

Programme  
**Public Panel/Experts' Dialogue**  
**The EU-UK Progressive Forum – A new Chapter**

Brussels  
July 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> 2025

**Venue:**  
Foundation of European Progressive Studies  
Avenue des Art 46, 1000 Brussels

**Organisers:**  
FEPS  
FES EU Office  
FES Office London

**Background:**

The relaunch of relations between the EU and the UK marks a shift towards more constructive engagement following years of post-Brexit tension. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine made it clear that the EU and UK are facing a common threat and need to coordinate their policies better. While the UK has made clear that it will not return to the single market or customs union, the government of Keir Starmer has started to engage diplomatically with the EU, with a reset of the relationship as its priority. This renewed cooperation is centered on shared interests such as security, trade, energy and climate action. Key developments include the resolution of disputes over the Northern Ireland Protocol through the Windsor Framework, and the UK's re-entry into the Horizon Europe research programme. While challenges remain, both sides appear committed to stabilizing and strengthening their partnership in a more pragmatic and collaborative spirit.

The summit on May 19<sup>th</sup> laid the foundations for a “new era” of EU-UK partnership. Leaders identified shared global challenges, formalized a security and defence partnership, and signed a document on ‘*Common Understanding*’ setting out the agreements reached on fisheries, energy cooperation, youth mobility and a renewed commitment to tackle irregular migration. Even though the atmosphere was described as respectful and constructive, the preparations were tense and a success of the summit not a given.

What are the benefits both partners are expecting from a better partnership on a mid- to long-term perspectives? What networks are needed to develop mutual understanding and deeper trust in each beyond cumbersome technical negotiations towards a long term and stable partnership?

This Conference will focus on the ‘big picture’ strategic questions that will structure the future of UK-EU relations and broader geopolitics. Leveraging the joint expertise and networks of FES and FEPS, it will convene politicians as well as experts from the UK, the EU as well as selected member states to build trust and understanding around political issues such as security, trade, migration, energy, and mobility. Ultimately the participants should develop a joint long-term vision of the future EU-UK partnership.

The first, public part of the Conference will address the outcome of the EU-UK summit in terms of impact for the strategic partnership and security in Europe. The closed workshop sessions on the following day will address the above-mentioned topics more specifically to spell out how the partnership in these areas could look like.

### Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Afternoon Arrival

17h30      *Registration - Venue: FEPS, Avenue des Art 46, 1000 Brussels*

18h00      Panel Discussion: **After the EU-UK summit: How to make the new strategic partnership long-lasting, strong and resilient against populist attacks?**

Against the backdrop of global instability and based on the EU-UK Strategic Partnership, security cooperation between the EU and the UK is expected to deepen. Public expectation for safety and resilience is rising. As threats evolve—ranging from cyberattacks to geopolitical tensions—a broader understanding of security is emerging, including energy, information, and supply chain resilience. Strengthening international partnerships will be key to safeguarding the rules-based international order. In this context, the UK and the EU share responsibility for defending democratic values and tackling common global challenges together against challenges from inside and outside.



**Key Questions:**

- How can the UK and EU move beyond transactional security cooperation toward a more integrated, strategic partnership that reflects their shared democratic values and global responsibilities?
- In the face of hybrid threats like cyberattacks, disinformation, and energy disruption, what practical steps should the UK and EU take to build joint resilience across critical infrastructure and information ecosystems? Could we come up with a common European identity which strengthens our resilience?
- What role should the UK and EU play together in safeguarding the international rules-based order amid rising authoritarianism and global instability?

**Key note:**

Caroline Read, Deputy Ambassador, UK Mission to the EU

**Discussion:**

Ana Catarina Mendes, MEP, Vice-Chair, S&D Group

Rosa Crawford, Head of International at the Trades Union Congress UK

Katherine Sangster, National Manager for Scotland, The Fabian Society

Joe Dancey, Executive Director Policy & Communications, Labour - *tbc*

**Tuesday, 15th July 2025**

The closed section of the program is available upon invitation only.