EUI EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE 50th



STAGE 1 – THE EXHIBITION

OPEN 2026

Report on the pilot edition

A new civic space for art and science

Palazzo Buontalenti, Florence · 7 May–12 October 2026

OPEN 2026: report on the pilot edition

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Stage 1 – the exhibition: attendance, audience profile and outlook. A second report, on the *Officine d'Orizzonti* school programme, should follow in December 2026.

Date: November 2026 · **Data:** attendance registers updated to 17 October 2026; *Officine d'Orizzonti* data as reported by the programme team on 19 October 2026.

almost 7,000 people took part (6,796 to date)	**29** public openings, mostly on Monday and Saturday afternoons	**94** nationalities among visitors
40% of participants under 35, students included	**1,532** on guided and mediated visits	**641** in groups, on private visits, or with their schools
120 volunteers welcomed the public	**143** students in the *Officine d'Orizzonti* workshops so far	**107** visitors per opening in October, up from 73 in June

These results were reached with a limited opening schedule. Apart from the three opening evenings (7–9 May), the exhibition was open to the public on 29 afternoons of four hours, mostly on Mondays and Saturdays from 15:00 to 19:00, and it remained closed in July and August, when no funding was available for the summer openings. Groups, schools, and private visitors were also welcomed on dedicated openings, with guided tours and educational activities.

1. Summary

The exhibition *OPEN: A new civic space for art and science* was the pilot project for the 50th anniversary of the European University Institute (1976–2026). It was held from 7 May to 12 October 2026 at Palazzo Buontalenti (Casino Mediceo) in Florence, home of the EUI's Florence School of Transnational Governance (STG), in a wing of the palace restored by the Agenzia del Demanio. With free admission, it brought academic research and contemporary art together and opened the palace to the Florentine and international public.

As a pilot, OPEN tested a new use of Palazzo Buontalenti as a civic space for art, research and the city. In the exhibition booklet, EUI President Patrizia Nanz described it as "a first expression" of the Institute's commitment not to separate the life of the mind from the life of the world and wrote: "*Today we take a bold step by opening this new exhibition space to the city."* The results of this first edition should help shape the next one, OPEN 2027.

The exhibition was curated by Sergio Risaliti and Stefania Rispoli (Museo Novecento), in dialogue with Johanna Gautier-Morin, who developed the scientific concept from her research *Measuring the Invisible Economy* (Cambridge University Press, 2026). It was coordinated by an EUI working group with Johanna Gautier-Morin, Julian Vierlinger, and Serena Bürgisser. It presented works by Agnieszka Polska, Berlinde De Bruyckere, Eglė Budvytytė, Elena Mazzi, Leone Contini, Riccardo Previdi, and Pierre Chastel, with six students of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze. In the Sala delle Grottesche, the room dedicated to the Agenzia del Demanio, Gina Soden presented the photographic project *Memory and Vision*.

OPEN was realised with the support of Agenzia del Demanio, Fondazione CR Firenze, MUS.E, FAI Delegazione di Firenze, Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, and Galleria Continua, under the patronage of Regione Toscana and Comune di Firenze, and with the partners listed at the end of this report. The school programme *Officine d'Orizzonti* is led by STG with the support of Fondazione CR Firenze.

This report covers the first stage of the project, the public exhibition. It is based on the final attendance registers (6,351 individually registered visitors) and on the first data from the *Officine d'Orizzonti* workshops. A second report should follow when the workshops end in December 2026.

Main findings

- **Attendance – almost 7,000 people:** 6,796 participants to date, made up of 6,515 visitor admissions (including about 50 guests at the visit of the President of the Italian Republic on 8 May), 161 *Officine d'Orizzonti* participants (143 students and 18 teachers), and 120 volunteers. With 150 further students expected in the November–December workshops, total reach should come to 6,946.
- **Guided and mediated visits:** 1,532 participants (23.5% of visitor admissions), with 1,052 on guided tours with the art historians of MUS.E, 366 in academic and professional groups, and 114 on private curatorial visits.
- **Groups and dedicated openings:** 641 people came in groups, on private visits, or with their schools: 366 in academic, executive, and university groups (from STG programmes, EUI departments, the University of Florence, the Florence School of Banking and Finance, and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, among others), 114 on 26 private visits, and 161 students and teachers of *Officine d'Orizzonti*. Many of these visits took place on openings arranged for them, with guided tours or educational activities.
- **Young audience:** 40.3% of profiled participants were under 35, counting the 141 *Officine d'Orizzonti* students who answered the survey (39.0% of registered visitors alone), rising to 46.8% in the regular public programme and to about two thirds in May and June, when university groups were most present.
- **International reach:** visitors declared 94 nationalities; among valid entries, 69.8% were Italian and 30.2% international. June was the most international month (41.5%).
- **Visit of the President of the Italian Republic:** on 8 May, Sergio Mattarella visited the exhibition with about 50 guests, as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations (read the news).
- **Special events:** the *Corri la Vita* opening (27 September), linked to the charity run, brought 381 visitors, the busiest day of the exhibition; the talk with Berlinde De Bruyckere (24 September) gathered 98 invited guests, 70% of them from outside the EUI.
- **Volunteers:** 120 volunteers welcomed the public (90 from FAI Delegazione di Firenze and 30 from the EUI community and MUS.E).
- **Schools:** the 143 students came from four schools in the Florence area; their average age was 16.8, over a third live outside the city and its suburbs, and two thirds had no previous volunteering experience (see Section 7).



The opening of OPEN, 7 May 2026



President Sergio Mattarella visits OPEN with EUI President Patrizia Nanz, 8 May 2026



President Sergio Mattarella with EUI President Patrizia Nanz and Alessandra dal Verme, Director of the Agenzia del Demanio, in the Sala delle Grottesche, 8 May 2026



President Mattarella and his guests in the frescoed hall of Palazzo Buontalenti, 8 May 2026



Flag throwers in the courtyard during the opening evenings



Visitors queuing on Via Cavour



Visitors with the works of Elena Mazzi



A visitor on the spinning chairs of Gleaning (Mutation, Irreversibility, Exhaustion)

2. Overall attendance (6,796 participants)

The total of 6,796 participants is the sum of the strands in Table 1. Each person is counted once: the 98 guests of 24 September are already part of the September register, and the guests of 8 May are counted as an estimate (see Section 10).

Table 1. Participants by strand

Strand	Participants	% share	Source and context
Institutional preview (7 May)	1,670	24.6%	Opening evening, inaugurated by the Mayor of Florence Sara Funaro, the Director of the Agenzia del Demanio Alessandra dal Verme, and EUI President Patrizia Nanz, with European delegations, the Mayor of Fiesole, councillors for culture, members of the EUI High Council, and 50th anniversary guests. In the courtyard, the *Hymn to Peace* by Andrea Portera, with words by Father Bernardo Gianni, and immersive video projections by Vincenzo Capalbo.
Opening to the city (8–9 May)	1,096	16.1%	Two free evenings (572 on 8 May, 524 on 9 May) with immersive video projections by Vincenzo Capalbo on the courtyard façades and guided tours of the exhibition by MUS.E.
Regular public openings (May–October)	2,760	40.6%	Two afternoons a week, on Mondays and Saturdays from 15:00 to 19:00, with the volunteers of FAI Delegazione di Firenze, the art historians of MUS.E, and EUI staff. The exhibition was closed in July and August, when no funding was available for the summer openings. In all, 1,052 visitors came on guided tours and 1,708 on free admission (monthly registers).
Academic, executive and university groups	366	5.4%	STG programmes for diplomats from the Western Balkans and for executives, a conference on borderlands, new researchers of the EUI Department of Law, the Digital Currencies Academy of the Florence School of Banking and Finance, the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz with the EUI Department of History, the Department of Architecture of the University of Florence (89), the Better Society Academy, FUA-AUF, Gonzaga University, ANSE, and an interior design class.
Special opening: *Corri la Vita* (27 September)	361	5.3%	Sunday opening linked to the charity run, organised by EUI staff.
Berlinde De Bruyckere in conversation (24 September)	98	1.4%	Talk by invitation with Fabrizio Tassinari (STG), organised with Galleria Continua: 29 EUI members and 69 external guests (see Section 5).
Private and curatorial visits	114	1.7%	26 accompanied visits: foundations, collectors, museum directors, institutional guests, and specialised press.
Visit of the President of the Italian Republic (8 May)	50	0.7%	About 50 guests accompanied President Sergio Mattarella: representatives of the Agenzia del Demanio, Fondazione CR Firenze, Comune di Firenze, and Regione Toscana, the EUI governance and academic units, students of the master's programmes, and the protocol team (estimate; not profiled).
Subtotal – visitor admissions	**6,515**	**95.9%**	**All admissions to the exhibition and related events.**
Officine d'Orizzonti workshops (STG)	161	2.4%	143 students and 18 teachers from Istituto Don Facibeni, Educandato Statale SS. Annunziata, I.I.S. Piero Calamandrei, and Istituto Professionale Benvenuto Cellini (see Section 7).

Strand	Participants	% share	Source and context
Volunteers	120	1.8%	90 volunteers of FAI Delegazione di Firenze and 30 from the EUI community and MUS.E.
Total to date	**6,796**	**100.0%**	**All strands as of 19 October 2026.**
Officine d'Orizzonti, November–December	*+150*	–	*150 further students expected in school workshops through December 2026, supported by Fondazione CR Firenze.*
Projected total	**6,946**	**–**	**Expected overall reach at the end of the school programme.**

3. Regular public programme, month by month

Between 11 May and 13 October, the monthly registers record 3,585 admissions, combining online bookings, transcribed sign-in sheets of visitors who had not booked, groups, and special events (Table 2).

Table 2. Admissions to the regular public programme by month

Month	Total	Guided tours	Free admission	Groups	Special events
May (11–30)	841	194	647	–	–
June (1–29)	858	297	456	105	–
September (5–28)	1,228	391	329	49	459
October (3–13)	658	170	276	212	–
Total	**3,585**	**1,052**	**1,708**	**366**	**459**

Note: September includes the *Corri la Vita* opening (361) and the Berlinde De Bruyckere event (98), as well as one FUA-AUF group (18) that visited on 9 July.

Rhythm of the openings (FAI door counts)

FAI volunteers also kept a head count at the door for each of the **29 public openings**. These counts follow a different method from the registers and are used here only to describe the rhythm of the programme:

- **Door counts:** in total, 2,566 visitors were counted at the door (958 on guided tours, 1,608 on free admission), an average of 88.5 visitors per opening, in line with the capacity of the historic rooms.
- **By month:** May (6 openings): 523 visitors (87.2 per opening). June (9 openings): 656 (72.9). September (10 openings): 958 (95.8). October (4 openings): 429 (107.3, the highest average of the exhibition).
- **Busiest days:** 27 September (*Corri la Vita*, 294 counted at the door; 381 in the registers) and the closing day on 12 October (150 visitors in the afternoon, followed in the evening by groups from the University of Florence, the Florence School of Banking and Finance, and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz).

Attendance per opening grew over time: after the summer break, the average rose from about 73 in June to over 107 in October, which may reflect word of mouth and the September events.

4. Audience profile (6,351 registered records)

The registers of the preview (7 May), the opening evenings (8–9 May), and the regular programme (May–October) contain age, gender, and nationality for 6,351 registered visitors. Private visits, the guests of 8 May, and volunteers are not profiled. For age, the last column of Table 3 and Figure 1 also include the 141 *Officine d'Orizzonti* students who answered the survey (Section 7).

A. Age by phase

Table 3. Age of registered visitors by phase, and of all profiled participants

Age group	Preview (7 May)	Opening evenings (8–9 May)	Regular programme	All registered visitors	All participants, students included
Under 18	0.6%	1.6%	2.7%	2.0% (124)	3.5% (227)
18–25	9.4%	4.7%	21.0%	15.1% (962)	15.4% (1,000)
26–35	24.7%	13.4%	23.1%	21.9% (1,388)	21.4% (1,388)
36–45	18.8%	12.0%	9.7%	12.5% (795)	12.2% (795)
46–55	18.3%	19.9%	12.8%	15.4% (981)	15.1% (981)
56–65	17.8%	25.4%	15.0%	17.5% (1,111)	17.1% (1,111)
Over 65	10.5%	23.0%	15.0%	15.2% (966)	14.9% (966)
Not specified	–	–	0.7%	0.4% (24)	0.4% (24)
Under 35 (total)	**34.7%**	**19.7%**	**46.8%**	**39.0% (2,474)**	**40.3% (2,615)**

The last column adds the 141 *Officine d'Orizzonti* students who answered the survey (103 under 18 and 38 aged 18 and over, counted in the 18–25 group), for 6,492 profiled participants. Counting them, under-35s rise to 40.3%.

- **Preview:** many early-career academics and institutional staff; the 26–35 group was the largest (24.7%), followed by 36–45 (18.8%) and 46–55 (18.3%).
- **Opening evenings:** a strong presence of the local public and of older visitors; over-55s were 48.4% of the two evenings.
- **Regular programme:** the youngest audience of the project. Under-35s were 67.3% in May and 67.5% in June, fell to 20.2% in September, when *Corri la Vita* and the talk brought an older public (over-55s: 49.3%), and rose again to 43.5% in October.

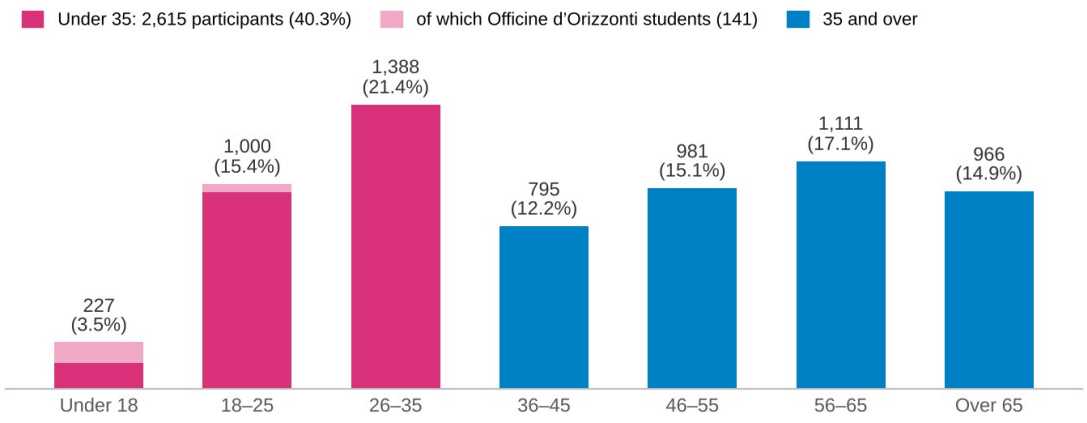


Figure 1. Profiled participants by age group, students included (the 24 records with no age are not shown)

B. Gender

- **Female:** 57.3% (3,641) – **Male:** 41.6% (2,639) – **Other identities** (non-binary, transgender, other): 0.8% (53) – **Not specified:** 0.3% (18).

- The preview was close to parity (50.3% female, 47.7% male), while the public sessions had a clear female majority (60.0% at the opening evenings and 59.8% in the regular programme).

C. Origin and international reach

- **Italy:** 69.8% of valid records (4,421 visitors), showing strong roots in Florence and Tuscany.
- **International visitors:** 30.2% of valid records (1,909 visitors) from 93 other countries – 94 nationalities in total.
- By phase, the international share was highest in June (41.5%), in October (38.6%), and at the preview (35.3%, reflecting EUI delegations and guests), and lowest at the opening evenings (17.3%).
- **Main countries of origin after Italy:** Germany and the United States (218 each), France (194), the United Kingdom (102), and Spain (96), followed by the countries shown in Figure 2.

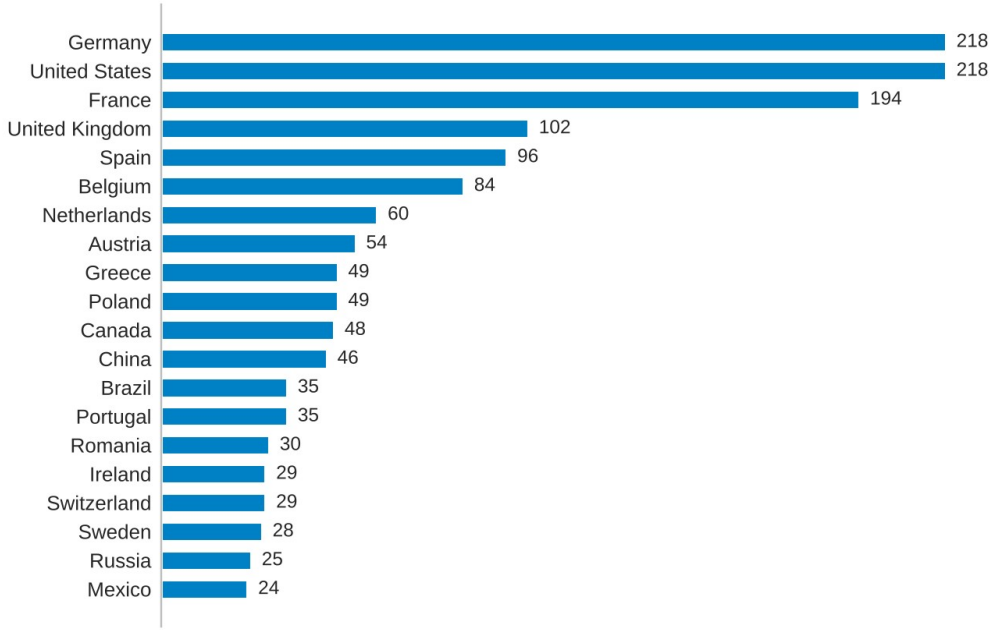


Figure 2. Main countries of origin after Italy (registered visitors)

5. Berlinde De Bruyckere in conversation (24 September)

The Belgian artist Berlinde De Bruyckere spoke with Fabrizio Tassinari of the Florence School of Transnational Governance, in an event by invitation organised with Galleria Continua (read the news). It was the main networking moment of the exhibition. The final guest list (98 participants) shows:

- **Audience mix:** 29 EUI members (29.6%) and 69 external guests (70.4%), one of the most outward-facing events of the programme.
- **Profile:** 61 women and 35 men; average age of about 48 (where known); 72 Italian guests and 24 from 14 other countries (mainly Belgium, France, Germany, and the Netherlands).
- **Network:** guests included senior academics, art-world experts, and representatives of the partner institutions.
- **Institutions represented:** Galleria Continua, Museo Novecento and MUS.E, Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze and di Carrara, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Università di Firenze and di Siena, Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore, Pitti Immagine, Lo Schermo dell'Arte, Bruegel, Castello di Ama, Istituto Marangoni, FAI Delegazione di Firenze, and the studios of Berlinde De Bruyckere and Peter Buggenhout.

6. Institutional, cultural and press visits

Palazzo Buontalenti also hosted 26 private visits (114 people) and a number of institutional, academic, and cultural groups:

- **Institutional guests:** the visit of the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, on 8 May, as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations, with about 50 guests, including representatives of the Agenzia del Demanio, Fondazione CR Firenze, Comune di Firenze, and Regione Toscana, the EUI governance and academic units, and students of the master's programmes; the preview of 7 May, opened by the Mayor of Florence Sara Funaro, the Director of the Agenzia del Demanio Alessandra dal Verme, and EUI President Patrizia Nanz, with European institutional representatives, the Mayor of Fiesole, councillors for culture, and members of the EUI High Council; and governmental and diplomatic guests from Italy and other European countries.
- **Foundations:** senior representatives of European philanthropic foundations, who visited the exhibition with the EUI leadership.
- **Museums, galleries and art schools:** Collezione Maramotti, Galleria Continua, Lo Schermo dell'Arte, IED, Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, critics, curators, and private collectors.
- **Press:** journalists and critics from *Il Foglio*, *La Repubblica*, *ArtsLife*, *Artribune*, and *Small Zine* visited the exhibition (see "In the press" below).
- **Academia and training:** Stanford University, INDIRE / Erasmus+, STG programmes for diplomats and executives, new researchers of the EUI Department of Law, the Digital Currencies Academy of the Florence School of Banking and Finance, the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz with the EUI Department of History, the Department of Architecture of the University of Florence (89 students on 12 October), and the Better Society Academy (40 participants on 13 October).

In the press

From the opening in May to the closing in October, OPEN was followed by national, regional, and specialised media. On 8 May, the print editions of *La Nazione*, *Corriere Fiorentino*, and *La Repubblica* (Florence) reported on the opening, as did the regional television news *TG Regione* and, on 9 May, *TGR Toscana* (RAI). Online coverage included *La Nazione*, *FirenzeToday*, *Revenews*, *Itinerari nell'arte*, *Il Giornale dell'Arte*, *FUL Magazine*, *Artribune*, *Il Maggio dei Libri*, *ArtsLife*, and *ArteIn*. On 13 October, *Askanews*, *Gazzetta di Firenze*, and *Gazzetta Toscana* reported on the results of the first edition.

7. Officine d'Orizzonti: school workshops (through December 2026)

With the support of Fondazione CR Firenze, the end of the public exhibition marked the transition of the venue to an educational space. The *Officine d'Orizzonti* workshops are led by STG (coordination: Elena Casali and Alessandro Cercaci) with the EUI Development and External Relations Service (DEXT).

Participants at OPEN

- **Participants:** 161 (143 students and 18 teachers) from Istituto Don Facibeni (three classes, 40 students), Educandato Statale SS. Annunziata (classes 3C, 3B and 3F, 40), I.I.S. Piero Calamandrei (classes 3H and 3G, 32), and Istituto Professionale Benvenuto Cellini (classes 4L and 5M, 31). The wider programme also involves Liceo Classico Michelangiolo and Liceo Scientifico Galileo.
- **Approach:** led by STG alumni and EUI researchers, the workshops start from the themes of OPEN (unrecognised work, climate irreversibility, social change) and lead to European

Parliament simulations and discussions on democratic participation and algorithmic governance.

Student profile (survey of 141 out of 143 students)

- **Age:** from 15 to 20 and over, with an average of 16.8 years; 85% are aged 16 to 18. Of the respondents, 103 (73.0%) are under 18 and 38 (27.0%) are 18 or over, so many could vote in the coming elections.
- **Gender:** 57.4% female, 36.9% male, 5.7% preferred not to say.
- **Where they live:** 64.5% in a city centre or its suburbs; 35.5% in extra-urban areas or small towns, which are less often reached by projects of this kind.
- **Family background:** 61.6% have both parents born in Italy, 29.0% parents born outside Europe, and 9.4% in another European country (138 responses).
- **Civic experience:** one third (33.6%) had previous volunteering experience; two thirds had none (140 responses).
- **School context:** for 68.6% of students, activities with external guests or outside school happen rarely or never (140 responses).

These first results suggest that the workshops reached young people from a range of backgrounds, including peripheral and rural areas and students not yet active in their communities, and offered them an activity that is uncommon in their school routine. Data and analysis are by the *Officine d'Orizzonti* team; qualitative data on content, perception, and feedback are being analysed and should be included in the second report.



Officine d'Orizzonti students in the exhibition rooms of Palazzo Buontalenti

Outlook

- A further 150 students are expected in November and December, for an overall reach of about 293 students in the school programme, plus the teachers involved.

8. Lessons learned and OPEN 2027

What the 2026 data suggest

- **Students and young people are the core public of the regular openings:** two thirds of May–June visitors were under 35. Aligning a future calendar with the academic year and with university partners (University of Florence, study-abroad programmes, EUI departments) could sustain this.

- **Special events bring peaks and new audiences:** *Corri la Vita*, the talk with Berlinde De Bruyckere, and the closing day were among the busiest days. A planned calendar of four or five events could spread these peaks across the exhibition.
- **Groups are an efficient channel:** 366 group visitors on only a few dates. A simple group-booking offer (schools, executive education, partner institutions) could be considered.
- **The exhibition works as a setting for civic education:** the *Officine d'Orizzonti* workshops reached students who rarely take part in activities outside school.
- **Network value:** the private visits and the talk brought foundations, museums, galleries, and the press into direct contact with the EUI and its partners.

OPEN 2027 · coming soon

May 2027 · Palazzo Buontalenti, Florence

Building on this pilot, the second edition of OPEN is in preparation and should open in May 2027, with a focus on technology and human agency. The experience of 2026 and the views of partners should help shape its planning. Updates will be published on the OPEN website.

Support OPEN 2027

9. Next steps

- **November–December 2026:** remaining *Officine d'Orizzonti* workshops and analysis of the qualitative data.
- **Late December 2026:** second report on the school programme and final report to Fondazione CR Firenze.
- **At Palazzo Buontalenti:** the works by Riccardo Previdi and Leone Contini in the San Marco garden, and Gina Soden's *Memory and Vision* in the Sala delle Grottesche, remain on view and can be visited on request by writing to open@eui.eu.
- **May 2027:** opening of OPEN 2027.

10. Methodological note

- **Sources:** registers of the preview, the opening evenings, and the four monthly reports (groups and FAI), the tables of private visits and groups, the FAI per-opening counts, the final guest list of 24 September (all as updated on 17 October 2026), and the participant data and entry survey of *Officine d'Orizzonti* students (19 October 2026).
- **No double counting:** the 98 guests of 24 September are part of the September register and are counted only once in the total.
- **Visit of 8 May:** the guests who accompanied President Mattarella are counted as an estimate (about 50 people), as no register was kept; they are not profiled.
- **Students in the age profile:** 141 of the 143 *Officine d'Orizzonti* students answered the entry survey; the 38 students aged 18 and over are counted in the 18–25 group.
- **Registers and door counts:** the official totals come from the registers; the FAI door counts (2,566) are used only to describe the rhythm of the openings.
- **Demographics:** age, gender, and nationality come from the consolidated register prepared by Alessia Costantino (DEXT), which contains the same 6,351 records as the monthly files, with missing fields completed. Nationality was declared as free text and then harmonised; where two nationalities were given, the first was used. Twenty-one records have no usable nationality.

With thanks

OPEN was a shared effort. The EUI would like to thank the curators Sergio Risaliti and Stefania Rispoli (Museo Novecento), Johanna Gautier-Morin for the scientific concept, the artists, the students of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, the art historians of MUS.E, the volunteers of FAI Delegazione di Firenze, Alberto Tofani for the technical equipment and coordination, all the partners listed below, the schools and teachers who took part in *Officine d'Orizzonti*, and all EUI colleagues involved.

- **With the support of:** Agenzia del Demanio, Fondazione CR Firenze, MUS.E, FAI Delegazione di Firenze, Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, and Galleria Continua.
- **Under the patronage of:** Regione Toscana and Comune di Firenze.
- **Partners:** Alberto Tofani, Glauk Sound, Roopu, AGA Architettura e Gestione, ANR – Agence nationale de la recherche, Ditta Artigianale, Peter in Florence, Badiani, The Social Hub, Montalbano, Pure Stagioni – Ghiottini, La Fonte, Prinz Beverage & Food, Lunica, Giara Image, Locanda L'Antica Porta di Levante, Space Club, and Taglietti.

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Partner

Alberto Tofani · Glauk Sound Emotion · roopu · aga · anr agence nationale de la recherche · Ditta Artigianale · Peter in Florence London Dry Gin · Badiani Gelato Firenze · The Social Hub · Montalbano · Pure Stagioni Ghiottini · La Fonte Caseificio nelle Crete Senesi · Prinz Beverage & Food · Lunica Toscana · Giara Image · Locanda L'Antica Porta di Levante · Space Club · Taglietti Beverage Service

OPEN in pictures



The courtyard of Palazzo Buontalenti during the opening evenings, with video projections on the façades



Visitors in the room of Gleaning (Mutation, Irreversibility, Exhaustion) by Elena Mazzi and Johanna Gautier-Morin



Sápmi Flatbed by Elena Mazzi



Arcangelo III by Berlinde De Bruyckere



Visitors and the Braudel Clocks series by Agnieszka Polska

Event photos: European University Institute. More photos on Flickr: opening days · visit of President Mattarella · the exhibition.

The works in the exhibition

OPEN brought together seven artists, the research of Johanna Gautier-Morin, and six students of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, in the San Marco garden, the central hall, and the rooms of the palace. Their works are shown below.

Browse the exhibition booklet (PDF) →



Riccardo Previdi, *OPEN* (2015)
San Marco garden. The luminous sign at the entrance, made in response to the tragedies of migration in the Mediterranean, welcomed visitors as both an invitation and a threshold.



Leone Contini, *Sorgente* (2026)
San Marco garden. A spring rising from the rubble of the building's own restoration, where Sicilian cucuzze gourds and varieties grown by Chinese farmers in Prato took root.

Sound work
San Marco garden

Johanna Gautier-Morin and Pierre Chastel, *Fragments of Self* (2026)
San Marco garden. A polyphonic sound work that follows a single day between care, work, and self-performance, part of The TUD Project (Time-Use Diary).



Elena Mazzi and Johanna Gautier-Morin, *Gleaning (Mutation, Irreversibility, Exhaustion)* (2026)
Central hall. Texts, data, and quotations on the walls, with spinning chairs that unsettle the visitor's balance, realised with six students of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze.



Elena Mazzi, *Polar Silk Road (Map 1)* (2023) and *Sápmi Flatbed* (2022)
A tapestry map and works on paper on the Arctic trade routes opened by melting ice, and an island of soft mountain forms that visitors could touch and rearrange.



Berlinde De Bruyckere, *Arcangelo III (San Giorgio)* (2023–2024) and *The Embalmer (Dornbirn)* (2015)
A faceless archangel in a former courtroom, a figure first conceived during the COVID-19 pandemic as a tribute to healthcare workers, and horse skins in the former archive of the Court of Appeal.



Eglė Budvytytė, *Songs from the Compost: mutating bodies, imploding stars* (2020)
A 30-minute film shot among the lichen forests and sand dunes of the Curonian Peninsula in Lithuania, on the interdependence of human and non-human life.



Agnieszka Polska, *The Book of Flowers* (2023)
A film combining AI-generated animation and 16mm footage to imagine a lost symbiosis between humans and plants.



Agnieszka Polska, *Braudel Clocks* (2022)
Two rotating clocks that question time as a single, neutral measure.

Works courtesy of the artists, Fondazione MUSEION (Bolzano), Hauser & Wirth, Galleria Continua, Lombardi-Kargl, Artopia Gallery (Milan), and Ex Elettrofonica (Rome). Photos of the works: Elisa Norcini.

Alongside OPEN, the Sala delle Grottesche, the room dedicated to the Agenzia del Demanio, hosted *Memory and Vision*, a photographic project by Gina Soden on three Florentine sites in transition: Palazzo Buontalenti, the Basilica of San Miniato al Monte, and the former Caserma Redi.

The exhibition poster



The poster of the public openings, 11 May–12 October 2026

OPEN: A new civic space for art and science

Palazzo Buontalenti, Via Cavour 53, Florence · 7 May–12 October 2026

Find out more

OPEN website: www.eui.eu/en/projects/open

Exhibition booklet: download the PDF

Photos: opening days · visit of President Mattarella · the exhibition

News: President Mattarella visits the EUI · Berlinde De Bruyckere in conversation

Officine d'Orizzonti: sites.eui.eu/officine-dorizzonti

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Contact

Serena Bürgisser, OPEN 2026 Project Manager – Senior Expert, Strategic Outreach & Development, Development and External Relations Service

serena.burgisser@eui.eu · open@eui.eu

Press and media: EUI Communications Service · eui.press@eui.eu

European University Institute
Via della Badia dei Roccettini 9, 50014 Fiesole FI, Italy