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From: EK-postbus <postbus@eerstekamer.nl>
Date: Friday, September 11, 2026, 1:14 PM
To: EK-postbus <postbus@eerstekamer.nl>
Subject: FW: Parliamentary representatives @ State of Europe 2026 in Brussels - INVITATION

Attachments:

2026_State of Europe_Invitation_Committee_European_Affairs_Eerste_Kamer.pdf
The 2026 State of Europe & Gala Dinner - Programme.pdf
Frequently_asked_questions - State of Europe - 2026.pdf

Van: 5.1.2.e <5.1.2.e @friendsofeurope.org>
Verzonden: maandag 7 september 2026 13:03
Aan: Griffier <griffier@eerstekamer.nl>
Onderwerp: Parliamentary representatives @ State of Europe 2026 in Brussels

U ontvangt niet vaak e-mail van 5.1.2.e @friendsofeurope.org. Ontdek waarom dit belangrijk is

Dear Secretary General Nehmelman,

I am reaching out in hope that you could help us spread the word and ensure that representatives of the your national Assembly have a possibility to join our 23rd edition of the **Festival of Politics and Ideas - State of Europe high-level roundtable**, taking place in Brussels on the evening of **Wednesday 30 September** and **Thursday 1 October**.

It feels like a particularly important moment to bring people together. Europe is facing some daunting challenges, from security and competitiveness to technological and demographic change, but also some very real opportunities to rethink how it acts, invests and uses its collective strength. This year's discussions will look at Europe's economic and industrial future, AI and the changing world of work, security and defence, enlargement, energy resilience and Europe's relations with key global partners.

To a member of parliament, our flagship provides an ideal platform to connect with 200+ influential figures from more than 40 countries: sitting and former (prime) ministers, CEOs, civil society leaders, senior European and international officials, local level decisionmakers, members of European parliament, as well as Friends of Europe's Trustees and European Young Leaders (EYL40).

So far, 56 legislators and members of the parliament from 13 EU member states have registered their presence. I am contacting you to express our intention to welcome a strong presence of members of your parliament our events. Would you be able to support us in this endeavour by nominating one or several parliamentarians to attend our events?

The two-day festival features:

- **Day 1 - The Gala Dinner – 30 September 2026 - 18.30 onwards.** *An intellectually stimulating and engaging evening, bringing together our community with leading voices from Brussels, EU capitals, and beyond.*
- **Day 2 - The State of Europe high-level roundtable - 1 October 2026.** *A day-long brainstorm on the priorities shaping Europe's next phase.*

Please see below some of the discussants already confirmed for this year:

- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e European Commissioner for Defence and Space
- 5.1.2.e France's Special Envoy for Artificial Intelligence
- 5.1.2.e Co-Chair of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), former Swedish Prime Minister, Friends of Europe Trustee
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs, former Spanish minister of foreign affairs, and Member of the Governing Board of the Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics and former governor of De Nederlandsche Bank
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Chair, European Parliament Committee on International Trade (INTA)
- 5.1.2.e European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy
- 5.1.2.e Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA)
- 5.1.2.e Founder and CEO of Undercats Media, bestselling author of "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls" and European Young Leader (EYL40)
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Prime Minister of Greenland
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB)
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Chair of the Bundestag Budget Committee and former minister
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, European Young Leader (EYL40)
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Young Leader (EYL40)
- 5.1.2.e former chief economist at the IMF and 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Emeritus of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Mayor of Tallinn

Please find our latest programme 5.1.2.e Also find 5.1.2.e a description of the events taking place during the Festival, including a selection of participants that have joined us recently. Practical information on formats, venue and accommodation can be found in our 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e

I very much hope that you will be able to assist us in securing the participation of one or several Assembly members (either from the governing party and/or the opposition) to make sure that your institution and country are well represented at this high-level event.

Do not hesitate to let me know whether I should send you additional material that may be useful. In the meantime, I am available for any comments or questions,

Best regards,

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friends of europe

5.1.2.e
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To the Members of the Standing Committee on European Affairs
The Eerste Kamer
The States General of the Netherlands

Brussels, 10 September 2026

Dear Senators,

We would be delighted to welcome you to the **23rd edition of the Festival of Politics and Ideas – State of Europe,** taking place in Brussels with the **Gala Dinner on Wednesday 30 September** and the **high-level roundtable on Thursday 1 October**.

This year's roundtable discussions will cover:

- Europe's competitiveness and industrial future
- AI, digitalisation and technological change
- Security and defence
- Enlargement and Europe's neighbourhood
- Energy resilience and strategic dependencies
- Europe's relations with key global partners

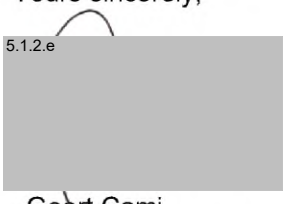
Some 200 participants from over 40 countries will join us, including ministers and state secretaries, members of European and national parliaments, ambassadors, mayors, senior European and international officials, business leaders, civil society representatives and European Young Leaders. A large number will be travelling to Brussels specifically for the occasion.
The real value of State of Europe lies in bringing these different perspectives together: not only to debate Europe's priorities, but also to brainstorm with people coming from very different countries, sectors and backgrounds, and to better understand how the same challenges are seen and experienced across Europe and beyond.

Please find our latest programme here. Also find here a description of the events taking place during the Festival, including a selection of figures that have joined us recently. Practical information on formats, venue and accommodation can be found in our Frequently Asked Questions.

Among those already joining us are 5.1.2.e France's Special Envoy for Artificial Intelligence; 5.1.2.e former Swedish Prime Minister; 5.1.2.e former Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs; 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Minister of Greenland; **Spyridon Adonis Georgiadis**, Health Minister of Greece; 5.1.2.e Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA); **Oana Ţoiu**, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs; 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova; 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Director of UNOPS; 5.1.2.e former IMF Chief Economist and Professor Emeritus at MIT; 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e Mayor of Tallinn; 5.1.2.e former Prime Minister of Italy and Author of the Report on the Future of the Single Market; 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e European Commissioner for Defence and Space; 5.1.2.e former governor of the Dutch central bank and candidate to the European Central Bank presidency; 5.1.2.e European Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy.

Let us know whether you can join us for part of the events or decline using this **online registration form.**
We very much hope you will be able to join us and contribute your perspective to this important conversation.

Yours sincerely,



Geert Cami
Co-Founder and Secretary General, Jacques Delors
Friends of Europe Foundation and Friends of Europe



Nathalie Furrer
Director
Friends of Europe

friends of europe

Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation



STATE OF EUROPE

Europe at a crossroads: purpose, power and resolve

In partnership with:











Europe at a crossroads: purpose, power and resolve

The world is now marked by geopolitical tension, technological disruption, shifting alliances, and a rupture in the rules-based order. **Today, Europe's relevance and prosperity depend on its ability to implement the right choices and act decisively.**

Across the continent, citizens and businesses are navigating complex and immediate transitions: the cost and supply of energy, the race for tech innovation and digital sovereignty, the security of supply chains and accessibility of markets, the changing nature of warfare and the challenges arising from mass AI adaption. These developments are already affecting daily life and shaping what the future will look like, making it clear that competitiveness and social cohesion must advance together. If the gains are not broadly shared, they risk deepening inequalities and weakening public support for the very transitions Europe needs.

At a time of mounting uncertainty and pressure, Europe retains important strengths: the world's largest single market, the depth of its talent and savings, strong industrial and research capabilities, and its unique balance between economic dynamism and social stability. The task now is to mobilise these strengths effectively in pursuit of Europe's ambitions.

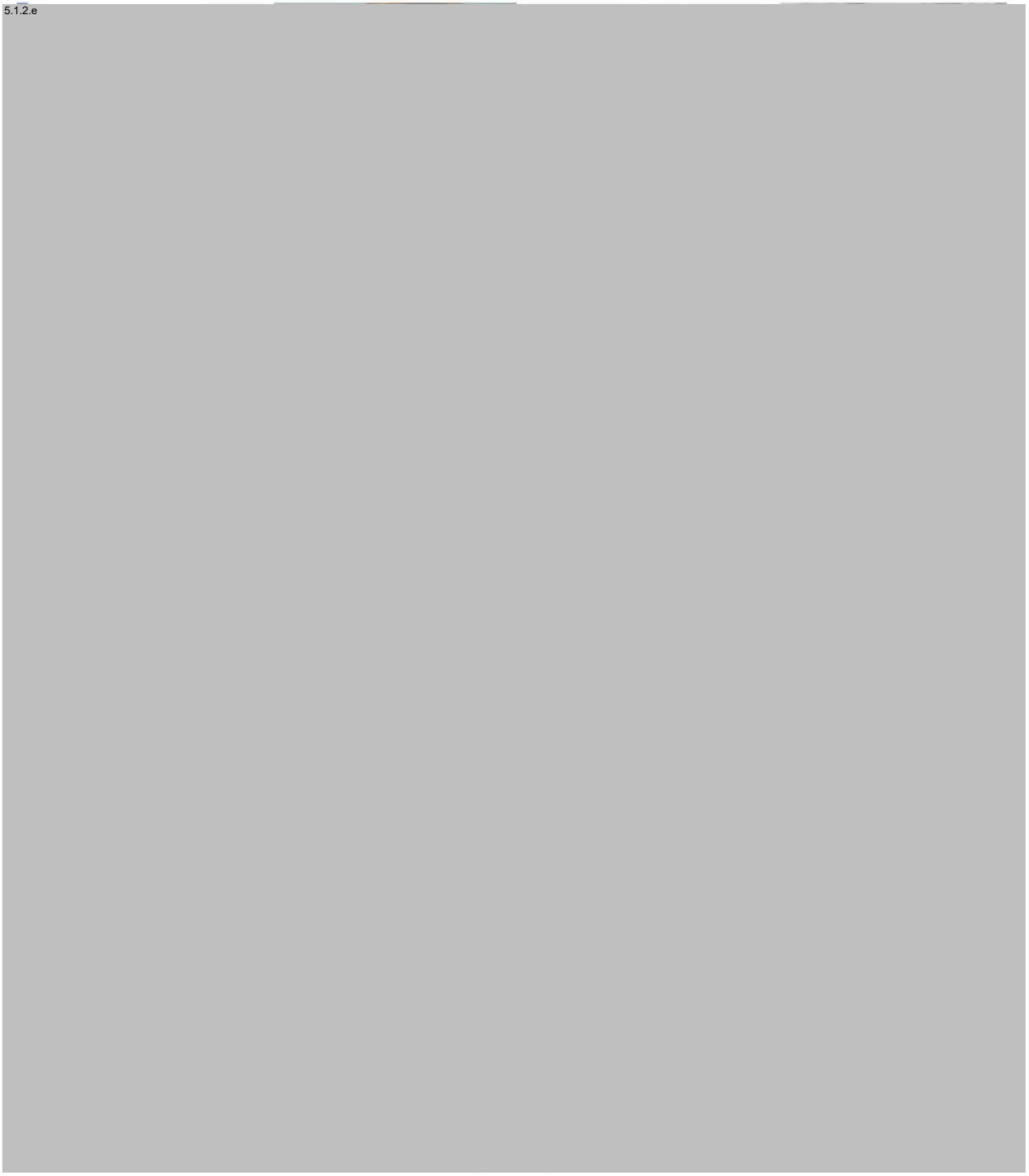
Meeting today's global challenges requires European leaders to act boldly, strategically and with coherence. This requires a focus on a set of shared priorities: strengthening Europe's voice in the world through renewed regional and global partnerships; deepening cooperation on defence and security; completing the Single Market in energy, digital and capital; simplifying ways of doing and scaling business; securing trade routes; and developing resilient supply chains. All this, while ensuring that growth, higher real wages and economic opportunities are felt by citizens across the Union. Adapting to technological, climate and demographic change – while making timely political choices – will be key to Europe's success.

This moment invites some fundamental questions. What is working for Europe today, and holds it back? What needs to change for the EU to remain both competitive and cohesive? And how can it stay true to its values while adapting to a more contested and fragmented world?

The **Festival of Politics and Ideas – State of Europe high-level roundtable** brings together 200+ influential figures from more than 40 countries — sitting and former (prime) ministers, CEOs, civil society leaders, senior European and international officials, members of European and national parliaments, mayors, as well as Friends of Europe's Trustees and European Young Leaders (EYL40) — to reflect on the choices required to move from ambition to action. Building on citizen-generated data gathered by Debating Europe and drawing on the Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation's 'Spending Better in European Defence' and 'Europe28: One Europe, One Market' initiatives, the discussions will translate these perspectives into concrete actions for Europe's next phase.

Joining us this year

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Wednesday 30 September

18.30 ONWARDS

Gala Dinner

On the eve of the State of Europe we bring together senior stakeholders for an intellectually stimulating and entertaining evening ahead of the next day's high-level roundtable.

We will welcome thought leaders and changemakers from the worlds of arts and culture to serve up food for thought, challenge us to think differently, and set the tone for the next day's roundtable.



Thursday 1 October

8.30 – 17.30

State of Europe high-level roundtable

The annual State of Europe high-level roundtable gathers over 200 influential figures from more than 40 countries, including sitting and former prime ministers, ministers, CEOs, NGO leaders, top European officials, members of parliaments, influencers, top journalists and European Young Leaders (EYL40) to generate ideas in a novel and productive way.

Europe is entering a new chapter, shaped by the choices it is willing to make together. In a world of geopolitical tension, technological disruption and a weakening rules-based order, Europe's prosperity and relevance will depend on its ability to act with unity and purpose. This raises fundamental questions: what works today, where are the gaps, and what must change for the EU to stay competitive, cohesive and true to its values?

Schedule

Thursday 1 October

8.00 – 8.30 Registration and welcome coffee

8.30 – 9.20 EARLY-BIRD BRIEFINGS

A new geometry of influence

hese parallel early-bird briefings, guided by leading experts, will offer short and thought-provoking conversations on the EU's relations with influential global partners. As power becomes more dispersed and economic competition intensifies, countries such as Brazil, China, India, Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates are playing a key role in shaping trade flows, supply chains and international security.

The discussions will look at how the EU can work more closely with these partners in areas such as trade, investment and geopolitical cooperation. From securing the resources needed for the green transition to building more reliable supply chains, the briefings will explore how these relationships could shape Europe's economic future towards much-needed reciprocal partnerships.

TABLE 1 – BRAZIL: GREEN GOLD, RED TAPE

Brazil is becoming an increasingly important partner for the EU, both in trade in goods and services and in the supply of minerals critical to the energy and digital transition. The country holds vast reserves of lithium, nickel and other resources essential for batteries and clean technologies. Yet the ongoing challenges surrounding the implementation of the EU-Mercosur agreement highlight the difficulties in advancing closer economic ties. As global demand for critical materials rises and the EU seeks to diversify its key partnerships, how can the EU and Brazil build a relationship that supports both industrial development and sustainable resource management?

TABLE 2 – INDIA: TECH, TRADE, TRUST?

India's fast-growing economy and expanding technological sector are making it a new key partner for Europe. The country offers opportunities for cooperation in areas such as digital technologies, manufacturing, energy and defence. Progress on the landmark EU-India trade agreement reflects a shared recognition that stronger ties are essential in a fragmented global economy. At the same time, differences in market access and regulatory approaches remain. How can the EU and India deepen their economic relationship while addressing these challenges?

TABLE 3 – NIGERIA: THE NEW GIANT

As Africa's most populous country, a leading economy and a key regional power, Nigeria plays a pivotal role in shaping political, economic and security dynamics across the continent. With a population expected to exceed 400 million by 2050, making it the world's third most populous country, Nigeria's demographic trajectory will have profound implications for global growth, labour markets, urbanisation and migration. For the EU, cooperation with Nigeria is increasingly strategic, spanning trade, energy and security. As both sides navigate a more competitive world, how can the EU and Nigeria build a stronger partnership for growth, security and stability?

TABLE 4 – CHINA: COUPLES COUNSELING

Once defined by booming trade and investment, EU-China relations are increasingly shaped by disputes over subsidies, industrial overcapacity, market access and economic coercion. European leaders warn that Chinese state-backed industries are distorting competition and threatening Europe's industrial base, while Beijing accuses Brussels of protectionism and containment. Yet despite growing tensions, the two remain deeply interconnected through trade, investment and critical supply chains – and, in many respects, need each other more than ever given global geopolitical shifts. Is the EU-China relationship heading towards managed competition, or can it find a new balance between rivalry, interdependence and cooperation?

TABLE 5 – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: BUILDING A BROADER PARTNERSHIP

The launch of negotiations for an EU–UAE free trade agreement offers an opportunity to place relations on a more ambitious and practical footing. The prospective agreement aims to reduce barriers to trade and investment while expanding cooperation in services, digital trade and strategic sectors, including renewable energy, green hydrogen and critical raw materials. It could also provide a foundation for a wider future agreement between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Beyond trade, the two sides share important interests in protecting maritime routes, maintaining energy and supply-chain security, countering terrorism and addressing instability across the Gulf and the wider region. Recent tensions around the Strait of Hormuz have further highlighted Europe's direct stake in the security of the region's shipping lanes and energy flows. How can the EU and the UAE use the FTA negotiations to build a broader strategic partnership?

09.30-11.00 OPENING SESSION

Transitioning economies, rebuilding power

Europe's prosperity and influence have long rested on its ability to innovate, manufacture and compete globally. Today, however, that model is under growing pressure. Chinese manufacturers are expanding rapidly and competing aggressively in sectors such as electric vehicles, batteries and clean technologies, while the United States is pulling ahead in attracting investment and creating high-value industries, particularly in technology and advanced manufacturing.

In response, European governments are debating how to strengthen competitiveness while preserving the openness that has long underpinned Europe's success. At the heart of the debate lies the relationship between trade, industrial policy, innovation and investment. Rising geopolitical competition is forcing policymakers to rethink how Europe can protect strategic interests, accelerate innovation and build the industries that will shape future growth and prosperity. Yet the challenge goes beyond industry alone. Europe must also mobilise the investment needed to finance its ambitions, complete the Single Market in key areas and ensure that the benefits of economic transformation are broadly shared. As artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing and new technologies redefine global competitiveness, Europe stands at a crossroads in its industrial transformation.

- Should Europe focus on supporting existing industries or prioritise building strategic sectors?
- How can Europe design trade and industrial policy without distorting competition within the single market?
- How can Europe mobilise more private and public investment in strategic sectors?

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

11.30-11.45 IDEA SHARING

10-minute inspiring, multidisciplinary talks focused on the power of ideas

11.45-13.00 SESSION I

Preparing for transformative AI

Artificial intelligence is rapidly evolving towards systems that can fundamentally reshape scientific discovery, labour markets, economic growth, geopolitical power and the functioning of public institutions within the coming years. As such, (access to) frontier AI models, computing capacity and technological capabilities becomes as strategically important as access to energy, finance or critical infrastructure. Today, however, Europe remains a relatively small player, accounting for around 5% of global AI compute and lagging behind the United States and China in the development of frontier models.

Preparing for this future will require more than regulating AI or just adopting new technologies. Europe will need to build and support the ecosystem for long-term technological resilience and innovation, including world-class digital infrastructure, access to computing power, skilled talent, investment and high-growth companies. Transformative AI poses a fundamental question: will Europe have the institutional capacity to act with resolve, securing its future prosperity, strategic autonomy, agency and safety? And how can Europe use this to steer the future of this technology in a way that benefits all of humanity?

- Should Europe build its own frontier AI capabilities at all costs, secure access to technologies developed abroad, or pursue both approaches simultaneously?
- How can Europe develop the skills, investment, computing capacity and digital infrastructure needed to remain resilient and competitive in the age of transformative AI?
- What tools and systems will public institutions need to develop to maintain citizens' interests at the core of transformative AI?

11.30-11.45 IDEA SHARING

Europe’s unfinished freedom

10-minute inspiring, multidisciplinary talks focused on the power of ideas

WITH:
Hanna Liubakova, Belarusian Journalist, 2026 Amnesty International Chair

11.45-13.00 SESSION II

Europe's security moment

Europe is entering an era in which warfare is evolving faster than its defence structures, procurement systems, as well as political instincts. The Russian war of aggression in Ukraine has shown that military advantage increasingly depends on the ability to deploy, adapt at speed and integrate emerging technologies – from drones and software to electronic warfare and resilient communications. But Ukraine is the war of today. The more difficult question is whether Europe is learning fast enough to prepare for the wars of tomorrow.

Adaptation will require difficult choices about what capabilities and legacy equipment to retain, what to abandon and where to concentrate resources. It will also require Europe to rethink how much initiative can be left to armed forces, companies and innovators closer to the battlefield, rather than managed through slow procurement and decision-making systems. All this unfolds under real fiscal constraints, with higher defence spending competing with other public priorities.

As warfare has become more distributed, data-driven and iteration-dependent, readiness can no longer be measured only by budgets or inventories, but by whether Europe is spending in lines with rapidly changing realities of modern battlefield. This means reducing fragmentation, strengthening interoperability and building a more coherent defence industrial base. Here, a a fundamental question of ambition is raised: does Europe see itself primarily as a regional security power or as a global power with capabilities to match?

- What does spending better actually mean when security spending competes with other demands and which capabilities should Europe prioritise for the conflicts ahead?
- What reforms are needed for Europe to turn military increased spending and innovation into deployable capability, while giving emerging industrial actors greater room to innovate, take responsibility and adapt at speed?
- What lessons should Europe draw from Ukraine to prepare for the next war? Can it do so within today’s fragmented national systems, or will credible European defence require a clearer division of labour and closer defence integration?

13.00-14.00 Lunch break

14.00-14.15 IDEA SHARING

Building Europe's narrative infrastructure

10-minute inspiring, multidisciplinary talks focused on the power of ideas

WITH:

5.1.2.e Cultural Strategist, Bestselling author of Goodnight Stories for Rebel Girls, European Young Leader (EYL40)

14.15-15.30 SESSION III

Bringing back trust to enlargement

The European enlargement process is accelerating and, for the first time since 2013, there is renewed ambition in preparing the ground for new accessions. The enlargement process for the Western Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova, is a crucial investment for the shared prosperity and security of the continent, at a time when Europe's geopolitical competitors are not standing still. Russia, China and other actors have expanded their influence across the region and the wider neighbourhood, increasing the strategic cost of inaction for Europe. The model for European accession must be capable of delivering at the speed required by today's geopolitical realities.

Political momentum is very present in the region, shown by the drafting of the Accession Treaty for Montenegro, Albania transitioning into the concluding phase of negotiations, and the Serbian government committing to rule of law reform. Meanwhile, discussions are advancing on phased integration, associate participation and EU institutional reform. The question will then not only be on how to prepare candidate countries for membership, but also how European countries will find consensus on key internal political disputes. As Europe considers the accession of Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans, enlargement is increasingly becoming a question of credibility, security and political will.

- What are the strategic costs for Europe of a stalled accession process in its neighbourhood?
- How will gradual accession accelerate the path towards EU membership and what are the building blocks to make enlargement a reality?
- How can enlargement strengthen both Europe's security and its democratic legitimacy?

14.00-14.15 IDEA SHARING

10-minute inspiring, multidisciplinary talks focused on the power of ideas

14.15-15.30 SESSION IV

Powering a resilient Europe

Energy is a defining question for Europe's future. It sits at the intersection of technological change, industrial competitiveness, security and geopolitical influence. Recent crises have exposed the risks of excessive dependence on external suppliers, while growing geopolitical tensions continue to demonstrate how quickly events beyond Europe's borders can affect households, businesses and governments across the continent. At the same time, the shift to cleaner and more electrified energy systems is redefining economic security. Countries that secure affordable energy, clean technologies and resilient supply chains will be better positioned to attract investment, strengthen industry and reduce vulnerabilities.

In the current environment, marked by rising inflation and narrow fiscal space, Europe needs to manage the energy transition to turn it into a source of long-term economic and geopolitical strength. This will require balancing affordability, security and sustainability while accelerating investment in infrastructure, energy grids and innovation. This will also require stronger partnerships with trusted partners to secure critical raw materials and resilient supply chains. Meanwhile, energy costs remain a major concern for citizens and businesses, with energy poverty affecting over 46 million Europeans and influencing industrial investment decisions. Therefore, affordable electricity will be key to sustaining support for the clean energy transition.

- What role should energy policy play in strengthening Europe's competitiveness and security?
- How can Europe secure the technologies, infrastructure and supply chains needed for a more resilient future?
- How can policymakers maintain public support for the transition while managing concerns about affordability and industrial competitiveness?

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

14.00-15.30 ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION (BY INVITATION-ONLY)

In partnership with The School of Moral Ambition

The geopolitics of AI

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the balance of global power, but influence will not depend solely on who develops the most advanced models. It will also depend on who controls access to computing capacity, critical technologies and trusted partnerships. Europe may not lead the frontier of AI development, but it possesses strategic assets that could give it an important role in shaping the next phase of the AI race. The question is whether Europe is prepared to use them.

Europe's leverage rests on three mutually reinforcing pillars: expanding computing capacity on European soil under conditions that guarantee European access; building a coalition of like-minded middle powers around critical technologies and supply chains; and using that leverage not only to strengthen Europe's position, but also to shape the international governance and safety of artificial intelligence. Each of these choices carries political, economic and geopolitical trade-offs. How much sovereignty is Europe willing to trade for speed? How far should it rely on international partners? And what role does Europe ultimately want to play in defining the rules of the AI age?

- Where does Europe hold genuine geopolitical leverage in the AI race, and how can it strengthen it?
- Can computing capacity hosted on European soil become a strategic asset, even if much of it is built through international investments?
- What role can a coalition of like-minded middle powers play in shaping access to critical AI technologies and supply chains?

15.30-16.00 Coffee break

16.00-17.30 CLOSING SESSION

An architecture of progress

Europe is facing a growing number of challenges at once: strengthening competitiveness, investing in defence and security, delivering the green and digital transitions, supporting Ukraine and preparing for enlargement. Yet these ambitions are colliding with a reality of constrained public finances, complex decision-making and growing demands on the European budget.

As geopolitical competition and economic uncertainty increase, Europe's greatest vulnerability is not a lack of policymaking, but the gap between ambition and delivery. This has revived debates about how Europe takes decisions, allocates resources and finances common priorities. While discussions intensify over the next long-term EU budget, new financing instruments and more flexible decision-making, Europe faces an urgent challenge: ensuring that its ambitions are backed by the resources, investment and political support needed to deliver results. Ultimately, Europe's future competitiveness, security and influence will depend not only on what it wants to achieve, but on how it creates the political and financial conditions needed to deliver.

- Is a multi-speed Europe becoming inevitable?
- How can Europe become more effective and agile without undermining democratic legitimacy?
- Should Europe develop new common financing instruments to support shared priorities?
- What political leadership is required to turn Europe's ambitions into delivery?

17.30 End of the high-level roundtable

List of participants

5.1.2.e
Independent Government Advisor, The Netherlands, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
Ambassador, Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the EU

5.1.2.e
Ambassador, Mission of Switzerland to the EU

5.1.2.e
European Commission Director-General for Communication (DG COMM)

Haifa Al Jedea
Ambassador, Mission of Saudi Arabia to the EU

5.1.2.e
Founder of The Good Lobby,
5.1.2.e in EU Law at HEC 5.1.2.e Friends of Europe Trustee and European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, Chamber of Representatives, Committee on the Economy, Consumer Protection and Digitalization, Belgium

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Director, Arel Single Market Lab, Italy

5.1.2.e
Quaestor and Member of the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

5.1.2.e
Ambassador, Mission of Serbia to the EU

5.1.2.e
Director General, European Space Agency (ESA)

5.1.2.e
Founder of AA Strategic Advisory, former Member of the European Parliament and Friends of Europe Trustee

5.1.2.e
Member, Portuguese National Assembly

5.1.2.e
Member, Canadian Parliament

5.1.2.e
Head of Liaison Office with the European Union, European Space Agency (ESA)

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE)

5.1.2.e
Executive Chairman, Next Day Sustainable Holdings (NDSH)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on International Trade (INTA)

5.1.2.e
Co-Chair of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), former Swedish Prime Minister, and former Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, National Parliament Lithuania Committee on National Security and Defence

5.1.2.e
Former International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief economist and Professor Emeritus of Economics at the Massashusets Institute of Technology (MIT)

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China

5.1.2.e
Member, Bulgarian National Assembly

5.1.2.e
Polish Secretary of State of Climate and Environment

5.1.2.e
Head of EU Institutional and Regulatory Affairs, Enel

5.1.2.e
State Secretary, Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and State Property, Croatia

5.1.2.e
Chairwoman AI Innovation Board, Envision Pharma Group, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
France's Special Envoy for AI

5.1.2.e
Co-Founder of Jusoor, MENA Young Leader

5.1.2.e
Teachta Dála, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
Co-Founder and Secretary General of the Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation, Co-Founder & Secretary General of Friends of Europe and Co-Secretary General of Africa-Europe Foundation

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
CEO, Hozint - Horizon Intelligence, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
Cultural strategist, bestselling author of "Good Night Stories for 5.1.2.e", European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
Managing Director, Global Asthma & Allergy Excellence Network, Germany, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
European Commission Director-General for the Environment (DG ENV)

5.1.2.e
Secretary-General, European Parliament

List of participants

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
European Commission Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy (DG REGIO)

5.1.2.e
Senior Director Public Policy Europe, The Coca-Cola Company

5.1.2.e
Fellow at Maastricht University's Institute of Globalisation and former EU trade negotiator

5.1.2.e
Member, Chamber of Deputies Luxembourg

5.1.2.e
Member, Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and the Armed Forces, France

5.1.2.e
Managing Director, Teneo Brussels

5.1.2.e **Correia**
Secretary of State for Digitalisation, Portugal

5.1.2.e
Director General, European Commission Reform and Investment Task Force (SG REFORM)

5.1.2.e
Senior Adviser, Kofi Annan Foundation

5.1.2.e **de Figueiredo**
Member, European Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)

5.1.2.e
Deputy Director of the Global Relations and Cooperation Directorate, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

5.1.2.e
Advisor to the Governor of the National Bank of Romania and Chairman of the Romanian Fiscal Council, former Finance Minister of Romania, and Trustee of Friends of Europe

5.1.2.e
Steward, Open Collective, European Young Leader(EYL40)

5.1.2.e
State Secretary for EU Affairs, Sweden

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Partner, FGS Global

5.1.2.e
Chairman, Sonae, Portugal

5.1.2.e
Honorary President and former CEO of CBC Banque, Trustee of Friends of Europe

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Professor, European University Institute, former European Commission Director General for Climate Action

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Mayor of Charleroi, Belgium, former State Secretary for Economic Recovery and Strategic Investments, European Young Leader (EYL40),

5.1.2.e
Honorary President, Club of Rome Brussels

5.1.2.e
Member of the European Parliament Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Director, Open Society Foundations Western Balkans

Ondrej Dostal
Member, European Parliament Committee on Environment, Climate and Food Safety (ENVI)

5.1.2.e
Senior Advisor for Emerging & Disruptive Technologies at the European External Action Service, former Director of the EU Agency SatCen, and former Assistant Secretary General for emerging security challenges at NATO

5.1.2.e
President of Friends of Europe's Governing Board, former Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and Member of the Governing Board of the Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
CEO, TransferGo, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
CEO, Montis Capital Fund, Poland, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
EU Ambassador to Egypt and League of Arab States

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)

5.1.2.e
Former Vice-President, European Young Farmers' Council (CEJA), European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
Deputy Director, Notre Europe Jacques Delors Institute Paris Office, France

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
European Commission Director-General of the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Deputy Minister, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Albania, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
Director, European Commission Secretariat General

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5.1.2.e
President of the European Alliance to Save Energy (EUASE), former Member of the European Parliament, and Friends of Europe Trustee

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Deputy Minister for the Presidency and Immigration, Portugal

5.1.2.e
Former Special Envoy to the OSCE and the Western Balkans, former European Commissioner, and Trustee of Friends of Europe

5.1.2.e
Director, Friends of Europe

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, Bundestag Committee on Foreign Affairs, Germany

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Budgets (BUDG)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Director-General, European Commission Directorate-General for Interpretation & Conference Organisation (DG SCIC)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Minister of Health, Greece

5.1.2.e
Vice-Chair, Chamber of Deputies Committee on Culture Arts and Media, Romania

5.1.2.e
Former Member of the European Parliament, Friends of Europe Trustee

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Senior Fellow, Friends of Europe

5.1.2.e
Dean of the Paris School of International Affairs, former foreign minister of Spain, Member of the Governing Board of the Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation

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CEO, Happioh.com, European Young Leader (EYL40)

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Member of Regulatory Scrutiny Board, European Commission Regulatory Scrutiny Board

5.1.2.e
President, Renew Europe

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Ambassador, Mission of Singapore to the EU

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5.1.2.e
Director General of International Relations, City of Madrid, Spain

5.1.2.e
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Member, Regulatory Scrutiny Board, European Commission Regulatory Scrutiny Board

5.1.2.e
Vice-President, European Parliament

5.1.2.e
Head of Cabinet to His Majesty the 5.1.2.e Royal Palace

5.1.2.e
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Senior Fellow, Friends of Europe, former Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges at NATO

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Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Communications and Works, Cyprus

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Member, European Parliament

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Head of Institutional Relations - EMEA, Temasek International

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Member, European Parliament Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN)

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Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Plan A, Germany, European Young Leader (EYL40)

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Director of Research, Arq Foundation

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Executive Director, European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions (EUROFOUND)

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Director for Labour Mobility and International Affairs, European Commission Directorate General for Employment Social Affairs and Inclusion (EMPL)

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5.1.2.e
Founder and President, Women Political Leaders (WPL)

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Member of the Executive Board, Deutsche Bundesbank

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CEO of the Arwidsson Foundation, former Mayor of Stockholm and former Member of the Swedish Riksdag

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European Commission Director-General for Enlargement and the Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST)

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Senior Director Government Affairs Europe, Dow Chemical

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European Commissioner for Defence and Space

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Climate, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

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Member, European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)

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Co-Founder and Vice-President of the Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation, Coordinator of the Jacques Delors Think tanks, and former Director General of the World Trade Organisation and former European Commissioner

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5.1.2.e
Head of Economic, Social and Regional Policy, Welsh Government, United Kingdom

5.1.2.e
Chairman of Mediahuis, Umicore and DSM-Firmenich

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Head of Cabinet, European Commission Cabinet of EU Commissioner for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy Stéphane Séjourné

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Head of Division, EU Institutions & Fora Division, European Central Bank (ECB)

5.1.2.e
Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Future Generations (CFG)

5.1.2.e
Belarusian journalist and 2026 Amnesty International Chair

5.1.2.e
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Member, Irish National Parliament (Oireachtas) Committee on Agriculture and Food

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Executive Director, The ONE Campaign

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5.1.2.e
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Prime Minister, Greenland

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Member, European Parliament Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China, Former Foreign Affairs Minister of Estonia

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Member, European Parliament Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE)

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Chair, Bundestag Committee on Budget, former minister

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Brussels Bureau Chief, The Economist

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Head of Permanent Representation in Brussels and Deputy Secretary General, European Investment Bank (EIB)

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Minister of Investments and European Projects, Romania, former Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL)

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5.1.2.e
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5.1.2.e
Vice President, Head of Region Europe Public Affairs at Novartis

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Mayor of Tallinn, Estonia

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Member, European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)

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Former European Director of the Trilateral Commission, and Trustee of Friends of Europe

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Head of Department for Sea Policies, Ministry of Civil Protection and Sea Policies, Italy

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Former Irish Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications and Minister for Transport

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Director, European Commission European Innovation Council and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EISMEA)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Director Corporate Affairs Europe, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

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Delors Friends of Europe Foundation

5.1.2.e
Non-resident Fellow Cyber Policy Center and Institute for Human-Centered AI, Author of The Tech Coup, Friends of Europe Trustee

5.1.2.e
Deputy Director General, European Commission Directorate-General for Interpretation & Conference Organisation (DG SCIC)

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Member, European Parliament Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE)

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Member, Chamber of Deputies Committee on Foreign and European Affairs, Cooperation, Foreign Trade, Luxembourg

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Senior Fellow for Peace, Security and Defence, Friends of Europe, former Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges at NATO

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Visiting Fellow, Middle East and North Africa Programme, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

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Former General Director, Clingendael - the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Netherlands

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Director Africa, European Commission Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA)

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Editor-in-Chief, United24 Media, Ukraine

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Mayor of Mechelen, Belgium

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Member, European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Deputy Director-General, European Commission Directorate General for Communications Networks Content & Technology (CNECT)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Executive Director, Balkan Civil Society Development Network, North Macedonia

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Chief Researcher, Sciences Sector, UNESCO

5.1.2.e
State Secretary for European Affairs, Middle East and Africa, Romania

5.1.2.e
State Secretary for Digital Affairs, Poland

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member of Cabinet, European Commission Cabinet of EU Commissioner for Defence and Space Andrius Kubilius

5.1.2.e
Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Czech Republic

5.1.2.e
Director-general Foreign Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands

5.1.2.e
Group CEO, Empik, Poland

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Security and Defence (SEDE)

5.1.2.e
Director General, European Commission Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union (Commission Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union (TAXUD)

List of participants

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Senior Advisor for European Affairs, Fondazione Cariplo

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Mayor of Sredets, Bulgaria, Former Minister of Economy, Energy and Tourism of Bulgaria

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, National Parliament, Finland, Commerce Committee

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)

5.1.2.e
Senior Fellow, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), Germany, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Member of the Supervisory Board, ASML, former Deputy Prime Minister of The Netherlands

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)

5.1.2.e
Co-Founder of the School of Moral Ambition and Training for Good, European Young Leader (EYL40)

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Mayor of Jalhay, Member, Chamber of Representatives, Committee on Constitution and Institutional Renewal, Belgium

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China

5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e
Co-Leader, Don't Let Belgrade D(r)own, and Member, National Parliament Republic of Serbia Committee on Foreign Affairs, European Young Leader (EYL40)

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Member, European Parliament Committee on International Trade (INTA)

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Member of the European Parliament Committee on Environment, Climate and Food Safety (ENVI)

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Vice-President, European Investment Bank (EIB)

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Partner, FGS Global

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Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU

5.1.2.e
Director-General, European Commission Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI)

5.1.2.e
European Data Protection Supervisor, European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS)

5.1.2.e
Head of Cabinet, European Commission Cabinet of EU Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration Magnus Brunner

5.1.2.e
Ambassador, Cabinet of Queen Mathilde of Belgium, former Belgian Ambassador to the United States of America and to the EU

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Budgets (BUDG)

5.1.2.e
Founder & CEO of CleverBooks, Ireland, European Young Leader (EYL40)

5.1.2.e
CEO, Thomson Reuters Foundation

5.1.2.e
Member, European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, 5.1.2.e and Home Affairs (LIBE)

5.1.2.e
Country Director, The Carter Center, Israel

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friends of europe

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Foundation



THE FESTIVAL OF POLITICS & IDEAS – THE 2026 STATE OF EUROPE

Information and frequently asked questions

Friends of Europe is looking forward to welcoming you in Brussels on Wednesday, 30 September, for our **Gala Dinner** and Thursday, 1 October, for the 2026 edition of our annual high-level roundtable **State of Europe**.

Each year, leading European politicians, decision-makers, members of civil society, academics and media representatives from Brussels, member states and beyond, attend our State of Europe to offer their views on Europe's future in an interactive, inclusive, and fast-paced brainstorm. They come from Europe and beyond with 40+ countries represented.

It is a unique space where top decision-makers explore new opportunities, reconnect with their peers, and participate in innovative activities designed to encourage bold thinking. It is more than just a gathering; it is an opportunity to influence the direction of our continent and shape Europe's future together.

Gala Dinner

The State of Europe high-level roundtable is preceded by the Gala Dinner, which you are welcome to attend. There, you will have the opportunity to engage with the top decision-makers of the 40+ countries in attendance in an informal and friendly atmosphere.

This evening is more than just a sit-down dinner; it catalyses ideas by bringing together leading figures from politics, industry and civil society for an engaging and thought-provoking evening.

The dress code for the dinner is cocktail attire. It is not a black-tie event.





State of Europe high-level roundtable

Format of the high-level roundtable

- The working language is English, with no interpretation;
- The roundtable is attended by about 200 senior discussants;
- It is in-person and livestreamed; sessions recordings will be available on our website following the event;
- The format is an open brainstorm discussion facilitated by a moderator;
- Given the high profile of our discussants, only 3 preselected quick starters make introductory remarks to kick off each session. This ensures maximum interaction in the ensuing open discussion;
- The style is informal and does not allow for written/read-out speeches. Rather than the analysis of a policy issue, we prefer that all discussants make forward-looking, concrete and actionable policy proposals.

Who are the discussants and what is their role?

Discussants include current and former (prime) ministers, CEOs and start-up founders, civil society voices, senior EU decision-makers, members of national and European parliaments, members of the media, and European Young Leaders (EYL40).

We place a high value on diversity and aim to welcome at least 50% of female discussants at State of Europe, ensuring the voices of younger generations are well represented and that we engage tomorrow's decision-makers.

The State of Europe is designed to be a high-level roundtable: a collective brainstorm. This is why Friends of Europe has adopted the roundtable format. The aim is to get everyone involved. Introductory discussants open the debate with a few of thought-provoking questions, after which discussants have the opportunity to intervene freely. The goal is to craft big ideas and promising recommendations on the way forward.

Everyone present at the State of Europe, whether introductory discussant or discussant, is personally selected and invited.

What sessions can discussants attend?

The invitation to discussants is not limited to any specific session, and we welcome and encourage discussants' contributions and active participation in the sessions they wish to participate in. Discussants are encouraged to stay the entire day and to attend the sessions of their choice, as well as to comment and debate in the open discussions facilitated by a moderator.

Once registered we'll keep you regularly informed about the latest developments.

Venue and accommodation

Venue of the Gala Dinner (5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e 5.1.2.e)

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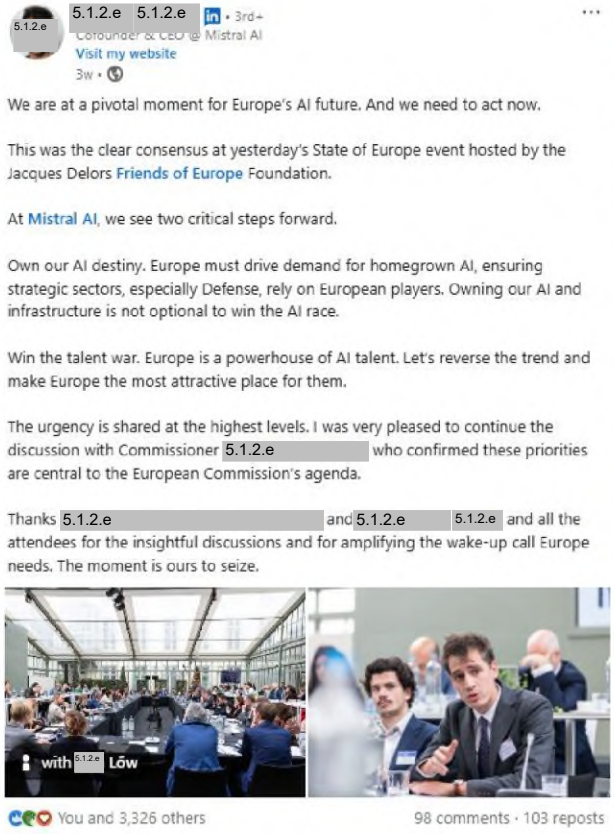


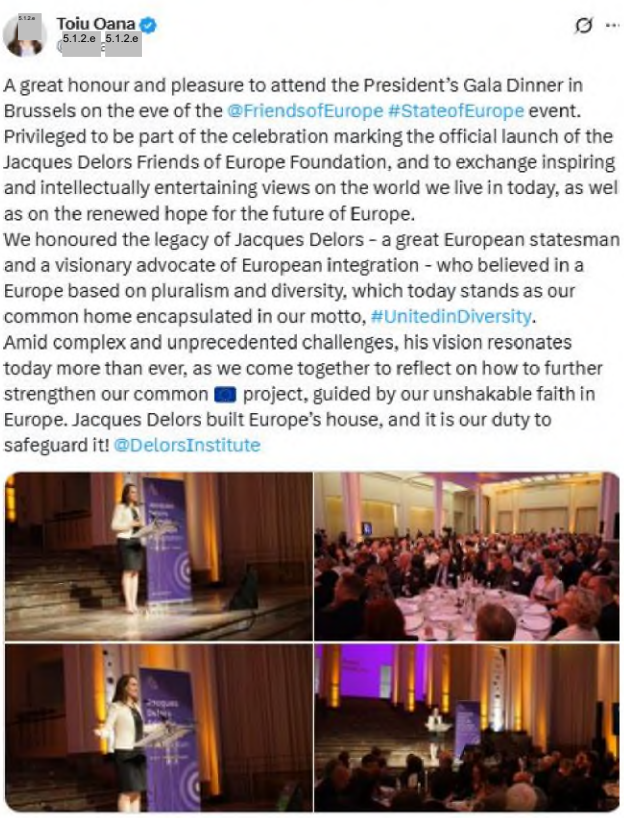
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State of Europe on social media

Join the online conversation

You are welcome to start engaging with us and raising issues that matter for Europe ahead of the State of Europe event, using the Friends of Europe **#StateOfEU** hashtag and following us on LinkedIn and Instagram. A Social Media toolkit will also be made available as we get closer to the date of the roundtable.





Please find below a post for inspiration to share your participation on your preferred social media platforms. Feel free to copy the content or tailor it.

Looking forward to joining @FriendsofEurope's #StateOfEU as Europe faces a turning point: competitiveness, security and social fairness will define our future.

Further questions

Should you require further information or have additional questions, please refer to:

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A project of friends of europe

Co-founder of Jacques Delors Friends of Europe Foundation