

Crisis as Catalyst?

Europe's Opportunity in a Changing World Order

February 6 – February 7, 2026
a student-led conference at
Harvard University



European
Conference



Welcome to the European Conference 2026

The European Conference, one of the most important events about Europe in the U.S., is organized by students from Harvard, MIT, and Fletcher to strengthen transatlantic dialogue. It brings together top scholars, policymakers, and leaders from both sides of the Atlantic to explore new pathways for action.



The 2026 edition marks the 12th consecutive year of the conference. Under the theme ***Crisis as Catalyst: Europe's Opportunity in a Changing World Order***, the 2026 edition will bring together over 750 academics, students, and future global leaders. Across 12 panels, flagship sessions, and fireside chats, the European Conference will address three key themes: **the future of the transatlantic relationship**, Europe's potential to lead in **innovation**, and **Europe's place in a multipolar world**.

We are delighted to welcome you to the European Conference!

- The Organizing Team of the 12th Edition of the European Conference

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Schedule

Friday February 6, 2026 | Morning

10:00 AM	TAUBMAN ENTRANCE Registration	
11:30 AM	NYE HALLWAY Welcome Coffee	
12:30 PM	NYE AUDITORIUM Opening Ceremony FLAGSHIP SESSION Leo Varadkar Former Prime Minister of Ireland (Taoiseach)	
1:45 PM	NYE HALLWAY 30' Coffee Break	
2:15 PM	NYE AUDITORIUM Rearming Europe: The Dilemma of European Strategic Autonomy PANEL	TAUBMAN G50 Europe's Global Role: Taking the Lead in International Development PANEL
3:30 PM	NYE AUDITORIUM 30' Break Please move to the next sessions, which begin promptly at 4:00 PM	
4:00 PM	JFK JR. FORUM Flagship Session Luc Frieden Prime Minister of Luxembourg (Separate Registration Required Entrance from 79 John F. Kennedy St., Cambridge MA 02138)	NYE AUDITORIUM Strategic Tech Sovereignty: Europe's Next Frontier PANEL

Friday, February 6, 2026 | Afternoon

5:15 PM	JFK JR. FORUM 30' Break		
5:45 PM	NYE AUDITORIUM	TAUBMAN G50	Fireside Chat Luc Frieden Prime Minister of Luxembourg (Pre-registration required – starts at 5:30 PM)
	Periphery to Frontline: Rethinking Security in the Arctic PANEL	Security First or Leadership First? Europe's Strategic Energy Crossroads PANEL	
7:00 PM	END OF PROGRAMMING DAY 1		
8:00 PM	Speakers Reception INVITATION ONLY		

Saturday, February 7, 2026 | Morning

8:00 AM	WEXNER COMMONS Breakfast	Please use the Wexner Entrance to enter Harvard Kennedy School.	
9:00 AM	JFK JR. FORUM Flagship Session Christos Christou Outgoing President of Doctors Without Borders	STARR AUDITORIUM Trade, Investment, and Power: Europe's Economic Strategy in Emerging Markets PANEL	WEXNER 436 Turning Europe into a Research Powerhouse PANEL
10:30 AM	WEXNER COMMONS 30' Coffee Break		
11:00 AM	JFK JR. FORUM Europe's Role in a Multipolar World Order PANEL	STARR AUDITORIUM Mobilizing Capital and Financing European Innovators PANEL	WEXNER 330 Forecasting Europe's Strategic Future – Nuclear Risk, Baltic Security, and Europe's Indo-Pacific Ties Workshop Pre-registration required
12:15 PM	JFK JR. FORUM MEP Debate		WEXNER 436 Harmony or Dissonance? Culture as a Transatlantic Bridge PANEL
1:30 PM	WEXNER COMMONS Lunch Break		

Saturday February 7, 2026 | Afternoon

2:45 PM	JFK JR. FORUM Flagship Session Sophie Wilmès Vice-President of the European Parliament, Former Prime Minister of Belgium	STARR AUDITORIUM Recommitting to the Alliance: Does Transatlanticism Still Serve U.S. and European Interests in a Fragmented World? PANEL	WEXNER 436 Can Smarter Regulation or Deeper Integration Drive Europe's Competitiveness? PANEL
4:00 PM	WEXNER COMMONS 30' Coffee Break		
4:30 PM	JFK JR. FORUM Flagship Session Robert Habeck Former Vice Chancellor of Germany	STARR AUDITORIUM Democracy in a Post-Truth World PANEL	WEXNER 330 A Career in the European Institutions WORKSHOP <i>Pre-registration required</i>
5:45 PM	JFK JR. FORUM 10' Break		
5:55 PM	JFK JR. FORUM Closing Ceremony		
6:25 PM	END OF PROGRAMMING DAY 2		
8:00 PM	HARVARD ART MUSEUMS Closing Gala Speakers & Attendees with separate Gala ticket Entrance at 32 Quincy St., Cambridge MA 02138		
11:30 PM	END OF THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE 2026		

Flagship Sessions

Opening Ceremony Speaker: Friday 6 Feb., 12:30–1:45 PM, NYE AUDITORIUM
LEO VARADKAR | Former Prime Minister of Ireland (Taoiseach)



Leo Varadkar was Taoiseach, or Prime Minister, of Ireland from 2017–2020 and again from 2022–2024. He served in the cabinet for 13 years in the Ministries of Transport, Tourism & Sport, Enterprise, Trade, Employment, Social Protection and Health. As Taoiseach, Varadkar received international recognition for his leadership of Ireland's public health and economic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. He led Ireland through Brexit, preventing a hard border between North and South, maintaining Ireland's place at the heart of the European Union, its single market and upholding the Good Friday Agreement. The Governments he participated in lifted Ireland's ban on abortion and improved LGBT rights including the introduction of marriage equality and a gender recognition law. He also prioritized equality between men and women including gender pay gap reporting, greater diversity on state and corporate boards and linking state funding for political parties to election candidate quotas. A strong supporter of Irish unification, he allocated over a €1billion to North-South projects under the Shared Island Fund and helped to get the power-sharing institutions of the Good Friday Agreement operating again. During his premiership, Ireland dramatically increased its budget for international development and was elected to serve on the UN Security Council. As Taoiseach, he established a Child Poverty and Wellbeing Program to drive cross-government work on the matter. Early results include the introduction of free school books, hot school meals, subsidized childcare, better access to higher education for lone parents and higher welfare payments for children in greatest need. He is a medical doctor, qualified GP and a graduate of Trinity College Dublin. He is a member of Ireland's Council of State.

MODERATOR: MATHIAS RISSE | Berthold Beitz Professor in Human Rights, Global Affairs and Philosophy – Director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School



Mathias Risse is Berthold Beitz Professor in Human Rights, Global Affairs and Philosophy and director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. He has worked extensively in political philosophy with a focus on international and global questions ranging from human rights to the impact of artificial intelligence on a range of normative issues

Flagship Session Speaker: Friday 6 Feb., 4:00 – 5:15 PM, JFK JR. FORUM
LUC FRIEDEN | Prime Minister of Luxembourg

Luc Frieden completed his primary and secondary education in Luxembourg before earning a Master's degree in Business Law from the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in 1986. He continued his postgraduate studies at the University of Cambridge (Queens' College) in the United Kingdom, where he obtained a Master of Comparative Law (LLM). In 1988, he completed a Master of Laws (LLM) at Harvard Law School in the United States.

MODERATOR: DANIEL ZIBLATT | Eaton Professor of Government at Harvard University, Director of Harvard University's Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies

Daniel Ziblatt is the Eaton Professor of Government at Harvard University and Director of Harvard University's Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies. He also leads a research group on democracy and democratic erosion at the WZB Berlin Social Science Center in Germany.

Flagship Session Speaker: Saturday 7 Feb., 09:00–10:15 AM, JFK JR. FORUM
CHRISTOS CHRISTOU | Outgoing President of Doctors Without Borders

Dr Christos Christou is the outgoing International President of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), leading the organization from 2019 to 2025 through some of the most complex and politically challenging humanitarian crises of recent decades. He first joined MSF in 2002 as a field doctor in migration projects in Greece and HIV/AIDS programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, before returning as a trauma surgeon in conflict settings including Sudan, South Sudan, Iraq, Cameroon, and Yemen. He specialized in general and transplantation surgery in Athens and later continued his clinical career in London as Colorectal Surgery Fellow at King's College Hospital and Consultant at North Middlesex University Hospital. He holds a PhD in surgery and is a Fellow of the European Board of Surgery in Coloproctology. He also holds an MSc in International Health – Health Crisis Management and is a member of its faculty at the University of Athens. In 2025, Dr Christou was included in the TIME100 list, recognized among the most influential voices shaping the future of giving. He has spoken at major international platforms including the United Nations, WHA, COP28, ECOSOC, WISH, and the World Health Summit.

MODERATOR: MATHIAS RISSE | Berthold Beitz Professor in Human Rights, Global Affairs and Philosophy – Director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School

Mathias Risse is Berthold Beitz Professor in Human Rights, Global Affairs and Philosophy and director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School. He has worked extensively in political philosophy with a focus on international and global questions ranging from human rights to the impact of artificial intelligence on a range of normative issues.

Flagship Session Speaker: Saturday 7 Feb., 2:45–4:00 PM, JFK JR. FORUM
SOPHIE WILMÈS | Vice-President of the European Parliament, Former Prime Minister of Belgium



Sophie Wilmès became a Member of the European Parliament in 2024 and currently serves as one of its Vice-Presidents. She is First Vice-Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the United States and a member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and the Special Committee on the European Democracy Shield (EUDS). She is also a substitute member of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE). A member of the Mouvement Réformateur (MR), affiliated with the Renew Europe group, Ms. Wilmès previously served as a Belgian federal deputy and as Minister for the Budget, with responsibility for Public Administration and Scientific Policy. From October 2019 to October 2020, she was Belgium's first female Prime Minister, leading the country during the COVID-19 crisis, and later served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Throughout her career, she has received several prestigious honors, including Commandeur de l'Ordre de Léopold (2019), the Serge Lazareff Prize awarded by NATO (2021), Grand-Croix de l'Ordre du Mérite du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (2023), and Grand Officier de l'Ordre de Léopold (2024). Ms. Wilmès holds degrees from the Institute of Higher Social Communication Studies and the Institut Supérieur de Commerce Saint-Louis and is the mother of four children.

MODERATOR: EDOARDO CAMPANELLA | Founding Director and Chief Editor of the UniCredit Investment Institute



Edoardo Campanella is the founding director and chief editor of the Investment Institute by UniCredit -the think tank of the bank - and a senior fellow at the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government at the Harvard Kennedy School. His research focuses on the future of capitalism, the green transition, the digital revolution, and rising inequalities. He is also a Rockefeller Fellow of the Trilateral Commission, an Alumnus of the Aspen Institute Italia and a Young Leader of the CONSIUSA. He is an author of political and economic commentaries for top international publications such as Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, the Financial Times and Project Syndicate. In 2015, he was shortlisted for the Bracken Bower Prize, awarded by McKinsey and the *Financial Times* for the best book proposal written by emerging business and economic authors under the age of 35.

Flagship Session Speaker: Saturday 7 Feb., 4:30–5:45 PM, JFK JR. FORUM

ROBERT HABECK | Former Vice Chancellor of Germany and Former Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action



Robert Habeck served as Vice-Chancellor and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action for the Federal Republic of Germany from 2021–2025. He has also served as chair of the Alliance 90/The Greens party from 2018 to 2022. Previously, Habeck was appointed Minister and Deputy Minister-President of the State of Schleswig-Holstein for six years, where he also led the Ministry of Energy, the Environment, Agriculture and Digitalization. Habeck holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Hamburg. This spring, he serves as a John F. Kennedy Memorial Policy Fellow at the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University

MODERATOR: ELAINE PAPOULIAS | Executive Director, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies at Harvard University



Elaine Papoulias is the Executive Director of the Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies (CES) at Harvard University. She is responsible for the overall management and administration of the Center and its many grants and initiatives which promote the interdisciplinary understanding of European history, politics, economy and societies. In addition to her career in academia, Papoulias' professional experiences include advisory, public affairs, communications and analytical work for government agencies, political candidates, grassroots campaigns, non-profit institutions as well as private companies across a multitude of sectors.

Panels

The Harvard European Conference brings together influential voices to explore critical transatlantic issues through thoughtfully curated panel discussions. Designed by Harvard, MIT, and Fletcher students, the panels address the most pressing topics shaping Europe's future, fostering diverse perspectives and constructive dialogue. Each session encourages audience participation, with students actively engaging panelists by posing questions to advance meaningful conversations and identify actionable pathways forward.

Panel 1: Friday 6 Feb., 2:15–3:30 PM, NYE Auditorium

Rearming Europe: The Future of the European Strategic Autonomy

In today's geopolitical context marked by great power rivalry, a weakening of the rules-based international order, and growing uncertainty over U.S. security guarantees following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the concept of 'strategic autonomy' has become central to the EU's foreign policy in response to these challenges. This panel will feature perspectives from European Institutions, EU Member States, and NATO to explore how the EU's quest for strategic autonomy is reshaping its relationships with NATO, the U.S., and other international partners amid growing geopolitical uncertainty. The panel will also address the internal implications of this shift within the EU, including questions of policy coherence, political and fiscal dilemmas, institutional power dynamics, and the future of deterrence in Ukraine.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

IVO DAALDER | Senior Fellow, Belfer Center



Ambassador Ivo H. Daalder is a leading expert and commentator on international affairs, geopolitics, and geoeconomics. He served as U.S. Ambassador to NATO under President Barack Obama, on the U.S. National Security Council under President Bill Clinton, and is currently a senior fellow at Harvard's Belfer Center. He served as President and CEO of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs from 2013–2025. Ambassador Daalder was a senior advisor on nonproliferation policy to Senator Obama during his 2008 presidential campaign and served as the National Security Council and nonproliferation lead on the Obama-Biden transition team. He is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Action Council and Geopolitical Advisory Council and served as a member on the OSCE Panel of Eminent Persons on

the future of European Security. He is a geopolitical consultant to global businesses and financial institutions, and has worked at leading think tanks around the world, including the Brookings Institution and Center for American Progress in Washington, DC, and the International Institute on Strategic Studies in London.

FRANK HOFFMEISTER | Head of the Legal Department, European External Action Service, and Professor of International Law, Free University of Brussels

Frank Hoffmeister holds a PhD from the University of Heidelberg (1998) and served as academic assistant at the Walter Hallstein-Institute for European Constitutional Law from 1998 until 2001. He then joined the European Commission where he worked first in the Cyprus Unit in DG Enlargement before becoming a member of the Commission Legal Service (external relations and institutional team). From 2010 to 2014 he acted as Deputy Head of Cabinet of the EU Trade Commissioner De Gucht, and as of 2015 he was Head of Unit dealing with anti-dumping at DG Trade. He joined the European External Action Service in November 2021 as Director of the Legal Department. He teaches EU external relations law at the Free University of Brussels and has written extensively on EU and international law matters. He edited (together with J Wouters, G Debaere and T Ramopoulos) *The Law of EU External Relations – Cases, Materials and Commentary on the EU as an International Legal Actor* (Oxford, OUP, third edition 2021).

DR. BENEDETTA BERTI | Secretary General, NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Dr Benedetta Berti has been the Secretary General of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly since October 2025. The Secretary General leads the Assembly's Secretariat as senior executive officer and principal strategic advisor to the Assembly's political leadership, with responsibility for the Assembly's activities and policy work, as well as for representing the Assembly externally. Dr Berti previously served as Director of Policy Planning in the Office of the Secretary General at NATO (2018–2025). She is Associate Researcher at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy at Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Visiting Professor at the College of Europe and a Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. An Eisenhower Global Fellow and a TED Senior Fellow, Dr Berti has, in the past decade, held research and teaching positions at West Point, The Institute for National Security Studies, and Tel Aviv University, among others. Dr Berti is the author of four books, including *Armed Political Organizations: from Conflict to Integration* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013). Her work and research have notably appeared, in *Foreign Policy*, *Foreign Affairs*, *The National Interest*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*; as well as in *Civil Wars*, *Democratization*, *Government & Opposition*, *Mediterranean Politics*, *The Middle East Journal*, *Parameters*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*. She holds a BA in Oriental Studies from the University of Bologna, and an MA and PhD in International Relations from The Fletcher School (Tufts University).

ROLAND THEIS | Member of Parliament, Deutscher Bundestag

Roland Theis is Member of the German Bundestag since 2025. He is member of the Committee on Defence and the Committee on European Union Affairs, as well as president of the franco-german group in the Deutsche Bundestag. From 2009 to 2017 and from 2022 to 2025, he served as a member of the Saarland State Parliament. From 2017 to 2022, he was State Secretary in the Saarland Ministry of Justice and the Saarland's Representative for European Union Affairs.

MODERATOR: SANNE CORNELIA J. VERSCHUREN | Assistant Professor of International Security

Sanne Cornelie J. Verschuren is an Assistant Professor of International Security at the Pardee School of Global Studies of Boston University. Her research interests lie at the intersection of international relations, the domestic determinants of security policy, and the role of ideas, norms, and institutions in national security decision-making. She focuses on how states fight war, examining why they construct novel weapon technologies, how they envision fielding such technologies, and why they choose to abandon certain technologies and practices. Sanne is in the process of finalizing her first book manuscript, entitled “*Imagining the Unimaginable: War, Weapons, and Procurement Politics*.” This book is based on her dissertation, which received APSA’s 2022 Kenneth N. Waltz Outstanding Dissertation Award. In the book, she asks why and how states decide to develop different weapon capabilities within a similar military domain—with the development of missile defenses by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and India as the central case studies. Beyond the book manuscript, her research has appeared in *Global Studies Quarterly*, *War on the Rocks*, and *Inkstick Media*, among others. Her research has been generously supported by the Stanton Foundation, the European Commission, the National Science Foundation, the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy, the Belgian American Education Foundation, the Tobin Project, Saxena Center for Contemporary South Asia, the Pardee School of Global Studies and the Brown Graduate School.

Panel 2: Friday 6 Feb., 2:15–3:30 PM, TAUBMAN G50**Europe’s Global Role: Taking the Lead in International Development**

As the United States withdraws from international development, the question is inevitable: what role should Europe assume? Amid growing geopolitical competition accompanied by persistent migratory pressures, the European Union faces the task of redefining its approach to development cooperation. This panel brings together perspectives ranging from European policy-making to multilateral development financing to examine how Europe is adapting its strategies and strengthening its partnerships with Africa and the rest of the Global South. The discussion focuses on what model of cooperation Europe should use to move forward and what this means for its leadership capacity in an increasingly contested global environment.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**ANTÓN LEIS GARCÍA | Director, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation**

Antón Leis García is Director of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). He has extensive experience in the field of international development cooperation and multilateral affairs, both in international organisations and in the Spanish Government. Previously, he held various positions in the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), worked as Senior Advisor in the General Secretariat for International Affairs, European Union, G20 and Global Security of the Cabinet of the President of the Spanish Government, and was Advisor to the Secretary of State for International Cooperation. As a professional dedicated to development, he specialised in economic governance, competitiveness, and the private sector. He worked at the African Development Bank as a Senior Governance and Private Sector Specialist in Tunisia and Ivory Coast after joining its Young Professionals Program, and as a Legal Advisor at the World Bank, covering the Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions from the Washington DC headquarters. He holds a Law Degree from the Carlos III University of Madrid, a Master of Laws (LLM) from Harvard Law School and a dual Master of Public Administration (MPA) from the London School of Economics (LSE) and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po Paris).

HILDE VAUTMANS | Member of the European Parliament (Renew Europe, Open Vld Belgium)

Hilde Vautmans (Renew Europe, Open Vld Belgium) is a liberal Belgian Member of the European Parliament. Hilde is the Chair of the Delegation to the Africa-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the vice-chair of the delegation to the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. She further is a member of the Conference of Delegation Chairs, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Delegation for relations with the United States and a substitute for the Committee on Security and Defence, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, and the Delegation for relations with the People's Republic of China. Ms Vautmans holds degrees in social science and criminology and held various positions in local and national politics before entering the European Parliament in 2015.

ROLAND SILLER | CEO, Chairman of the Board, DEG – Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH

Roland Siller has been CEO of DEG – Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH since 15 July 2021. He previously was a Member of the Management Committee at KfW Development Bank since 2012, in charge of Strategy, Policy and Latin America since 2019. Siller holds a master degree in business administration and political science from the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg (Germany) and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques of Strasbourg (France) and completed the Postgraduate Programme of the German Development Institute (DIE). He began his career at KfW in 1993. For two years he was seconded to the French Development Bank AfD. Since 2000 he has held various management positions at the KfW Development Bank. Parallel to this he attended the Advanced Management Program at Wharton Business School. DEG – Deutsche Investitions- und Entwicklungsgesellschaft mbH DEG, a subsidiary of KfW, finances investments of private companies in developing and emerging-market countries. As one of Europe's largest development finance institutions, it promotes private business structures to contribute to sustainable economic growth and improved living conditions.

MODERATOR: SAMANTHA POWER | Anna Lindh Professor of the Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy, former USAID Administrator, former US Ambassador, Harvard university



Ambassador Samantha Power is the Anna Lindh Professor of the Practice of Global Leadership and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School and the William D. Zabel Professor of Practice in Human Rights at Harvard Law School. From 2021 to 2025, under President Biden, she served as Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), where she led efforts to combat corruption and democratic backsliding, respond to humanitarian crises, and help countries adapt to climate change. Under her leadership, USAID expanded partnerships with the private sector and local organizations, distributed 700 million COVID-19 vaccine doses in developing countries, and supported Ukraine's economy and energy sector in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion. From 2013 to 2017, Ambassador Power served as a member of President Obama's cabinet and the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, where she worked to advance human rights, address conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, and strengthen international measures to combat ISIS and North Korean nuclear proliferation. From 2009 to 2013, she worked at the National Security Council (NSC) as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights. Earlier in her career, she was the founding executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard Kennedy School and worked as a freelance war correspondent in the former Yugoslavia. A Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the New York Times bestsellers, "A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide and The Education of an Idealist, she has twice been named to TIME magazine's list of the "100 Most Influential People." She and her husband Cass Sunstein have two teenage children.

Panel 3: Friday 6 Feb., 2:15–3:30 PM, NYE Auditorium
Strategic Tech Sovereignty: Europe's Next Frontier

As Europe seeks to reduce dependence on external suppliers and assert greater control over its technological future, the pursuit of "strategic tech sovereignty" has become a central pillar of EU policy. From AI and quantum computing to defense innovation and semiconductor manufacturing, Europe is striving to build indigenous capacity without severing transatlantic ties that underpin collective security. Yet achieving sovereignty amid global competition requires difficult trade-offs: autonomy vs. interoperability, innovation vs. regulation, and sovereignty vs. alliance coordination. This panel brings together leading policymakers, innovators, and strategists to explore how Europe can pursue technological leadership while maintaining a strong partnership with the United States and NATO.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

TOMMASO CALARCO | Director of the Institute of Quantum Control, Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH



Prof. Tommaso Calarco is considered one of the leading quantum physicists today. At least as important is his role as an instigator and as someone who brings others together. He is one of the founding fathers of the European Quantum Manifesto, which led to the billion-euro EU Quantum Flagship programme. Within the programme, he leads the Quantum Community Network, which brings together theorists and experimental groups as well as science and industry. He was also instrumental in founding “EIN Quantum NRW”, the quantum computing network for science and industry in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW).

THANOS DOKOS | National Security Advisor and Secretary of the National Security Council, Government of Greece



Thanos Dokos received his Ph.D. in International Relations from Cambridge University and has held research posts at the Peace Research Institute of Frankfurt (1989–90) and the Center for Science and International Affairs (CSIA) at Harvard University (1990–91). He served as the Director for Research, Strategic Studies Division, Hellenic Ministry of National Defence (1996–98) and as an Advisor on NATO issues to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1998–1999). He was also a NATO research fellow for 1996–98. He was the Director of Research (1999–2006) and then the Director-General of the Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) [2006–2019]. He has taught at the Universities of Athens and Piraeus, the Hellenic National Defence College, the Diplomatic Academy and the Hellenic National Security Academy. Since October 2020, he is the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of Greece. In October 2023, he was appointed by the Secretary General of NATO to the Expert Group in support of the comprehensive and deep reflection on NATO’s southern neighbourhood.

VIKTORIA YAREMCHUK | Co-Founder & CEO, Farsight Vision



Co-founder and CEO of Farsight Vision, a company operating in the GIS systems domain within the defense sector. An experienced software product developer and business strategist with a strong analytical approach and a focus on long-term value. Many years of experience in building and scaling technology companies, as well as conducting negotiations and building high-performing teams. Her expertise covers product strategy, product marketing, quality management, and creating competitive differentiation in multicultural contexts. Viktoria is skilled at combining people, financial resources, and technology into effective solutions that ensure sustainable business growth. She also has deep experience in the startup

ecosystem and the venture capital environment, including fundraising, pitching, RFPs, and working with VC funds.

MODERATOR: ERIC ROSENBACH | Senior Lecturer, Harvard Kennedy School, Director, Defense, Emerging Technology, and Strategy Program



The Honorable Eric Rosenbach is a Senior Lecturer at the Harvard Kennedy School and is the Director of the Defense, Emerging Technology, and Strategy Program at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. He previously co-led the Belfer Center with former Secretary of Defense Ash Carter. Rosenbach currently serves on the Secretary of State's International Security Advisory Board and on the Secretary of Defense's Defense Business Board. Rosenbach teaches graduate courses in policy development, strategy execution, and emerging technology. He also teaches two online courses for HarvardX on managing cyber risk and public sector strategy execution. Rosenbach previously held several senior-level appointee jobs in government. As the Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Defense

from 2015–2017, Rosenbach served as Secretary Ash Carter's closest strategic advisor on key policy initiatives, such as the war to defeat ISIS, the "rebalance" to Asia, and the effort to check Russian aggression. Rosenbach also led the Department's efforts to improve innovation by forging and managing key initiatives such as the Defense Digital Service and the Defense Innovation Unit. Before serving as Chief of Staff, Rosenbach was the Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Security and Homeland Defense. His diverse portfolio as Assistant Secretary included cyber, space, countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, antiterrorism, continuity of government, and defense support to civil authorities. Earlier, Rosenbach served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cyber Policy. Rosenbach previously served as national security advisor for then-Senator Chuck Hagel and as a professional staff member on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, where he led oversight of Intelligence Community counterterrorism programs. A former Army intelligence officer and commander of a telecommunications intelligence unit, Rosenbach led a team that worked closely with the NSA to provide strategic intelligence in direct support of commanders in Bosnia and Kosovo. Rosenbach has published widely and authored several books, including *Confronting Cyber Risk: An Embedded Endurance Strategy*.

Panel 4: Friday 6 Feb., 5:45–7:00 PM, NYE Auditorium

From Periphery to Frontline: Rethinking Security in the Arctic

As the Arctic moves from a zone of exceptional cooperation to one of heightened strategic competition, allies face growing challenges in aligning threat perceptions, security priorities, and political interests. This panel examines how and whether Europe and the United States can maintain alliance unity amid diverging national approaches, with particular attention to Greenland's strategic role between the United States, Denmark, and Greenland itself. It also explores whether diplomatic statecraft can still complement hard security in a more militarized Arctic, and how Arctic states should navigate the presence of Russia and China. Finally, the discussion considers the geoeconomic dimension of the High North, assessing how infrastructure and energy investments can advance strategic objectives while respecting indigenous communities and local governance.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

CARLA SANDS | Chair, Foreign Policy Initiative, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Energy Policy, AFPI, US Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark (ret.), America First Policy Institution



Carla Sands serves as Chair of the Foreign Policy Initiative and Distinguished Senior Fellow for Energy Policy at America First Policy Institute. She was appointed to President Trump's Economic Advisory Council and served as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, including Greenland and the Faroe Islands from 2017–2021. During her tenure, she and her team increased U.S. exports to Denmark by 45% from \$2.17 billion to \$3.94 billion according to MIT's Observatory of Economic Complexity. Ambassador Sands' top priority was to strengthen U.S. national security by establishing a consulate in Greenland. Through close collaboration with interagency partners and Congress, this goal was successfully achieved in 2020. She also executed strategic trade and cooperation agreements with Greenland and the Faroe Islands to counter malign Russian and Chinese influence in the Arctic. In recognition of her service, Ambassador Sands was awarded the Department of Defense's highest civilian honor, the Medal for Distinguished Public Service, in 2021. Prior to her appointment as U.S. Ambassador, Carla served as Chairman and CEO of Vintage Capital Group and its subsidiary Vintage Real Estate. Carla currently serves as Chairman of The Daily Caller News Foundation's Advisory Council and sits on the board of the Parliamentary Intelligence Security Forum. She also serves on the advisory boards of the Krach Institute for Tech Diplomacy and Independent Women's Forum.

ANNIKEN HUITFELDT | Ambassador of Norway to the United States, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs



Anniken Huitfeldt is Norway's Ambassador to the United States. She has a long history of public service, most recently serving as Foreign Minister from 2021 to 2023. She has also held three Cabinet positions with Jens Stoltenberg's Government. She has a longstanding career in the Norwegian Parliament, where she led its Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense for eight years. She calls Jessheim, a town close to Oslo, home. As a young adult, she studied at the University of Oslo and the London School of Economics, and she later achieved a master's degree in foreign policy. She also worked as a researcher for five years. "I am delighted to be starting this new chapter as Norway's Ambassador to the U.S.," says Ambassador Designate Huitfeldt. "The United States is Norway's most important ally, and we have such a special relationship. I look forward to getting to work and continuing to strengthen our ties, as well as traveling and meeting people all over the country."

ANNEGRETTE RASMUSSEN | Co-Founder, Editor-in-Chief and U.S. Correspondent, POV International

Annegrete Rasmussen is editor in chief and US correspondent and a co-founder of POV International, a role she has held since 2016. She is the co-author of USA's *Udfordringer*, the most widely used Danish high school textbook on the United States. She also works as an advisor, helping Danish companies navigate the United States through strategy, analysis, network building, and communications, from the East Coast to Silicon Valley. In addition, she is a public speaker, chair, moderator and serves as a board member of the Nordic Press Centre. From 1992 to 2015, Rasmussen held a range of senior journalistic positions, including political editor at *Weekendavisen*, editor in chief of *Berlingske Sunday*, and correspondent in London, Paris, and Washington for *Information*. She was also an analyst on European affairs as well as British and French politics for Danish television and radio. During this period, she undertook various freelance assignments for the European Commission, the Danish Foreign Ministry, and leading Danish women's magazines.

MODERATOR: HENRY LEE | Co-Chair, and Director, Arctic Initiative, Environment and Natural Resources Program, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard Kennedy School

Henry Lee is the Jassim M. Jaidah Family Director of the Environment and Natural Resources Program and Co-Chair of the Arctic Initiative in the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard Kennedy School. He is also a Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at HKS. Before joining HKS in 1979, Lee spent nine years in Massachusetts State Government as Director of the State's Energy Office and Special Assistant to the Governor for Environmental Policy. He has served on numerous state, federal, and private advisory boards concerning energy and the environment. Lee is a former Chairman of the Massachusetts Stewardship Council, which oversees state parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, he has worked with private and public organizations, including the InterAmerican Development Bank, the World Bank's International Finance Corporation, the State of Sao Paulo, the U.S. Departments of Energy and Interior, the National Research Council, the Intercontinental Energy Corporation, General Electric, and the U.S. EPA. Lee's research interests surround energy and transportation issues, U.S. climate policy, China's energy policy, and public infrastructure projects in developing countries. Lee is a co-author of *Foundations for a Low-Carbon Energy System in China* (Cambridge University Press, 2021). His forthcoming publications include: a book chapter on state electricity regulation and climate (with Judy Chang), a paper on deploying renewable energy in China (with Bo Bai), and a new case study on solid waste disposal in Serbia.

Panel 5: Friday 6 Feb., 5:15–7:00 PM, TAUBMAN G50**Security First or Leadership First? Europe's Strategic Energy Crossroads**

Europe faces two defining imperatives: securing energy supply and leading in global cleantech amid rising competition. The core challenge is aligning short-term security measures with long-term investment in innovation and decarbonization. This panel examines

whether smart policy can deliver both: protecting citizens now while positioning Europe as a resilient, competitive climate and industrial leader for the decade ahead.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

ZINEB BENNANI | CEO Mirova US



With more than two decades at the forefront of sustainable finance, Zineb Bennani brings a deeply integrated European, U.S. and global perspective on how capital can drive transition toward a more resilient economy. She is CEO of Mirova US, leading the firm's North American expansion for the past three years, after holding senior roles across sustainable research, portfolio management and global development at Mirova, a firm affiliated with Natixis Investment Managers. She brings a pragmatic, investor-led perspective on sustainable finance, informed by long-standing experience across European and U.S. markets, and a deep understanding of the structural differences shaping capital allocation at a global level.

BERNARD GUSTIN | CEO Elia Group



Bernard Gustin became CEO of Elia Group on January 15, 2025 after having been Chairman of the Board of Elia Group, Elia Transmission Belgium, and Elia Assets since 2017. His other roles include Executive Chairman of Lineas (present), operating advisor to DWS Infrastructure Fund (Chairman of InfraMobility, Vice Chairman of Charleroi Airport), and CEO of Brussels Airlines (2008–2018). Earlier, he was a partner at Arthur D. Little. Born in 1968, he holds degrees from ICHEC, including in international comparative management from Loyola College Maryland, and an MBA from Solvay Business School.

MARCO MARGHERI | Head of Eni's U.S. Relations



Marco Margheri is the Head of Eni's U.S. Relations and Chairman of Eni New Energies US Inc. He oversees relations with US Authorities, US-based IFIs, and multilateral processes of interest for the company. Marco is also serving as Board Member for the Atlantic Council, and as the Chair for Italy of WEC – World Energy Council. Prior to joining Eni, he was Italy's Edison Executive Vice-President for Sustainability, Institutions & Regulation overseeing activities in Rome and Brussels, and held positions with GE Oil & Gas and Cohn Wolfe. Marco is also a visiting professor at LUISS Guido Carli University in Rome, a member of the Italian press and an Honorary Member of the Milano per la Scala Foundation in Milan.

MODERATOR: JOSEPH ALDY | Teresa and John Heinz Professor of the Practice of Environmental Policy, Harvard Kennedy School

Joseph E. Aldy is the Teresa and John Heinz Professor of the Practice of Environmental Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, a University Fellow at Resources for the Future, a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research, and a Senior Adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. His research focuses on climate change policy, energy policy, and regulatory policy. He also chairs the Faculty Steering Committee to the Salata Institute's Climate Action Accelerator. In 2009–2010, he served as the Special Assistant to the President for Energy and Environment at the White House. Aldy previously served as a Fellow at Resources for the Future, Co-Director of the Harvard Project on International Climate Agreements, Co-Director of the International Energy Workshop, and worked on the staff of the President's Council of Economic

Advisers. He earned his doctorate in economics from Harvard University and MEM and bachelor's degrees from Duke University.

Panel 6: Saturday 7 Feb., 09:00–10:15 AM, STARR Auditorium**Trade, Investment, and Power: Europe's Economic Strategy in Emerging Markets**

As Europe adapts to a more multipolar global economy, its trade strategy is increasingly shaped by engagement with emerging markets across Latin America, Africa, and Asia. This panel examines how the EU is recalibrating its external economic relations, from trade agreements and investment partnerships to regulatory influence and geopolitical positioning, while safeguarding competitiveness, sustainability, and strategic autonomy. Bringing together perspectives from policy, business, and trade analysis, the discussion explores what Europe's evolving trade agenda means for its global role in the years ahead.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**LIESJE SCHREINEMACHER | Deputy Secretary General, Benelux Union, Former Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands**

Ms Liesje Schreinemacher has been Deputy Secretary-General of the Benelux Union since January 2026. From 2022 to 2024 she served as Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation in the Dutch government. Prior to that, Schreinemacher was a Member of the European Parliament working on Trade related issues and regulations concerning the Internal Market, while also serving as a member of the delegations to the United States and the United Kingdom. Earlier in her career, she worked as an attorney at law in public procurement law and political adviser to the Minister of Defense.

DR. MARION JANSEN | Director of the Trade and Agriculture Directorate of OECD

Marion Jansen is the Director of the Trade and Agriculture Directorate (TAD), having been appointed in September 2020. She oversees the implementation of the OECD's work on international trade, agriculture and fisheries and its contributions to relevant G20, G7 and APEC tracks, and other relevant international forums like the WTO and FAO. Before joining the OECD, Marion Jansen was Chief Economist at the International Trade Centre (ITC) in Geneva. Prior to this, she held senior research positions in the World Trade Organization and headed the Trade and Employment Programme at the International Labour Organization. Marion Jansen has published widely on international trade and global governance and has lectured in multiple academic institutions, including the University of Geneva and the World Trade Institute. She is member of the Board of the Centre d'études prospectives et d'informations internationales (CEPII) in Paris, the Advisory Board of the World Trade Institute (WTI) in Bern, the Advisory Board of the Centre for Inclusive Trade Policy (University of Sussex), and of the Advisory Board of the MSc IB at SKEMA Business School in Paris. A German national, Marion Jansen holds a Doctorate Degree in International Economics from the Pompeu Fabra University (Spain) and undergraduate degrees in economics from the University of Konstanz (Germany), the University of Passau (Germany) and the University of Toulouse (France).

CRISTIÁN RODRIGUEZ-CHIFFELLE | Partner & Director; Trade, Investment and Geopolitics, Boston Consulting Group

Cristián Rodríguez-Chiffelle, LL.M, is Partner and Director at Boston Consulting Group in Geneva, Switzerland, specializing in trade, foreign direct investment, and geopolitics. Before joining BCG, he was a resident visiting scholar at Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies. Previously, he served as CEO of InvestChile – a ministerial-level appointment leading the Nation's foreign investment promotion agency – and priorly led international trade and investment policy at the World Economic Forum and Davos for five years. As a trade diplomat, he negotiated Chile's free trade agreements – including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) – and represented Chile before international organizations including WTO, OECD, APEC and UN bodies. He holds an LL.B from the University of Concepción (Chile), an LL.M from Harvard Law School, an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School and an MA in Global Leadership from the World Economic Forum and INSEAD. Cristian is the co-editor of "The Elgar Companion to the World Trade Organization" (Edward Elgar, 2024), a 50-chapter effort distilling current affairs affecting international trade with a focus on facilitation, digitalization, and geopolitical tensions.

MODERATOR: ELVIRE FABRY | Director Trade and Economic Security programme, Jacques Delors Institute

Director, Trade and economic security programme, Jacques Delors Institute, and Rapporteur of the working group on EU-China relations. Expertise: geopolitics of trade, economic security, EU-US relations, EU-China relations, WTO reform. Member of the board of CEPII (leading French center for research and expertise on the world economy), the Policy Advisory Committee of the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) in Paris, the Scientific Council of Elcano Royal Institute

(Madrid), and the Editorial board of the journal *Futuribles* (Paris). Director, European programme, Fondation pour l'Innovation Politique (2005–09); Research Fellow, Fondation Robert Schuman (2003–04); Research Fellow, Prospective Studies and Foresight Centre, *Futuribles International* (1996–2002); Forward Studies Unit; European Commission (1995). PhD in political science, Sciences-Po Paris; MA in philosophy and MA international relations, Panthéon Sorbonne. Institute of Higher National Defence Studies (IHEDN) 2011–2012. Colonel of the Citizens' Reserve of the French Air Force.

Panel 7: Saturday 7 Feb., 09:00–10:15 AM, WEXNER 436**Turning Europe into a Research Powerhouse**

This panel examines the strengths and weaknesses of Europe's research and innovation ecosystem, from funding and governance to talent, commercialization, and public policy. Drawing on perspectives from academia, industry, and government, the discussion will explore what is working, where reforms are needed, and which priorities will matter most for Europe's R&D competitiveness in the coming decade.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**DR. ELENI DIAMANTI | Professor at Sorbonne University and Research Director of CNRS**

Eleni Diamanti is CNRS research director at the LIP6 laboratory of Sorbonne University in Paris. She received her PhD in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University in 2006 and was a Marie Curie postdoctoral fellow at the Institute of Optics Graduate School in Palaiseau before joining the CNRS in 2009. Her research focuses on experimental quantum cryptography and communication, and on the development of photonic resources and applications for quantum networks. She is a recipient of a European Research Council Starting Grant, director of the Paris Centre for Quantum Technologies, and was awarded the CNRS Silver and Innovation Medals in 2024. She also serves as vice chair of the European Quantum Technologies Flagship Strategic Advisory Board and is cofounder and scientific advisor of the start-up company Welingq that specializes in quantum interconnect technology.

DR. MARIA LEPTIN | President of European Research Council

Maria Leptin is a developmental biologist and geneticist who is the President of the European Research Council (ERC). After her studies in mathematics and biology, Maria Leptin carried out her PhD research at the Basel Institute for Immunology. She then moved to the Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge, became a group leader at the Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology in Tübingen, and a professor at the Institute of Genetics, University of Cologne. Before her appointment as ERC President, Leptin was the Director of the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO) in Heidelberg and a research group leader at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory. She is an elected member of numerous

scientific academies and an Honorary Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, a Foreign Member of the Royal Society, and an international member of the US National Academy of Sciences.

JACOB PETERSEN | Senior Vice President, Novo Nordisk Pharmatech



Jacob Sten Petersen has been Senior Vice President as Head of Global Nucleic Acid Therapies since 2023, responsible for RNAi modality and gene editing modality platform. He joined the Board of Directors of Novo Nordisk Pharmatech A/S in 2021. Mr. Petersen joined Novo Nordisk in 2001 as CVP for Global Research Metabolic Diseases and Adjunct Professor. In 2006, he was awarded the Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) degree from the medical faculty of Copenhagen University, Denmark, and from 2010–2022, he was a professor of biomedicine at the medical faculty of Copenhagen University. Besides numerous presentations at international diabetes conferences, he has published approximately 70 papers in peer-reviewed journals, mainly on topics of diabetes prediction, prevention, and intervention but also on beta cell biology, physiology, and immunology.

DR. MIKLÓS SZÓCSKA | Director, Special Adviser, Semmelweis University Health Services Management Training Centre, European Commission, former Minister of State for Health of Hungary



Professor Miklós Szócska graduated at the Semmelweis University (SU) of Medicine in 1989. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a Ph.D. from the SU in the change management. He initiated the creation of the Health Services Management Training Centre where he at present serves as director. 2019–2025 he was Dean of the Faculty of Health and Public Administration at Semmelweis University. 2010–2014 Dr. Szócska served as the Minister of State for Health of the Hungarian Government. In 2016 he was nominated by the Hungarian Government for the DG position of the WHO. Since 2021 he is a member of the Sustainability Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Since 2022 he has also been Head of Data-Driven Health Division of the National Laboratory for Health Security. For the 2024/25 and the 2025/26 academic years, he was appointed as a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government. Since 2025 he has been a Special Advisor to the European Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare.

MODERATOR: MICHAEL MCQUADE | Director of the Program on Emerging Technology, Scientific Advancement & Global Policy, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs



J. Michael McQuade is the Director of the Program on Emerging Technology, Scientific Advancement & Global Policy at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs in the Harvard Kennedy School. The program is dedicated to research, dialogue and training at the intersection of technology and policy. Prior to this role, Dr. McQuade served as the Vice President for Research and Special Advisor to the President of Carnegie Mellon University, where he provided operational

leadership and strategic direction for the University's research enterprise and advocated for the role that science, technology, and innovation play for national security and economic competitiveness. McQuade has had a distinguished private sector career in roles ranging from developing and commercializing new and novel technologies to executive operational leadership and general management. He served as Senior Vice President for Science & Technology at United Technologies Corporation, where he managed research, engineering, and development activities across a broad range of high-technology products and services for the global aerospace, defense, building systems, and energy industries. Previously, he led the medical products division of 3M's global healthcare portfolio and served as the President of Eastman Kodak's Health Imaging business. Dr. McQuade has been deeply involved in the development of national and international policies related to science and technology investments and regulations, national security, and economic competitiveness. He has served as a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology and of the Secretary of Energy's Advisory Board, was a founding member of the Defense Innovation Board, and a member of the National Academies' National Science, Technology, and Security Roundtable. He holds Ph.D., M.S., and B.S. degrees from Carnegie Mellon University. He received his doctorate in experimental high energy physics for research performed at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory on charm quark production.

Panel 8: Saturday 7 Feb., 11:00 AM–12:15 PM, JFK JR. FORUM
Europe's Role in a Multipolar World Order

As the unipolar moment fades and great power competition returns, Europe faces fundamental questions about its global role. Should the continent seek strategic autonomy or does its security and prosperity still depend on deepening transatlantic unity? Amid growing U.S. unilateralism, how can Europe best engage with China, rising middle powers, and the Global South?

This panel will bring together policymakers and scholars to examine Europe's strategic options in the age of multipolarity. It will explore the future of Western cohesion, implications of 'the rise of the rest,' and the prospects for sustaining a rules-based international system in a more plural world.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

JOVITA NELIUPŠIENĖ | Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to the United States



Jovita Neliupšienė is a Lithuanian diplomat and scholar specializing in European and foreign policy. She holds degrees in international relations, diplomacy, and law, and earned a PhD from Vilnius University, where she has also taught at the Institute of International Relations and Political Science.

She served as Chief Adviser to the President of Lithuania on foreign policy and later as Lithuanian Ambassador to the European Union from 2015 to 2020. Her career includes roles in the Seimas, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Lithuanian Embassy in Belarus. She has been directly involved in European Council coordination and EU foreign policy at the highest levels.

ANNIKEN HUITFELDT | Ambassador of Norway to the United States, Royal Norwegian Embassy, Former Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs

Anniken Huitfeldt is Norway's Ambassador to the United States. She has a long history of public service, most recently serving as Foreign Minister from 2021 to 2023. She has also held three Cabinet positions with Jens Stoltenberg's Government. She has a longstanding career in the Norwegian Parliament, where she led its Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense for eight years. She calls Jessheim, a town close to Oslo, home. As a young adult, she studied at the University of Oslo and the London School of Economics, and she later achieved a master's degree in foreign policy. She also worked as a researcher for five years. "I am delighted to be starting this new chapter as Norway's Ambassador to the U.S.," says Ambassador Designate Huitfeldt. "The United States is Norway's most important ally, and we have such a special relationship. I look forward to getting to work and continuing to strengthen our ties, as well as traveling and meeting people all over the country."

DR. DANIELA SCHWARZER | Board Member Bertelsmann Stiftung & Former Director of the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)

Prof. Dr. Daniela Schwarzer is member of the Executive Board of the Bertelsmann Stiftung and a leading expert on European and international affairs. She is honorary professor of political science at Freie Universität Berlin and senior fellow at Harvard University. Since 2025, Daniela Schwarzer has been serving as the honorary president of the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations and as co-chair of the German-Japanese Forum. She previously served as Executive Director for Europe and Central Asia at the Open Society Foundations, as director and CEO of the German Council on Foreign Relations, and as head of the Europe research group at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. She is a member of the supervisory boards of BNP Paribas and Covivio, an honorary board member of DGAP and non-executive board member of the Jacques Delors Institute/Centre (Paris/Berlin) and a Council member of the European Council on Foreign Relations.

RANA MITTER | Chair in US-Asia Relations at Harvard Kennedy School specializing in the history of China

Rana Mitter is ST Lee Chair in US-Asia Relations at the Harvard Kennedy School. He is the author of several books, including *Forgotten Ally: China's World War II* (2013) which won the 2014 RUSI/Duke of Westminster's Medal for Military Literature, and was named a Book of the Year in the Financial Times and Economist. His latest book is *China's Good War: How World War II is Shaping a New Nationalism* (Harvard, 2020). His writing on contemporary China has appeared recently in Foreign Affairs, the Harvard Business Review, The Spectator, The Critic, and The Guardian. He has commented regularly on China in media and forums around the world, including at the World Economic Forum at Davos. His recent documentary on contemporary Chinese politics "Meanwhile in Beijing" is available on BBC Sounds. He is co-author, with Sophia Gaston, of the report "Conceptualizing a UK-China Engagement Strategy" (British Foreign Policy

Group, 2020). He won the 2020 Medlicott Medal for Service to History, awarded by the UK Historical Association. He previously taught at Oxford, and is a Fellow of the British Academy.

MODERATOR: MATTHEW KAMINSKI | Editorial Chair of Middle East Broadcasting Networks

Matthew Kaminski is a Polish-born American journalist and media executive. He's the editorial chair of Middle East Broadcasting Networks and editor-at-large of the Arsenal. Matt also is editor in chief of Evident AI Insights, advises New Vista Capital, and serves on the boards of the Partners Group and World.Minds. He's the co-founder of POLITICO Europe, which launched in 2014 as a separate company, and ran the publication for four years. He was subsequently editor-in-chief of POLITICO in Washington in 2019–2023 and a columnist there until early 2025. Matt won an Overseas Press Club and was a Pulitzer Prize Finalist for his coverage of Ukraine in 2014. He graduated from Yale and lives in Washington.

Panel 9: Saturday 7 Feb., 11:00 AM–12:15 PM, STARR Auditorium**Mobilizing Capital and Financing European Innovators**

Finance has the power to enable innovation, to scale ambition, and to shape Europe's economic future. Bringing together leading voices from venture capital, private equity, think tanks, and sovereign wealth funds, this panel examines how capital access and liquidity conditions impact Europe's ability to foster and retain innovative companies. Starting from the premise that financing is a central driver of innovation, the discussion will explore how Europe can better mobilize private and public capital, deepen its capital markets by reducing fragmentation, and ensure a continuum from early-stage funding to scale-up and exit. Why are European companies going public in the United States, and is it legitimate? Can, and should, Europe finance innovation without relying on foreign capital? And how can Europe redirect its large pool of savings toward more productive, innovation-driven uses?

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**DARIO SCANNAPIECO | CEO and General Manager, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti SpA**

Born in Rome on August 18, 1967, and graduated with honours in Economics at Luiss University in Rome, Dario Scannapieco started his career in Telecom Italia in 1992, in the Strategic Planning and Control Department and subsequently (1997) obtained a Master in Business Administration (MBA) from Harvard Business School. From 1997 to 2002 he was a member of the Council of Experts of the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance, with the role of advisor to the Director General of the Treasury Department and from 2002 to 2007, he was Director General of the Finance and Privatization Department at the Ministry of Economy and Finance. From 2007 to May 2021, Dario Scannapieco was Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), and, from 2012 to May 2021, he was also the President of the EIF.

Since May 2021 he is the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP), the Italian national promotional bank, and from July 2021 he is the Chief Executive Officer of CDP Reti. Since 2021 he has been a member of the Board of Directors of Assonime and a member of the Advisory Board of the B20. During his professional experience, he has also been a member of various BoDs and international commissions, including, since 2014, the Executive Board of Save the Children Italy ETS. Since July 2023 he is the President of the European Long-Term Investors Association (ELTIA), the association that brings together the 32 main National Promotional Institutions and European Financial Institutions, including the European Investment Bank. He is the author of various publications on privatizations and infrastructure financing and periodically gives lectures on corporate governance and infrastructure financing.

WILLIAM KADOUCH-CHASSAING | Co CEO, EURAZEO



Educated at the École Normale Supérieure, holding an agrégation in economics and social sciences, and a graduate of Sciences Po Paris, William Kadouch-Chassaing quickly turned to the private sector and finance. In the mid-1990s, he joined the prestigious American bank J.P. Morgan, first in Paris as a market economist, then soon after in London, where he joined the investment banking teams. As the sector was booming, William Kadouch-Chassaing participated in launching the bank's Tech-Media-Telecom platform, which he helped develop for nearly ten years, supporting major mergers and acquisitions of the era, both in listed and unlisted markets. In 2007, he was recruited by Société Générale and joined the headquarters at La Défense in Paris. For five years, he covered multi-sector companies as a senior banker and contributed to the development of the advisory and financing franchise for large European corporations. A business leader with expertise in strategic movements

CLARA ANDREOLETTI | President and CEO, Eni Next



Clara got her degree in telecommunication engineering at Politecnico di Milano. She joined Eni in 2002, where she started her career as an R&D geophysicist, working on the development of innovative technologies for subsurface exploration. She then covered several managerial positions in the exploration function; among them: West Africa Area Manager, Head of Technical Assurance, Digital Transformation partner, Head of subsurface data management. Before becoming CEO of Eni Next, she was head of Business Support Services and Transformation Program Director of the Eni's Natural Resource General Direction.

KAREL LANNOO | CEO, Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS)



Karel Lannoo has been Chief Executive of CEPS since 2000, Europe's leading independent European think tank, ranked among the top ten think tanks in the world. He manages a staff of 80 people. Karel was an Independent Director of BME (Bolsas y Mercados Españolas), the listed company that manages the Spanish securities markets (2006–18).

He published several books on capital markets, MiFID, and the financial crisis. He is the author of many op-eds and articles published by CEPS or in international

newspapers and reviews. Karel is a regular speaker in hearings for national and international institutions (the European Commission, European Parliament, etc.) and at international gatherings. Karel Lannoo holds a baccalaureate in Philosophy (1984) and an MA in Modern History (1985) from the University of Leuven, Belgium, and obtained a postgraduate diploma in European studies (Centre d'Etudes européennes, CEE) from the University of Nancy, France (1986).

MODERATOR: YVONNE BENDINGER-ROTHSCHILD | Executive Director, European American Chamber of Commerce New York (EACCNY)



Yvonne joined the European American Chamber of Commerce New York Chapter as its Executive Director in October 2010. During her career she has worked with and consulted for a number of non-profits and for-profits and was able to significantly contribute to their growth and raising their public profiles, geographic foot print and relevance within their respective industries. In her role at the EACC she focuses on promoting an active transatlantic discourse and to engage the business communities on both sides in a meaningful dialog, to create profitable partnerships and to provide a professional platform to exchange ideas. Education: Mrs. Bendinger-Rothschild is a graduate of the University of Applied Science in Ludwigshafen, Germany where she earned a Master of Business Administration with a focus on Marketing and Controlling/Finance. She is fluent in German and English, has a working knowledge of French and basic skills in Spanish. Memberships & Affiliations: Mrs. Bendinger-Rothschild is a fellow at the Tribeca Disruptor Foundation and a member of the Corporate Advisory Committee at International Property Tax Institute (IPTI) and the Transatlantic Business & Investment Council [TBIC]; She is also a member of the Economic Club of New York and the Bretton Woods Committee's "Development Finance" Working Group. Yvonne's priority is to create value for its membership and help grow the organization and its influence on both sides of the Atlantic. To that extend she is spearheading EACC's international expansion strategy and is working with partners across the U.S. and Europe to identify & develop suitable locations and collaborators to expand the EACC chapter network. Yvonne is also spearheading the EACCNY's Transatlantic Resilient Infrastructure Alliance [TRIA], a joint initiative with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to support investments for resilient infrastructure.

Panel 10: Saturday 7 Feb., 12:15 PM–13:30 PM, WEXNER 436
Harmony or Dissonance? Culture as a Transatlantic Bridge

Culture has the power to connect, to challenge, and to inspire. This panel aims to bring together voices from across the Atlantic to explore how cultural diplomacy and storytelling can strengthen transatlantic ties and foster mutual understanding in a time of global change. The panel will explore the meaning of the term "cultural diplomacy" and demonstrate the diversity of cultural agents that are working to foster stronger transatlantic bonds today. Cultural exchanges can create linkages across the Atlantic that embrace our diversity while recognizing our similarities and shared sentiments. How can cultural exchanges contribute to strengthening the transatlantic relationship? Are we in an era of transatlantic cultural harmony or dissonance?

PANELISTS & MODERATOR

TAMARA ROJO | Artistic Director, San Francisco Ballet



Appointed Artistic Director of San Francisco Ballet in 2022, Tamara Rojo is the first woman to lead the company and only its fifth Artistic Director since the company was founded in 1933. At SF Ballet, she has already commissioned three world premieres, added new works to the repertoire, instituted choreographic and professional development opportunities for the Company, expanded audiences, and secured a transformational \$60 million gift. Before coming to San Francisco, Rojo served as Artistic Director and Lead Principal of London's English National Ballet (ENB) for nine and a half years, where she brought groundbreaking programming, garnered the company critical accolades, and spearheaded a successful £50-million capital campaign to create a new headquarters for the company that opened in 2019. Raised in Madrid, Rojo received her bachelor's degree in Dance/Choreography at the Real Conservatorio de Danza Mariemma and received a Master's in Theatrical Arts, as well as a doctorate from the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos de Madrid.

ANGELA RODEL | Executive Director, Fulbright Bulgaria, 2023 International Booker Prize winner



Angela Rodel holds a BA from Yale University in linguistics and two MAs from UCLA in linguistics and ethnomusicology. She is a two-time Fulbright Scholar, who first came to Bulgaria in 1996 to study Bulgarian language and folk music. Since relocating permanently to Bulgaria in 2005, Angela has performed in various musical projects and has also become a prominent literary translator from Bulgarian to English, with nearly a dozen books published in the US and UK, and has received NEA and PEN awards. Her translation of Georgi Gosopodinov's novel Time Shelter won the 2023 International Booker Prize. Since 2015 she has served as executive director of the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission.

DARIA KOLOMIEC | Cultural activist, creator and producer of “Diary of War”



Daria Kolomiec is a Ukrainian activist, producer, performer, and the creator of the documentary-theater project Diary of War with over 15 years of experience in television, radio, and live performance as a DJ and music curator. At the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Daria collected 41 personal diaries from Ukrainians at war as voice messages. While sheltering in Kyiv, she edited and released them as the Diary of War podcast. Since then, the project evolved into staged readings presented to international audiences in collaboration with theaters across the U.S. and Europe. Project's performances have sold out venues in New York and D.C., featuring actors from TV, film, and Broadway. Through these events, Daria has raised over \$150,000 for Ukrainian volunteer and humanitarian initiatives.

Time magazine recognized her as one of its Next Generation Leaders. Central to Daria's work is the amplification of Ukrainian women's voices and leadership in resisting Russian aggression, from the front lines to humanitarian and cultural advocacy worldwide.

JENEÉ OSTERHELDT | Deputy Managing Editor for culture, talent, and development, The Boston Globe/A Beautiful Resistance

Jeneé Osterheldt is a culture columnist who covers identity and social justice through the lens of culture and the arts. Her work centers Black lives and the lives of people of color. She is also the creator of *A Beautiful Resistance*, a multimedia platform and docuseries for *The Boston Globe* that centers Black voices and celebrates Black Joy. The work is both joy and justice. Sometimes this means taking systemic racism, sexism, and oppression to task. Other times it means arts, joy, and space-making. It always means Black lives matter. Beyond writing and film, her work comes to life on stage and screen as she moderates conversations with thought leaders and culture makers like Ghetto Gastro, Taraji P. Henson, and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley. In 2023, she was named deputy managing editor

of talent, culture, and development, making her the second Black woman to ever grace the masthead. More recently, the City of Boston honored her work with a day in its honor: As of 2025 going forward, Nov. 21 is *A Beautiful Resistance Day* in our city. She joined the *Globe* in 2018. She was the 2023 chair of the Pulitzer jury for criticism, 2023 ONA winner for Commentary, 2022 YW Boston Women Achiever, a 2022 Murrow Award winner, a 2021 News Leader Association winner, and a 2021 Most Influential Bostonian. She opened for ABC/Hulu's "Soul of a Nation" three times. She is a 2024 New England Regional Emmy Award winner. A native of Alexandria, Va. and a proud graduate of Norfolk State University, Osterheldt was a 2017 Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, where her studies focused on the intersection of art and justice.

MODERATOR: CARLA CANALES | Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs

Carla recently served the Biden Administration in a newly created role as Senior Advisor and Envoy for Cultural Exchange at the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. Carla has been a Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government since 2022, where she has led a co-curricular course for the Center for Public Leadership. She is also a Visiting Professor at the Korbel School of International Studies. Carla has served as a U.S. State Department Arts Envoy since 2005. Carla has been a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities Turnaround Arts Program, was selected by Foreign Policy Magazine as one of its 100 Leading Global Thinkers and won the Medal of Excellence from the Sphinx Organization, which was presented to her at the Supreme Court by Justice

Sotomayor. Carla was also named one of Musical America's 30 Movers and Shapers of 2018. In each case, she was the first opera singer ever to receive the honor.

Panel 11: Saturday 7 Feb., 2:45–4:00 PM, STARR Auditorium**Recommitting to the Alliance: Does Transatlanticism Still Serve U.S. and European Interests in a Fragmented World?**

This panel will attempt to find whether a common consensus of values and goals exists today between the U.S. and Europe to maintain the historic alliance in the context of an increasingly insecure and complicated geopolitical situation. It will firstly explore how the U.S.'s recent approach to Greenland has affected the relationship and whether the alliance can continue in spite of the tension. Through the lenses of Russia's war on Ukraine, democratic backsliding, engagement with China, and energy security — we ask what either side can realistically handle on its own. The discussion will assess how U.S. engagement with European opposition parties (e.g., in Germany, the U.K., and Romania) shapes trust and day-to-day diplomacy among allies. We also examine rising frictions over democratic norms—including free speech and academic freedom—and how these debates reverberate through values-based diplomacy on both sides of the Atlantic. A core focus is the economic relationship: through the U.S.-EU tariffs, tensions over industrial policy, digital regulation, green subsidies, and supply-chain security. Finally, we consider how economic fragmentation could undermine strategic cohesion—and why sustained alignment is vital to protect shared prosperity.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**BRANDO BENIFEI | Member of the European Parliament (S&D Group), Chair of Delegation for relations with the US**

Brando Benifei is an Italian MEP serving his third term in the European parliament. During the previous mandate he was co-Rapporteur for the Artificial Intelligence Act and thanks to this work in March 2024 he won the prize for the Best MEP of the Mandate assigned by The Parliament Magazine.

Now he is Coordinator in the Committee on International Trade for the Socialists and Democrats Group and Chair of the European Parliament's D-US delegation. He is member of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and he works also as substitute member on the EU internal market and consumer protection and on legal affairs, always following closely digital issues

CARLA SANDS | Chair, Foreign Policy Initiative, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Energy Policy, AFPI, Former US Ambassador to Denmark, America First Policy Institution

Carla Sands is Chair of the Foreign Policy Initiative and Distinguished Senior Fellow for Energy Policy at the America First Policy Institute and previously served as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, including Greenland and the Faroe

Islands, from 2017 to 2021, following her appointment to President Trump's Economic Advisory Council. As ambassador, she prioritized U.S. national security and Arctic strategy, overseeing a 45 percent increase in U.S. exports to Denmark and leading the successful establishment of a U.S. consulate in Greenland in 2020, alongside trade and cooperation agreements with Greenland and the Faroe Islands aimed at countering Russian and Chinese influence. For her service, she received the Department of Defense's Medal for Distinguished Public Service in 2021 and now continues to shape U.S. foreign and security policy debates through senior leadership and advisory roles.

DANIEL FRIED | Former Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, Former Ambassador to Poland, Weiser Family Distinguished Fellow at the Atlantic Council



Ambassador Daniel Fried is a veteran U.S. diplomat who played a central role in shaping American and transatlantic policy toward Europe after the fall of the Soviet Union. Over a forty-year Foreign Service career, including senior roles under Presidents Clinton and George W. Bush, U.S. Ambassador to Poland, and Assistant Secretary of State for Europe (2005–09), he helped shape and implement NATO enlargement to Central and Eastern Europe while managing NATO–Russia relations in pursuit of a “Europe whole, free, and at peace.” Following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine in 2014, he led the U.S. sanctions response as State Department Coordinator for Sanctions Policy, crafting the largest sanctions program in U.S. history and coordinating parallel measures with European and other allies. A specialist in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia, Fried’s career combined deep regional expertise with alliance-building, making him one of Washington’s most influential architects of post-Cold War European security; he is currently a Weiser Family Distinguished Fellow at the Atlantic Council.

DITMIR BUSHATI | Fellow, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, Former Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs



Ditmir Bushati is the former Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania and a former member of parliament. He has led OSCE-ODIHR election observation missions and consults on various international projects. He also hosts the Public Square podcast, offering analysis on developments in southeast Europe and beyond. He is currently a fellow at the Weatherhead Scholars Program at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University.

MODERATOR: VESSELA TCHERNEVA | Deputy Director of ECFR



Vessela Tcherneva is deputy director of the European Council on Foreign Relations. Her topics of focus include EU foreign policy and the Western Balkans and Black Sea region. Between January and July 2022, she held the position of Foreign Policy Advisor to the Bulgarian Prime Minister Kiril Petkov. From 2010 to 2013, she was the spokesperson for the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a member of Foreign Minister Nickolay Mladenov’s political cabinet. Previously, she was secretary of the International Commission on the Balkans, chaired by former Italian Prime Minister

Giuliano Amato and former German President Richard von Weizsäcker; supervising editor of the Foreign Policy Bulgaria magazine; and political officer at the Bulgarian Embassy in Washington, DC. Tcherneva holds an MA in Political Science from the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität in Bonn.

Panel 12: Saturday 7 Feb., 2:45–4:00 PM, WEXNER 436**Can Smarter Regulation or Deeper Integration Drive Europe's Competitiveness?**

A year after the Draghi Report called for renewed European competitiveness, the EU stands at a crossroads. Despite strong talent and institutions, complex and fragmented regulation continues to hinder innovation and scale. This panel examines whether Europe's competitiveness challenge is best tackled through regulatory simplification or deeper integration. It considers the impact of simplifying rules without diluting standards, the benefits of supervisory authority integration and what the EU can learn from the US model. Can Europe strike the right balance between flexibility and cohesion to turn ambition into lasting competitiveness?

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**DAMIAN BOESELAGER | Member of the European Parliament (Volt)**

Damian Boeselager is a Member of the European Parliament and co-founder of Volt Europa, the first pan-European movement fighting for a united and democratic Europe. Elected in 2019 as Volt's very first MEP and joined in 2024 by four more colleagues, he's been pushing for bold EU reforms on everything from migration to digital policy. Damian started Volt with friends after seeing Trump, Brexit, and the far right on the rise — determined to prove that young people can change politics across borders. Today, he's working to make the EU stronger, fairer, and future-ready — and he's inviting a new generation to help shape it.

VICTORIA DE POSSON | Secretary General, European Tech Alliance (EUTA)

Victoria de Posson is currently the Secretary General of the European Tech Alliance (EUTA). EUTA brings together European-born technology companies operating across the EU Single Market and beyond. Its 36 members from 16 European countries are popular and have earned the trust of consumers. Before joining EUTA, Victoria held a senior position in public policy at the Computer & Communications Industry Association (CCIA) and at FTI Consulting. She started her career at Samsung Electronics and the European Parliament. Victoria studied European Affairs at the College of Europe and International Relations at the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve. In addition to her work in tech policy, she is also involved in promoting gender equality in the digital sector.

CARY COGLIANESE | Edward B. Shils Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania

Cary Coglianese, the Edward B. Shils Professor of Law and Professor of Political Science and the founding Director of the Penn Program on Regulation at the University of Pennsylvania, specializes in the study of administrative law and regulatory policy, with an emphasis on the design and evaluation of alternative processes and strategies and the role of public participation, technology, and business-government relations in policymaking. The author of more than 300 articles, book chapters, reports, and essays on a broad range of administrative law and regulatory policy issues, Coglianese served as a founding editor of the international peer-reviewed journal, *Regulation & Governance*. He also founded and serves as the faculty advisor of *The Regulatory Review*, a global online publication

that covers a full range regulatory law and policy issues. He previously served as the Deputy Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Pennsylvania's law school. Prior to joining the Penn faculty, he spent a dozen years on the faculty at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government where he founded and chaired the school's Regulatory Policy Program and was an affiliated scholar at the Harvard Law School. He also has served as a visiting law professor at Stanford University and Vanderbilt University.

ANTONIOS NESTORAS | Founding Director, European Policy Innovation Council (EPIC)

Dr. Antonios Nestoras is Founder and CEO of the European Policy Innovation Council (EPIC), a Brussels-based think tank focused on industrial strategy, technology policy, and geopolitics. With almost two decades of experience across academia, think tanks, and European public administration, his work examines how regulation, institutional design, and technological capacity shape Europe's competitiveness and role in a shifting global order. His work has appeared in peer-reviewed journals, think-tank reports, and leading international media including the Financial Times, Politico, and Euronews, as well as many European national media. He is Chief Editor of the Future Europe Journal and Editor of the Draghi Observatory & Implementation Index. His forthcoming book, *The Shape of Europe*, explores the geographical roots of European division and Europe's long search for political order and unity.

MODERATOR: AMARYLLIS VERHOEVEN | Deputy Director and Head of Unit, DG GROW, European Commission

Dr. Amaryllis Verhoeven has a Ph.D. in Law from the University of Leuven (Belgium) and holds an LL.M. from Harvard Law School. She worked as an attorney in private practice with Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton in Brussels and New York. She is currently working at the European Commission building Europe's Single Market and seeking to harness the EU's competitiveness. Alongside, she is also teaching at the Leuven Law School on economic regulation, rule of law and democracy. Dr. Verhoeven has written extensively on EU law and is a regular guest speaker at high level fora.

Panel 13: Saturday 7 Feb., 4:30–5:45 PM, STARR Auditorium
Democracy in a Post-Truth World

Disinformation, foreign influence, and the challenges facing European democracies. This panel explores the impact of disinformation and democratic backsliding on human rights and the rule of law, and whether the future of our democracies is crumbling. A decreasing trust in institutions and unstable governments, combined with foreign interference in the information environment aiming to destabilize us, places a secure and stable continent at risk. We explore and discuss the balance between free speech and protecting the truth and human rights, and whether we can tackle disinformation without compromising on liberty.

PANELISTS & MODERATOR**LEO VARADKAR | Former Prime Minister of Ireland**

Leo Varadkar was Taoiseach, or Prime Minister, of Ireland from 2017–2020 and again from 2022–2024. He served in cabinet for 13 years in the Ministries of Transport, Tourism & Sport, Enterprise, Trade, Employment, Social Protection and Health. As Taoiseach, Varadkar received international recognition for his leadership of Ireland's public health and economic responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. He led Ireland through Brexit preventing a hard border between North and South, maintaining Ireland's place at the heart of the European Union, its single market and upholding the Good Friday Agreement. The Governments he participated in lifted Ireland's ban on abortion and improved LGBT rights including the introduction of marriage equality and a gender recognition law. He also prioritized equality between men and women including gender pay gap reporting, greater diversity on state and corporate boards and linking state funding for political parties to election candidate quotas. A strong supporter of Irish unification, he allocated over a €1 billion to North-South projects under the Shared Island Fund and helped to get the power-sharing institutions of the Good Friday Agreement operating again. During his premiership, Ireland dramatically increased its budget for international development and was elected to serve on the UN Security Council. As Taoiseach, he established a Child Poverty and Wellbeing Program to drive cross-government work on the matter. Early results include the introduction of free school books, hot school meals, subsidized childcare, better access to higher education for lone parents and higher welfare payments for children in greatest need. He is a medical doctor, qualified GP and a graduate of Trinity College Dublin. He is a member of Ireland's Council of State.

SOPHIE WILMÈS | Vice-President of the European Parliament, Former Prime Minister of Belgium

Sophie Wilmès became a Member of the European Parliament in 2024 and currently serves as one of its Vice-Presidents. She is First Vice-Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the United States and a member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and the Special Committee on the European Democracy Shield (EUDS). She is also a substitute member of the Committee on

Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE). A member of the Mouvement Réformateur (MR), affiliated with the Renew Europe group, Ms. Wilmès previously served as a Belgian federal deputy and as Minister for the Budget, with responsibility for Public Administration and Scientific Policy. From October 2019 to October 2020, she was Belgium's first woman Prime Minister, leading the country during the COVID-19 crisis, and later served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Throughout her career, she has received several prestigious honors, including Commandeur de l'Ordre de Léopold (2019), the Serge Lazareff Prize awarded by NATO (2021), Grand-Croix de l'Ordre du Mérite du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg (2023), and Grand Officier de l'Ordre de Léopold (2024). Ms. Wilmès holds degrees from the Institute of Higher Social Communication Studies and the Institut Supérieur de Commerce Saint-Louis and is the mother of four children.

JAKUB KALENSKÝ | Deputy Director of COI Hybrid Influence, Hybrid CoE



Jakub Kalenský is the Deputy Director of the Centre's Hybrid Influence COI, focusing on disinformation and efforts to counter this threat. He joined the Centre of Excellence in 2022. Jakub has specialised in disinformation and Russian hybrid activities since 2015, when he joined the newly created East StratCom Task Force within the European Union's diplomatic service, the EEAS. In the team, Jakub was responsible for raising awareness about Russia's disinformation campaigns, and he and his colleagues founded the EUvsDisinfo campaign. Between 2018 and 2021, Jakub worked in the Atlantic Council's Ukrainian Election Task Force and in the Digital Forensic Research Lab. He authored reports and articles on Russian disinformation attacks and the countermeasures against them, and testified in the European

Parliament, the US Congress, and other legislative bodies in Europe on the same topic. Since 2024, Jakub has been a Visiting Professor at the College of Europe (Natolin). Before specialising in countering disinformation, Jakub worked as a journalist in the Czech Republic.

PATRYK JAKI | Member of the European Parliament (ECR), Co-Chair of the European Conservatives and Reformists and the Vice President of the Law and Justice Party in Poland



Born 11 May 1985 is a Polish politician, sitting as a Member of the European Parliament since 2019. He is the leader of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the European Parliament and has been vice-president of the Law and Justice party since 2024. He was previously a member of the Sejm in the VII and VIII terms (2011–2019). He served as Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice (2015–2019) and is the vice-chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Eastern Partnership – Euronest (since 2019). Patryk Jaki graduated from the University of Wrocław and obtained a master's degree in political science in 2010. He also completed the ARGO Top Public Executive program organized by the National School of Public Administration in collaboration with IESE Business School in Barcelona (2018) and training at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville. In 2019, he defended his doctoral dissertation at the Faculty of National Security of the War Studies University. In 2003, he joined the Young Forum of Law and Justice and later served as a marketing specialist at the International School of Logistics and Transport. He published in the "Logistyka" journal. His political roles include being a member of the Opole Voivode's political cabinet, assistant to MEP Ryszard Legutko, and membership in Opole's "Gazeta Polska" club. He was also vice-president of the "Stop Corruption" Association. In 2006, he joined the Civic Platform party briefly before returning to Law and Justice. He completed his political science studies at the University of Wrocław in 2009. Re-elected in 2010,

he became chairman of the Law and Justice councillors' club. Notably, he expanded Opole's boundaries in 2016, despite significant local opposition, and oversaw the establishment of the Museum of Cursed Soldiers and Political Prisoners. Appointed Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice in November 2015, he supervised the Prison Service and led efforts like the Electronic Monitoring System implementation. He drafted laws to protect parental custody rights and chaired initiatives including the Verification Committee for Reparation. He introduced Poland's registry of sex offenders in 2017 and launched a successful prisoner employment program. Currently, he chairs the Polish Council of Penitentiary Policy and is known for his stance against Islamization. In October 2021, he received the "Polski Kompas" award for combating reparation corruption.

ADRIÁN VÁZQUEZ LÁZARA | Member of the European Parliament (EPP), Vice-Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO)

Dr. Antonios Nestoras is Founder and CEO of the European Policy Innovation Council (EPIC), a Brussels-based think tank focused on industrial strategy, technology policy, and geopolitics. With almost two decades of experience across academia, think tanks, and European public administration, his work examines how regulation, institutional design, and technological capacity shape Europe's competitiveness and role in a shifting global order. His work has appeared in peer-reviewed journals, think-tank reports, and leading international media including the Financial Times, Politico, and Euronews, as well as many European national media. He is Chief Editor of the Future Europe Journal and Editor of the Draghi Observatory & Implementation Index. His forthcoming book, The Shape of Europe, explores the geographical roots

of European division and Europe's long search for political order and unity.

MODERATOR: ALBANA SHEHAJ | Political Scientist, Program Manager, and Seminar Chair, Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies

Dr. Albana Shehaj is a political scientist, program manager, and lecturer at Harvard University's Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies and the Department of Continuing Education. She specializes in international political economy and democratic governance. Her research focuses on corruption and accountability, distributive politics, and the effects of EU integration. Dr. Shehaj holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Michigan, an M.A. in International Relations and Methodology, and a B.A. in Political Science and Computer Science.

MEP Debate

Member of European Parliament Debate

This panel brings different Members of the European Parliament for an informal debate on whether the EU can still hold together as a consensus-based project while facing deeper dissent, weaker momentum for uniting Europe, and higher expectations on defence, migration, and foreign policy without treaty change. The discussion will focus on what strategic autonomy should mean in practice, how a more state-driven Union changes the role of the European Parliament, and what the evolving US/EU relationship implies for Europe's security choices in the 2030s—EU, NATO, or coalitions of the willing.

SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

BRANDO BENIFEI | Member of the European Parliament (S&D Group), Chair of Delegation for relations with the US



Brando Benifei is an Italian MEP serving his third term in the European parliament. During the previous mandate he was co-Rapporteur for the Artificial Intelligence Act and thanks to this work in March 2024 he won the prize for the Best MEP of the Mandate assigned by The Parliament Magazine.

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HILDE VAUTMANS | Member of the European Parliament (Renew Europe, Open Vld Belgium)



Hilde Vautmans (Renew Europe, Open Vld Belgium) is a liberal Belgian Member of the European Parliament. Hilde is the Chair of the Delegation to the Africa-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the vice-chair of the delegation to the OACPS-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. She further is a member of the Conference of Delegation Chairs, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Delegation for relations with the United States and a substitute for the Committee on Security and Defence, the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, and the Delegation for relations with the People's Republic of China. Ms Vautmans holds degrees in social science and criminology and held various positions in local and national politics before entering the European Parliament in 2015.

DAMIAN BOESELAGER | Member of the European Parliament (Volt)



Damian Boeselager is a Member of the European Parliament and co-founder of Volt Europa, the first pan-European movement fighting for a united and democratic Europe. Elected in 2019 as Volt's very first MEP and joined in 2024 by four more colleagues, he's been pushing for bold EU reforms on everything from migration to digital policy. Damian started Volt with friends after seeing Trump, Brexit, and the far right on the rise — determined to prove that young people can change politics across borders. Today, he's working to make the EU stronger, fairer, and future-ready — and he's inviting a new generation to help shape it.

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MODERATOR: JAMES DENNISON | Pierre Keller Professor, Harvard Kennedy School

James Dennison is Professor at the Migration Policy Centre of the European University Institute in Florence and the Pierre Keller Professor at Harvard Kennedy School. His research interests include social and political attitudes, behaviour, and communication, migration, and quantitative methods and his work has been published in dozens of leading scientific journals. He holds a PhD from the European University Institute, has held positions at several world leading universities, has secured numerous grants and international collaborations, and regularly advises international organisations such as the United Nations and European Commission, political parties, NGOs, and private sector organisations on how to effect change with evidence-based solutions. His work has been featured repeatedly in international media such as the Financial Times, The Economist, the Guardian, the BBC, and beyond.

Workshops and Fireside Chats

Registration Required

Workshop

Forecasting Europe's Strategic Future – Nuclear Risk, Baltic Security, and Europe's Indo-Pacific Ties

This facilitated RANGE workshop, led by geopolitical experts from the Bertelsmann Foundation, will engage participants in a forward-looking forecasting exercise on three timely and strategically significant issues: nuclear risk, security challenges in the Baltic Sea region, and Europe's ties with the Indo-Pacific. The session will demonstrate how probabilistic forecasting can enhance policy analysis, publications, and public debate, and participants will learn to analyze the aforementioned policy domains systematically. Participants will be guided through structured discussions and forecasting questions designed to test assumptions, surface new insights, identify emerging trends and communicate their findings effectively.

Moderator

MARSHALL REID | Senior Manager, US-EU-Asia Dynamics, Bertelsmann Foundation



Marshall Reid joined the Bertelsmann Foundation in 2024 as Senior Manager of US-EU-Asia Dynamics. At BFNA, Marshall works on RANGE, Bertelsmann's transatlantic forecasting platform. He also conducts research on linkages between the United States, Europe and the Indo-Pacific. Prior to joining BFNA, he worked with the Global Taiwan Institute, where he managed a variety of programs related to Taiwan and its place in the world. He has also held positions at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, and is a Pacific Forum Young Leader. Marshall received an M.A. in International Affairs from George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, where he focused on U.S. foreign policy in the Indo-Pacific. He graduated with a B.A. in International Relations and History from Rhodes College. He is proficient in Mandarin Chinese.

Workshop

A Career in the European Institutions

Join for an interactive discussion of career pathways in the EU covering policy-making, diplomacy, and external relations. The speakers will first introduce their backgrounds, interests, and current work, and offer reflections on the challenges and opportunities of their roles and advice for the new generation of global young leaders. This study group offers a valuable opportunity for individuals interested in contributing to the EU or pursuing a career in foreign affairs to engage with experienced and accomplished representatives and discuss questions about potential career paths.

PANELISTS AND MODERATORS

HELENA MALIKOVA | European Commission, DG Competition



Helena Malikova is a European Union civil servant with the European competition watchdog the Directorate General for Competition (DG COMP) at the European Commission in Brussels. Helena is attached to the directorate investigating foreign subsidies flowing into the European economy. She is currently leading the directorate's work on intelligence gathering and investigations and is researching the valuation of strategic M&A facilitated by foreign governments. Helena was previously a member of the Chief Economist Team at DG COMP advocating for greater use of financial and business data in antitrust economics. Prior to that role, Helena led the investigation under European State aid rules into the tax planning practices of multinational corporations including those of Big Tech firms. During the financial crisis, Helena was part of the European Commission's Financial Crisis Task Force where she helped assess the bailout and restructuring of numerous European banks. She subsequently worked on a number of Covid-19 related state-bailout cases including in the aviation sector and helped analyse financing needs resulting from the Covid-19 crisis. Helena practices competition policy across the broad spectrum of European antitrust enforcement. She has been called upon to lead and participate in unannounced inspections, or raids, of corporate premises in sectors from e-books to pharmaceuticals. In addition, she has published on the geopolitics of artificial intelligence and conflicts of interest among antitrust economists, academics and economic consultancies advising on regulation. Helena started her career with Société Générale and Credit Suisse as a Foreign Exchange (FX) sales trader, and she is a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA). She earned her Masters in Economics from the College of Europe in Bruges. Helena has previously been an EU Fellow at UC Berkeley, and she is a fellow at Centre for Digital Governance at the Hertie School, Berlin.

FRANCESCO MARIA GRAZIANI | Counsellor, Energy and Climate, Delegation of the European Union to the U.S.



Francesco Maria joined the EU Delegation in Washington DC in November 2023 as the Counsellor for Energy and Climate. Prior to his current posting in the U.S., he was Policy Assistant to the Director General at the European Commission's

Direktorate-General for Energy in Brussels. He also held the position of Legal Officer for Renewables and Energy System Integration Policy at the European Commission.

Francesco Maria holds an LL.M. in International Trade Law from the Georgetown University Law Center and a Master's Degree in Public Law from Luiss – Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali in Rome. He also studied in Helsinki, Finland through the ERASMUS programme. He carried out legal private practice in international law firms as a qualified attorney in New York and Italy before joining the European Commission.

AMELIE GIESEMANN | Head of the European Parliament Liaison Office, Washington, D.C.



Amelie Giesemann currently serves as the Head of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Washington, D.C. She brings over 15 years of experience within the European Parliament. Most recently, she served for three years as a Cabinet Member to the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, where she was responsible for key policy areas including economic affairs, digital policy, trade, and budgetary matters. She also headed the Parliament's Policy Department providing expertise in the area of Justice, Civil Liberties, and Institutional Affairs. Amelie has extensive experience working on international trade and EU Single Market issues and has been actively engaged in fostering the transatlantic relationship for many years.

Earlier, she worked as a trainee attorney at the German American Chamber of Commerce in New York City, where she was a member of the Legal Service team, handling collection services and legal queries, particularly in the areas of U.S. customs and tax law. She completed her legal education in Germany, qualifying her as a fully licensed lawyer. Her legal expertise encompasses German civil law, criminal law, and public law. Amelie holds a Master's degree in European and International Law, with a focus on EU Competition Law and International Public and Private Law, from the Université de Toulouse in France. She is fluent in German, English, French, and Spanish. Amelie is an alumni of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP).

NERA KULJANIC | Counselor, European Parliament Liaison Office, Washington, D.C.



Nera Kuljanic works at the European Parliament's office in Washington, D.C., where she focuses on strengthening EU and US parliamentary ties. Previously, she spent ten years at the European Parliamentary Research Service in Brussels where she contributed to better law making in the EU through impact assessment of new and emerging technologies, and scientific foresight. Her academic background is in food science, nutrition and public health, with a Master's degree from Ghent University, Belgium. She has a certificate in Public Policy Analysis from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Fireside Chat

LUC FRIEDEN | Prime Minister of Luxembourg

Ambassadors and Consuls

Jovita Neliupšienė – Ambassador of the European Union

Birgitta Tazelaar – Ambassador of the Netherlands

Anniken Huitfeldt – Ambassador of Norway

Arnaldo Minuti – Consul General of Italy in Boston

Mustafa Soykurt – Consul General of France in Boston

Nicola Moss – Deputy Consul General of the United Kingdom in Boston

Annabelle Dullin – Deputy Chief of Mission, Grand Duchy of

Luxembourg **Christian Donner** – Honorary Consul of Austria in Boston

Brice Gilson – Consul of Belgium in New York

Halime Diğdem Buner – Consul General of Turkey in Boston

Conference Logistics

The conference will take place in the **Harvard Kennedy School of Government**, located at **19 Eliot St, Cambridge, MA 02138**.

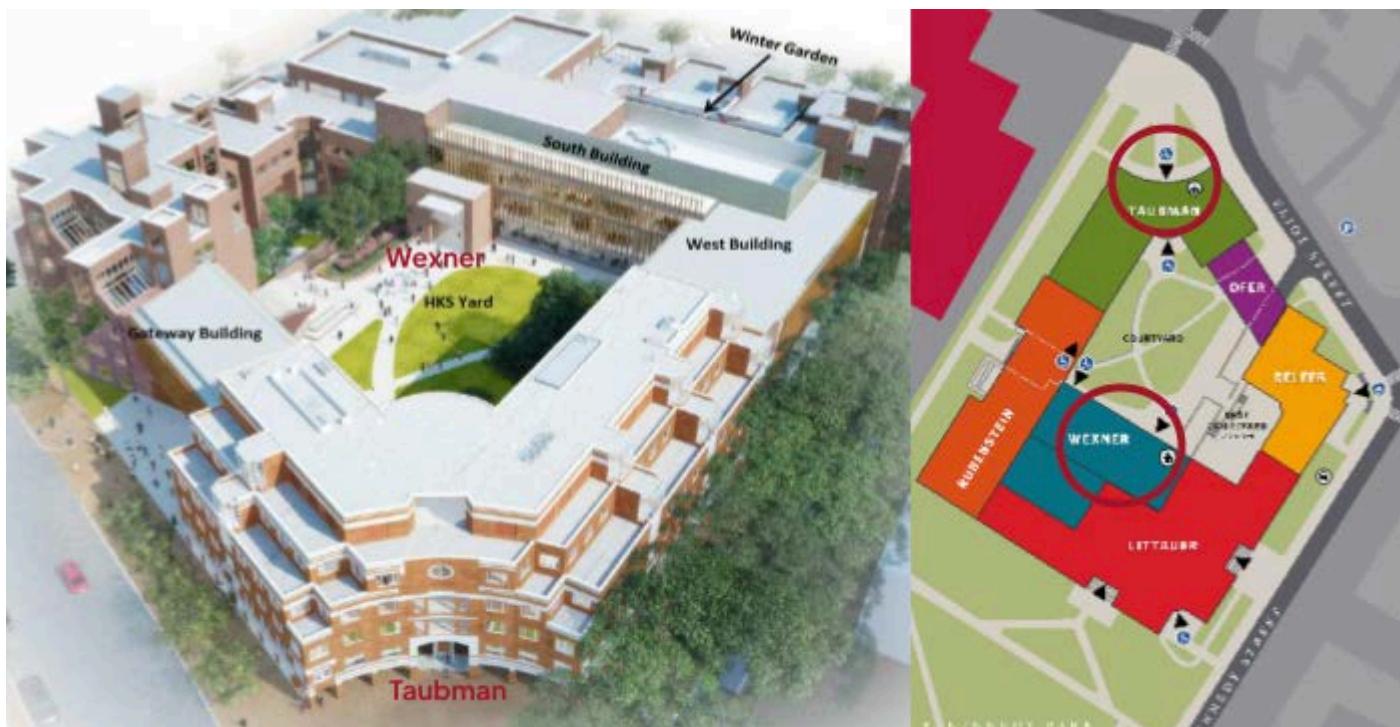
Trained volunteers will be available nearby to assist with any logistical needs or address inquiries promptly. Additionally, professional security personnel will be stationed to ensure the smooth operation of all conference activities.

Entrance for ticket purchasers:

- **Friday:** Taubman Entrance
- **Saturday:** Wexner Entrance

Entrance for speakers and distinguished guests:

- **Friday:** Wexner Entrance
- **Saturday:** Wexner Entrance



Closing Gala

Date: Saturday, February 7

Time: 8:00 PM – 11:30 PM (*galleries open only 8:00–9:00 PM*)

Location: Harvard Art Museums, 32 Quincy Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts





The Conference will culminate in an elegant Closing Gala hosted at the prestigious Harvard Art Museums. This event is open to all conference attendees, including speakers, dignitaries, and guests, offering a memorable conclusion to the weekend's discussions and connections.

The Closing Gala offers an opportunity to celebrate the success of the conference in a refined atmosphere surrounded by the timeless art and architecture of the Harvard Art Museum. Guests will enjoy an evening of exquisite hors d'oeuvres, stimulating conversation, and cultural enrichment as they reflect on the ideas shared and connections forged during the event.

Located at 32 Quincy Street in the heart of the Harvard campus, the Harvard Art Museums house one of the finest collections of art in the world, providing a perfect backdrop for this distinguished gathering. The gala promises to embody the spirit of innovation, excellence, and community that defines the conference. The galleries will be open for the first hour of the gala between 20:00–21:00, offering attendees a chance to explore masterpieces by renowned artists such as Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, or Hiroshi Yoshida.

Conference Team

Our team is made up of more than 40 Harvard, MIT, and Tufts students hailing from more than 25 countries and attending a variety of programs across policy, business, law, public health, medicine, engineering and others.

Co-Chair

SLAVINA ANCHEVA | BULGARIA

Slavina Ancheva is pursuing a master's in public policy at the Harvard Kennedy School as a Fulbright Bulgaria Scholar and Belfer Young Leader Fellow. During her time at Harvard, Slavina is focusing on Artificial Intelligence policy, emerging technologies, and geopolitics and conducting research at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Prior to this, Slavina worked at the European Parliament for four years, focusing on AI and Tech Policy, including the EU AI Act, the world's first law on AI. Slavina is a Fellow of the International Strategy Forum, an alumnus of the Atlantic Council's European Accelerator Program and of the Bertelsmann Foundation Fellowship. Her work on U.S. AI Policy has been featured in The Hill, Tech Policy Press, and Lawfare. In Bulgaria, Slavina is a co-founder of the Accessible World Foundation, an NGO focusing on disability rights and the accessibility of public spaces.

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Co-Chair

CARLO GIANNONE | ITALY

Carlo Giannone is a Master in Public Policy candidate at HKS, supported by scholarships from BCG, the Fulbright Commission, and the Zegna Foundation. At Harvard, he served as a Teaching Assistant in Political Economy for Robert Lawrence and as a Research Assistant on Geopolitics and Emerging tech for Eric Rosenbach and on Industrial policy for John Haigh and Edoardo Campanella. He is a contributor for Il Sole 24 Ore and the IAI in Italy, and to the Harvard and Yale magazines in the US. He also hosts a top-100 Italian podcast on geopolitics and economics, "Finanza, Pizza e Mandolino." Before HKS, Carlo worked for 3 years at BCG in the Middle East, focusing on geopolitics, industrial and foreign policy. He holds a Bachelor in Economics from Bocconi University and a Master in International Management from the LSE and Bocconi University, where he also served a two-year term as an elected member of the Bocconi Alumni Board.

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Content Chair

LUC HILLION | France

Luc Hillion is a second-year Master in Public Policy candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School and a Dias Fellow. He previously worked at the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, and the Samuel B. Griffith Foundation for Chinese Military Studies. At Harvard, he focuses on international security and energy policy and conducts research on European affairs for Belfer Center Senior Fellow Daniela Schwarzer. He also oversees the Harvard French Review. Luc holds a dual BA from Sciences Po and Columbia University, where he served as a research assistant to the Dean of Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, Dean Keren Yarhi-Milo.

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Content Chair

ONORINA BUNEANU | France-Moldova

Onorina Buneanu is a first-year Master in Public Administration candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School and Dias Fellow. She began her career in investment banking at Bank of America, before transitioning to development finance at the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. At Harvard, she conducts research on innovation policy at the Harvard Growth Lab. Onorina holds an MSc in Management from EM Lyon Business School.

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Content Chair

ERIK DALAKER | Norway

Erik Dalaker is a junior at Harvard College pursuing a B.A. in Economics and a concurrent M.A. in Modern Middle East Studies. He grew up on the small, remote Norwegian island of Rennesøy, but has always been drawn to global issues, particularly how to find common ground through diplomacy and international development. Previously, he worked full-time as a project coordinator for Doctors Without Borders, interned in an Amman-based think tank, and served as a trainee for DG MENA in the European Commission. At Harvard, he co-founded and co-chaired

the IOP Global Affairs Program and serves as the president of the Harvard Undergraduate Nordic Club.
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Secretary

ANNA BARTOUX | France

Anna Bartoux is a Belfer Young Leader Student Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and a Master's in Public Policy candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School. She is a former James C. Gaither Junior Fellow in the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where she worked on various nonproliferation, deterrence, and arms control issues. Anna holds a Dual Bachelor of Arts from Sciences Po Paris and Columbia University, where she studied Political Science and Government. At the Belfer center, she works on the application of history in foreign policy decision-making in association with Fredrik Logevall, Laurence D. Belfer Professor of International Affairs and Professor of History at Harvard.
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Logistics Chair

ALEX DRAGHIA | Romania

Alex Draghia is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts at Harvard College, concentrating in Social Studies, with a secondary in Ethnicity, Migration & Rights. He spent 4+ years in international relations, advocacy, event management, and humanitarian assistance. He worked for Plan International, American Councils for International Education, and was one of Romania's Youth Delegates at the United Nations in 2023. At Harvard, he co-leads the Harvard Undergraduate Romanian Association and is a Peer Advising Fellow for first-year students and the Mignone Center for Career Success.
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Logistics Chair

JEREMIAS THIEL | Germany

Jeremias Thiel is a Master in Public Policy candidate at the Harvard Kennedy School, where he focuses on economic, energy, and industrial policy. Prior to his Master's, he served as a Legislative Aide to Alexander Schweitzer, supporting his legislative work and coordinating outreach to local officials, business leaders, and civil society. He also worked as a fundraising consultant for SOS Children's Village, where he developed new fundraising measures, conducted market and demographic analyses, and co-designed a long-term strategy following a full restructuring of the division. His studies center on how structurally weak regions can transform their economic fabric and the policy instruments required to achieve this. He is also focused on how industrial policy in sectors like solar and semiconductors can strengthen Germany's

economic resilience.
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Finance Chair

MARGOT BERMAN | United States

Margot Berman is a Master in Public Administration student at Harvard Kennedy School and a recipient of the John F. Kennedy Fellowship. Prior to Harvard, she worked at the Congressional Budget Office, where she provided economic analysis to Members of Congress. During her time at CBO, she earned a Master of Science in Applied Economics through a graduate fellowship while attending night classes. Margot holds a BA in Economics and Political Science from Williams College, where she also competed on the men's varsity rowing team as a coxswain.
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Finance Chair

JEFF ZHOU | United States

Jeff Zhou is an MPP candidate at Harvard Kennedy School focusing on international and global affairs. He tackles global poverty as Regional Director at The Borgen Project, engages in social impact work as a World Economic Forum Global Shaper, and serves as the Vice President of Membership Experience and Growth for Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YPFP). Previously, Jeff spearheaded the raise of a \$22 million fund and supported 32 startups as Head of Investor Relations and Portfolio Operations at Untapped Ventures. He also co-designed Burbank's award-winning Future of Work Accelerator. Outside of work, Jeff writes on MENA affairs and climate governance and volunteers with several nonprofits, including Empower Work and American Promise.
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Communications Chair

EMIRHAN CELIK | Germany

Emirhan is a fifth-year medical student from Hannover, Germany, and a research fellow in the Lee Lab at the Harvard Stem Cell Institute. His academic interests focus on interventional pediatric cardiology, with a strong emphasis on translational and clinical research. He is a merit-based Avicenna Scholarship holder.
emirhan_celik@fas.harvard.edu

Communications Chair

COLAS RICHARD | France

Colas Richard is a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs, a joint degree at the College of Europe and The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He is specialized in EU governance, transatlantic relations,

environmental, energy and technology policies. He previously obtained a master's in European Affairs and a bachelor's in political and social sciences at Sciences Po Bordeaux, where he developed a multidisciplinary understanding of EU law, economics, and policymaking. Colas worked for a year in the cabinet of the Deputy Mayor of Paris on the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Beyond, Colas is very active in student and volunteer organizations focused on European affairs and climate action. His current research compares the formation of carbon border mechanisms in the EU and the U.S., and he has a strong interest in sports, public policy innovation, and transatlantic cooperation.

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Cocktail and Gala Chair**GAIA NEGRINI | Italy**

Gaia Alexandra Negrini is a junior at Harvard College pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Mathematics on the Government track with a double concentration in Psychology. Outside of classes, she serves as Deputy Chair of the Global Affairs Program at the Harvard Kennedy School's Institute of Politics and as Vice President of the Harvard Undergraduate European Society. This past summer, Gaia interned at Integrity Initiatives International (III), an NGO chaired by former US District Judge Mark Wolf, where she worked on advancing the establishment of an International Anti-Corruption Court to combat grand corruption worldwide. In the future, Gaia plans to attend law school and pursue a career in international human rights law.

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