

NORFACE
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The West Under Strain: Europe's Small States in a Changing Environment

**Seminar organised by the Danish Institute for International Studies
As part of the NORFACE* Project:
'The Transatlantic Relationship and the Struggle for Europe'
Copenhagen, 2-3 June, 2006**

Outlining the Theme:

The West used to be one of the most stable concepts on the international scene that provided a reliable anchoring point for locating oneself in world politics. This has not least been the case for Europe's smaller states. Today, however, the concept is challenged from several sides. This seminar thus aims at unpacking various discourses pertaining to the 'West' and 'Europe' and to pinpoint, in this context, the layered nature of these discourses. Arguably, to the extent that notions of the 'West' and 'Europe' are evolving and changing in essence, this will have fundamental and rather problematic consequences in the sphere of transatlantic relations as well as intra-European relations.

The recent fracture in transatlantic unity, which was intensified with the Iraq war, poses serious questions about the impact that the United States' exceptionalist disposition and unilateral actions in the 'war on terror', will have on the US-Europe partnership. Moreover, it also throws into doubt the unity of Europe (EU) as a sovereign subject in foreign and security policy, insofar as the split of the rhetorical figure of Europe into 'Old' and 'New' camps suggests a pluralisation of European political space. This development, besides being perceived as a rather serious challenge, is also a potential source of opportunities for those political actors dissatisfied in the context of the present European distribution of influence.

However, whilst recent debates about the transatlantic rift have focused overwhelmingly on the key protagonists in the dispute – i.e., the US and the European great powers – little attention has been paid to the outlook, opinions and challenges that the transatlantic rift poses for Europe's small states. This is problematic in two respects. First, there is a fundamental question of how Europe's smaller states will try to locate themselves in a new situation and in relation to two sets of strategic allies apparently intent on falling out. This is particularly disturbing for new EU/NATO members who spent the last decade 'returning' home to Europe only to discover that home is not as undifferentiated as previously expected. With post-Cold War identity discourses increasingly problematic how will these states reconstitute their central identity narratives in the future?

* **NORFACE (New Opportunities for Research Funding Cooperation in Europe)** is a partnership between the social science research councils in 12 European countries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom (plus Canada).

Second, this oversight of what the transatlantic rift may mean for small states in Europe is not surprising when seen through the lenses of traditional IR theories that tend to depict small states as simply objects of international relations, largely at the mercy of the great powers. However, the fact that enduring understandings of European political space and power relations are now in question may provide Europe's small states with opportunities to play a more constitutive role in Europe-making.

In particular the seminar probes into questions such as:

- What identity challenges face Europe's small states in the context of renewed debates about 'Europe' and Westernness'?
- What constitutive power do small states possess in terms of agenda setting?
- Do Europe's small states share a common view of the identity of Europe/West?

The West Under Strain

Europe's Small States in a Changing Environment

Seminar organised by the Danish Institute for International Studies
Copenhagen, 2-3 June, 2006

Venue: DIIS, Main Auditorium, ground floor, Strandgade 71, 1401 Copenhagen K

Provisional Programme:

Friday, 2th of June, 2006

10.30-10.40

Christopher Browning, University of Birmingham: *The NORFACE Project on The Transatlantic Relationship and the Struggle for Europe: Background*

10.40-10.50

Marko Lehti, Tampere Peace Research Institute: *The West Under Strain: Notes on a Changing Political Setting*

10.50-11.00

Pertti Joenniemi, DIIS: *The Markers of West, East and Europe: Contours of New Constellations*

Session on the Policies of Austria and Ireland

Chair: **Annika Bergman**, University of Edinburgh

11.00-11.20

Heinz Gärtner, Austrian Institute for International Affairs: *Austria's Neutrality: Western Identity without Global Interests*

11.20-11.40

Ben Tonra, Dublin European Institute, UCD College of Human Sciences: *Irish Westernisation: A Resurgent Anglo-American Narrative in Irish Foreign Policy*

11.40-12.00

Discussion based on the presentations of the morning

12.00-12.40 Lunch (DIIS cafeteria)

12.40-13.00

Akrivi Andreou, University of Birmingham: *(De)constructing the Diminutives: Critical Theoretical Considerations for the Study of 'Small European' States*

13.00-14.00

Panel: *Fractures in Transatlantic Unity: The Impact on the Smaller European States*

Chair: **Heinz Gärtner**, Austrian Institute for International Affairs

Participants: **Ben Tonra**, Dublin European Institute, UCD College of Human Sciences ;

Christopher Browning, University of Birmingham; **Hans Mouritzen**, DIIS; **Anders Wivel**, University of Copenhagen

14.00-14.20 Coffee

Session on Nordic Choices in a Changing Environment

Chair: **Johan Eriksson**, Södertörn University College/Swedish Institute for International Affairs

14.20-14.40

Hans Mouritzen, DIIS: The Nordic-Baltic Area: Divisive Geopolitics at Work

14.40-15.00

Annika Bergman, University of Edinburgh: Security Strategy, ESDP and Sweden

15.00-15.20

Christopher Browning, University of Birmingham and **Marko Lehti**, Tampere Peace Research Institute: Finland: From Western Outpost to Global(ised) Leader

15.20-15.40

Ola Tunander, Peace Research Institute, Oslo: Norway's Dual Track Policy

15.40-16.10

Discussion on the policies pursued by the Nordic countries

Saturday, 3th of June, 2006

Session on the Policies Pursued by the Baltic Countries

Chair: **Marko Lehti**, Tampere Peace Research Institute

10.00-10.20

Heli Tiirmaa-Klaar, Institute for International and Social Studies, Tallinn: Is there 'Europeanisation' of the New Members? An Estonian View

10.20-10.40

Tatyana Muravska, University of Latvia, Riga: The Case of Latvia

10.40-11.00 Coffee

11.00-11.20

Dovile Budryte, University of Brenau: What Kind of Return? Lithuania's In/security and the Changing West

11.20-11.40

Merje Kuus, University of British Columbia: The Ritual of Listening to Foreigners: The Agency of Baltic States

11.40-12.00

Discussion on the policies pursued by the Baltic countries

12.00-12.40 Lunch

Session on the Policies of Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia

Chair: **Peter Drulak**, Institute of International Relations, Prague

12.40-13.00

Petra Roter, University of Ljubljana: *Foreign Policy Making in the Context of Slovenian State-formation: An Older European State in the New Europe*

13.00-13.20

Katalin Sarvary, International Centre for Democratic Transition, Budapest: *Conceiving of Strains as Signs of Opportunity in Transatlantic Relations: A Hungarian Perception Distilled from Prime Ministers' Speeches*

13.20-13.40

Alina Curticapean, Tampere Peace Research Institute: *No Laughing Matters: Foreign Policy in Romanian and Bulgarian Political Cartoons*

13.40-14.00

Discussion on the policies pursued by Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia

14.00-14.20 Coffee

Session on Mediterranean Constellations

Chair: **Ulla Holm**, DIIS

14.20-14.40

Akrivi Andreou, University of Birmingham: *Working on the Margins: Greece as a 'Small European' State*

14.40-15.00

Michelle Pace, University of Birmingham: *Analyzing the Impact of the EU Membership on Small States: The Case of Malta*

15.00-15.20

Discussion on the policies of smaller Mediterranean actors

15.20-15.40

Johan Eriksson, Södertörn University College/Swedish Institute for International Affairs: *Concluding Remarks*

