

# In about a hundred words on Europe Day

**As Russia's war against Ukraine spills into another year, this year's celebration of Europe Day will be underscored by conflict on the European continent and more broader geopolitical distress. While threats manifest externally, a burgeoning set of pressing policy issues inside the EU presents an equally difficult exercise for Brussels and its members to overcome.**

**While the members of the EU hold a wide and diverse view of various policy issues, they are bound together by shared values and a common goal to make the European project a thriving force for good. As the continent copes with an assortment of challenges GLOBSEC asks experts from Italy, Ireland, Germany and Bulgaria; *What needs to be done to further strengthen internal cohesion and resiliency against geopolitical shocks?***



**Dr. Nathalie Tocci**

Director Istituto Affari Internazionali;  
Honorary Professor, University of Tübingen

Achieving unity, cohesion and resilience are the perennial questions bedeviling the European project and the EU's role in the world. There is only so much that strategies and plans can do to that effect. There is nothing more effective than joined action, even when interests and positions partly diverge. The story of the last year points in this direction when, faced with an external shock, the EU acted together, be it in terms of energy, providing military assistance, protecting refugees or reviving enlargement. The main challenge and goal is finding the internal resources and will to act not only when the EU is on the verge of collapse or faced with an existential external threat but out of a shared conviction that it can and should shape its own destiny.



**Mag. Sebastian SCHÄFFER, MA**

Managing Director, Institute for the Danube Region  
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We need more supra-nationalisation and, at the same time, more regionalisation. Single member states should not be able to block further progress, especially in external relations – be it security, sanctions or enlargement. Therefore, I very much welcome the group of friends committed to making greater use of qualified majority voting in the EU. Even more, cross-border cooperation between regions rather than fragmented national responses is key for cohesion. We also need a more inclusive approach to the future of Europe. Old and new, Western and Eastern, as well as members and (potential) candidates, need to work on a common vision.



**Noelle O Connell**

CEO, European Movement Ireland

To strengthen internal cohesion and resiliency against geopolitical shocks, the EU needs to focus on three key areas: communication, solidarity, and reform. Firstly, there needs to be better communication and understanding among member states, with efforts to build bridges, promote dialogue and share best practice. Secondly, the EU needs to further promote solidarity, learning lessons from our response to the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, as well as through greater cooperation on shared challenges like climate change. Finally, the EU needs to continue reform efforts, with a focus on improving democratic engagement and increasing transparency. By working together on these fronts, the EU can build a more cohesive and resilient community, capable of weathering any challenge and working for all its citizens.



**Vladislava Gubalova**

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The unified, quick and meaningful reaction of the EU and its Member States to the Russian aggression against Ukraine has shown in practice that the European project is built on solid grounds. Keeping the momentum should be a priority for institutions, governments and citizens. This would mean using all available legal instruments while exploring creative solutions to incoming shocks-breaking the taboos. Simultaneously, political will, leadership and responsibility should be encouraged and fostered with the EU's best interest in mind. And citizens should have consistent opportunities to impact policies through participating in multi-level but approachable formats.