

by Maria S. Liperi and Asli Selin Okyay

ABSTRACT

On 6 December 2018, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Rome (FES) and Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) co-organized the conference "External Borders and Internal Divisions of Europe: Policies and Politics of Migration" to foster debate on European migration and asylum governance by approaching it both as a policy issue and a political question. While the scale of migratory flows is no longer the main problem, countries at the Southern external borders continue facing different policy challenges. The lack of political will and continuing tensions among the member states stand out as the main obstacles blocking substantial policy reform at the European level. This context also provides fertile ground for further polarization of the political debate between the two extreme positions of open versus closed borders, highlighting the need for more balanced and neutral narratives on migration in the run up to the European elections.

European Union | Migration | Refugees | Mediterranean | Italy | Greece | Western Balkans | Spain



by Maria S. Liperi and Asli Selin Okyay*

Introduction

On the eve of the European Parliament elections, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Rome (FES) and Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) co-organized the conference "External Borders and Internal Divisions of Europe: Policies and Politics of Migration" to foster debate on European migration and asylum governance by approaching it both as a policy issue and a political question. The conference brought together experts and policy makers based in a range of European countries, namely, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Spain.

This report summarizes the proceedings of the two panels of the conference. The first panel, chaired by Asli Okyay, focused on the state of play in terms of the migratory situation in the Southern external borders of the European Union (EU) as well as the challenges and prospects in the migration and asylum policy field at both the national and European levels. María José Castaño Reyero, Angeliki Dimitriadi, Cecilia Estrada Villaseñor, Antonio Ricci, and Bodo Weber provided analyses and insights on the topic. The second panel, chaired by Michael Braun, aimed to embed migration within the European political context in the run up to the European elections. Tamás Boros, Costanza Hermanin, Timo Rinke, and Elly Schlein discussed the current state of the political debate, the factors underlying the rise of populist-nationalist stances on migration, and shared their suggestions regarding how the progressive forces should position themselves on the issue.

The conference was kicked off by a brief introduction by **Ferdinando Nelli Feroci**, the President of IAI, and **Michael Braun**, the Scientific Advisor of FES Rome Office. After welcoming the panellists and the audience, Nelli Feroci extended his special thanks to FES for editing the report "On Europe's External Southern Borders"

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Report of the conference "External Borders and Internal Division of Europe: Policies and Politics of Migration", organized in Rome on 6 December 2018 by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Rome (FES) and Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI).

published in August 2018,¹ and the authors for their contributions. Providing a comprehensive overview of the state of play in terms of the migratory situation at the Southern external borders of the EU and analysing the main policy challenges and recommendations at those borders, this report served as a basis for the first panel of the conference focusing on migration policies. The IAI President highlighted that the large-scale migratory flows arrived at



a time in which the EU was already fragile due to the on-going effects of the financial crisis. In addition to these two factors having acted in tandem, the inadequate response by the Union to the migratory challenge – particularly in its internal dimension – provided fertile ground for the rise of populist political forces all-over Europe, which has become the main challenge before the European elections.

Michael Braun, after extending his welcome and gratitude to the speakers and the audience, underlined that the contentious intra-EU politics of migration as well as its instrumentalization by populist forces have led to higher degrees of discontent among the citizens about the EU, even if this has been caused by diametrically opposing reasons in different cases: whereas the frustration in Italy was mainly caused by the sentiment of too small help and solidarity received from Europe, in Hungary, the main issue was what was perceived as the excessive intervention of the EU in the national management of migration and asylum. Regardless of the underlying causes, Braun underlined, public perception of migration as one of the main problems, if not the main one, continues to characterize several European countries, implying that no political force has the luxury of leaving this issue unaddressed when designing political narratives and strategies.

Panel I: The southern external borders and the EU: The state of play and prospects of reform

Asli Okyay, Senior Fellow at IAI, launched the panel discussion by asking the speakers to provide an overview of the migratory situation and the main policy challenges at the four "entry points" to Europe, namely, the Greek-Turkish border, the external land borders along the so-called Balkan route, the Italian maritime border along the Central Mediterranean Route, and the Spanish sea and land borders along the Western Mediterranean route.

¹ María José Castaño Reyero et al., "On Europe's External Southern Borders. Situation Report on Migration Management", in *FES Analyses*, August 2018, http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/budapest/14644.pdf.

Starting the first round of discussion, Angeliki Dimitriadi, Research Fellow and the coordinator of the Migration Unit at the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), stated that apart from the relative reduction in the number of irregular arrivals, the policy challenges at the Greek-Turkish border have not substantially changed. First, three years after the so called migration crisis of 2015, and despite the significant reduction of arrivals after the EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016 (43,000 arrivals have been recorded in the first six months of 2018), the Greek Government continues to depict the migration and asylum challenge as an "emergency". This has been, and still is a strategy deployed by the government with the aim of pushing the reform of the Dublin regulation and receiving higher amounts of emergency funding from the EU. The second point of continuity regards the two parallel border control and asylum regimes applying to the land border and the mainland on the one hand, and the sea border and the five Aegean islands on the other. Both the sea border and the asylum regime in the islands are governed in line with the regime created through the EU-Turkey Statement. This implies that the mobility of the asylum claimants who arrived via the sea is restricted to the islands, while they face the possibility to be returned to Turkey in case of negative reply. Long processing times and insufficient reception conditions continue to overstrain the islands' capacity, negatively affecting the stranded migrants and asylum seekers (at times leading to cases of self-harm) as well as local populations, feeding into rising social tension. The management regime of the Greek-Turkish land border is outside the framework of the EU-Turkey Statement, implying that migrants and asylum seekers have access to the mainland. The mobility of asylum seekers in the mainland is not restricted, they are eligible for relocation within the EU, and the reception standards in the mainland are higher. These relatively better prospects are thought to be among the reasons behind the increasing number of arrivals at the land border.

Taking the floor after Dimitriadi, Bodo Weber, Senior Associate of the Democratization Policy Council (DPC), underlined that the number of arrivals and crossings by migrants towards the EU is no longer the main problem along the so-called Balkan Route. Weber explained the evolution of migratory trends along the route by dividing them into three stages: In the first phase during 2015, the main route from Greece passed through the FYROM and Serbia. The scale of the movement was large, peaking at 20,000 people per day, which led to a critical situation in a context of already fragile countries. With the EU-Turkey Statement and the closure of the Greek-Macedonian border in March 2016, the second phase witnessed the shifting of the route mainly towards Bulgaria. The response given by Bulgaria – with EU support – focused on more stringent border control and effective prevention of irregular entries. This confirmed the difference between the approach to and effectiveness of border controls conducted by EU and non-EU countries in the region, a difference already observed in the case of Hungary and Croatia before. EU members proved not only better equipped and more resourceful, but they also used force in a more widespread fashion, frequently resorting to pushbacks. As the Bulgarian border became more difficult to cross, the route shifted towards Bosnia-Herzegovina via Albania in the third stage covering the period since the end of 2017. According to Weber, in an already fragmented

and largely dysfunctional country like Bosnia, the presence of about 25,000 migrants, waiting for their window of opportunity to access Croatia, is a heavy burden to shoulder, also considering that the support provided by the EU remains insufficient. Lacking the capacity and the resources, Bosnia has neither been able to provide the migrants with minimum assistance nor to control the flow.



Moving towards the Central Mediterranean Route and Italy, Antonio Ricci, Senior Researcher and the Deputy President of the Italian Study and Research Centre IDOS, Voci di Confine, provided an overview of the main migratory and policy changes and continuities – in 2018. There has been a reduction in the number of irregular sea arrivals to Italy following the Italo-Libyan Memorandum of Understanding signed on 2 February 2017, aiming at a more active involvement of the Libyan Coast Guard in maritime border control. Prioritizing the dual objectives of curbing irregular migratory flows through cooperation with third countries and enhancing returns, the document, according to Ricci, reflects the main lines of Italy's migration policy in the last years. Yet, while the aftermath of the Memorandum and particularly the period from the summer of 2017 on witnessed a rapid decrease in arrivals, the proportion of people who died or went missing in these fewer journeys has increased, potentially indicating the use of more dangerous routes. The new Italian Government that took office on 1 June 2018 introduced no major policy changes in terms of the external dimension of migration management. This was also illustrated by the fact that the European Multilevel Strategy for Migration, presented by Prime Minister Conte in Brussels on 24 June 2018, consisted primarily of enhancing the partnership with third countries, strengthening external borders and combatting human trafficking. There has nevertheless been a radical shift as regards the asylum and reception systems, which, Ricci emphasized, will have significant implications for thousands of protection claimants and beneficiaries. According to Ricci, with the abolition of the status of humanitarian protection through the recent Decree-Law on Security and Immigration (Decreto Sicurezza e Immigrazione),² up to 40,000 persons risk finding themselves in an irregular situation, potentially creating Italy's own "Windrush generation".

Closing the first round of interventions, **Cecilia Estrada Villaseñor**, Coordinator of the Chair of Refugees and Forced Migrants at the Comillas Pontifical University of Madrid, explained the latest developments on the Western Mediterranean Route. Both the political and the migratory contexts have significantly changed in Spain:

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² Decree-Law No. 113 of 4 October 2018: *Disposizioni urgenti in materia di protezione internazionale e immigrazione, sicurezza pubblica...,* http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2018/10/04/18G00140/sg.

While the new Government of Pedro Sanchez took office on 2 June 2018, the year 2018 has also witnessed a considerable increase in the number of irregular arrivals (49,015 as of November 2018). While the humanitarian stance adopted by the new government during the Aquarius case seemed to point to a change in Spain's approach to migration and protection issues, according to Estrada Villaseñor, continuing emphasis on stringent border controls and on swift returns seems to indicate that no major policy shifts are to be expected. In addition to the increasing sea arrivals in the last years, the situation at the land border between Spain and Morocco, namely at the two Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, has been, and continues to be, a major issue. Ceuta and Melilla have long been important points of entry for mixed migration flows from Africa, resulting in the installation of a complex system of (six metres high) fences, wires, and walls between 1998 and 2014. Even if the media largely depicts an image of irregular crossings exclusively by African economic migrants, in the recent years, Ceuta and Melilla have been witnessing arrivals by migrants and asylum seekers not only from Sub-Saharan Africa, but also from Syria. Yet, whether/to what extent asylum procedures can be accessed in line with Spain's international legal obligations remains questionable. While restricted access to asylum remains one of the major policy challenges, also thanks to the low degrees of attention paid by the media to Syrian asylum seekers attempting to cross into Spanish territory, the issue remains largely neglected.

The second round of discussion aimed embedding the four cases within the European policy context. The speakers were asked to provide their views on what they see as priority areas for policy reform at the national and European levels, as well as prospects for such reform, given the current political conjuncture informing the issue of migration and asylum governance in the EU.

Angeliki Dimitriadi highlighted, while 2015 was an exceptional year in terms of the numbers, and the EU-Turkey Statement led to a significant reduction, the number of irregular entries has started to catch up with the pre-2015 period in the last three years, with a particularly visible increase in arrivals at the land border. Beyond the numbers though, according to the speaker, one of the major issues in Greece regards insufficient European financial support. Nevertheless, Dimitriadi underlined, the main challenges particularly in terms of border and asylum management – the reception system in particular – remain structural in nature, and cannot be addressed only with money. Overcoming these structural shortcomings also requires time and patience, and hence, both Greek and European stakeholders should not be expecting swift fixes merely as a result of an increased amount of European funds. As for the interaction between the national-European levels, the ambivalent attitude of the Greek Government regarding the reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and the provision of international protection in Greece remains one of the major issues: while Greece demands from the EU to reform the Dublin regulation so as to guarantee a fairer distribution of refugees and asylum seekers among all member states, official statements keep underlining Greece's unwillingness to host refugees on its territory in the longer term. The two positions, Dimitriadi emphasized, are contradictory, as a potentially successful Dublin reform including a redistributive mechanism would imply that a much bigger number of refugees than currently would fall to Greece's share. As to the impasse at the European level regarding the CEAS reform, while moving forward with the consent of all member states seems implausible, pursuing a coalition of the willing approach would be highly risky, Dimitriadi contended. This could lead to opening the door to discretionary opt-ins and opt-outs, potentially legitimizing further non-compliance with member states' obligations stemming from international and European law.

In accordance with the previous intervention, **Bodo Weber** stated that a coalition of the willing approach is not to be pursued, since in essence it already failed in 2015, representing one of the causes of the existential crisis the EU has been going through. While the Commission tries to keep the reform process alive to a certain extent, for Weber, the main obstacle to the building of a coherent EU migration policy framework is the lack of political will among the member states for a genuine CEAS reform. This internal deficit leads to further externalization of the problem according to Weber, which, translates into delegating the task of controlling the EU external borders to neighbouring countries. This has been the case also in the Western Balkans. This approach bears several deficiencies, Weber emphasized: firstly, relying on externalization in order not to face the issue of remedying the internal shortcomings will only temporarily reduce irregular entries, while not substantially addressing the issue at hand. Second, externalizing migration management to a region like the Western Balkans, by deepening the fragility of these states, potentially contradicts the EU's foreign policy line of promoting and supporting stability and good governance in the region. A good example in that regard is Serbia, stated the speaker, where the EU needs to strike a better balance between its objective of supporting a candidate country for full membership and that of delegating the tasks of reducing irregular crossings and containing migrants and refugees.

Antonio Ricci stated that to be able to detect the main challenges, we should ask ourselves whether the real threat is migration as a phenomenon or the weakness of the EU in the face of this phenomenon. According to the speaker, the so called "refugee crisis" created disputes between member states, called into question the Schengen area, and fed into the crisis of multilateralism, all of which deepened the vulnerability of the EU. Ricci emphasized that depicting migration flow as a never-ending emergency has made it "real", particularly in terms of its governance, and its broader repercussions on European politics. This constant crisis-based alarmism has been feeding into increased anxiety among populations, whereas the insufficiency of the European response to the challenge has further enabled populist parties to politically exploit the crisis. The numbers in the last years have not really been justifying the current degree of alarmism. Hence, Ricci warranted, it must be underlined that this is not an invasion, and on the contrary, well-planned, organized, and regulated migration is needed in Europe as the populations are dramatically ageing. At the level of public discussion and political narrative, according to Ricci, a bipartisan approach beyond the extreme poles of full openness and full closure is highly needed, both at national and European levels.

María José Castaño Reyero, researcher at the University Institute of Studies on Migration at the Comillas Pontifical University (ICADE), stated that rather than the burden-sharing implications of the lack of solidarity characterizing European migration and asylum governance system, the main challenge in the case of Spain regards the state's full compliance with its European and international law obligations particularly in the realm of international protection. The Spanish system remains inadequate in guaranteeing the right of asylum, firstly, as protection seekers are not allowed to make an asylum request at Spanish diplomatic representations in Ceuta and Melilla. Second, even if about six months are needed to process an asylum application in Spain, swift return of large numbers of migrants to Morocco indicates that access to the asylum procedure is also restricted also on Spanish territory. As for recommendations, Castaño Reyero, firstly called for the development of safe pathways for protection so as to allow claimants to be able to make their protection requests at diplomatic representations outside the EU. Second, all European countries should reconsider their positions so as not to criminalize NGOs involved in Search and Rescue Operations in a broad, discretionary and rather arbitrary fashion. Finally, European courts and institutions should continue defending EU law and values against governments' breaches, following the example of the European Court of Human Rights when it sentenced Spain for the pushbacks from Ceuta and Melilla on 3 October 2017.

Panel II: Political perspectives: Migration as a determining factor in Europe's forthcoming elections

Michael Braun introduced the second panel by describing the dramatic shift in the European political and social context from one that was marked by a welcoming and humanitarian sentiment at the beginning of the "refugee crisis" to that of today, where anti-migration and securitarian discourses increasingly prevail. Braun drew the attention to the current polarization of the approach to migration between the two extreme positions of fully open versus fully closed doors and asked the speakers whether we are supposed to adopt either one of them or there might be alternative positions lying somewhere in the middle.

Costanza Hermanin, former Special Adviser to Italy's Under-Secretary for Justice, argued that the answer is in the middle: it is indeed misleading to call for equally unachievable positions of open or closed borders, and the question must instead focus on the types of measures required for different categories of migration. Labour-related admission quotas have increasingly been limited in many member states, including Italy, whereas family formation and reunification constitutes about 80 per cent of legal immigration to the EU. According to Hermanin, this implies that in the near absence of options for legally migrating to Europe for work-related reasons, those who lack family links are left with no option but applying for protection, further straining the asylum system. Therefore, Hermanin contended, the EU should work more on developing a common policy on labour migration in order to fill the big legal gap corresponding to the so called "economic migrants". According to the speaker, instead of looking for the problem and the solution

primarily – and almost exclusively – in the realm of international protection, Europe should have the courage to detect the problems and take the necessary steps in the labour migration domain so as to cover a diverse set of skill levels and types. At the level of politics of migration, Hermanin highlighted the interconnected nature of the



anti-migration discourses with the broader contestation against multilateralism, including the increasingly prevalent Eurosceptic positions. Recent contestation against and withdrawals from the Global Compact for Migration constitute an example at the global scale. At the European level, this trend is illustrated by the channelling of the accusations towards the EU for not being able to manage the migratory "crisis", while concealing the determining role member states have been playing in blocking European efforts for reform and improvement, essentially and ultimately for furthering Eurosceptic agendas. In her concluding remarks, Hermanin underlined the difficulty of making plausible predictions regarding what kind of policy reform we might witness in the upcoming years, considering the upcoming European elections. The speaker contended nonetheless that a coalition of the willing approach might be the only feasible way forward, while having acknowledged the difficulties and risks involved in choosing this path.

Tamás Boros, Co-director and Head of strategy at the Budapest-based Policy Solutions Research Institute (PSRI) started his intervention by underlining two major trends in the current European landscape of populism, based on public opinion polls conducted by PSRI: First, the support to populist parties is broadening as to go well beyond East Europe, where they have traditionally been stronger. Second, beyond the overall growth of populist forces, the support base of rightist-populist forces – with anti-migrant positions – is growing at a faster pace. Therefore, Boros contended, migration will continue to be one of the main agenda items in the campaigning period before the European elections. Moving to the forecasts, Boros stated that there might be a very different landscape after the elections with all the mainstream parties losing ground, yet the outcome might also be "business as usual" depending on the coalition choices of these parties. According to the speaker, it might be the first time in the EU history that the sum of the European People's Party (EPP) and the Socialists and Democrats (S&D) will fall short of securing the majority, which will force them to find allies. In the case of a coalition between the EPP, S&D, and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE), Boros argued, it might be "business as usual", yet with an important number of Eurosceptics able to filibuster. While the former option seems more likely at the moment, if the EPP decides to ally with the Eurosceptic forces, the centre of gravity could radically shift, with significant implications also for migration-related issues.

Timo Rinke, Director of the project "Flight, Migration, Integration in Europe" at the Budapest Office of FES, addressed the issue of the challenge centre-left parties face in creating and promoting a political narrative on migration that could gain support against the anti-migration discourses of populist forces. According to Rinke, left-wing parties lose ground by missing the connection with needs and fears of the people as migration is not sufficiently addressed in the political discourse; whereas, a solid strategy is missing on the communication side. The main question is, Rinke underlined, whether progressive forces on the left could win elections when migration is among the top agenda items, or if they would be inevitably try to make migration a "non-issue". Given that the latter is not really an option in the upcoming European elections, Rinke, by giving examples both from the German and European political landscape, put forth a number of suggestions for narration and communication strategies on the issue of migration that could be adopted by the progressive forces on the left as to successfully counter antimigration discourses. Firstly, the progressive forces should aim a pragmatic narrative that can strike a balance between humanity and security. The left should work on bridging the gap characterizing the open versus closed borders dichotomy and try to represent the issue of migration as an issue to be dealt with, rather than one about which pro- and con- positions should be adopted. Second, not copying rightist-populist narratives on migration is one of the lessons that should be clear to many progressive forces by now, Rinke underlined. Third, there is a need for shifting the debate towards areas where progressive politics could yield successful results, such as integration and social cohesion, from contentious and problematic issues, such as relocation. Fourth, the progressive forces should expose the failures and contradictions of the populists more efficiently. Finally, Rinke concluded, adopting holistic and comprehensive narratives about improving social rights and services for both migrant and local populations would be a constructive approach.

In line with the previous intervention, Elly Schlein, Member of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of S&D at the European Parliament, drew the attention to the shortcomings of the communication strategies of the progressive field. This was recently best exemplified by the inability of the progressive forces to effectively counter the rightist-populist narratives on the Global Compact for Migration. They were particularly weak in successfully exposing populists' use of ungrounded claims about the Compact, such as it being a legally binding agreement or allowing "invasion" by urging States to grant a basic right to migrate. While acknowledging that the progressive forces have considerable responsibility in the fact that extreme right narratives on migration have become predominant, Schlein also drew attention to the role played by conventional media and social media, particularly by networks of fake news in the latter case. In the last years, Schlein stated, politics and policies have been increasingly enmeshed in the issue of migration, arguing that the main reason behind the current impasse in various dimensions of migration and asylum policy reform, is neither the scale of the numbers nor the volume of available resources, but the lack of political will of the member states. This lack of political will, combined also with a more low profile position by the Commission, feeds into the current state of deadlock, particularly regarding CEAS reform. This then feeds into the strengthening of simultaneously Eurosceptic and

anti-migration positions accusing the EU of lacking capacity to respond to the migratory challenge. Schlein concluded calling for a collaborative approach to the topic, working towards: a genuine reform of the Dublin regulation based on an understanding of solidarity beyond the question of relocation, the broadening of legal channels for applying to asylum already outside Europe, i.e., "humanitarian visas", giving the EU real competence in Search and Rescue operations, and, finally, designing a diverse set of legal options for work-related migration.

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Conference Programme

Rome, 6 December 2018

Welcome and Introduction

Ferdinando Nelli Feroci, President, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Rome **Michael Braun**, Scientific Advisor, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Rome (FES)

Panel I

The Southern external borders of the EU: The state of play and prospects of reform

- Chair Asli Okyay, Senior Fellow, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Rome
- Speakers **María José Castaño Reyero**, Researcher, University Institute of Studies on Migration at the Comillas Pontifical University (ICADE), Madrid

Angeliki Dimitriadi, Research Fellow and Coordinator of the Migration Unit, the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP), Athens

Cecilia Estrada Villaseñor, Coordinator of the Chair of Refugees and Forced Migrants, Comillas Pontifical University of Madrid – INDITEX, Madrid

Antonio Ricci, Deputy President and Senior Researcher, Italian Study and Research Centre IDOS / Voci di Confine Project, Rome **Bodo Weber**, Senior Associate, Democratization Policy Council (DPC), Berlin

Panel II

Political perspectives: Migration as a determining factor on Europe's forthcoming elections

Chair	Michael Braun , Scientific Advisor, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Rome (FES)
Speakers	Tamás Boros , Co-director and Head of Strategy, Policy Solutions Research Institute, Budapest
	Costanza Hermanin , former Special Adviser to Italy's Under- Secretary for Justice, Rome
	Timo Rinke, Project Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Budapest (FES)
	Elly Schlein , Member of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), European Parliament

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Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)

The Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) is a private, independent non-profit think tank, founded in 1965 on the initiative of Altiero Spinelli. IAI seeks to promote awareness of international politics and to contribute to the advancement of European integration and multilateral cooperation. Its focus embraces topics of strategic relevance such as European integration, security and defence, international economics and global governance, energy, climate and Italian foreign policy; as well as the dynamics of cooperation and conflict in key geographical regions such as the Mediterranean and Middle East, Asia, Eurasia, Africa and the Americas. IAI publishes an English-language quarterly (*The International Spectator*), an online webzine (*Affarinternazionali*), two book series (*Quaderni IAI* and *IAI Research Studies*) and some papers' series related to IAI research projects (*Documenti IAI*, *IAI Papers*, etc.).

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18 18	Andrea Aversano Stabile, Guillaume Lasconjarias and Paola Sartori, NATO-EU Cooperation to Project Stability
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