

Integrating Diversity in the European Union



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On 24 November 2021 the Estonian Foreign Policy Institute (EFPI) at the International Centre for Defence and Security (ICDS) and the Trans European Policy Studies Association (TEPSA) co-organised a roundtable on the future of Europe and differentiated integration with researchers from the European University Institute (EUI), members of the European Affairs Committee of the Estonian Parliament and researchers of EFPI and the University of Tartu.

The meeting was held in the framework of the Horizon 2020 funded research project Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU), aimed at contributing to the current debate on the Future of Europe by assessing, developing and testing a range of models and scenarios for different levels of integration among the EU member states.

The findings of the project were presented by **Paolo Chiocchetti** and **Stefan Telle** from the EUI. Members of the Riigikogu as well as other participants provided their comments and discussed the presentations.

Some key points from the discussion:

- The future of Europe can be envisaged with four broad alternative scenarios: (1) the EU being unified in future integration, (2) proceeding with different levels of integration among the member states, (3) having a uniform disintegration or finally (4) having a differentiated disintegration.
- Member states are in constant search for the right balance between the Community method and intergovernmental method. Sharing national sovereignty is needed for more influence in Europe and at the global level, so that the EU can become a stronger global player next to the US and China.
- Due to different positions of member states a key choice to be made is whether the EU wants to proceed with deeper but less inclusive integration or with inclusive but shallower integration. Looking at big member states, France has rather been in favour of the former and Germany of the latter option.
- Estonia's position has been in favour of a unified EU, but to the extent there is differentiated integration, it has aimed to be part of the 'core'.
- There cannot be any differentiation regarding the EU's core values, including the rule of law.