

Centre for European Security of the Institute of International Relations

The post Cold War European security order is undergoing radical transformation. The European Security Strategy as well as the far-reaching changes to the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy introduced by the Treaty of Lisbon and the development of both the Eastern Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean show the impact of internal policy reforms. These changes come at a time when the EU and its Member States continue to face significant economic problems as well as questions over mobility and migration that have affected European understandings of security in a wider sense and which have also impacted on the EU's relations with other actors. The continuing power-shift to Asia, the hesitancy of the United States, ongoing unrest in North Africa and the Middle East and, particularly, the Ukraine crisis of 2014 mean that while these relations and the EU's identity and capability as a security actor have rarely been more important, they have rarely been less certain.

The Institute of International Relations has established its new Centre for European Security (CES) to take up the challenge of this exploring the new contours of this emerging global security (dis)order from a European – and particularly Central European – perspective. Amidst the proliferation of security research centres in Central Europe, CES is exceptional in that it brings together experts from the fields of Security Studies and European Studies to provide a powerful combination of regional and thematic expertise. The CES is therefore well positioned to provide the necessary insight into security in Europe, the security of Europe and the role of the EU and its member states as security actors. Uniquely in Central Europe, the CES combines these strengths with the distinctively European approaches to security that have emerged in the last twenty years, but which have yet to be fully applied in the region.

The Centre's reach will span academic and policy communities and its publications, while growing from the most recent academic debates, will put forward concrete policy recommendations with the aim to facilitate policy-making both at the regional - Central European - level, and at the level of the European Union as a whole. The newly launched series entitled European Security Spotlight, with its easy-to-read format and clear policy-orientation is the first step in this direction. The CES will, however, also direct its attention to a wider audience, with the aim of shaping public debate in central Europe and the wider EU. To this end, the Centre will seek to actively engage EU citizens through direct contact at conferences and seminars, as well as through traditional and social media.

I am confident that the CES will be a valuable addition to the activities of the Institute of International Relations in Prague and that it will soon establish itself as one of the leading centres for European security in the region and beyond.



Petr Kratochvíl
Director of the Institute of International Relations