



The changing World Order and EU Law

The Danish Association of European Law invites you to a presentation featuring two distinguished speakers exploring critical questions at the intersection of EU Law, global geopolitics, and European security.

As the world order changes, the EU faces a dual challenge: Adapting its internal legal framework to external pressures while charting a path toward a credible common defence. Two leading voices examine these transformative developments from complementary perspectives.

SPEAKERS

[Steven Blockmans](#), Associate Senior Research Fellow, former Research Director of the EU foreign policy unit of the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS).

[Graham Butler](#), Full Professor of Law, (B.A., LL.M., Ph.D.), Department of Law, University of Southern Denmark, and Full Professor of Law at Linnaeus University.

Legal Pathways towards a European Defence Union, by Steven Blockmans:

Both at home and abroad, the European Union is not generally perceived as a provider of strong security guarantees. Even if its treaty packs a mutual assistance clause akin to NATO's Article 5, the EU as an organisation above and beyond its member states has no operational mandate to defend the 'homeland' in the traditional kinetic sense. Political divides between member states lead to frequent blockages in Council decision-making procedures that require unanimity and delay or derail action on foreign and security policy issues. Treaty reform is not on the horizon.

And yet, "the progressive framing of a common defence policy that might lead to a common defence" is a treaty-based competence that can and should be used to support, coordinate, and supplement the actions of member states, especially when NATO is rendered dysfunctional by its 'indispensable nation'. The focus of this interrogation will lie on treaty-based and extra-EU legal pathways to equip the Union with the politico-strategic, command and control, operational, and industrial arrangements needed to swiftly build a European Defence Union worthy of the name.

DATE

23 APRIL 2026

TIME

16:00-18:00

LOCATION

Eigtveds Pakhus
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs
Strandgade 25D
1401 Copenhagen K

Course

Certificates

Will be issued
upon request

Registration deadline:

22 APRIL 2026

[REGISTRATION](#) →

The Changing World Order and International EU Law, by Graham Butler

This contribution examines how the growing shifts in the world order are increasingly shaping the internal development of the EU's legal order. While the EU has long been regarded as a regulatory power, recent global events are now propelling and accelerating forms of internal legal development of the EU. These external pressures have driven the adoption of new EU legal acts grounded in a wide range of legal bases in the EU Treaties, including internal market harmonisation (Article 114 TFEU), external trade through the common commercial policy (Article 207 TFEU), industrial policy (Article 173 TFEU), environmental and climate considerations (Articles 191-193 TFEU), energy (Article 194 TFEU), and even emergency provisions (Article 122 TFEU). The emerging picture is one of an internal EU legal order in which external vulnerabilities serve as catalysing events to self-justify far reaching internal measures, deeper integration, and more coordinated efforts to safeguard Europe's strategic interests. This manifests in fields such as foreign subsidies control, investment screening, access to critical raw materials, energy market interventions, defence procurement, joint EU borrowing, and trade related countermeasures, inter alia. Together, these developments mark a broader shift in which the boundary between the EU's internal and external action is becoming increasingly porous, and how EU external relations, and the legal acts that accompany it, now function as a central driver of the EU's internal legal order.

PROGRAMME

TIME	SUBJECT
16:00 - 16:05	Welcome - by Ulla Neergaard, Chairperson for Danish Association of European Law and professor of EU Law, University of Copenhagen
16:05 - 16:50	Legal Pathways towards a European Defence Union - by Steven Blockmans, Associate Senior Research Fellow, former Research Director of the EU foreign policy unit of the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)
16:50 - 17:00	BREAK
17:00 - 17:45	The Changing World Order and Internal EU Law – by Graham Butler, Full Professor of Law, (B.A., LL.M., Ph.D.), Department of Law, University of Southern Denmark, and Full Professor of Law at Linnaeus University, Sweden
17:45 - 18:00	Q&A AND DEBATE

SPEAKERS



STEVEN BLOCKMANS
Associate Senior Research
Fellow, former Research
Director CEPS



GRAHAM BUTLER
Full Professor of Law,
B.A., LL.M., Ph.D., SDU
and Linnaeus University

Dansk Forening for Europaret

c/o advokat Rass Holdgaard
POUL SCHMITH
KALVEBOD BRYGGE 32
1560 KØBENHAVN V

T +45 33 15 20 10

W www.europaret.dk
@ europaret@poulschmith.dk

