

50 years shaping Europe

Final Report - EUI 50th Anniversary



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Overview

In 1976, the European University Institute (EUI) welcomed its first cohort of 67 researchers, has evolved over the past five decades into a vibrant academic community. Through bold, interdisciplinary research and teaching, and public engagement, the EUI has become a cornerstone of European scholarship and dialogue.

The official EUI's 50th anniversary celebrations began with the **opening ceremony** at the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino on Thursday, 7 May. This ceremony served as an opportunity to celebrate the people and ideas that have shaped the EUI's legacy while reflecting on its history and achievements. It also provided an occasion to lay foundations for the future of the social sciences and humanities and their capacity to create public value in the presence of Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, Antonio Costa, President of the European Council, António José Martins Seguro President of the Portuguese Republic and other authorities. The celebrations continued with the **ministerial summit** 'Universities for the future. Higher education and research in re-imagining Europe'.



Ministers and representatives from all EUI member states, together with European institutional and academic leaders gathered at the Badia Fiesolana to discuss the role of universities in securing Europe's future amidst a multitude of pressing issues. Summit participants approved the '[Florence Declaration on Universities and Europe's Future](#)', which reaffirmed the EUI's role as a bridge between academia, Member States, and EU institutions and set the stage for its contribution to the 2027 Ministerial Conference of the European Higher Education Area (Bologna Process), to be held in Iași and Chișinău in May 2027, co-hosted by the Republic of Moldova and Romania. The summit continued with the spring session of the EUI's **High Council Meeting**.

On Friday, 8 May, the Badia Fiesolana hosted **EUIdeas**, the EUI's new research festival, titled 'The power of knowledge'. The research festival aims to create a space for academics, policymakers, and civil society to meet, exchange ideas, and explore research-based pathways for Europe, celebrating shared values such as diversity, democracy, and equality. The festival contributed to identifying how knowledge can renew Europe's institutions, strengthen cohesion, and guide collective choices in uncertain times. EUIdeas fostered a festival-like atmosphere, encouraging active participation while looking ahead to the future role of universities as key institutions for research, digital transformation, and academic freedom, and showing how universities can deploy knowledge to inform public debate, and contribute intellectually to the future of our societies.



Final report





A variety of **parallel side activities** enriched the EUIdeas programme. A [50th anniversary photo exhibition](#) showcased images from the EUI's archives spanning the 1970s to the early 2000s, and highlighting the Institute's 50-year legacy. Additionally, mural sketches created by students from the Liceo Artistico di Firenze celebrated European values, with one design selected for realisation in a public space in the city of Florence. The Max Weber Fellows poster competition encouraged fellows to present their research accessibly, while the researcher-led radio station [Radio Cavolo](#) provided a space for unscripted discussions.

The programme included parallel activities such as a genealogy project stand, an EUI Alumni and Historical Archive of the European Union (HAEU) stand with interactive elements, the Economic and Monetary Union Laboratory (EMU Lab) report stand on [Europe's Economic and Monetary Union](#), and [#EUIResearch stories](#) showcasing the Institute's academic excellence. A documentary area featured screenings like *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?* and *Jean Monnet, the Adventurer of Europe*. Finally, guided tours from Badia to Villa Salviati included a yoga session and a visit to the EUI beehive.



The event, *'Beyond the EUI: 50 Years of Alumni Engagement'*, brought together both the EUI community and more than 300 alumni at Palazzo Buontalenti, including members of the very first EUI cohorts. The afternoon was structured around three complementary events, including the EUI Alumni Association Annual Conference, *'Geopolitics of Knowledge in an Increasingly Polarised World'*, and guided visit of the exhibition OPEN. The event concluded with the inaugural *EUI Alumni Podium*, where five distinguished alumni from the fields of law, politics, entrepreneurship, and diplomacy reflected on how the EUI shaped their personal and professional trajectories, while sharing their perspectives on the future of the alumni community.



The day concluded with a **tasting of local products**, made possible through the collaboration of 35 supporting partners. This networking and social event provided speakers and participants with the opportunity to reflect on the day's discussions at EUIdeas while connecting with the Tuscan region through its local offerings.

On 7 May, the newly renovated wing of Palazzo Buontalenti welcomed over 1,500 guests from the EUI community, partner organisations and the Florentine community for a special evening preview of the **OPEN exhibition**, transforming the historic building into a space where contemporary art meets academic research. The doors then opened to the wider city of Florence during the Grand Opening on 8 and 9 May. Visitors explored an evocative atmosphere, starting in the courtyard, reinvented through immersive multimedia projections and an unprecedented sound garden. Curated by Sergio Risaliti and Stefania Rispoli in dialogue with EUI alumna Johanna Gautier-Morin, the exhibition features artists including Agnieszka Polska, Berlinde De Bruyckere, Eglè Budvytytė, Elena Mazzi, Leone Contini, Riccardo Previdi, and Pierre Chastel. [OPEN welcomes the public every Monday and Saturday until 12 October 2026](#). More about OPEN in Annex II.



The Department of Political and Social Sciences (SPS) organised the **SPS Community Hike** at the Parco Mediceo di Pratolino - Villa Demidoff. The initiative brought together faculty, researchers, staff, alumni, former members and families, creating an informal moment of connection and exchange beyond the usual academic spaces. Walking together across generations offered a meaningful way to reflect on the transnational network of scholars that SPS has built over the past fifty years, a community that continues well beyond Florence.

Additional sessions were coordinated by EUI Departments. The Department of Economics and the Department of History organised 'Circolazione dei saperi. Tra storia, scienza ed economia', an interdisciplinary event in collaboration with Museo Galileo. The event explored the evolution and circulation of knowledge across history, science, and economics, featuring contributions from EUI faculty members, as well as researchers from Museo Galileo.

On Saturday 9 May, the celebrations concluded with the **Open Day at Villa Salviati**, an event co-hosted by the Historical Archives of the European Union and Fondo Ambiente Italiano (FAI). Building on the success of previous editions, the day featured a rich programme, including guided tours of the grounds and vaults, arts and performances, and historical exhibitions. The event celebrated Europe Day, inviting the public to visit the Historical Archives. More than 2,500 people visitors joined the activities. Additional sessions were coordinated by EUI Departments. The Department of Economics and the Department of History organised '**Circolazione dei saperi. Tra storia, scienza ed economia**', an interdisciplinary event in collaboration with Museo Galileo. The event explored the evolution and circulation of knowledge across history, science, and economics, featuring contributions from EUI faculty members, as well as researchers from Museo Galileo.



Stories

The anniversary programme combined moments of recognition with moments of reflection and action. From honours celebrating the Institute's contribution to European scholarship to discussions on the future of higher education, from artistic collaborations with local communities to collective reflections on the world of 2076, the celebrations looked beyond commemoration alone. Together, these moments reflected the EUI's mission to connect research, education, and public engagement in a European context that is constantly evolving.



EUI President Patrizia Nanz calls for Europe to reimagine its future

"Is this the world my younger self had imagined? No."

In her opening address, EUI President Patrizia Nanz reflected on fifty years of European integration and the tensions that shape it today. She spoke about the gap between earlier expectations of unity and the current context of fragmentation and uncertainty. She stressed that universities have a particular responsibility in this setting: they are places where difficult questions can be asked and debated, and where different perspectives can meet without easy answers. "Let's ensure that the EUI remains what it was meant to be," she concluded, "a place where Europe reflects upon itself in its full depth: as an excellent research university, as a social space of possibility, as a diplomatic force grounded in principle, and as a shared act of imagination."

[Read the full speech.](#)



Italian President Sergio Mattarella visits Palazzo Buontalenti and OPEN exhibition

During his visit to the EUI on 8 May, Italian President Sergio Mattarella toured Palazzo Buontalenti, a historic state-owned property entrusted to the Institute by the Italian State Property Agency Demanio. Palazzo Buontalenti hosts the Florence School of Transnational Governance where the EUI trains future leaders. The restoration and continued redevelopment of the Palazzo reaffirm its role as a place dedicated to knowledge, education, and student life, while strengthening the EUI's connection with the city of Florence and the wider local community. The Institute's engagement with schools and citizens has also been further supported through the contribution of Fondazione CR Firenze. President Mattarella's visit also coincided with the opening of the new exhibition [OPEN](#) (see Annex II), hosted in a newly accessible wing of the former Medici Casino, which brings together works by six contemporary artists exploring the relationship between art and science.

[Read more on 'President Sergio Mattarella visits the EUI for its 50th anniversary celebrations'.](#)



Romania honours the EUI with the Order of Cultural Merit

In a message read during the Opening Ceremony, Romanian President Nicusor Dan said: "As a sign of our deep appreciation for its contribution to European research and for the role it has played in shaping generations of scholars and leaders, I have the honour, as President of Romania, to award the European University Institute the Order of Merit for Research and Science, one of the Republic of Romania's highest honours." The opening ceremony at Teatro del Maggio combined celebration with recognition. The distinction underlined the Institute's contribution over the past fifty years, as well as its role in shaping and connecting a wider European academic community.



The Reimagining Europe Award celebrates a lifetime of intellectual leadership

The conversation about Europe's future continued through the recognition of those who have shaped its intellectual foundations. The inaugural EUI Reimagining Europe Award was presented to Professor Sabino Cassese, whose work has influenced generations of scholars in public law and governance. Cassese has close ties to the Institute: as a professor and long-standing member of the Governing Board, he has been committed to its academic and institutional development for many years and has helped to guide it through times of change without losing sight of its founding principles.

[Read Professor Cassese's acceptance address](#) for the EUI's 'Reimagining Europe' Award.



Ministerial Summit launches debate on universities' future role

A summit of European ministers, institutional and academic leaders launched the Florence Declaration and a Europe-wide debate on the role of universities in shaping Europe's future. Summit participants approved the ['Florence Declaration on Universities and Europe's Future'](#):

- renewing support to the EUI, commending the Institute for five decades of excellence, and recognising its success in fulfilling its mission to contribute to the development of Europe's cultural and scientific heritage;
- reaffirming the bond between Europe's universities and the societies they serve;
- launching a European debate on the role of universities for Europe's future, inviting governments, European institutions, academia, the private sector, and society at large to engage in this reflection.



Travelling to 2076

As part of the EUIdeas research festival, the EUI community turned its attention from the past fifty years to the next fifty. Researchers, students, speakers and guests were invited to imagine the Institute in 2076. The final plenary transformed this reflection into a collective exercise, creating space for diverse perspectives, uncertainties, and aspirations about the EUI's future. The session culminated in the creation of a time capsule containing contributions from across the community. "I hope that the researchers standing beside me today are among those who will have the courage to imagine and the power to shape the world for the better," said EUI President Patrizia Nanz. The capsule is now held at the Historical Archives of the European Union.

[Hear the EUI's researchers on the future of the EUI.](#)



Florentine students create a mural for Europe's future

The anniversary celebrations also reached beyond the Institute through a collaboration with students from Liceo Artistico di Porta Romana in Florence.

The students developed four mural proposals inspired by European values, focusing on themes such as solidarity, democracy, inclusion, and shared identity. One design was selected and unveiled during the celebrations at Palazzo Buontalenti. The mural reflects both the creative process behind it and the perspectives of the students involved. It will later be moved to a permanent public space in Florence, becoming part of the city beyond the anniversary events.

[Watch the video showing how the mural came into being.](#)



Infographics & statistics

Opening Ceremony

1208 participants

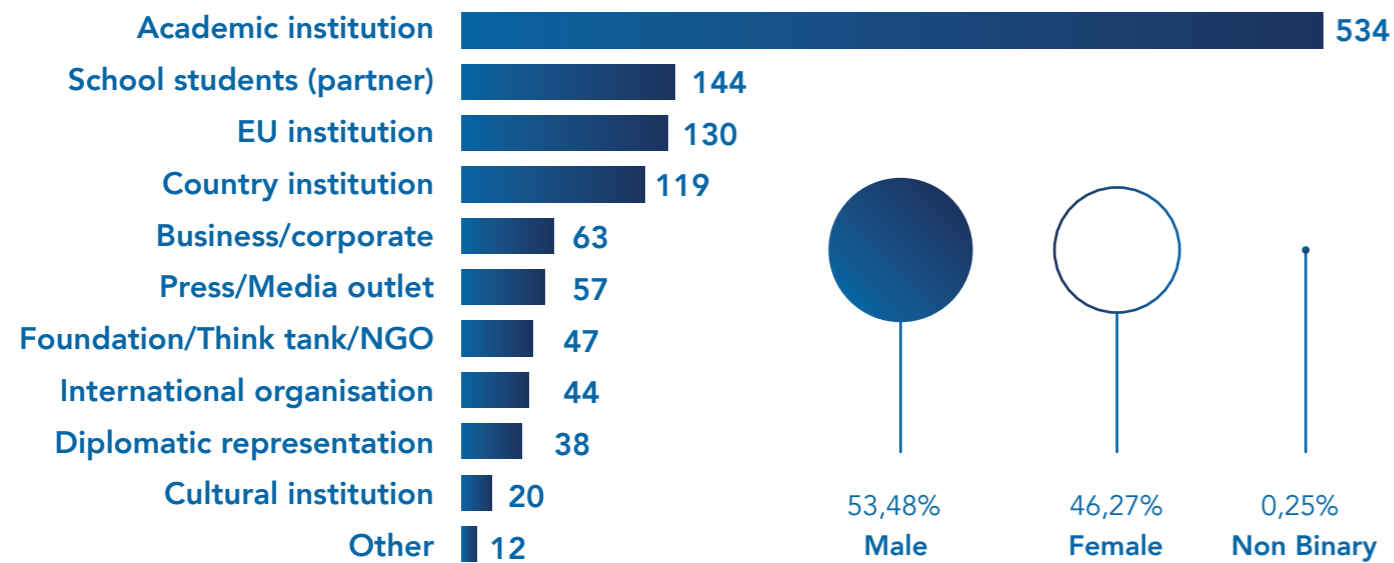


Fig.1 Type of affiliation | Opening Ceremony participants

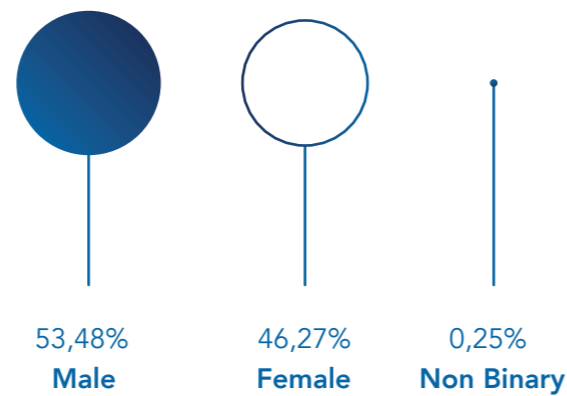


Fig.2 Gender diversity | Opening Ceremony participants

Seventy-three nationalities created a global conference in which people from different cultures could meet and engage.

Below are the top 20 nationalities represented:

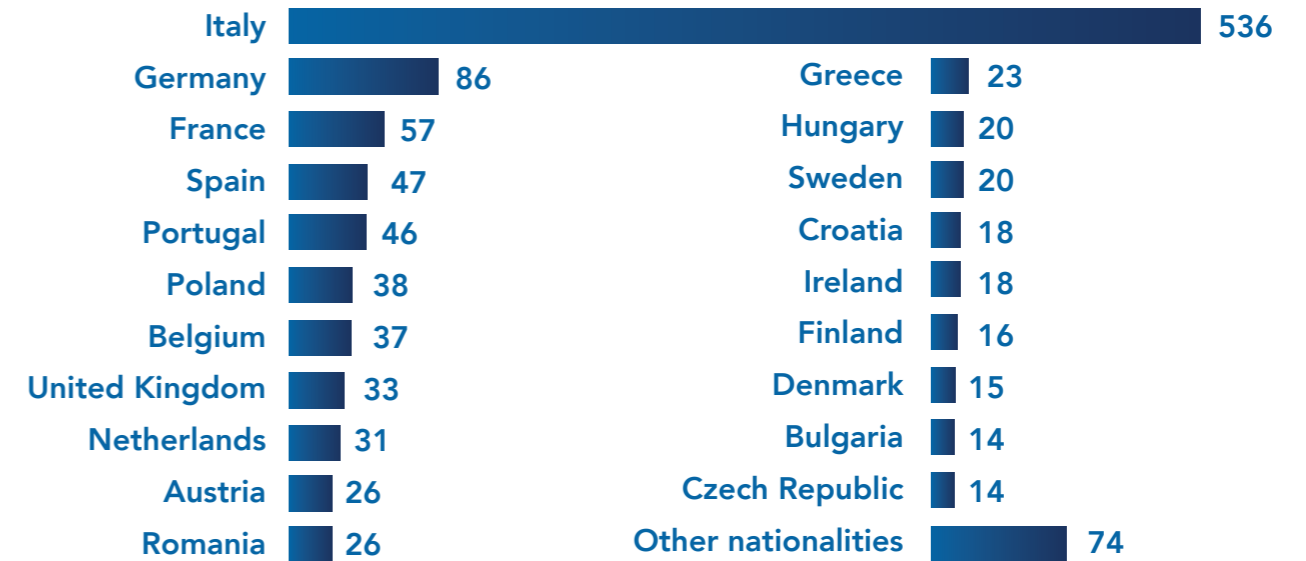


Fig.3 Nationalities | Opening Ceremony participants

EU Ideas

817 participants

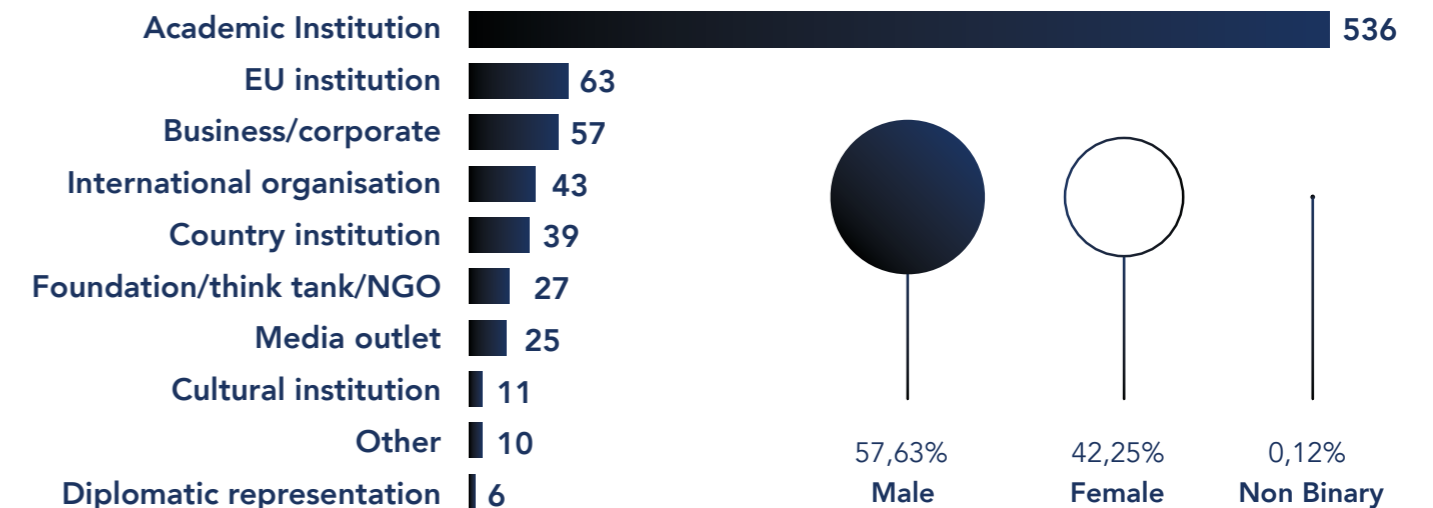


Fig.4 Type of affiliation | EU Ideas participants

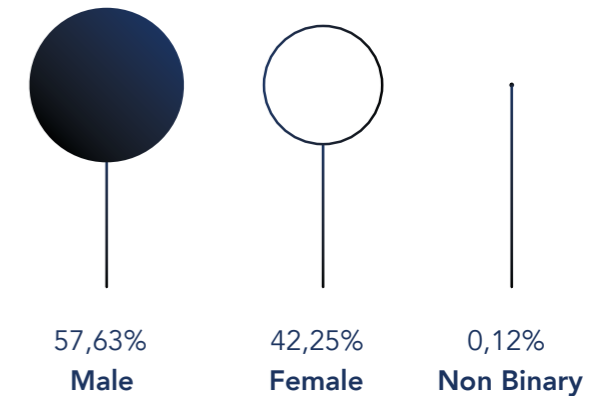


Fig.5 Gender diversity | EU Ideas participants



197 EUI Alumni

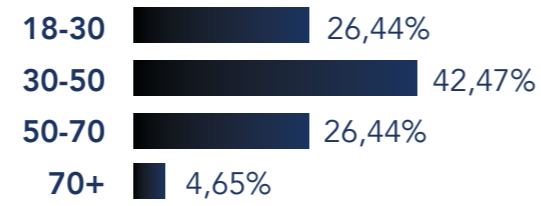


Fig.6 Age range | EUIdeas participants



EUIdeas: Speakers

97 speakers

15 sessions

Plenaries 3
Parallel sessions 12



Fig.7 Type of affiliation | EUIdeas speakers

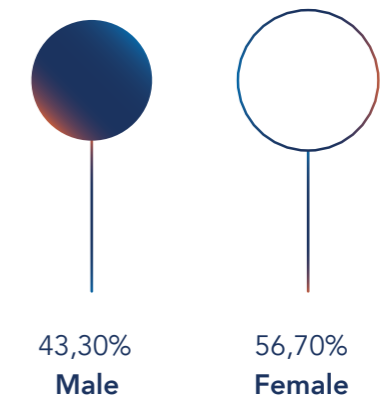


Fig.8 Gender diversity | EUIdeas speakers

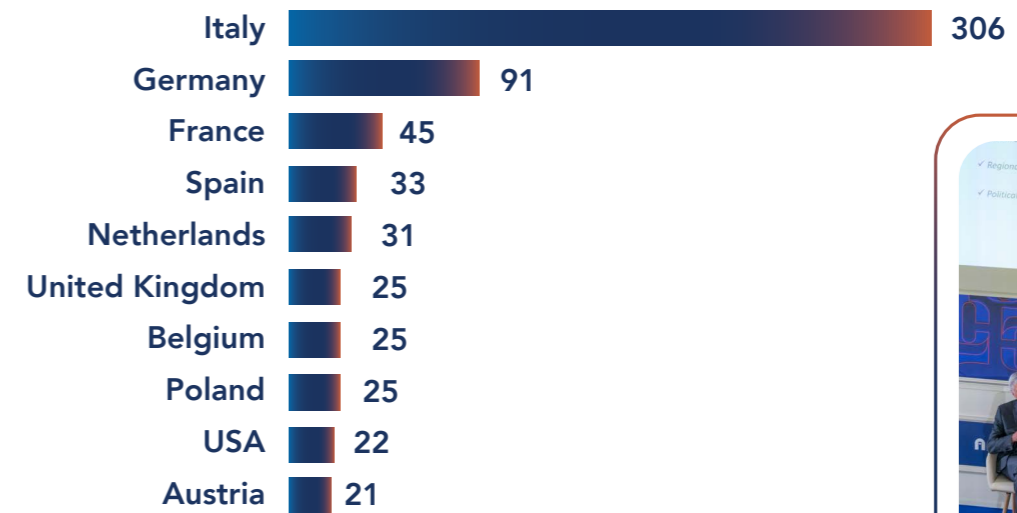


Fig.9 Nationalities | EUIdeas speakers



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Sotto l'Alto Patronato del Presidente della Repubblica

*Sotto l'Alto Patronato del
Presidente della Repubblica*

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With the support of:

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Media Partners



Cultural Partners



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6

SAVE THE DATE

6-8 May 2027

7

14

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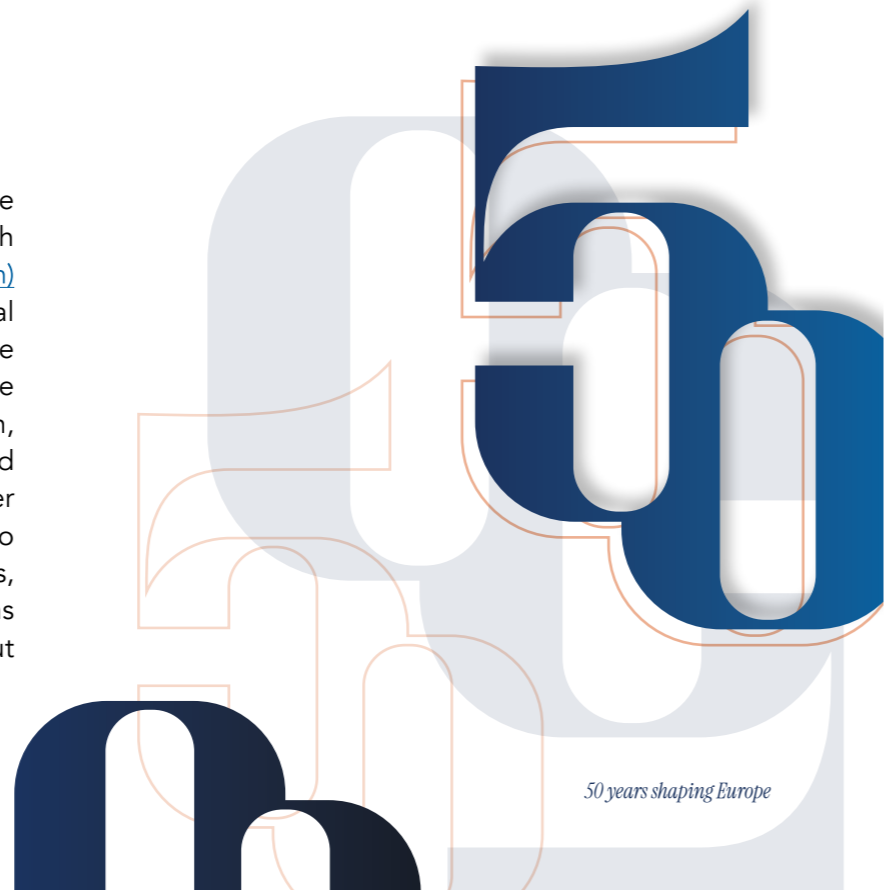


Annex I Communications and visibility

The communications strategy for the EUI’s 50th anniversary was designed to build momentum over several months, maximise institutional visibility, and extend engagement beyond the events themselves. Activities combined digital communications, media and press relations, academic storytelling, multimedia production, visual identity development, and on-site audience engagement to ensure a coherent and high-impact presence across channels and audiences.

Strategic communications and campaign development

Communications activities began well in advance of the anniversary celebrations, with the launch of a [dedicated anniversary website \(eui.eu/50th\)](http://eui.eu/50th) in mid-October 2025, which served as the central information hub throughout the campaign. The website evolved continuously as the programme developed, incorporating speaker information, session updates, practical information, and dedicated anniversary content. From October 2025, a 50th anniversary visual marker was also introduced across selected institutional events, extending the visibility of the celebrations beyond the flagship programme and throughout the anniversary year.



Social media promotion ran from February until the final day of the celebrations, with around **40 dedicated anniversary posts** published across institutional channels. Activities were delivered through LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and Bluesky, with LinkedIn and Instagram being the strongest-performing channels.

During the campaign period, the posts reached approximately:



The content strategy focused on programme developments, speaker announcements, anniversary storytelling, and community engagement. One particularly successful ‘birthday wishes’ post featured former [Italian Prime Minister Giuliano D’Amato](#), which significant engagement, with many reactions from his former students, helping to create a more personal and community-driven narrative around the anniversary celebrations.

Several editorial initiatives further strengthened the intellectual and institutional narrative surrounding the celebrations. The [EUIdeas essay series, ‘The Power of Knowledge’](#), connected the new flagship event with the Institute’s broader thought leadership agenda through six first-person essays written by members of the academic community. The series achieved an engagement rate of 34%, significantly outperforming standard content benchmarks and leading to its continuation beyond the anniversary year.

Additional storytelling initiatives included the [#UniquelyEUI video series](#), showcasing the identity and evolution of academic units, as well as the Research Storytelling flagship collection, which was also presented through a dedicated public display during the celebrations.

About [15 news items](#) were published around the EUI 50th anniversary, including speeches, press releases and research stories. News production ended with a closing piece, highlighting the key takeaways: [EUI at 50: putting knowledge at the centre of Europe’s future](#).

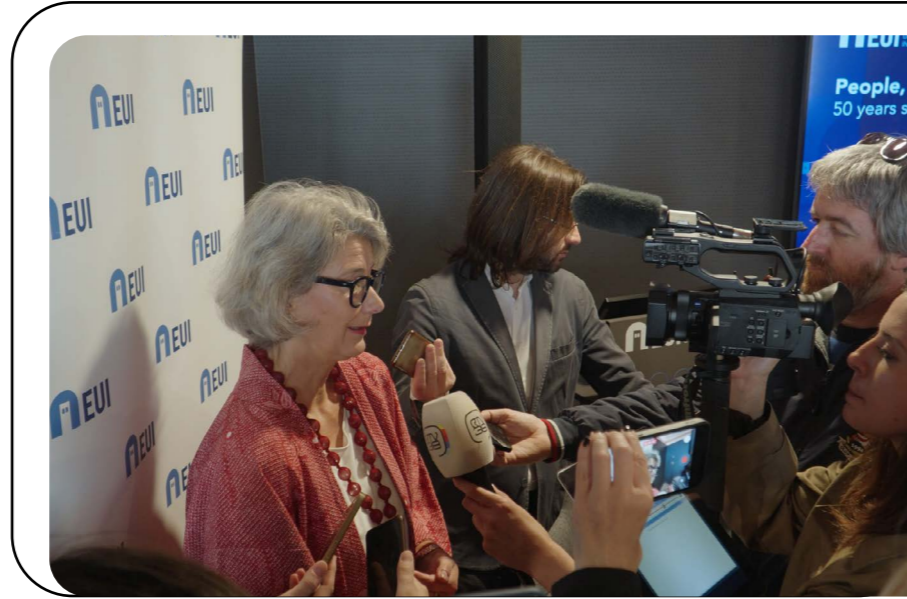
Media coverage and outreach

The press strategy for the EUI 50th anniversary was designed to position the Institute as a major academic and institutional hub of knowledge and expertise on European and global matters. The strategy combined media partnerships, press liaison and press pitching to a consolidated media network, gradually building attention up to the central celebration on 7-9 May 2026.

The first phase focused on positioning and awareness through strategic media partnerships with *The Financial Times*, *Rai News24*, *Euronews*, *Agenda Pública*, and *The Conversation*, complemented by targeted editorial engagement with journalists. These partnerships provided broadcast reach, enhanced credibility, and amplified key messages. High-profile journalists were also engaged as moderators and editorial anchors: Henry Foy, Brussels Bureau Chief of the *Financial Times* held a conversation with the President of the European Council António Costa, during the Opening ceremony, and so did Maria Tadeo, Head of EU News and Correspondent, in a conversation with the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola.



This media outreach culminated in a press conference held on 30 April at Palazzo Buontalenti in Florence, officially launching the celebrations. The event brought together local authorities and EUI senior leadership, highlighting the Institute's commitment to engaging with the local community and positioning OPEN as a flagship initiative for Florence. The press conference attracted strong media interest, with 15 journalists in attendance, including representatives from ANSA, La Repubblica, La Nazione, and several other local and regional outlets. A [press release](#) was circulated immediately after the press conference, with quotes and photos, to almost 700 press contacts.



During the celebration, the EUI press office circulated two press releases during Day 1 ([one on the Opening](#) and [one on the Florence Declaration](#)) and one on Day 2 covering the EUIdeas Festival, with key outcomes, highlights and photos. On 7 and 8 May the team could monitor press participation via a structured accreditation system, while an online press kit facilitated journalists' work. The coverage of the celebrations resulted in **135 articles and broadcast segments** including coverage in leading publications such as Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, NRC, La Repubblica, RAI News, and ANSA. [A selection of these pieces is available online.](#)

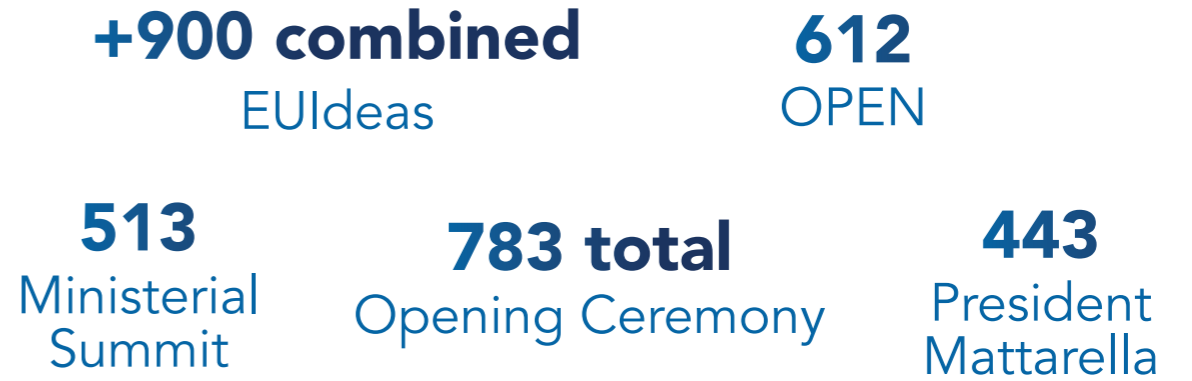
Event-day communications performance

Communications activity intensified during the anniversary celebrations, with extensive coverage throughout both event days. Three institutional posts were published each day alongside complementary content from affiliated EUI units, and the EUI alumni LinkedIn page.

Across LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook, event-related content generated:

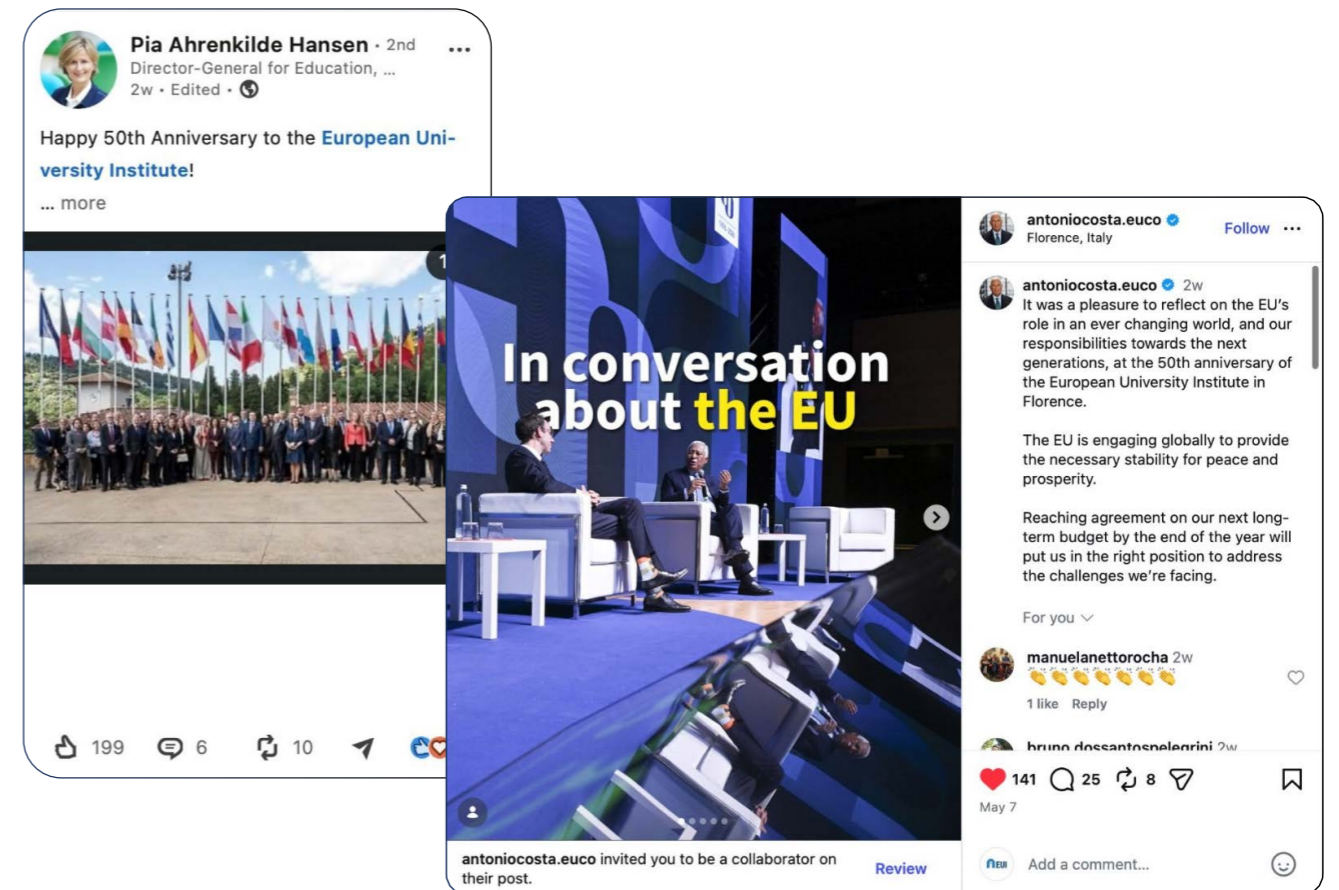


Several individual posts significantly outperformed average engagement benchmarks:



The 50th anniversary programme was actively promoted through the social media channels of the EUI departments, centres, and schools, and the EUI Alumni LinkedIn page. These channels highlighted anniversary-related activities and featured sessions involving their respective faculty members, researchers, and communities. By leveraging these established networks, the campaign extended the visibility of the celebrations and reached more than 40,000 additional users on LinkedIn alone.

Engagement went beyond EUI institutional channels also through high-level speakers and policymakers, as well as EUI alumni, who amplified the anniversary events through their own networks, further increasing visibility and reach. This included online engagement from senior European figures participating in the programme, contributing to wider dissemination among policy and public affairs audiences.



Online ambassadors

The anniversary campaign also marked the Institute's first collaboration with external content creators acting as ambassadors to engage younger audiences interested in European affairs, public policy, and international careers. Brussels- and Florence-based creators produced anniversary-focused content across Instagram through posts, stories, and reels, providing authentic perspectives on the celebrations and the three flagship events held between 7 and 9 May. By leveraging creator-led storytelling and established communities interested in EU affairs and professional development, the campaign expanded the visibility of the anniversary beyond the Institute's owned channels and strengthened engagement among students and early-career professionals.



MATTEO BRIZZI @matteobrizzi_ue
Audience: **Italy / Florence**
Content Focus: **EU institutions, career guidance, job search tips, EU opportunities**
Follower base: **17.2K**

Views: **19,500** Reposts: **9**
Likes: **475** Saves: **148**
Comments: **55** Accounts reached: **11,780**



GIULIA TARIELLO @giulia.tariello

Audience: **Brussels / EU**

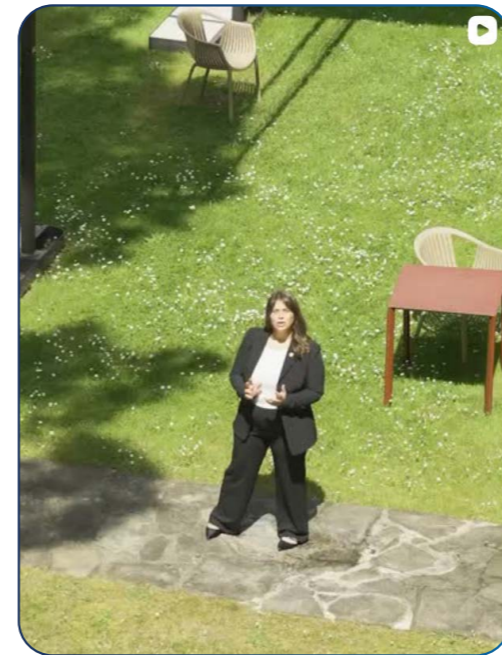
Content Focus: **EU & UN institutions, career guidance, job search tips, institutional insights, days in the life**

Follower base: **132K**



Views: **53,686** Reposts: **19**
Likes: **1,119** Saves: **361**
Comments: **8** Accounts reached: **19,752**

Three **reels** were produced across the celebrations, including two daily recap reels on 7 and 8 May and a final wrap-up reel covering the Open Day at the Historical Archives of the European Union (HAEU) on 9 May. Together, the reels generated more than 16,000 views, over 450 likes, 34 reposts, and 26 saves, with around 61% of viewers coming from non-followers. Engagement rates reached 10–10.6%, demonstrating the effectiveness of short-form video in expanding audience reach and strengthening engagement beyond the Institute's existing social media community.



DAILY REEL #1:

INSTAGRAM STATS

Views: **5,814**
Likes: **212**
Comments: **1**
Reposts: **17**
Saves: **13**
Non-followers: **60.7%**
Follows gained: **5**

LINKEDIN STATS

Views: **3,771**
CTR: **8.9%**
Engagement rate: **10%**



DAILY REEL #2:

INSTAGRAM STATS

Views: **6,794**
Likes: **247**
Comments: **1**
Reposts: **17**
Saves: **13**
Non-followers: **60.7%**
Follows gained: **4**

LINKEDIN STATS

Views: **2,668**
CTR: **8.7%**
Engagement rate: **10.6%**

Interviews were conducted with seven alumni representing different generations, academic departments, and fellowship programmes. Participants reflected on their experiences at the Institute, subsequent career paths, and the influence of the EUI on their professional and personal development. The interviews form part of a phased editorial series scheduled for publication throughout 2026, creating a lasting anniversary legacy while strengthening alumni engagement and institutional storytelling.

Visual identity, design, and event production

A coherent **visual identity** was developed across all anniversary activities and event environments to ensure consistency across physical and digital touchpoints.

Outputs included:

- Development of the overall visual concept and branding system
- Venue signage and information materials
- Livestream graphics and LED wall content
- Stage visuals and screen assets
- Social media templates, email assets, newsletter banners, and website visuals
- Printed materials including badges, programmes, press flyers, and branded merchandise

At the venue level, promotional stands showcased contributions from across the Institute, involving representatives from academic units, the Historical Archives, alumni, researchers, and students. The activation included an #EUI50 quiz, which attracted 21 registered participants, while branded items such as tote bags, pens, and mugs proved particularly popular among attendees.

Multimedia production and audience reach

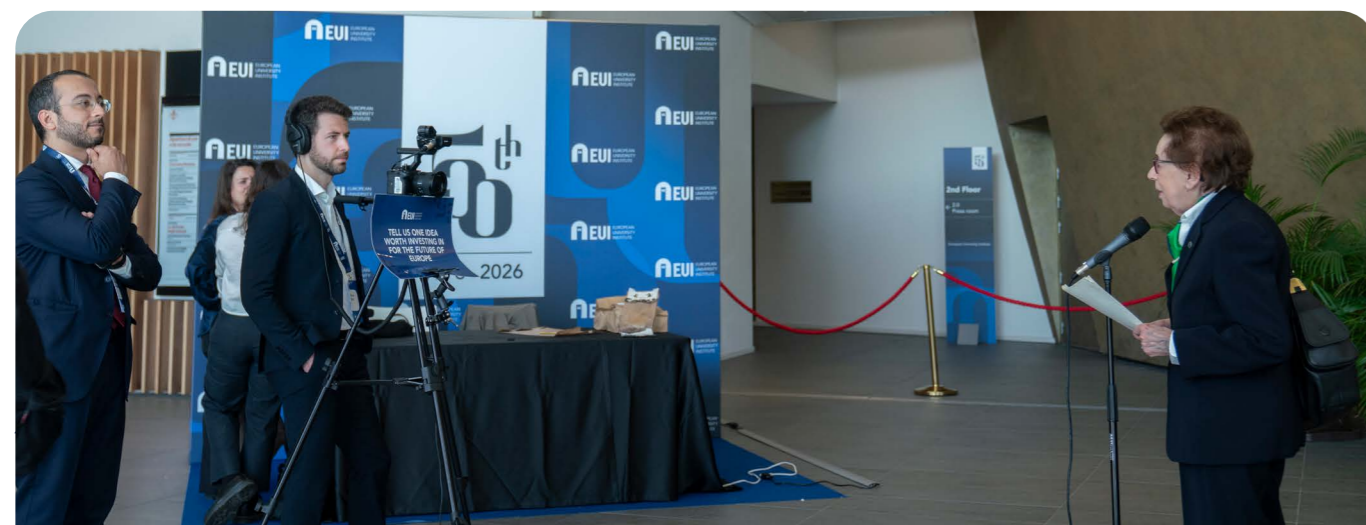
Multimedia activities played a key role in both the delivery and lasting visibility of the anniversary programme through livestreaming, video production, photography, technical support, and digital content creation. The two flagship events were livestreamed not only from the EUI Youtube channel but also with RAI News 24, reaching audiences well beyond those attending in-person:

- **Opening Ceremony (7 May 2026):** 1,812 views
- **EUIdeas: The Power of Knowledge (8 May 2026):** 1,119 views

Two major multimedia productions were the video on '[Celebrating 50 years of the European University Institute](#)' and [People, ideas and Europe's future](#), premiered on 7 May 2026 as the opening video and the accompanying video to the President's speech. While the first video looked back at the origin and the legacy of the original idea behind the creation of the Institute, the second one featured voices from across the EUI community reflecting on Europe's past, present, and future. Another video premiered at the Opening ceremony featured [the work of Florence art students on a mural](#) dedicated to the EUI anniversary.

Additional outputs included, high-level video productions for the Opening Ceremony at Teatro del Maggio, daily reels and social-first content, full photography coverage of both days, technical support for *Radio Cavolo* during EUIdeas, public screenings of *research stories* in the Emeroteca at Badia Fiesolana, long-term legacy projects, including the anniversary aftermovie and a mini-documentary on the OPEN space at Palazzo Buontalenti. Rapid image production and distribution also supported internal and external communications throughout the celebrations, including key institutional moments such as the visit of President Mattarella.

The anniversary playlist [People, Ideas, Spaces | 50 Years Shaping Europe](#) provides a lasting digital archive of anniversary activities and institutional storytelling.



Community participation and engagement

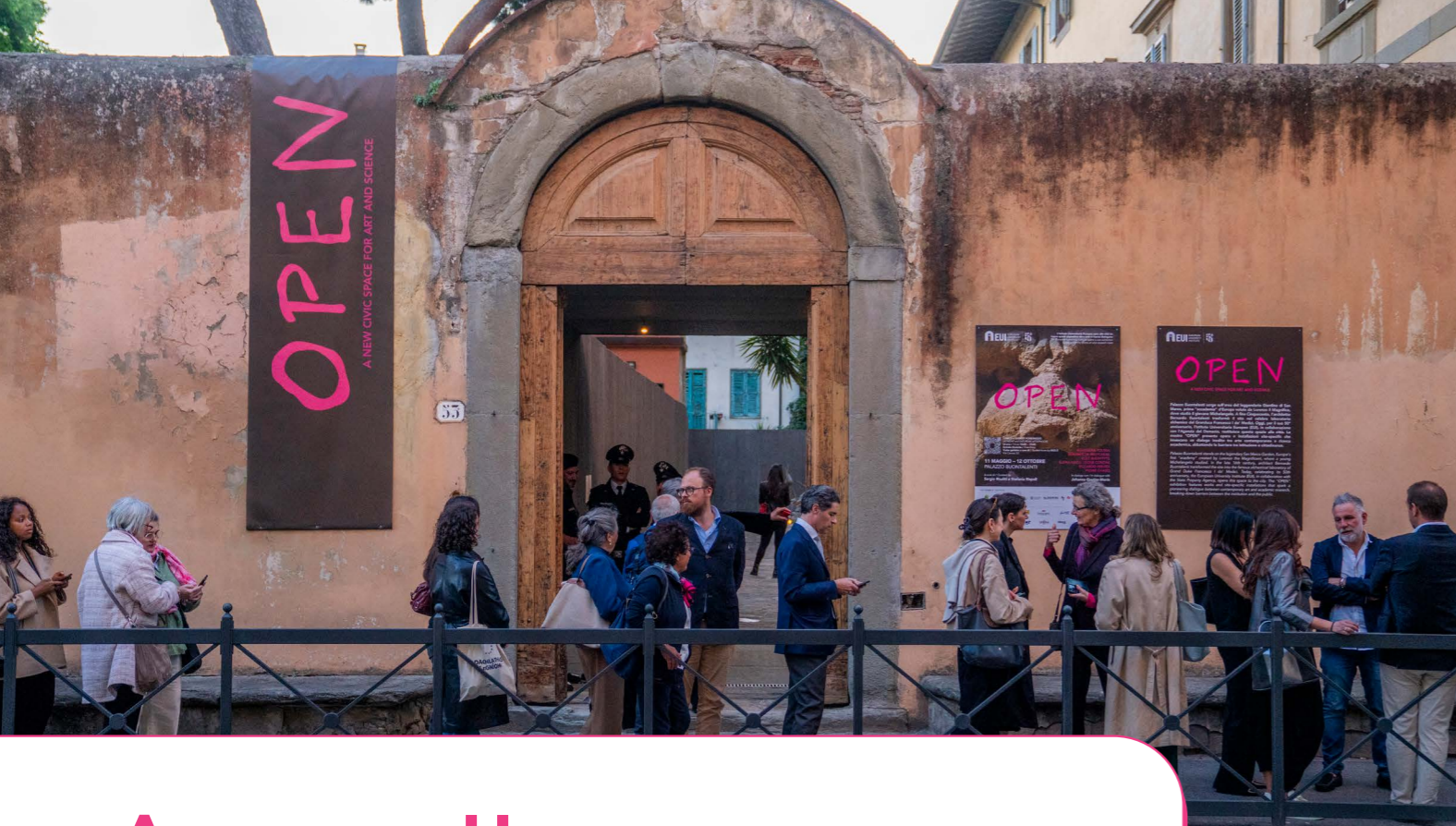
Communications efforts prioritised broad participation and representation across and beyond the EUI community.

The 'Open Mic' initiative engaged 35 participants, including high-schoolers, master's students, researchers, fellows, alumni, staff, professors, speakers, and members of the wider public, creating a space for diverse voices to contribute to the anniversary narrative. By placing citizens, academics, and practitioners at the centre of the conversation, the initiative contributed to the broader communications objective of connecting academic knowledge with societal concerns and aspirations.

Communications activities also supported the [OPEN exhibition](#) through the creation of a dedicated website featuring programme information and practical details, targeted email invitations distributed to institutional contacts and local stakeholders, and social media promotion in the weeks leading up to the event. The integrated approach helped position OPEN as a key component of the anniversary celebrations and contributed to strong visibility and attendance across its activities.

Overall, communications activities not only supported the operational success of the anniversary programme but substantially strengthened institutional visibility, expanded audience reach, generated long-term communication assets, and reinforced the EUI's positioning as a leading European academic institution.





Annex II OPEN exhibition (English)

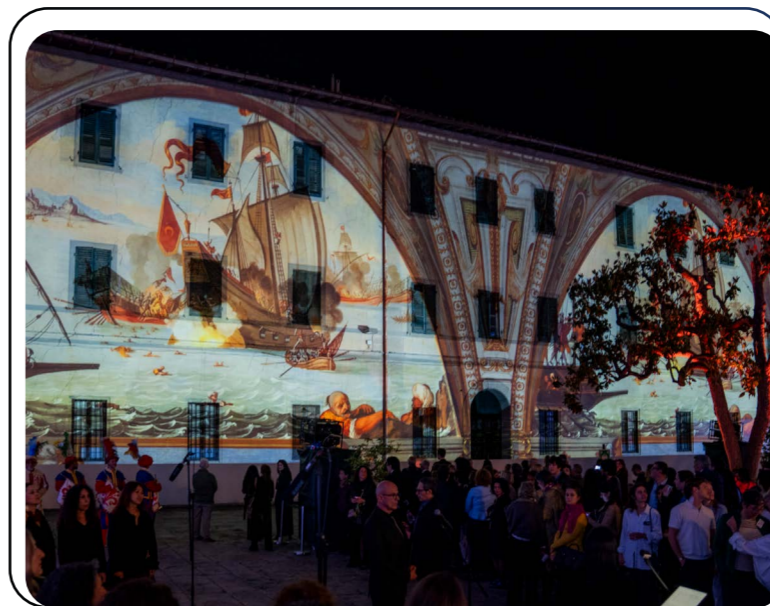
OPEN | Palazzo Buontalenti | 7 May – 12 October 2026

On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, the European University Institute (EUI) opened the doors of Palazzo Buontalenti with the exhibition “OPEN”, an initiative bridging academic research and contemporary artistic practice. As emphasised by EUI President Patrizia Nanz, this space stems from the understanding that the arts and sciences share a similar vocation: both invite us to question what we take for granted, pushing us into the uncertain and the ambiguous to help us see what often remains invisible. Rather than a project based on a fully predefined concept, the exhibition operates as a first shared initiative, a work-in-progress laboratory where research, artistic processes, and society can meet and engage in dialogue.

The exhibition cycle commenced on Thursday, 7 May 2026 with an invitation-only preview night, which welcomed approximately 1,500 institutional guests, partners, and EUI scholars. The attendance reflected an exemplary demographic diversity, demonstrating an exceptional balance in terms of both gender and generational representation, thereby mirroring the inclusive values of the Institute. For this inaugural session, the courtyard of Palazzo Buontalenti was configured as an innovative cultural arena and an immersive space of sensory impact. Following the formal welcome ceremonies with *Chiarine* and *Sbandieratori*, the walls and architecture of the courtyard were animated by immersive multimedia and architectural projections by digital artist Vincenzo Capalbo. The visual work recalled the historical memory of the Medici family and the decorative apparatus of the palace’s frescoes, integrating these elements into a flow of monumental imagery. This powerful visual narrative was enveloped and amplified by an unprecedented “sound garden” designed to foster cultural syncretism and dialogue; at the centre of this sensory environment, the *Hymn to Peace* was broadcast, an acoustic work expressly commissioned to composer Andrea Portera, featuring a choir that set to music the solemn words of peace by Padre Bernardo, Abbot of San Miniato al Monte.

The preview programme further featured the immersive theatrical performance “The Fountain of Governance”, staged around the central fountain by EUI. The performance enacted a provocative, speculative debate between Lorenzo de’ Medici and a modern technocrat, examining the evolution of political authority. The evening concluded with a musical performance by the STG Singing Club, presenting a celebratory pop and soul repertoire. These immersive visual and sonic installations remained fully operational for the general public during the subsequent Grand Opening nights on 8 and 9 May, drawing a collective initial attendance of over 2,000 visitors to the new exhibition venue.

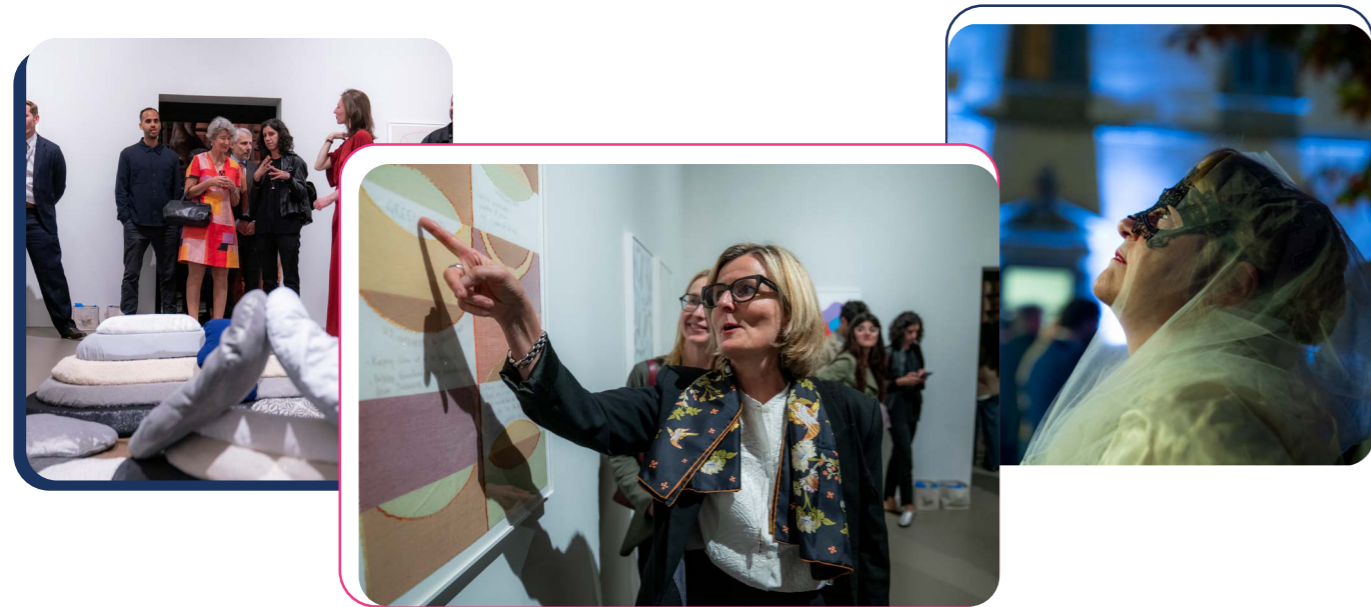
Under the curatorship of Sergio Risaliti and Stefania Rispoli, in close dialogue with historian and EUI alumna Johanna Gautier-Morin, ‘OPEN’ operates as a transdisciplinary dispositive. It establishes a direct epistemological connection between advanced social science research and contemporary visual art. The conceptual framework is derived from Gautier-Morin’s historical inquiry, *Measuring the Invisible Economy* (Cambridge University Press, 2026), which investigates the unquantified, yet foundational practices sustaining the global productive economy, such as domestic care work, informal transactions, and the asymmetric extraction of natural resources. The exhibition trajectory is structured around four critical thematic categories—gleaning, exhaustion, irreversibility, and mutation—challenging visitors to critically re-evaluate the blind spots of conventional economic metrics. The exhibition features site-specific installations and monumental works by an international roster of artists, offering a polyphony of critical perspectives:



- **Riccardo Previdi**: welcomes the public in the historic garden with *OPEN*, a large-scale, luminous sign utilising a pop aesthetic to interrogate the structural conditions of accessibility, global mobility, and the democratization of institutional knowledge.
- **Leone Contini**: presents *Sorgente* [Spring], an evolutionary, living installation generated directly from the building’s architectural restoration debris. Controlled irrigation triggers the germination of Sicilian and Chinese gourds, formulating a critique of traditional capitalist notions of productivity while tracing a botanical archive of human migration.
- **Johanna Gautier-Morin** and **Pierre Chastel**: collaborate on an unprecedented, multi-stereo sound piece that functions as a dynamic, open auditory archive, immersing the listener in the empirical and documentary premises of historical research.
- **Agnieszka Polska**: participates with the *Braudel Clocks* and the AI-generated video work *The Book of Flowers*. The narrative employs a speculative, science-fiction framework to destabilise linear chronology, exploring the complex interdependencies between human agency, gender identity, technology, and the natural environment.

- **Elena Mazzi** and **Johanna Gautier-Morin**: present the dispersed, collaborative installation *Gleaning* (*Mutation, Irreversibility, Exhaustion*) within the central exhibition hall (the "piazza"). Realised with the active creative and operational contribution of six students from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze (Michele Bernardini, Elena Coli, Marta Fumanti, Gaia Lupo, Alessandro Musumeci, and Antonio Vasquez), this work establishes an open space for collective co-creation, utilizing textual wall interventions and custom spinning chairs designed to induce a deliberate perceptual and cognitive instability. Concurrently, Elena Mazzi conducts a rigorous visual investigation into the geopolitical transformations of the Arctic region through her *Polar Silk Road* project-including a refined cotton and viscose tapestry mapping extractive shipping routes and climate change-alongside *Sápmi Flatbed*, an interactive sculptural topography reflecting on the melting of glaciers and the territorial sovereignty of the Sámi community.
- **Berlinde De Bruyckere**: exhibits plastic works of profound phenomenological weight, including the monumental, faceless *Arcangelo* enveloped in animal skins, and *The Embalmer*, a visceral installation of preserved equine skins situated in the historical premises of the former Court of Appeal archive. The works compel a direct confrontation with vulnerability, somatic suffering, and the physical presence of human and animal bodies.
- **Eglé Budvytyté**: presents the hypnotic video essay *Songs from the compost: mutating bodies, imploding stars*, which deconstructs anthropocentric hierarchies through slow, highly stylized choreographies filmed within the lichen forests of the Curonian Peninsula, highlighting the biological and ecological interdependence between physical bodies and non-human ecosystems.

Concurrently, within the restored architectural complex, a permanent institutional space dedicated to the Agenzia del Demanio was inaugurated: the *Sala delle Grottesche*. This permanent narrative hub commenced its public programme with *Memory and Vision*, a photographic exhibition by British artist **Gina Soden**, which documents the structural transitions and historical memory of three iconic Florentine heritage sites subject to institutional adaptive reuse.



In the words of President Nanz, the project defines itself primarily as a first open initiative. An intentional part of this approach consists in not starting from a fully predefined framework, embracing the fact of not having all the answers from the outset. OPEN is a process in the making, where continuous learning and constant adaptation are essential to shape a flexible space for co-creation, moving beyond the concept of a static museum. To operationalise this exhibition opening, a strategic partnership was formalised with the **MUS.E Foundation** (responsible for cultural mediation) and the **Florence Delegation of the FAI** (responsible for welcoming services), ensuring regular public access two afternoons per week (Mondays and Saturdays) until 12 October 2026, maintaining a steady, estimated attendance of approximately 80 to 100 visitors per opening session. Concurrently, the Institute has structured a curated calendar of private viewings for national and international stakeholders from major cultural institutions and philanthropic foundations, aiming to verify external interest and accompany the evolution of the space.

This collective effort has actively involved a diverse network of institutional, cultural, and technical partners, deeply rooted both in the Tuscan territory and within the international arena, whose synergistic contribution was fundamental for the production of the exhibition and the success of the inaugural events. This invaluable collaborative ecosystem will continue to support the project until its conclusion on 12 October 2026. Alongside the pivotal role of the **Agenzia del Demanio** as the institutional and restoration partner, and under the patronage of the **Tuscany Region** and the **Municipality of Florence**, the initiative benefits from the strategic support of the **Fondazione CR Firenze** and the fundamental contribution of the **MUS.E Foundation** and the **Florence Delegation of the FAI**, serving as essential pillars for the daily accessibility and cultural mediation of the project.

The success of this scientific-artistic synergy was further determined by the participation of prestigious academic and research institutions such as the **Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze** and the French National Research Agency (**ANR**), alongside key actors in the contemporary art sector such as **Galleria Continua**, and the architectural studio **Aga**, which oversaw the exhibition design. The complex technological, acoustic, and sensory architecture of the event was realised with the technical support of **AT**, **Glauk Sound**, and **Roopu**, alongside **Giara Image**. Finally, the logistical success and hospitality of the opening evenings were made possible by a wide consortium of local partners (including **Ditta Artigianale**, **Peter in Florence**, **Badiani**, **Prinz**, **The Social Hub**, **Montalbano**, **Pure Stagioni**, **Ghiottini**, **La Fonte**, **Antica Porta di Levante**, **Lunica**, **Space Club**, and **Taglietti**), demonstrating a profound community and economic synergy dedicated to ensuring the long-term appreciation and accessibility of this new civic space.





Allegato II Mostra OPEN (Italian)

OPEN | Palazzo Buontalenti | 7 May – 12 October 2026

In occasione del suo cinquantenario, l'Istituto Universitario Europeo (EUI) ha aperto le porte di Palazzo Buontalenti con la mostra "OPEN", un'iniziativa che mette in contatto la ricerca accademica con la pratica artistica contemporanea. Come sottolineato dalla Presidente Patrizia Nanz, questo spazio nasce dalla consapevolezza che le arti e le scienze condividono una vocazione simile: entrambe ci invitano a mettere in discussione ciò che diamo per scontato, spingendoci verso l'incerto e l'ambiguo per aiutarci a vedere ciò che spesso rimane invisibile. Più che un progetto basato su un concetto interamente predefinito, la mostra si configura come un primo esperimento condiviso, un laboratorio in corso d'opera in cui la ricerca, i processi artistici e la società possono incontrarsi e dialogare.

Il ciclo espositivo ha avuto inizio il 7 maggio con una serata di Preview esclusiva su invito, che ha registrato la partecipazione di circa 1.500 ospiti istituzionali, partner e accademici dell'EUI. L'affluenza ha evidenziato un'eccezionale diversità demografica, con un eccellente equilibrio in termini di rappresentanza di genere e generazionale, rispecchiando così i valori inclusivi e progressisti dell'Istituto. Per questa sessione inaugurale, il cortile monumentale di Palazzo Buontalenti è stato riconfigurato quale arena culturale innovativa e spazio immersivo di straordinario impatto sensoriale. In seguito alle formali cerimonie di accoglienza con Chiarine e Sbandieratori (coordinate dall'Ufficio Cerimoniale di Palazzo Vecchio), le pareti e l'architettura del cortile sono state animate dalle proiezioni multimediali e architettoniche curate dall'artista digitale Vincenzo Capalbo. L'opera visiva ha rievocato la memoria storica della famiglia dei Medici e l'apparato decorativo degli affreschi del palazzo, integrando questi elementi in un flusso di immagini monumentali. Questa potente narrazione visiva è stata avvolta e amplificata da un inedito "giardino sonoro" progettato per favorire il sincretismo culturale e il dialogo; al centro di questo ambiente sensoriale è stato diffuso l'*Inno alla Pace*, opera acustica espressamente commissionata al compositore Andrea Portera, la cui esecuzione ha visto il coinvolgimento di un coro che ha cantato in musica le solenni parole di pace di Padre Bernardo, Abate di San Miniato al Monte.

Il programma della Preview ha inoltre compreso la rappresentazione teatrale immersiva "The Fountain of Governance", curata dagli *scholars* dell'EUI e della Florence School of Transnational Governance (STG). La performance, allestita attorno alla fontana centrale, ha inscenato un dibattito speculativo e provocatorio tra Lorenzo de' Medici e un moderno tecnocrate, esaminando l'evoluzione dell'autorità politica. La serata si è conclusa con l'esibizione musicale del *STG Singing Club*, incentrata su un repertorio pop e soul celebrativo. Queste installazioni visive e sonore immersive sono rimaste pienamente operative per il pubblico generale durante le successive serate di Grand Opening dell'8 e 9 maggio, portando l'affluenza iniziale complessiva a oltre 2.000 visitatori.

Sotto la curatela di Sergio Risaliti e Stefania Rispoli, in costante dialogo con la storica e *alumna* dell'EUI Johanna Gautier-Morin, "OPEN" opera come un dispositivo transdisciplinare. Esso istituisce una connessione epistemologica diretta tra la ricerca scientifica e i linguaggi dell'arte contemporanea. Il costruito teorico della mostra trae origine dall'indagine storica di Gautier-Morin, *Measuring the Invisible Economy* (Cambridge University Press, 2026), focalizzata sull'analisi di quelle pratiche economiche non quantificate, eppure strutturali, che sostengono il sistema produttivo globale (lavoro di cura, economie informali ed estrazione asimmetrica delle risorse naturali). L'itinerario espositivo si articola pertanto attorno a quattro categorie tematiche critiche — spigolatura (*gleaning*), esaurimento, irreversibilità e mutazione —, invitando a una riconfigurazione critica delle zone d'ombra della vita economica globale.

La proposta espositiva si avvale di una serie di contributi da parte di artisti di rilievo internazionale, i quali offrono una pluralità di prospettive analitiche:



- **Riccardo Previdi**: accoglie il pubblico nel giardino storico con OPEN, un'installazione luminosa monumentale di matrice pop che interroga criticamente le condizioni strutturali dell'accessibilità, della mobilità globale e della democratizzazione della conoscenza istituzionale.
- **Leone Contini**: presenta Sorgente, un'installazione vivente ed evolutiva prodotta a partire dai residui dei materiali di restauro dell'edificio; l'attivazione idrica stimola la germinazione di cucurbitacee siciliane e cinesi, della Cina e d'Italia, delineando una critica ai modelli tradizionali di produttività e tracciando una memoria vegetale delle migrazioni.
- **Johanna Gautier-Morin** e **Pierre Chastel**: collaborano alla creazione di un'inedita opera sonora multi-stereo che funge da archivio uditivo dinamico e aperto, immergendo l'ascoltatore nelle premesse empiriche e documentali della ricerca storica.
- **Agnieszka Polska**: partecipa con i Braudel Clocks e con l'opera video generata tramite intelligenza artificiale *The Book of Flowers*, destrutturando la linearità cronologica per esplorare le relazioni di interdipendenza tra dimensione umana, identità di genere, tecnologia e ambiente naturale attraverso una narrazione fantascientifica.

- **Elena Mazzi** e **Johanna Gautier-Morin**: presentano l'installazione collaborativa e diffusa Gleaning (Mutation, Irreversibility, Exhaustion), collocata nella sala centrale (la "piazza") e negli ambienti contigui. L'opera è stata eseguita con il concorso operativo e creativo di sei studenti dell'Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze (Michele Bernardini, Elena Coli, Marta Fumanti, Gaia Lupo, Alessandro Musumeci e Antonio Vasquez), configurandosi come uno spazio aperto di co-creazione caratterizzato da interventi testuali parietali e sedute rotanti destinate a generare una voluta instabilità percettiva e cognitiva. Contestualmente, Elena Mazzi conduce una rigorosa indagine visiva sulle trasformazioni geopolitiche della regione artica attraverso il suo progetto Polar Silk Road — che include un raffinato arazzo in cotone e viscosa sulle rotte navali estrattive e il cambiamento climatico — affiancato da Sápmi Flatbed, una topografia scultorea interattiva che riflette sullo scioglimento dei ghiacciai e sulla sovranità territoriale della comunità Sámi
- **Berlinde De Bruyckere**: espone opere plastiche di profonda intensità emotiva, tra cui il monumentale e acefalo Arcangelo rivestito di manti di pelle animale, e The Embalmer, un'installazione viscerale di pelli equine conservate situata negli storici locali dell'ex archivio della Corte d'Appello, inducendo una riflessione sulla vulnerabilità, sulla sofferenza e sulla presenza fenomenologica dei corpi umani e animali.
- **Eglé Budvytyté**: propone il saggio video ipnotico Songs from the compost: mutating bodies, imploding stars, volto a decostruire le gerarchie antropocentriche attraverso coreografie lente e altamente stilizzate filmate nelle foreste di licheni della Penisola Curlandese, evidenziando l'interdipendenza biologica ed ecologica tra i corpi e gli ecosistemi non umani.

Contestualmente, all'interno del medesimo complesso architettonico, è stata inaugurata la mostra permanente *Memory and Vision* dell'artista britannica **Gina Soden**, ospitata nella *Sala delle Grottesche* (Spazio Agenzia del Demanio), volta a documentare la transizione strutturale e la memoria storica di tre complessi monumentali fiorentini oggetto di rifunzionalizzazione istituzionale.



Nelle parole della Presidente Nanz, il progetto si definisce innanzitutto come un primo esperimento aperto. Un elemento intenzionale di questo approccio consiste nel non partire da un impianto interamente predefinito, accogliendo il fatto di non disporre di tutte le risposte fin dall'inizio. OPEN si configura come un processo in divenire, in cui l'apprendimento e l'adattamento costante sono fondamentali per dare forma a uno spazio flessibile di co-creazione, superando la concezione di un museo statico. Per rendere operativa tale apertura, è stata formalizzata una partnership strategica con la **Fondazione MUS.E** (incaricata della mediazione culturale) e con la **Delegazione FAI di Firenze** (responsabile dei servizi di accoglienza), garantendo la regolare apertura al pubblico due pomeriggi a settimana (lunedì e sabato) fino al 12 ottobre 2026, con un'affluenza media costante stimata tra gli 80 e i 100 visitatori per ciascuna sessione. Contestualmente, l'Istituto ha strutturato un calendario di visite private per stakeholder provenienti da istituzioni culturali e fondazioni filantropiche, al fine di verificare l'interesse esterno e accompagnare l'evoluzione dello spazio.

Questo sforzo collettivo ha visto il coinvolgimento attivo di un'articolata rete di partner istituzionali, culturali e tecnici, profondamente radicati sia nel territorio toscano sia in ambito internazionale, il cui contributo sinergico è stato fondamentale per la produzione della mostra e per il successo degli eventi inaugurali. Tale prezioso ecosistema di collaborazione continuerà ad accompagnare il progetto fino alla sua conclusione il 12 ottobre 2026. Accanto al ruolo cardine dell'**Agenzia del Demanio** come partner istituzionale e di restauro, e al patrocinio della **Regione Toscana** e del **Comune di Firenze**, l'iniziativa beneficia del sostegno strategico della Fondazione CR Firenze e del contributo fondamentale della **Fondazione MUS.E** e della **Delegazione FAI di Firenze**, pilastri essenziali per la fruibilità quotidiana e la mediazione culturale del progetto.



Il successo di questa sinergia scientifico-artistica è stato inoltre determinato dal concorso di prestigiose istituzioni accademiche e di ricerca come l'**Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze** e l'agenzia nazionale francese **ANR**, insieme a importanti realtà del sistema dell'arte contemporanea come **Galleria Continua**, e allo studio di architettura **Aga**, che ha curato la progettazione della mostra. La complessa architettura tecnologica, acustica e sensoriale dell'evento è stata realizzata grazie al supporto strategico dei partner tecnici **AT**, **Glauk Sound** e **Roopu**, affiancati dal lavoro documentale di Gira Image. Infine, il successo logistico e l'ospitalità delle serate inaugurali sono stati garantiti da un nutrito consorzio di partner del territorio (tra cui **Ditta Artigianale**, **Peter in Florence**, **Badiani**, **Prinz**, **The Social Hub**, **Montalbano**, **Pure Stagioni**, **Ghiottini**, **La Fonte**, **Antica Porta di Levante**, **Lunica**, **Space Club** e **Taglietti**), a testimonianza di una profonda e virtuosa convergenza comunitaria ed economica volta a valorizzare stabilmente questo nuovo spazio civico.



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