

Policy Research Alert

FROM FLASH-IT, A DISSEMINATION PROJECT RELATING EUROPEAN POLICY PRIORITIES TO EU-FUNDED RESEARCH IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

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Research Meets Diplomacy: Europe as a Global Actor in the 21st Century

Is European foreign policy benefiting from insights gained in EU-funded research projects? How can European research contribute more effectively to the EU's global engagement efforts? And what can be done to optimise communication between researchers and policymakers dealing with foreign affairs? These were among the key questions addressed during a one-day conference jointly organized by the European Commission and the Flash-IT dissemination project in Brussels on 5 June 2014.

Bringing together some 120 researchers, diplomats, policy-makers, business representatives and civil society actors, the conference addressed the overarching theme of the EU's capacities as a global actor. Special attention was paid to the novel roles of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European External Action Service. Several representatives of the Service participated in the conference, delivering presentations and actively engaging in discussions with researchers.

The event also highlighted EU research activities and foreign policy engagement in three geographical areas: the Mediterranean rim; Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Asia-Pacific region. Coordinators of EU-funded research projects on all these regions outlined the main findings of their work, offering suggestions for policy learning and future research.

Among the chief suggestions to emerge from the event:

- Through a process of continuous engagement, nurture dialogue between researchers and policymakers, emphasising insights that address foreign policy puzzles in pragmatic language.
- Overcome EU centism in research and policy and emphasize local knowledge; strengthen cooperation between EU and third-country researchers.
- Look beyond trade and economics when it comes to research on EU external activities; recognize the value of engagement around issues such as sustainable development, security and human rights.

A detailed report on the results of the conference is available [here](#).

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