



GLOBSEC 2021
BRATISLAVA FORUM

Let's Rebuild the World Better

GLOBSEC 2021
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15 - 17 JUNE

SUMMARY



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LET'S

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Authors

Karolína Kötelešová, GLOBSEC

Lucia Rybníkárová, GLOBSEC

Adam Šipoš, GLOBSEC

THE WORLD



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Introduction

The year of 2021 - the second year of the pandemic and world-wide restrictions to eliminate the spread of the coronavirus. Civilization still seems to bear with the struggle of the new normal, but we seem to have adapted to it more over the last year. Wearing facemasks and following frequently changing regulations have become a part of our everyday lives. Vaccine rollouts have given us hope out of the crisis.

GLOBSEC is one of many organisations going through turbulent times - scaling down in activities and ambitions, reducing staff, losing a number of important partners and sponsorships. We keep pushing through difficult times to make a step forward to start rebuilding the world better.

To ensure the safety of all our guests at the GLOBSEC 2021 Bratislava Forum, we adopted comprehensive health and hygiene measures. Thanks to our healthcare partners, we tested all participants and organizers prior to their entry into the venue using PCR and Lamp tests - administering over 1600 tests in total. We successfully safeguarded the conference area using thermovision cameras, air purifiers and frequent disinfection of the premises.

The names and numbers of our speakers and audience say it all - participation of guests from 98 countries, over 100 of world media present, over 50 partners supporting us, 3 presidents visiting in person, 30 ministers of many government departments, and a large number of political representatives. We were thrilled that this year His Holiness, Pope Francis accepted our invitation and sent a powerful video message encouraging everyone to take the opportunity to come out of this crisis stronger and better than ever before.

The wide range of panel discussions of the GLOBSEC 2021 Bratislava Forum was delivered in a hybrid format over three days. Rather than synthesising the discussions in a chronological order, this summary provides a useful overview of the panels under each of the key four pillars that need rebuilding after the crisis: Democratic Renewal & Rebuilding of Trust, Economic Growth & Recovery, Global Europe in a Post-Pandemic World, Tech Governance, and two focused streams that need further attention in the post-pandemic world: Security in the 21st century and Resilience in Health.

The first part of the summary focuses on the theme of 'Democratic Renewal & Rebuilding of Trust', which explores how the global community of democracies can work together to deliver on the worldwide quest for better governance and to strengthen the rule of law.

'Economic Growth & Recovery' section looks at the economic reboot and its resilience, the winners, and losers of the pandemic, and international trade which has made a significant contribution to the expansion of the global economy.

The third section on 'Global Europe in Post-Pandemic World' discusses how the EU can strengthen its capacities to act on a global stage by increasing cooperation between member states and improving the EU's ability to acquire stronger and more agile capacity to act as a global leader.

The fourth part of this summary focuses on the theme of 'Tech Governance' and covers topics such as the future of 5G, the presence of AI in cybersecurity, the digital agenda in the EU and US, as well as European tech regulations.

The first of the two focused streams, 'Security in the 21st century', discusses the possibilities of enhancing collaboration between the private and public sectors and aims to unpack some of the emerging geopolitical and technopolitical challenges. It also touches upon how the defense sector can best contribute to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions.

Last but not least, the section on 'Resilience in Health' incorporates key lessons learned from the pandemic and summarises different perspectives on fighting COVID-19 and the impact the pandemic has had on cities around Central Europe.

Democratic Renewal & Rebuilding of Trust



“Ensure that our rules don’t benefit those who violate them.”

*Zuzana Čaputová,
President of the Slovak Republic*

The global community will continue to grapple with the crisis that has revealed and intensified the already existing vulnerabilities of the international community. The new normal will be affected by the refreshed power dynamics on the global stage as well as the renewal of democracies. A crucial issue that the global community of democracies will need to tackle is how to work together to deliver on the worldwide quest for better governance, active participation, stronger rule of law, regain the trust of people and improve transatlantic relationship between US and EU. But we also need to be concisions of the digital space and its regulation to prevent the threat of disinformation.

 **@ZuzanaCaputova:** To build back better, let’s apply the lessons we learnt during the pandemic: we need a shared perception of what challenges are ahead of us and a common goal to address them; shared rules to guide us and joint actions to prevent future crises.



“Every crisis forces us to choose, for better or worse. We come out of it, either better or worse. But never the same.”

His Holiness, Pope Francis

 **@prezydentpl:** The only way to deal with post-pandemic recovery of the world, and Central Europe, is the one based on global solidarity.



„All of us hope the pandemic is coming to an end and right now it is the moment to talk about the challenges awaiting us but also about the things that have affected us and why we weren’t able to prevent them.”

*Andrzej Duda, President of the
Republic of Poland*



“Liberties, human rights. All those things we took for granted were tested.”

Zoran Milanović, President of the Republic of Croatia

Democracy in the Digital Space: An Alliance for a Healthy Infosphere

The issue of healthy digital space is a frequently discussed topic at GLOBSEC. There is a need for a transatlantic relationship between the US and the EU in this sphere, and the visit of the US President Biden sends a good signal. A healthy infosphere is becoming increasingly more imperative. Media are becoming more fragmented than ever, blurring the lines between objectivity, truth, and public accountability. Protection of personal data collected by social media platforms and smart devices is a collective issue and privacy is a networked problem. We must look at the way privacy breaches affect entire communities, even populations.

“Even the best data protection authorities don’t have resources and tools to tackle the data protection.”

David Carroll, Associate Professor of Media, New School, New York City

It is important to not take democracy for granted, especially in the digital space. The focus needs to be on finding the right balance between regulation and censorship to ensure the Internet remains a free space. The responsibility for finding that balance should fall on democratically elected governments and multilateral organizations working in close cooperation with digital platforms. Additionally, the lack of operational transparency of digital platforms and lessons learnt from measures previously implemented by them further complicates the situation and should be focused on.

Bridging the Rift and Restoring the Middle Ground in Politics and Societies

Why have politics, politicians and political systems seen a considerable deterioration in trust by citizens? The answer lies in both economic and cultural issues. A cultural divide based on various socioeconomic factors has produced a society that struggles with understanding each other. However, one of the most prominent drivers of polarization and distrust is inequality. To change that, we must support all citizens to gain knowledge on how to participate in democratic processes. If we fail to do this, the situation will only deteriorate.



@BoschStiftung „Conspiracy theories are not necessarily in the ownership of the Eastern and Southern countries. We see this phenomenon in countries where it has not been before.“ says Sandra Breka.

One of the best tools that could be utilised is direct communication to ensure that all societal groups are included. Technological change, in the way information is disseminated and consumed, has fuelled a “scrambling in democratic discourse.” People tend to believe a lot of false narratives and conspiracy theories, which are easily transferred through the internet, resulting in an undermining of our democracies. One way of tackling this issue is to regulate the digital space. If regulation is not pursued, hate and disinformation will continue to flood the infosphere, increasing polarization and distrust in all institutions.



“One reason people mistrust media is the ownership structure. In Eastern Europe, legacy media have been taken over by oligarchs. So, it is no accident that people do not trust the media.”

Francis Fukuyama, Olivier Nomellini Senior Fellow, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, Stanford

Regenerating Democracies Worldwide

Results of GLOBSEC Trends polls confirmed a decline of trust in national governments and dissatisfaction with how democracy works among Central and Eastern Europeans. The findings reflect a global crisis of democracy and the challenges societies face across the world. Despite this, democratic systems have a lot of strengths, for example the recognition of internal problems, reflection and re-evaluation and subsequent policy changes. A restorative and self-corrective nature of democracy had been observed in the past, for example, in the United States of America.



“We start with the assumption that people crash between strong leaders and democracy. That is not true, people want the strong leaders who were elected by them.”

Ivan Krastev, Chairman, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Sofia; Member of the Board of Directors, GLOBSEC

It is important to highlight that the crisis of democracy does not appear in every country and it can take many forms. New political leadership engaging with ordinary citizens, public debates about societal grievances and rifts, inclusiveness, and a strong application of anti-corruption measures should be at the core of the democratic restoration.



@AmbassadorDeo(@GatewayHouseIND) says: „There is not a conversation about structural changes in India. We are still in the stage of shouting at each other. Democracies are now talking about the people like Marxist used to.“ #GLOBSEC2021

Furthermore, big demographic changes such as aging populations, generational divisions, and underrepresentation of labour markets in politics need to be taken into consideration when attempting to fix our democracies.

Empowerment and engagement of young generations is a must. While these changes will not happen overnight, it is high time to rebuild our democracies.

“Democracies can be in a healthier state if we look inwards, examine our prejudices and concentrate our energies on the small problematic bits.”

Neelam Deo, Director and Co-Founder, Gateway House, New Delhi

Democratic Change in Russia: How to Increase the Odds

Despite the actions of the Kremlin to make the political opposition less visible, the dissent in Russia is growing. Fundamental factors of protest are not gone and will not disappear. The future is bright with the young generation being politically aware and conscious their human rights are being taken away from them. The policy recommendation of Navalny's campaign is to try a different approach with Putin as previous attempts to 'reset' the relationship between Russia and the West had not worked. One powerful tool of gaining influence internationally is the export of corruption which results in local politicians across countries acting as agents of the regime enticed by the prospect of receiving funds from Russia. Although Putin's regime is trying to push the protest under the carpet by disenfranchising the opposition from any political representation and shutting down their offline operations, there is no decrease in support for them. On the contrary, the more is being done to silence the movement, the more increase in dissent there is.



„Our policy recommendation is that we need to try something else rather than trying to push the non-existing reset button.“

Leonid Volkov, Chief of Staff to Alexei Navalny, Vilnius

Political Extremism Goes Virtual and International

Cyberwars and disinformation wars are closer to becoming the wars of the future than ever before. There are signs of nationalist internationalism in international branches of far-right groups and in forming alliances in power and parliaments to compete against other parties. However, such international endeavours often happen by default and are not the priority of these groups. The actions of populist politicians have a direct negative impact on trust in institutions and elected politicians.



@dlibsen, Executive Director, Counter

Extremism Project, New York City: "The ultimate responsibility lies within the individual - at the same time, we need to ask the platforms whether they are doing enough to mitigate the extremism-related actions."



Against this backdrop, national representatives should act transparently and focus on pro-people policies, rather than exacerbating feelings of exclusion and fear. Although extremism and terrorism are not directly generated by social media, social media platforms certainly act as an accelerator. Extremists abuse social media to grow and extend their message. There is a need for the platforms to step up and curtail the phenomena. Like any technology, social media can be used for good as well as nefarious purposes. Modifying the terms and conditions of social media platforms to communicate what comprises misuse could work as a simple solution that would help to combat harmful extremist online activity.

"Right-wing groups manage to unite groups of unsatisfied people to form coalitions of the protest voters. We should strive to decompose such coalitions."

*Daphne Halikiopoulou, Professor of Comparative Politics,
University of Reading*

Economic Growth & Recovery

Global Trade – Optimism Restored?

Positive signs have come out of the EU-US Summit addressing some of the key disputes of trade cooperation, such as aircraft subsidies, tariffs on steel and aluminum as well as standards on cybertechnology, and green and emerging technologies. With the global trade recovery on the rise, upholding and reforming the rules-based multilateral trading system must be of utmost importance. Rising geopolitical tensions, sanctions, and exports controls impede trade negotiations. There is a rising need to facilitate balance among the major global players by providing an appropriate avenue for an open dialogue.



A positive sign of such cooperation is coming from conversations on reworking some of the WTO stances on issues such as e-commerce, fishery subsidies, and sustainability. Reform of the WTO is needed. However, an agreement between the three big players is not sufficient. Conversations about global trade need to include emerging economies and low- and middle-income countries as well. There is an urgency to build trust around global trade - fast-moving technological innovation is defining the pathway rather than politics. Importantly, without joint initiatives on trade, we will not be able to reach climate ambitions.

“Trade is a key pillar for recovery for everybody in the world, protectionism is not the solution.”

Wilhelm Molterer, Chairman of the Board of Directors, GLOBSEC, Vienna

The EU Economic Reboot: On Track Towards Resilient Economies?

Despite the initial skepticism about the European Union recovery package, there is optimism that it will be enough to jump start European economies. Structural reforms are key to long-term growth and economic recovery and are perceived positively in Central Europe. However, there needs to be more discussion on where and how we invest the recovery funds rather than how much to invest. The focus should be on green transition and digitization.



“Solidarity is only possible if all 27 member states on their own and united are successful.”

Sebastian Kurz, Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria

The panel shared the vision and importance of solidarity within and of the EU. The basis for solidarity, public investments, and higher social standards is competitiveness and economic growth. Solidarity and economic growth go hand in hand.



@KarelHavlicek: Even before crisis, in the Czech Republic we defined the new priorities.

We have started to invest in research and development. To be no longer the land of stories but a country for the future. We would like to present the Czech Republic no longer as a country of cheap beer, beautiful countryside, and the Charles bridge but as a country of knowledge and innovation, science, and universities. And the recovery and resilience plan is based on this innovation strategy.

The best support for our economies now is to continue with strong vaccination campaigns which will be the ultimate defeat of the pandemic. Although the pandemic hit all member states hard and resulted in loss of lives and jobs, the EU is in a much better position to deal with future waves, keep moving forward and improving the quality of life in Europe.

Strategic Autonomy vs. Global Supply: How to Secure Value Chains

Disruption in global value chains did not start with Covid but the pandemic has accelerated some of the pre-existing trends, such as skepticism over globalization, lack of cooperation, and a lack of solidarity between countries. There has been an increase of skepticism in globalization due to both individual countries' politics as well as the changing role of international landscape. Specifically, the changing role of China is resulting in less interdependence of the world.

The pandemic has caused a shift in demand of certain goods, namely medical goods, face masks, ventilators, and vaccines. Lockdowns have increased demand for goods and services needed for working from home. However, the global value chains have adjusted. The challenge often was in increasing production and to do this, we need global value chains. Resilience is not about avoiding disruption but about recovering quickly from a crisis. True resilience arises from reliable, diverse, and co-dependent supply chains. Governments have a role in ensuring continuity of supplies through specific regulations, strategic stockpiles, and contingency plans.



“We have to understand that resilience is not about avoiding disruption, but it is about recovering quickly.”

Sébastien Miroudot, Senior Trade Policy Analyst, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Winners & Losers of the Pandemic

Although we are all losers of the pandemic, the difference lies in the impact on individual countries and what lessons they learn from it. The world needs to use this opportunity to build greener, more equal, and more resilient societies. For various industries, the pandemic has been a revelation of how complex the supply chain is and that it might need re-thinking. It has also brought about a lot of changes in how people and services work. In some areas, such as AI, digitalization or shipping, the changes will accelerate, and we need to be ready to adapt.



“What is important is that the reconstruction is greener, more equal, and of course producing more resilience.”

Ángel Gurría, former Secretary General, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

However, it is important to highlight that both recovery and vaccination rates have two very different speeds – one in the Western world and one in the global South where the speed is much slower. What happens next? Will there be a structural divide between the Global North and Global South? Will we learn from the pandemic and turn it into positive change? For now, the COVAX Facility is a good system and a start for handling the situation on a global level. The victory or loss will be determined by what we would learn from the pandemic.



„Governments across the world will be judged based on 3 criteria: the number of casualties, the rollout of vaccines, and the speed of economic recovery,” says [@alexstubb](#) from School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute.

EU Climate Diplomacy Leadership and the Carbon Border Tax



When it comes to carbon border tax, there is a concern that Europe is evolving in one direction and the United States and other countries are evolving in another. The lack of coordination and alignment, even though the carbon goals of the EU and the US are similar, creates complexities for transnational companies. A crucial aspect of the EU carbon adjustment mechanism proposal is its compatibility with WTO rules in order to avoid the creation of any potential international trade tensions.

“The one race that the Europeans can win is the decarbonisation race.”

Pascal Canfin, Chair, Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, European Parliament.

However, it is not possible for the EU to launch carbon pricing internally and at the same time have importing companies bypass the obligation as this would create an incentive to not go green which would be counterproductive to the EU’s goals. The focus should be on investing in low-carbon cement and steel and new green industries, making sure that free allocations do not discourage the innovation of green technologies.



@J_A_Hillman Honor to have shared stage w/ Pascal Canfin and Christopher Egenhofer.

Thanks to Steve Clemons for great questions. EU CBAM proposal is smart but will be complicated to administer. Is there easier way to get to same goal?

Political Leadership in Climate change: United We Stand?

Strong political leadership is paramount if we are to effectively tackle climate change. There is an urgent need to quicken the pace of phasing out fossil fuels and cutting emissions by 2030. The focus for the next 6 months ahead of COP26 in Glasgow should be on working with and supporting developing countries in their climate change ambitions.



@LaurenceTubiana “The concern is the problem of the rising divide between developed countries and the Global South.” #climatechange

Strong collaboration between the US and Europe coupled with ambitious climate change goals will be key in achieving net zero emissions globally. It is important to build on the positive commitment to ending the financing of coal and focus on encouraging and supporting other countries to transition to cleaner energy sources. Each country now needs to focus on implementing the agreed shared visions. The main concern is the growing divide between the Global North and the Global South on several issues including climate financing, historical emissions, lack of access to capital markets, mistrust, and vaccine equity. There is a window of opportunity to engage with China who is more open to discussing climate-related issues than they were just two years ago. Strong EU-US economic decisions can signal a shift to a greener global market and encourage other regions to adopt similar positions.



“Future emissions will not be caused by the US or Europe, but in Asia and Latin America. We need to help them decarbonize while at the same time bolster their energy security”

David Livingston, Senior Advisor to US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate

Global Europe in a Post-Pandemic World

The Great EU Soul-searching: What Spot on the New Global Power Map?

When positioning the European Union as a global actor, the EU has the leverage to become a global player. However, it needs to acquire a better capacity to act first. The EU's model of governance and liberal democracy is becoming increasingly challenged not only from the outside but also from within. The ambitions of the Union must be agreed upon by all member states as no single EU country has enough power to have a large impact by themselves.



“We are extremely good at talking ourselves down, but we have leverage, and we need to start using it. The buzzword should be less of strategic autonomy and more coherence.”

Alexander Schallenberg, Federal Minister for European and International Affairs of Austria

The global power struggle is moving away from the ‘traditional’ domain to the technological one. The EU must question if it is able to live up to this challenge and in order to bolster its position on the global stage, it must move from developing and implementing one grand strategy and focus on sub-strategies instead. These are clear strategies in areas where the EU must deliver to avoid being disappointed in their attempts to claim global influence.

For the EU to become a truly global player, it is necessary for it to increase its presence as a geopolitical actor and to further develop a unified foreign and security policy based on shared values. Given this context, the EU needs to perform a very precise risk assessment to gain the tools and possibilities to act unanimously, have a coherent position, and speak with a unified voice.



@IvanKorcok: I'm not a friend of grand strategies, I prefer small strategies in those areas where we must deliver, e.g. the #WesternBalkans. More down to Earth approach to not be disappointed each and every time we claim global influence.

The New Transatlantic Agenda: Trumped No More

The US image abroad has rebounded with transition to the Biden's administration. One of the key positive messages received from the new administration is the return to multilateralism. However, in Europe, there is still concern about the extent to which the US considers the interests and opinions of its European partners when conducting foreign policy. There is a need for Biden to repair the reputation of US' international relations' competence and to bridge foreign and domestic policy. When it comes to its relations with the EU, the US needs to focus on the strategic development more.



General John Allen from @BrookingsFP points out: „We have to link our (#US) foreign policy to the domestic policy, otherwise, the discontinuity of the two will be produce mixed results.“

Outside of domestic politics, the most pressing issue the US needs to give attention to is China. Despite having a bi-partisan agreement, there is a lack of consensus on what Biden has already achieved and whether the declared EU-US commitment will translate into concrete policies and actions.

Generally, China must be understood in a broader context of economic challenges and as a threat to liberal democratic order. As a result, the transatlantic relations are facing the most difficult task ahead - to build the democracy of the future.



“A broader challenge that China presents is not only on the economic front - it is also that China clearly wishes to rewrite the rules of the game.”

Jim Lindsay Senior Vice President, Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, D.C.

Great Power Competition in East Asia

Chinese activities home and abroad indicate that we might be finding ourselves within a new great power competition, a situation that calls upon a stronger cooperation and a joint approach. The expansion of the Chinese nuclear arsenal, the rapid development of emerging and disruptive technologies, and investments in the Belt and Road Initiative represent some of the activities raising not only military but also geopolitical concerns in the West.



„I definitely think that Europe has woken up to the geopolitical challenges and is seeking its position on the global stage. It is just the question of when is the time that we will arrive there.“

@Kinga Brudzinska

There is an apprehension that small and medium-sized powers may be getting lost in this competition and may find themselves in a difficult position on China’s foreign policy. However, the prevailing sentiment is disappointment and disillusionment over what China is offering versus what it can deliver.

Are the economic links, particularly with countries of East Asia – Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, going to be controlled by China in the end? This is an issue where Europe must be more active. We cannot afford to become a fortress isolated from the world.”

Bruno Mações, Senior Research Associate, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, Brussels

Foreign policies of other powerful countries should focus on building viable alternatives and competitive economies. There is hope that European states and the US will formulate a joint strategy to strengthen peace by establishing strong democratic principles. Resilience building and strengthening of democracy is hence a critical component of addressing the East Asian region.

Strategic Foresight for Resilience: the EU and NATO in a Post-Pandemic World

Building and strengthening resilience has been the top priority of the EU’s and NATO’s agenda. Yet, the pandemic has demonstrated how vulnerable societies are and how easily successful policies of the Union, such as the internal market, can be disrupted. The pandemic has shifted the emphasis to establishing a new commitment where resilience is understood in broader terms, including climate change, critical infrastructure, supply chains, and telecommunications. That, however, does not leave the ‘hard’ security issues to be unaddressed. NATO has been tackling wide range of security issues such as hybrid threats, cybersecurity threats, and the interventions of China and Russia.



“West is back, and it is good for democracy and for the people living in democratic societies.”

Maroš Šefčovič, Vice President for Interinstitutional Relations and Foresight, European Commission

The EU and NATO must be prepared for more of these challenges and be ready to work together in tackling authoritarian regimes and building democracy worldwide. To achieve this, the convergence and complementarity of the EU Strategic Compass with NATO’s Strategic Concept will be crucial. Democracy will be the steppingstone of the future.



“As leaders made clear at the #NATOSummit this week, we need to be ready and adapt to complex threats in an unpredictable world.”

Micrea Geoana

Václav Havel Transatlantic Dialogues: The Russia Challenge - Where to Now?

The fundamental nature of Russian adversarial politics is still dominating global issues. Due to the lack of motivation from the Russian side and persistent destabilising behaviour, it is unlikely that it will cease to present a challenge. Russia will continue its attempt to change the international system as much as possible and in this context, it will be inherent for the European states to develop capabilities to quickly react to the changing environment. European states, the CEE region, and Western Balkans have been the most contested territories that might also have some means to put into play against Russia. The Russian trade strongly relies on the European countries, a leverage that with the help of Biden's administration can be used.



„The Europeans have some means to put in play against Russia - a leverage to be used by the help of the Biden administration“ said @zantov at #GLOBSEC2021



A joint approach of European states, however, might be difficult to achieve. It is evident that there is no unity in the European society towards Russian politics. There are three paramount reasons for these incoherent positions. Firstly, it is due to the different history and perceptions of historical experience with Russia. Secondly, it is the in-betweenness between the West and the East. Finally, it is the role of disinformation and the ability of Russia to create and sell narratives. Russia will continue to present an adversarial actor in international relations and despite the ongoing dialogue, it is not presumed that this situation will change in the near future.

“The US-Russia relationship is doomed to remain adversarial for the foreseeable future. Nobody expects the Biden-Putin meeting to leave a persistent impact on the state of issues.”

Andrey Kortunov, Director General, Russian International Affairs Council, Moscow

Geopolitical Europe at Crossroads: Western Balkans in the Post-COVID-19 Era

The European Union and its member states must not overlook the strategic importance of Western Balkans. Stability and prosperity of the region continues to be one of the key priorities of the EU. However, the future enlargement of the countries is in the hands of the EU member states, rather than of the candidate countries. The focus should be shifted from intergovernmental conferences to concrete political steps. Western Balkan economies are already closely integrated with the EU.



“We should come from a problem-oriented strategy to a solution-oriented strategy in the region. If someone wants to become a member of the EU, it has to show it with the geopolitical pool of decisions.”

Anže Logar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia

The EU is their largest trade partner, largest source of incoming foreign investment, and the main destination for outward migration. In this regard, countries such as North Macedonia and Albania have made considerable progress since 2005 and it is now up to the EU to start the negotiations.



Visegrad Insight: @MiroslavLajcak We are holding the carrot, our partners are coming to us trying to reach it, and then we run away from them. We need to figure out if we still want to be seen as a credible partner for the #WesternBalkans and on the global arena #GLOBSEC2021

Nonetheless, aspiring EU members must resolve outstanding disputes as part of their membership process. Although, both Kosovo and Serbia committed themselves to the process of normalization, the EU-sponsored dialogue needs clearer negotiating position. Both Kosovo and Serbia need to overcome the legacy of the past and steer towards their common European future. The EU on the other hand needs to establish a common unified approach with regards to the recognition of Kosovo.

A View from Central Europe: Future of the EU

The EU is entering a new age, both in terms of global politics and global economy. This age contains a lot of competition for strength from global actors. There is a need for the European Union to be among the winners of this race, both in terms of political strength and economic power. However, a strong EU requires strong member states. Transforming the individual strength of member states into the collective strength of the entire union will be key in post-pandemic Europe.



“The future of EU should be looked at from the view of citizens. For the average EU citizen issues of restructuring the EP is not as important as the division of competencies between states and EU institutions.”

Zbigniew Rau, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland

With regards to V4 countries, the EU brought new responsibilities, opportunities, and economic development to the region. However, there is a considerable need to address the current issues and the outcomes of unresolved crises before looking into future challenges. There are certain immediate expectations from the European Union. Firstly, a solid political structure rooted in European institutions that pursue the interests of its member states. Secondly, a community of cooperation, a mutual understanding based on the principles of equality, subsidiarity, and proportionality. In general, the pandemic has been a wake-up call for the EU. In this light, it will be crucial to identify what kind of role the EU should have in health policy to be better prepared for any future pandemic.



Visegrad Insight: [@IvanKorcok](#): With every crisis that is a wake-up call to the EU, we fall asleep afterwards #GLOBSEC2021

Towards the EU that Delivers

The EU brings considerable advantages to its citizens, including but not limited to free movement, common currency, respect for human rights, peace, and security. However, the pandemic has shown that the expectations of the public were set higher than the EU could deliver on, especially in terms of immediate action. The next two years, therefore, will be crucial in delivering concrete policies of the EU recovery plan. The EU's budget is designed to boost recovery and help rebuild a post-COVID 19 Europe. Greener, more digital, and more resilient Europe aims to help member states to emerge stronger from the pandemic. However, the EU needs to go beyond the recovery plan. Once it proves successful, the EU should consider opening the discussion on a 10-year investment plan. When talking about 'the EU that delivers', one of the priorities of the EU should be strategic communication, which brings its citizens closer to decision-making processes and ongoing policy-making. For this, active engagements of EU member states' citizens in the conference on the Future of Europe will be crucial.

“I believe that we need to speak frankly with our citizens that on some occasions, like the pandemic, more involvement of the EU is necessary.”

Martin Klus, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic



“There is a need to develop a sense of belonging and awareness in Europe.”

Clément Beaune, Secretary of State for European Affairs, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic

Tech Governance

Big-Tech & European Regulations

Discussions about the regulation of big technology companies such as Facebook, Apple, or Microsoft are still on the table in the European Union and other countries outside the EU. European countries have taken a major step forward in the area of personal data protection by implementing the GDPR legislation.



“The regulation will not kill innovation; we need trust in order to innovate.”

Hendrik Bourgeois, Head of Government, Affairs Europe and Russia, Apple, Brussels

The law has also inspired other non-European countries. Big tech companies are now worried about the EU effort to implement new rules through the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Market Act (DMA), which might potentially affect their global business. The new rules aim to create a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users of digital services are protected. At the same time, they aim to establish a level playing field to foster innovation, growth, and competitiveness.



Olivier Guersent from @EU_Competition: „The #EU set a global standard by creating #GDPR...

Our objective isn't to rule the world. Our objective is to protect our citizens and give digital platforms the opportunity to innovate and grow while respecting EU values.“

US-EU Digital Marketplace: Bridging the Gap

There is no digital sovereignty without cybersecurity. The gap between creating a fully digital marketplace and cybersecurity in Europe and the US is still significant although companies such as Microsoft or Facebook have the ambition to and are working towards minimizing this gap. When discussing bridging the gap, there is the

question of regulating digital space in the European Union while not knowing what the approach of the Biden administration will be. There is a chance for statutory changes in the following years to rebuild the foundation and build trust that a strong transatlantic relationship requires. The EU and the US must undoubtedly cooperate in this area.

“We have to ensure that the issues around digital technology play a huge role in the relations between the US and the EU.”

Brad Smith, President, Microsoft, Bellevue

Raising the Bar: Towards a New US-EU Digital Agenda



“When we talk about European strategic autonomy it is to become autonomous geopolitically. The stronger Europe becomes the better partner it will be to Allies such as the US.”

Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, New Democracy MEP for Greece, European Parliament, Brussels

The future developments in the transatlantic relationship in the digital area require a clear definition of rules and priorities. Currently, the main goal is to put the agenda on the table and persuade policymakers to implement necessary changes. One of the biggest challenges is to create a resilient digital infrastructure and cybersecurity standards which affect dialogues on security and defense. These are the priorities that both the US and the EU deem vital in their digital economies. Many believe the only long-term solution is for the US to modify their surveillance laws and practices. There is also a need for an adequate federal-level privacy legislation.



„DATA flow and the privacy shield is the elephant in the room which need to be addressed“ said President of European Digital Rights @edri

A 5G Future: Not Just Smoke and Mirrors

Implementing 5G is not just a new technological innovation, but also an instrument for the economic recovery and the green revolution. For the European Union, it is the main priority for the next five years.



Michel Van Bellinghen from @BERECeuropaeu: „There is a need to gain access to #5G network as soon as possible... The digital agenda is not yet a reality, and we still need to push for 5G.“

5G is also accelerating the development of autonomous vehicles and environmentally friendly transport, which would be more efficient and safer by enabling artificial intelligence systems and providing real-time data collection and analysis. At the same time, it will bring the cloud to a new dimension by providing the distribution of computing and storage, such as edge cloud and mobile edge computing, throughout the infrastructure.

“Europe is one of the regions that leads in manufacturing and there is a huge potential in applying 5G, but also in the agriculture.”

Ulf Pehrsson, Head of Government and Industry Relations
Ericsson, Stockholm

GLOBSEC Chat: AI in Cybersecurity - A Blessing or a Curse?

We have all heard about phishing emails, false accounts, and other digital threats which are significant elements of the discussion about cybersecurity and related policy debates. Hackers have developed a strong strategy focusing mainly on people and companies who do not use advanced security. Europe should find the best strategy to fight cyber-attacks. Focusing on artificial intelligence will help with potential threats in Europe. It is important to discuss all solutions with the US who are a key partner on this despite differing views on digital space regulations.

“In general, you cannot easily tell if AI or machine learning was used for specific tech unless you confiscate it and examine it and find a proof.”

Richard Marko, CEO, ESET

Human Brain-Scale Artificial Intelligence: Coming to Us Soon

Digitalization of the public sector is one of the priorities of national governments across Europe, with the best examples being in Estonia and

Denmark. However, there are more sectors that need to be digitalized and that comes with a cost. For example, last year, more than 3% of electricity was consumed by data centers. On top of that, data centers are growing by more than 15% per year. In 10 years time, almost 30% of the planet's electricity will be used by data centers. This data-driven society might create new problems we will have to face. The priority of the EU in the next few years is to advance the continent's technological sovereignty. Compared to the industrial revolution, where it took over 100 years for people to transition from agriculture to manufacturing, the AI revolution will be extremely fast.

“Reducing power consumption is our crucial question in digitalization.”

Radoslav Danišák, CEO, Tachyum

Growing the Digital Economy in CEE

There is no doubt that digital economy is finally growing in Central and Eastern Europe. This also brings a new set of potential threats we need to be aware of. In the CEE region, there is still relentless discussion if and how to regulate the digital space. If the countries want to prevent digital threats such as cyber-attacks and personal data losses, we need a clear strategy and a more substantial standards policy in Europe.



We live in a global economy, therefore we need to make sure that data can flow undisturbed booth in the EU and outside of it“ said @jeffbullwinkel Associate General Counsel and Director of Corporate, External & Legal Affairs of Microsoft Europe

Digital sovereignty also has its place in discussions of the European context, and the upcoming Slovenian presidency of the Council of the EU will focus on that area. When it comes to data privacy, we need to find a good balance between regulation and business-friendly environment.



“If we do not top up the investment into digital security, we are missing a crucial field of the future.”

Andres Sutt, Minister of Entrepreneurship and Information Technology of the Republic of Estonia

Security for the 21st Century

NATO 2030: How to Get There?

After the pandemic, the world order changes. Great power competition between the West, China, and Russia intensifies. New threats emerge. In such an environment, the cooperation of NATO Allies will be ever more crucial. The 2021 NATO Summit reassured the standing NATO values and the commitment of the Allies.



„The #NATO summit was indeed a decision-making summit. We need to strengthen the defence and deterrence - not only hard power but also the resilience of all societies including the private sector and every citizen.“ **Baiba Braže**

Although NATO consensus-rooted decision-making is cumbersome at times, a united decision and commitment of thirty sovereign states bear a remarkable power. The represented nations agreed that cyber and hybrid threats, exacerbated by the rapid progress of artificial interference, are of grave concern.



„We will be very restrictive on technologies coming from countries where democratic values are not safeguarded. We should go back to the basics, discuss our experiences on regulations and reconsider some of them.“ **Radmila Šekerinska Jankovska**

Cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure, political and state institutions transpire across the world. The new security threats become challenging to a new extent as they take on both global and intersectional character. In this light, a key aspect of the collective ability to face future challenges is resilience. Against this backdrop, NATO introduces its first Innovation Accelerator where Canada could provide valuable experience with public-

private sector cooperation on the development of technologies. NATO and nation-states should pay attention to utilising quality and diversity of talent and should equally think about efficient and effective procurement for all their activities.

European Defence Cooperation: Defining the Resilient Europe by Synergy of Defence Capabilities

The establishment of new European defence initiatives yields considerable opportunities for member states but also potential risks that must be adequately addressed to find a comprehensive complementarity to the activities of NATO. Though the initiatives are broadly welcomed, it is important that they can face the challenges imposed by the rapidly changing security environment. Key challenges that lie ahead of European defence, such as emerging and disruptive technologies, public-private sector cooperation in areas of research and development, and military gaps between the member states, must be addressed in a timely manner.



EDF is a promising tool for the future, but it needs to be taken by all European countries as a European tool. It cannot be helping just the big nations, but also the small ones.“ Says **@MajerMarian** - State Secretary, Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic

One of the key promising steps towards European defence cooperation is the establishment of the PESCO initiative on military mobility. Despite its controversy, PESCO aims to complement and enhance the transatlantic cooperation. In this context, the European defence cooperation may serve as an important building block for transatlantic security cooperation. Moreover, it can be an important counterpart in overcoming the imposed challenges and in helping European states to maintain ethical and technological superiority against competitors.



“We need to avoid institutional decoupling between NATO and the EU. We need to ensure transparency and understanding of what we are aiming to do in these organisations.”

Ján Havránek, Deputy Minister for Defence Policy and Strategy, Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic

Climate Change & Global Security: A Closer Relationship Than One Might Think?

Generally acknowledged as a threat multiplier, climate change is no longer solely a part of the environmental agenda but is also pervading all other aspects of our societies, including the defence sector. In the light of the recent G7 meeting and the NATO Summit, it has become clear that world leaders consider climate security as one of the key priorities. Incorporation of climate change into security agenda has been acknowledged as a huge symbolic significance that needs to be disseminated to all the relevant agencies.



“The recent announcements by NATO to act up on the climate issue is a revolutionary step in responding to climate multilaterally.”

Kate Guy, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Climate and Security, Washington, D.C.

However, it is important that the debates about climate change mitigation start to shift more towards adaptation. While mitigation is indeed important, the ongoing impacts such as extreme weather conditions and natural disasters must be recognized, including the establishment of comprehensive strategies on how to build resilience and adapt to these changing conditions.



„The military has always been on top of the new trends, now the new trend is green and you can't imagine that the military will lag behind in this trend.“
@Alex_Verbeek - Policy Director, #Environment & Development Resource Centre, Brussels

As all countries are facing immense impacts, it is in their best regional intentions to prevent the situation from worsening. In this light, climate change is recognized as having global importance and thus has the potential to overcome geopolitical tensions. Though the phenomenon of climate change is already widely acknowledged, there is still more room to grow in terms of training and educating the public sector. The private sector also has a crucial role to play in sharing know-how and helping to optimize public processes with new technologies to decrease the carbon footprint.

Precious Space: A String of Satellites and the Future for Influence

NATO has recognized space as the fifth operational domain as it serves military purposes both within the Earth's orbits as well as on the ground. For a long period of time, space technologies came from military innovations, but now the private industry is taking over, rolling out innovative systems more rapidly, making access to space more routine. With the progress and growth of space activity, it is increasingly important to establish adequate rules and regulations for the use of space and the electromagnetic spectrum. Besides being the domain of governments and military, space has become an integral part of the private sector, particularly telecommunications.



„The management of the overall space domain should be part of public sector responsibility „
said @aarti_holla Secretary General of @ESOA_SAT

A close dialogue between the public and private sector is required to achieve further development. The importance of the private sector lies in enhancing the understanding of the role of satellites in emerging technologies such as 5G or even 6G. Without a clear understanding of this, policymakers may find it difficult to tap the

strengths of these systems. Generally, to harness the opportunities that lie in space, the cooperation among states, industries, and international organizations must be strengthened to overcome all the potential risks that could arise from an unregulated use of the domain.



“The establishment of norms in increasingly shared space is of utmost importance. Expanding further into space, we are going to face property issues and usage rights for not just the world orbit, but the moon and the outer space.”

Paul Jaffe, Electronics Engineer, US Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, D.C.

Titans of Technology: Winning the Future of Defence

New and emerging technologies, from AI to cyber and nanotechnology, can act as a force multiplier and profoundly accelerate the speed of operation at the same time. To ensure technologies are used ethically, international regulatory frameworks need to place human responsibility at the centre of all stages, from design and development to deployment of technologies. However, to ensure that the principles are truly effective, ethical values, particularly the International Humanitarian Law, must be deeply rooted in a robust testing regime of technologies, as well as in appropriate training for the troops and commanders. Although AI can function more efficiently and rapidly, decision-making shall not be fully automated, and a rigorous chain of command should stay in place for all operations.

“Responsible use of the AI is extremely important because the limits are not that easy to define and translate into development.”

Emmanuel Bresson, Advisor for Cyber, Artificial Intelligence and Disruptive Technologies, French Ministry of Armies

With NATO’s new Innovation Development Accelerator, the Alliance, and indeed the international community, is going to be increasingly pressed to address collective and individual development, adoption, and use of technologies. Nonetheless, despite the seeming technological boom, traditional systems will not be immediately replaced with new technologies. Ensuring interoperability between all systems and technology, old and new, and addressing historical issues, especially communications, will remain the key.



“There is a long history of trying to have a professional code of ethics on how to fight within the bounds...we have to think about how we uphold these boundaries within the area of AI...all the militaries going forward have to take this as a serious commitment.”

Heather M. Roff, Senior Research Analyst, Applied Physics Laboratory, The Johns Hopkins University, Laurel

Resilience in Health

Global Perspectives on Fighting the COVID-19 Pandemic



“Lots of the politics is about the vaccine, but I am stressing testing, without testing we are blind.”

Carl Bildt, former Prime Minister of Sweden; WHO Special Envoy for the ACT-Accelerator

We have not won yet. The pandemic has brought almost all the world’s economies to their knees. Moreover, the dangerous virus took hundreds of thousands of people’s lives. The way out lies in successful vaccination campaigns and a responsible approach to anti-pandemic measures. The whole world needs more vital global institutions that have the authority and ability to work together. Discussions at the international level should focus more on concrete steps to revitalize the economy and promote technology.

 **@SumaChakrabarti:** „We really have to get vaccination up in the Global South. We do need an international scientific committee on health threats.“

Defeating the Infodemic?

Although conspiracy theories have existed for decades, today, they are mostly spread on the internet without any regulations. Vaccination campaigns have become a target of disinformation websites and fake accounts on social media.

“Belief in conspiracy theories is linked to the trust or mistrust the public has for institutions.”

Miroslava Sawiris, Research Fellow Democracy and Resilience Programme GLOBSEC Policy Institute, Bratislava.

There is a link between conspiracy theories, disinformation, and the vaccination rollout but the strength of this link varies widely across countries. The lack of trust in institutions is not created by false information, but mistrust of the government is the reason behind people believing and spreading conspiracy theories. The main goal of conspiracy theories is likely not to persuade people but to create chaos. The solution is not easy but can be found in strategic communication. It is crucial to build trust among citizens before the next crisis as it is impossible to focus on building trust during a crisis.



„We can see the perpetuation of the conspiracy theories, which are global.“ said **@MiraSawiris** at #GLOBSEC2021 discussing #infodemic.



“We need to create a demand for accurate information and ensure that accurate information is brought in a way that the audience deems trustful.”

Henry Collis, Deputy Director, National Security Communications, UK Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Office

Lessons Learned from the Pandemic: Re-designing Health Care Systems



It is worrying to see that the number of patients diagnosed with cancer is down by 40%. We are now in a position where we can restart healthcare systems as soon as possible and provide treatment for these patients. The coronavirus situation has highlighted where our healthcare systems lack and what we need to improve them.

 **H.E. Vladimír Lengvarský - Minister of Health of the Slovak Republic:** „Before the third wave we have to implement technologies that have already brought results.“

During the pandemic, a lot of diagnoses and surgeries were put on hold, while all energy and resources were focusing on finding the way out of the pandemic. In order to ensure there are incentives for people to take care of their health, healthy people need to be rewarded and benefit. This could be done by changing how medical costs are calculated. Lot of changes need to be done to ensure we are ready for infectious diseases outbreaks in future not only in reflecting on lessons learned but also in taking new actions.

“We have seen a lot of innovation during the pandemic. The pandemic gave us the opportunity to innovate in ways and at a speed which otherwise would not have been possible.”

Johanna Hanefeld, Head of the Centre for International Health Protection, Robert Koch Institute, Berlin

Cities in Lockdown

The pandemic of Covid-19 has greatly affected cities across the world. Mayors and local politicians saw their budgets disappear very quickly when lockdowns started.. Many cities throughout Europe took loans out to pay the debts they had created during the pandemic. A strong communication strategy is one of the critical elements of being ready for the next pandemic. People should have full transparency and as much information on measures and restrictions they need to follow as possible.

 **@Vit_Rakusan** „Communication; you have to focus on all different groups of people in your city, you have to find the right way to communicate with all people in your community.“

During any crisis, particular attention should be given to vulnerable groups,, particularly the elders and homeless people. Governments and cities should work together during the crisis to support people as much as possible.



“People want to go back to normal – it is our task as a municipality to be ready for similar crisis.”

Matúš Vallo, Mayor of Bratislava.



GLOBSEC 2021 Award Ceremony

JAGELLO 5000
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CZECH AND SLOVAK

General John R. Allen

President, The Brookings Institution

Transcription of the Thank you speech

Madam President, Prime Minister, Ministers, Excellencies, Generals and Admirals, Ladies and Gentlemen, And Dear Friends

Before I start, as Robert mentioned, my dear friend Robert, I have in my mind tonight the images of our troops, when we all served together on behalf of democracy. And the sacrifices that all of the countries made together. And I can never get them out of my mind during moments like this. They are precious to me and will always be.

First let me, if I may thank the selection committee, who found within themselves to make this award. Beyond the fact they've obviously got a sense of humor, I can't tell you how honored I am, that my name in any way could be associated with the great sign of democracy, Václav Havel. He is one of the great figures in living history and maybe modern history. Not just in this region, but to many of us in America, he was our hero. So, to even find my name associated at all this evening with his memory is a great honor for me.

We also hasten to add that I find myself at the end of a list, a long list of those, who have received this award. Each one for whom I have great respect. Many of whom are friends, and some of whom are dining with us here tonight. So, to be on this list with you is deeply, deeply humbling to me.

Robert said something very important about why we gathered here tonight. And it's about celebrating transatlantic relationship. I'd like to spend few minutes talking about that. For tonight in my mind is about our collective celebration of this relationship. And that which is its beating heart, democracy.

The events playing out for us these last few days, last week and this week in the G7, in England, in Brussels with NATO and the EU have given us all a reason to be optimistic. Joe Biden has come to the continent, bearing the promise of reinvigorated, reinvigorated United States. The United States that are at once embracing the values-based nature of the transatlantic relationship, which is being called in my country the essential relationship of the 21st century. And America that irrevocably supports NATO and Article V, and America that is committed to a friendship and a partnership with the EU, that will seek to restore the health, strengthen the



economies and protect the collective futures of our people. Joe Biden has said it: America is back.

In the wake of battering that we've all taken from covid, and the long list of human tragedies and national calamities, America past 600 000 dead today. We've all suffered a great deal over these last 18 months or so, but this last week, has in many respects been a soothing balm for us all. Even more though as the events of the last few days have so powerfully illustrated, we're seeing a recommitment to democracy from North America, across Europe and even to Asia.

And while this moment seems to be about reaffirmation of democracy as an institution and as a system of government. In truth it actually, more broadly is a recommitment to the idea of democracy. The idea that government derives from will of the free people, that the sanctity of human life and human rights are precious and paramount. The idea that equal rights and equal justice are inherent. The idea that free and independent press

is essential. The idea that the idea rule of law is transcendent guarantor of this sacred principle. And the idea that, if necessary, we will defend a preserve these freedoms and sustain these rights.

Dear Friends, there are powerful, sometimes seemingly overwhelming headwinds, blowing against the institution and the ideas of democracy. But sources of these winds are many, and list is too long to review this evening, but they come from social realities of often massive inequality, frustrated and unfulfilled aspirations, and the scent of despair. They come from a temp of illiberal leaders, to constrain their own democracies. And they come from direct assault of autocrats and authoritarian regimes on our own institutions and our own people. All of these forces have buffed it no just our systems of government, but they have targeted that very idea of democracy itself.

At the fall of the Soviet Union and in the heady days of the democratization of the Centre of Europe many of us believed that the arc of history, would now bend inevitably towards a values-based liberal world order. And while there was a glimmer of hope, sadly that was not to be. And indeed, the order that did emerge produced so much good on behalf of humanity. But it has been slipping and fraying and slipping badly. Especially in the last four years.

So, these last few days then can justifiably be seen as a source of optimism. But for my forty-five years of service in the U.S. military and the Department of State, I know firsthand, that liberal democracy is desperately fragile, desperately fragile. But even so, it is viewed as an existential threat by autocrats and the illiberal and the authoritarians, who oppress their own people, while seeking to disrupt our own. So, while would seem to be a moment to celebrate, to celebrate to triumph of democracy in the transatlantic context, the very fragility of democracy and all that it's stands for demands two things of us, two things: vigilance and resistance.

Vigilance in our nurturing of this precious human condition, constantly. This thing called democracy, and our constant and unrelenting resistance to the forces, that would deny our people the values-based democracy they deserve.

Now for me as an American, it's clear no democracy is truly secure. For the events of 1.6 in 2020 in Lafayette Square, outside the White House and later on 6.1 2021 at the US Capitol Building, these were clear illustrations, that the very idea of democracy, even in the oldest, most settled of democratic governance is tenuous and may even be ephemeral.

Which brings me back to this evening and the Transatlantic Award and why we have gathered at this moment and why we have gathered here. For while this award may serve as a form of recognition, and I am so deeply honored and grateful to receive it, for me though, it is moment for my personal recommitment to the idea of democracy. To the institutions of the democratic government that emerge from, by and for the people. And to be ever vigilant in the preservation of our collective human rights and to resist those forces that would deny them. Whether here in central Europe, or on the steps of the U.S. Capitol Boulding in the Washington D.C.

And I don't need to tell the people in this room what happens when good people do nothing in the face of evil. If we are ever to truly want to Build the World Back Better, the theme of this conference, it has to begin with us, it has to be nurtured by us, but it must be founded on the strengths of our democracies.

So let me close by thanking GLOBSEC and Robert Vass and his wonderful team, not just for this award, or even for tonight or this conference. But for being one of those forces pushing back against those headwinds. Not just here in central Europe, GLOBSEC is a global entity, pushing back against those headwinds that are sailing our democracies and our very way of life. And I know personally how challenging it has been for this organization, to persevere in this arena. And it is why my own Institution, Brookings Institution is proud and honored to partner with GLOBSEC, as yet another manifestation of the transatlantic relationship.

This was clear to me from the first time I attended a GLOBSEC in 2014. The vibrance of the organization, the boldness and the audacity of the conference agenda. But most of all, the incredible optimism of the Slovak and other central European youth that staffed it. It made it clear when you look into their eyes, that here was an expectation of freedom, here was the future of the democracy looking back.

These young people, these young women and men freed from living a memory of the experience of crushing soviet and autocratic authoritarianism, their blue-sky optimism was truly admirable, and it seemed right, and it seemed proper for us to become allies. So that they could achieve the full potential of our democracies. So, when I became the president of Brookings, Robert and I decided to make it official.

So, with that Ladies and Gentlemen, and my thanks to GLOBSEC and for this wonderful award, I thank you for your patience and I wish you a good night.

Václav Havel (in memoriam)

Thank you speech presented by Michael Žantovský, Executive Director, Václav Havel Library, Prague



Thank you Rasťo, thank you GLOBSEC, thank you Jagello, thank you all on behalf of Václav Havel.

Prime Minister, ministers, ladies and gentlemen,

it is a somewhat humbling task to stand in front of this August audience and receive a prize that belongs to someone else. But if that someone else is Václav Havel, it is also an honour. Even more so in the knowledge that this is one prize that the two of us share.

At first, I was thinking of recounting for you the enormous legacy of Havel, the playwright, thinker, prisoner of conscience and statesman, but I'm confident that his contributions to freedom, democracy, human rights, European integration and the Euro-Atlantic bond, many of which were mentioned by Ambassador Káčer, are well known

and do not need extolling. So rather than speak of his greatness, which might make him a little uneasy if he is listening to us somewhere, I thought I would let him speak for himself.

And I quote: "Human freedom, human rights, democratic political system, free market economy and human responsibility, rooted in the awareness that the miracle of this world and of human existence, is not just a matter of coincidence, but the work of a creator." This summary in 45 words delivered at the unveiling of a statue to Tomas Garrigue Masaryk in Washington on the 19th of September 2002, says, in my mind, more about the spirit of the Euro-Atlantic civilization and the trans-Atlantic relationship than volumes of political treatises and statistical data.

Next, the words that earned Havel 17 standing ovations from the joint session of the US Congress on the 21st of February 1990: "The salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human meekness and in human responsibility. Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being as humans and the catastrophe, toward which this world is headed, be it ecological, social, demographic or a general breakdown of civilization, will be unavoidable. In other words, we still don't know how to put morality ahead of politics, science and economics. We are still incapable of understanding that the only genuine backbone of all our actions, if they are to be moral, is responsibility." Never have those words rang more true than at this moment of a crisis of confidence and uncertain prospects that the pandemic bestowed upon us.

And perhaps as an antidote to hopelessness and despair, Havel's acceptance speech for the Erasmus of Rotterdam prize, another occasion on which he was notably absent because the communist government would not allow him to travel on the 13th of November 1986: "All of us can, despite the harsh political reality, despite the many limitations given by human nature and by the spiritual moral and social state of contemporary civilization, give voice to our ideals and endeavour to put them into practice. All of us can make some personal sacrifice for the sake of these ideals.

We all can accept that peculiar logical and yet somewhat mysterious imperative, which says that man ought to act the way he thinks that everyone should act like this. In short, each and every one of us can come to realize that he or she, no matter how insignificant or helpless they may feel, is in a position to change the world. We all have to start with ourselves. If we wait for someone else, none of us will ever see any change. Even the most powerless among us has his own willpower and at the same time, this is perhaps the only thing no one can take away from us. Whoever applies it may achieve something. If he doesn't even try, it is quite certain that he will achieve nothing." In the letter and the spirit of his speech, Havel alludes to the book by Erasmus of Rotterdam "In Praise of Folly". Among all the wonderful ideas that Havel left us, the praise of folly as a testimony to human spirit may be the most original and the most permanent.

And, finally, a thought from Havel's acceptance speech of the Sonning Prize in Copenhagen on the 28th of May 1991, which I think makes him a shining model, if difficult to match, to all present and future politicians: "Being in power makes me permanently suspicious of myself."

I will leave you on that note, thank you.



2021 Policy Initiatives and Reports



GLOBSEC Disruptive Tech Trends in CEE: A Snapshot

A new GLOBSEC report '[Disruptive Tech Trends in CEE: A Snapshot](#)' is an appetizer to the course of work that will be pursued over the next several months as part of GLOBSEC's Digital Valley in CEE Initiative, which will explore how the CEE region can take advantage of the global tech trends but also transform from a trend follower into a trendsetter.



GLOBSEC Trends 2021: Central and Eastern Europe one year into the pandemic

For the sixth year in a row, we are introducing our flagship report – [GLOBSEC Trends 2021](#) – providing insight into the minds of Central and Eastern Europeans by offering answers to some pressing questions and much more. While the willingness of people to get vaccinated has increased, some COVID-19 conspiracy theories still persist. Acceptance of the narrative asserting that public authorities are overestimating the number of COVID-19 cases amounts to at least 20% of the population in every surveyed country.



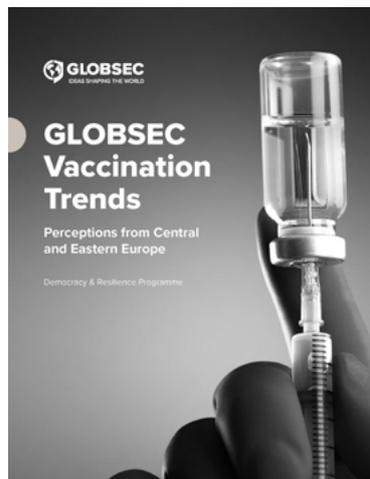
The EU Strategic Autonomy: Central and Eastern European Perspective

[This paper](#) explores ongoing debates about strategic autonomy transpiring in CEE in several areas, including defence, trade, and digital. Furthermore, it looks to ground EU foreign policy ambitions in shaping a “stronger West” as a response to intensifying confrontation between China and the United States. The report, which is a joint endeavour of the Atlantic Council and GLOBSEC, brings together contributions from nine distinguished practitioners, experts, and policymakers from the region.



From Contestation to Buy-In: the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy as seen from European Capitals

Though the European Union (EU) is a global actor in areas like trade and climate, the bloc has struggled to develop a coherent common foreign and security policy (CFSP). The EU external action is rather often plagued by institutional inefficiencies and a lack of a shared strategy. Recognizing these shortcomings, member states have lobbied the EU to become a more responsive and coherent actor and to acquire a more prominent international role.



GLOBSEC Vaccination Trends: Perceptions from Central & Eastern Europe

Though survey data from October 2020 pointed to concerns regarding the vaccination campaign, the new GLOBSEC Vaccination Trends report based on public opinion poll surveys indicates an improved outlook on the vaccine take up. The report finds that Central Europe is now on the path towards administering vaccines to around 60-70% of the population.



CEEHer Report: Absent Voices: Missing Female Perspective in CEE

The Report on Absent Voices: Missing Female Perspectives in CEE, produced by GLOBSEC with the support of the Open Society Foundation, aims to shed light on the level of gender equality and female participation in the public and private sectors in Central Europe and advances a series of recommendations for the creation of a more inclusive and equitable landscape.



The Time for EU's Common Foreign Policy is Now

In this report, sixteen distinguished practitioners, experts and policymakers analyse what Europe's foreign policy priorities should be in 2021 and what the EU should do to bolster its strategic ambitions.



Fighting Disinformation While Safeguarding Human Rights: Key Recommendations

The Alliance for Healthy Infosphere has come together to contribute to the UN OHCHR Special Rapporteur's paper on disinformation and human rights, that will be presented before the 47th Human Rights Council in June 2021. Alliance for Healthy Infosphere advocates for a healthier information environment for all, while preserving democratic principles and human rights, one of the most important of them being the right to free speech.



One Step Closer: Towards Deeper and Wider EU Defence Partnerships

The closest partners of the EU, including Norway, the UK and the US, generally support the expansion of European competencies in areas of security and defence. It is important, nonetheless, for EU partners to ensure that the developments pose no negative repercussions for their own defence and security relations with the bloc. Exclusion of third parties could, in fact, be detrimental to all, resulting in suboptimal outcomes.

Partners

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*This event receives financial support from the European Parliament. Sole liability rests with the organisers, the European Parliament is not responsible for the activity.

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Vajnorská 100/B
831 04 Bratislava
Slovak Republic

+421 2 3213 7800
info@globsec.org
www.globsec.org