

50th Anniversary events

EUIdeas: The power of knowledge

Friday 8 May 2026



Badia Fiesolana, EUI

The power of knowledge is the guiding theme of this anniversary: A coherent set of conversations that opens the Institute to the world, and that contributes to 'Reimagining Europe' by identifying how knowledge can help renew Europe's institutions, strengthen cohesion, and orient collective choices in uncertain times.

Addressing major crises and structural challenges, democracy, the rule of law, humanitarian emergencies, environmental issues, crisis of experts, academic freedom, transformations in law and governance, the 50th anniversary will be more than a celebration of our past: It will foster a festival-like atmosphere and a sense of participation of attendees, while looking ahead to the future role of universities as key institutions for research, digital transformation, academic freedom, public trust and evolving societal expectations, showing how universities, and the EUI in particular, can deploy knowledge to frame issues, inform public debate, and contribute intellectually to the future of our societies.

08:00 – 09:30	<i>Registration, walk-in and welcome coffee</i>		
09:30 – 10:30 Refectory PLENARY	<p>Academic freedom: Rights, resilience and responsibilities 50 years on</p> <p>Keynote by Siofra O'Leary, Fellow, Remarque Institute and Hauser Global Law School, NYU; former President, European Court of Human Rights, and EUI alumna</p> <p>Reflection, opening the discussion with Joseph H. H. Weiler, European Union Jean Monnet Chair, New York University School of Law; Senior Fellow, Harvard, and former President, EUI</p> <p>Moderation: Maria Tadeo, Head of EU News and Correspondent, Euronews</p>		
10:30 – 10:40	<i>Time to change room</i>		
10:40 – 11:40	<p>Refectory</p> <p>The power of embodied knowledge: Reimagining peace and justice through a reenactment Session coordinator: Sarah Nouwen</p> <p>This session revisits the idea of "no peace without justice," central to European foreign policy in the late 1990s–2010s. Participants will reenact elements of a real ICC case to experience how peace and justice interact. Reflections on Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, and Venezuela will highlight the challenges and prospects of pursuing justice in a geopolitically contested world.</p> <p>Facilitators: Barney Afako, Former member, Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, United Nations Sarah Nouwen, Professor, and Co-Director of the Academy of European Law, EUI Wouter Werner, Professor, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam</p>	<p>Theatre</p> <p>Strategic knowledge: European security in a turbulent world Session coordinators: Angela Liberatore and Trine Flockhart</p> <p>Europe faces a turbulent geopolitical landscape marked by great power tensions, weakened multilateral institutions, and global threats. As the old security order collapses and a new one struggles to be born, decisions made now will shape the future for decades. This roundtable examines power, knowledge, and security: who holds power, how knowledge and power interact, how evidence may help anticipating or de-escalating security crises, and how science diplomacy can operate amid critical technologies and contested institutions.</p> <p>Facilitator: Trine Flockhart, Professor, EUI</p> <p>Speakers: Oksana Antonenko, Professor, EUI Christian Berger, Director, Crisis Response Centre, European External Action Service Pietro Ducci, Director-General, Directorate-General for External</p>	<p>Buonsanti</p> <p>European history changes everything – A power of knowledge quiz Session coordinator: Glenda Sluga</p> <p>The panel examines the central role of history in the EUI's founding vision and in today's European debates. Historians and researchers will engage the audience in a quiz-style discussion on how narratives of WWII, the Cold War, fascism and anti-fascism, empires and revolutions shape current politics. The interactive activity explores how Europe's past is used to understand present, contest the idea of Europe itself, and influence our sense of the future.</p> <p>Facilitators: Giancarlo Casale, Head of History Department, EUI Emma Dal Mas, Researcher, EUI Nicolas Guilhot, Professor, EUI Emmanuel Mourlon-Druol, Professor, EUI Mhamed Oualdi, Professor, EUI Glenda Sluga, Professor, EUI Corinna Unger, Professor, EUI</p>

		Policies of the Union, European Parliament Angela Liberatore, Fellow, EUI Liv Nielsen, Fellow, EUI Clara Portela, Professor, University of Valencia, and EUI Alumna	
11:40 – 12:10	<i>Coffee break</i> Location: Lower loggia		
12:10 – 13:10	Refectory Who decides on our climate? The power of knowledge in environmental governance Session coordinators: Josephine Van Zeben and Joanne Scott This debate examines whether expert knowledge should guide or limit democratic decision-making in climate and energy governance. Although climate science, modelling, law, and policy expertise drive climate action, knowledge alone does not equal power and remains entangled with politics and social legitimacy. The session explores how expertise is produced, contested, and used in shaping Europe's climate transition. Speakers: Daniel Bertram, Post-doctoral researcher, University of Leiden Antara Haldar, Professor, University of Cambridge Joanna Pandera, Professor, EUI, and Founder and President, Forum Energii Glenda Sluga, Professor, EUI Frans Timmermans, Former Executive Vice-President, European Commission Josephine van Zeben, Professor, and Provost for Education and Academic Staff Development, EUI	Theatre The European social model: Knowledge for a new era Session coordinators: Anton Hemerijck and Giancarlo Corsetti President Trump's hard-right shift has exposed the deep crisis of the rules-based global order, pushing the EU to rethink sovereignty in trade, finance, technology, and especially security. This session examines Europe's longstanding effort to balance prosperity, democracy, and social cohesion amid geopolitical turmoil, ageing societies, and technological change. It explores whether Europe can forge a new compromise between economic integration and welfare legitimacy. Speakers: Giancarlo Corsetti, Professor, EUI Valentina Di Stasio, Professor, EUI Anton Hemerijck, Professor, EUI Herwig Immervoll, Senior Economist and Head of Social Benefits and Green Transition, OECD Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, Professor, LSE	Buonsanti The power of culture in reimagining Europe Session coordinator: Mafalda Dâmaso This conversation explores the role of culture in shaping Europe's future and its place in the university of tomorrow. While culture is often invoked as a unifying force, academic research shows its broader artistic, economic, sociopolitical, and geopolitical value—yet it remains marginal in long-term R&D debates. Speakers will drive a discussion on cultural policy, identity, and the EU's global role, followed by an interactive debate. Contributors: Mafalda Dâmaso, Professor, EUI Aurora Hamm, Researcher, EUI Isabelle Schwarz, Head of Public Policy, European Cultural Foundation Pawel Zerka, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council of Foreign Relations
	13:10 – 14:20	<i>Lunch</i> Location: Library garden	

<p>14:20 – 15:20 Refectory</p> <p>PLENARY</p>	<p>Future of universities in the making Within the intellectual framework of EUIdeas – The power of knowledge, this plenary session focuses on the university as a fundamental institution within Europe's knowledge ecosystem. It showcases the various ways in which the EUI and its partners are exploring and building the university of the future in Europe. The plenary showcases academic contributions, and positions European officials' interventions as a strategic European response and ensuring continuity between institutional reflection and European policy orientation. Together, the components juxtapose empirical social sciences, macroeconomic modelling, multidisciplinary institutional imagination and historical perspective to demonstrate that the future of universities cannot be captured through a single epistemic lens.</p> <p>Introduction: Laurène Le Cozanet, Research Fellow, EUI</p> <p>Discussants: Benjamin Carver, Teacher in English for Academic Purposes, EUI Chiara Lacroix, Researcher, EUI Alexander Ludwig, Professor, EUI Frederico Menino, International Higher Education Scholar Milan Thies, Postdoctoral researcher, University of Lausanne Ewa Zakrzewska, Researcher, EUI</p> <p>Senior comment by: Katarina Bjelke, Director General, Swedish Research Council</p>		
<p>15:20 – 15:30</p>	<p><i>Time to change room</i></p>		
<p>15:30 – 16:30</p>	<p>Refectory</p> <p>The power of evidence for policy Session coordinator: Gaby Umbach</p> <p>In a conversational format, the session examines how knowledge is translated, what evidence literacy is required, and how academic perspectives align with EU institutional practice, with input from an EU official. Examples span institutional science-for-policy work, academic policy advice, co-creation of data-driven tools.</p> <p>Speakers: Etienne Bassot, Director, Directorate for Transformation, Innovation and Health (ITRE – ENVI – SANT), Directorate-General for Economy, Transformation and Industry, European Parliament Godelieve Laureys, Chair, Science-Policy Standing Committee, ALLEA David Mair, Head of unit, Joint Research Centre, European Commission Laura Rahm, Policy Leader Fellow, EUI Gaby Umbach, Professor, EUI</p>	<p>Theatre</p> <p>Knowledge at the border: Rethinking migration governance in a changing Europe Session coordinator: Andrew Geddes</p> <p>This session presents three research contributions on borders and security, access to rights, and refuge and protection. Speakers will offer interactive reflections suited to a non-specialist audience.</p> <p>Facilitator: Andrew Geddes, Professor, and Director, Migration Policy Centre, EUI</p> <p>Speakers: Laurence Hart, Director, International Organisation for Migration Josiah Kaplan, PhD Child Protection Specialist Gender, Child Rights and Protection Section UNICEF Office of Strategy and Evidence - Innocenti Ashley Mantha-Hollands, Research Fellow, EUI Martin Ruhs, Professor, EUI Zuzanna Samson, Researcher, EUI</p>	<p>Buonsanti</p> <p>Citizen power Europe Session coordinators: Kalypso Nicolaïdis and Elias Dinas</p> <p>A roundtable and world café around the question: How has EUI action-research contributed to 'citizen power Europe' and the democratic renewal agenda?</p> <p>This session will address the 'power of knowledge' by asking how the work on democracy conducted in the last few years at EUI - inter alia through the Transnational Democracy Programme (TDP) and the EUI cluster on Transnational Democracy in the 21st Century - has contributed to our collective capacity to reimagine Europe as 'citizen power Europe.' We ask: What are the pathways from action-research to democratic renewal and societal resilience? What limits and blindspots? And what obstacles to be overcome?</p> <p>Moderators: Elias Dinas, Professor, EUI Kalypso Nicolaidis, Professor, EUI</p> <p>Speakers: Vladimir Bartovic, Policy Leader Fellow, EUI Inna Bondarenko, Master student, EUI Karolina Boronska-Hryniewiecka, Fellow, EUI Poly Cintra, Policy Leader Fellow, EUI Andrea Gaiba, Programme manager, Transnational Democracy Programme, EUI</p>

			Ulrike Liebert, Professor, EUI Vanja Mladineo, Policy Leader Fellow, EUI Silvia Pellegrini, Master student, EUI Shalini Randeria, Senior Fellow, EUI, and Rector Emerita, CEU
16:30 – 17:00	<i>Coffee break</i> Location: Lower loggia		
17:00 - 18:00	Refectory Empowering diplomats: The power of ideas in negotiations Session coordinator: Alain Lempereur This session explores how diplomats generate and use actionable ideas even without hard power, drawing on practices within the UN, EU, and Red Cross systems. How diplomatic knowledge grows through education and field experience? How academic concepts can empower diplomats? How field-driven insights reshape research? The session highlights how transformative ideas can meaningfully support vulnerable populations in crises. Opening: Johanna Mair, Director, Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI Facilitator: Olivier Roy, Professor, EUI Speakers: Bintou Keita, Former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations Peter Maurer, Former ICRC President Alain Lempereur, Professor, EUI Benedicte Meille, Researcher, EUI Marvi Qazi, Researcher, EUI Emilio Rodriguez, Research Fellow, EUI Olena Snigyr, Jean Monnet Fellow, EUI Alison Weston, Head of Division, Security and Defence Policy, European External Action	Theatre Why Europe should (not) be strategically autonomous Session coordinators: Stephanie Hofmann and Monika Sus An unpredictable United States administration, wars at the borders of the European Union, and the increasing instrumentalisation of defence for domestic political purposes have pushed questions of transatlantic and European security back to the top of the political agenda. Yet policymakers, experts, and citizens draw very different lessons from these developments. This session brings together American and European students to share short perspectives on the opportunities, risks, and trade-offs associated with Europe's pursuit of greater strategic autonomy. Their statements are intended as conversation starters for an open exchange with the audience on the future of European and transatlantic security. Speakers: Elena Casali, Master student, EUI Jack Connor, Researcher, James Madison University Silvia D'Amato, Professor, James Madison University Andrea Garbo, Researcher, EUI Thomas Pontius, Researcher, James Madison University Angela Sajewicz, Researcher, James Madison University Ediz Topcuoglu, Researcher, EUI	Buonsanti AI and the future of knowledge Session coordinators: Thomas Streinz and Francisco De Abreu Duarte AI and the future of knowledge is an interactive debate on the future of academic knowledge in the context of the 50th anniversary of the EUI. Building on an innovative approach, it will tackle specific claims (propositions) which are always approached from two conflicting perspectives. The audience then continuously votes on which proposition they think is right. Moderator: Barbara Moens, EU correspondent, Financial Times Facilitators: Francisco De Abreu Duarte, Assistant Professor, EUI Thomas Streinz, Professor, EUI Marlies Hofman, Researcher, EUI Cosimo Pacciani, Group Head of Research, Poste Italiane
	18:00 – 18:10	<i>Time to change room</i>	

18:10 – 19:00 Refectory PLENARY	<p>Time travelling to 2076: Co-imagining the power of knowledge</p> <p>How will the EUI look like in 50 years? What will its role be within Europe and the world of 2076? Through a creative and interactive format, we will 'travel' to the future to explore what it would take for the EUI to continue shaping Europe and the world in the decades to come. Designed and led by researchers, the session seeks to capture a diversity of perspectives – opening up space for hopes, concerns, and critical reflections from within and beyond the EUI community. Rather than closing the conversation, the plenary aims to extend it forward: Inviting participants to envision not just what the EUI has been, and is, but what it could become.</p> <p>Moderator: Aurora Hamm, Researcher, EUI</p> <p>Speakers: Leopoldo Pérez Obregón, Research Associate, EUI Khushi Singh Rathore, Fellow, EUI Hillena Thoms, Researcher, EUI</p> <p>Audience interaction: Pierre-Alexis Du Bus, Researcher, EUI Marie Palmers, Researcher, EUI Martyna Zurowska, Master Student, EUI</p> <p>Note-taker: Anna Pelizzari, Researcher, EUI</p> <p>Closing remarks by Patrizia Nanz, President, EUI</p>
19:00 – 22:00	<i>Tasting of local products</i> Location: Library garden
19:30 – 20:00	<i>Performance by EUI choir: Opera-ballet 'L'Europe galante'</i> Location: Church
Parallel side activities	
All day <i>Location:</i> Canteen	50th Anniversary photo exhibition The photo exhibition will present a selection of images from the EUI photographic collections preserved at the Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU). The photographs span from the 1970s to the early 2000s and document different aspects of life at the Institute. This is a reduced physical version of a larger online exhibition that will be published on the HAEU multimedia platform .
All day <i>Location:</i> Cloister	EUI exhibition The EUI Exhibition showcases the Institute's journey through five thematic areas: its 50-year legacy in Florence, the state-of-the-art Tuscan campus, the vibrant international academic community, its impactful research for Europe and beyond, and its vision for shaping the future. Murales bozzetti display To mark the EUI's 50th Anniversary, students from the Liceo Artistico di Firenze created four mural proposals celebrating European values. One of these designs has been selected for realisation and will be unveiled at a venue in Florence in 2026. The display will present the four bozzetti (sketches), complemented by photographs and explanatory materials outlining the concepts and creative processes behind each artwork.
All day <i>Location:</i> Presidency corridor	Max Weber Fellows poster competition This initiative, jointly organised by the Max Weber Programme and the Office of the Provost, aims to encourage fellows to present their research in a clear, engaging, and accessible way.
All day <i>Location:</i> Cloister	Radio Cavolo livestreaming: The "uncut" EUIdeas – Live from the sidelines The Radio Cavolo Corner will offer a space where speakers, alumni, and researchers can "decompress" and discuss the day's themes in an unscripted, conversational format. Full programme at Radiocavolo.org . Follow the live streaming on the @RadioCavolo Youtube channel.

<p>09:00 – 17:00</p> <p><i>Location: Lower loggia</i></p>	<p>Genealogy project stand The genealogy project reflects how knowledge has developed and evolved within the Institute over time.</p> <p>EUI Alumni and HAEU stand Stand addressed to EUI alumni and former staff with the aim to raise awareness about the importance of private photographic collections related to the Institute. While we preserve many institutional photos, we still have relatively few images documenting everyday life on campus. The stand will also function as a small interactive activity: visitors will be able to browse the full online exhibition on a computer, and we will display some printed photographs on the table to encourage conversation and help identify people, places, and events depicted in the images.</p> <p>EMU LAB report The “Florence report”, the flagship, bi-annual report project of the EMU Lab (Economic and Monetary Union Laboratory). Its purpose is to dissect and rethink Europe’s Economic and Monetary Union architecture and to produce policy-relevant conclusions and recommendations grounded in interdisciplinary work.</p>
<p>10:40 – 13:10</p> <p>15:30 – 18:00</p> <p><i>Location: Emeroteca</i></p>	<p>#EUIResearch stories A special EUIdeas viewing Presented at EUIdeas: The Power of Knowledge, this special viewing showcases the breadth and impact of research at the European University Institute. Featuring three complementary series, it highlights ideas, people, and personal research journeys, bringing the EUI’s academic excellence to life.</p>
<p>11:00 – 13:00</p> <p>15:45 – 17:45</p> <p><i>Location: Seminar Room 2</i></p>	<p>Documentary area</p> <p>11:00 – 13:00 The truth effect The truth effect: How does a society function when the boundary between truth and lies begins to blur, even at the highest levels of power? The truth effect delves into that very question. Followed by a Q&A session with Andrew Dudfield, Head of AI, Full Fact.</p> <p>15:45 – 17:45 Jean Monnet, l’aventurier de l’Europe / Jean Monnet, the adventurer of Europe Building on unpublished archives, the film recounts, through the voice of Jean Monnet, the genesis of the European idea and the first 25 years of European integration. Presented by Jean-Marc Lieberherr Monnet, Founding President, Jean Monnet Institute, grandson of Jean Monnet and co-scenarist of the movie. Followed by a debate chaired by Marco Buti, Professor, EUI.</p>
<p>11:00 – 13:00</p> <p>15:45 – 17:45</p> <p><i>Meeting point: Piazzale della Chiesa</i></p>	<p>Guided tours Guided tours will be starting from the church at the Badia church and will reach Villa Salviati. The guided tours will end with yoga session and visit to the EUI beehive. All participants are encouraged to bring a water bottle and wear comfortable clothes.</p>

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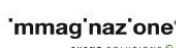
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