



¿Se Está Convirtiendo la Derecha Conservadora en el Nuevo Globalismo?

4 JUL 2025 · PUBLICATION

Internationalization of conservatism, national sovereignty and emerging tensions in the new transnational right

Executive summary

During the last decade, an increasingly articulated international network of parties, governments, think tanks, media and opinion leaders linked to the new Western conservatism has emerged. What began as a fragmented reaction to the international liberal order has progressively evolved towards an informal but recognizable architecture of conservative transnational cooperation, characterized by a growing discursive, symbolic and strategic convergence between right-wing political actors in Europe, America and other regions of the world.

This phenomenon has generated important benefits for conservative forces: exchange of ideas, transfer of good practices, mutual legitimization, international coordination and strengthening of intellectual ecosystems alternative to the dominant liberal consensus. However, it also poses a structural tension of increasing importance: the risk that internationalized conservatism will end up subordinating the national interest of their respective actors to transnational ideological loyalties.

The paradox is evident. A movement born largely as a reaction against liberal cosmopolitanism, technocratic supranationalism and the erosion of national sovereignty runs the risk of reproducing analogous dynamics under new cultural and symbolic codes. If not properly managed, the current internationalization of conservatism could result in an alternative form of ideological globalism: one less progressive in content, but structurally similar in its logics of coordination, pressure, discursive homogenization and subordination of national particularities to a shared transnational narrative.

The central question for the future of the new international right is not, therefore, whether there should be cooperation between conservative movements, but under what principles such cooperation should be articulated in order to prevent conservative internationalism from eroding the patriotic foundation that has historically defined conservative thinking.

I. Conservative Tradition and its Historical Link to Patriotism

Historically, conservatism has been intimately linked to the defense of concrete political communities, specific national traditions and inherited institutions rooted in particular historical contexts. Unlike the great universalist ideologies of modernity—liberalism, socialism, or communism—classical conservatism did not emerge as an exportable or universalizable project, but as a political disposition aimed at preserving concrete social orders against revolutionary or abstract dynamics.

From Edmund Burke in the United Kingdom to Donoso Cortés in Spain, through Charles Maurras in France or the Hungarian conservatism of the nineteenth century, conservative tradition shared a common feature: the defense of the particular from the abstract, from the historical community against ideological universalism, and from the nation as a priority framework of political loyalty.

For much of contemporary history, even in contexts of international alliances or ideological blocs — such as the Cold War — conservatism maintained a strong national imprint. Thatcher was inseparable from the British interest, De Gaulle of the French, Reagan of the American. International cooperation existed, but did not dilute the centrality of the nation-state as a primary political reference.

The historical premise was clear: conservatism did not aspire to homogenize nations, but to preserve their differences.

II. The emergence of an International Conservative Ecosystem

The progressive erosion of the international liberal order and the shared perception of threat to the advance of cultural progressivism, supranational technocracy and post-national cosmopolitanism have favoured the emergence of an increasingly cohesive transnational conservative ecosystem.

In practice, this ecosystem is articulated through:

This phenomenon has generated a sort of relatively standardized international conservative political language. Concepts such as sovereignty, anti-wokism, Western civilization, traditional family, border defense, fight against globalism or cultural battle circulate today with remarkable uniformity among conservative movements of very diverse national contexts.

The problem is that this discursive convergence, while useful in building identity and international community, introduces the risk of artificially homogenizing profoundly different national realities.

III. From Patriotism to Ideological Alignment: A Growing Tension

The main emerging tension within this new international conservative ecosystem lies in the progressive substitution of classical patriotism by growing forms of transnational ideological alignment.

Increasingly, conservative parties, leaders and opinion-makers adopt positions, discourses or international alignments not so much in terms of an autonomous calculation of national interest as in terms of ideological affinities with foreign actors perceived as allies within the same civilizational or cultural cause.

This is a significant investment in the historical logic of conservatism.

While the classical conservative understood that his first political obligation was towards his own national community, sectors of the new right seem increasingly inclined to prioritize international ideological solidarity over strict considerations of national interest.

This is especially evident in foreign policy, where some conservative actors are reluctant to criticize decisions harmful to their own countries when they come from ideologically related foreign leaders.

The consequence is a growing confusion between ideological alliance and strategic alignment.

IV. Structural Asymmetry between Governments and Opposition

One of the factors aggravating this trend is the structural asymmetry between conservative governments in office and conservative opposition parties.

Once in power, governments must necessarily subordinate ideological purity to strategic realism. Managing alliances, trade, energy, defense, security and diplomacy forces them to introduce pragmatism and numeracy into decision-making.

On the contrary, opposition parties are free to adopt ideologically maximalist positions without facing immediate costs of governance.

This produces a functional division within the international conservative ecosystem:

However, at the transnational level, ideological rhetoric tends to generate more visibility than government prudence. As a result, the tone of the movement tends to be defined by actors with less responsibility for government and, therefore, less exposure to the restrictions of real power.

This dynamic creates an additional risk: small or peripheral parties begin to model their behavior not on the strategic prudence of successful governments, but on the aesthetics, narrative or discursive maximalism of the international conservative ecosystem.

V. The Risk of Hegemony Within the Own Conservative Internationalism

Conservative internationalization is not horizontal. Like any international ecosystem, it contains hierarchies of power.

The great hegemonic poles—mainly the United States, and to a lesser extent certain influential European governments—have greater capacity to define agendas, impose interpretative frameworks, and structure ideological priorities of the movement.

This raises a fundamental question: even within a conservative internationalism based formally on national sovereignty, the interests of hegemonic actors will not cease to prevail over those of their minor partners.

In other words, the rhetoric of conservative international solidarity does not eliminate the structural reality of power politics.

Every hegemonic actor, however ideologically it may be, will tend to instrumentalize international alliances according to their own national interests.

The risk for smaller actors or foreign opposition parties is to end up inadvertently subordinating their own national priorities to strategic agendas designed by larger powers under cover of ideological affinity.

VI. Europe and the Limits of an Integrated Conservative Power

This tension is particularly visible in Europe.

Much of the new European right shares a vision for greater continental coordination between sovereign governments. However, such an aspiration runs into a structural contradiction: a geopolitically powerful Europe would require levels of political integration incompatible with the full national sovereignty that conservatism itself claims to defend.

Moreover, even under conservative hegemony, irreconcilable divergences between European national interests would persist:

The conclusion is clear: there is no single potential “conservative Europe” without significant sacrifice of national sovereignty.

European conservatism must assume that a fully sovereign Europe will necessarily be plural, fragmented and competitive, not an integrated hegemonic actor.

VII. Conclusion: The Future of International Conservatism

The internationalization of conservatism is one of the most important political developments of the last decade. It has allowed to break the cultural monopoly of international liberalism and has generated an unprecedented ideological, political and media infrastructure for the Western right.

However, its consolidation raises a fundamental strategic question: can there be conservative internationalism without degenerate into a new form of ideological globalism?

The answer will depend on whether the movement is able to preserve a clear political hierarchy:

Ultimately, conservatism will remain truly conservative only if it maintains as a guiding principle that the first political obligation of every conservative actor is towards his own nation.

Any conservative internationalism that reverses that hierarchy will cease to be cooperative patriotism to become a new form of structural globalism.

The question, therefore, is not whether conservatives should cooperate internationally. The question is whether they will be able to do so without becoming what they originally rebelled against.

Note: A more extensive and developed version of the arguments contained in this report was published by Juan Ángel Soto at the Danube Institute in July 2025 under the title Towards a Brave New World: Are Conservatives the New Globalists? Available from:

[<https://danubeinstitute.hu/en/research/towards-a-brave-new-world-are-conservatives-the-new-globalists>](<https://danubeinstitute.hu/en/>)