



Council of the European Union
General Secretariat

READING REFERENCES

Council Library

2020

Multilateralism



Introduction

The UN is marking its 75th anniversary at a time of great disruption for the world, compounded by an unprecedented global health crisis. A high-level meeting at the opening of the [75th session of the UN General Assembly](#) will take place on 21 September 2020. The theme for this event will be 'The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism'.

In July the Council adopted its [conclusions](#) setting out the EU's priorities at the 75th General Assembly of the United Nations under the theme 'Championing multilateralism and a strong and effective UN that delivers for all'.

To mark the anniversary, the Council Library has compiled a reading list covering the EU's approach to multilateralism, recent threats to the multilateral system including the COVID-19 pandemic, some recommendations for modernising and revitalising the multilateral system, and a focus on China.

Please note:

This bibliography is not exhaustive; it provides a selection of resources made by the Council Library.

Titles are hyperlinks to full text, either via the online catalogue [Eureka](#) or on publishers' platforms. Chrome browser is recommended. Access to some resources might be limited to registered Council Library users or to users in subscribing institutions.

The contents are the sole responsibility of their authors. Resources linked from this bibliography do not necessarily represent the positions, policies, or opinions of the Council of the European Union or the European Council.

Additional resources may be added to this list by request - please contact the Council Library to suggest a title: library@consilium.europa.eu

Table of contents

1.	AN OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF MULTILATERALISM	3
2.	ELEMENTS ON THE EU'S APPROACH TO MULTILATERALISM	5
3.	CHALLENGES TO THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM INCLUDING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	11
4.	RECOMMENDATIONS TO MODERNISE AND REVITALISE THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM.....	15
5.	SUCCESS OF MULTILATERALISM	20
6.	SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS ON MULTILATERALISM	22
7.	CHINA'S APPROACH TO MULTILATERALISM	24

1. An overview of the history of multilateralism

The past and future of multilateralism

In: The challenges of multilateralism, pp 245-264

Kathryn C. Lavelle
Yale University Press, 2020

[Online access](#)

Multilateralism has long been a study of contrasts. Nationalist impulses, diverging and shifting goals, and a lack of enforcement methods have plagued the international organizations that facilitate multilateralism. Yet the desire to seek peace, reduce poverty, and promote the global health of people and the planet pushes states to work together. These challenges, across time and the globe, have brought about striking, yet diverging, results. Here, Kathryn Lavelle offers a history of multilateralism from its origins in the nineteenth century to the present. Lavelle focuses on the creation and evolution of major problem-solving organizations, examines the governmental challenges they have confronted and continue to face from both domestic and transnational constituencies, and considers how non-governmental organizations facilitate their work.

The United Nations: before, during and after 1945

Thomas G. Weiss

In: The United Nations at 70, Special Issue, International Affairs, v. 91, n. 6, 2015, p.: 1221-1235.

[Online access](#)

The wartime commitments to defeating fascism and multilateralism made the establishment of the world organization a logical outgrowth of the wartime origins and the best guarantee of peace and prosperity. Ironically, the ideals of Immanuel Kant were found to be essential to the Hobbesian objective of state survival; multilateralism was a powerful strategy and not merely liberal window-dressing. That historical backdrop is complemented by two largely invisible variables from that time—the role of ideas and of non-state actors—which have since been driving change in the world organization. A future research agenda suggests ways to lift the UN from its current doldrums. Many of the debates and operational activities in the United Nations beginning in the 1970s reflected two topics—interdependence and the proliferation of actors—which profoundly affected what, since the 1990s, we have come to call ‘global governance’. On the positive side, these preoccupations helped us move towards a better understanding of a very complex world. On the downside, they also tend to celebrate unduly the ability of non-state actors and ignore the crucial role of intergovernmental organizations.

Evolving International organizations: the UN past and present

In: A United Nations renaissance: what the UN is, and what it could be

John Trent and Laura Schnurr

Opladen; Berlin; Toronto: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2018

[Online access](#)

The United Nations is not the first but the third in a series of international organizations that date back to 1815. This chapter gives some historical context to the establishment and workings of the United Nations as it is today.

Dialectics of a global constitution : the struggle over the UN Charter

Michael W. Doyle

European Journal of International Relations, 2012-12, Vol. 18(4), pp. 601-624

[Online access](#)

As a decentralized legal order, the international system arguably has no single constitution, but the closest candidate to a constitution that it does have is the UN Charter. Thus it is worth exploring how constitutional the Charter is in theory and practice. Sixty-plus years into its evolution we can see two dominant features. First, its key constitutional elements are: supranationality in its various forms; inequality; and, like all constitutions, an 'invitation to struggle' that leads to inevitable pushback from states when UN authority expands. Second, unlike in many domestic constitutions, the pushback more than holds its own. The UN has neither integrated its parts nor centralized authority.

L'assemblée générale des Nations unies : Une institution politique mondiale

Guillaume Devin, Franck Petiteville, Simon Tordjman

Presses de Sciences Po, 2020

[Available soon](#)

Seul forum où tous les pays sont représentés sur un pied d'égalité, l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies est le centre politique du multilatéralisme et le creuset où se forment les références communes de notre planète. Cette institution politique mondiale méritait bien un premier ouvrage de référence en langue française. Souvent éclipsée par le Conseil de sécurité, volontiers taxée de « bavarde », l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies n'est pourtant pas qu'une scène où viennent se produire, le temps d'un discours, les dirigeants mondiaux. Épicentre d'intenses négociations diplomatiques depuis plus de soixante-quinze ans, elle fait entendre sa voix sur le droit des peuples à disposer d'eux-mêmes, les droits humains, la sécurité, le développement, l'environnement... Au cœur de l'architecture onusienne dont elle irrigue les institutions, seul forum où tous les pays sont représentés sur un pied d'égalité, l'Assemblée est le centre politique du multilatéralisme et le creuset où se forment les références communes de notre planète.

2. Elements on the EU's approach to multilateralism

- **Council conclusions for the 75th General Assembly of the United Nations**

Council conclusions on EU priorities at the United Nations and the 75th United Nations General Assembly, September 2020 – September 2021

The Council adopted conclusions on July 13, 2020. The conclusions set out the EU's priorities at the 75th General Assembly of the United Nations, under the theme "Championing multilateralism and a strong and effective UN that delivers for all".

In its conclusions, the Council stresses that, as demonstrated by the outbreak of COVID-19, multilateral cooperation is more necessary than ever. Therefore, the rules-based international order – with the UN at its core – must be upheld and international solidarity and cooperation strengthened.

For the 75th UNGA, the EU will focus on key priorities such as human rights and gender equality, promoting peace and security, building a fair globalisation, accelerating the global transition towards sustainable and climate-neutral future, and leading the transition to a new digital world. Preserving the humanitarian space and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles will remain equally important for the EU."

- **Studies and policy papers**

Strong Europe, better world: defending global cooperation, multilateralism and democracy in turbulent times

European Political Strategy Center

Luxembourg: Publications Office , 2019

[Online access](#)

In a world in flux, Europe has become the standardbearer for global cooperation, multilateralism and democracy. This is because working together in a spirit of solution and compromise lies at the heart of the European project. While 'giving in' is now often portrayed as a weakness, finding – and accepting – the 'common denominator' between varying interests is the European Union's tried and tested way of policymaking. As some call for 'Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution', it is obvious that the foundation of this new architecture cannot be solid if every country puts its own interests first in a winner-takes-all fashion; if basic freedoms and human dignity are compromised; and if mainstay stakeholders for vibrant communities – whether the independent media, civil society or empowered women and minorities – are sidelined or even actively undermined. Almost three decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain, it is a sad reality that the world has now seen its twelfth consecutive year of decline in global freedoms and democracy. It is palpable that we are on the cusp of a new era – one that has the prospect of undermining more than seventy years of progress and relative peace. As democracy comes under growing pressure, a wrong turn could prove impossible to

reverse in an age of strongman politics that strives to undermine the rule of law, accountability and political choice.

Three crises and an opportunity : Europe's stake in multilateralism

Richard Gowan ; Anthony Dworkin ; European Council on Foreign Relations.

2019

[Online access](#)

This report discusses how the multilateral system faces three connected crises. The first is a crisis of power; the second is a crisis of relevance; the third is a crisis of legitimacy. The paper's focus areas offer immediate opportunities for the EU to strengthen its multilateral networks at a time when the international system is fragmenting.

The EU and multilateralism in an age of Great Powers

Sven Biscop

Egmont, 2018

[Online access](#)

Try to imagine a major issue in world politics today that could be settled (whether peacefully or forcefully) by a single power: one cannot. It's the interplay between at least four poles that determines the course of world politics: the United States (US), China, Russia, and, if it wants to, the European Union (EU). Thus we are living in a multipolar world. We might see other actors rising in the future, but these definitely are the great powers of the first half of the 21st century: one is the established power, one is emerging, one is declining, and one is in the making.

The future of multilateralism: crisis or opportunity?

Elena Lazarou

Brussels : European Parliament, May 2017

[Online access](#)

Multilateralism lies at the core of the EU's identity and of its engagement with the world. Both the 2003 European Security Strategy and the 2016 Global Strategy emphasised the importance of a rules-based global order with multilateralism as its key principle and the United Nations (UN) at its core, and made its promotion part of the EU's strategic goals. Yet, in spite of widespread acknowledgement of the achievements of the multilateral international order established after the Second World War, and in particular of the attainment of long-lasting peace, multilateral institutions and the liberal international order in which they are embedded have recently been the subject of severe criticism. The rise of populist nationalism has been interpreted, among other things, as a crisis in support for the multilateral order. Some of the causes of this crisis are related to the emergence of new actors in the global scene, the expansive nature of multilateral institutions, the widening gap between publics and international institutions and the decline of American power. The election of Donald Trump, who had repeatedly questioned the value of multilateral organisations such as the UN, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), has led to even greater preoccupation about the future of global governance. In this scenario, several scholars suggest that the EU and the

G20 should be proactive in safeguarding multilateralism, while acknowledging and promoting the necessary reforms to the architecture of global governance.

The European Union's changing approach towards multilateralism

Sebastian Forsch ; College of Europe. 2017

[Online access](#)

This paper analyses in how far the 2016 EU Global Strategy (EUGS) has changed the EU's approach towards multilateralism compared to the approach under its predecessor, the 2003 European Security Strategy (ESS).

The European Union in the United Nations: an effective external actor?

Diana Panke

Journal of European Public Policy, 2014, Vol.21 (7), p.1050-1066

[Online access](#)

Although the EU has become an increasingly prominent actor on the international stage, only EU member states and not the EU itself formally enjoy full membership in most international organizations. In the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the EU only has observer status and its formal autonomy and authority are limited. On this basis one might expect that it lacks cohesiveness to turn into an effective external actor in UNGA negotiations. Nevertheless, the member states often develop common negotiation stances for UNGA resolutions. The paper argues that having a common position is essential, but not sufficient for the EU to turn into an effective external actor in international negotiations. In order to exert influence over UNGA resolutions the EU needs to adopt tied-hands strategies if EU member states' votes are crucial, or unbiased argumentative strategies in situations where passing resolutions do not require the support of EU members.

The EU global strategy : going beyond effective multilateralism?

Balazs Ujvari ; Sven Biscop ; Beatrice Berton ; Alice Ekman ; Juliane Schmidt ; Joren Selleslaghs ; Gerald Stang ; Luk Van Langenhove ; European Policy Centre. ; Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations.

2016

[Online access](#)

The ongoing consultation process on the EUGS presents an occasion for the EU to redress the European Security Strategy's shortcomings and update its stance on multilateralism. This collection of six essays tries to answer to the question: Over a five year horizon, what do you think should be the focus of the EU's multilateral agenda? The answers dwell on the EU playing a proactive role in relation to emerging powers especially China, and Latin America as a whole; furthering the EU's soft power through 'science diplomacy'; and EU leadership in building a global energy and climate community, and counter terrorism measures.

- **Books**

Multilateralism in the 21st century : Europe's quest for effectiveness

Caroline Bouchard ; John Peterson ; Nathalie Tocci

Abingdon : Routledge, 2013

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(100445\)](#)

This volume focuses on multilateralism in the 21st century and examines how, and how effectively, the EU delivers on its commitment to effective multilateralism. Presenting results generated by MERCURY, an EU research programme into multilateralism, this book addresses a central research question: does the EU deliver on its commitment to effective multilateralism ?

Research handbook on the European Union and international organizations

Ramses A. Wessel; Jed Odermatt (editors)

Northampton : Edward Elgar Publishing , 2019

[Online access](#)

Over the years, the European Union has developed relationships with other international institutions, mainly as a result of its increasingly active role as a global actor and the transfer of competences from the Member States to the EU. This book presents a comprehensive and critical assessment of the EU's engagement with other international institutions, examining both the EU's representation and cooperation as well as the influence of these bodies on the development of EU law and policy.

EU policy responses to a shifting multilateral system

Esther Barbé ; Oriol Costa ; Robert Kissack

London : Palgrave Macmillan , 2016

[Available at Council Library Main Collection \(104069 \)](#)

This book explores how the EU, as an international actor, is adapting to recent transformations in the multilateral system. The international identity of the European Union is built upon its support for effective multilateralism and its commitment to core norms and values. Until recently, there was no need to choose between these goals. Emerging powers in the international system are not only demanding more power in multilateral institutions, but also sometimes seeking to influence their purpose and function, away from those championed by the EU. This presents a dilemma for EU foreign policy - framed in this edited volume as either accommodating changes in order to support multilateral institutions or entrenching the EU position in order to uphold values. Using a common analytical framework, the chapters include case studies on important multilateral institutions such as the United Nations Security Council, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the International Criminal Court, as well as key policy areas such as energy, climate change, nuclear non-proliferation, and human rights.

Global politics and EU trade policy facing the challenges to a multilateral approach

Wolfgang Weiss ; Cornelia Furculita
Cham : Springer , 2020

[Online access](#)

This book explores how the European Union designs its trade policy to face the most recent challenges and to influence global policy issues. It provides with an interdisciplinary perspective, by combining legal, political, and economic approaches. It studies a broad set of trade instruments that are used by the EU in its trade policy, such as: trade agreements, multilateral initiatives, unilateral trade policies, as well as, internal market tools. Therefore, the contributions to this volume present the EU's Trade Policy through different lenses providing a complex view of it.

The EU and effective multilateralism : internal and external reform practices

Edith Drieskens ; Louise G. van Schaik
Abingdon : Routledge, 2014

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(100545\)](#)

This book investigates the extent to which the EU has defined and operationalised the notion of effective multilateralism. Reform has dominated the agenda of the EU in recent years with the adoption and implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. However, various international organisations have also been in reform mode in an attempt to adjust their structure to the changing polarity and counter criticisms about a lack of legitimacy, accountability and effectiveness. The EU and Effective Multilateralism examines the EU's intention to make multilateral settings more effective, as formulated by the European Security Strategy in December 2003. Firmly grounded in new empirical research, it provides a balanced account of the fit between internal reform (the institutional reform within the EU, notably following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty) and external reform (the institutional reform of the international reform in which the EU operates).

The European Union and emerging powers in the 21st century : how Europe can shape a new global order

Thomas Renard ; Sven Biscop
Farnham : Ashgate, 2012

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(097588\)](#)

The emergence of new powers fundamentally questions the traditional views on international relations, multilateralism or security as a range of countries now competes for regional and global leadership – economically, politically, technologically and militarily. As the focus of international attention shifts from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the European states in particular are seen to lose influence relative to the emerging economic powerhouses of China, Russia, India and Brazil. European nations find themselves too small to engage meaningfully with these continent-sized powers and, in an increasingly multipolar world are concerned their influence can only continue to decline. This book

analyses the shifts in the structure of global power and examines the threats and opportunities they bring to Europe.

The European Union and multilateral governance : assessing EU participation in United Nations human rights and environmental fora

Jan Wouters ; Hans Bruyninckx ; Sudeshna Basu ; Simon Schunz

Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2012

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(102597\)](#)

An interdisciplinary approach to the study of the EU in UN human rights and environmental governance which addresses the legal and political science dimensions. With contributions from academics and policy-makers, this volume is a comprehensive analysis of how the challenges it faces impact on the EU's position in UN fora.

The European Union at the United Nations : the functioning and coherence of EU external representation in a state-centric environment

Maximilian B. Rasch

Leiden : Martinus Nijhoff, 2008

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(088353\)](#)

This book examines the implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) regime at the United Nations (UN) in New York. It assesses the functioning and quality of the coordination and representation of EU Member States' national interests and EU policy aims in the most important international organization.

Pursuing effective multilateralism : the European Union, international organisations and the politics of decision making

Robert Kissack

London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2010

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(093586\)](#)

[Online access at SpringerLink](#)

Does EU participation in the multilateral system lead to the goal of effective multilateralism? This book examines 8 multilateral organizations, showing how EU policies harm the organizations they mean to help. The multilateral system is too heterogeneous for a one-size-fits-all approach; we must understand multilateralism working in practice.

The European Union at the United Nations : intersecting multilateralisms

Katie Verlin Laatikainen ; Karen E Smith

Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2006

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(082633\)](#)

This book examines in-depth the EU's relationship with the UN and analyzes critically the EU's contribution to 'effective multilateralism'. The contributors show that the EU most often fails to make the UN as effective as it should be in addressing global challenges.

The United Nations and the European Union : an ever stronger partnership

Jan Wouters ; Frank Hoffmeister ; Tom Ruys

The Hague : T.M.C. Asser Press, 2006

Available at Council Library - Main Collection (088309)

This book provides a comprehensive overview of EU-UN cooperation, identifying the role of the various actors involved in the decision-making process and its influence in areas stretching from environmental protection to human rights, crisis management, public health and the protection of refugees.

3. Challenges to the multilateral system including the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 global inflection point and Europe's predicament

Nathalie Tocci; Asia Europe Journal, 2020

[Online access](#)

A post-COVID-19 leaderless world could trigger a further weakening of the rules-based multilateral system, already debilitated by nationalism, protectionism, and a move towards a US-China decoupling. This crisis could fuel demands for economic autarky, driving scepticism for interdependence, cooperation, and openness. And as trade protectionism becomes engrained and the incentives to protect the shared gains from global economic integration dwindle, the twentieth century global economic governance system could quickly atrophy.

The rules-based multilateral order : a rethink is needed

Pádraig Murphy ; Institute of International and European Affairs. 2020

[Online access](#)

The rules-based multilateral order with which we are familiar is essentially a Western one, which has been added to and amended since the end of World War II. In the last 75 years, technological development has made the world an ever more single space. The dynamics of world organisation have changed with the emergence of more than one hundred new states, the inexorable rise of China and the increasing impact of civil society and of corporations on world affairs. New challenges, climatic, social and technological, have arisen. The established system needs to be rethought.

'Geopolitics in a post-pandemic world - Scenarios for 2025'

Council of the European Union

Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175 - B-1048 Bruxelles/Brussel - Belgique/België

Tel. +32 (0)2 281 65 25

Follow us <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/library-blog/> -  [#EUCOLibrary](#)

Karim El Assir, Chris Suckling, Richard Jackson

IHS Markit., 9 June 2020

[Online access](#)

With the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic disrupting all facets of everyday life, we have begun to consider the long term impacts the crisis could have on global state relations. While it is possible that the world will go back to how it was in December 2019, it is also possible that more substantive geopolitical shifts will disrupt the status quo. It is important to take stock of assumptions about the world now and how they might change so that companies and investors can be better prepared for the longer-term disruption. With that in mind, IHS Markit has produced the 'Geopolitics in a post-pandemic world - Scenarios for 2025' report to begin thinking about what form that disruption could take.

The new world disorder : special report

The Economist, 18 June 2020

[Online access](#)

- [The new world disorder : if America pulls back from global institutions, other powers must step forward](#)
- [Who runs the world? : as America gets tired, China gets busy](#)

"The threat to the global order weighs on everyone, including America. But if the United States pulls back, then everyone must step forward, and none more so than the middling powers like Japan and Germany, and the rising ones like India and Indonesia, which have all become accustomed to America doing the heavy lifting. If they hesitate, they will risk a great unravelling."

COVID-19 a turning point for the EU?

Herman Van Rompuy 1947- ; European Policy Centre

2020

[Online access](#)

Herman Van Rompuy looks at the impact of Covid-19, and the quarantine measures many governments have subsequently taken to stop its spread, on our economy and societies, on the fate of multilateralism, and the fight against inequality and global warming. He finds a hopeful development in the Eurogroup compromise but argues that it is just a first step. He also warns of the ghosts of crises past

How relevant? The EU's 'Geopolitical' Commission and the response to the Covid-19 pandemic

Tommaso Emiliani ; College of Europe

2020

[Online access](#)

Council of the European Union

Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175 - B-1048 Bruxelles/Brussel - Belgique/België

Tel. +32 (0)2 281 65 25

Follow us <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/library-blog/> -  [#EUCOLibrary](#)

The Covid-19 pandemic constitutes an unprecedented challenge for the EU, posing existential internal as well as external threats to the European integration project. To seize the momentum, the EC needs to act consistently with the geopolitical approach put forward by President von der Leyen. Internally, it must promote cohesion and unity among MS and coordinate a joint European response to the sanitary, political, and socio-economic challenges. Externally, it must join efforts with like-minded members of the international community to establish a robust system of multilateral crisis management tackling the multiple dimensions of the crisis.

Foreign policy consequences of coronavirus

Elena Lazarou

Brussels : European Parliament, June 2020

[Online access](#)

The Covid-19 crisis has had economic, social, political and geopolitical consequences that will inevitably affect key aspects of EU foreign policy. These include relations with major powers, as well as several aspects of humanitarian aid, development and peacekeeping, and the fight against disinformation and cyber-attacks. It has also accentuated the debate about the future of multilateralism, a primary concern of EU foreign policy.

Cultures, nationalism and populism : new challenges to multilateralism

José Luís de Sales Marques, Thomas Meyer, Mario Telò

Taylor & Francis, 2019

[Request access via Ebook Central](#)

This book examines the role of the cultural factor, and patterns of its interaction with social, economic and political developments, in fostering identity-based new populisms and various forms of political authoritarianism across the globe. Comparing authoritarianism in the Asian and Western context, this book attempts to shed light on the different ways in which new political actors make use of cultural traditions or constructs in order to justify their claims to power and challenge the culture of modernity as understood in the Western world. Lastly, the book focuses on the consequence of these new challenges for multilateral cooperation at regional and global levels, asking the question: is the world going towards fragmentation and anarchy or a pluralist and innovative form of multilateral cooperation? This book will be of key interest to scholars and students of populism and authoritarianism studies, democracy, global governance and more broadly to international relations.

The EU, the US and the crisis of contemporary multilateralism

Smith, Mike

Journal of European Integration: 2018, Vol.40 (5), p.539-553

[Online access](#)

The article begins by exploring the crisis of contemporary multilateralism in terms of three core elements: institutions, norms and negotiation. It then argues that in relation to these elements, the EU and the US occupy ambiguous positions and roles, and that these

ambiguities, exacerbated by internal tensions and crises as well as external forces, pervade their changing roles in the multilateral system. The third part of the paper assesses the role of multilateralism in the development of transatlantic relations, drawing attention to the differentiation between 'special relationships', modes of transatlantic governance and broader multilateral mechanisms, and to the ways in which this reflects the underlying ambiguities in the roles of the EU and the US. The paper concludes that the consequent tension between differentiation and disintegration will be a core element of transatlantic relations for the foreseeable future, and that EU-US relations are thus weakening in a foundational aspect of world order.

Book chapter "The United Nations Security Council : the challenge of reform" by Madeleine O. Hosli (et al.)

In: **Rising powers and multilateral institutions**

Dries Lesage ; Thijs Van de Graaf

Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2015

Available at [Council Library - Main Collection \(102313\)](#)

This chapter aims to explain the difficulty of fundamental reform of the UNSC and seeks to shed light on relations between incumbents and outsiders of this eminent multilateral institution, including their contribution to the reform debate and adaptation strategies by major excluded powers. Its theoretical focus is based on path dependency approaches, insights derived from veto player analysis and social choice theory. The chapter describes how adapted! patterns of UN membership have affected prospects for change, placing emphasis on the decision-making procedures for UNSC reform and, conversely, investigating which actors can in fact block reform of the UNSC.

Which post-Westphalia? : international organizations between constitutionalism and authoritarianism

Christian Kreuder-Sonnen ; Bernhard Zangl

European Journal of International Relations, 2015-09, Vol. 21(3), pp. 568-594

[Online access](#)

The most recent transformation of world order is often depicted as a shift from a Westphalian to a post-Westphalian era in which international organizations are becoming increasingly independent sites of authority. This internationalization of authority is often considered as an indication of the constitutionalization of the global legal order. However, this article highlights that international organizations can also exercise authority in an authoritarian fashion that violates the same constitutionalist principles of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law that international organizations are usually expected to promote.

Book chapter "Sources and Manifestations of Multilateral Malaise"

In: **A crisis in global institutions? : multilateralism and international security**

Council of the European Union

Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175 - B-1048 Bruxelles/Brussel - Belgique/België

Tel. +32 (0)2 281 65 25

Follow us <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/library-blog/> -  [#EUCOLibrary](#)

Edward Newman
New York : Routledge, 2007
[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(088025\)](#)

This chapter examines the sources, manifestations and consequences of multilateral malaise. International organizations and other multi-lateral arrangements have always faced difficulties - and even crises. The chapter illustrates why, however, there is a widely held perception that the values and institutions of multilateralism are fundamentally challenged at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Global governance. Demise or transformation? : progress report on the transformation of Global Governance Project 2018-2019

Edited by George Papaconstantinou and Jean Pisani-Ferry
European University Institute, 2019, 210 pages

[Online access](#)

Why is international cooperation successful in some fields and not in some others? What are the most promising templates for international collective action in the present context? These are the questions at the origin of the "Transformation of Global Governance" project that we initiated at the European University Institute as a joint endeavour of the Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa chair of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies and the recently created School of Transnational Governance. The motivation for addressing these questions stems directly from policy concerns. The rise of interdependence, its new and deeper patterns, as well as the emergence of true global commons of which climate is the most epitomic as well as the most important all call for enhanced and more effective forms of international collective action. At the same time, concerns about sovereignty, geopolitical rivalries and heterogeneity across nations limit the ability of the global community to engage in such an action. The institutional architecture of globalisation remains seriously incomplete, multilateralism is on the retreat, and the global institutions that constituted the pillars of global governance have weakened. In short, the global community is confronted to the need to address heightened challenges with enfeebled instruments.

4. Recommendations to modernise and revitalise the multilateral system

- **Studies and policy papers**

How the coronavirus pandemic affects the EU's geopolitical agenda

Nicole Koenig ; Ana Stahl ; Hertie School of Governance. ; Jacques Delors Institute - Berlin
2020

[Online access](#)

The EU's leadership announced last year that it would play a more geopolitical role and learn to speak the "language of power". One year later, a global pandemic severely affects this geopolitical ambition. This paper reviews the pandemic's geopolitical implications for the EU with a focus on three key relationships: China, the US and Africa. It argues that the EU should fill the global leadership vacuum that others leave and makes proposals for concrete articulations of this role in the pandemic's global aftermath.

Rethinking global governance

Arnaud Bodet ; Indrè Krivaité ; Zachary McGuinness ; Angela Pauly ; Friends of Europe. 2020

[Online access](#)

It is a dangerous paradox: multilateralism is in retreat just when collective action is most desperately needed to tackle complex and interconnected global challenges, including the climate crisis. US President's 'America first' policies, including a retreat from international initiatives such as the Paris climate agreement, have strained global governance structures. Emerging nations are demanding a stronger voice in the running of global affairs. Demands from China, India and Brazil for a stronger international rule-making role have therefore added to the drive for global governance reform. New areas demanding collective action now include hybrid threats, connectivity, information-sharing, human rights and cyber security. However, institutional reform and change are easier said than done.

Multilateralism : variants, potential, constraints and conditions for success

Hanns W. Maull

SWP, March 2020

[Online access](#)

In view of the current challenges facing world politics and its specific structural conditions (national sovereignty, power diffusion), multilateralism appears to be an almost indispensable form of international diplomacy. Nevertheless, it seems controversial: multilateralism is currently under fire, particularly from the White House and the State Department, whilst both China's President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin pose as advocates and defenders of multilateralism. On closer inspection, however, the controversy is not about multilateralism as a diplomatic procedure, but essentially about the question of which principles, values and organizations should determine the international order and thus shape international politics. At the same time, the inherent difficulties and limitations of multilateralism are often underestimated, and its potential overestimated. In order to make multilateralism as effective as possible, a realistic assessment of its preconditions and a wise understanding of the peculiarities of multilateral politics are therefore essential.

The purpose of multilateralism : a framework for democracies in a geopolitically competitive world

Will Moreland

Brookings, September 2019

[Online access](#)

Across the globe, multilateralism appears in crisis. Skepticism of the benefits of a multilateral order grounded in underlying liberal principles is manifesting throughout the Western world. The United States, the system's imperfect cornerstone, scorns a growing number of multilateral institutions and norms each day. Within Europe, Brexit and discord over the European Union's (EU) future is undercutting the EU as a regional multilateral pillar, alongside the supranational bloc's capacity as a global actor. Simultaneously, a more assertive China and Russia are seeking to reshape multilateralism, challenging the foundational liberal principles that have guided the post-Cold War multilateral order to which the world has become accustomed. The post-Cold War moment witnessed a tremendous flourishing in multilateral cooperation. Nations employed multilateral architectures with unprecedented success to manage and reduce real shared global problems. Individuals, understandably, are rallying to defend this multilateral order against rising strains. However, multilateralism can only operate in the geopolitical context within which it exists. The unfortunate return of great-power competition, so noticeably dampened during the preceding decades, is eroding the very foundations on which the multilateralism of the post-Cold War era stood.

Would the world be better without the UN?

Thomas G. Weiss,
Polity Press, 2018

[Online access](#)

Do we need the United Nations? Where would the contemporary world be without its largest intergovernmental organization? And where could it be had the UN's member states and staff performed better? These fundamental questions are explored by the leading analyst of UN history and politics, Thomas G. Weiss. He is not shy about UN achievements and failures drawn from its ideas and operations in its three substantive pillars of activities: international peace and security; human rights and humanitarian action; and sustainable development. But, he argues, the inward-looking and populist movements in electoral politics worldwide make robust multilateralism more not less compelling. The selection of António Guterres as the ninth UN secretary-general should rekindle critical thinking about the potential for international cooperation. There is a desperate need to reinvigorate and update rather than jettison the United Nations in responding to threats from climate change to pandemics, from proliferation to terrorism

The UN's structures built in 1945 are not fit for 2020, let alone beyond it : grand redesigns

The Economist, 18 June 2020

[Online access](#)

"If you didn't have the UN you really would have to reinvent it," says Stephen Schlesinger, author of a history of its founding. Maybe, but nobody in their right mind would design it as it exists today. Insiders complain of a tangle of overlapping agencies, senseless silos and barricaded budgets. "If you locked a team of evil geniuses in a laboratory, they could not design a bureaucracy so maddeningly complex," one departing official despaired. Outsiders face a forbidding confusion of agencies with acronyms. Many do great work (wfp

and unhcr), others have a mixed record (who and fao), a few are useless (unido). And at the top the structure reflects the world of 1945, as if little had changed since.

Seven Opportunities for the UN in 2019-2020

International Crisis Group

International Crisis Group, Special Briefing 2 / Global 12 September 2019

[Online access](#)

This publication highlights seven crisis spots where the UN can make a positive difference for peace in 2019-2020. It outlines how the UN can contribute to 1) developing new ways to stabilize the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and its neighborhood; 2) reinforcing and expanding peacemaking efforts in Yemen; 3) facilitating reconciliation in Venezuela; 4) supporting the next stage of peace talks in Afghanistan; 5) backstopping African Union (AU) support for Sudan's transition; 6) boosting AU-UN institutional cooperation, and 7) rethinking multilateral security arrangements in the Middle East.

- **Books**

Book chapter "Accommodating or entrenching? : how the EU is dealing with changes in the multilateral system" by Oriol Costa (et al.)

In : **EU policy responses to a shifting multilateral system**

Esther Barbé ; Oriol Costa ; Robert Kissack

London : Palgrave Macmillan, 2016

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(104069\)](#)

How should the European Union react to twenty-first century challenges posed to the post-WWII multilateral system that it has so steadfastly supported? The challenges faced are extensive and wide-ranging, spanning the incorporation of emerging powers, the acceptance of alternative norms and values, and the reduction of international interference into domestic affairs. These challenges are part of a larger question about the need to reform the liberal international order institutionalised at the end of the Second World War that aspired to universalise the promotion of human rights, peaceful relations among states and open market economies. The core issue at stake for countries from the Global South is the assumption that Western values are unquestionably also universal values to the extent that there is no room for dialogue about the relationship between their centrality in the prevailing multilateral order and the underlying distribution of power and influence within that order.

Book chapter "Multilateralism in crisis? : global governance in the twenty-first century" by Marc Saxer

and

Book chapter "Europe's role in the twenty-first century" by Janis A. Emmanouilidis

In : **The European Union and emerging powers in the 21st century : how Europe can shape a new global order**

Thomas Renard ; Sven Biscop

Farnham : Ashgate, 2012

Available at Council Library - Main Collection (097588)

The emergence of new powers fundamentally questions the traditional views on international relations, multilateralism or security as a range of countries now competes for regional and global leadership - economically, politically, technologically and militarily. As the focus of international attention shifts from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the European states in particular are seen to lose influence relative to the emerging economic powerhouses of China, Russia, India and Brazil. European nations find themselves too small to engage meaningfully with these continent-sized powers and, in an increasingly multipolar world are concerned their influence can only continue to decline. This book analyses the shifts in the structure of global power and examines the threats and opportunities they bring to Europe.

Book chapter "Conclusion: Revisiting Institutionalism in a Post-Westphalian World"

In : **A crisis in global institutions? : multilateralism and international security**

Edward Newman

New York : Routledge, 2007

Available at Council Library - Main Collection (088025)

The author suggests that multilateral values and institutions must be constituted according to contemporary principles of governance and legitimacy, and capable of addressing contemporary challenges effectively, if they are to be viable and legitimate. This involves moving beyond the Westphalian roots of multilateral institutions based upon sovereign equality, reassessing the values upon which multilateralism is based and is promoting, and recognizing that contemporary challenges demand greater flexibility and pro-activity.

Book chapter "UN reform: as necessary as it is difficult" by Martin Ortega

In : **The European Union and the United Nations : partners in effective multilateralism**

Martin Ortega ; Jean-Marie Guéhenno ; Sven Biscop ; Francesco Francioni ; Graham Kennedy

Paris : European Union Institute for Security Studies EUISS, 2005

Online access

This Chaillot Paper offers some ideas on how the EU and its member states can contribute to UN reform. The conclusion draws some lessons from the various chapters and suggests that the EU should be more involved in the UN reform process.

5. Success of multilateralism

The world without the UN and its ideas and operations?

In: Would the world be better without the UN? pp 53-109

Thomas G. Weiss, foreword by Kofi A. Annan

[Online access](#)

- A more violent world with diminished international peace and security? p. 61
- A more repressive and unkind world with diminished human rights and humanitarian action? p. 73
- A more impoverished and polluted world with diminished development? p. 93

Council Conclusions on Reinforcing the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on peace operations and crisis management: priorities 2019-2021

Council of the EU, 18 September 2018

[Online access](#)

Press release : "On 18 September 2018, the Council adopted conclusions endorsing the priorities of the UN-EU Strategic Partnership on peace operations and crisis management for the period 2019-2021. The Council recognised the mutually beneficial nature of the longstanding UN-EU cooperation on peacekeeping and civilian, police and military crisis management. The Council highlighted the significance of including women, peace and security as an overarching priority. It welcomed the efforts to enhance conflict prevention in the context of peace operations and crisis management operations. Through these conclusions, the Council reiterates the EU's firm commitment, alongside its Member States, to a strong UN as the bedrock of the multilateral rules-based order. The EU provides the UN with political support as well as expertise, financial backing and political leverage to deliver on UN mandates. Close cooperation helps UN and EU missions and operations act more coherently and effectively to address various security challenges and ensure a positive and sustainable impact on the ground. Partnering with the UN contributes to the EU playing its role as a global peace and security actor in support of effective multilateralism."

UN involvement and civil war peace agreement implementation

Maekawa, Wakako ; Ari, Barış ; Gizelis, Theodora-Ismene

Springer

Public Choice, 2019-03, Vol.178 (3-4), p.397-416

[Online access](#)

Many studies argue that third-party guarantees, such as those of the United Nations, increase the chances that belligerents will sign peace agreements, but it is unclear how third-party involvement affects the implementation of such agreements. We unpack the relationship between UN involvement and peace agreement success by focusing on the risk of defections during the peace accord implementation phase. We argue that two types of commitment problems, namely involuntary and voluntary defections, emerge from the characteristics of the peace process itself as well as from new opportunities available to rebel groups. We expect that shifts in relative power and polarized voting lead to lower

implementation scores overall, but that the deployment of UN troops has a mitigating effect, thereby increasing the prospects of sustainable peace agreements

Climate change after Paris: from turning point to transformation

Kinley, Richard

Climate Policy: Special Issue: Climate policy after the 2015 Paris Conference, 2017-01-02, Vol.17 (1), p.9-15

[Online access](#)

COP 21 was the most successful climate change conference ever. This article lays out eight key ways in which the Paris Conference changed the game: the shift in emphasis towards national action; cementing of the below 2 °C goal and going further to reference 1.5 °C; the addition of 'global peaking' and balance between emissions and removals as supplementary goals; global stock-taking every five years with no backsliding; much more nuanced differentiation between developed and developing countries; greater recognition of adaptation and the inclusion of loss and damage; new developments on finance, including stronger reporting provisions; and renewed recognition of market mechanisms. Policy announcements and initiatives made outside of the formal negotiations were also spectacular in scale and scope, suggesting that a new sustainable growth model is underway. At the same time, non-state actors are becoming the engine of both mitigation and adaptation action.

A new status quo? The psychological impact of the Paris Agreement on climate change

Rowell, Arden ; Zeven, Van, Josephine

European Journal of Risk Regulation, 2016, Vol.7 (1), p.49-53

[Online access](#)

This brief opinion piece draws upon behavioural and cognitive research to argue that the Paris Agreement's goal of keeping global temperature change below 2 degrees Celsius sets a psychologically powerful baseline against which future policy failures can be measured. When international law successfully triggers perception of a baseline, it can lead decisionmakers to perceive deviations from that baseline as "losses." This implicates loss aversion, which provides an additional motivation to achieve international norms. The psychological impacts of this new status quo may end up being more powerful and more durable than either the unusual structure of the document or the domestic implementation questions that have already attracted so much scholarly debate.

The Paris Climate Change Agreement: a new hope?

Daniel Bodansky

American Society of International Law

The American journal of international law, 2016-04-01, Vol.110 (2), p.288-319

[Online access](#)

Know your limits. This familiar adage is not an inspirational rallying cry or a recipe for bold action. It serves better as the motto for the tortoise than the hare. But, after many false starts over the past twenty years, states were well advised to heed it when negotiating the

Paris Agreement. While it is still far too early to say whether the Agreement will be a success, its comparatively modest approach provides a firmer foundation on which to build than its more ambitious predecessor, the Kyoto Protocol.

The EU in multilateral arms negotiations: shaping the process or outcome?

Romanyshyn, Iulian

Journal of European Integration, 2019-07-04, Vol.41 (5), p.675-692

[Online access](#)

The European Union demonstrates varying patterns of impact in multilateral negotiations. In some areas the EU focuses on shaping the outcome document of negotiations through the use of multilateral means. In other areas, however, the Union is merely preoccupied with a process of negotiations that contributes to the collective benefit of multilateral dialogue. While discussions of the EU's process and outcome effectiveness are not new, this article provides an explanation for when and why the EU is effective in terms of process or outcome of multilateral negotiations. The EU focuses on shaping the outcome of negotiations under a condition of prevailing uncertainty, whereas the dominance of complexity leads to the EU's inclination to influence the negotiation process. In order to probe these assumptions, the article examines the EU's role in the multilateral negotiations on arms trade and nuclear non-proliferation.

Making war and building peace : United Nations peace operations

Michael W. Doyle ; Nicholas Sambanis

Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2006

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(088356\)](#)

This book examines how well United Nations peacekeeping missions work after civil war. Statistically analyzing all civil wars since 1945, the book compares peace processes that had UN involvement to those that didn't.

6. Speeches and statements on multilateralism

- **At Head of State level:**

Déclaration de M. Emmanuel Macron, président de la République, sur le multilatéralisme, à Paris le 12 novembre 2019.

Forum de Paris sur la Paix

[Online access](#)

Déclaration de M. Emmanuel Macron, Président de la République, sur les relations entre l'Union européenne et la Chine et la préservation du multilatéralisme, à Paris le 26 mars 2019.

[Online access](#)

Rede von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel im Rahmen der Veranstaltung „Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik in der deutschen EU-Ratspräsidentschaft“ der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung am 27. Mai 2020

[Online access](#)

Speech by Federal Chancellor Merkel at the 2020 Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum on 23 January 2020 in Davos

[Online access](#)

Rede von Bundeskanzlerin Merkel bei der Verleihung des Henry A. Kissinger Preises am 21. Januar 2020 in Berlin

[Online access](#)

Speech by Prime Minister Mark Rutte at the UN General Assembly, New York

27-09-2018

[Online access](#)

- At EU level:

Address by President Donald Tusk at the 72nd United Nations General Assembly, 20 September 2017

[Online access](#)

Address by President Donald Tusk to the 73rd United Nations General Assembly, 27 September 2018

[Online access](#)

Address by President Donald Tusk to the 74th United Nations General Assembly, 26 September 2019

[Online access](#)

Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, EEAS, Brussels, 23 April 2019

[Online access](#)

Multilateralism Day, cooperation is the only path and a common responsibility, EEAS, 24 April 2020, with speech by Josep Borrell Fontelles

[Online access](#)

- Other:

We need strong global cooperation and solidarity to fight COVID-19

Joint Declaration of the Alliance for Multilateralism

25 May 2020

[Online access](#)

"The COVID-19 pandemic is a wake-up call for multilateralism. Trying to cope with the immediate devastating effects of the virus, nations have turned toward imposing unprecedented executive measures, including closing borders. However, a virus knows no borders. All countries are affected. We must remain united in our shared humanity. The fight against this global pandemic, which is taking so many lives and challenging our societies, requires more and enhanced international cooperation and worldwide solidarity. Containing and countering this pandemic calls for a co-operative, transparent, science-based and coordinated global response. We are concerned by the serious threat to all countries, particularly developing and least developed countries, countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict countries, where health systems are less prepared, as well as the particular risk faced by refugees and displaced persons."

7. China's Approach to Multilateralism

China and multilateralism : from estrangement to competition

Yuan Feng

Taylor & Francis Group, 2020

[Online access](#)

"This book thoroughly analyzes China's political ideas regarding the international order and their reflection in China's engagement in multilateralism. It introduces the debates and discussions that take place among Chinese intellectuals in the study of international relations as an important part of non-western international relation theories, generating reflections on the convergences and divergences between China's political ideas and Europe-centric perspectives. With a focus specifically on China's main bilateral and multilateral relations in its principal regions of interest – East Asia and Central Asia – the book also examines China's relationship with the United States, Russia, and the European Union, and the One Belt One Road initiative."

Contested Multilateralism 2.0 and Asian Security Dynamics

Kai He (ed.)

Taylor & Francis Group, 2020

[Online access](#)

In the 1990s there was a wave of multilateralism in the Asia Pacific, led primarily by ASEAN. Since the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, however, many non-ASEAN states have attempted to seize the initiative, including the USA, Japan, China, South Korea, and Australia. Kai He and his contributors debate the reasons for this contested multilateralism and the impacts it will have on the region's security and political challenges.

EU-Asia should defend multilateralism

Cameron, Fraser

Asia Europe Journal, 2020-05-22

[Online access](#)

Relations between the EU and Asia face an uncertain future as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Unlike after 2008-09, when there was a coordinated global response to the financial crisis led by the US, there has been no such response to Covid-19. States have turned inwards, closing borders and placing an emphasis on national as opposed to cooperative solutions. A bitter propaganda war between the US and China has also had a negative impact on global cooperation. The implications of Covid-19 are likely to be far-reaching and will affect the balance of global power, economic structures, the role of multilateral agencies, patterns of social interaction and ways of work. Much will depend on the trajectory of the pandemic but governments will wish to mitigate the huge costs of the economic shutdown as soon as possible. Although national governments will give priority to restoring their own economies they will soon learn that this can only be effective by global cooperation. In the absence of traditional US global leadership, there is now an opportunity for the EU and Asia to demonstrate the benefits of a cooperative approach to international relations.

Effective multilateralism : through the looking glass of East Asia

Prantl, Jochen (ed.)

Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan, 2013

[Available at Council Library - Main Collection \(104072\)](#)

Existing theories of cooperation assume a stable geo-political order, led by countries with a shared conception of the modalities of cooperation. These assumptions are no longer justified. Effective Multilateralism makes the case for a new approach to explaining international cooperation through the lens of East Asian.

Geopolitical scenarios for Asia after COVID-19

Michael J. Green

Center for Strategic Studies International, March 31, 2020

[Online access](#)

What will the longer-term geopolitical impact of COVID-19 be on Asia? A few weeks into the crisis the early prognostications were generally bullish on China's hegemonic opportunism and pessimistic about the future of American leadership in the region. To be sure, Washington's initial failures at home and abroad will be costly in terms of lives and prestige, while Beijing has been aggressive in its efforts to cement diplomatic gains after recovering from the initial shock to Wuhan. However, it is far too early to predict that a short-term shock to the global economy will somehow catapult China to regional or global leadership over the long term.