Dr Busek begins by asserting that there is not enough discussion about the impact of globalization in Europe. Europeans are content to tell themselves that the continent still has plenty of influence all over the world, but in reality, the EU has no real strategy for the challenges of globalization.

Europe today counts for only 7% of the global population and 20-22% of global economic activity, this latter figure is typically cited as a source of strength, but the European share of both is in decline. This trend puts into doubt another key figure, that Europeans consume 50% of the world's welfare. The resulting anxiety about the future of the European social model is exacerbating an inward-looking trend. On top of this, internal issues such as Catalonia's drive for independence and the Brexit process mean Europeans are avoiding questions related to global affairs (with climate change being perhaps the key exception).

However, the impact of the outside world cannot be ignored forever. Europe will inevitably have to face the implications of a changing global environment. An increasingly assertive Russia is intent on regaining importance through military strength. The rise of China is seeing its presence on the continent grow, especially in the Balkans where it is starting to compete with the EU for influence. Recent worries about predatory loans voiced by smaller Asian nations should leave a clear message that similar projects in Europe will eventually come at a cost. Finally, Europe will have to face the reality of a weakening in the transatlantic relationship. The relative decline in the importance of the USA is in part fuelling Trump's push for 'America First' and Europe needs to devise a suitable response.

Devising such a response demands clarification on what exactly Europe is. The EU member states believe they are Europe but Busek contends that an effective answer to the challenges of globalization also needs to include the countries that are not (yet) members. To this end, the enlargement process, which is continuing but has effectively stalled, needs to continue. There is no practical consensus for this in Europe, however, as seen in Macron's recent comments about Bosnia and his decision to block the start of accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania. North Macedonia has accomplished a lot in the pursuit of EU membership and deserves recognition of these efforts - Macron is playing domestic politics and this episode reveals the difficulties in making truly European policy.
Furthermore, on the lack of public discussion on global affairs, Busek asserts that the European Party and the Commission need to step up to put it higher on the European agenda. What is also needed is for European universities to work harder to fill this void. Europe's key strength in a changing globalized world is its research capabilities and it is here, rather than in promoting normative innovation, that it can play the part of a global leader. Key to such a project would be a renewed effort to keep pace in science and technology innovation, at the moment Europe is too dependent on America and needs to make the most of the promise of Erasmus research exchange programme.

An intensification of global competition has already started with the increasing regularity of cyber-attacks and a growing disposition toward trade wars over trade agreements. The World is broadly at peace for now but there is no guarantee of that a sense of competition fuelled by the memories of empire (Chines, Soviet, even British) is causing nation-states to come to loggerheads more frequently.

Europeans remain convinced that Europe leads the way in human rights and their promotion. But such a normative framework is coming under sustained attack as a Western invention as. Democracy and its promotion are going in the same direction and it is now doubtful that it will form an essential part of the World's common future under globalisation. In order to resist these efforts Busek concludes that Europe needs to urgently find its identity on the global stage.