



High-Level Roundtable Discussion on: Resilience: How to better protect, prepare and transform the European Union?

31 July 2020, 15h00-17h00 [Via Webex, see attached file for connection details]

Purpose and Scope

This roundtable is convened in the run-up to **President von der Leyen's first State of the Union address** in September 2020, and against the background of ongoing negotiations for the EU's next MFF and the Recovery Fund. The roundtable gathers a small number of selected thought leaders with a **two-fold objective**. First, to contribute their insights on the **State of the Union** in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic; and second to solicit **concrete ideas** on how to strengthen EU's resilience to ensure effective recovery, encourage the required transformation and reinforce solidarity through the Commission's work ahead.

The EU is currently facing unprecedented challenges. Member State governments are under stress to safeguard jobs, livelihoods and entire sectors of their economies, while facing unprecedented pressure on their healthcare systems and institutions. Policymakers and academics are increasingly looking at 'resilience' as a **holistic conceptual, analytical and policy framework** to synthesise insights from across disciplines.

For the purposes of our roundtable discussion, we understand '**resilience**' as the capacity to withstand and cope with shocks, and to undergo the required transformations in a fair, sustainable and cohesive manner. Resilience is in this sense what it takes for a society/economy both to recover from the COVID-shock and to achieve the twin transitions (green and digital). It has been argued that 'resilience' is needed for the EU to 'bounce forward' and swiftly recover and emerge stronger from the current and future crises, by accelerating its transitions, minimising damage and relieving suffering from crises through adaptation and transformation.

Questions that we would like to discuss include:

- Is '**resilience**' in your view a concept to offer a positive narrative and policy frame to pursue economic recovery, environmental sustainability, digital transformation and foreign policy?
- What is your assessment of the **effectiveness of EU action** so far, in engaging on that challenging path?
- Which **initiative** do you recommend for the Commission to take in 2021, in order to nurture EU resilience and put the EU firmly on the track of a transition-led recovery?

The meeting will be held under Chatham House rule to facilitate an open and frank debate.

Session Structure

Participants are kindly requested to connect 10 minutes prior to the start of the meeting (at 14h50) to check that video and audio connections are functioning and to ensure a prompt start of the meeting.

- 14h50 Participants are connecting to Webex
- 15h00-15h05 Welcome by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] I.D.E.A., European Commission
- 15h05-15h20 Introductory remarks by **Björn Seibert**, Head of Cabinet of the President of the European Commission
- 15h20-16h00 Initial remarks by speakers (*5 minutes each, in alphabetical order*)
- [REDACTED] Policy Director, European Round Table for Industry.
 - [REDACTED] Club of Rome, [REDACTED] Expert Group on Economic and Societal Impact of Research & Innovation (ESIR), [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED] Rome University 'Tor Vergata' and former Italian Minister of Labour and Social Policies.
 - [REDACTED] Centre for Liberal Strategies, Sofia, and a [REDACTED] Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna.
 - [REDACTED] Club of Rome and [REDACTED] Collective Leadership Institute.
 - [REDACTED] Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute and [REDACTED] Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences.
 - [REDACTED] The Pandemic Action Network.
 - [REDACTED] Bruegel.
- 16h00-16h50 Interactive discussion moderated by [REDACTED]
- 16h50-16h55 Concluding remarks by **Björn Seibert**, Head of Cabinet of the President of the European Commission.
- 16h55-17h00 Concluding remarks by [REDACTED]