EUI EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

‘It’s my life!’

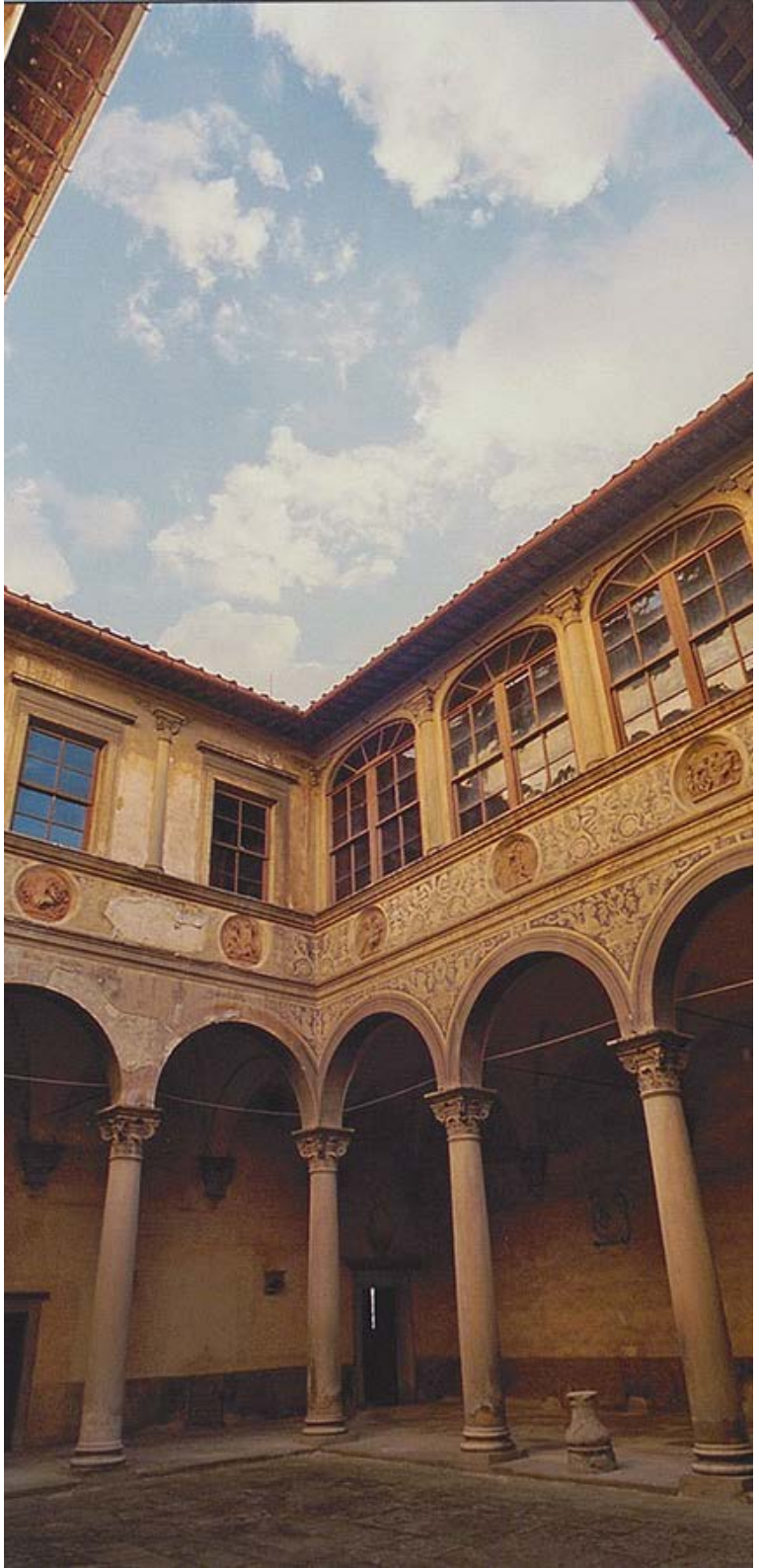
An oral history of the European University Institute





Two years ago, in the summer of 2024, a small team of PhD researchers connected to the Interviewing and Oral History Working Group, staff from the Historical Archives of the European Union, and professors from the History department met to discuss what an oral history project commemorating fifty years of the European University Institute would look like. The EUI is a peculiar institution, whose history so far has been written from an EU institutional perspective (including some excellent work by Sarah St John and Marina Cino Pagliarelli). This project has used oral history methodology to approach the history of the EUI from the perspective of its members, from all different parts of the institute. Central to this project is the work of the Interviewing and Oral History Working Group, which is a researcher-led group, supported by Prof. Benno Gammerl.

Our team of interviewers reflected this institutional diversity and included researchers, professors, research fellows and staff from the archives. In alphabetical order these are: Maria Sole Barbieri, Jonah J. Berger, Wojciech Białożyt, Leonardo Bruni, Jacopo Cellini, Anna Feleki, Aude Foucoin, Benno Gammerl, Aurora Hamm, Leslie Nancy Hernández Nova, Alleiah Kall, Georgia Katakou, Carlotta Rudolph, Jan Schubert, Zsófia Veszely, Alice Zamai, Karla Žeravčić. Interviewers were affiliated not only with the History and Civilisation department, but also with the Law and Social and Political Sciences departments. This was a truly interdisciplinary cohort, and some of our interviewers conducted interviews for the first time, while others are seasoned professionals. This project was also a vehicle through which a new cohort of researchers was trained in designing a project together, interviewing, transcribing and translating.



Together, we came up with the topics we wanted to cover in the interview, the questions we needed to ask, and the list of those we wanted to interview. We have included the questions in this booklet, for you to better understand the context from which these quotes are taken from. We conducted thirty interviews with interviewees that held a wide range of positions in the past fifty years of the EUI's history. Across these thirty interviews, snippets of which are outlined above we had conversations in coffee shops in Florence and abroad, Badia and Salviati offices, as well as online.

The EUI is a dynamic entity, with researchers, professors, and staff changing constantly. This makes it difficult to preserve its institutional memory. This project is an attempt to recover, construct and reflect on this memory from the perspective of past workers, researchers, faculty, personnel, admins, HAEU employees, and those in leadership positions. We strove to ensure that we included a variety of languages, keeping the inherent multilingualism of our daily lives here alive in these transcripts, as well. We also wanted to make sure we had a range of nationalities represented. The recordings, transcripts (and their translation, if needed) will be deposited in the HAEU, for future generations of historians to consult.

We have structured this booklet to follow the themes of the oral history interviews we conducted. The sections are as following:

- The idea & reality of EUI: Networks, first impressions, expectations, ideas, impact, innovations, and debates.
- The culture of the EUI: Work culture, material conditions, and staff dynamics.
- The spirit of the EUI: The everyday, social life, languages, and long-lasting connections.
- A world beyond the hill: how external events and places affected the EUI.

Each section begins with a brief introduction, summarising some of the recurring themes that emerged through these interviews. The interviewers have then selected passages from each interview conducted, and presented them in both the original language of the interview and in English. The work presented here is very much collaborative, but the booklet has been compiled and edited by Georgia Katakou and Zsófia Veszely.

Some of the questions we had when we set out to undertake this project were: How is the EUI different from other institutions? How can you capture something of its spirit: the emotions and social interactions that underpin it? What were some of the big debates that affected the institute over its history?
It is important for us to also note that the project has been funded by the Alcide De Gasperi Research Centre and the HAEU. In this capacity, researchers were compensated for the work they undertook and had freedom to approach the interviews impartially. We hope that if you take the time to read through the selected quotes presented here and the longer transcripts deposited at the HAEU, you will see that our narrators have complicated relationships to different aspects of the EUI. For many, this was an incredibly important and joyful part of their lives. And simultaneously, these interviews also deal with topics such as gender inequality, grant inequality, racism, discrimination, professional disagreements, and other contentious topics that our narrators experienced. We want to underline this ambivalent relationship to avoid presenting the EUI and its history in an uncritical, celebratory tone. It has been much more interesting for us all to explore our institution in both its strengths and weaknesses.

List of interviewees

Silvia Albrizio (interviewed by Carlotta Rudolph)
Stefano Bartolini (interviewed by Georgia Katakou)
Gherardo Bonini (interviewed by Alice Zamai)
Thomas Bourke (interviewed by Alleiah Kall)
Ursula Brose (interviewed by Jan Schubert)
Giorgio Brundo (interviewed by Leonardo Bruni)
Daphné Budasz (interviewed by Alleiah Kall)
Cinzia Ceccatelli (interviewed by Alice Zamai)
Felix Corell (interviewed by Jonah J. Berger)
Antonio Corretto (interviewed by Maria Sole Barbieri)
Veerle Deckmyn (interviewed by Aurora Hamm)
Donatella della Porta (interviewed by Benno Gammerl)
Eleonore Eckmann (interviewed by Carlotta Rudolph)
Linda Gilbert (interviewed by Zsófia Veszely)
Michael Goerke (interviewed by Jan Schubert)
Simonida Kacarska (interviewed by Wojciech Białożyt)
Colette Kleemann-Rochas (interviewed by Jonah J. Berger)
Ramon Marimon (interviewed by Jan Schubert)
Yves Mény (interviewed by Aude Foucoin)
Ruth Nirere-Gbipki (interviewed by Jonah J. Berger)
Leonidas Oikonomakis (interviewed by Anna Feleki and Georgia Katakou)
Olaf Osica (interviewed by Wojciech Białożyt)
Jean-Marie Palayret (interviewed by Dieter Schlenker)
Carla Parrini (interviewed by Maria Sole Barbieri)
Luisa Passerini (interviewed by Georgia Katakou and Zsófia Veszely)
Maria Rita Pellisari (interviewed by Maria Sole Barbieri)
Corrado Pettenati (interviewed by Leslie Nancy Hernández Nova)
Daniel Rozenberg (interviewed by Alleiah Kall)
Silvana Sciarra (interviewed by Anna Feleki and Benno Gammerl)
Senada Šelo Šabić (interviewed by Karla Žeravčić)

Introduction

For this section, we asked former EUI members how they conceptualised the EUI and how that changed over time. What were their first impressions, expectations? We wanted to know whether people found it important that the institution is deeply intertwined with the European Union and it is a European entity in every sense of the world. Some respondents underscored the tension between the EUI's identity as a university vs. an institution and whether it is a critical academic environment or a think tank of the European Union. Still, from the answers, it is clear that former members' experiences underline democratic values, openness and diversity as core EUI values.

Interview with Colette Kleemann-Rochas, Jonah J. Berger (originally in French):

> ***Que représente l'Institut pour vous ?***
> *Ah, c'est ma vie. C'est plus important que mon séjour de 7 ans en Allemagne, où j'ai appris beaucoup de choses aussi. Mais c'est là où j'ai pu, bien que la structure n'ait pas prévu ce centre de langues, j'ai pu expérimenter toutes sortes de nouvelles, de nouvelles voies. Oui, avec un peu de persévérance, même si le la structure est étroite ou même inexistante, on peut faire des choses très intéressantes.*
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> ***What does the Institute mean to you?***
> *Ah, it's my life. It's more important than my seven-year stay in Germany, where I also learned a lot. But it's where I was able, even though the institution hadn't planned for this language centre, to explore all kinds of new paths. Yes, with a little perseverance, even if the framework is limited or even non-existent, you can do some very interesting things.*

Interview with Donatella della Porta, Benno Gammerl (originally in English):

> *What is the identity of the EUI? Is it a critical academic environment or is it a think tank for the EU? It's a very relevant element to address. For me, it was a critical academic environment and this was what attracted me.*



Interview with Antonio Corretto, Maria Sole Barbieri (originally in Italian):

> ***Che cosa rappresenta per te lo spazio Istituto europeo, questo grande contenitore?***
> *Che domanda di difficile. Beh, è stata la mia vita. Quindi se ti dico che ancora sogno la notte episodi, cose che sono successe, perché dall'88 alla pensione ho fatto 35, 36 anni. È strano perché intimamente è mio, però fisicamente non lo è, è lontano, ma è intimamente tutto mio. Non perché so pensionato e non voglio venire, ma perché in qualche modo ti esclude, se non ci stai dentro ti senti escluso e questo non va bene. (...)*
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> *Il mio cuore è Villa Schifanoia. Voi avete mai visto un tramonto da Villa Schifanoia? Io i tramonti che ho visto da Villa Schifanoia non li ho mai visti, li ho visti in India forse, ma belli, belli.*
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> ***What does the European University Institute as a place represent to you?***
> *That's a difficult question. Well, it has been my life. If I tell you that I still dream at night about episodes and things that happened there, it's because I spent thirty-five or thirty-six years there, from 1988 until my retirement. It is a strange feeling because, deep down, it is mine; and yet, physically, it is not. It is distant now, but inwardly it still belongs entirely to me. Not because I'm retired and don't want to come back, but because in a way it excludes you. If you're no longer part of it, you feel excluded, and that's not right. (...)*
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> *Villa Schifanoia is where my heart belongs. Have you ever seen a sunset from Villa Schifanoia? The sunsets I saw from Villa Schifanoia I have never seen anywhere else, perhaps only in India, but they were truly beautiful, breathtakingly beautiful.*



Interview with Linda Gilbert, Zsófia Veszely (originally in English):

> *It just opens your horizons. I mean, just looking at it, if I talk to people who have also retired, they'll turn around and say, "Oh, it's so good to talk to you. You've had the same experience in life as I've had. You understand where I come from. Other people I speak to don't understand", because I often say the Institute is a microcosm of the world, and we're living in that little world, but everything is here. And that really gives you so much. It's so, so much.*

Interview with Veerle Deckmyn, Aurora Hamm (originally in English):

> *And I thought, but this is a university. It's not only a university, but it's an international community. People want to raise and need to and must raise their voices.*

Interview with Donatella della Porta, Benno Gammerl (originally in English):

> *So having a large cohort of people from different countries, with different skills, knowledge, and background, but aiming at constructing shared knowledge, visions and so on. This was something that I really liked.*

Interview with Stefano Bartolini, Georgia Katakou (originally in English):

> *When the EUI opened in September [1976], you know how it was! The refectory where you now buy coffee was the creche [...], the first room in which you eat next to the refectory was a seminar room, the big room over the refectory was the library, the entire library, and the institute finished more or less at the cloister. [...] We were living in a relatively small space! The professors, the eight professors who were originally appointed by the national authorities had themselves unclear ideas of what they should be doing. [...] Nobody had an idea of what this would have meant, to be honest!*

Interview with Yves Mény,
Aude Foucoin (originally in French):

Alors d'abord, il y a une impression, si je peux dire, esthétique, en ce sens que, pour ne rien vous cacher, j'avais toujours été un passionné de l'Italie, de l'architecture italienne, de l'art italien, etc. Il n'existait à l'époque que la Badia, mais la Badia était déjà plus ou moins comme elle est aujourd'hui au niveau de sa structure, la Badia n'a pas changé. Et donc, une première impression esthétique.

Ensuite, la deuxième impression, une fois rentré dans la maison, l'intensité des conflits. Il y avait des conflits terribles parce que, à l'époque, comme disent les Italiens, l'Institut, c'était un unicum. Il n'y avait pratiquement pas d'école doctorale en Europe. Il y avait, en Allemagne par exemple, la relation extrêmement étroite, quasi filiale, avec le directeur de thèse, qui disait : "Vous allez traiter ceci, Monsieur" ou "Madame". Et c'était très rigide, et c'était toujours un peu, disons, de père en fils académique, en ce sens qu'il fallait choisir ce que le professeur vous donnait. C'était un petit peu comme ça en France aussi, mais moins directif, moins rigide.

Et dans certains pays, l'Italie notamment, on ne savait pas ce que c'était qu'une thèse de doctorat. D'ailleurs, la thèse en Italie, c'est souvent le petit document synthétique qu'on fait à la fin du master — enfin, je ne sais plus comment ils appellent ça, mais voilà. Alors donc, il y avait des bagarres énormes, et il y avait grosso modo deux camps.

Well, first of all, there's an impression, if I may say so, an aesthetic one, in that, to be quite honest with you, I had always been passionate about Italy, about Italian architecture, Italian art, and so on. At the time, there was only the Badia, but the Badia was already more or less as it is today in terms of its structure: the Badia hasn't changed. So that was a first, aesthetic impression.

Then the second impression, once I'd got into the house: the intensity of the conflicts. There were terrible conflicts because, at the time, as the Italians say, the Institute was a unicum. There was practically no doctoral school anywhere in Europe. In Germany, for instance, there was an extremely close, almost filial relationship with the thesis supervisor, who would say: "You will work on this, Sir" or "Madam." It was very rigid, and it was always a bit, shall we say, academic father-to-son, in that you had to choose what the professor gave you. It was a bit like that in France too, but less directive, less rigid.

And in certain countries, Italy in particular, nobody really knew what a doctoral thesis was. In fact, in Italy, the thesis is often the short summary document you produce at the end of your master's — I can't remember what they call it now, but there you are. So there were enormous battles, and there were roughly two camps.



**Interview with Maria Rita Pellisari,
Maria Sole Barbieri (originally in Italian):**

> ***È cambiato la sua percezione, la sua idea d'integrazione europea?***
> *Ma integrati eravamo tra di noi europei, Poi per quel poco che facevamo, cioè nel lavorare insieme (...). Forse un po' di più lo percepivano a livello accademico. Noi seguivamo le orme di Bruxelles, loro l'avevano già fatta l'integrazione. Quando i nuovi paesi aderivano a Bruxelles, poi successivamente aderivano anche alla Convenzione dell'Istituto molto spesso, e noi quando venivano li accoglievamo, non avevamo problemi. No, non ho notato grandi cambiamenti.*
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> ***Has your perception, your idea of European integration changed?***
> *We were integrated among ourselves as Europeans. Through the little that we did, simply by working together (...). Perhaps it was perceived more strongly at the academic level. We were following in Brussels' footsteps, they had already achieved integration there. When new countries joined Brussels, they would often later accede to the Institute Convention as well, and when they came here, we welcomed them without any problems. No, I did not notice any major changes.*

**Interview with Donatella della Porta,
Benno Gammerl (originally in English):**

> *And in the beginning, the High Council was a place in which countries sent important representatives. For instance, I remember that the first time I went as a professor, I was at the table with a minister from the UK, [Foreign Secretary David] Miliband. And this created an environment in which decisions made were discussed at a high level in the High Council. Then the impression I had was that the High Council became less 'high' in the sense of people who participated. There was less of an investment in the idea of a European university.*

**Interview with Antonio Corretto,
Maria Sole Barbieri (originally in Italian):**

> *Ma la cosa più importante che ho imparato qui è stato il rispetto per le minoranze. Noi a Napoli diciamo "pure o' ciceniello è pesce", cioè anche quello piccolissimo è pesce. Se eravamo in venti a decidere una cosa e tre non erano d'accordo, i ragazzi perdevano ore a parlare con quei tre.*
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> *Questa era una cosa nuova. Per me se eravamo d'accordo in venti, quei tre avrebbero potuto anche andare per la loro strada. Ora, non voglio dire che fosse una cosa completamente nuova per me, però non avevo questo senso forte delle minoranze che ho imparato con i ragazzi. Qui ho imparato che anche quei tre hanno diritto di essere ascoltati.*
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> *But the most important thing I learned here was respect for minorities. In Naples we say, "even the tiniest little fish is still a fish," meaning that even the smallest voice counts. If twenty of us agreed on something and three disagreed, the students would spend hours talking with those three.*
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> *That was something new to me. My view had always been that if twenty people agreed, those three could simply go their own way. Now, I do not want to say that this was entirely new to me, but I certainly did not have the strong sense of respect for minorities that I learned from the researchers. Here I learned that those three people also have the right to be heard.*

**Interview with Donatella della Porta,
Benno Gammerl (originally in English):**

> *When I was at EUI as a student, one of the main tensions that I remember was about gender. … there were practically no female teachers. And this was one of the main struggles within the EUI. We formed a women's group and we pressured for more gender studies and some women professors in all departments. History, I think, had been the first to hire women. Gisela Bock was there. She also participated in our activities … for a more gender balanced faculty. Economics was totally indifferent.*

**Interview with Eleonore Eckmann,
Carlotta Rudolph (originally in German):**

> *Wie gesagt, ich und die Dänin, wir waren die einzigen Frauen, die da saßen. Wenn ich heute lese, was es da alles bei euch gibt, Queer-Gruppen und ... Und heute gibt es ja viele, viele, viele mehr Frauen an der Uni als damals. Also damals gab es schon ein paar Frauen, aber die konntest du auch zählen. Das war schon sehr männerlastig. Das hat sich auch sehr geändert, Gott sei Dank.*
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> *Like I said, me and the Dane, we were the only women sitting there. When I read today about all the things you have now, queer groups and ... And today there are many, many, many more women at the university than there were then. So there were a few women back then, but you could count them, too. That was really very man-heavy. That has changed a lot, thank God.*

**Interview with Senada Šelo Šabić,
Karla Žeravčić (originally in Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian):**

> *Jako malo žena u to vrijeme. Dominantno su bili muškarci… kao profesori, apsolutno. Mislim da smo imali samo jednu profesoricu Adrienne Heritier. To je bio dominantno muški svijet. Patrijarhat je sigurno bio jači nego što je sad. Nismo ni imali tu svijest o tome, tako da se mnogo toga normaliziralo što se smatra neprihvatljivim.*
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> *There were very few women at that time. Predominantly men… especially professors. I think we had only one female professor, Adrienne Héritier. It was a predominantly male world. The patriarchy was certainly stronger than it is now. We did not have that awareness either, so many things were normalised that would now be considered unacceptable.*

**Interview with Corrado Petenatti,
Leslie Nancy Hernández Nova (originally in Italian):**

> *Da quel momento è cominciata la storia dei calcolatori all'Istituto; il primo calcolatore era orientato solamente alla gestione della biblioteca. Boisset [Vice direttore della biblioteaca del Istituto Universitario Europeo] era una persona che aveva una visione chiarissima di che cosa si doveva fare come automazione [...] Abbiamo avuto il calcolatore CII (Compagnie Internationale d'Informatique, founded by De Gaulle), abbiamo cominciato a scrivere dei programmi. I bibliotecari hanno cominciato a utilizzare i terminali, si potevano fare delle interrogazioni [per ricercare temi di ricerca], erano cose che oggi farebbero rabbrividire: non erano precise, ma erano un'automazione, era l'unica che c'era in Italia. Non c'erano altre automazioni di quel livello, c'erano stati alcuni esperimenti, soprattutto a Pisa, e a Livorno, ma una forma di automazione della gestione della biblioteca l'avevamo solo all'IUE. Questo risultato ha interessato molte altre persone che venivano a visitarci per vedere i servizi disponibili; si è creato in Italia, un forte interesse per migliorare la gestione delle biblioteche attraverso l'automazione.[...] si erano create delle condizioni estremamente favorevoli all'Istituto per guidare un progetto che è diventato nazionale in Italia (il Sitema Biblioteario Nazionale). [...] Abbiamo trasferito tutto questo entusiasmo, [...] all'organizzazione italiana delle biblioteche. [...] Mi sono trovato più volte a spiegare come erano organizzati i file, quali erano i collegamenti, perché usavamo dei sistemi di base dati che ci permettessero di creare dei legami fra il record d'autore e il record titolo, il record collana e il record titolo e così via, queste architetture che ora sono di una facilità incredibile, allora erano all'avanguardia.*

From that moment, the history of computing at the Institute began; the first calculator/computer was intended solely for managing the Library. [...] Boisset [Deputy Director of the EUI Library] was someone who had a very clear vision of what needed to be done in terms of library automation. [...] We had the CII computer (Compagnie Internationale d'Informatique, founded by De Gaulle) and we began writing programs. The librarians started using terminals, and it became possible to run queries [for researching themes of research]. They were the kind of queries that would make people shudder today: they were not precise, but it was automation, and it was the only system of its kind in Italy. There were no other automation systems at that level. Some experiments had been carried out, particularly in Pisa and Livorno, but the EUI was the only institution with any form of automated library management. This achievement drew the interest of many other people, who came to visit us to see the services available; in Italy, it generated strong interest in improving library management through automation. [...] Extremely favourable conditions had developed at the Institute, enabling it to lead a project that became nationwide in Italy (the Italian National Library Service, SBN). [...] We passed [...] this information on to the Italian library system. [...] On several occasions, I found myself explaining how the files were organised, how the links worked, and why we used database systems that allowed us to create relationships between the author record and the title record, between the series record and the title record, and so on. These architectures, which are incredibly easy to create today, were at the cutting edge at the time.

Interview with Jean-Marie Palayret, Dieter Schlenker (originally in French):

On a tout de même été pionnier à Florence de l'informatisation des archives. Quand je parle de l'informatisation, je ne parle pas encore de la numérisation, on n'en était pas encore là. Mais dès 1995, j'ai recruté un informaticien aux archives. La plupart des archives ici en Italie ou en France n'avaient pas encore d'informaticiens. Et je me souviens que nous sommes allés à Luxembourg en plein hiver - j'ai raconté cette histoire récemment - sous un vent glacial pour étudier une des premières bases de données qui existait dans une institution européenne afin de la calquer ici.

We pioneered in Florence the computerization of archives. When I speak of computerization, I am not yet referring to digitization, we were not there yet. But in 1995, I hired an IT specialist for the archives. Most archives here in Italy or France did not yet have IT staff. And I remember traveling to Luxembourg in the dead of winter – I told this story recently – under an icy wind to study one of the first databases used by a European institution, with the aim of modeling ours on it.

The culture of the EUI: Work culture, material conditions, and staff dynamics

This segment and the discussion here was intended to find out about important debates, impact, innovation, contributions at the EUI. What were some points of contention, conflict, taboos? We wanted to find out what initiatives were encouraged, tolerated, or fought against? We wanted interviewees to talk about material conditions, unions, childcare, gender equality, Coppa Pavone, staff dynamics and the EUI as an employer. This was quite a divisive question and people gave remarkably different answers: some refused to acknowledge conflicts or simply did not remember any, others (e.g. staff members) said that initiatives were fragmented to groups of researchers, staff, faculty and there was not so much contact with each other. Others were quite outspoken about the issues at the EUI.



**Interview with Leonidas Oikonomakis,
Anna Feleki and Georgia Katakou (originally in Greek):**

> *Προσπαθούσαμε αρκετά να αναδείξουμε το ζήτημα και ως Prezzemolo, όμως πέφταμε στο σκόπελο των ξεχωριστών διακανονισμών και συμφωνιών μεταξύ των ιδρυμάτων υποτροφιών κάθε χώρας. Επίσης δεν υπήρχε και πολύ μεγάλη αλληλεγγύη μεταξύ των ερευνητών. Δηλαδή είχαμε Νορβηγούς ερευνητές που παραπονιούνταν γιατί δεν παίρναν ποτέ χρήματα για συνέδρια στο τέλος χρονιάς και έπρεπε να τους εξηγήσω ότι ναι δεν παίρνεις χρήματα για συνέδρια, αλλά έχεις συν 20.000€ από τους Έλληνες ή τους Ιταλούς, οπότε δεν πρέπει να μιλάς. Οπότε δεν υπήρχε τρομερή αλληλεγγύη σε αυτό και πάντα σκοντάμε στο γραφειοκρατικό ζήτημα.*
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> *We tried to foreground this issue through Prezzemolo, but we struggled with the separate legal conditions and agreements across the different scholarship foundations of different countries. Additionally, there was not a lot of solidarity among researchers. We had Norwegian researchers that complained about not getting money for conferences at the end of the year and I had to explain that yes, you might not be getting money for conferences but you have plus 20.000€ from Greek or Italian researchers, so you should not speak. So there was not a lot of solidarity around this and we always struggled with the bureaucracy.*

**Interview with Donatella della Porta,
Benno Gammerl (originally in English):**

> *What I didn't like … is in fact the precarity. So the fact that it is difficult to build something durable because everything is connected with the longer or shorter life of each of the colleagues at the EUI. … I understand the logic, but I found it not very congenial to what I wanted to do, to have always to start from zero with the construction of relations. [...]*
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> *It was a moment in which the students were very active because it was the period of austerity. … in 2011, there was a collective … called prezzemolo. … Many of them came from Southern Europe and Ireland. … it was the period of memorandums imposed by EU, of evidence that the EU was not a benign type of regulatory institution, that … just granted better conditions for all, but an institution that made political choices and these political choices were more favorable for some countries, for instance, those more competitive economically, and less for the others. … Prezzemolo was located in an office in front of mine and so I could also do some observation and it was really highly participated; there were debates about how to … oppose these types of policies that also hit some of the students, particularly because there were countries that were no longer able to pay the grants.*



Interview with Michael Goerke, Jan Schubert (German):

> *Ich hab dann mich, was die Vertretung des Personals angeht, erst um 2010 beschäftigt oder eingemischt und da ging es eben auch darum, dass gleiche Arbeit halt, gleich bezahlt werden soll. Da haben wir dieses Survey damals lange, lange diskutiert und vorbereitet und dann realisiert. Das Ganze ist mehr oder weniger ohne wirklichen Effekt geblieben, also es hat sich niemand auf diese Umfrage je bezogen, um was zu fordern oder zu begründen, dass Änderungen da stattfinden. Aber es ist eben Teil eines "Kampfes" in Anführungszeichen gewesen, hier Human Resources als Department überhaupt mal autonom, selbstständig existierend einzuführen.*
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> *I didn't really get involved in staff representation until around 2010, and one of the key issues back then was that equal work should be paid equally. We spent a long, long time discussing and preparing that survey back then, and then carried it out. The whole thing more or less had no real impact – in other words, nobody ever referred to that survey to make a demand or to justify changes being made. But it was simply part of a 'struggle' – in inverted commas – to establish Human Resources as a department that existed autonomously and independently in the first place.*

Interview with Stefano Bartolini, Georgia Katakou (originally in English):

> *If there is one thing that has not changed is the division between administrators and academics is stronger, more persistent at the EUI than it is in any other national university, because in a national university the connection between administrator and academic is close and permanent and lasts sometimes for decades! At the EUI, given the statutory differences in terms of contract, administrators have the sense they have to deal with continuously new [academics].*



Interview with Antonio Corretto, Maria Sole Barbieri (originally in Italian):

> *Quando ho cominciato a lavorare, per chiamare l'Ungheria potevano volerci due ore. Con la Russia comunicavamo con il telex. Il cambiamento è stato epocale. Passare dal telex alla mail è stata una cosa sconvolgente. Prima tutto era molto più lento. E adesso, con tutti questi programmi e con l'intelligenza artificiale, secondo me siamo davanti a un altro cambiamento enorme: credo che metà dell'amministrazione potrebbe anche andare a casa. L'Istituto è sempre stato all'avanguardia. siamo stati prima a mettere la cablatura il doppino telefonico per fare la trasmissione dati in Italia, i primi dopo il Vaticano. Però la tecnologia non deve sostituire le relazioni. Quello che abbiamo perso è proprio il rapporto umano.*
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> *When I started working, it could take up to two hours just to place a phone call to Hungary. With Russia, we communicated by telex. The change has been monumental. Moving from telex to email was truly revolutionary. Back then, everything was much slower. And now, with all these new software tools and artificial intelligence, I think we are facing another major transformation: in my view, half of the administrative work could eventually be automated. The Institute has always been at the forefront of innovation. We were among the first in Italy to install telephone-pair cabling for data transmission, second only to the Vatican. However, technology should not replace human relationships. What we have lost, above all, is human connection.*

**Interview with Ramon Marimon,
Jan Schubert (originally in English):**

> *PhDs everywhere, and in Europe in particular. That was you have your advisor, and then you meet with your advisor, and each one has its own. In contrast, what, it was more useful in economics was that we have all, we have a large group of students. There's more formal training in particular needed, and therefore it's more of a collective enterprise. At the end of the story, of course, one is more responsible for the ones that we have, like, [00:11:37] first and second advisees is. And for that, for example, I was here the first to start having them as a group. That worked out very well. I mean, because you have more interrelation. It's not that you just… you are… the problem we tend to have in social science is that sometimes it's true that it's important to sit down and do your work, but sometimes it becomes a little too lonely. So it's… it's good… it's good to… to have an environment that… that you communicate with others and you understand.*

**Interview with Linda Gilbert,
Zsófia Veszely (originally in English):**

> *[Raising children] wasn't easy. It wasn't easy at all because we didn't even have family to help us. So we were both working at the Institute and we both had kids to raise [...] Even choice of schools for the children, unfortunately… unfortunately, depended on school hours. Who would be available to pick up? At the very beginning, but this was before I had my kids, but at the very beginning there was no support within the Institute for childcare.*

**Interview with Donatella della Porta,
Benno Gammerl (originally in English):**

> *When I was at the EUI, my department was very pluralistic inside. So it was a space in which different visions, epistemologies, methodologies and so on could come together. Now I think there is a tendency towards specialization seen as professionalism and I think this would be a regretful development, because for me at least, the richness of the EUI was small departments, but with … excellent professors and accepting pluralism of approaches as a value. I think this is something that, from my memory of what worked in the past and my utopia for the future, is a valuable element.*



Interview with Simonida Kacarska, Wojciech Białożyt (originally in English):

The sense of appreciation of knowledge and merit was something that I felt was present throughout the EUI. As a Policy Leader Fellow, I was relieved of the burden of academic performance that I had carried at different places before. And those high academic expectations and merit were combined with a very friendly environment, such as that in Tuscany, which made for a very unique experience. I think the EUI values both a humanistic approach and academic performance. When one reflects on the challenges Europe is facing, one can see that places like the EUI are probably even more important than when I was here in 2018.

Interview with Yves Mény, Aude Foucoin (originally in French):

Qu'est-ce qui différencie pour vous l'Institut des autres universités ? Mais à propos de la méthode de travail, donc comment vous conduisez vos recherches finalement ?
Oui, alors là, il y a des variations évidemment assez considérables d'un département à l'autre. En dépit de toutes les tentatives, je dirais, de faire des recherches interdisciplinaires, il n'y a pas eu, je dirais, de très grands succès dans ce domaine, dans ce sens que chacun reste un peu accroché à sa discipline. Soit en raison des méthodologies utilisées, soit du fait que la reconnaissance académique est presque exclusivement fondée, au niveau national et même international parfois, sur l'appartenance à une discipline, à ses règles, etc. Donc je dois dire que le rêve interdisciplinaire ne s'est jamais vraiment réalisé. On pourrait dire qu'une partie du rêve multidisciplinaire, oui, s'est réalisée. C'est-à-dire qu'un nombre peut-être limité, mais tout de même un certain nombre de chercheurs s'intéressent à ce qui se passe chez le voisin, vont suivre des séminaires : des juristes vont aller chez les sociologues, ou un historien. Alors évidemment, ce qui peut accrocher ce caractère multidisciplinaire, c'est le fait qu'il y ait des thèmes qui soient conjoints ou qui soient proches les uns des autres.

Par exemple, dans le cas de Vincent Wright, avec qui j'avais collaboré, nous avions choisi un thème qui était délibérément multidisciplinaire. À l'époque, on était en pleine crise de l'acier européen — enfin, une des crises, parce que, oui, jusqu'à la mort finale, pratiquement. Et puis il y avait une grande diversification des problèmes, depuis les bresciani, qui recyclaient l'acier déjà utilisé, jusqu'aux méga-sidérurgies, par exemple à Tarente, ou à Fos, près de Marseille, ou à Dunkerque. Bon, il y avait de multiples problèmes, et il y avait des résistances sociales très fortes. Par exemple, les Napolitains ont résisté pendant des années à la fermeture de la sidérurgie de Bagnoli ; et puis les Toscans ont résisté plus fort que les autres, et ils ont maintenu la sidérurgie de Piombino, qui n'est plus que l'ombre d'elle-même. Piombino était la ville de l'acier, et il y avait une forte liaison entre la politique et l'économie : le Parti communiste de l'époque était évidemment l'empereur incontesté de ce domaine.

Donc vous voyez, on s'est dit ensemble : on va étudier cette crise de l'acier, à la fois au niveau national, au niveau européen et au niveau mondial, puisqu'il y avait aussi des répercussions du fait qu'il y avait davantage d'intérêt à produire de l'acier dans des sidérurgies au bord de mer plutôt qu'en Lorraine — parce qu'en Lorraine, le minerai était pauvre, le charbon était épuisé, alors qu'à Fos-sur-Mer, on faisait tout venir de l'extérieur et on traitait cela sur place. Bon, donc il y avait des problèmes qui étaient différents d'un pays à l'autre, d'un secteur de la sidérurgie à l'autre. Et puis il y avait les problèmes sociaux, il y avait l'intervention européenne à travers la CECA, il y avait les financements européens à travers la CECA. Donc c'était vraiment très complexe, et on a construit une équipe qui comportait des économistes, des juristes, des politologues.

Mais ça a été une des tentatives — il y en a eu d'autres, bien sûr. Ce que je veux dire, c'est que cela reste un peu une rareté, quand même, même aujourd'hui, je pense, dans l'Institut. Alors donc, de ce point de vue-là, l'objectif de l'interdisciplinarité, qui est un objectif très difficile, n'a pas vraiment été atteint. Mais bon, je crois que c'est partout dans le monde, dans les universités, c'est ainsi : la structuration en silos verticaux disciplinaires reste le phénomène marquant.

What do you think sets the Institute apart from other universities? But regarding working methods — how do you actually conduct your research?
Yes, well, there are obviously quite considerable variations from one department to another. Despite all the attempts, I would say, to carry out interdisciplinary research, there hasn't been, I would say, a great deal of success in that area, in the sense that everyone remains rather attached to their own discipline. Either because of the methodologies used, or because academic recognition is almost exclusively based, at national level and sometimes even international level, on belonging to a discipline, to its rules, and so on. So I have to say the interdisciplinary dream was never really achieved. One could say that part of the multidisciplinary dream, yes, was achieved. That is to say, a perhaps limited number, but still a certain number of researchers, take an interest in what's happening next door, go along to seminars: lawyers go along to the sociologists, or a historian. What can

obviously help foster this multidisciplinary character is the fact that there are themes which are joint, or close to one another.

For example, in the case of Vincent Wright, with whom I had collaborated, we had deliberately chosen a multidisciplinary theme. At the time, we were in the middle of the European steel crisis — well, one of the crises, because, yes, right up until its final demise, practically. And there was a great diversification of problems, from the bresciani, who recycled steel that had already been used, right up to the mega steelworks, for example at Taranto, or at Fos, near Marseille, or at Dunkirk. Well, there were multiple problems, and there was very strong social resistance. For example, the Neapolitans resisted the closure of the Bagnoli steelworks for years; and the Tuscans resisted even harder, and kept the Piombino steelworks going, which is now but a shadow of its former self. Piombino was the steel town, and there was a strong link between politics and the economy: the Communist Party of the time was clearly the undisputed ruler of that domain.

So you see, we said to ourselves: let's study this steel crisis, at national, European and global level all at once, since there were also knock-on effects, for instance from the fact that there was greater interest in producing steel at coastal steelworks rather than in Lorraine — because in Lorraine the ore was poor quality, the coal was exhausted, whereas at Fos-sur-Mer everything was brought in from outside and processed there. So there were problems that differed from one country to another, from one sector of the steel industry to another. And then there were the social problems, there was European intervention through the ECSC, there was European funding through the ECSC — so it really was very complex, and we put together a team made up of economists, lawyers, political scientists.

But that was one of the attempts — there have been others, of course. What I mean is that it remains rather a rarity, even today, I think, at the Institute. So from that point of view, the goal of interdisciplinarity, which is a very difficult goal, hasn't really been achieved. But then again, I think that's the case everywhere in the world, in universities — the vertical structuring into disciplinary silos remains the defining phenomenon.

Interview with Donatella della Porta, Benno Gammerl (originally in English):

I've participated recently in one of the alternative events [at the EUI]. And the students were quite critical, also voicing ... fear of repressions within institutions at the EUI, so fear that the administration would not welcome their political commitment. I'm not there, so I cannot judge, but what I know is that there was not such fear in my time, neither in my time as a professor nor in my time as a student.

The spirit of the EUI: The everyday, social life, languages, and long-lasting connections

This block of questions was really a way to find out, how did people spend their time at the EUI, what did a typical workday look like and how did work merge with socialising, activities, cultural programmes, interactions. As a multilingual institution, languages such as French, German and Italian really dominated the EUI which also created different cultural groups, which has expanded and diversified over time (many referred to the EUI as a big family when it was only the Badia building). Formal and informal interactions often got intertwined, facilitating social life and keeping the EUI a professional space at the same time. In many answers, the cafeteria and the canteen, as well as Fiasco bar are present as central points of meeting and socialising.

Interview with Luisa Passerini, Georgia Katakou and Zsófia Veszely (originally in English):

What I would like to add is that much of what was happening was informal, in terms of intellectual terms also. Meeting at the Mensa, walking together to the School of Music, or Villa Le Fontanelle… The experience there, it's difficult to archive, because it was so informal, and perhaps other colleagues have also talked to you about this. There were, of course, formal moments of exchange, like the academic council or the departmental council, but these were not extremely formal. However, the academic council was very large, so it was not the place for developing an exchange.



**Interview with Donatella della Porta,
Benno Gammerl (originally in English):**

> *… speaking, in fact, of my life as a student. It was a golden ghetto. … There was a total detachment between the EUI and Florence …. And this is something that I also lived when I was a professor, so also with discomfort by the students about life as expats. I had colleagues who did not speak Italian and stayed in Italy for many years and understood nothing about Italian politics. … And this was quite frustrating. But when I was a student, I sort of enjoyed this type of life, so being always together like on campus.*

**Interview with Eleonore Eckmann,
Carlotta Rudolph (originally in German):**

> *Und wie gesagt, aber vieles war möglich, weil es so klein war. Also zum Beispiel mit meinem, mit dem Professor, den ich dann hatte, das war ein Franzose. Und sein Deutsch war so lala. Und mein Französisch war so lala. Wir trafen uns im Italienischkurs und beschlossen, dann ist unsere Arbeitssprache Italienisch. Und das ging dann. Ich schreibe Deutsch, weil er Deutsch lesen kann. Er macht mir seine Bemerkung auf Französisch, weil ich Französisch lesen kann. Aber wenn wir reden, reden wir italienisch miteinander. solche Sachen waren möglich.*
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> *And as I said, many things were possible because it was so small. So, for example, with mine, with the professor I then had, that was a Frenchman. And his German was so lala. And my French was so lala. We met in the Italian course and decided, then our working language is Italian. And that was it. I write German because he can read German. He makes me his remark in French because I can read French. But when we talk, we speak Italian to each other, things like that were possible.*

Interview with Yves Mény,
Aude Foucoin (originally in French):

Et donc, quelle initiative finalement avez-vous encouragée, ou qu'est-ce que vous avez combattu, finalement, à cette époque-là ?
Vraiment, je le vois encore, je me vois encore à table. J'ai conservé de ce déjeuner un traumatisme, parce que je trouvais que c'était exagéré. Et il faut bien dire qu'un des grands thèmes sous-jacents — qui aujourd'hui apparaît peut-être un peu comme ridicule, mais qui était généreux — c'était de dire : il faut défendre le plurilinguisme. Ce qui voulait dire, pour les Français, qu'il fallait que le français soit la langue de travail, ou une des langues de travail, etc. — ce qui fut vrai au début, mais qui, progressivement, avec les élargissements, le fait que beaucoup d'étudiants ne connaissaient pas un mot de français quand ils arrivaient… Et puis, bon, c'est ainsi : l'anglais est devenu la lingua franca en général.

Moi, ce que je regrette toujours, ce que je regrette même aujourd'hui, c'est que beaucoup d'étudiants — en particulier, souvent, les étudiants anglophones d'ailleurs — ne fassent aucun effort, par exemple, pour apprendre l'italien (je ne parle même pas du français), et qui savent à peine aller au-delà de la commande au restaurant. Donc ça me gêne. Je trouve que ça fait un peu colonisateurs, qui s'installent dans le pays et qui sont indifférents à la culture de ce pays — surtout quand cette culture est la culture italienne, qu'on connaît, n'est-ce pas. Alors voilà, ça me gênait un peu. Ensuite, que la langue de travail et d'échange soit l'anglais, eh bien, c'est ainsi, le monde est ainsi : le monde n'est pas plat, il tourne, et voilà. Bon, mais donc ça, c'était très traumatisant. [...]

Alors, en plus, il y avait une situation différente d'un département à l'autre : le département d'histoire utilisait encore beaucoup le français, et l'italien un peu ; le département d'économie, presque exclusivement l'anglais ; le département de sciences politiques tendait à utiliser presque exclusivement l'anglais ; et le département de droit, c'était un peu un mixed bag.

So what initiative did you end up encouraging, or what did you end up opposing, at that time?
I can really still see it, I can still see myself at the table. That lunch left me with a kind of trauma, because I found it excessive. And it has to be said that one of the great underlying themes — which today may seem a little ridiculous, but which was well-meant — was to say: we must defend multilingualism. Which meant, for the French, that French had to be the working language, or one of the working languages, and so on — which was true, at the start, but which gradually, with the enlargements, the fact that many students didn't know a word of French when they arrived… And then, well, that's how it is: English became the lingua franca generally speaking.

What I still regret, what I regret even today, is that many students — particularly, often, English-speaking students, in fact — make no effort whatsoever, for example, to learn Italian — I'm not even talking about French — and barely know how to get beyond ordering in a restaurant. So that bothers me. I think that makes them come across a bit like colonisers, settling into a country and remaining indifferent to that country's culture — especially when that culture is Italian culture, which, as we know, is… Well, there you are, that did bother me a little. As for the working and exchange language being English, well, that's how it is, that's the way of the world: the world isn't flat, it turns, and there you go. Anyway, that was very traumatic.
[...] And on top of that, the situation differed from one department to another: the History Department still made considerable use of French, and Italian a little; the Economics Department almost exclusively English; the Political and Social Sciences Department tended to use almost exclusively English; and the Law Department was a bit of a mixed bag.

Interview with Jean-Marie Palayret,
Dieter Schlenker (originally in French):

Les réunions de chefs de service par exemple, jusqu'à récemment, étaient en français. Jusqu'à Josep Borrel qui est devenu ensuite notre représentant du service extérieur de l'UE, on faisait des réunions de chefs de service en français. C'est avec son successeur qu'on les a faites en anglais. Et un peu sous Patrick Masterson, parce que lui ne parlait pas français,…
Pour montrer l'importance encore dans l'administration, le français était encore une langue très parlée ici à l'Institut.

The meetings of department heads, for example, were conducted in French until recently. Until the time Josep Borrell became the EU's foreign policy chief, the meetings were held in French. It was under his successor that they switched to English. And a little under Patrick Masterson, since he didn't speak French...

To illustrate its importance within the administration, French was still a widely spoken language here at the Institute.

Interview with Senada Šelo Šabić,
Karla Žeravčić (originally in Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian):

> *To je, recimo, bilo jedno veliko iskustvo: da izađete iz svog bubblea, kakav god on bio. Može biti brutalan, može biti egzotičan, ali je to uvijek dobro… ta interakcija i mobilnost, susreti, druženja, dijalozi. Mislim da je to jedan poseban proces odrastanja i stjecanja znanja. Kad razgovarate s pametnim, zainteresiranim mladim ljudima o temama koje dijelite, za koje dijelite interes, mislim da već samo to boravljenje zajedno je iskustvo za sebe, i onda naravno formalno znanje koje stječete.*
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> *That was a great experience: getting out of your own bubble, whatever it may be. It can be brutal, it can be exotic, but it is always good… that interaction and mobility, encounters, socialising, dialogue. I think that is a particular process of growing up and acquiring knowledge. When you talk to smart, interested young people about topics that you share, that you share an interest in, I think that simply being together is an experience in itself, and then of course there is the formal knowledge you acquire.*

Interview with Felix Corell,
Jonah J. Berger (originally in English):

> *[...] lunches were really... In a sense, the heart of the day at the EUI, at the eco department at least, because you actually... subconsciously got a lot of work done there. Just by chatting with the others, we often talked about work there, but in a relaxed way, of course, an unforced way. And everyone who wanted to leave could just leave and go back to their office.*
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> *But sometimes we would sit there for hours on the terrace, getting another lemon soda and another coffee and just learn, right, and teach each other there. So it's the closest thing I have ever experienced to this kind of textbook ideal of how academic life works, right. This kind of carefree exchange of ideas, mentoring each other because of your hunger for knowledge.*

Interview with Carla Parrini,
Maria Sole Barbieri (originally in Italian):

> *Beh, sicuramente il senso di comunità si è modificato nel tempo, ma non sempre l'organizzazione di più eventi conviviali rappresenta una reale evoluzione. Il senso di comunità era molto forte nei primi anni perché all'inizio l'ambiente piccolo e c'erano tanti scambi fra tutto lo staff. Era veramente una comunità che potevamo considerare una grande famiglia, dove i rapporti fra colleghi andavano al di là del puro rapporto professionale ed era naturale condividere anche parte della vita privata. In quegli anni c'erano tanti momenti di convivialità perché ti incontravi personalmente nei vari uffici o al bar e ti ritrovavi a parlare di tutto commentando eventi, scambiandosi opinioni, cosa che si è molto ridotta dal momento in cui i contatti lavorativi sono diventati via email anziché di persona.*
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> *Well, the sense of community has certainly changed over time, but organizing more social events does not necessarily represent genuine progress. The sense of community was very strong in the early years because the environment was smaller and there was a great deal of interaction among all staff members. It was truly a community that could be considered one big family, where relationships among colleagues went beyond purely professional ties, and it was natural to share aspects of one's private life as well.*
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> *In those years, there were many occasions for informal socializing because people would meet in person in the various offices or at the bar, and conversations would naturally extend to all sorts of topics—commenting on current events, exchanging opinions, and simply interacting with one another. This has diminished considerably since work-related communication has increasingly shifted from face-to-face interactions to email.*

**Interview with Giorgio Brundo,
Leonardo Bruni (originally in Italian):**

> ***Che cosa ti è piaciuto – o ti piace – di più dell'Istituto universitario europeo e cosa invece ti è piaciuto di meno?***
> *[...] piacere? Bisogna interpretare che tipo di piacere puoi sentire, o avvertire e così via. Però io sono legato... anche alla parte artistica delle sedi. Quindi vedere la trasformazione di questi stabili – da come li ho conosciuti… quando me li hanno presentati la prima volta, li ho guardati, ho fatto le considerazioni, mi sono scervellato, con l'apporto indispensabile degli esperti, per trovare soluzioni di sistemazione funzionale nel rispetto della tutela dei siti e poi a cose fatte, nel silenzio della sera quando esco, o la mattina quando ritorno, mi guardo intorno, e mi piace.*
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> ***What did you like -- or do you like -- most about the European University Institute, and what did you like the least?***
> *[...] like? "Like" needs a bit of interpreting, because you have to say what kind of pleasure you feel, or perceive, and so on. But I'm attached to... also the artistic side of [the campus]. So seeing the transformation of these buildings – from how I first knew them… when they were first shown to me, I looked at them, I reflected, I racked my brains, with the essential input of experts, to find solutions for functional renovation while respecting the protection of these sites, and then once it's done, in the quiet of the evening when I leave, or in the morning when I return, I look around, and this is what I like.*

**Interview with Cinzia Ceccatelli,
Alice Zamai (originally in Italian):**

> *[...] La festa [per il suo pensionamento, ndt] è stata… me lo chiese Katinka, che anche lei ho visto studente qua e… e poi ha fatto una super… una super carriera e lei mi conosce bene, mi conosce da quando lei... ti ripeto, da 50 anni. E lei quando mi disse, guarda, c'erano altre due signore della Creche che andavano in pensione, e una segretaria dice "io ti voglio inserire insieme a loro" e gli dissi "oddio, mi conosci come sono?". Anche, lo sai, quando è andato in pensione dei professori, delle segretarie, mi hanno sempre invitata alle feste, ma io sono sempre stata molto, non sono… ma non perché non volevo andare, ma sono sempre stata molto nel… nel mio, diciamo. Sicché ecco questa cosa della festa mi aveva, le dissi "guarda non voglio fare discorsi, non voglio", "no, non devi dire niente". Ma guarda una cosa… venne fatta a fine novembre, nella sala delle conferenze, ma più che altro i commenti del Segretario Generale, di tutti, guarda. Ho tutto… i filmati, mi commuovo tutte le volte che li riguardo. [...] Perché loro veramente mi hanno sempre considerata una di loro, sì, veramente. E questo ti fa piacere.*
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> *No, of course. The party [for her retirement, ndt] was… I was asked by Katinka, who I also saw as a student here… and then she had a great career, and she knows me well, she had known me since, I repeat, fifty years ago. And when she told me "See, there are two more women from the Creche retiring", and a secretary says, "I want to make you join [the party] with them", and I said, "Oh God, do you know who I am?". Even, you know, when professors retired, secretaries, they always invited me to parties, but I was always very, I never was… but not because I didn't want to go, but I was always… I kept to my own, let' say. So yes, this thing with the party had, I told her, "Look, I don't want to give speeches, I don't want to", "No, you don't have to say anything". But look… it took place in November, in the conference room, but mostly the remarks of the Secretary General, of everyone, really. I have everything… the videos, I tear up every time I see them. [...] they always considered me one of them, really. And this makes one happy.*

Interview with Gherardo Bonini, Alice Zamai (originally in Italian)

> *GB: [...] Io sono dell'opinione che noi come archivi, e qui come Istituto, il personale è integrazione, quindi già noi— quando lavoravo agli archivi all'Istituto avevamo un concreto esempio di integrazione, avevamo un lavoro molto bello, molto interessante, di grande soddisfazione, con aiuti e sostegni indubbi, però il personale è sempre stato più lingue, e quindi anche questo credo nei minimi termini sia integrazione, perché appunto si cerca di vedere francamente le cose che uniscono, le cose con cui si può collaborare. Si può collaborare fruttuosamente con altri colleghi di altre culture, di altre estrazioni.*
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> *GB: [...] I am of the opinion that we as archives and we as the Institute… the personnel is integration, meaning that we—when I was working at the archives at the Institute we had a concrete example of integration, we had a beautiful job, very interesting, very rewarding, with solid help and support, but the personnel was always multilingual, and so this I also believe to be integration in its simplest terms, because one frankly tries to see what is bringing you together, the things on which you can collaborate. You can collaborate fruitfully with colleagues coming from other cultures, other walks of life.*

Interview with Silvia Albrizio, Carlotta Rudolph (originally in English):

> *Wir hatten in Seminaren immer so diese Konkurrenz „Ich bin schlau" und „ich bin schlauer". „ich weiß das besser" und so weiter, das hast du in den Sprachprogrammen nicht. Da hattest du eben auch gemischt, sowohl Studierende als Professoren, als Staff, Leute, alle zusammen. Und, also wir haben unheimlich viel roleplay und Partnerarbeit und solche Sachen gemacht, kreatives Schreiben auch. Das war einfach lustig und die Professoren wurden wieder zu, zu Kindern fast. Also die haben sich amüsiert. Das war eine ganz andere Geschichte als in den Seminaren, wo doch großer Druck auch herrscht. Das heißt, die Leute sind gern zu den Sprachkursen, also wenigstens zu unserer Sprachkursen, gekommen.*
>
> *We've always had seminars with this competition 'I'm smart' and 'I'm smarter'. "I know better" and so on, you don't have that in the language programmes. There you had just mixed, both students, professors, staff, people, all together. And, so we did a lot of roleplay and partner work and stuff like that, creative writing too. That was just funny and the professors got back to being kids almost. So, they were having fun. This was a very different story than in the seminars, where there was a lot of pressure. That is, people liked to come to the language courses, at least to our language courses.*

Interview with Donatella della Porta, Benno Gammerl (originally in English):

> *We got, when I got the ERC grant, the entire Villa Pagliaiuola for ourselves, because the Villa Pagliaiuola was totally abandoned. Nobody wanted to go because it's in a very narrow street and considered to be peripheral towards the Badia Fiesolana. And it was a wonderful period because we occupied it. We were about 25. There was even no porters, so it was just for us. We organized lunch, dinners, cinema, clubs, and all these type of things.*

Interview with Jean-Marie Palayret, Dieter Schlenker (originally in French):

> *Et puis je dois dire qu'à l'époque, nous étions dans cette Villa Poggiolo qui de mon avis - ainsi que celui de beaucoup d'historiens ou de chercheurs - était un peu excentrée par rapport au campus de l'Institut. La Villa Poggiolo se situe en effet facilement à deux ou trois kilomètres du campus, et elle avait été choisie surtout parce qu'il ne s'agissait pas d'un bâtiment de nature historique, ce qui fait qu'on pouvait plus facilement y faire des transformations pour y construire des magasins d'archives ou des salles accueillant du public. Mais elle était un peu excentrée, ce qui ne favorisait pas non plus l'arrivée des chercheurs.*
>
> *I must say that at the time, we were based at Villa Poggiolo, which in my opinion and that of many historians and researchers, was somewhat removed from the Institute's campus. Villa Poggiolo is a good two or three kilometers away from the campus, it had been selected primarily because it was not a historic building, making it easier to carry out the modifications needed to create archive storage areas or public-facing spaces. However, its somewhat removed location did not exactly encourage researchers to visit.*

Interview with Silvia Albrizio, Carlotta Rudolph (originally in English):

> *I mean, there was a possibility of doing a lot of activities. So, I did theater all the years, every year with soccer, the Copa Pavone. We, I think, were the only or first only women team. It was "all the sexy men". So, we had even cheerleader men. And then what we did, well, we started like a think tank, at a certain point. And it was called "Project Insight Europe". And it was very cool. We were meeting at each other's house, drinking wine, discussing economic issues. And we then tried, we had a website. We tried to post some, some articles, like not many, but some. I think it was very nice that we did a lot of trips together. In Tuscany, we also went skiing. The first year we went to Puglia to get all together.*

Interview with Jean-Marie Palayret, Dieter Schlenker (originally in French):

> *Donc immédiatement le fait d'être nommé à Florence a posé problème parce que ma femme étant professeur d'italien en France [à Strasbourg], et on la voyait mal enseigner le français en Italie, … donc on a convenu que je rentrerais tous les quinze jours - trois semaines pour un long week-end. Donc pendant des années - il existait encore à cette époque le train de nuit entre Bruxelles, Strasbourg, Florence, Rome - j'ai fait toutes les trois semaines un aller-retour.*
>
> *My appointment to Florence immediately posed a problem, because my wife was an Italian teacher in France [in Strasbourg], and it was hard to imagine her teaching French in Italy, … so we agreed that I would come back every fifteen days/three weeks for a long weekend. So, for years – there was still a night train running between Brussels, Strasbourg, Florence, and Rome back then – I made that round trip every three weeks.*

Interview with Veerle Deckmyn, Aurora Hamm (originally in English):

> *Lots of people fall in love with people while working in the library!*

A world beyond the hill: how external events and places affected the EUI.

What was it like for former EUI members to live and work in Florence, in the Tuscan hills? We wanted to find out how they experienced moving away, being in one of the main cultural, academic and artistic centres of Europe. What is considered an EUI place, also outside the Institute's premises? Was this an isolated experience or not? What global events had an impact on people's lives at the EUI? Responders said that the EUI is kind of a safe haven, but was quite isolated from the city centre until the establishment of the School of Transnational Governance close to Piazza San Marco.

Interview with Donatella della Porta, Benno Gammerl (originally in English):

> *… it was just Europe. And at a certain point, it becomes a bit claustrophobic to be forced within these borders. In my institution, the Scuola Normale Superiore, there are more students also from the Global South. And so also reflections on colonialism, racism and other negative aspects of Europe are easier to single out. … the dimensions of a … think tank in which the promotion of Europe became valued sort of contrasted with my view that was more critical of the limits of the European Union and especially with my visions of the European University Institute [as] a university, so [a place] to develop more critical views and to also criticize EU politics and policies.*

Interview with Yves Mény, Aude Foucoin (originally in French):

> *Quand les pays sont rentrés, j'ai fait la tournée des popotes de ces dix États pour dire bienvenue, on est prêt à vous accueillir. Et pour que le problème financier n'en soit pratiquement pas un, on ne leur faisait presque rien payer, c'était ridicule. Leur problème à eux, c'était de donner des bourses qui, même si elles étaient à Florence, n'étaient pas mirobolantes et restaient insuffisantes — ces bourses représentaient trois, quatre ou cinq fois l'équivalent du salaire moyen d'un ouvrier dans les pays baltes, etc. Et ça, ça a été une surprise.*
>
> *J'ai vu que, en fonction des personnes bien sûr — parce que, surtout dans des petits pays comme ça, les personnes comptent énormément —, il y avait dans certains cas beaucoup d'appétence à adhérer à l'Institut universitaire européen, et puis il y avait au contraire des pays que ça laissait complètement froids, et qui disaient : bon, on a d'autres problèmes. Et puis, à l'époque, par exemple, je me souviens d'avoir dialogué avec des ministres de l'Éducation qui avaient votre âge [la vingtaine], si vous voulez. Eux aussi, ils avaient tout à découvrir, et des problèmes énormes à affronter. Et peut-être que l'Institut universitaire européen, c'était la cerise sur le gâteau — mais il n'y avait pas encore le gâteau, quoi.*
>
> *When the countries joined, I did the rounds of all ten states to say: welcome, we're ready to receive you. And so that the financial issue wouldn't really be one at all, we charged them next to nothing — it was almost derisory. Their problem was providing scholarships which, even if they were in Florence, weren't lavish and remained insufficient — these scholarships were worth three, four or five times the average wage of a worker in the Baltic states, and so on. And that came as a surprise.*
>
> *I found that, depending on the individuals involved, of course — because, especially in small countries like that, individuals matter enormously — there was, in some cases, a great deal of enthusiasm for joining the European University Institute, and, conversely, there were also countries that were left completely cold by it, saying, well, we have other problems. And then, at the time, for example, I remember talking with education ministers who were your age [in their twenties], if you like. They too had everything still to discover, and huge problems to face. And perhaps the European University Institute was the icing on the cake — but there wasn't yet a cake to speak of.*

**Interview with Ursula Brose,
Jan Schubert (originally in German):**

Wir hatten damals zu Hause noch keinen Fernseher und da war die Bar Fiasco in der Beziehung auch attraktiv, weil man dann Nachrichten im Fernsehen [schauen konnte] oder so. [Zum Beispiel] bei der Wiedervereinigung.
JS: Ah ja?
das haben wir alles in der Bar Fiasco dann erlebt, und solche Sachen, ne? Also, die Mauer, wie die Mauer fiel.
JS: [01:07:17] Ja, am 9. November waren Sie im Fiasco?
UB: Ja, am 9. November, da war ich in der Bar Fiasco.
JS: Wie war da die Stimmung?
UB: [01:07:25] Ja, es war seltsam, also die Deutschen waren erst mal sehr [euphorisch], konnten's nicht fassen. (...) Auf der Treppe kam einer mir entgegen und, ein ganz stiller Typ eigentlich, hat mich umarmt und ‚Die Mauer ist weg!' Er konnte es also nicht fassen, aber dann war das alles ganz groß, haben nach Hause telefoniert. Und ja, dann hatten wir zufällig noch eine Praktikantin oder eine Gaststudentin aus Ost-Berlin, die war im History Department und, naja, die haben wir natürlich ausgefragt nach Strich und Faden.

We didn't have a television at home back then either, and that's why the Fiasco bar was so appealing in that respect – because you could catch the news on television or whatever, for instance, when reunification happened.
JS: Oh, really?
We experienced all that at the Fiasco bar, and things like that, right? I mean, the Wall – how it came down.
JS: So, were you at Fiasco on 9 November?
UB: Yes, on 9 November, I was at the Bar Fiasco.
JS: What was the atmosphere like there?
UB: [01:07:25] Well, it was quite strange – at first, the Germans were really [euphoric]. They couldn't believe it. (...) I met one guy on the stairs; he came towards me – a rather quiet sort, actually – and hugged me, saying, 'The Wall's gone!' He just couldn't believe it, but then, well, then it was all huge; we phoned home. And, yes, and then we happened to have an intern or a visiting student from East Berlin – she was in the History Department – and, well, of course we grilled her thoroughly with questions.

**Interview with Luisa Passerini,
Georgia Katakou and Zsófia Veszely (originally in English):**

I better say what I didn't do, or I did in an insufficient form: the relationships between the Institute and Florence have always been rather scarce. I don't know what is the situation now, maybe it is better because there is now also the School of Transnational Governance in the city centre, but at the time there was no such thing. We did try to connect with schools, for instance, and schools of various levels. It was a difficult task, but was well-received and all together, it changed the situation a bit.

**Interview with Stefano Bartolini,
Georgia Katakou (originally in English):**

The EUI had been widely published in the local newspapers. I remember I discovered the EUI from a small article in La Nazione in '72-'73. But to be honest, locals haven't the slightest ideas of what the doctoral programme was! So, there was a very positive perception in the city, that's true! The city was very proud.

**Interview with Leonidas Oikonomakis,
Anna Feleki and Georgia Katakou (originally in Greek):**

Οπότε εμείς πηγαίναμε, πηγαίναμε στις πλατείες, πηγαίναμε στην Ισπανία, πηγαίναμε στην Ελλάδα, κάναμε κάναμε διάφορα πράγματα πέρα απ'το διδακτορικό μας και συγχρόνως φτιάξαμε και ένα κολεκτίβο που λεγόταν Κολεκτίβο Πρετσέμολο (Collettivo Prezzemolo), μαζί με διάφορα παιδιά τέτοιου προφίλ, αλλά εντάχθηκαν κι άλλα παιδιά που δεν ήταν τέτοιο προφίλ ήταν εντελώς upper class αλλά κάπως ήταν και φίλοι μας, και επειδή ιδεολογικά ήταν κοντά σε μας συμμετείχαν. Αυτό έφερε στο EUI μία μεγάλη αναστάτωση, γιατί ξαφνικά εκεί που καλούσαν ξέρω 'γω τον Van Rompuy, ή τον Schäuble και τον υποδέχονταν με στρωμένα χαλιά και γαρύφαλλα, δεν έγινε ακριβώς έτσι, τον υποδέχονταν με διαμαρτυρίες και κάπως έπρεπε το EUI να το αντιμετωπίσει αυτό γιατί δεν του είχε ξανατύχει.

So we went, we went to the squares, we went to Spain, we went to Greece, we did many different things other than our PhD and simultaneously we built a collective, Collettivo Prezzemolo, alongside researchers of our kind, but also other researchers that had a different identity joined, some who were fully upper class but also were somehow our friends, and because they were ideologically close to us they participated. This brought some trouble to the EUI, because suddenly while they used to be able to invite Van Rompuy, or Schäuble, and roll out the red carpet for them, now that was no longer the case. We would receive them with protests, and the EUI somehow had to deal with this because it had not happened before.



**Interview with Prof. Sciarra Silvana,
Anna Feleki and Benno Gammerl (Originally in English):**

> *[It is important] Making researchers here aware, this is a point I really stress, making them aware of the importance of international courts and International Law. Because our current world is ignoring and in fact is killing International Law. Which is crucial for the living of communities and of interchanges and exchanges and for living together at this stage.*

**Interview with Ruth Nirere-Gbipki,
Jonah J. Berger (originally in French):**

> ***Est-ce que vous avez des conseils pour ceux qui sont actuellement à l'Institut et ceux qui arriveront à l'avenir ?***
>
> *Alors moi, pour la situation en général, comme je dis : diversifiez. Ça sera, ça ne pourra être qu'une grande, grande richesse. Ça je continue à le dire. Moi j'ai eu cette richesse parce que je me suis retrouvée injectée dans un monde diversifié. Donc si ça se passe à quelqu'un d'autre comme moi, qui se retrouvent dans un monde diversifié, ça ne pourra que l'enrichir. Qu'enrichir les recherches à l'Institut, je pense, qu'enrichir tout, et le partage, et cetera.*
>
> ***Do you have any advice for those currently at the Institute and those who will join in the future?***
>
> *Well, as for the situation in general, as I always say: diversify. It will, it can only be, a great, great asset. I keep saying that. I've benefited from this richness because I found myself immersed in a diverse world. So if someone else has the same experience as I did, finding themselves in a diverse world, it can only enrich them. It will enrich research at the Institute, I think, and enrich everything else, including collaboration, and so on.*

Interview with Olaf Osica, Wojciech Białożyt (originally in English):

> *The EUI experience was not only intellectual but also very much professional, which I cherish to this day. My key takeaway from the EUI is that the PhD process taught me to think in a structured way and solve problems. I learned that there always needs to be an intellectual structure, an intellectual framework within which one operates, particularly while dealing with ideas or political events. This is something you can sell yourself on the job market, not only in academia but also in many public or private institutions. Being at the EUI was a great learning experience. Beyond that, I was shaped by Italy, its Renaissance dimension, and by the beauty of the city.*

Conclusion

In reading these interview excerpts, as well as conducting interviews ourselves, and hearing our colleagues speak about the interviews they conducted there are some key elements that emerge. Sociability appeared again and again across our interviews, as an essential way through which researchers, professors, and staff experienced their lives in Florence. Academic collaborations emerged from these social moments in the canteen, in the San Domenico pizzeria, the bar over a coffee. Many of these are long-lasting social and professional collaborations. Multilingualism was also a repeated element across these discussions.

The prevalence of some languages over others in the institute (French, Italian, German, and more recently, English) was brought up. Teaching and writing used to be more multilingual, but has over the years become more and more dominated by English. The transnationality of the EUI was also highlighted. Global events were constantly being discussed and brought into the institute by researchers and staff that had personal and professional connections abroad. Notably, moments like the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 were experienced in Fiasco, while researchers in the 2010s joined anti-austerity protests in Greece and Spain. Global political events were brought in the EUI and metabolised, while members of the EUI were also constantly leaving Florence to be involved in their shaping. On the other hand, relationships with Florence and our local community have been described as limited.

Inequality has shaped the history of the EUI. Starting with grant inequality, which has affected researchers since the inception of the institute and has created the need for the creation of activist spaces such as Collettivo Prezzemolo and the Researchers' Union. But equally, our interviewees have noted disparities in how our institute is representing Europe and European identity in relation to gender, race, sexuality and ability. Professorial posts and the researcher community have seemingly been dominated by white men.

Lastly, many of our interviewers brought up what they understand as a lack of engagement with the EUI's past. Even around the fifty-year anniversary of the EUI, there is little to be shown about the history of the institute, and especially from a bottom-up perspective. We envision this project to be a response to this, and to contribute to an inter-generational discussion about the institute. The role of memory in oral history and interviewing comes across most strongly in this section. From our perspective, as researchers, we learned so much about the EUI and it was a real privilege to talk to all of our narrators. Thank you to everyone who agreed to speak with us! We see the institute differently with this knowledge and can place ourselves better in its broader history.

Beyond the team of interviewees, we also wanted to thank a wider team of administrative staff that assisted us in this project. These are: Lisa Benvegnu, who has been with this project since its very early days, Arianna Muneraburchi, Ainara Garcia Esteban, Nandita Menon, Giulia Coda, Fabrizio Borchi, as well as the Communications Service, EUI Events, and EUI Graphic Design.

We wanted to close with a quote from one of our narrators, who offered this message to pass on:

Interview with Carla Parrini, Maria Sole Barbieri (originally in Italian)

Vorrei aggiungere forse qualcosa per le generazioni future dicendo che stiamo festeggiando i cinquant'anni di attività di questo Istituto. Questa è una tappa importante ma non deve essere un punto di arrivo; quindi, i giovani che sono qui adesso hanno il compito di proseguire questo percorso con l'entusiasmo, la dedizione, la collaborazione, delle persone che li hanno preceduti in questi cinquant'anni e li inviterei a considerare che è molto importante il senso collettivo, il senso di collaborazione. Il successo di un gruppo è il successo del singolo, le grandi sfide si vincono solo collaborando e mi sembra un messaggio importante da dare.

I would perhaps like to add something for future generations. We are celebrating fifty years of this Institute's activities, which is an important milestone. However, it should not be seen as a finish line. The younger generations who are here today have the responsibility to carry this journey forward with the same enthusiasm, dedication, and spirit of collaboration that have characterized those who came before them over the past fifty years. I would encourage them to remember the importance of a collective mindset and a collaborative spirit. The success of a group is the success of each individual, and great challenges can only be overcome through cooperation. I believe this is an important message to pass on.

Questionnaire

1. The idea & reality of EUI (How it evolved into what it is from what it was intended).

- Can you tell me a bit about what were you doing at the EUI and when?
- Through what networks did you hear about the EUI?
- What does the EUI mean to you?
- What were your first impressions of the EUI?
- How much were you aware of the EUI as an institution when you worked here?
- What were your expectations of the EUI before coming? Were they met?
- What is your most vivid memory of the EUI?
- What did/do you like best about the EUI? (What did/do you not like?)

2. Important debates, impact, innovation, contributions.

- What were the big debates you remember from your time at EUI?
- What initiatives were encouraged, tolerated, or fought against? • Were there any taboos/conflicts?

3. Work culture

- What makes work at the EUI different from other places?
- What tools/working methods/technologies did you use? (library, EUI resources, departments, working structures)
- How did you do your research/work at the EUI?

4. The Spirit/Environment (everyday life, multinational, multilingual interactions)

- How would you describe your usual day, routine, at EUI?
- What kind of habits did you pick up at EUI?
- How would you describe the atmosphere within your department?
- What or who did you take with you after your time at EUI?
- Which people, activities shaped your time at EUI? Are you still in contact with them?
- Which languages did you speak most? How did your relationships vary or depend upon the language you used? Did you learn any new languages?

5. Social dynamics (material conditions, unions, childcare, conflict, Coppa Pavone, staff dynamics)

- How did you find the EUI as a workplace/employer?
- How did the EUI help you with your personal circumstances? Or not? (material conditions, unions, childcare, conflict, Coppa Pavone, staff dynamics)
- What EUI policy had an impact on your life?

- How equal/fair did you find the EUI?
- What were the main changes in your career in administrative terms (promotions, status)?

6. EUI as an International Organisation

- How did you understand the EUI structure? Or did you?
- What did European integration mean to you before and during your time at EUI?
- Have you thought about this before coming to the EUI?
- During your career, did you work for other organisations/institutions?
- What brought together and divided people?
- What were people's attitudes towards the European institutions?
- How does the EUI differ from other communities you have been part of?

7. Politics and global events

- Did any big event impact your life at the EUI? What were they?
- What can you remember about enlargements of the EUI member states?

8. Places

- Where do you remember spending a lot of time? Why? And with whom?
- Where would you advise newcomers to go?
- What is an EUI space for you?
- Where did you meet other EUI people?
- What did the presence of EUI in Italy, and Florence specifically, mean to you?

Conclusion:

- What were the circumstances of your departure? Where did you head next?
- Is there anything you want to add that has not been mentioned so far?
- Do you have any advice for people currently in the EUI or those joining us in the future?