

# ERJA KAIKKONEN

## HEAD OF THE POLICY AND PUBLIC OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

Erja Kaikkonen is the Head of the Policy and Public Outreach Department since 2021.

She joined the ETF in April 2019 as the Head of the Strategic Development Department. She is an experienced leader with a background in EU external relations, coordination and strategic development through multiple European Union institutions and instruments, including the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU CSDP mission and EU Delegation. She has defined, developed and implemented EU and UN policies in four continents: Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and the EU headquarters in Belgium.

Before joining the EFT, Erja was employed by the European External Action Service (EEAS) since 2011, the last three years as the Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Cameroon. Prior to that she was responsible for the EU policy response to the Syrian conflict at the EEAS, and then advisor to the Permanent Chair of the EU Political and Security Committee on Middle East and Africa.

Erja has also worked in Afghanistan as Head of Strategy, Planning, Analysis and Reporting unit and as Senior Political Advisor to the Head of the EU Police Mission to Afghanistan, as a Regional Programme Officer for livelihoods development at the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Lebanon, and in management positions in EU public affairs and advocacy at the private sector (Hill & Knowlton and Quantum Communications) in Brussels and in Lebanon.

Erja has a post graduate degree from the College of Europe in Bruges, and she also holds degrees from Sciences Po Paris and the University of Sussex.