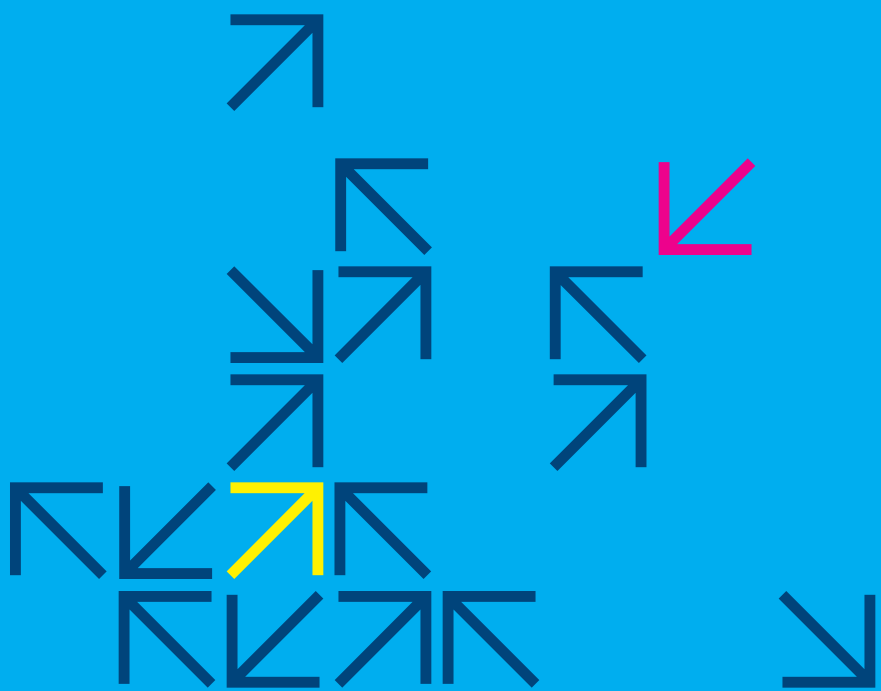
BRITISH COUNCIL

Transatlantic Network 2020

# TALKING TRANS-ATLANTIC



# RESPOND

Would you like to see a closer relationship between Europe and North America?

Which areas would you like to see Europe and North America collaborating on more closely?

How do you think the world is changing in an increasingly mobile society?

have your say

**www.britishcouncil.org/TN2020-COMMENTS**

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**British Council**

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. Our purpose is to build mutually beneficial relationships between people in the UK and other countries and increase appreciation of the UK's creative ideas and achievements. Through our work in 110 countries worldwide we reach 86.8 million people. The British Council is registered as a charity (not-for-profit organisation) in England, Wales and Scotland and operates at arms-length from the UK government.

**Transatlantic Network 2020**

Transatlantic Network 2020 is a new initiative which aims to strengthen ties between Europe and North America. By uniting rising leaders who represent the changing demographics on both sides of the Atlantic, the Transatlantic Network 2020 will help to tackle today's, and tomorrow's, pressing issues and to amplify participants' many voices into one. Those involved bring diversity of ethnicity, nationality, language, career or academic field, economic standing and social and religious beliefs. The participants' sustainable connections will help to generate grassroots efforts in their own communities and serve as a resource as they rise in their career fields.

www.britishcouncil.org/TN2020

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**Disclaimer**

The views expressed in Talking Transatlantic represent the views of the writers and not the British Council.

**Also available in Braille.**

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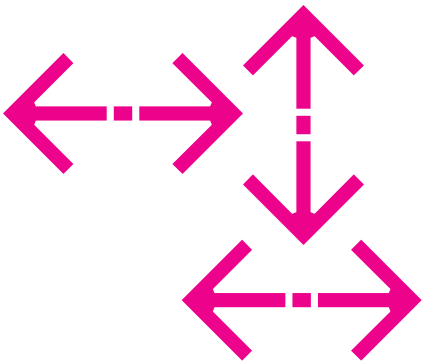
# PREFACE

Some Americans and Britons still occasionally refer to the Atlantic as 'the Pond', implying that it is small and easily crossed, and the other side – including the massive hinterlands – merely another part of a familiar landscape. Plainly the term has always been something of an affectation of understatement. But 'pond' does have the useful quality of expressing the assumption and the inclination with which the post-war generation grew up. The USA helped to save Europe from monstrous forces of evil by intervening in the World War in 1941; assisted gigantically with the rebuilding of a shattered continent through the Marshall Plan; and invested its mighty influence in the institutions that shaped the post-war world – not least NATO, the World Bank and the IMF. Clearly, each side of the North Atlantic has, from time to time, found the other provocative, exasperating, even infuriating. But the USA still filled a large part of the sky of what Michael Ignatieff calls 'a world which we thought would never change' and, meanwhile, Europe was the main frontline of the Cold War, supplementing America's political and military engagement with its own, and it was – is – inescapably, the seedbed of American history, constitution and culture.

Neil Kinnock Chair of the British Council

The end of the Cold War and the enlargement of the European Union, new patterns of migration and, therefore, new demographics and cultural 'memory' in North America and in Europe, globalisation, the sustained communications revolutions, and recent geo-political stances and military ventures have, however, been among the changes which have eroded that sense of mutual necessity and esteem.





Such evolution could, of course, be regarded to be evidence of a maturing process that implied no losses. It could also, however, weaken the creative, cultural, value-based linkages between two stable, democratic segments of the World with resulting disadvantages for young Europeans, young Americans and young people in the wider World. It is, therefore, worth trying to find a more productive alternative to gradually drifting apart, to passively accepting the mental widening of the Atlantic.

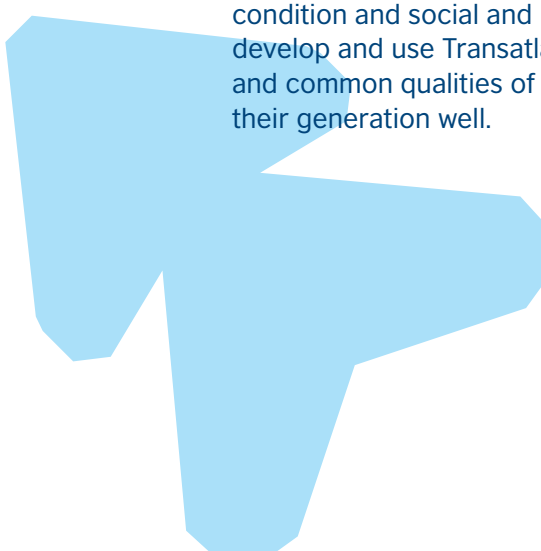
The British Council is consequently launching Transatlantic Network 2020 to help counter the risks of reduction in association and understanding in the rising generation of Europeans and Americans. That effort is not motivated by any desire to revive an expired past and it will not be propelled by sentiment, or nostalgia or political expediency. On the contrary, Transatlantic Network 2020 is assisted by detailed and expert recent opinion polling on both sides of the Atlantic, and it is focused on building new plexuses of potential transformational leadership firmly based on understanding that spans the Atlantic and the World beyond its shores.

Some of the polling responses – not surprisingly – show negative attitudes to the development of closer transatlantic relations, other results show extensive agreement on the question of global challenges that must be addressed. All of the material provides fertile ground for a British Council project that is motivated entirely by the desire to promote candid debate between young Europeans and young north Americans in order to advance thorough mutual comprehension.

Along with – and assisting – those exchanges is Talking Transatlantic - this book of essays by talented people from diverse origins and occupations who provide insights, some answers, more questions about the current condition and future prospect of transatlantic relationships.

Reading them, I was encouraged by the sense that – whatever their differences and their real home addresses – the writers all inhabit a place, an emerging borderless country, where migration is normality and multiple identity a fact, where achievement trumps inheritance, where group membership is a source of relaxed confidence not of aggressive resentment, where neighbourhood is a matter of communication rather than geography, where the appetite for facing and shaping the future is stronger than any desire to look backward.

Transatlantic Network 2020 wants to enable others to share that place by connecting across the Atlantic those who will be among the professional and vocational, local and national leaders of 2020. Those people will have unprecedented diversity of ethnicity, nationality, language, intellectual interests and prowess, economic condition and social and religious beliefs. If they have, develop and use Transatlantic Networks of understanding and common qualities of enlightenment they will serve their generation well.



# TALKING TRANS-ATLANTIC

**Research** on the transatlantic relationship and opportunities for the future.

As a part of its Transatlantic Network 2020 initiative aimed at building effective networks between individuals across the Atlantic, the British Council commissioned a poll of European countries, the United States and Canada. The goal is to understand how Europeans and North Americans see each other, and how these perceptions influence levels of enthusiasm for transatlantic cooperation.

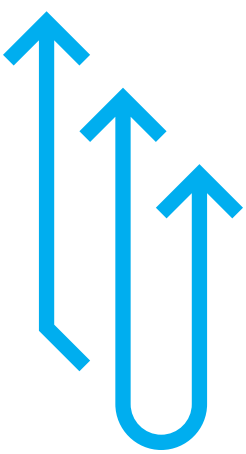
The poll was conducted in seven European countries, Canada and the United States between 8 and 25 January 2008 by the international polling firms GlobeScan and IFF Research. Sample size in all countries was at least 500, with larger samples in the USA (2,001) and UK (1,019) giving the poll a margin of error of 4 percent.

What follows is a brief summary of the findings. Further analysis and data can be found at www.britishcouncil.org/TN2020.

# KEY FINDINGS

Key findings of the poll are:

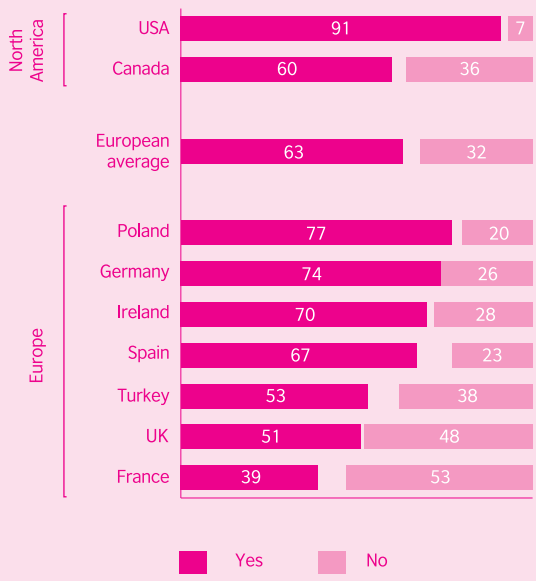
- Among Europeans, Canadians and especially Americans there is widespread support for closer relations between Europe and the United States.
- Cooperation between Europe and North America is seen as ineffective on many key issues.
- Overall transatlantic relations are fairly cool.
- Europeans see US impact on important issues as largely negative while Americans have mixed views of European influence.



# DESIRE FOR GREATER COOPERATION

Americans overwhelmingly favour closer relations with Europe (91%). On average among all European countries polled, 62 percent favour closer European-American relations. This includes large majorities of Poles (77%), Germans (75%), Irish (70%), and Spaniards (67%). More modest majorities of Turks (53%) and Britons (51%) favour closer relations. The one exception is France. Only a minority (39%) of the French favour closer relations, while a modest majority (53%) is opposed. Most Canadians (60%) favour closer relations with the USA, as well.

**0.1 SUPPORT FOR A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE USA**
"WOULD LIKE TO SEE A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP," BY COUNTRY




*The white space in this chart represents "Don't Know/Not Applicable."*

## SUBGROUP VARIATIONS IN SUPPORT FOR GREATER COOPERATION

The poll shows that, while support for greater cooperation is high among all age groups, older people are somewhat more enthusiastic than the young. Sixty-eight percent of those over 65 favour closer transatlantic relations, compared to 60 percent of those in the 18-24 age group. This perhaps suggests that difficulties of recent years have had an influence on young people's views as they come to political consciousness.

Religious affiliation does not appear to be strongly associated with attitudes towards greater closeness between Europe and the US. The exception appears to be the Muslim community – while significant majorities of Christians of any denomination and those of no religion favour closer relations between their country and the USA, the opposite is true of Muslims. The great majority of Muslims in the sample are Turkish, but more than three quarters (76%) of European Muslims outside Turkey are opposed to closer links with the USA.

## WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF RESISTANCE TO COMING CLOSER?

Respondents who said they did not want to have closer relations were asked why they felt that way. They were free to answer how they wished, and answers were then categorised.

By far the most common answers among Europeans had to do with views of the US government. Overall, 21 percent said they did not like US foreign policy, especially Germans (30%), Spanish, and French (27%). Seventeen percent of Canadians felt this way, as well.

Closely related, 13 percent of Europeans said they distrusted the US government, with a remarkable 50 percent of Turks making this statement as well as 11 percent of Poles.
Living in countries that contribute troops to US-led operations, it is not surprising that 8 percent of Britons, 9 percent of Spaniards and 7 percent of Canadians said they did not like how the US gets them involved in wars. But interestingly few Germans, or Poles cited this reason, though they have troops fighting in Afghanistan or Iraq. Dislike of President Bush was very rarely mentioned.

A substantial number of Europeans (14%) cited dislike of US culture and America's personal characteristics (eg insularity, brashness). This was especially high among Spaniards (20%), the French (19%) and the Germans (16%), but was also found among the British (11%), and the Irish (9%). Nine percent of Canadians mentioned it. Thirteen percent of Spaniards and 10 percent of the French said they did not want closer relations because they were 'different' to Americans and did not 'have anything in common'—however, few others used this language.

Smaller numbers cited reasons related to concerns about dependency and dominance of US culture. Seven percent of Europeans cited a fear of loss of independence and a feeling that they should stand on their own more, especially Turks (9%), Poles (8%) and Britons (6%). A larger 12 percent of Canadians also felt this way. A very low number cited dislike of US influence on their culture or a loss of identity though it was mentioned by 9% of the Irish and 7% of Canadians.

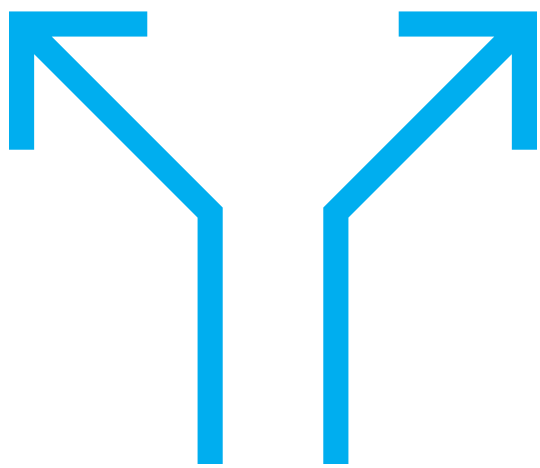
The British and Irish – two countries that showed the lowest levels of enthusiasm for closer relations – stood out in their view that the relationship is close enough as it is (Britons 20%, Irish 21%) and that the US already has too much influence over them (Britons 15%, Irish 10%). Canadians also expressed the view that the relationship is close enough as it is (16%). But for all others, less than 5 percent cited this reason. Eight percent of Germans and 7% of Spaniards said the US already has too much influence. Small numbers of Britons (6%) and Irish (5%) said that they would prefer to be closer to Europe, as did 4% of Poles, but few others cited this reason.

For Americans, the largest group (17%) cited characteristics of Europeans such as being too liberal or socialist. Eleven percent said the relationship is close enough as it is and the same number said that Americans should solve their own problems first before getting more involved with Europe. Eight percent said that Europeans were 'different' or that they did not 'have anything in common' with them. Interestingly, 6% of Americans also spoke of some fear of loss of independence and a feeling that they should stand on our own.

# PERCEPTION OF RELATIONS

American views of the nature of their relationship with Europeans are considerably warmer than European views of their relationship with Americans. Respondents were asked to assess their relationship on a scale of 1 (member of family), 2 (friend), 3 (casual acquaintance), or 4 (people you pass on the street) to 5 (people you would prefer to never meet). Americans characterise their views of Europeans as a whole at 2.7 – cooler than a friend but warmer than a casual acquaintance. Americans' average assessment of specific European countries is also about 2.7.

On average, Europeans characterise their relations with Americans as 3.2 – cooler than a casual acquaintance but warmer than someone you pass on the street. The Europeans who characterise relations with the US most warmly are the Irish (2.8) and the British (2.8). All others feel cooler than a casual acquaintance towards the US – Turks (3.8), French (3.5), Spanish (3.4), Germans (3.1), and the Poles (3.1).



# EFFECTIVENESS OF EUROPEAN-NORTH AMERICAN COOPERATION

Asked how effectively Europe and North America are working together on nine different areas, people give a generally negative assessment.

Views are clearly negative in five areas:

- On eradicating poverty, an average of 65 percent give cooperation poor ratings.
- On combating climate change, 58 percent give poor ratings.
- On managing international migration and immigration, an average of 53 percent give negative ratings.
- On conducting effective peacekeeping missions, a plurality of 48 percent on average give negative ratings.
- On protecting human rights, a plurality gives negative ratings (47% negative to 29% positive).

For all of these categories, every country has more giving a negative than a positive rating, with the single exception of Canada, which is evenly divided on cooperation on protecting human rights.

Views are mixed but lean negative in two areas. On transatlantic cooperation to fight global terrorism, 43 percent give negative ratings while 35 percent give positive ratings. Majorities of Turks and Spaniards give a negative assessment, while a plurality of the French are positive. Similarly, 36 percent give negative ratings and 29 percent positive ratings on cooperation on educational links between institutions and individuals, with no clear majorities on either end and substantial numbers not responding.

Views are mixed but lean positive on transatlantic cooperation to fight killer diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria. On average 40 percent give a positive assessment with 35 percent giving a negative view.

**0.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT COOPERATION BETWEEN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA**
BY AREA OF COOPERATION, PROMPTED


*The white space in this chart represents neutral views (neither positive nor negative) and "Don't Know/Not Applicable."*

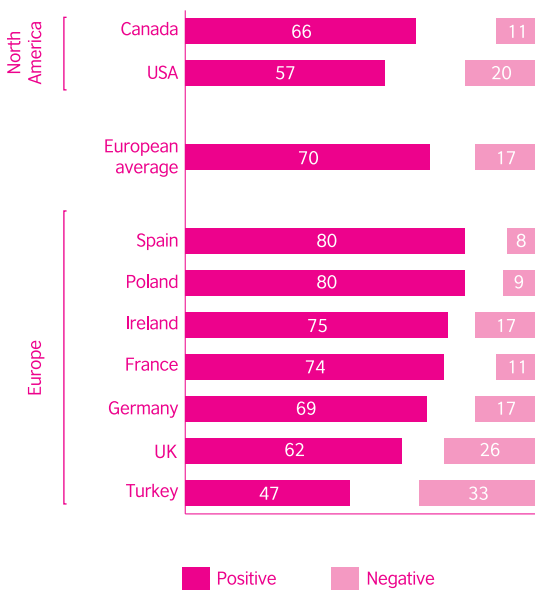
In just one area is there a predominantly positive view. On business and trade 47 percent give a positive rating including pluralities or majorities in all countries except Turkey, which is divided.

Taking into account all the areas in which the US and Europe are cooperating, in every country on average more are negative about the state of transatlantic collaboration than are positive. In four countries a majority gave an average rating across the nine areas that was negative. These were led by Spain (55%) and followed by Germany (50%), and the UK (50%). More modest percentages gave average negative ratings in USA (48%), Ireland (46%), Canada (43%), Turkey (43%), Poland (42%), and France (38%).

# ASSESSMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Americans give the EU fairly positive ratings. Asked to assess its overall influence, 57 percent give it a positive rating. Asked to assess its impact on the global issue that is most important to them, a plurality of 40 percent give the EU a positive rating. In the largest number of cases the most important issue was the environment – see below for more discussion of what people saw as the most important global issue.

**0.3 MOSTLY POSITIVE ASSESSMENT OF EU INFLUENCE**
EU HAS POSITIVE/NEGATIVE INFLUENCE IN THE WORLD, BY COUNTRY, 2008




*The white space in this chart represents neutral, refusals and "Don't Know/Not Applicable."*

Europeans and Canadians give the EU extremely positive ratings. Asked to assess its overall influence, 68 percent of the whole sample gives positive ratings.
Extremely large majorities give positive ratings in Poland (80%), Spain (80%), Ireland (75%), and France (74%). Only one country has just a plurality – Turkey with 47 percent positive and 33 percent negative.

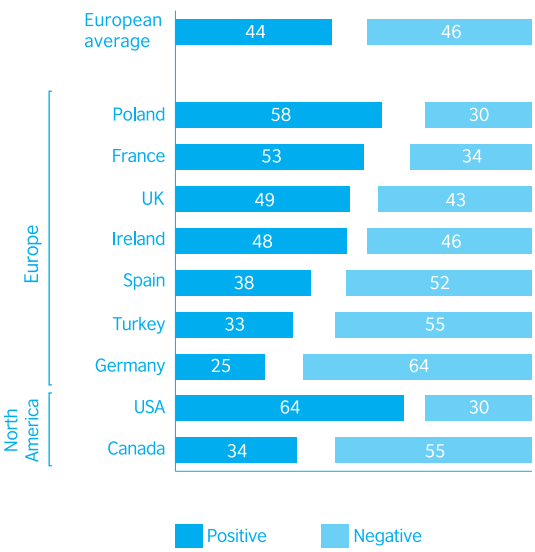
Asked to assess the impact of the EU on the issue most important to them, views are positive, but considerably more muted. On average 51 percent give a positive rating. Most positive are the Irish (68%), the Germans (63%), and the Spanish (60%). Though 8 in 10 Poles give the EU a positive rating overall, a bare plurality (40%) rate the EU positively on this question. The only country where more see the EU's impact on the issue most important to them as negative rather than positive is Turkey – 48 percent negative, 34 percent positive on the issue of terrorism. Asked to assess the EU impact on the second most important issue views are yet more muted, but basically follow the same pattern.

In summary, it seems that the EU is nearly universally seen as intrinsically positive, though there is less enthusiasm about its ability to produce positive results on the issues that matter to people.

# ASSESSMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES

European views of the US are considerably cooler than Americans views of the EU. Asked to rate US influence overall 46 percent of Europeans give a negative rating and just 44 percent give a positive rating. Those with the largest number giving a positive rating are Poland (58%), France (53%) and Britain (49%). Those with the largest number giving a negative rating are Germany (64%), Turkey (55%), and Spain (52%). Canadians are also predominantly negative (55%).

**0.4 PERCEIVED OVERALL INFLUENCE OF THE USA IN THE WORLD**
BY COUNTRY, 2008




*The white space in this chart represents neutral, refusals and "Don't Know/Not Applicable."*

Asked to rate US impact on the issue most important to them, views are even more negative. On average, 61 percent have a negative view, with just 29 percent positive. Indeed, majorities in all countries except one have majorities holding a negative view. The one exception is Poland, which is divided – 44 percent negative, 41 percent positive. Canadians are 62 percent negative.

This strong negative rating may be due in part to the fact that the global issue most commonly mentioned by respondents as being important is the environment, including climate change. This is an area where the US has had a poor image internationally due to its failure to sign the Kyoto Treaty or to commit to limits on greenhouse gas emissions.

Americans are quite positive about the overall influence of the US (64% positive), but divided about its influence on the issue most important to them (47% positive, 47% negative).

More highly educated Americans are much more likely to see Europe as having a positive impact in the world – while only 39 percent of those who have not finished high school perceive the EU as having a positive overall influence. This rises to 66 percent in those with a college degree. But more highly educated Europeans are no more likely to perceive the USA as playing a positive role in the world.

# AGREEMENT ABOUT MOST IMPORTANT GLOBAL ISSUES

North Americans and Europeans show a remarkable level of agreement about which global issues are the most important. In an open-ended question respondents were asked to name the global issue that concerned them the most. Their answers were then organised into categories.

There is a tremendous amount of agreement about the importance of environmental issues including climate change, pollution and natural disasters. This was the most widely cited issue in the US, Canada and five of the seven European countries. The only exceptions were the French and Turks who rated it third most important.

The second most frequently mentioned issue was war and conflict. In the US and Canada it received the second highest rating, as it did in the UK, Turkey, Ireland, and Germany.

Two other issues were mentioned frequently. Poverty and inequality was the top concern in France, second in Poland and Spain, and third in Canada, Ireland, Germany, and the UK. Terrorism was the most frequently mentioned issue in Turkey, second most cited in Spain, and third highest in the United States.

**0.5 ISSUES OF CONCERN**
CURRENT ISSUES OF GREATEST CONCERN, BY COUNTRY, 2008

| | Canada | France | Germany | UK | Ireland | Poland | Spain | Turkey | USA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Top mention | Environment* (46%) | Poverty/ inequality (22%) | Environment* (42%) | Environment* (48%) | Environment* (53%) | Environment* (29%) | Environment* (20%) | Terrorism (26%) | Environment* (26%) |
| Second mention | War/conflict (14%) | Unemployment (19%) | War/conflict (11%) | War/conflict (12%) | War/conflict (14%) | Poverty/ inequality (17%) | Poverty/inequality, Terrorism (each 14%) | War/conflict (18%) | War/conflict (21%) |
| Third mention | Poverty/ inequality (9%) | Environment* (15%) | Poverty/ inequality (9%) | Poverty/ inequality (6%) | Poverty/ inequality (10%) | Unemployment (15%) | Unemployment (12%) | Environment* (17%) | Terrorism (9%) |
| Fourth mention | Terrorism (5%) | War/conflict (8%) | Unemployment (7%) | Economic crisis, Terrorism (each 4%) | Terrorism, Health, Moral decay (each 2%) | War/conflict (13%) | Economic crisis (11%) | Unemployment (12%) | Economic crisis (8%) |

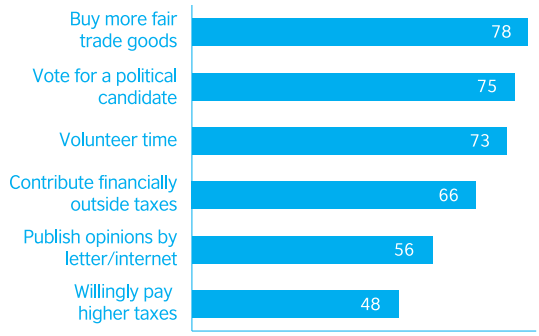
**Includes climate change, pollution, and natural disasters.*

# PERSONAL ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO GLOBAL ISSUES

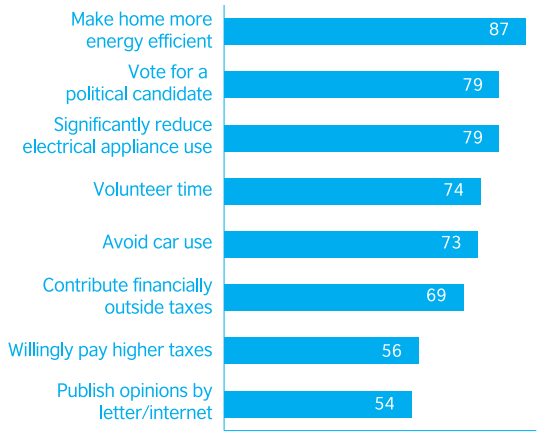
Respondents were asked what actions they felt they were likely to take in response to these global concerns. Among those for whom environmental concerns were top of mind, making changes to one's home to make it more energy-efficient emerges as the action that people feel they would be most likely to take, with 87 percent saying they would be 'very' or 'fairly' likely to do so. Otherwise, nearly four in five say they would be very or fairly likely to significantly reduce their use of electrical appliances (79%), while nearly as many (73%) say they would be very likely to abandon their car for regular journeys and walk, cycle or use public transport instead – although markedly more Europeans (76%) are receptive to the idea than Americans (63%).

Americans, in contrast, are more likely than Europeans to say they would publish their opinions on the issue, for instance writing to their local newspaper or posting them online. Sixty percent say they would be very or fairly likely to do so, compared to 53 percent of Europeans. They are also slightly more likely than Europeans to say they would cast their vote according to a candidate's position on the environment – 83 percent of Americans say it is very likely they would do so, compared to 79 percent of Europeans. When asked if they would contemplate paying higher taxes to address the issue – 58 percent of Americans think it very likely they would do so willingly, compared to 54 percent of Europeans.

**0.6 TAKING ACTION ON POVERTY AND INEQUALITY**
"VERY" AND "FAIRLY LIKELY" TO TAKE ACTION TO ADDRESS POVERTY/INEQUALITY, 2008




**0.7 TAKING ACTION ON THE ENVIRONMENT**
"VERY" AND "FAIRLY LIKELY" TO TAKE ACTION TO ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, 2008

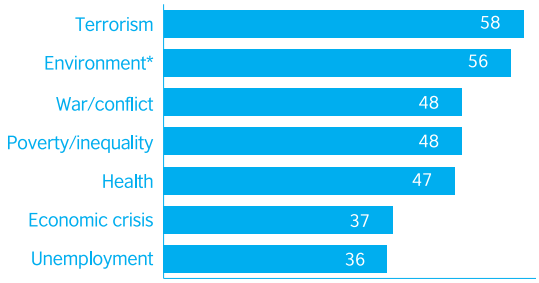


The ballot box is also seen as a key focus of personal action for those concerned about poverty as a global issue – 75 percent think it very likely they would cast their vote according to a candidate's position on poverty, including more than four in five (85%) of Americans for whom the issue is top of mind. Buying fair trade goods is also a popular action, with 78 percent saying it is very likely they would do so to help address the poverty issue.

Nearly three quarters (73%) say it is very likely they would volunteer their time to help address the poverty issue, rising to 81 percent in America. Poverty is another issue on which Americans are more prepared than Europeans to contemplate paying higher taxes – 56 percent say they would be likely to do so willingly, compared to 47 percent of Europeans.

Nonetheless, as this chart shows, terrorism and the environment appear to be the top-of-mind issues on which there is greatest willingness to contemplate paying extra taxes. There is much less of a consensus about paying increased taxes to address national issues such as economic crisis or unemployment.

**0.8 PAYING TAXES TO ADDRESS ISSUES**
"VERY" AND "FAIRLY LIKELY" WILLINGLY TO PAY HIGHER TAXES, BY ISSUE, 2008




**"Environment" includes climate change, pollution and natural disasters*

# PERCEPTIONS OF EACH OTHER'S TRAITS

Europeans have rather strong perceptions of Americans with most of these being negative. Majorities or near majorities perceive Americans as manipulative, aggressive, and selfish. However, majorities or near majorities also perceive Americans as bold or daring and as keen consumers.

Americans have much less pronounced views of Europeans. They give them modestly high ratings in a number of positive traits including being open, collaborative, sensible and respectful. They also give Europeans low ratings in being aggressive, selfish, and vulgar.

**0.9 TRANSATLANTIC CHARACTER PERCEPTIONS**
CHARACTERISTICS THAT MOST APPLY TO AMERICANS AND EUROPEANS, 2008

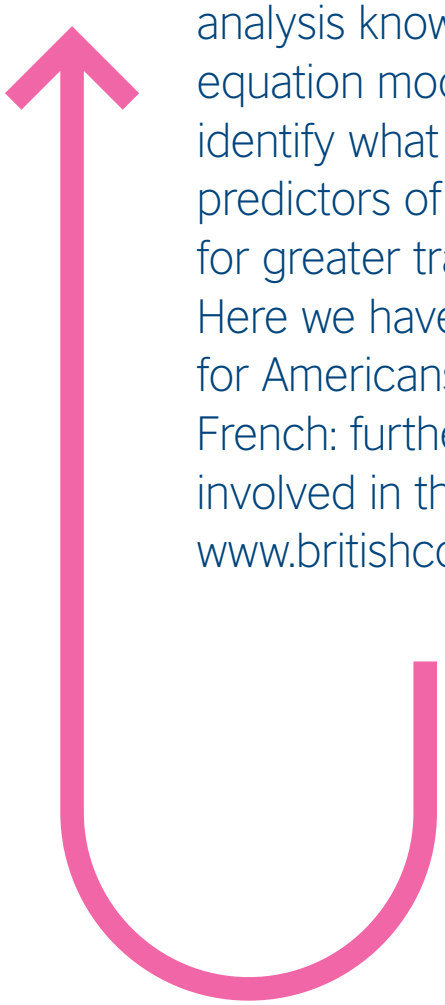
| | Europeans' views of Americans | Americans' views of Europeans |
|---|---|---|
| Characteristic applying most* | Keen consumers (62%) | Keen consumers (39%) |
| Second | Manipulative (55%) | Respectful (36%) |
| Third | Bold/daring (48%) | Sensible, Collaborative (35% each) |
| Fourth | Selfish (47%) | Snobbish (34%) |
| Fifth | Aggressive (45%) | Open (31%) |

**Percentages show the proportion of respondents answering 4 or 5, i.e. that this characteristic does apply to Europeans/ Americans*

# PREDICTORS OF, AND BARRIERS TO, THE DESIRE FOR GREATER TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

A survey such as this gives us the opportunity to understand what factors lie behind people's opinions.

By a process of advanced statistical analysis known as SEM (structured equation modeling), it is possible to identify what factors are the strongest predictors of – and barriers to – the desire for greater transatlantic cooperation. Here we have performed this analysis for Americans, for the British and for the French: further analysis of other countries involved in the poll can be found at www.britishcouncil.org/TN2020.



## WHAT INFLUENCES OPINION IN THE UK

In the UK, there appear to be a number of key factors that predict enthusiasm for transatlantic cooperation:

- A high opinion of US influence – the belief that the US plays a positive role in the world.
- A low opinion of Arab influence – the belief that Arab countries play a negative role in the world.
- A high opinion of the character of American people – the belief that they are not manipulative, selfish, aggressive, etc.

Perception that transatlantic cooperation is working, however, does not emerge as a driver of enthusiasm for more of it.

Perhaps more of a surprise is that, after controlling for other factors that may have an influence, people in the UK with higher levels of education emerge as less likely to have positive perceptions of Americans. In particular, they are less likely to believe that they are reliable. As positive perceptions like these are a strong predictor of enthusiasm for greater transatlantic cooperation, such skepticism among the opinion-forming classes in the UK may prove to be a considerable obstacle to greater collaboration.

It also emerges that global optimism in the UK – the sense that the world is going in the right direction – is being driven by perception that the UK is a force for good in the world, and that cooperation between the USA and Europe is effective.

## WHAT INFLUENCES OPINION IN THE USA

As in the UK, enthusiasm for transatlantic cooperation among Americans does not depend on believing that the dialogue is currently effective in delivering policy advances.

Instead, Americans' support for greater transatlantic cooperation with Europe appears to be influenced by:

- Positive perception of European (and specifically British) influence in the world.
- Dissatisfaction with the role of the US.

Perception that transatlantic cooperation is working, however, does not emerge as a driver of enthusiasm for more of it.

It is instructive that global optimism among Americans – the belief that the world is going in the right direction – is correlated with a positive view of not only the US, but also Arab influence. In other words, if the world is not going in the right direction, both Americans and Arab countries share the blame.

A major barrier to enthusiasm for transatlantic dialogue is a lack of trust and disbelief in the sincerity of Europeans – that they are, for instance, manipulative or selfish. This attitude is more apparent among Americans with lower levels of education, and also among older Americans.

## WHAT INFLUENCES OPINION IN FRANCE

In France, unlike in the UK, desire for greater transatlantic cooperation is not linked to a perception that the USA is a force for good in the world. The key predictor of enthusiasm for closer links with America seems to be the belief that Americans are, notably, reliable. Those French who have a positive view of Americans are also more likely to be generally optimistic about the direction in which the world is going.

Negative perceptions of American traits have other impacts on French opinion. French assessment of the effectiveness of transatlantic efforts in peacekeeping operations is aggravated by the perception that Americans are manipulative and selfish. This suggests that if transatlantic peacekeeping efforts are felt to be failing, the French may see this as being partly a consequence of America acting in its own self interest.

It is apparent that France sees its role as being closely aligned with that of the EU (including the UK). Those who see the French as playing a positive role in the world are also likely to feel the same way about the EU. Conversely, despite the fact that the French are the least negative of all countries polled towards the role played by Arab countries, this role is still seen as being opposed to French influence.

Lastly, the French appear to see themselves as important players in transatlantic efforts to address global issues. The perceived success of these efforts, in French eyes, seems to require France to exert its influence, and for the US to be reliable.

# OVERVIEW

The survey suggests that one of the legacies of the turbulent last few years may be a situation in which Americans are much keener on a closer transatlantic relationship than Europeans. Relations are still distinctly cool with 'old Europe', with both France and Germany giving a relatively negative assessment of US global influence, but much more upbeat in a new EU member state like Poland. It is encouraging that despite misgivings, both sides of the Atlantic – and even in Germany, which is otherwise skeptical of US influence – favour closer relations between America and Europe, and in cases where they do not, it is often (notably in the UK and Ireland) because they perceive they are close enough already. Nonetheless, US foreign policy is clearly still a major barrier to greater engagement in many parts of Europe, and may be a key reason why European Muslims appear so strongly opposed to closer links with the US. The French, fewer than two in five of whom want to see a closer relationship, are another exception to the generally positive picture, and here a more fundamental dislike of US culture does seem to be a factor for many.

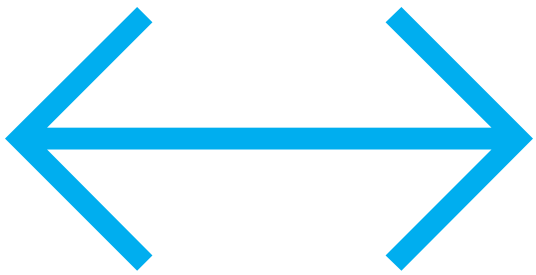
Motivations for favouring closer links differ somewhat across the Atlantic. Those Americans keen on forging closer transatlantic links tend to be those concerned about the global role that their country is currently playing and convinced of Europeans' basic good faith. Europeans' motivations for wanting greater closeness with the USA are sometimes contrasting; in the UK, those favouring closer links with America are often those who see not only a contrast between America's positive global role but also a threat coming from the Arab world. In France, desire to engage further is driven very much more by a positive assessment of Americans' character traits than it is by the view that the USA is a global force for good. Mutual trust is, as so often, a prerequisite for a relationship to flourish.

But while this would seem to suggest that perspectives are being shaped by the USA's war on terror and all that entails, the perception that the existing transatlantic relationship is helping to resolve major global issues does not, in fact, seem to be a significant factor in driving people to endorse closer relations. For both Americans and Europeans, seeing the other as reliable, and not selfish or manipulative, is considerably more important in shaping attitudes.

Age and education play a different role in forming attitudes on either side of the Atlantic. More highly educated Europeans tend to oppose closer links with America. Whereas, those Americans less keen on closer links with Europe tend to be comparatively less well educated and older. Those with a negative view of Europe's influence are slightly more likely to put their trust in conservative media outlets such as Fox News.

But if these findings speak to existing stereotypes, perhaps one of the most significant findings confounds them – the pre-eminence of environmental concerns on both sides of the Atlantic. Americans are in agreement with most Europeans in rating it as their chief spontaneous concern. Even if the desire for collaboration does not seem to be driven by hard-headed assessments of the benefits it brings, this points, perhaps, to an opportunity for the USA to demonstrate its concern for other nations and rekindle the transatlantic relationship by collaborating productively on an issue of true global importance.

For further analysis and data visit www.britishcouncil.org/TN2020.



# TALKING TRANS-ATLANTIC

**Essays** on the transatlantic relationship and opportunities for the future.

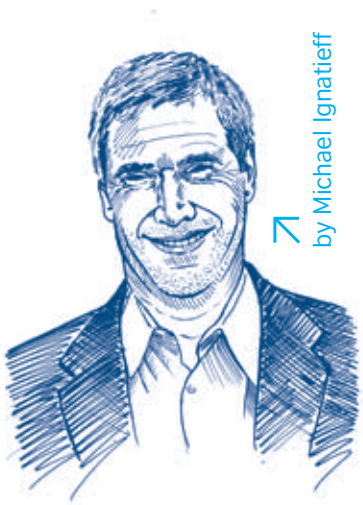
These essays represent a wide range of views. Some are negative, others positive. Some pessimistic, others optimistic. They don't look for agreement; their aim, and ours, is to stimulate debate. But of one thing we are certain: the essays and research read together show that we cannot be complacent about the transatlantic relationship. We need to build new connections across the Atlantic which reflect the new demographics and changing dynamics of both North America and Europe. This is what Transatlantic Network 2020 is all about.

# THE TRANSATLANTIC CULTURE OF FREEDOM

## I

Anyone like me, born right after World War II, has witnessed an astonishing transformation in the relationship between North America and Europe. In 1945, American and allied forces in the West and Russian forces in the East occupied a continent devastated by war. As soon as the Russians made it clear that they wished to make their empire in Eastern Europe permanent, the Americans committed themselves to staying and defending the Europe that remained free. The Cold War had begun. To those born into that era the confrontation between two empires seemed eternal. My generation grew up in a world which we thought would never change. Its contours appeared as ugly and as fixed as the Berlin Wall itself. As late as 1980, no one could have dreamed that Eastern Europe would ever be free or that the Berlin Wall would come down. No one would have predicted the amazing sequence of events that then ensued: Solidarity in Poland, a Polish Pope, Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, the emergence of glasnost in Russia and the sudden disintegration of a once implacable and self-confident Communist empire.

During the Cold War, the foreign policy of both the United States and Canada was dominated by containment and deterrence of the Soviet Union and the defense of Europe. The rest of the world's problems were seen through a Eurocentric lens. Cuban penetration into Angola, for example, was deemed a threat to the US-Soviet strategic balance in the main battlefield of Europe. Vietnam mattered to the West, again, as a front in a war in Europe. Looking back, this way of thinking seems as much of a relic as the nuclear bunkers built to protect our leaders from Soviet missiles.



by Michael Ignatieff

Since 1989, we have been plunged into a new era whose contours are still taking shape. Only some elements of the new order can be seen clearly. Today in North American capitals, European security has ceased to be a priority, since most people believe European security is assured. A host of subjects now compete with European matters for the attention of North Americans. China, India, Afghanistan, the Middle East, global warming, Darfur, Iran – any of these are more likely to occupy the minds of policy-makers and the public than European integration and stability in eastern Europe.

The people in the Baltic States, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria are worried about one consequence of this waning attention. These new democratic states feel they have been left alone to face an authoritarian and expansionist threat taking shape in President Putin's Russia. Under his leadership, Russia is armed with nuclear weapons; its economy is riding the rise in oil and commodity prices; and it is run by a new elite who came of age under authoritarian regimes and whose commitment to democracy is questionable. This is not to deny that President Putin's Russia is a better place to live in than either Gorbachev or Yeltsin's Russia. A strong majority of Russians support President Putin's regime since he has restored Russian prestige while affording Russians new opportunities to make their fortunes, enjoy travel overseas and think what they like, provided that they keep their opinions private. Yet thoughtful Russians worry that the political and cultural freedoms they have enjoyed may be sacrificed in the name of expansionism abroad and repression at home. They point to the corrupt linkages between state functionaries and private entrepreneurs, the brutality of the war in Chechnya and the murder of opposition journalists and dissidents, either by private groups with the collusion of the state or directly by state authorities. Nobody can be sure where Russia is headed, but few are confident that it is heading in the right direction.

So the first question about the transatlantic relationship that has opened up since 1989 is whether the freedom of eastern Europe is really secure; and whether Russia will make the transition to democratic stability. If North Americans decide that Europe no longer matters to them, western Europe - the European Union - will have to confront Russia alone.

Challenges to European freedom do not come solely from Russia. Many of the eastern European democracies are struggling against their own domestic temptations. Demagogues keep urging voters to revert back to the false path of authoritarian populism. The Orange Revolution in Ukraine is not secure. Poland has an authoritarian tradition to which it may revert. Steady engagement by western Europe and by North Americans is crucial if the long transition to democracy is to be completed successfully.

After 1989, the happy illusion persisted that freedom, democracy and markets were irresistible and that their victory in Europe - and elsewhere - was assured. In 2008, such an idea seems deluded. Faith in markets, freedom and democracy depends on continued economic success, and economic progress in eastern Europe has been slow. Democratic stability in eastern Europe depends on security guarantees. The European Union and NATO have responded to the challenges of maintaining freedom through a strategy of expansion right up to the borders of Russia. Eastern European countries cannot develop as market societies and as democracies unless they have stable security guarantees from their more prosperous neighbors. States like Serbia need to know that they have an eventual home in Europe, if they are to remain as democracies.

For now, the US and Canada are committed to defending and consolidating European freedom. NATO remains in business. The Partnership for Peace with Russia and non-NATO states remains in working order. As long as Russia leaves the Baltic states alone, as long as it does not seek to extend its influence through Serbia southward into the Balkans, as long as Russia itself remains stable and democratic, European freedom and security seem secure. But this will remain true only as long as North America stays engaged.

## II

The future of European freedom depends on more than security guarantees. The North Atlantic relationship is too important to be left to politicians and generals. It depends also on cultural and human ties, and these ties are less strong than they were during the Cold War. If asked what countries matter to their future most, more North Americans are likely to reply China and India, than they are to reply Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Hungary or Romania.

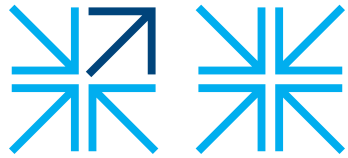
North American societies used to attract most of their immigration from Europe, and so family and cultural ties were strong. Today, the leading countries sending people to Canada, for example, are China and India, not the countries of Europe. Inevitably, the close connection that North America has always enjoyed with Europe will have to compete with other ties of family and culture that now link North America to Asia.

The transatlantic relationship can be made stronger if governments invest in sustaining networks of emerging young leaders. Canada and the US would do well to invest heavily in scholarships, exchanges and training opportunities that allow Russians and eastern Europeans to work and live in north American society: in universities, technical colleges, banks, industrial and commercial companies. The traffic should be two-way: Canadians and Americans should be encouraged - with grants and government programs - to build professional networks of their own in eastern Europe and Russia.

Leaving people to make their own networks is usually the most efficient way. Give people market incentives to communicate and they will do so. Market opportunities have attracted Europeans to work and train in north American market centers. Still there is more work to be done. Agencies like the British Council, the Goethe Institut, and the Alliance Francaise are right to target their efforts at creating leadership networks across the Atlantic and across the divide that still separates eastern and western European youth. The aim here should be to create networks of common interests so that when this generation takes over the reins of power, East and West understand each other and share a common commitment to peace, freedom, markets and democracy. Current visa restrictions should be eased so that eastern Europeans can study and work in North America. Bringing down these barriers will help to build a new transatlantic relationship, not just between governments and officials, but between citizens.

It would be a great thing, for example, if Parliaments on both sides of the Atlantic took the trouble to invest in intern programs for eastern Europeans so that they get to see democracy at work, warts and all. In the early years of the democratic transition, western governments - as well as associations of lawyers and jurists - provided helpful advice to eastern European regimes setting up independent judiciaries, independent election commissions and corruption-free police forces. This work needs to continue.

Freedom is not yet assured from the Atlantic to the Urals. We have a lot of work to do, and the key work is to anchor the taste for freedom in the generation born since the end of the Cold War, the generation of eastern Europeans too young to remember what tyranny felt like, but not yet old enough to know that the defense of freedom is a citizen's life work.



## III

We will do a better job of sustaining freedom in emerging democracies, and in societies emerging from war and conflict, if we recognize that there is no single model of freedom, no single template for democracy. We do freedom harm if we think it comes in one size that fits all. American capitalism is not European capitalism. American democracy is not European democracy. If we are going to promote a common culture of freedom across the north Atlantic, and if we are going to anchor it in eastern Europe and in Russia, we had better show some respect for the political cultures in which we wish freedom to take root. Freedom always takes on the contours of the society in which it is nurtured. The imposition of imported freedoms always fails. Westerners often forget that they have no single model of freedom to export, because their various democracies have never lived according to a single model.

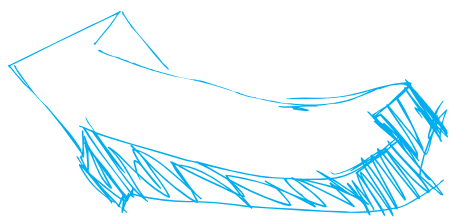
As a Canadian, living next door to the United States, it is the differences in our political culture that I want to defend. Canadians believe that every citizen has a right to access medical care. In this we are closer to Europe than we are to American style health care. Americans believe in a right to bear arms. Canadians believe in gun control. The Canadian constitution entrenches rights to educate your children and secure government services in either official language. The US remains officially unilingual.

This Canadian culture of rights engenders a distinct kind of Canadian freedom in which the role of government, the place of the market in allocating public services, the balance between individual rights and collective responsibilities are all substantially different from the political culture of our friends and neighbours to the south. Canadians treasure these differences. We get along with our neighbours, and they get on with us, when we acknowledge rather than suppress these differences.

The right way to foster a common commitment to freedom across the north Atlantic is for us all to be honest about our differences. As North Americans and Europeans talk through their shared culture of political liberty, they quickly discover, for example, that they do not agree about how to reconcile religious liberty with political freedom, or what place to accord expressions of religious conviction in the political sphere. Most liberal democracies practice some form of separation between church and state, but beneath this starting commonality there are startling differences.

In the United States, there are no confessional bars to public office and there is no public funding of confessional schools and yet it has become an informal condition of public office to affirm belief in a Supreme Creator. Such a condition for public office does not exist next door in Canada. Indeed, speaking about the Creator in public creates embarrassment in Canadian political culture. Whether or not this is a good thing is not the point. The point is, our public cultures are different and these differences should be celebrated and not suppressed. Similar differences exist between European countries. A Prime Minister of Great Britain has recently spoken about his religious faith, but a President of France would take care not to do so. Frequent expressions of public religiosity might not be popular in many European countries, while in the United States, public religiosity is the norm.

As we seek to promote a common culture of freedom across the Atlantic, it would be wise to explore these differences rather than pretend they do not exist. When we seek to promote freedom in emerging democracies, we should pay some respect to their differences as well. Western democratic societies promote freedom in other countries without taking the care to explain how different freedom can be in each society. Religion will play a larger role in the public square in Poland than it will in France, a nation that is heir to a secular and anti-religious revolution.

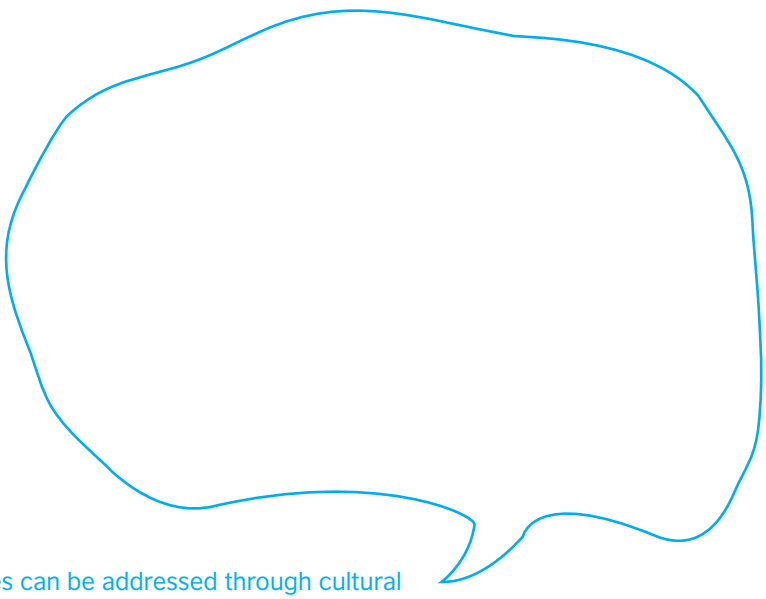


How France confronts the claims of religious identity among Muslim women will not be how British democracy confronts the same challenge. In France, a tradition of Jacobin citizenship will be more resistant to the claims of religious difference in public life than in a British model of citizenship.

Salient differences have opened up in how European and north American democracies accommodate the right to affirm religious identity in public. Wearing headscarves in French state schools is banned. In the schools of Canada, wearing headscarves is commonplace. North American societies, with long histories of immigration, may be more accommodating of religious difference than European ones.

North Americans and Europeans do face common institutional challenges - maintaining funding for our increasingly expensive public health systems, for example - but until we seek to find out what has worked in each other's jurisdictions, we cannot learn from each other.

Globalization appears to have paradoxical results. We spend a lot of time talking and less time listening, and we know so much about each other, that we seem to have lost curiosity about each other. There is even a risk that globalization will render us more politically parochial and provincial, as we seek refuge from a complex world within our clichéd and worn out images of each other. Anything that organizations like the British Council can do to facilitate institutional exchange and learning among the young leaders who run our society would be welcome. Otherwise, our societies will be like ships passing in the night on the north Atlantic.



What challenges can be addressed through cultural interaction, as opposed to government action?
*www.britishcouncil.org/tn2020-comments*

# IV

Thus far I have encouraged a rebirth of the north Atlantic relationship on the premise that we share a common, though pluralistic culture of freedom and that the work of promoting this culture of freedom is not yet completed. Thus far I have worked on the tacit assumption that Europe and north America are allies. What happens to this relationship if we become economic and strategic rivals?

The north Atlantic relationship began in tutelage and dependency. Europe was on its back. The enemy of freedom was at the gate. Europe needed America and submitted to a relationship based on dependency and subordination. America was wise enough not to exploit this dependency. Europe never became a colony and as the economic miracle unfolded, Europe began to regain its independence, first nation by nation, and then by the 1980's and 1990's as a new global force in its own right, the European Union.

Now the dependency is over. Europe is an economic giant. The euro rivals the dollar as a currency of exchange in international markets. Already, European companies have commanding leads over north American companies in key areas - business services in Britain, oil and energy in Norway, telecommunications in Finland. Personal incomes in most western European countries now rival those in North America, and if the quality of public goods - hospitals, roads, schools and public transport - is factored in, most western Europeans enjoy a higher standard of living than most North Americans. Europe also rivals North America as a global center for popular culture: Milan, London and Paris are as important as New York in the fashion industry; and London, Manchester and several other European cities now rival Nashville or New York in the global music industry. The predominance of America in popular culture is now over.

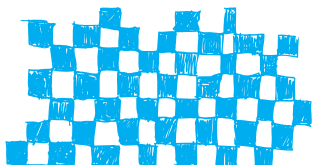
European economic and cultural power is offset by strategic weakness. Europe still does not speak or act with a common political will. Young European elites support further integration but sovereignty dies hard. Elites may favor further integration but stubborn resistance remains, especially among those who feel that they pay the price of integration - workers in declining industries, farmers, small businessmen and intellectuals attached to national linguistic and cultural traditions.

It is too early to know whether the forces of continental integration will win out over the forces of region and nation. But it is a safe bet to assume that these forces will continue to battle for the European future for a generation to come. As a result, Europe is unlikely to speak with a single political voice on the world stage any time soon.

Europe also lacks a strategic military capability. Europeans are less willing to spend money on defense than the United States. Indeed since 1945, Europe has rebuilt its economic strength by passing the costs of its defense to its American ally. This bargain worked for both sides: the Americans gained strategic pre-eminence and the Europeans could afford to spend their surpluses on hospitals, roads, schools and agricultural subsidies. The Europeans have purchased economic power at the price of strategic weakness. The question is whether this situation will continue.

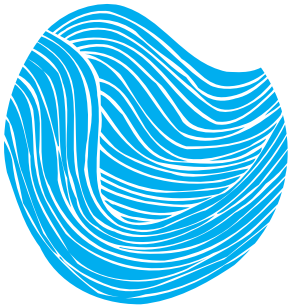
Many European electorates continue to resist spending more on defense. Other countries, Britain and France, spend more because their political elites believe that military might confers political power. It is not clear whether the high spenders or low spenders will win over European opinion at large.

The strategic problem with low spending is that Europe is being asked to support military operations in places like Afghanistan, Darfur and elsewhere and finds itself unable to respond, or if able to respond, only by strictly limiting what their forces can do. As a result, Europe is unable to play a role in global security that corresponds to its economic and cultural influence.



Many young European voters want Europe to play a role in solving humanitarian crises in Africa and Asia and understand that this requires military force. A Europe that is unwilling to invest in the military and unable to provide security in humanitarian crises will then face a conflict between its conscience and its capabilities.

A tempting way out of this conflict is to blame the Americans. They may have the capabilities, but they lack our conscience. This has become a common refrain. The American conscience is unpopular in Europe because of Iraq and because of the Bush Administration`s unwillingness to act on climate change. Yet the roots of this anger at the United States run deeper than the policies of George Bush. If one stands back, it's hard to know whether America is actually more unpopular now than it was in the Vietnam era, or before that during the Cold War, when Communist Parties in Western Europe shaped a whole generation of European intellectuals with their anti-American propaganda. America has always aroused resentment because it has capabilities that Europe lacks, and because it discharges responsibilities that Europe envies. Some of this anti-Americanism, in other words, is an exercise in bad faith. Europeans prefer the easy grievance and the easy excuse of blaming the Americans to the hard work of developing capabilities to match their own conscience.

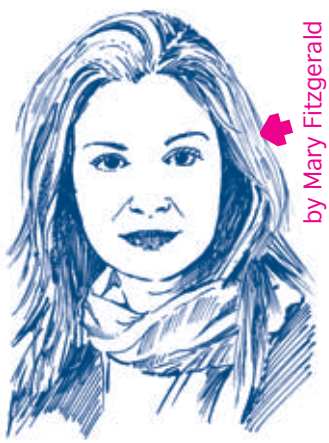


Europe now rivals the United States as an economic and cultural power. Yet some of its elites continue to promote a culture of resentful inferiority and bad faith towards its ally. It is long past time to get over this. Instead of complaining about American power, young Europeans should set about building a Europe with the capabilities to match its conscience.

So the dialogue across the north Atlantic will be challenging but exciting. Americans will have to understand that their idea of liberty is not universal. Europe has a plethora of different cultures of liberty. These differences within Europe and between Europe and the United States should not be lamented. They should be celebrated and explored since they are both the source of the deep ties that unite the two continents as well as the source of many of our fundamental disagreements.

Americans should listen more carefully to Europeans, free of that grating sense of superiority that is now a relic of a vanished era of American hegemony. Europe for its part will have to wake up to the gap between its capabilities and its conscience. Canadians, the party in between, will side sometimes with the Americans, sometimes with the Europeans. The debate will be important, and it will take us to a very different place from the one we were in in 1945. A new situation in the translatlantic relationship is apparent: a resurgent Europe is now a giant in the world. America is less dominant and less sure of its future role. Both America and Europe are custodians of cultures of liberty which are now spreading around the world. But the future of this culture of liberty is not assured, not even in eastern Europe. The common defense of liberty remains the grand project which should unite the leaders of the future on both sides of the Atlantic. These are just some of the challenges that face the next generation of European and American leaders. They can face them as long as they understand the road they have traveled since 1945. I hope I have helped to mark out that road for the next generation.

# A VIEW FROM IRELAND



by Mary Fitzgerald

It was the largest protest seen in Ireland in decades. In February 2003 an estimated 100,000 people thronged the streets of Dublin to voice their opposition to the war on Iraq. The demonstration marked the first time Irish people had registered their disapproval of US government actions in such numbers. To understand the significance of that day, one needs to appreciate the unique place Ireland occupies in the transatlantic conversation.

Ireland's relationship with the US is a long and complex one. The history of the two countries has been interwoven over centuries of immigration and shared experience. In many ways we are part of the same extended family – almost 40 million Americans claim some Irish ancestry – and that closeness has led to deep social, economic, political and cultural ties. US investment played a major role in the economic boom that transformed Ireland over the last decade. Northern Ireland was nudged towards peace with help from across the Atlantic. The American Dream has fired the imagination of many of Ireland's writers, musicians and artists. Tens of thousands of Irish people travel to the US every year for tourism, work or study.

It is a relationship Ireland's then deputy Prime Minister Mary Harney attempted to pin down in a seminal speech in 2000: "Geographically we are closer to Berlin than Boston," she said. "Spiritually we are probably a lot closer to Boston than Berlin."

That juxtaposition of Boston and Berlin kicked off a debate that still resonates today, capturing the ambiguities of modern Ireland as it imagines the future and oscillates between the economic, cultural and political pull of the US to the west and an increasingly unified Europe to its east. What do we want – an American-style economy? The European social model? Or a mix of the two?

While Ireland's connection with the United States remains strong, the nature of the relationship is changing because Ireland is changing. Emigration to America - for so long a vital link between the two countries - declined significantly from the 1990s on, as Ireland rose to become one of the wealthiest countries in the EU. This unprecedented prosperity brought with it a new confidence about Ireland's place in the world. The deference and sense of dependence that had so often characterized the Irish transatlantic relationship has been replaced by an increasing willingness to criticize the US.

Ireland has become more ethnically diverse too. High levels of immigration in the last decade mean one in ten people living in Ireland was born outside the country. These new arrivals view the US through a different lens and do not share the common history that has bound the two countries so closely together in the past.

Once upon a time spending the summer working in the US on a J1 visa was practically a rite of passage for Irish students. But in recent years the number applying for J1 visas is a fraction of what it used to be. Some believe this is due to increased entry restrictions following 9/11; others say Ireland's economic boom has played a role; but even the US ambassador has conceded that anti-American feeling may have contributed to the decline. Whatever the reasons, it means far more young Irish are growing up without the up-close-and-personal knowledge of the US that comes from summers spent waiting tables in New Jersey, an experience no amount of watching the OC or Grey's Anatomy re-runs can ever replace.

There is also a sense that perhaps some of the old ties between Irish America and Ireland are beginning to fray or at least loosen. Since the September 11 attacks, members of the Irish diaspora in the US have voiced dismay at what they perceive to be growing anti-American sentiment in the old country. They complain of hostile media commentary and bristle at Irish criticism of US policy. "When did Ireland become an anti-American hotbed?" one Fox News presenter who has an Irish grandmother asked two years ago. "What's the matter with the Irish? What happened to that century-long love affair with America? It appears to be over."

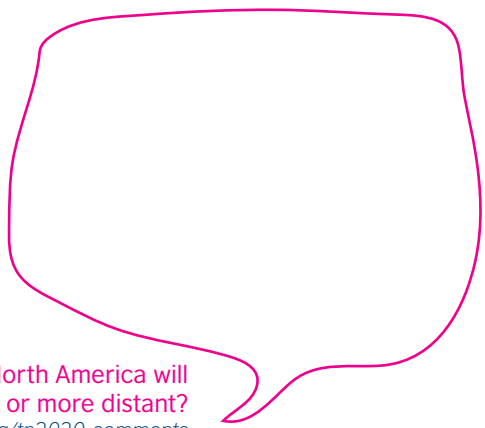
It is difficult to gauge levels of anti-Americanism in Ireland. Organizations such as Pew have not included it in surveys which register consistently high levels of animosity towards the US in many other European countries. But the issues that draw criticism of the US in Ireland are the same ones cited in Europe – Iraq, Guantanamo, climate change and the so-called 'war on terror'. There are signs that the disconnect between government policy and public attitudes to the US reported in other European countries also exists to a certain extent in Ireland. An example is the controversy over the use of Shannon airport as a refuelling stop for the US military. Public opinion has swung widely on the issue since 2001 - one of the most recent polls showed that 58 percent were opposed.

But while people may shake their fists at the Bush administration and snipe at the US in pub conversations and op-ed columns, American culture is deeply embedded in Ireland – as it is elsewhere in Europe – and there is an admiration, albeit sometimes grudging, for the idea of America, its exuberance, energy and exhilarating sense of possibility. Nevertheless, at a time when the transatlantic relationship between Europe and the US is considered by many to be at its lowest ebb, some wonder if the fissure goes deeper than criticism of Bush and his war. We may share the market and democracy but is it possible to speak of common values when there are marked differences between Europe and the US on issues such as the death penalty, gun control and the place of religion within society?

A debate like this requires both Europeans and Americans to move beyond stereotypes. There is a tendency in Europe to flatten representations of America into a one-dimensional caricature, ignoring its vastness and diversity. But Americans also fall into that trap, often viewing Europe as little more than a quaint chocolate box holiday destination instead of the growing power it is today.

So whither the transatlantic relationship? If a note of ambivalence can creep into a population so closely linked to the US as Ireland's is, what does that say about the future of relations between Europe and America?

Whatever our differences, most would agree that more unites us than divides us when compared with any other actor on the international stage. The question is whether we can build on that and draw closer together or allow ourselves to drift further apart.



Do you think Europe and North America will become closer or more distant?
*www.britishcouncil.org/tn2020-comments*

# COMING OF AGE

America's hegemonic position has been seen as a demonstration of its internal strength and resilience – testimony to the essential adequacy of its political method. Yet it has also bred a complacency veiling recently revealed problems incipient in the structure of the American system:

(1) the excessive impact of the fundamentalist religiosity of Middle Americans upon the US political system has colluded in pushing the country on a misshapen crusade against international terrorism. Far from bringing the expected results, it now generates immense costs, leaving the US economy to cope with them for generations to come;

(2) a Westphalian-style foreign policy, grounded in a Hobbesian-Straussian understanding of the nature of international relations, continues to be dictated by the need to secure energy supplies in their traditional, increasingly scarce form;

(3) a reversal in the US economy which, once most productive, has turned from the production of commodities to focus on generating financial or banking 'products'. Already in 2000, the finance sector amounted to 20 percent of the US GDP, whereas the share of the manufacturing sector in GDP fell to 14.5 percent. Due to the unforeseen consequences of neo-liberal monetarism, money, an instrument for organizing the production, distribution and consumption of commodities, has become the chief commodity in itself. Bubbles of success have brought inflated wealth to a few, yet also claimed their victims. Largely unsupported by material embodiment, they have deprived many Americans of their savings and endangered the stability of the US economy in a way that has now raised an ominous question mark over the global function of their currency.

Thus, in a surprisingly brief time-span the fear of all-too-powerful America is now becoming a fear of its imminent weakening. The emergence of America as uncontested victor of six decades of wrestling with the Soviet bloc may now gradually be turning into a grand failure, promising an uncertain future to the world at large. The political and moral legitimacy of the United States are not the only victims of this success-turning-into-failure. The US insistence that Europe jointly defends the West and its Christian values in the name of the unity of the West under American guidance has little appeal for post-religious Europeans. Western unity itself may thereby be imperiled.

United Europe, born out of protracted negotiations, is desperately slow to face some fundamental problems of a structural and geopolitical nature. Though world-transformation is now faster than ever before, time in Europe passes at a much slower pace. European inability to address the conflict in the Balkans; to agree on a common foreign and defence policy; to decide which continent the future of Turkey is to belong to; and whether Europe is to have its own military force or not, together with its obliviousness to the problems of rising China and India – all these may be signs of a withering of internal forces, evidence at least that the allegedly unified Europe remains divisive, divided and weak.

by Adam Chmielewski

Europe's similarly scarce energy resources force it to depend on an unpredictable Russia. Though now inhabited by nearly 500 million people, Europe is facing an imminent demographic crisis: in four decades its population will shrink to barely 3 percent of the world population. The extension of the average life-span is gradually turning Europe into a land of pensioners requiring many more years' pension support along with more extensive and expensive health care. Europe will need immigrants to contribute to its economy, which may only be brought about at the price of even more disruption to tolerant European customs and laws. The egalitarian demands of labour slow down European growth, create inflationary pressure and inhibit investment into new jobs. The European attempt to exceed the United States in inventiveness, as formulated in the Lisbon Strategy, is already an undisputed flop. Twelve rather backward new member countries exacerbate the problems of the distribution of wealth, complicating even more Europe's already inefficient decision-making processes, and bringing new systemic problems to the management of this increasingly incoherent colossus.

Yet Europe's protracted deliberative processes are an expression of its multinational nature: an essence of the European method. Though irritatingly sluggish, this has also not insignificant virtues. Deliberations enforced by its composition make the European community more resistant to the sway of the moment. Debates in Europe, though divisive, have, paradoxically, the beneficial result of bringing moderation to occasional eruptions of extremity in the member states. They force politicians to develop argumentative rather than populist skills, and to act in a more mature way. As a result, the quality of European politicians is noticeably, if only slightly, higher than in perennially adolescent America. The European Union may not seem much of a role-model in conflict resolution, yet it is a more reliable safeguard of world stability than that offered by the US, where people enjoy their mobility at the price of being dispossessed of the stabilising influence of their original communal identities, and are, as a result, more easily swayed by reckless political leadership and irresponsible media.

The openness of European debates keeps them alive with ever new issues. Their intensity makes it difficult to sweep European problems under any carpet, and they are faced, if not solved, with increasing intellectual courage. Aware of its energy deficits and increasing dependence on Russia, Europe is imaginatively searching for new environment-friendly resources while the US, gripped by its oil-car-and-banking industry, continues unabated its bellicose search for oil. Learning the lessons from an erroneous multiculturalism which extended recognition to immigrant groups while denying full rights to immigrant individuals, some European countries are reversing this policy, demanding from incomers more respect for European customs and laws, while some are offering incentives to families to have more babies. In view of the dwindling efficacy of US policies, Europe, coming of age, is becoming more serious about its common foreign and defence policy.

The pressures of the present moment demonstrate the inadequacy of a world-system dominated by a sole hegemonic power. It is in the vital interests of America that Europe successfully becomes the State of Europe, sharing with it responsibility for the world on an equal footing. Sovereign Europe will not lead to a clash of two unilateralisms, any more than it will signal the dissolution of the West: it could mean the West standing firm on both of its feet, and able to take a step towards applying the European method to a global scenario.

# FOR A FUTURE BIGGER THAN OUR PAST

By Irshad Manji

Probably no phenomenon today is more global in reach than the mass migration of people. When I say 'global', I am not measuring by simple distance. I am measuring by daily impact.

Whether individuals may cross borders safely, permanently and with dignity is affecting everything from how quickly you can find a doctor, to how hard you must work for a university seat, to how much you are paying for an apartment, to how soon a fast food franchise will appear near your apartment. Migration is the human heart of 'globalization' – the movement of people, technology, money and, inevitably, cultural influence.

This year, we are witnessing globalization accelerate in a weird way. It is not just that American culture is invading European life. Rather, Europe is exporting its attitudes to America – at least when it comes to immigration.

US presidential nominees are debating whether to keep out the very people whom the Statue of Liberty proclaims she wants: the poor and the tired. Historically, America has loved its wretched, starving newcomers. They have been the only ones desperate enough to believe in the American dream. By believing in it, many have indeed achieved it.

However, these potential millionaires pose a political problem. They may be tired, but they still have the energy to toil twenty hours a day for little pay. To America's bloated middle class, that is a threat. While the unions complain that immigrants are undercutting wages, the non-unionized charge that immigrants are stealing jobs from 'real Americans'. Ethnicity creeps into economics and makes for a very European fear of the future.

Still, globalization distributes power in several directions. Which means immigrants are fighting back. Be they Mexicans in the US or Moroccans in the EU, I already hear them expressing a message of defiance:

*You need us as much as we need you! When we are allowed to work legally, we can pay our taxes. We can finance social assistance, hospital beds and pensions — all the things that you first-world types need because of your own low birthrates, aging populations and expectations of material comfort.*

*In short, our contract with you is to keep the welfare state intact without losing our sense of self. If you recognized all that we can contribute, then we would not have to express rage at a society that demonizes us. For your own sake, give us jobs instead of grief.*

I sympathize with this argument, even as I recognize that Muslim communities in Britain, France and elsewhere have internal problems to combat.

My sympathy stems from the fact that I am a refugee to Canada. With my family, I fled Idi Amin's Uganda in 1972, settling in Vancouver. Throughout childhood, I watched my mother sweat for the next dollar and delay gratification – to the point where my sisters and I spent every Christmas vacation alone because mum, a manual laborer, earned double the wages during those 'holiday' weeks. She slaved and saved so that we would have to do neither. Mum taught us the dignity of making our future bigger than our past.

To be honest, I am not sure I would have absorbed that message had I been raised in western Europe, where family lineage often matters more than personal initiative. Where one comes from too frequently outweighs where one would like to go. No wonder successive generations of Muslim laborers who have been living in continental Europe continue to be called immigrants, despite being bona fide citizens.

In North America, the opposite is typically true. What makes somebody belong is not so much her skin color or faith as her willingness to compete and accomplish. To be sure, many African-Americans and Aboriginal people would disagree. Yet many more Asians would agree. Just ask the Indian and Chinese newcomers who comprised one-third of Silicon Valley's scientists and engineers during the 1990s technology boom.

Fast forward ten years later. As incredible as it sounds in the era of the Patriot Act and Guantanamo Bay, dozens of young Muslims in Britain have whispered to me that they would rather live in America because of how it treats social status. There, they say, you do not have to be born into status; you can still earn it. You are not merely a Muslim; you have the opportunity to create and re-create yourself. What I hear them articulating is the difference between being an identity protectionist and being an identity entrepreneur.

Such romantic perceptions of America appear to be shared by Muslims who actually live there: a 2007 Pew research survey of Muslim Americans showed that the vast majority love their communities, have close non-Muslim friends and have not experienced anything they would call discrimination on US soil. One can only dream of such findings in the United Kingdom and across the English Channel.

If earning your keep is the key to dignity, then Europe will soon understand that egalitarianism is the wrong ideal for both immigrants and their host societies. Egalitarianism is a fancy word for equality of result. While equality of result sounds compassionate, it is only a shortcut to compassion.

On a recent visit to Copenhagen, I repeatedly heard the joke that 'our borders are closed but our coffers are open'. Denmark's unions have managed to stop immigrants from entering certain trades so that workers can preserve their high incomes. But in an egalitarian gesture, union leaders convinced the Danish government to give skilled, unemployed immigrants almost the same amount of money that workers are earning. That way, they assumed, discrimination would be avoided.

It turns out that egalitarianism itself is fuelling discrimination. Young, jobless Muslims tend to feel stripped of their ambition. Employers have not developed an incentive to take them seriously. In 2006, the Democratic Muslims of Denmark formed to fight radical Islam. They do more than denounce reactionary imams. Among their strategies is to organize career fairs for Muslim youth who need hope.

Perhaps the United States and western Europe should take a hint from the old Islamic empire. Between the eighth and fourteenth centuries, Muslim civilization led the world in innovation precisely because it engaged the imagination of outsiders. The harvest? Several hundred years of creativity in agriculture, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, commerce, maths, even fashion. It is when the empire became insular to 'protect' itself that the motivation to remain robust, and the talent to do so, disappeared.

That is why my heart breaks at the growing Europeanization of the US. I gladly acknowledge that Americans have much to learn from their European cousins on issues such as women's rights and the environment. But if some US presidential aspirants are going to tell foreign arrivals that they cannot work hard and stand tall, then they should send America's most enduring immigrant, the Statue of Liberty, back to her native land. France, like much of Europe, could use some of her spirit over the coming years.

by Heather Gonzales

# PARTNERS FOR A BROAD ENGAGEMENT IN CHANGE

It's impossible to talk about the evangelical tradition in the United States without mentioning its shaping European forces. The movement arose from the direct influence of English Puritanism, Continental Pietism, and High Church Anglican traditions of rigorous and innovative organization. When evangelicalism appeared upon the American scene in the eighteenth century, it did so as part of interconnected revival movements that developed in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and Britain's North American colonies. What was known in Britain as the Evangelical Revival was called the Great Awakening in North America, and birthed a religious movement that now claims nearly one quarter of the American population.

John and Charles Wesley, George Whitfield, and John Bunyan were all European and all central to the American evangelical story. European influences touched not only our theology, but also our social action, which was inspired and informed by leaders like William Wilberforce and William Booth. The influence of these leaders, and the homegrown American leaders they motivated, soon made evangelicalism a staple of American life and a central moral compass in our struggles for abolition, temperance, and women's rights. Undoubtedly, evangelicals continue to influence one another across the Atlantic. American evangelicals admire C.S. Lewis, John Stott, and N.T. Wright, while Europeans are very familiar with the likes of Rick Warren, Bill Hybels, Philip Yancey and Tim LaHaye.

Yet somewhere along the way, the serious, collaborative evangelical connection with Europe weakened. In many respects, Europeans have understood the term 'evangelical' somewhat differently from the way it was understood in the States. While 'evangelical' is often used in Europe as a synonym for Protestant, in the States it took on a narrower connotation for a Protestant subsection that held strongly to the authority of scripture, the centrality of Jesus Christ and the need for personal conversion. Beyond theological nuances, however, perhaps the growing tendency to equate evangelicalism with a conservative social and political agenda was what most distinguished the American movement from its European counterpart.

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), the primary evangelical organizing body in the States, is a member of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), which includes the Evangelical Alliance UK and other national coalitions throughout Europe and the rest of world. But beyond cursory cooperative efforts within this worldwide alliance, and the outreach of individual churches, there has been little recent formal cooperation between what seem to be natural allies.

Nevertheless, there is hope for trans-Atlantic evangelical collaboration. The face of evangelicalism in the States and in Europe is changing in at least two ways which may help lay the foundation for renewed cooperative efforts.

First, evangelicals in the States are reconsidering their own identity. For the past several decades the typical American evangelical has focused largely on personal growth in their theology and conservative action in their politics. But today the tide is turning, and evangelicalism is reclaiming a heritage of broad engagement. In 2004, the NAE issued a landmark document, For the Health of the Nation: An Evangelical Call to Civic Responsibility, summoning evangelicals to social engagement across a broad spectrum of issues, as embodied by our evangelical forefathers. The document, signed by the full spectrum of American evangelical leadership, calls for action on issues ranging from protecting the sanctity of life and nurturing family life, to caring for creation, seeking justice for the poor, and protecting religious freedom, among others.

For many of our evangelical brethren in Europe, for whom a broad array of issues has long been a priority, these changes are good news. The past association of the term 'evangelical' with conservative politics tainted the term for Europeans who were uncomfortable with a title that too often implied Republicanism,unilateralism, and a narrow focus on 'family issues'. There is evidence, beyond the formal NAE document, that those stereotypes are falling by the wayside.

For example, recent polling by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life shows that American evangelicals are far more open to multilateralism (75% of evangelical respondents) than stereotypes portray. And evangelicals are raising their voices on issues ranging from sex trafficking, to climate change, and the genocide in Darfur, leading a New York Times columnist to dub them the 'new internationalists'.

Secondly, churches on both sides of the Atlantic are facing a worldwide demographic shift in global Christianity. As Philip Jenkins outlines in The Next Christendom, the demographic center of Christianity is moving from north to south. Soon, Christians in the south will far outnumber their brethren in both Europe and North America. This shift is also creating new realities close to home. In the States, minority groups, particularly Hispanics, are a major source of church growth, while Africans and Asians have started sending missionaries to North America. Similarly, in Europe the most significant church growth is found in ethnic minority churches, where African, Asian and other ethnic groups are laying a new foundation for the evangelical movement.

Evangelicals in Europe and the States find themselves in a unique moment, as they both learn to navigate rapidly changing church demographics, while simultaneously coming to see the biblical mandate for engagement in similar ways. The confluence of these shifts may serve as a springboard for cooperative efforts. Europeans and Americans can jointly apply a shared broad agenda (from human rights and care for the poor, to peace, religious freedom and beyond) in service to the growing church in the global south and ethnic minority churches in their own backyards.

Partnerships in service are already developing, as young evangelicals from the States are not heading to Europe for vacation, but instead are joining young Europeans in going to the farthest corners of the earth to put feet to their convictions about AIDS, trafficking, poverty, peace and the environment. And leaders on both continents have thrown their support behind collaborative campaigns like the Micah Challenge, which aims to end poverty worldwide. Additionally, leaders on both sides of the Atlantic are looking to one another for guidance in these times of change. Young evangelical pastors and activists from the States, like Shane Claiborne, Rob Bell, and Mark Driscoll are learning from and helping equip their counterparts in Europe, while Willow Creek Church has hosted European versions of their leadership conference.

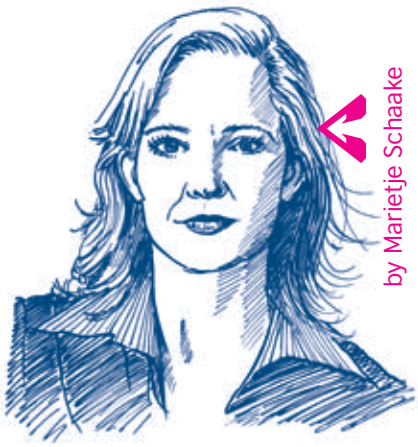
Granted, sustained cooperation won't be easy. The American evangelical subculture is strong and independent, and it may be challenging to convince evangelicals of the need to cooperate with their European brethren. Yet if evangelicals can come together across the Atlantic, they will avoid duplication of efforts, strengthen the churches and the communities they serve, and offer faithful examples of God's healing presence to the poor, the oppressed and the vulnerable around the world.

# A STATE OF BEWILDERMENT: DUTCH FEAR OF FEAR ITSELF

In the light of 9/11 and the murders of politician Pim Fortuyn and movie director Theo van Gogh, fear has become a common sentiment among the Dutch. Yet this fear, and hatred of 'the other', is expressed openly only by a few Muslim extremists and those on the far right.

Although the next Dutch generation of politicians and youngsters are actively participating in public debates, these are to a large extent stifled by political correctness. The anonymous Internet is the favourite resort of those amongst the masses who wish to honestly vent their hatred. The result is that a proactive, content-based debate to formulate a balanced future for the Netherlands is sitting astride a reactionary undertow that threatens to undermine it. Frustrations build up below the radar.

In this landscape, the right wing parliamentarian Geert Wilders has announced that he is about to air a controversial movie on Islam and the Koran. We stand poised, therefore, on the eve of an escalation in the conflict between freedom of expression and freedom of religion. Anxiously, we wonder whether mainstream society and the younger generation are able to channel such fears and frustrations safely while guaranteeing these two critical freedoms.



by Marietje Schaake

With such intense sentiments boiling away on a domestic level, the mood in the Netherlands is too inward looking to register much by way of European and Transatlantic perspectives. The Dutch situation is unique yet in many respects it is exemplary for other western European countries.

## Pre-emption

The aftermath of 9/11 and the two political murders set the tone for a new era in the Netherlands. These successive traumas contributed to a new preoccupation with questions about the position of ethnic and religious minorities in Dutch society. The resulting uncertainty and fear have raised fundamental questions about Dutch identity, values and our future. Growing tensions between those who are ethnically Dutch and 'Muslim immigrants' are dictating the terms of a polarized political agenda. They have hollowed out the political middle ground. Attempts are being made to redefine Dutch core values.

For such a redefinition to be successful, a proactive, meaningful public debate is vital. But this has proved very difficult. Populism and one-liners on how to deal with 'Islam and the integration of Muslims' dominate the headlines. Particularly now, the tension created as we await the next imminent event in what has been quite a roll call of devastation is unfurling in the form of a 'preemptive strike' by the reactionary forces.

Right wing parliamentarian Geert Wilders promises us a movie on Islam while describing the Koran as 'an inspiration for intolerance, murder and terror'. The Danish cartoon crisis serves as a daunting precedent, and the possibility of violent reactions has already provoked crisis meetings of the entire Dutch cabinet. Imams and minority groups are strategizing on how to channel responses by Muslims. Meanwhile, a group of social elites initiated a petition to stop the 'Wildering' of society, and to replace this downward spiral with respect. As no-one yet knows the content of this movie, a substantial debate should address whether parliamentarians are to be engaged in making movies at all, and on how to balance freedom of expression and religion.

The young generation has its own debating platforms, apart from speaking out through hip-hop music and art. The Dutch next generation, roughly between 15 and 25 years old today, is divided and increasingly diverse. This diversity is simultaneously met with hopes and fears, prompting the question whether enough cohesion will be secured in time to deal with such crises. While the diverse Dutch youth is generally happy with life and society, on all sides they have noticed that the tensions between majority and minority populations have grown, and they predict increases in such sentiments. How do young Dutch Muslims plan to respond to Wilders' movie?

## Headlines

In a youth centre in downtown Amsterdam the doors are barricaded by security guards and by herds of journalists setting up their cameras. One might imagine one is attending the concert of a famous rock star, or a press briefing of news of national importance. The latter is what the press hopes for as it anxiously awaits noisy altercations, threatening language and any other clue as to what will happen when Wilders' movie actually comes out.

Disappointment sets in as nothing takes place apart from politically and religiously correct talk. A 'former radical' on the panel explains that the Koran teaches Muslims to meet threats as a challenge; that those 'unknowing' cannot be blamed for their ignorant expressions. Others caution against strong reactions, as these will only confirm Wilders' allegations of the innate aggression of Muslims. A representative picture of what may happen when the movie comes out? Probably not, but then again, we don't know its content yet. The meeting does not even make next morning's headlines...

Wilders' constituency, representing 9 seats in parliament, has been largely invisible, or at least entirely overshadowed by a leader that has seized half the available limelight for such a small country. Debates on the level of citizenship including both (mainstream) Muslims and Wilders-voters have not so far been organized. Beyond headlines, our political leadership is yet to initiate deep-structural debates about values such as this shared citizenship and freedom of speech and religion. Now, the vast majority is silent, while frustration builds up just below the surface. Essentially, their real sentiments remain undercover and unidentifiable, except for those who speak out on the Internet. There, they provide all too stark a contrast with the politically correct picture painted by those who like to maintain the façade of an inclusive mainstream debate.

Numerous violent opinions vented online confirm that we are not living in a dream world. For a few hours before it was removed, YouTube aired a clip showing bullets being fired through a poster of Wilders' face, giving us advance warning of how some people with their own agendas are already taking advantage of his unseen film as an excuse to use violence. Similarly, clips on the 'Tsunami of Muslims ready to establish a caliphate in the West' are rampant.

## What's next?

Whether riots break out or whether paranoia will remain the most dramatic effect of the movie to date, there is an urgent need for moral leadership and debate in which, in the best tradition of freedom of expression, even the extreme voices can seek expression, as long as they do not advocate violence. These debates should take place on both the national and local levels. The next generation, which includes both Muslims and Wilders-voters, in particular needs to play an active part in this process. They should be encouraged to use culture and creativity in expressing themselves and to move beyond aggression.

Any new definition of Dutch identity must make its pluriform nature an explicit value. Unless we want to become a navel-gazing country, it is time to move beyond the one-liners and headlines to seize the initiative on the challenging and painful content of the issues that cause fear and uncertainty. Only when freedom of expression and freedom of religion in times of diversifying populations are addressed concretely and openly, will we be able to deal with the matters at hand. Only then, can we focus our perspectives outward again and regain the typically Dutch trait of open-mindedness that in the past allowed so many positive elements from all over the world to contribute to the shaping of Dutch identity. Time is running out to move beyond this state of bewilderment!

# BEYOND A ZERO-SUM GAME

"On major strategic and international questions today, Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus. They agree on little and understand one another less and less." ROBERT KAGAN

by Alex Evans

Robert Kagan's characterisation of Europeans as enervated wimps and Americans as warlike thugs is an inexcusable simplification, of course; but, boy, does it hold true when the world gets together to 'respond' to impending environmental disaster.

American negotiators arrive at the talks already bristling. They just *know* that they're going to be asked to sign up to some high-falutin' promises that no-one has any intention of keeping. The Europeans walk around with a 'bully me' sign around their necks and then act surprised when everyone queues up to oblige. It may not be a clash of civilizations, but it certainly is a clash of cultures and one that played out exactly as expected in Bali last year, as governments talked about talks about climate change. True to form, the European Union staked out the high ground on day one and then ceded it inch by inch. But it went worse for the Americans. They found themselves isolated and friendless, and had to run for home followed by a cacophony of decidedly undiplomatic catcalls and boos.

Expect more of the same over the next year or so. The climate problem is now urgent enough to be a major determinant of the transatlantic relationship. In the wake of Bali, we are promised summits and shindigs galore as the world struggles to agree a global deal to replace Kyoto. This will keep climate at the top of the political and news agenda. But if a global deal is signed in 2009, the fun will only just have started. Greenhouse gas emissions will need to be slashed by at least half, and probably much more, by 2050. Rich countries will be expected to make deep cuts almost immediately. A colossal and unprecedented economic realignment will therefore be needed. It's a huge task. So how will Europe and the US fare on this shifting terrain?

and David Steven

It's tempting to see good times ahead for the Europeans. After all, they've already dreamed up one insanely complex supranational institution and found it a happy home in Brussels (and Strasbourg every second Tuesday). They're thus much more likely to feel at home with a bigger badder bolder sequel to Kyoto. On top of that, and unlike the Americans, they have a plan. By agreeing to unilateral cuts in their own emissions – 20% by 2020, more if others join in – they're hoping to force the pace of a new agreement. They're also working hard to get the other Kyoto countries on board. The aim is to agree a joint position early next year, just in time to bounce a new American administration into action.

The Americans, meanwhile, are rudderless, as the world waits for Bush to see out his term. Most of the candidates to replace him are promising stronger leadership on the climate issue, something that has left many Europeans giddy with excitement. But they may be disappointed if they expect the new President to sweep them off their feet. Already in Bali, US negotiators were boasting about American leadership, while muttering darkly about others needing to 'fall in line and follow'. A new President may take a more conciliatory tone than his or her predecessor, but will be as aggressive in protecting the national interest. Otherwise, any new deal will share the fate of the last one. We all remember George Bush denouncing Kyoto as unfair to America, but few recall that Bill Clinton made no move to present it to the Senate for ratification. Even a Democrat President judged the political conditions as not right. Poor Kyoto never stood a chance.

Expect competing visions of 'fairness' to bedevil the negotiations over its successor. America is determined that China and India should do their bit. This infuriates the world's biggest countries. The rich have enjoyed years of unconstrained, high carbon growth, they argue. It's up to them to deal with the consequences. Europeans, meanwhile, resent the suggestion that the US will need a sweetener if it is to be drawn into a global deal. That, they believe, would be a reward for rejecting Kyoto. And, understandably, vulnerable countries shout the loudest. At Bali, the world's small islands threw a 'drowning our sorrows while we drown' party. With national survival at stake, they believe that economic growth should take a back seat.

With such fundamental differences, there's a good chance that an ugly competitive dynamic will come to dominate the mindset of the world's governments. If it does, climate talks are likely to develop a nasty case of 'trade round syndrome'. In theory, countries believe that free trade is in their interest, but this goes out of the window as soon as domestic lobbies take to the streets. The result is protracted and debilitating trench warfare of the type that has left Doha stranded in intensive care. Climate negotiations may well be hit as hard, as electorates recoil in horror at the scale of the change in prospect. Expect many more 'climate elections'. Governments have fallen over much less.

But this destructive dynamic is not inevitable, especially if Europe and America keep their eyes on the sizeable benefits that a stabilised climate will bring. This prize is only on offer if greenhouse gases are kept below a critical threshold and it can only be shared. We all win, or none of us do. If governments *really* believe the science, as they say they do, they must know that a global deal will come eventually, even if it takes years and a natural disaster or two for it to be signed. In that case, it is strongly in their interest to start acting now as if the deal has already been agreed upon. Early movers gain a significant advantage, as their investors make low carbon bets that will prove resilient as the carbon price rises. They also open up room for manoeuvre at a global level. We live in a world where carbon performance is becoming an increasingly important component of national competitive advantage.

A *pre-emptive* approach to climate stabilisation would allow Europeans and Americans to play to their strengths, without having to obliterate their differences. Europeans might be tempted by a major shift in taxation away from income and towards emissions for example – potentially providing a fillip for the EU's flagging competitiveness. They also have a huge incentive to expand and deepen their embryonic carbon market. This is an asset that more and more people are going to want to buy and sell. Americans, meanwhile, are beginning to sniff at huge opportunities for profit as the world switches to clean technology. A concerted drive to establish new low carbon industries could inspire the nation, evoking inevitable comparisons with JFK's pledge to put a man on the moon. For both sides, taking these steps at home will strengthen their hand abroad. It will also make it easier for them to accommodate the needs of developing countries, whose bottom line will continue to be equal rights to scarce carbon emissions and much greater assistance with clean growth technologies.

All in all, a race to the top should exert a growing attraction for both Europe and America. Neither will win if they choose to fight over climate. Even for Venusians and Martians, climate change need not be a zero sum game.

# THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW GLOBAL CULTURE IN THE IMAGINATION AGE

"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down upon that grass, the world is too full to talk about." RUMI

by Rita J. King

For those who suspect that the human family is forever doomed to perpetuate a warlike state, consider how far we've come, and how unlimited the development of consciousness might be, should we manage to dodge doomsday before the hourglass flips on the next millennium. When, not so long ago, fire was harnessed, a word may not yet have existed to describe the joy of those who captured the first flames. Now, fires burn in virtual worlds, surrounded by "avatars" who are learning, together, to become the heroes in their own constructed narratives, living in communities made up of real people from all over the world. These worlds are immersive three-dimensional platforms in which people create representations of themselves to interact with one another. Sometimes the content of such worlds is user-created, and sometimes the scene is designed and built for a chosen purpose, such as the exploration of music.

Rather than exist as an unwitting victim of circumstance, all too often unaware of the impact of having been born in a certain place at a certain time, to parents firmly nestled within particular values and socioeconomic brackets, millions of people are creating new virtual identities and meaningful relationships with others who would have remained strangers, each isolated within their respective realities. This tectonic shift in the global economy, now in its infancy, is being sparked by people such as the Muslim woman I met during my first few weeks in the virtual world, Second Life.

There's a reason why most people don't bother to break ranks with tradition, which ultimately symbolizes the collective expectations of entire cultures, together with the families and individuals composing them: fear. All her life, this woman had wanted to see what happens in a Jewish synagogue, but feared the disruptive nature of taking that step. I first met her in the sanctuary during a prayer service. For the first time in recorded human history, a new global culture based on a deeper collective consciousness is emerging. People can explore one another's belief systems fearlessly. And, just as importantly, new collective systems are being formed, based on modern needs.

For the most part, cultural revolutionaries in three-dimensional immersive platforms are ordinary people operating undercover in a way that the physical world, with its obvious indicators of race, shape, gender, age and status, refuses to allow.

Will online participatory culture change the way we communicate across borders?
*www.britishcouncil.org/tn2020-comments*

When Buddhist monks in Burma were attacked by police, hundreds of avatars gathered together in Second Life, holding hands for hours, to protest. A note card appeared on my screen to inform me of the event, and when I arrived, I decided to interview as many people as I could about why they were there and what freedom means. Over three hundred people from countries including Japan, Germany, Australia, the UK, the United States, Egypt, France, Belgium, Amsterdam, Canada and Brazil were present. Many of them uploaded snapshots of the virtual event to the Commonwealth Island group pool of the photo-sharing site, flickr. One participant passed around a note card with an explanation of the Tibetan Buddhist mantra, Om Mani Padme Hum:

*Think of it as a phrase which awakens compassion and loving-kindness for welfare of all beings... In English, Om Mani Padme Hum can be roughly translated to mean "the jewel in the lotus of the heart." This is a reference to the inner Buddha nature or spark of divinity within each of us.*

*The six syllables of the mantra are believed to purify the six negative emotions...while simultaneously engendering the six qualities of the enlightened heart - generosity, harmonious conduct, endurance, enthusiasm, concentration, and insight...*

The message went on to define in depth the meaning of each syllable in the chant, and the implications of mastering those lofty ideas for the development of all humanity. In this way, whether in the form of note cards, exhibits, art, live music or other interactions, people are learning to respect the richness of what various belief systems have to offer. Most of the people in the world do not have the luxury of investigative globetrotting to get to the heart of the human condition, and even those who do rarely possess the level of vulnerability and open-mindedness necessary to engage total strangers in the kind of exchanges about cultural progress that routinely take place in virtual worlds.

Critics point out that the virtual social scene is often mundane, at best, and can be depraved, at worst, just like real life. But increasingly, I encounter individuals acting as cultural ambassadors. People sharing the specifics of their own respective circumstances can make informed decisions about which elements are worth preserving and which in their view, no longer serve the promotion of the greater good. People can construct, inhabit and enhance one another's ideas in three dimensions. This groundbreaking development has irrevocably changed the nature of our cultural perspectives. And not a moment too soon. The challenge now, for those of us focusing on making a meaningful contribution towards collective creativity and organised action, is to apply the technology towards the inclusion of as many people as possible in this compelling dialogue.

To observe, record and decipher energy systems, including our lives, environments and the cosmos in which we exist, with greater degrees of collaborative sophistication - this is the ultimate goal of the Imagination Age. For those who understand the power of the medium, the potential for creating social change and transforming the economy as a result is unlimited. Virtual worlds are the stickiest social networks imaginable. The unique opportunity to create and manage one's identity as a global citizen simultaneously shatters barriers while offering the perfect arena in which conflicts can be resolved creatively, through mutual, personal comprehension.

Peace is not the absence of conflict, but one's attitude towards it. The only hope of clashing cultures is to find a common ground beyond the shackles of time and place to which each human is bound. This place is the imagination, where ideas are born. Increasingly, the delicate glass bulb of the future will be lit by a tangled filament of intertwined ideas. People from all over the globe, having been left out of the dialogue for so long, will add vital new dimensions to global unity. Like the first word of creation, spoken in the language of nature common to us all, a seemingly impossible movement taking root today in virtual worlds will catalyze a metamorphosis in the physical realm.

A new world order is forming. For those of you who want to generate life through innovation, wild international adventure (across multiple worlds including the one inhabited by our physical bodies) and savvy social interactions aimed at greater authenticity in the human experience, take note. Your time has come.

"Es ist schön in Ost-Berlin zu sein... Ich möchte euch sagen, ich bin nicht hier für oder gegen eine Regierung, ich bin gekommen um Rock 'n' Roll zu spielen für Ost-Berliner... In der Hoffnung, dass eines Tages alle Barrieren abgerissen werden..."

*"It is nice to be in East Berlin. I would like to tell you that I am not here for or against any government; I have come here to play rock'n'roll for the East Berliners... With the hope that one day, all barriers will be torn down."*

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, EAST BERLIN, 1988

by Ali Fisher

## ARE GOVERNMENTS LOSING THEIR GRIP?

Government actions during the Cold War contributed to a way of thinking in Europe which ascribed the actions of many organisations to loyalty to either the American or Soviet Government. This perspective may have been strengthened by revelations that organisations previously thought to be independent, such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom, Encounter Magazine, the International Student Conference, and trade union movements across Europe, had received covert US support, largely through the CIA.

Thus, it would have been tempting mentally to link Bruce Springsteen's concert at Radrennbahn Weissennsee, East Berlin in 1988, with the actions of American governments in the run up to the end of the Cold War. However, Springsteen was clear that he was not in East Berlin 'for or against a certain government'. In fact, the concert included the iconic Born in the USA and War, originally made famous by Edwin Starr. Both songs contain a clear anti-war and by implication anti-US government message. This was not merely Americans sending American messages to a Soviet oppressed East German audience: there were some ideas that were shared, not owned by one side or the other, which created a network transcending borders. These networks already existed in 1988. But high barriers prevented large numbers of people from participating in them.

The generation growing up with Youtube can watch the video of this concert online, alongside videos from Friends of the Earth and Amnesty International. These organisations seek to exert influence through the creation of international networks of individuals placing pressure on governments. In the past many international campaigns were organised or supported by a governmental elite: now governments are as often as not the target of international campaigns coordinated by transnational networks of individuals who exist outside the traditional hierarchical structures. As such, while governments still retain influence over the image of a country, they have far less influence over the flow of ideas and campaigns.

Governments still play a significant role; they retain legal authority within their borders, whether these are e-borders or physical barriers. They continue to provide financial support for 'independent' cultural programmes around the world. But the role of governments in promoting ideas or causes is diminishing. No longer does it take the resources of a state to change the views and lives of millions in other countries. In its place has arisen the cross-border power of individuals, the media and the internet. The barriers, which in the past separated people with common interest, are much lower today. Networks of individuals can change minds and ultimately societies through

engaging people on their own terms, in their language, and in their environment. Whether it is a large network like Avaaz.org or an individual with an effective Blogroll, RSS feed and a webcam, there are many ways of mobilizing an opinion-forming network which governments can only watch with envy.

Online, successful campaigns for Cadburys to reinstate their Wispa chocolate bar, sit alongside the US Presidential Primaries campaigns, with virtual primaries on facebook. This time around various Presidential campaigns are catching up with what Nicco Mele achieved as Howard Dean's webmaster and internet strategist four years ago. These networks do not rely on the US Government for support; on the contrary, it is the politicians who attempt to channel the potential power of these massive online networks into support for their campaigns. Such networks are still in their infancy but have the potential to influence the outcome of elections and pressure governments over particular policies.

What networks have in common is a shared focal point and the ability to communicate over vast distances at high speed. Juxtaposed against the myriad of government departments, overlapping authority, and slow adoption of new technology, it is clear why governments lag behind networked communities in innovation and communication of perspectives.

Do governments still influence the perceptions of a country? As the legal authority with ability to conduct official foreign policy, the answer has to be yes. Yet, the way those actions are framed and interpreted is increasingly influenced by the actions of the still nascent online networks. When government officials speak of countries 'confronting a problem', or Europe and America 'facing issues side by side', they are invoking a language imbued with their kind of authority.

Online, authority comes from credibility in the eyes of the audience, not legal responsibility for a geographic area. Networks focusing on a particular issue, whether in the form of international movements that link physical and virtual campaigns, or behind the scenes coordination between bloggers, are not restricted to the language of the state. As such they have the potential to produce material which resonates across borders, continents and oceans, to reach specific communities.

In future, while the conduct of foreign policy is an important component in the way a country is perceived, the manner in which transnational networks frame the interpretation of government actions will have at least as great an impact on the way such actions are understood. Inevitably, the issues that governments have to confront will be increasingly influenced by international networks. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines successfully lobbied governments to use their legal authority to create the Ottawa Convention, otherwise known as the Mine Ban Treaty. Greenpeace has mobilised similar pressure on issues such as the anti-whaling campaign that has been running since 1975.

On the road to Copenhagen 2009, the demands from transnational networks for a post-Kyoto climate deal will continue. Governments may speak the language of countries and nations, but the pressure from transnational networks will be undeniable. The 'video message in a bottle' campaign which demanded action at Bali is just one example of the many initiatives that have already started to build the pressure for a historic deal.

Today the barriers between nations have not been completely torn down but they are so low that almost everyone has the potential to trample over them. It will be the next ten years which will determine whether governments learn to engage effectively with transnational networks, or whether they have been inexorably sidelined in the exchange of ideas, becoming increasingly reliant for their authority on their legal position, rather than their credibility.

As Kofi Annan once said *"The challenges of our age are global; they transcend national frontiers; they are problems without passports. To address them we need blueprints without borders. That is why, more than ever before, we need dedicated and talented young men and women to be global citizens who make the choice of service to humankind".*

*Kofi Annan United Nations General Secretary C21 Citizens: Young People in a Changing Commonwealth (2002)*

# THE RIVER IS DIFFERENT AND YOU ARE DIFFERENT

by Gary Younge

The day I brought my new-born son home to our Brooklyn apartment an article in the *New York Times* pointed out that 'a black male who drops out of high school [in the US] is 60 times more likely to find himself in prison than one with a bachelor's degree'. These are the kind of statistics I often quote in my work. But this time it was personal.

Looking down at him as he snoozed in the brand new car seat, my first thought was:

'Those are not great odds. I'd better buy some more children's books.' My second was: 'Maybe, we should think about going back to England.' Such are the impulses of the migrant. Education is the ticket; opportunity is the destination. You move with the future in mind. These were my mother's priorities as she journeyed from Barbados to England. I'd barely changed my first nappy before I realised that her life is not mine and my son's chances and challenges would not be mine either. In the words of the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus: *You can't cross the same river twice. The river is different. And you are different.*

So for now we take stock on this side of the river. 2020 will mark the beginning of Osceola's teenage years. By then I may have already lost him to America's vast cultural power - a vaguely familiar world of little league, dental braces and phonetic spelling. It's a pull that my England of football chants, BBC comedy and hopeful picnics in hopeless weather can never counter from this distance. Having both bought into and propagated the half-truth that New York and London are more similar than they are different I now have to deal with the other half - that they are more different than I have ever cared to acknowledge.

Like many black Britons of my generation I was raised ambivalent to my immediate surroundings. The soil I stood on and was born onto was where I happened to be, not where I was from. We flew a flag of convenience - Barbados at home, England outside, black everywhere. Today neither of my two brothers lives in Britain - in death my mother was shipped 'home' to be buried within earshot of the Caribbean sea.

I don't want that for Osceola. The sense of dislocation that makes you feel like a guest in your own home is debilitating. I used to think that alienation typified a certain British trait - the inability to envelop the new - one would not find in America. Then my niece and nephew asked for BECKHAM England shirts and I wondered whether maybe I had mistaken a fleeting generational experience for a fixed national characteristic.

I'm glad I grew up in England. We were a one-parent family comprising a mother and three black boys. When I was eight I had a hernia. The NHS fixed it. No-one went bankrupt. At school I got my 'A' levels and could go to any university I wanted so long as it wanted me. There was no talk of scholarships, loans or fees.

Had we been raised in the US, statistically one of us would be dead, in jail or on probation. My hernia could have been a recurring problem. My choice of university and subject would have been guided more by cash than intellectual curiosity.

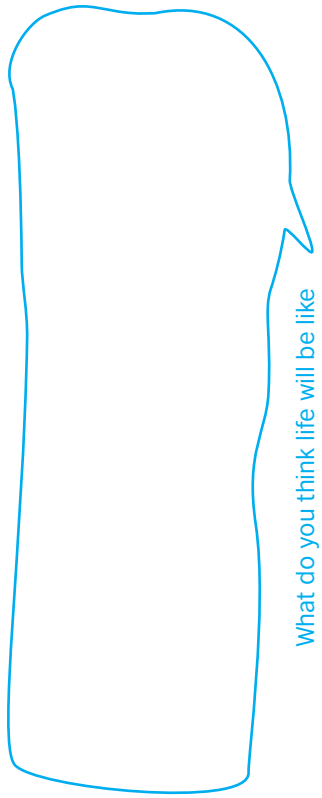
After his first round of injections Osceola ran such a high fever I took him to the emergency room in the middle of the night. He was treated well. But a few weeks later we received a bill for over $1,000. We have health insurance. But I wondered what kind of choices a parent would have to make if they didn't. I wondered what my mother would have done.

So, for all the talk of the American dream, England gave me opportunities that the US would not have. The trouble is, for all the social mobility enabled by the British welfare state, too often the journey seems to hit racial roadblocks. Britain's professions either don't want to or don't know how to attract or retain qualified, educated black people. Few in numbers and short on wealth, black professionals are unable to organise autonomously to break through barriers. The result is that black success often comes with a residual sense of atomised disaffection.

Such frustration exists here too but is tempered by a strength in numbers and years. Black Americans have had a significant presence here for generations. They have the institutions to prove it. And, notwithstanding segregation, with those institutions and that history comes a middle class with both confidence and resources. My wife is African American and the fourth generation in her family to be educated. There is a sense of self-assurance she has that I will never know, but that I hope one day my Osceola will possess.

The trouble with these pros and cons is that my England exists in my memory and my America exists as the product of dreams and nightmares I have yet to live. They are as real as anything else in my life. But that does not mean they will be real for him. The next generation wears the England shirts, but when they come of age will have to pay for their university education. America does have a huge black middle class. But it is crumbling. Nearly half of those born into it in the wake of the civil rights era have descended into poverty or near poverty, according to the Pew Research Survey. In personal choices as in politics we build the future from our history - learning from the past does not mean you have to live in it.

So which side of the river will we settle come 2020? The one where he might get shot or might be president - or the one where he stands relatively little chance of being either? Let's hope by the time he is 13 such choices make no sense to him. My anxieties are my own. The future is his.



What do you think life will be like growing up for your children?
*www.britishcouncil.org/tn2020-comments*

# A GLOBAL RIO GRANDE? UNPACKING A 21ST CENTURY PARADOX

by Federico Carlos Baradello

Governments on both sides of the North Atlantic grapple with what is commonly referred to as a 'migration problem'. It is not difficult to understand why. Almost daily, the mass media recounts stories of Sub-Saharan Africans migrating on flimsy boats from North Africa to Spain or of the rapidly increasing unauthorized Mexican population in the United States, to list just two examples. These emotionally-charged stories illustrate migration's growing salience in the mass media, highlighting the perception of migrant 'invaders' as a threat to indigenous cultures, languages, values, demographics, homes, and perhaps most importantly, jobs. Policymakers have responded to such fears by prioritizing migration as a 'problem' to be resolved. Yet the foregrounding of a 'migration problem' underscores a widespread confusion. Migration is an effect to another set of causes including globalization and specifically global labor market integration. To resolve the 'migration problem', policymakers must address not migration itself, but instead the socioeconomic conditions that cause so many millions of migrants to walk or swim North.

As the grandson of Italian migrants to Argentina and the son of Argentinean migrants to the United States, my family history is firmly rooted in the transformative role that destination countries play in creating welcoming and even empowering environments for migrants. Raised in California and as a graduate student now living in London, I can make several observations regarding migration as it impacts countries on both sides of the North Atlantic. First, migration is the most human manifestation of globalization. Second, migration represents a paradox to the governments of migrant-receiving countries, since migrants are in many cases both needed and unwanted. Third, this migration paradox can only be addressed by first creating a new covenant of shared values between the migrant-receiving North and the migrant-sending South.

Migration is the most human manifestation of globalization. After World War II, Europe and America came together to recognize the need for global economic institutions, reduced trade barriers and greater cross-border trade. There remains a broad consensus around the premise that economic interdependence inhibits cross-border conflict. However, this thesis is based on a static view of globalization as simply the global marketplace of goods and services. In most trade agreements, labor migration was left off the negotiating table, and many policymakers did not anticipate that globalization would trigger the high levels of migration witnessed today. Globalization has accelerated economic activity throughout the world and along with it the movement of labor demand across geographies. Many governments of migrant-sending countries have been unable to save jobs that have moved elsewhere. This transformation from self-sufficient domestic labor markets to integrated international labor markets, combined with aging populations in migrant-receiving countries on both sides of the North Atlantic, has generated a powerful demand for millions of migrants from the South.

The massive South to North flow of unauthorized migrants today presents a huge problem to governments attempting to enforce the sanctity of national borders and national sovereignty in general. Migration, at its core, involves people and families. Managing the movement of people is not quite as clear cut as managing the movement of goods produced in China or India and sold elsewhere. Migrants are not easy to move around or deport. Migrants create linkages with communities and generate social capital. Migrants do not immediately respond to changes in migration policies such as quota restrictions or temporary guest worker programs; as the saying goes, "there is nothing more permanent than a temporary guest worker." Fundamentally, this human manifestation of globalization has generated significant problems that governments must address.

In fact, the 'migration problem' facing American and European governments is more accurately labeled a 'migration paradox'. Migration presents a paradox to governments forced to balance an economic logic of open borders with a sociopolitical logic of closed borders. In other words, migrants are both needed by domestic economies and unwanted by those same societies. Migrants are needed because of a declining domestic labor force unable to meet the increased demand for workers. Migrants are unwanted because of xenophobia, heightened by a mass media that characterizes migration as a threat and a drain on public resources, with no mention or explanation of the causes behind their presence.

This migration paradox has sharpened significantly early in the 21st century, particularly in the wake of terrorist attacks by migrants in New York, Madrid and London. Politicians concerned with re-elections advocate very public shows of border control, like commissioning patrol boats in the Strait of Gibraltar or a fence on the U.S./Mexico border, regardless of their effectiveness. These policy efforts contrast starkly with the continued flow of unauthorized migrants into North America and Europe. Any slowdown in unauthorized migration is not likely to be the result of border control efforts, but a reflection of slowed labor demand growth in destination countries. Today, governments continue to address the migration paradox with policies that fail to mitigate the inflow of migrants, but instead reinforce unauthorized migrants' capacity to enter and work in destination countries as illegitimate members of society.

This status quo is not healthy for citizens or migrants alike. The fertile environment that my parents and grandparents experienced in their destination countries does not appear to be on offer in either America or Europe early in this century. Migrants live in the shadows in many destination countries, often finding themselves in a legal limbo, unable to access basic government services while their children face limited educational and career prospects. Yet migrants are not alone. Citizens also face significant uncertainties about their futures. Many citizens grapple with increasingly competitive labor markets, their jobs at risk of moving overseas. Citizens also grapple with a worrisome middle class squeeze, as costs of living rise while incomes stagnate. These uncertainties faced by migrants and domestic citizens alike are unsustainable.

The Rio Grande is a shallow river that marks much of the geographical border between the United States and Mexico. But it also represents the metaphorical border between the South and North: between unemployment and employment, between a life of poverty and a life of economic and educational opportunity. This metaphorical border, or Global Rio Grande, which extends from California to the Strait of Gibraltar and across the Mediterranean Sea, should not be the legacy we leave to future generations. The migration paradox troubling governments today demands that a new generation of Americans and Europeans work together to develop a covenant of shared values between the South and North. As citizens, we must push our governments to promote policies that protect all children and families, tolerate and promote diversity, and define a new nationalism flexible enough to cope with fast-changing demographics. But, following the maxim that great power brings great responsibility, the North must take the lead in the creation of this new covenant.

# MUSLIM INTEGRATION IN EUROPE – COULD WE LEARN SOMETHING FROM THE UNITED STATES?

States criticize each other. This is hardly remarkable, especially in a world of globalization, where the consequences of political decisions do not stop at national borders. However, one country castigating another for its failed integration policy is still rather exceptional. Exactly that is what happened in April 2006, when Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary in the US State Department, criticized Europe for its poor integration of Muslims. In European countries even the second or third generation of Muslim immigrants would still be conceived as foreigners, Fried said, while in the US they were acknowledged as equal US-citizens. Although Fried arguably did not have the well-being of European Muslims in mind (his concern was with the potential for spreading extremist thought) - he has a point.

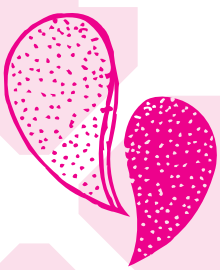
Of course, the integration of Muslims in the US and Europe has occurred under different conditions. The first generation of Muslims immigrating to Germany in the 1960s and 1970s generally came to Europe from a rural background. As so-called 'guest workers' they took over the relatively unskilled, physically demanding jobs, like factory and construction work. The United States, however, has always attracted the better-educated immigrants from all parts of world. America's Muslims are well educated and their economic success is higher than average. In Germany the opposite is true. Unemployment of the Muslim population, among them many of Turkish origin, is above average. The same applies to the school drop-out rates of the second and third generations.

by Cem Özdemir

But this is only one side of the coin when we try to understand the successes and failures of economic, social and political participation of Muslims in Europe. The other reflects the basic differences in the prevailing political culture between the two regions. Unlike Americans, Europeans still have great difficulty identifying even second-generation immigrants as fellow citizens. Europe has the tendency to define them by ethnic origin, colour or religion. The expression "a Turk with a German passport" is a particularly telling example of this mentality. Only German citizens, obviously, can hold German passports, but the tendency still exists to qualify citizenship with another nationality or ethnic origin (in this case 'Turk'). On the other hand, in the US hyphenated or hybrid identities are commonly accepted. Furthermore, the emphasis when employing these identity categories - whether African-American, Turkish-American or Italian-American - is placed on 'American'. In other words: American citizen first, ethnic heritage second.

It is crucial that we change such public attitudes in Europe if we are going to create an atmosphere in which immigrants and their children can more easily identify with their adopted countries and these countries can demand loyalty in return. We should not point the finger of blame at government failures and ignore the fact that immigrants and their organizations have responsibilities in the process, too. Nevertheless it is clear that, if we want to make progress, European states must first change their political culture and develop what the French call républicanisme, which sees the individual first and foremost as a citizen, regardless of his or her ethnic origin, identity or religion. The United States offers us a shining example of this.

As a second step, Europe must acknowledge the fact that Muslims are not the homogenous group so often presented in politics, public discussion and the media. There are conservative Muslims, liberals, fundamentalists and secularists. There are women who wear headscarves and women who do not. Many Muslims fast during Ramadan and others never have but still consider themselves as Muslim. And then there is the 'Muslim atheist', another contradiction in terms which has been making the rounds, but is just another absurd attempt to label immigrants by their ethnic or religious origins. At the end of the day, recognizing the diversity found within European Muslim communities would help to bridge the gap between Muslims and their adopted countries - and would help make the migrant communities feel that they belong. It is a precondition for establishing basic dialogue with Muslims and their representatives, and a foundation upon which cooperation can be built. Furthermore, by understanding the distinctions within Muslim communities, we would be better placed to identify groups and individuals who might become bridge-builders and those black sheep, especially among young people, who will resist integration.



Thirdly, Europe's political future needs conservative parties that embrace immigrants, particularly the growing Muslim population. In the US both Republicans and Democrats actively appeal to minorities and immigrant groups for support (think of the value an endorsement from the National Council of La Raza has to a candidate for political office). By contrast, European conservative parties such as Germany's Christian Democrats will call themselves advocates of European integration, but will remain skeptical of immigrants even if they are naturalized citizens - and able to vote. Still, even in 2008, the thought of European conservatives seeking the votes of Muslims remains somewhat surreal. Yet traditional European conservative voters have much more in common with many Muslims than they care to admit - for example, an emphasis on traditional, family-oriented values. As the number of voters of immigrant or Muslim background grows, they become a potentially crucial electoral force. Take some of the recent close election results in Germany - one might even argue that it was the immigrant vote, and among them many Muslims, that determined the outcome.

Finally, Europe's Muslims should seek to become recognised actors in civil and political life. Here, too, immigrant or Muslim organizations in the United States could serve as useful models. Migrant associations in Europe must learn to shift their focus away from the politics of their homelands and become more serious and respected political players in domestic policy areas. Italian-American associations in the US are not very concerned about resolving the most recent government crisis in Italy. They look to advise their members on civic engagement in their local communities. Similarly, if Turkish parents in Germany wish to ensure a brighter future for their children, they would be better off learning the names of the children's teachers than the names of political backbenchers in Ankara. And locally engaged immigrant organizations could even help to protect the interests of these children (and their parents). Intergenerational change within these organizations will become a key indicator of successful integration throughout the whole of Europe in the years ahead. If successful, we will see individuals in positions of leadership who were born and raised in Europe and therefore have the social as well as cultural capital to play the political game.

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**Mary Fitzgerald** is the *Irish Times'* foreign affairs correspondent. An award-winning journalist, she began her career reporting on Northern Ireland and has since worked across the Middle East, Africa and south Asia. She has studied and worked in the US, living in Miami, Washington DC and Austin, Texas.

**Adam Chmielewski** is professor of philosophy in the Institute of Philosophy, University of Wrocław, Poland, social activist and political columnist; having studied philosophy in Wrocław, Oxford, and New York. He has authored several books, among them, *Open Society or Community?* (2001), and his latest, *Two Conceptions of Unity* (2006).

**Irshad Manji** is a scholar with the European Foundation for Democracy and directs the Moral Courage Project at New York University.

**Heather Gonzales** is Association Director for the National Association of Evangelicals (USA), dealing with board relations, membership outreach, and funding as well as a variety of domestic and international policy issues. Previously employed by IRI, an international democracy promotion organisation, she served with Africa Inland Mission in Namibia and worked in the offices of Congressmen Jim DeMint and Mark Souder.

**Marietje Schaake** is an independent advisor on diversity, integration and Islam in the West; mostly in a transatlantic context. For the last eighteen months she has worked closely with the American Embassy and Ambassador in The Hague as a consultant for the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. Her book on transatlantic relations and the debate and policy on Islam in the West will be published in autumn 2008.

**Alex Evans** is a senior non-resident fellow at New York University's Center on International Cooperation. **David Steven** is a policy analyst and strategic consultant, specialising in international relations and global risks. Alex and David are co-editors of the Global Dashboard website (www.globaldashboard.org) and lead a Demos project on new approaches to public diplomacy.

**Rita J. King** is CEO and Creative Director, Dancing Ink Productions, a company that fosters the evolution of a new global culture in the Imagination Age through virtual worlds and mixed media. The company is currently on a global quest to see how virtual worlds affect the lives of real people.

**Ali Fisher** is a director of Mappa Mundi Consultants and a leading international researcher in the fields of cultural relations, public diplomacy and information operations. He previously worked as director of Counterpoint, the cultural relations think-tank of the British Council (2006-7), and as Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Exeter. Publications include *Options for Influence* and *Public Diplomacy in the UK.*

**Gary Younge** is an award-winning *Guardian* columnist based in New York and the Alfred Knobler Fellow for *The Nation* magazine. He has written two books, *No Place Like Home, A Black Briton's Journey Through the Deep South* and *Stranger in a Strange Land, Encounters in the Disunited States.*

**Federico Baradello** (AB, Princeton; MPP, Harvard) is a PhD Candidate at the London School of Economics. He is a regular commentator on migration policy issues.

**Cem Özdemir** is a Member of the European Parliament (The Greens/EFA) since 2004. The Co-speaker on Foreign Affairs for his political grouping, Cem is a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and a substitute member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. His specialist interests as a member of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), include EU foreign policy, relations between the EU and Turkey, migration and integration policy, as well as Islam in Germany and Europe.

What are the 3 global issues that concern you most?

What personal actions are you willing to take to help address these global issues?

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