



## Can the European Political Community be a bridge between the UK and the EU?

by Luigi Scazzieri, 28 April 2023

The European Political Community (EPC) is Europe's newest political forum. The first EPC summit in Prague in October 2022 showcased its potential as a platform for dialogue between a large and diverse group of European leaders, and as a means of fostering closer UK-EU ties.

This Centre for European Reform policy brief, [‘Can the European Political Community be a bridge between the UK and the EU?’](#), kindly supported by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Luigi Scazzieri, senior research fellow at the CER, argues that the EPC could help rebuild trust after the acrimony of the Brexit years, promote closer dialogue and help the EU and the UK discuss and address shared challenges.

The paper argues that the EPC's longer-term future and its ability to bring the EU and the UK together are still unclear. All EPC members agree that it can be useful as a forum for informal discussions on common challenges between a broad group of European leaders. The question is whether the EPC can become more than that, and serve as a platform for pan-European co-operation and co-ordination.

The main risk to the EPC's success, including its ability to facilitate UK-EU co-operation, is that leaders will lose interest in the EPC, causing it to sputter out. That would be particularly likely if the EU institutions became closely involved in the EPC, as that would scare the current British government off. A separate risk is that the EPC comes to be seen as an alternative to enlargement, as that would irk many eastern EU states and candidate countries.

The EPC's potential to foster closer UK-EU relations would be strengthened if it becomes more than a platform for dialogue and serves as an ‘incubator’ for concrete co-operation projects in areas such as energy security, countering hybrid threats or securing critical raw materials.

The author of the paper, Luigi Scazzieri, said: *The EPC has the potential to be an important new feature of Europe's political landscape, and to play an important role in fostering closer dialogue and co-operation between the EU and the UK. For that to happen the EPC needs to remain an inclusive,*

*informal and institutionally light forum in which all its members come together as equals. The EU should maintain an arms-length relationship with the EPC, or it will be perceived as dominated by the Union – which would drive away the UK.*

**This policy brief is the first of a three paper CER/Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung series, “Shared Values, Common Challenges - UK-European Security Co-operation after the War in Ukraine.”**

**Notes for editors:**

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