

## The 'Leadership Club' in Luxembourg: challenges for the EU in 2030

**For only the third time since the Leadership Club started up in early 2008, the European School of Administration arranged an event in Luxembourg at the end of November. A group of about 30, including Directors-General, Directors and Heads of Unit, met for a thought-provoking presentation and debate led by Daniel Keohane on the theme of what the world might look like in 2030 and the implications for the European Union.**

Daniel is the Head of Strategic Affairs at the Foundation for International Relations (FRIDE) a think-tank that has worked with many organisations including a number of the European institutions. There were so many fascinating projections that it is not possible to list them all but here are some of the most striking images of 2030:

- 8,3 billion people of which 5 billion will belong to what can be termed the "middle class". 60% of them will live in cities;
- A significant increase in South-South trade with new patterns of inter-dependence and new power balances;
- A shift East in terms of military capacity, science and innovation. Non-OECD countries will account for over half of global GDP;
- Continuing pressure on resources, including the most basic of all water, which will increase instability and may lead to further massive migration;
- Increasing dependence on fast-developing technologies which will reduce state control over the means to produce violence;

In a nutshell, the world will be a less stable, more fragile place.

As for the EU, the speaker believes it will be neither federal nor a superpower. It is imperative for it to develop strategies to become a "super-partner" taking advantage of its unique experience of managing rules-based integration. This would mean fostering a broader and more flexible diplomatic approach – covering a wide range of issues from trade and resource-management to climate, energy and security – based on cooperative rather than coercive power. It would also mean ensuring consistency between different levels of engagement (bilateral partnerships, coalitions, inter-regional groupings) in pursuing the EU's strategic goals.

The EU's ability to act autonomously where necessary and its agility to partner where possible will be equally important in determining its influence in its neighbourhood and beyond. In a polycentric world, the EU and the US have a strong mutual interest in fostering a strategic partnership. Concurrently, it will be important for the EU to invest in deeper partnerships with a range of global and regional actors that will be major players in international affairs by 2030, such as China, India, Brazil and Japan, as well as key neighbours Turkey and Russia.

The liveliness of the debate confirmed the enormous interest in the subject, the most sobering thought perhaps being how much of it will turn out to be true and how many unexpected twists and turns are waiting round the corner.

Thanks go to the Court of Auditors who generously put one of their brand-new training rooms at our disposal for the event.

Find out more in [this report](#).

**David Walker,**  
**Director of the European School of Administration**