

CLEER Presidency Lecture: The experience of Luxembourg in the field of EU external relations

On 25 February 2016, H.E. Mr. Pierre Louis Lorenz, Ambassador of Luxembourg to the Netherlands, gave a presentation on the main achievements of the Luxembourg Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The event took place as part of CLEER Presidency Lecture series.

H.E. Ambassador Lorenz outlined that the Luxembourg Presidency had the overarching goal of creating a “Union for citizens” and thus opted for an open, dynamic and reliable approach in its interaction with citizens, businesses, partners and institutions. Accordingly, the work of the Presidency was organised around 7 key priorities:

- Stimulating investment to boost growth and employment;
- Deepening the European Union’s social dimension;
- Managing migration;
- Combining freedom, justice and security;
- Revitalising the Single Market by focusing on the digital dimension;
- Placing European competitiveness in a global and transparent framework, promoting sustainable development; and
- Strengthening the European Union’s presence on the global stage.

Moreover, H.E. the ambassador outlined that the Presidency faced several unprecedented external challenges, such as the management of the migration crisis, the growing instability at the EU’s external borders, and the terrorist threat in the aftermath of the attacks in Paris. H.E. Ambassador Lorenz outlined that tangible progress was made in all seven priority areas and showed how the Presidency was able to react to the crisis in an appropriate and timely manner. Respondent speaker Prof. Arjen Meij highlighted the problems the EU is facing as regards the rule of law crisis in some Member States, and gave some insights concerning what should be done at the EU level to address these critical developments. The two presentations were followed by a lively debate with the audience under the chair of CLEER’s Academic Programme Coordinator Dr. Luca Pantaleo.