



# THE STATE OF THE UNION 2024

**Conference Programme**  
Badia Fiesolana, 23 – 24 May 2024

**WORK IN PROGRESS**

## THE STATE OF THE UNION | 23 and 24 May 2024, Florence

[The State of the Union](#) conference was established in 2011 to increase the visibility and international resonance of the excellent research carried out at the [European University Institute](#). The **14th edition** of the Conference will take place in Florence on **23 and 24 May 2024**. This year, the Conference will have a special emphasis on democracy and the rule of law, the enlargement of the European Union, economy, demography, the digital and green transition, themes which are all of crucial importance in the run-up to the European elections in June 2024. As was the case already in 2014 and 2019, the European University Institute is likely to host a televised debate among the “*Spitzenkandidaten*”, the representatives of the different political families running for the post of Commission President. On **Saturday, 25 May** the EUI will open its doors and the gardens of Villa Salviati, home of the Historical Archives of the European Union, for a day dedicated to art and culture highlighting the upcoming European elections of June 2024 and the EU priorities.

### CONTENT

- **Artificial Intelligence / Digital transition**
- **Climate change / Green transition**
- **Democracy**
- **Demography**
- **Economy / Industrial policy**
- **Geopolitics / Enlargement of the EU**

### THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND ITS MEMBERS

The [Scientific Committee](#) is composed of influential experts and academics representing the academic units of the EUI. Drawing on their expertise, the Committee devises the [programme of the Conference](#) by ensuring the scientific quality of sessions.

- **Marco Del Panta**, Secretary General, EUI (Chair)
- **Monika Baar**, Professor and Joint Chair, Department of History and Robert Schuman Centre, EUI
- **Elena Calsamiglia**, Researcher, Department of Law, EUI
- **Jeffrey T. Checkel**, Professor, Department of Political and Social Sciences, EUI
- **Marco Incerti**, Director, Communications Service, EUI
- **Erik Jones**, Director, RSCAS, EUI
- **Fabrizia Mealli**, Professor, Department of Economics, EUI
- **Kalypso Nicolaidis**, Professor, STG, EUI
- **Georgios Papakonstantinou**, Acting Director and Dean of Executive Education, STG, EUI
- **Nicolas Petit**, Head of Department, Department of Law, EUI

### AMONGST THE HIGH-PROFILE SPEAKERS INVITED | **Work in progress** | In alphabetical order

- **Leila Benali**, Minister for the Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Morocco **(Confirmed)**
- **Laurence Boone**, Former Secretary of State for European Affairs, France **(Confirmed)**
- **Josep Borrell Fontelles**, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President, European Commission **(Confirmed)**
- **Nadia Calviño**, President, European Investment Bank **(Confirmed)**
- **Alessandro Chiocchetti**, Secretary-General, European Parliament
- **Mario Draghi**, Former President, European Central Bank
- **Martin Dvořák**, Minister for European Affairs, Czech Republic **(Confirmed)**
- **Elsa Fornero**, Former Minister of Labour and Social Policies, Italy **(Confirmed)**
- **Mariya Gabriel**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria **(Confirmed)**
- **Pierre Gramegna**, Managing Director, European Stability Mechanism (ESM) **(Confirmed)**
- **Wopke Hoekstra**, Commissioner for Climate Action, European Commission **(Confirmed)**
- **Věra Jourová**, Vice-President for Values and Transparency, European Commission **(Confirmed)**
- **Kaja Kallas**, Prime Minister, Estonia
- **Enrico Letta**, Former Prime Minister, Italy, and President, Jacques Delors Institute **(Confirmed)**
- **Ursula Owusu-Ekufu**, Minister of Communications and Digitalisation, Ghana **(Confirmed)**
- **Andrej Plenković**, Prime Minister, Croatia
- **Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa**, President of the Republic, Portugal **(Confirmed)**
- **Katerina Sakellaropoulou**, President of the Republic, Greece **(Confirmed)**
- **Margaritis Schinas**, Vice-President, European Commission **(Confirmed)**
- **Stéphane Séjourné**, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, France
- **Anne-Marie Slaughter**, CEO, New America **(Confirmed)**
- **Dubravka Šuica**, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, European Commission **(Confirmed)**
- **Andrzej Szeptycki**, Under-Secretary of State, Poland **(Confirmed)**
- **Antonio Tajani**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Italy **(Confirmed)**
- **Donald Tusk**, Prime Minister, Poland

### Thursday 23 May 2024 | European University Institute, Badia Fiesolana

*Note: Number of panels, high-level conversations and their timings are indicative and subject to change.*

11:30-20:00	Registration throughout the day
12.00-13.00	Arrival and Tuscan tasting
<b>13.00-20.00</b>	<i>Master of Ceremonies</i> <b>Méabh Mc Mahon</b> , European affairs correspondent, Euronews
<b>13.00-13.10</b>	<b>Opening of the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of The State of the Union</b> <b>Patrizia Nanz</b> , President, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Anna Ravoni</b> , Mayor, City of Fiesole ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Alessandro Chiocchetti</b> , Secretary-General, European Parliament
<b>13.10-13.50</b>	<b>High-level conversation – <i>Format to be confirmed</i></b>
<b>13.50-14.20</b>	<b>High-level conversation – <i>Format to be confirmed</i></b>
14.20-14.30	Break
<b>14.30-15.40</b>	<b>N. 3 Parallel panels</b>
14.30-15.40	<b>A Brave New EU: rethinking the (geo)politics of enlargement</b>
<b>Geopolitics and the enlargement of EU</b>	The tectonic shift in global geopolitics caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine has irrevocably linked the security architecture of the European Union (EU) to the question of the Union's enlargement. This policy has proven ineffective in the Western Balkans, raising questions as to its credibility for integrating the Eastern Partnership countries, including Ukraine. How can the EU become politically, institutionally, and financially prepared for 30+ members? What will such a Union look like, and what place will the current aspiring members have in it? In this panel, we discuss the modalities in which the EU's enlargement policy can be reformed to best balance the challenge of the new geopolitical reality against the internal need for institutional reform and democratic legitimacy. We propose avenues through which the Union could have a greater impact on the transformation of (potential) candidate countries locked in protracted political and economic transitions.
EUI Scientific Coordinator: Erik Jones Kalypso Nicolaïdis	
	<i>Opening:</i> <b>Martin Dvořák</b> , Minister for European Affairs, Czech Republic ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
	<i>Moderator:</i> <b>Jelena Džankić</b> , Professor, Global Governance Programme, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <i>Co-moderator:</i> <b>Georgian-Marius Ghincea</b> , Researcher, Political and Social Sciences, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
	<i>Speakers:</i> <b>Anna Jarosz-Friis</b> , Director, Ukraine Unit, DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Hennadiy Maksak</b> , Executive Director, Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Prism" ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Milena Mihajlović</b> , Programme Director, European Policy Centre (CEP) ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Nathalie Tocci</b> , Director, Istituto Affari Internazionali, and Professor, STG, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
14.30-15.40	<b>Bertelsmann Stiftung</b> <b>How can the green energy transition succeed without harming regional cohesion in Europe?</b>
<b>Climate change Green transition</b>	The latest research by Bertelsmann Stiftung on the EU economy comes to a surprising conclusion: Less-developed, rural regions in the EU could gain significantly in economic prosperity from a transition to renewable energy, while urban areas with high energy demands could face setbacks. In short, it's well worth it for rural regions to pursue a renewable energy overhaul although their support is currently rather limited, while urban areas with high support for green policies could face future financial and political hurdles due to rising costs and political "greenlash." This panel will grapple with the implications of these findings for policymakers, businesses and consumers and address questions like:
EUI Scientific Coordinator: Erik Jones Malte Zabel	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How can policymakers ensure buy-in from rural regions by highlighting these benefits? And what can be done to forestall waning support for green energy policies in urban areas?</li> <li>- How can rural and urban regions work together to leverage the strengths of each to meet the needs of the other? What can be done to end up with a mutually beneficiary outcome?</li> <li>- What synergies can be leveraged between the EU's cohesion policy and energy policy? Can cohesion policy support energy policy goals?</li> </ul>

*Moderator:* **Paul Adamson**, Founder, Encompass Europe **(Confirmed)**  
*Co-moderator:* **Nathan Crist**, Project Manager, Europe's Future Program, Bertelsmann Stiftung **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Catherine Fieschi**, Visiting Fellow, RSCAS, EUI **(Confirmed)**  
**Thomas Schwab**, Project Manager, Europe's Future Program, Bertelsmann Stiftung **(Confirmed)**  
**Anna Sobczak**, Policy Coordinator for the Strategic Energy Technology Plan, DG for Energy, European Commission **(Considering)**

**14.30-15.40** **European competitiveness of the Single Market: What the future holds**

**Industrial policy** This panel will explore the rationale and contours of an emerging EU industrial policy and address the debate between protection vs. protectionism in the context of ongoing work to reform the EU Single Market and define a new strategy for competitiveness at EU level. The green transition will be discussed as a test case for this new strategy. Does it try to accelerate the green transition through promotion and protection of more sustainable products and production methods? Or does it prioritise geopolitical competition for resources like rare earths that may feed into the green transition but above all benefits established players in the fossil-based economy?

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Georgios  
Papakonstantinou

*Moderator:* **Waltraud Schelkle**, Joint Chair for European Public Policy, EUI **(Confirmed)**  
*Co-moderator:* **Jordy Weyns**, Researcher, Political and Social Sciences, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Enrico Letta**, Former Prime Minister, Italy, and President, Jacques Delors Institute **(Confirmed)**  
**Jan Mischke**, Partner, McKinsey Global Institute **(Confirmed)**  
**Markus Reinisch**, Vice President for Europe Public Policy, Meta **(Confirmed)**  
**Daniela Schwarzer**, Member of the Executive Board, Bertelsmann Stiftung **(Confirmed)**  
**Laurence Tubiana**, CEO, European Climate Foundation (ECF) **(Confirmed)**

**15:40-15:45** **Break**

**15:45-16:55** **N. 3 Parallel panels**

**15:45-16:55** **Ageing society: Threat or opportunity?**

**Demography** The European Union faces a complex challenge characterised by increasing life expectancy, diminishing fertility rates, and the ensuing phenomenon of demographic aging. This pervasive trend, though varying in intensity among member states, necessitates sustainable policy responses to address its multifaceted socioeconomic repercussions. Key considerations involve adapting welfare state policies to accommodate evolving occupational patterns, productivity levels, and changing social benefit provisions. This panel seeks to explore pivotal topics such as promoting active and healthy aging, sustaining welfare systems amidst youth labor market participation, leveraging migration to address declining birth rates, and navigating the delicate balance between pronatal policies and women's workforce engagement. Additionally, the panel will delve into the implications of a shrinking working-age population on technology adoption, automation, and the potential role of artificial intelligence in mitigating these challenges. Moreover, it will scrutinize whether immigration offers a more efficient and climate-friendly solution to the strain on social security and pension systems compared to pursuing higher fertility rates.

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Fabrizia Mealli

*Opening:* **Dubravka Šuica**, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, European Commission **(Confirmed)**

*Moderator:* **Alexander Monge-Naranjo**, Head of Department, Department of Economics, EUI **(Confirmed)**  
*Co-moderator:* **Edoardo Frattola**, Economist, Bank of Italy and Researcher, Economics, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Arnstein Aassve**, Professor of Demography, Bocconi University **(Confirmed)**  
**Elsa Fornero**, Professor of Political Economics, University of Turin **(Confirmed)**  
**Franca van Hooren**, Professor of Political Science, University of Amsterdam **(Confirmed)**

**15:45-16:55** **The State of Generative AI**

## Digital transition

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Nicolas Petit

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is gaining traction in Europe and the rest of the world. Thanks to large language models, AI systems have learned to speak and write. They can engage in meaningful conversations and can produce a vast range of texts, from literary essays to computer programs. Multimodal systems can shift from one to the other mode of expression, generating images or sounds from texts or viceversa. We are still wondering what technological and social prospect are opened by this amazing and to a large extent unexpected breakthrough, while popular applications such as GPT or Midjourney are already reshaping the way we produce and consume knowledge, including text, image, video or sound generation. GenAI is likely to have a major impact on our understandings of labor, creativity, speech, or identity, as it enters domains that we have so far assumed to be ultimately human. But what, exactly, is this technology about? What are its capabilities, limits and development prospects? How should we regulate it? Do the AI-Act rules on foundation systems provide an adequate framework? This panel focuses on the challenges brought about by this technology, it examines how its technological potential can be harnessed for good and its risks mitigated and discusses its regulation.

*Moderator:* **Giovanni Sartor**, Professor, Legal Informatics and Legal Theory, EUI (**Confirmed**)  
*Co-moderator:* **Francisco De Abreu Duarte**, Researcher, Law, EUI (**Confirmed**)

*Speakers:*

**Rima Alaily**, Corporate Vice President and Deputy General Counsel, Microsoft (**Confirmed**)  
**Orly Lobel**, Warren Distinguished Professor of Law, and Director, Center for Employment and Labor Policy, University of San Diego (**Confirmed**)  
**Roberto Navigli**, Professor of Natural Language Processing, Sapienza University of Rome (**Confirmed**)  
**Paul Nemitz**, Principal Adviser on the Digital Transition, DG for Justice and Consumers, European Commission (**Confirmed**)  
**Marco Pancini**, Head of EU Affairs, Meta (**Invited**)

### Poste Italiane

15.45-16.55

## The last mile of European Integration: Adapting the European Public Goods for the digital era

## Industrial policy

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Marco Buti  
Cosimo Pacciani

During the recent crises (Covid-19 and Ukraine), the EU developed a number of policies and instruments representing a break with past practice and revamping the discussion on European public goods. The urgent needs associated to the supply of vital services and the acceleration of a series of macrotrends (e.g. digitalization and climate change's adaption) will require a new understanding on how European Public Goods are defined, financed and distributed among all European citizens, also in forms of services of general interest.

This panel will explore the concept and contours of European public goods, the key role of developing "own resources" at EU level in this regard and how, in the context of their distribution through publicly or privately managed platforms, the EPCs will have a key role on creating more cohesion in Europe.

*Opening:* **Marcello Messori**, Professor, RSCAS, EUI (**Confirmed**)

*Moderator:* **Marco Buti**, Tommaso Padoa Schioppa Chair, RSCAS, EUI (**Confirmed**)

*Speakers:*

**Robin Brooks**, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution (**Confirmed**)  
**Silvia Merler**, Head of Research, Algebris, and Fellow, Bruegel (**Confirmed**)  
**Silvia Rovere**, President, Poste Italiane (**Confirmed**)  
**Eric Von Breska**, Director, DG for Budget, European Commission (**Confirmed**)

16.55-17.00

Break

17.00-18.10

## N. 3 Parallel panels

17.00-18.10

## Bolstering democracy in the EU: A progress report

## Democracy

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Kalypso Nicolaïdis

This roundtable will discuss the record of the EU on bolstering democracy since the last European Parliament elections in 2019 and ask what next for the EU. It will include a discussion of the Democratic Resilience package, the Conference on the Future of Europe, the new European Citizen Panels in Spring 2023 and 2024, the EP's Agora and the European Citizens Initiative record as well as the Defense of Democracy Package issued in December 2023.



*Opening:* **Dubravka Šuica**, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, European Commission (**Confirmed**)

*Moderator:* **Kalypso Nicolaidis**, Lead, Transnational Democracy Cluster, EUI, and the EUI-led 'Democratic Odyssey' project (**Confirmed**)

*Roundtable with:*

**Joel Christoph**, PhD Researcher, Department of Economics, EUI (**Confirmed**)

**Franca Feisel**, PhD Researcher, Department of Law, EUI (**Confirmed**)

**Réka Heszterényi**, Master Student, Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI (**Confirmed**)

**James Mackay**, Research Associate, Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI (**Confirmed**)

**Dominik Rehbaum**, PhD Researcher, Department of Political and Social Sciences, EUI (**Confirmed**)

17.00-18.10

**Meta**

**Strengthening EU Digital competitiveness: Stoking the engine** *tbc*

**Digital transition**

This panel will discuss the independent report delivered by the European University Institute's (EUI) Centre for a Digital Society (CDS) commissioned by CCIA. The concept of the report is that not enough attention has been paid in recent years to the need to strengthen EU competitiveness throughout the digital space, and it delves into why the EU has been less successful than the USA or China. An overview of the state of play and what effective action is needed to deal with known deficits will be provided.

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Pier Luigi Parcu

*Moderator:* **Pier Luigi Parcu**, Director Centre for a Digital Society and Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom, RSC, EUI

*Co-moderator:* **Journalist, Media Partner** *tbc*

*Speakers:*

**J. Scott Marcus**, Associate Senior Research Fellow at CEPS, Part-Time Assistant Professor at the RSC, EUI, and Senior Fellow at Bruegel (**Confirmed**)

**Maria Alessandra Rossi**, Associate Professor of Economic Policy at the University of Chieti-Pescara and Part-time Professor at the EUI (**Confirmed**)

**Amaryllis Verhoeven**, Acting Director, Tourism, Textiles, Digital Transformation of Industry, and Social Economy, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (GROW), European Commission (**Confirmed**)

17.00-18.10

**Florence School of Regulation**

**The Internal market and the EU Green Deal: Friends or foes?**

**Climate change  
Green transition**

We are celebrating the 30 years of the EU internal market. The internal market process also led to the development and integration of energy markets in Europe delivering millions or billions of euro in annual benefits. By pooling our resources, we increased our resilience against energy shocks, but we also increased our interdependencies. In the next decades, billions or trillions will be invested to live up to the ambitious decarbonization targets of the EU Green Deal and the Fit-for-55 package. To what extent will Member States continue to rely on energy markets to guide these investments? Will we increase cooperation across borders or favor local solutions? How can we avoid that EU Member States voluntarily or involuntarily free-ride our shared energy security at the expense of others?

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Leonardo Meeus

*Moderator:* **Leonardo Meeus**, Director, Florence School of Regulation, EUI (**Confirmed**)

*Co-moderator:* **EUI researcher or Journalist, Media Partner** *tbc*

*Speakers:*

**Anna Colucci**, Director, DG for Competition, European Commission (**Confirmed**)

**Leigh Hancker**, Professor, RSCAS, EUI (**Confirmed**)

**Clara Poletti**, Chair, Board of Regulators of the EU Agency for Cooperation of Energy Regulators and Commissioner, Italian Energy Regulatory Authority (**Confirmed**)

**Mechthild Wörsdörfer**, Deputy Director General, DG for Energy, European Commission (**Considering**)

**Break**

18:10-20:00

**Plenary sessions**

18:10-18:45

**High-level conversation - Title** *tbc*

18:45-19:00	<b>Presentation of the Solidarity in Europe Survey: Joint project EUI – YouGov</b> Presented by: <b>Dietlind Stolle</b> , Visiting Fellow, RSCAS, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
19:00-20:00	<b>Participatory event at The State of Union 2024 – CLOISTER, Badia Fiesolana</b>
<b>Democracy</b>  EUI Scientific Coordinator: Kalypso Nicolaïdis	<p>In the framework of the lead candidates (<i>Spitzenkandidaten</i>) debate (EP elections leading candidates' debate) that the EUI will be likely to host during The State of the Union Conference, a one-hour participatory event will be organised with a unique focus on combining deliberative democracy and immersive theatre methodologies to stimulate open dialogue and political debate through emotional intelligence, with a visible, playful and interactive participatory assembly. This session aims to bring a radically inclusive moment in the SOU in discussing the political agenda of the EP 2024 elections. It will in this way support and experiment with the Democratic Odyssey, paving the way for the next European elections. The target audience includes EUI researchers, civic society representatives, the public, VIPs and European politicians, and other relevant stakeholders. The key outcomes include fostering EUI community and local citizens' participation, building emotional intelligence among participants, and contributing to the design of a Citizens Assembly, emphasizing innovative facilitation and moderation techniques, thus amplifying the work carried by the Democratic Odyssey to further its mission in establishing a permanent citizens assembly in the European Union.</p>
20:00-23:00	<b>Social event, Gardens of Badia Fiesolana</b>

Friday, 24 May 2024 | European University Institute, Badia Fiesolana

**Note:** Number of panels, high-level conversations and their timings are indicative and subject to change.

08:00-09:15	Arrival and Tuscan breakfast
08:00-18:00	Registration throughout the day
9:15-18:00	<i>Master of Ceremonies</i> <b>Méabh Mc Mahon</b> , European affairs correspondent, Euronews
09:20-09:30	<b>Welcome to the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of The State of the Union – Day two</b> <b>Marco Del Punta</b> , Secretary-General, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Eugenio Giani</b> , President, Tuscan Region ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
09:30-10:00	<b>High-level conversation – Title tbc</b> <b>Josep Borrell Fontelles</b> , HR-VP, European Commission ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) and <b>Méabh McMahon</b> , European affairs correspondent, Euronews ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
<b>10:00-11:10</b>	<b>N. 3 Parallel panels</b>
10:00-11:10	<b>Are we out of the woods? The new economic policy mix</b>
<b>Industrial policy</b>	This panel will discuss post-inflation crisis economic scenarios from a global and European perspective and reconsider the challenges that these poses to economic policy in Europe. Managing high levels of debt, financing the many “transitions” and the post-war reconstruction(s), and strengthening resilience to tail risk, will require a reconsideration of the mode in which different policy institutions interact, in guaranteeing sustainable growth, stability and inclusiveness. Many factors point to a return of secular stagnation, with low growth and low or negative interest rates. A high level of geopolitical and economic uncertainty in the post COVID-19 world, however, raises the possibility that low growth will coexist with high borrowing costs in many countries. How can Europe improve its capacity to prevent such scenario, while creating the macroeconomic and financial premise for an efficient redirection of its high-quality resources towards innovative sectors and exploit the full potential of the single market?
EUI Scientific Coordinator: Georgios Papakonstantinou	
	<i>Opening:</i> <b>Laurence Boone</b> , Former Secretary of State for European Affairs, France ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
	<i>Moderator:</i> <b>Giancarlo Corsetti</b> , Professor, Economics, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
	<i>Co-moderator:</i> <b>Journalist, Media Partner tbc</b>
	<i>Speakers:</i> <b>Daniela Gabor</b> , Professor, UWE Bristol ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Pierre Olivier Gourinchas</b> , Economic Counsellor and Director of the Research Department, International Monetary Fund ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Sylvain Johansson</b> , Director and Senior Partner, McKinsey Global Institute ( <b>Confirmed</b> ) <b>Jeromin Zettelmeyer</b> , Director, Bruegel ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
10:00-11:10	<b>War, human rights, and double standards</b>
<b>Geopolitics</b>	The European Union’s response to Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine was seen as determined and united. Accordingly, European member states pulled together to offer temporary protection to millions of Ukrainians displaced by the conflict. European institutions organised and coordinated unprecedented sanctions. European people experienced a profound energy crisis and began an equally profound energy transition. And, at least up to the end of 2023, all levels of governments worked to help support Ukraine with both humanitarian and military assistance in that country’s efforts to resist and repel Russian aggression. Within Europe, this showunder of solidarity was cause for celebration in most seats of power. Outside Europe, however, the reception was very different. Many voices expressed dismay at the economic and humanitarian consequences of a prolonged conflict. Many also questioned why European responses to Ukraine were so different from European responses to other conflicts and refugee flows. Hamas’ attack on the South of Israel and the Israeli government’s response in Gaza only deepened concern about European commitment to the protection of human rights, and about its double standards and racialised politics, both within and outside Europe. Such concerns are not easily dismissed. They chip away at European self-perception of civilian power or normative power even as they threaten to undermine Europe’s relations with other countries and its role in a changing world order. The challenge for European leaders is to explain such a gap in perception and action and ultimately the connection between European policy and European proclaimed values.
EUI Scientific Coordinator: Erik Jones Kalypso Nicolaidis	
	<i>Opening:</i> <b>Andrzej Szeptycki</b> , Under-Secretary of State, Poland ( <b>Confirmed</b> )
	<i>Moderator:</i> <b>Catherine Fieschi</b> , Visiting Fellow, RSCAS, EUI ( <b>Confirmed</b> )



*Speakers:*

**Jan Beagle**, Director-General, International Development Law Organisation (IDLO)

(Confirmed)

**Pietro Ducci**, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, EP

**Alice Ekman**, Senior Analyst in charge of Asia, EU Institute for Security Studies (Confirmed)

**Revital Madar**, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow, RSCAS, EUI (Confirmed)

10:00-11:10

**Ripple**

**Blockchain regulation: By rules or enforcement?**

**Digital transition**

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Erik Jones

The development of Digital Assets based on blockchain technology has contributed to economic growth and increased the efficiency of financial systems around the world. Along the way, however, the same technologies have raised concerns about market transparency, security, and volatility. In response, governments and regulators have developed policy frameworks that seek to support the growth of innovative technology and business models, while protecting consumers and financial stability. But different jurisdictions have taken different approaches. The EU has led the way in developing a comprehensive regulatory regime under MiCA; the UK has extended traditional financial regulation to capture this new activity under its Financial Services and Markets Act 2023; and the US has taken the approach of 'Regulation by Enforcement'. This panel will discuss the pros and cons of these approaches, what is still left to do in terms of blockchain regulation, and what the implications of all this are for Europe and the world.

*Opening:* Conversation between **Stu Alderoty**, Chief Legal Officer, Ripple and **Javier Espinoza**, EU correspondent, Financial Times (Confirmed)

*Moderator:* **Morshed Mannan**, Research Fellow, RSCAS, EUI (Confirmed)

*Speakers:*

**Stu Alderoty**, Chief Legal Officer, Ripple (Confirmed)

**Judith Arnal**, Associate Senior Research Fellow, CEPS and Board member, Bank of Spain (Confirmed)

**Elisabeth Noble**, Senior Policy Expert, European Banking Authority (Confirmed)

**Ikhlaq Sidhu**, Dean, IE School of Science and Technology (Confirmed)

11:10-11:15

Break

11:15-12:25

**N. 3 Parallel panels**

11:15-12:25

**Resilient economies and institutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change**

**Climate change**  
**Green transition**

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Fabrizia Mealli

The frequency of natural disasters due to climate change is increasing, and institutions across different geographic areas are not equally ready to cope with such events. In fact, the lack of adequate institutional responses is likely to exacerbate the consequences of these events. Making the EU and developing countries better able to cope with the devastating consequences of climate change requires an articulated policy mix around carbon price, and resilient and reactive institutions and processes. Many economical, political and social lessons can be drawn from the recent health and war crises but also natural disasters. This panel will explore feasible manners to enhance resiliency to climate change pursuing the European Green Deal agenda, taking into consideration the climate mitigation policies. It will also address how to better prepare agriculture, biodiversity, the health system and our economies in general to cope with climate change and how to protect the most vulnerable populations in developing countries and in Europe.

*Moderator:* **Simone Borghesi**, Director of the Climate Area, Florence School of Regulation, EUI (Confirmed)

*Co-moderator:* **Fabrizia Mealli**, Professor, Economics, EUI (Confirmed)

*Speakers:*

**Shonali Pachauri**, Research group leader, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) (Confirmed)

**Massamba Thiolye**, Project Executive UNFCCC Global Innovation Hub, UN Climate Change Secretariat (Confirmed)

**Mira Manini Tiwari**, Research Associate, RSCAS, EUI (Confirmed)

11:15-12.25

**New forms of European macroeconomic governance**

**Economy**

The European Union has reinvented macroeconomic governance over the past fifteen years – by rewriting the rules for fiscal policy coordination, creating new institutions for macroeconomic

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:

Erik Jones  
Giancarlo Corsetti

and financial stabilization, and, through Next Generation EU, developing a new pattern for promoting country-specific reforms by tying them to common European projects backed by common European resources. The result is an unprecedented form of cross-border macroeconomic policy coordination that does not look like a ‘federation’ but is certainly much more than exists in any international organization. The purpose of this panel is to take stock of the current arrangement – which is based to a large extent on instruments that are either officially ‘temporary’ or that have yet to be tested – and to explore what it tells us about the nature and direction of European integration.

*Opening:* **Pierre Gramegna**, Managing Director, European Stability Mechanism (ESM) **(Confirmed)**

*Moderator:* **Benedicta Marzinotto**, Jean Monnet Fellow, RSCAS, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Co-moderator:* **Journalist, Media Partner tbc**

*Speakers:*

**Declan Costello**, Deputy Director-General, DG ECFIN, European Commission **(Confirmed)**

**Pierre Gramegna**, Managing Director, European Stability Mechanism (ESM) **(Confirmed)**

**Atanas Pekanov**, Economist, Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO) and Former Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of Bulgaria **(Confirmed)**

11:15-12.25

**European Media and Information Fund (EMIF) and Countering Foreign Interference (CFI) – STG (STG)**

**From within and without: Foreign interference operations and their local proxies**

**Geopolitics**

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:

Marco Incerti  
Paolo Cesarini

This panel’s theme will draw attention to foreign interference and the related role of local proxies and networks - topics that are central to the work of the EMIF and CFI project. The focus will be the relationship between foreign, state-backed actors that target the European Union, its member states and partner countries with FIMI, and their local proxies within the EU and the neighborhoods, who further amplify and disseminate narratives from these operations. Relevant research has also been highlighted by the European Parliament’s ING2 Special Committee appointing out to these issues as highly problematic and in need of attention. Particularly with an eye to the upcoming European elections, which will take place shortly after the SOU, this topic will be salient and acutely relevant. A panel could comprise high-level officials and experts from the field which would contribute to exploring the challenges and the potential solutions to this multi-faceted issue.

*Opening:* **Věra Jourová**, Vice-President for Values and Transparency, European Commission **(Confirmed)**

*Moderator:* **Paolo Cesarini**, Programme Director, European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) and the European Media and Information Fund (EMIF) **(Confirmed)**

*Co-moderator:* **Nad'a Kovalčíková**, Senior Analyst and CFI Project Director, EUISS **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Aude Maio Coliche**, Director for Strategic Communication and Foresight of the EU Diplomatic Service, EEAS **(Confirmed)**

**Irène Mingasson**, Head of Unit, Rapid Response Europe, Asia & Americas, European Commission **(Invited)**

**Gianni Riotta**, Director, LUISS School of Journalism Data Lab Luiss/IDMO **(Confirmed)**

**Clint Watts**, General Manager, Threat Analysis Center, Microsoft

*NATO representative*

*Security and/or research community representative*

12:30 – 13:00

**Plenary conversation**

12:30-13:00

**High-level conversation - Title tbc**

**Margaritis Schinas**, Vice-President, European Commission **(Confirmed)** and **Barbara Moens**, Chief EU Correspondent, Politico

13:00-14:30

**Lunch, Gardens of Badia Fiesolana**

14:30-15:40

**N. 3 Parallel panels**

14:30-15:40

**Investing in the Mediterranean neighborhood as part of EU’s new geopolitical context**

**Climate change  
Green transition**

The wars in Ukraine and Israel require the EU to redefine its geopolitical orientation, also from an industrial perspective. A key element is its policy towards its neighborhood, not least in the Mediterranean. Such a review may comprise more infrastructure investments and a

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Fabrizia Mealli

strengthening of the industrial cooperation on the climate and energy transition as well as on the digital economy. Important legislation on these issues has been finalized by the Von der Leyen commission, but important implementation issues remain to be solved. Huge investments are necessary and new cooperation opportunities arise in the form of new pipelines for gas and hydrogen (or derivatives), massive availability of renewable energy (solar, wind), need for more electricity transmission lines, etc. Will the EIB raise the stakes of triggering these investments? Does the Commission have an integrated plan?

*Opening:* **Nadia Calviño**, President, European Investment Bank **(Confirmed)**

*Moderator:* **Pilita Clark**, Journalist, Financial Times **(Confirmed)**

*Co-moderator:* **Jos Delbeke**, EIB Climate Chair, and Professor, STG, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Leila Benali**, Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, Morocco **(Confirmed)**

**Wopke Hoekstra**, Commissioner for Climate Action, European Commission **(Confirmed)**

**Evangelos Mytilineos**, Chairman and CEO, Mytilineos Holdings

**Laurence Tubiana**, CEO, European Climate Foundation (ECF) **(Confirmed)**

14:30-15:40

**PagoPa**

**Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for inclusion and digital innovation**

**Digital transition**

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Anna Renata  
Pisarkiewicz  
Massimiliano  
Gambardella  
Cristiano Zagari

The Preamble of the 'European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade' underscores Europe's commitment to advancing a digital model centered around individuals, rooted in European values and EU rights, while reasserting universal human rights. It advocates for technology that empowers individuals to pursue their aspirations within a secure environment that upholds fundamental human rights. Recent regulatory and practical developments suggest that Digital Public Infrastructures (DPI) can constitute an essential mean to align with this vision. An open, secure, inclusive, and market-friendly DPI, complemented by industry and coordinated policy reforms, can serve as a catalyst for citizen-friendly societal and economic transformation. It facilitates improved public services, fosters social and digital inclusion, and supports interoperability, particularly in areas such as identity, payments, and consensual data sharing. This integration of goals and tools promises substantial value growth through the 'network effect'. To delve deeper into this subject, the panel seeks to address the following points: assessing the current landscape of DPI within Europe, identifying exemplary practices as benchmarks, and determining common elements for European nations to consider when developing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in this field.

**WORK IN  
PROGRESS**

*Moderator:* **Anna Renata Pisarkiewicz**, Research Fellow, RSCAS, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Co-moderator:* **Journalist**, Politico **tbc**

*Opening:*

**Ivonne Forno**, President, HIT Foundation **(Invited)**

**Alessandro Moricca**, CEO, PagoPA S.p.A. **(Invited)**

*Speakers:*

**Barbara Ubaldi**, Head Digital Government and Data Unit, OECD **(Confirmed)**

**João Ricardo Vasconcelos**, Senior Governance Specialist, GovTech, World Bank, Wien **(Confirmed)**

14:30-15:40

**European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)**

**Panel tbc**

Panel Topic: **tbc**

Abstract **tbc**

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:  
Marco Incerti

**WORK IN  
PROGRESS**

15:40-15:45

*Break*

15:45-16:55

**N. 3 Parallel panels**

15:45-16:55

**Open Society Foundations**

**Building Ukraine back better**

## Democracy

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:

Erik Jones  
Goran Buldioski

The ‘reconstruction’ of Ukraine in response to Russia’s brutal war of aggression began on the second day of the conflict and will continue for the foreseeable future. What was immediately obvious is that the challenge for policymakers – and for the Ukrainian people – goes far beyond reconstruction. They have to prepare Ukraine for a future within the European Union and in the context of a more hostile and competitive global environment. To face this challenge, they will need to help restore Ukrainian society as they rebuild and modernize the country’s infrastructure, industry, political institutions, and social services. They will also have to bring back the millions of people displaced by the conflict even as they help to heal the wounds – both physical and psychological – suffered by all those who have experienced the horrific violence that the Russian government unleashed. Building Ukraine back better will require a holistic approach that goes beyond conventional notions of post-conflict stabilization and takes into account the essential human dimension that the word ‘better’ necessarily entails.

*Moderator:* **Simone Tholens**, Professor, Conflict and Interventions Initiative, RSCAS, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Goran Buldioski**, Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia, Open Society Foundations **(Confirmed)**

**Aida Hozic**, Associate Professor, University of Florida **(Confirmed)**

**Anna Jarosz-Friis**, Director, Ukraine Unit, DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission **(Confirmed)**

**Miriam Kosmehl**, Senior Expert Eastern Europe and European Neighbourhood, Bertelsmann Stiftung **(Confirmed)**

15:45-16:55

## Digital transition

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:

Nicolas Petit

### Tech Diplomacy: International cooperation for sustainable digital transition

The pivotal role of technology in today’s global order has led to new transnational disputes. Facing governance and security challenges in emerging tech areas - from artificial intelligence to semiconductors, and from cybersecurity to internet governance - Tech Diplomacy has become a critical dimension of diplomatic dialogues. Here, state actors, industry, and civil society engage in both multilateral and multi-stakeholder dialogues. The purpose of this roundtable is to examine the efficacy and constraints of existing diplomatic practices in the tech sector’s international collaboration. Special focus will be given to the evolving interplay between technology and diplomacy, including the identification of effective practices and key participants in the realm of tech diplomacy. The discussion benefits from perspectives from tech diplomats, industry leaders, and scholars, who are approaching international cooperation in the tech sector from various angles.

*Moderator:* **Andrea Calderaro**, Visiting Fellow, RSCAS, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Co-moderator:* **Nicolas Petit**, Head of Department, Department of Law, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Speakers:*

**Francesca Bria**, President, Italian National Innovation Fund and Board Member, RAI **(Confirmed)**

**Manon Le Blanc**, EU Cyber Diplomat, EEAS **(Confirmed)**

**Ursula Owusu-Ekufu**, Minister of Communications, Ghana **(Confirmed)**

**Anne-Marie Slaughter**, CEO, New America **(Confirmed)**

15:45-16:55

## Industrial policy

EUI Scientific  
Coordinator:

Elena Calsamiglia

### Rethinking capitalism in Europe on the path to sustainability

To deliver on the European Green Deal, European institutions have put in place several initiatives aiming to reform the EU economic and financial system to address the climate and sustainability crisis. However, these reform efforts do not seem to be heading in the right direction. Many are facing technical and political obstacles to be implemented. At the same time, increased widespread awareness of the multiple dimensions of the sustainability crisis is sparking debates as to the real effectiveness of these initiatives. According to some, the capitalist economic system is no more fit for the contemporary socio-economic reality, and a more radical reform is urgently needed to safeguard the health of the planet and future generations. Against this backdrop, a number of questions arise. Can capitalism be reconciled with the transition to sustainability? Does the transition require a deeper transformation of the existing economic model and of the underlying social contract? If so, what are the main obstacles for this shift of paradigm in Europe? How does the inherent interconnection and competitiveness of the global economy affect and influence the EU space of action? Bringing together academics, practitioners and policymakers,

this panel will explore innovations, challenges and contradictions of EU policy on redressing capitalism.

*Moderator:* **Elena Calsamiglia**, PhD Researcher, Department of Law, EUI **(Confirmed)**

*Co-moderator:* **EUI researcher tbc**

*Speakers:*

**Kenneth Amaeshi**, Professor, STG, EUI **(Confirmed)**

**Dan Dionisie**, Head of Unit, Company law JUST.A.3, DG for Justice and Consumers, European Commission **(Confirmed)**

**Ioannis Kampourakis**, Assistant Professor in Law and Markets, Erasmus School of Law, Erasmus University Rotterdam **(Confirmed)**

**Mariana Mazzucato**, Professor, Economics of Innovation and Public Value, University College London **(Considering)**

**Caroline Paulick-Thiel**, Executive Director, Politics for Tomorrow **(Confirmed)**

<b>17:00- 18:00</b>	<b>Plenary conversations</b>
17:00-17:30	<b>High-level conversation - Title tbc</b> A conversation between a high-profile personality and a moderator - <b>Speaker to be determined</b>
17:30-18:00	<b>High-level conversation - Title tbc</b> A conversation between a high-profile personality and a moderator - <b>Speaker to be determined</b>
<b>Time TBC</b>	<b>Social Event – Gardens of the Badia</b>
tbc	<i>Transfer to Spitzenkandidaten debate venue tbc</i>
tbc	<b>Plenary - Salone dei Cinquecento, Palazzo Vecchio – TBC</b>
tbc	<b>High-level address and Closing remarks – TBC</b>
tbc	<i>Technical Break</i>
19:30-20:30 tbc	<b>Spitzenkandidaten debate - TBC</b>



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