



VISION

SIENA

CONFERENCE

On the Europe of the Future

2024

12-14th September

VISION THINK TANK



UNIVERSITÀ
DI SIENA 1240



THE AGENDA SETTING EUROPE AT A CROSSROADS

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO – SIENA

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The Conference

“It is for us to put some flesh on the Community’s bones and, dare I suggest, give it a little more soul”

Address given to the European Parliament, 17 January 1989 by European Commission President, Jacques Delors.

Overview

The European Union is navigating uncharted waters, and as for its own historical characteristics, it is doing so without even having clear of whom is the skipper. We are living multiple crises that are questioning the very nature of the institutions that were conceived by Europe’s fathers eighty years ago.

Vision - the think tank which is convening **the 5th Siena Conference** on ‘**The Europe of the Future**’ together with the **European University Institute** and the **University of Siena** is convinced that most of the fractures we are witnessing start from out of control technologies. These technologies are transforming the nature of all industries, by reallocating information, which is power and, thus the forms in which power is exercised and controlled needs to be transformed as well.

At the end, they are producing a complexity that risks paralyzing action, a complexity that makes it hard to manage all the major challenges of our time (escalating wars, climate change, artificial intelligence, ...). This challenges will test and change not just Europe, but a world order conceived to govern a different, more stable century. This year the conference will leverage also the collaboration with the **Institute for European Policy Making** at **Bocconi University**.

The results of the European Parliament elections further changed the picture. Yes, the elections were held with the old, obsolete format that has not been modified for 45 years (since the first election of the EP). Once again, there were 27 referenda on national governments with very little debate on what should be the future of the European institutions, that for many of the 450 million EU citizens is perceived as alien. Our understanding, however, is that these elections have been a **turning point**, they signaled that Europe is not any longer a matter to be managed by “experts” and has shown its gradual politicization. However, they also force the political parties (and probably even most of the Member States) to move beyond ideologies (and predefined interests) to find solutions to problems that will not wait.

We may have had a coalition [1] amongst positions that we previously understood to be irreconcilable. Yet it is crucial that such a convergence will happen not just through compromises, diluting even more the EU's positions. But through a **problem setting/solving method**, so that everybody can contribute and to reshape the future of Europe, with a pragmatic, visionary method, and much less rhetoric. This is the method that the reelected President of the Commission, Ursula Von Der Leyen appears to look for, in the next 100 days according to her political guidelines for the Next European Commission 2024 – 2029. Ursula Von Der Leyen promised to deliver five urgent strategic documents [2] and the “Conference on the Europe of the Future” will provide a contribution to each of them.

The dates of the Siena Conference are from **12th to 14th September 2024** so that the possibilities to provide an input to the agenda setting are maximized. The objective is to develop a problem-solving platform that may add value to all parties involved. After all, the SIENA conference has already experimented for four editions with **the multi-partisan debate** that EU institutions will need. In fact, one of the most distinctive features of the Siena conference is that it has staged debates with the five political foundations / think tanks of the biggest EU political groups: **Foundation of European Progressive Studies for Party of European Socialists (PES); European Liberal Forum for Alliance of Liberals and Democrats Europe Party (ALDE); New Direction for the European Conservatives and Reformists Party (ECR); Green European Foundation for the European Green Party (EGP).**

The conference will take place at Certosa di Pontignano just outside the city of Siena, a venue that is ideal for such a dialogue amongst different political, professional, generational, academic representatives of society.

The following pages will define the objectives of the 5th Siena Conference, introduce each of the four “problem-solving groups”, the various plenary sessions, the key participants, the structure of the agenda; the scientific and media partners of the project and the method through which participants will elaborate the final document **with the proposals** emerged at the conference, through the **“Pontignano Paper”**.

[1] On 27th June, EU leaders proposed Ursula von der Leyen as the candidate for President of the European Commission, Portuguese Prime Minister António Costa as President of the European Council and considered Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas to be the appropriate candidate for High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. On 18th July Ursula Von Der Leyen was elected by the European Parliament.

The goal of the conference is, that of acting as a **catalyst of new ideas**, to offer new solutions to the specific issues outlined in the Concept Paper, and to promote a different approach to the European project. The conference will follow a **format which was successfully experimented** with the previous Vision's conferences.

on the Siena Conference on The Future of Europe and with The Dolomite Conference on the Global Governance of Climate Change.

As the title of the 5th edition of the Siena Conference on the Future of Europe suggests ("**THE AGENDA SETTING**") this edition aims at generating fresh and pragmatic ideas on the next agenda of the EU including:

1. How to give more legitimacy to a Union and increase its capacity to react to crises.
2. How to solve the tradeoff between regulations and innovation in financial markets.
3. What regulation can encourage the birth of European digital champions capable to compete with the US and China.
4. How to create a common EU defense strategy amongst sovereign states.
5. How to rethink green policies so that they are more acceptable to citizens and resilient to disruptions in the value chains.



During the three days event organized by Vision and its partners), more than 70 intellectuals, policy makers, journalists, entrepreneurs, economists, activists and students will gather to discuss future European scenarios.

[2] They are: a) the "clean Industrial deal" for competitive industries and quality jobs; b) the "AI Factories initiative" for supercomputing capacity, AI start-ups and industry c) an "European action plan on the cybersecurity of hospitals and healthcare providers"; d) a "White Paper on the Future of European Defense"; e) a "Vision for Agriculture and Food; f) a "pre-enlargement policy review". The CONFERENCE will provide a contribution to each of them (plus to other key strategic choices (like the reform of EU democracy and the fiscal architecture) with its problem setting/ solving groups, plenaries and after-conference follow ups.

KEY PARTICIPANTS – SCIENTIFIC PARTNERS, CORPORATE AND MEDIA

The SIENA CONFERENCE participants are gradually developing a proper “problem solving community”. The 2024 edition starting list includes: **Romano Prodi** (Former Prime Minister of Italy and Former President of the European Commission); **Patizia Nanz** (President of the European University Institute), **Erik Jones** (Director of Schumann Center at the European University Institute), **Simon Hix** (Stein Rokkan Chair at the European University Institute) and **Marco Buti** (Tommaso Padoa Schioppa Chair at the European University Institute and former Director-General for Economic and Financial Affairs at the European Commission); **Daniel Gros** (Director of the Institute of European Policy Making at Bocconi University); **Eleanor Spaventa** (Director of the Bocconi Lab in European Studies at Bocconi University); **Roberto Di Pietra** (Rector of the University of Siena); **Simone Borghesi** (President European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists and Vice Rector of University of Siena); **Fabrizia Lapcorella** (Deputy Secretary General OECD); **Mikel Landabaso** (Director of Fair and Sustainable Economy at the Joint Research Center of the European Commission); **Sandra Whiphram** (Co-Director Doc Society Trustee), **André Wilkens** (Director, European Cultural Foundation); **Joe Elborn** (Evens Foundation); **Giovanna Melandri** (President of Human Foundation and Board Member of the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment; Former Italy’s Minister for Cultural Heritage and Youth Policies), **Raja Chakir** (Steering Committee of the French Association of Environmental and Resource Economists);

Gerlinde Niehus (Deputy Director, Defence and Security Cooperation, NATO Headquarters); **Bill Emmott** (Chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and former editor of The Economist), **Jan Piotrowski** (Schumpeter columnist), **Lisa Jucca** (Reuters) and **Anne-Élisabeth Moutet** (The Telegraph); **Iain Martin** (The Times); **Nicola Maione** (President MPS); **Gregorio De Felice** (Chief Economist Intesa Sanpaolo); **Raffaele Fitto** (Italy’s Minister for European Policies and Vice President of New Direction); **Giorgio Gori** (MEP for S&D Group), **Sandro Gozi** (MEP Renew Europe, Italy’s former State Secretary for European Affairs and Secretary General of the European Democratic Party), **Dace Melbarde** (MEP, Vilnius/Latvia).

The 2024 edition will be chaired by an extraordinary pool of thinkers, professors and policy makers coming from very different political angles. They will – together with Vision and University of Siena – steer the conference towards the agenda setting. We expect to then scale up last year’s chair group to: **Maria João Rodrigues** (President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and former Portuguese Minister of Employment), **Peter Hefele** (Policy Director of Martens Institute, the Political Foundation of the European People Party), **Sandro Gozi** (MEP Renew Europe, Italy’s former State Secretary for European Affairs and Secretary General of the European Democratic Party), **Kalypto Nicolaidis** (Professor at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford and Professor at the School of Transnational Governance, EUI), **Robert Tyler** (Senior Policy Advisor at New Direction), **Taube Van Melkebeke** (Policy Manager of Green European Foundation), **John Hooper** (Correspondent for Italy and the Vatican, The Economist).



Siena Conference fourth Edition 2023.

Scientific partners of Vision will be the **University of Siena** and the **European University Institute**, to which the EU gave the task of promoting the academic debate on relevant topics for the European institutions. **Institute of European Policy Making at Bocconi** will chair two sessions of the conference.

As mentioned, one of the distinctive features of the conference will be that each of **the five political foundations/think tanks of the main European political groups will present their own works and will deliver one of the plenary sessions**. These foundations are **The Martens Institute** for the European People Party; **Foundation of European Progressive Studies** for the Party of European Socialists (PES); **European Liberal Forum** for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats Europe Party (ALDE); **New Direction** for the European Conservatives and Reformists Party (ECR); **Green European Foundation** for the European Green Party (EGP). Each of the foundations will lead a plenary session, where the discussion will focus on the topic of one of their recent studies. We also envisage the participation of a MEP from each political group during the closing plenary session, where the **Pontignano Paper** will be discussed.

We expect to have **90 participants in person and 10/15 joining remotely**. Criteria for the selection of participants will be **gender** (at least 50% of women), **age** (master students from the University of Siena and EUI will prepare the so-called problem solving/ setting groups), **geography** (less than 1/3 Italians, some British, some non-European), **profession** (policy makers, managers, entrepreneurs, journalists, economists, political scientists, activists, academics). Each of the participants will take part in the public plenary sessions and will act as introducer/chair/rapporteur of one of the problem-solving groups or the plenary sessions.

A key role will be played by our corporate partners, who will participate in the entire conference, present their points of view and will carry out a problem-solving exercise that will follow the **"Chatham House" rule** in the problem-solving groups. We are confident that these managers and entrepreneurs who will participate will offer the pragmatism and sense of urgency that the business world can convey.

We selected corporate partners that seem to understand how the role of businesses is changing, becoming more "social". The main corporate partners of the 2024 edition are **Monte dei Paschi di Siena** and **Intesa Sanpaolo**.

A key feature of the conference is **the problem-setting/problem solving groups** (PSSGs). They are meant to provide the ideas and the methods that can feed the agenda setting for the next five years and the debate. They will be managed by the **University of Siena** and the master's/PhD students of **EUI**. They will interact **with Vision**, and tutors from the University of Siena/EUI, the Introducer of each group (who will open the discussion in Siena), the Chair (usually a journalist who will moderate the discussion) and the Rapporteur who will report to the plenary session the PSSGs conclusions.

The agenda setting will also be fed by **plenary sessions**: five of them will be organized by the five foundations of the European Parliament political groups and will start from one of their recent works. Then, there will also be an opening session with the Conference Chairs and one closing session with the European Parliament members of each of the political groups involved.

This year, we also envisage a public part of the conference. It will be open to the public (not only invited panelists); it will start with **the presentation of the PONTIGNANO PAPER** (to the public and media) and will be followed by three – four events being held in some of the most iconic Siena locations, outlined in the detailed agenda below.

Media partners of the 2024 edition are Rai Radio 1 and TGR.

The 2023 edition addressed issues such as the role of the EU in international negotiations; the complexity of the EU security architecture; the Recovery and Resilience Facility governance; how to build a more transparent and democratic EU; how to replace energy at the center of the European political, security and democratic project, and much more.

The fifth edition is meant to be a scale up of the scope of the last year Vision conference and the consolidation of an event which is supposed to become a permanent hub of ideas to reform the EU and to support the design and implementation of EU policies.

The Siena Conference is becoming a multi-partisan platform to produce the concrete ideas that Europe needs to reform the 21st century institutions. It is meant to be a follow-up of the State of the Union of the EUI and has the goal of putting Siena and Florence at the forefront of the European debate.

The Programme



☀ The Ancient Certosa di Pontignano

The Certosa di Pontignano, the official congress centre for the University of Siena and the ideal location for stays in Tuscany, dates back to 1343 and presents the traditional appearance of Carthusian monasteries.

THURSDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

THE CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

- ✦ Registration Process to the Conference
We are waiting for you at the Vision Desk
- ✦ The Conference day is located at **the Certosa di Pontignano**
- ✦ Enjoy the journey!



Annalisa Piras (Director Wake Europe Project) will be our Master of Ceremonies for the Conference

THURSDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

9:00–10:00

Breakfast

10:00–17:45

Siena Conference Master's of Ceremonies – **Annalisa Piras** (Director Wake Europe Project)

10:00–10:15

Institutional Greetings

from **Nicola Maione** (President of Monte Paschi di Siena), **Antonio Mazzeo** (President of the regional Assembly of Toscana), **Vanna Giunti** (Councilor for Tourism, Commerce, and Productive Activities, UNESCO Site, University Relations)

10:15–10:30

Introduction to the Conference

Roberto Di Pietra (Rector of the University of Siena), **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision Think Tank, Professor at Bocconi University and Visiting Fellow at the EUI)

10:30–11:00

The State of the Union

THE EU&I POLL BY THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE 'WHICH ISSUES UNITE AND POLARIZE EU PARTIES AND VOTERS?'

The results of a survey conducted before the 2024 European Parliament elections on the recognition of, and attitudes towards, Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen. The survey was conducted in December 2023, with 13,000 respondents in 7 member states. The main results are that 75% of Europeans could correctly identify President Von der Leyen, which is much higher than for previous Commission Presidents. However, only 30% of Europeans felt informed enough to assess President Von der Leyen's performance. On average, these citizens rated President Von der Leyen's performance positively (6 out of 10), and viewed her handling of the war in Ukraine as her biggest achievement. Despite being a politician from the centre-right, President Von der Leyen is rated more favourably by citizens on the left than on the right. In general, European citizens view problem-solving, crisis management, and having relevant experience as the most desirable characteristics for a Commission President. Nevertheless, only 38% of respondents regarded the opportunity to influence who should be the next President as a motivating factor in deciding whether to vote in the European elections.

Andreas Reiljan* (EUI)

Opening Session

11:00-12:00

Time for the Agenda Setting - A feedback to the Conference Concept Paper

"Europe is in mortal danger". There are still vast disagreements on what Europe should do vis-à-vis these dangers (and opportunities). The electoral campaign mirrored different views on wars and immigration, on whether Europe should issue common debt and on how quickly should we reduce CO2 emissions, on the right quantity of regulations of digital and on the position of the block in a world which is looking for a new order. And yet most of the political sides and public opinions would agree that radically new challenges require us to rethink the institution that was conceived by Europe's fathers eighty years ago with the main objective to avoid new, catastrophic wars.

The conference will try to provide a contribution to the agenda setting of the next five years with a pragmatic approach meant to encourage convergences amongst different countries, political parties, generations.

Its concept paper redefines the nature of the problems we are facing (the "problem setting") and start outlining the options we have (the "problem solving") on each of the five crossroads the Europe is facing. The fundamental question that the conference (and Europe in the next years) will try to solve is about how to respond a crucial double trade-off: is there a way to have a decision making that is much more efficient and much more inclusive? How can we better regulate government finances and markets (so to avoid shocks) and still unleash innovation?

Introduction: **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision Think Tank, Professor at Bocconi University and Visiting Fellow at the EUI).

Speakers (Chairs of the conference and corporate partners): **Maria João Rodrigues** (President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and former Portuguese Minister of Employment), **Romano Prodi** (Former Italian Prime Minister and President of the European Commission), **Daniel Gros** (Director of the Institute of European Policy Making at Bocconi University), **Raffaele Fitto** (Italy's Minister for European Policies), **Patrizia Nanz** (President of the European University Institute), and **Kalypso Nicolaidis** (D) (St Antony's College, University of Oxford and the School of Transnational Governance, EUI).

Chair: **Jan Piotrowski** (Schumpeter columnist)

A creative *vision*

A creative work with 4 Problem Solving Groups

✨ Every participant must divide proportionally in each of the groups.

Democracy

Presented by the professors: Sabrina Cavatorto (UNISI)

Enlargement

Presented by the professors: Valentina Carlino (UNISI)

Technology

Presented by the professors: Massimiliano Montini (Jean Monnet
Chair on Circular Economy for the Internal Market and Rector's
Delegate for European Citizenship of the University of Siena)

Finance

Presented by the professors: Costanza Consolandi (UNISI)

THURSDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

12:00–12:30

Introduction to the 4 Problem-setting / Solving groups

The problem-setting groups are one of the creative aspects of the Conference. It is the mixture between students' young dynamism and professors' knowledge. Introducer (7 minutes each) – The participants in the conference will be divided proportionally into groups.

The four problem-setting/ solving groups will be the most creative part of the conference. They will have been prepared by four groups of students and professors/ tutors interacting with some of the participants/ opinion leaders joining the conference in the months before the event. Each group will distribute a paper before the event.

All 80 participants will be asked to choose one the four groups to join. The format in SIENA will be of a problem-setting/ solving debate with each participant briefly commenting or elaborating further the paper.

The four groups will report the work done in SIENA at the plenary on Saturday and will directly feed the PONTIGNANO PAPER. The paper is meant to influence the agenda setting and the debate with fresh ideas and new method. The groups will be framed around four trade-off/puzzles that the EU need to solve so to navigate in uncharted waters and renovate its own founding values.

12:30–13:30

Lunch

13:45–15:15

Group 1 - Democracy. The paradox of democracy and efficiency: can we make Europe both more inclusive and fast-moving?

The “democratic deficit” is one of the oldest debates on Europe. Yet, two discontinuities have radically changed its frame: a) any EU “deficit of democracy” would need today to be reconsidered within a much wider deterioration of the popularity/ efficiency of liberal, representative democracy that is felt also outside Europe and at national levels; b) multiple crises (from the COVID19 pandemic to wars at the border; from climate change to cyber-security) do ask for quicker EU responses which, in turn, ask for more popular backing.

The PSSG on democracy's moves from the idea that such decline (of democracy) is not avoidable; that stronger participation is indispensable to develop more intelligent policies and implement them more effectively; and that, yet this will require to update the forms themselves through which citizens participate and collective decisions are developed. The EU may become the lab where to experiment and institutionalize these innovations.

Introducer: **Sabrina Cavatorto** (UNISI)

Amongst the discussants: **Kalypso Nikolaidis** (D) (EUI – School of Transnational Government), **Domenec Ruiz Devesa**(D) (MEP, Spain), **Joe Elborn** (Evens Foundation), and **Franziska Maier**(D) (Universitat Stuttgart and Democracy Research Unit).

Chair: **Stephen Khan** (Global Executive Editor at The Conversation).

Rapporteurs: **Eleonora Pennino, Selin Caliskan, Sophia Morganti and Sofia Ricci** (UNISI, PhD candidates)

13:45–15:15

Group 2 - Enlargement. The puzzle of enlargement and institutional change: is there a way to make the EU larger and more capable to decide?

Should we enlarge before we touch EU treaties? Or should we, instead, integrate more (and solve some serious internal contradictions) before we consider increasing the number of member States? The debate on Europe seems sometimes lost into an unresolvable trade-off.

The PSSG will present few ideas that can solve the puzzle. This requires unpacking the notion of “integration” and to move beyond the old tug of war between Federalists and Eurosceptics. The intellectual, technical and political challenge is finding methods to turn the peculiar nature of the European Union (it will never be a State – as conceived by Hegel – and yet it is much more than a loose international organization) from being a structural constraint into a competitive advantage.

Introducer: **Valentina Carlino** (UNISI)

Amongst the discussants: **Jelena Dzankic** (D) (EUI and Robert Schuman Centre), Eleanor Spaventa (Head of the Bocconi Lab in European Studies). **Grace Ballor** (Assistant Professor of International Economic History at Bocconi University), **Veronica Anghel** (EUI – Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies), and **Aleksandar Metodijev** (Independent journalist).

Chair: **Lisa Jucca** (Reuters)

Rapporteurs: **Eleonora Pizzeghella, Virginia Lemme, Riccardo Colantuono, Matteo Paolanti, Emanuela Rassu, Raffaele Severino and Matteo Agostino** (UNISI, PhD candidates)

13:45-15:15

Group 3 - Technology. The choice between regulation and innovation: is there a method to both “protect” consumers and unleash animal spirits? (The case of digital)

Even the Silicon Valley giants are strongly requiring that somebody may start regulating the rise of artificially intelligent machines. And yet what should be called a “biological mutation” (more than just “industrial revolution”) risks to render obsolete even notions as the “anti-trust” or, even, of instruments like laws themselves. Europe has been (with few remarkable exceptions) mostly on the demand side of a process whose supply has been dominated by the USA, China, and (and more recently) India. Which is the righty quantity of regulation to steer digital revolution towards EU’s interests? Should we nurture EU champions with EU’s money? Are there rules that can, indeed, promote innovation? The PSSG on digital will feed Pontignano with some ideas that may feed into the EU’s next five years agenda on digital.

Introducer: **Massimiliano Montini** (Jean Monnet Chair on Circular Economy for the Internal Market and Rector’s Delegate for European Citizenship of the University of Siena)

Amongst the discussants: **Pier Luigi Parcu** (Center for Digital Society and EUI), **Sabrina Pignedoli** (former MEP, M5S), **Antonio Manganeli** (UNISI), **Eleonora Faina*** (General Director of Anitec-Assinform), **Ettore Carneade** (Chief Compliance Executive of Monte dei Paschi di Siena), and **Francesco Bonfiglio** (CEO of GAIA-X).

Chair: **Roberta Carlini** (Centre for Digital Society, EUI and Journalist).

Rapporteurs: **Maryam Rahmani**, and **Seyedhamidreza Fahimipendar** (UNISI, PhD candidates)

13:45-15:15

Group 4 - Finance. The trade off between financial stability and inclusive economic growth: is there the European Union current strategy of sustainable finance effective?

Last year banking crisis prover that European financial institutions are more resilient. Similar arguments apply to States: the price that EU governments are paying on their bonds, seem to indicate that neither higher debts nor lower support from the European Central Bank, have dented their reliability. And yet the overall financial/ fiscal architecture of the EU remains largely an unfinished project. The outcome should be not just about avoiding financial shocks but making sure that the system is capable to accept/ manage enough risks so to unleash competition.

The last PSSG will provide few hints on how to turn the choice between stability and dynamism into ideas for a new pact for growth. The work will touch upon all the main components of that architecture – growth and stability pact; banking union; stability mechanism; EU's budget; mandate of the European Central Bank – so to make European economy more “sustainable”.

Introducer: **Costanza Consolandi** (UNISI)

Amongst the discussants: **Gregorio De Felice** (Chief Economist Intesa Sanpaolo), **Pierre Schlosser** (EUI – Florence School of Banking and Finance), **Andrea Maffezzoni** (CFO, Monte Paschi Siena), **Klaudia Saldan** (EUI – Department of Law), **Anna Ragnarsdottir*** (EUI – Florence School of Transnational Governance), **Giovanna Melandri** (President of Human Foundation and Board Member of the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment; Former Italy's Minister for Cultural Heritage and Youth Policies), and **Marco Buti** (Tommaso Padoa Schioppa Chair at the Robert Schuman Centre, EUI and former Director-General for Economic and Financial Affairs at the European Commission Chief).

Chair: **John Hooper** (The Economist)

Rapporteurs: **Youssef Memmi**, **Giulio Boccadifuoco**, **Christian Gramigni**, and **Valeria Mascolo** (UNISI, PhD candidates)

15:30–16:30

Plenary 1. Foreign influence and European Democracy. Lessons learned and future perspectives. (In partnership with European Liberal Forum)

While foreign influences and interventions in Europe and democracies are not a new phenomenon in Europe, in the recent years they have been exacerbated. Every other week, we receive news about private companies, state institutions and officials and foreign nationals either being involved in our adversaries, spying for them or openly doing business with them. While the formats of cooperation with foreign powers vary across countries and regions, the outcome is the same: the vulnerabilities of our democracies are used to destabilise and divide the unity of the European continent and weaken our decision-making institutions.

It is no wonder that many European countries are contemplating about ways to protect themselves, with variations of laws against foreign interference. While the premise of these laws is to protect our democracies against malign foreign powers, in the hands of more illiberal government, they can become tools of suppressing independent media, civil society and ruling party critics.

Moving beyond disinformation and fake news, what does the scope of foreign interference in Europe include? Does the EU have successful examples of identifying and preventing them more proactively? Finally, where is the fine balance between protecting our democracies, but not at the cost of their existence?

THURSDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

Introducer: **Francesco Cappelletti** (Senior Policy and Research Officer, European Liberal Forum).

Discussants: **Milosz Hodun**, (Editor of Putin's Europe & European Liberal Forum Board Member, **Beadie Finzi** (Director, Doc Society), **Stephen Khan** (Global Executive Editor at The Conversation), and **Silvia Nadjivan** (NEOS).

Chair: **Viktorya Muradyan** (European Liberal Forum & The European Correspondent)

16:30–16:45

Coffee Break

16:45–17:45

Plenary 2. EU competitiveness: how to escape middle technology trap (In partnership with the Institute for European Policymaking, Bocconi)

The EU is losing the global innovation race. EU industry invests less than its peers in R&D, it lags way behind in software and artificial intelligence, and its pharmaceutical component is at risk. For over 20 years the same companies, mostly from the automotive sector, have dominated EU innovation activity. This the middle technology trap. Existing EU programmes to foster innovation, including those under the heading of the European Innovation Council (EIC), are far from the gold standard – the US Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) model. Their decision processes are still very political, they impose collaboration instead of accompanying them, they devote too much of their limited resources to venture capital investment rather than to supporting breakthrough innovation, and the few project managers are over-stretched. We propose an ARPA-style model of governance and a budget-neutral shift of resources to support high-risk, high-return projects that are far from commercial application. Project selection and management should be improved by increasing the scientific and engineering excellence of the EIC Board and by delegating more to scientists. The current venture capital activities should be outsourced to a specialised fund”.

Introducer: **Daniel Gros** (Director of the Institute of European Policy Making at Bocconi University)

Discussants: **Clemens Fuest*** (IFO President), **Jean Tirole*** (2014 Nobel in Economic Sciences Winner and Professor at Toulouse Capitole University), **Barbara Kolm** (former Vicepresident of the Austrian Central Bank and Candidate MP for Freedom Party), **Giorgio Gori** (MEP for S&D Group), **Erik Jones** (EUI - Director of Robert Schuman Center), **Paolo Canfora** (Programme Manager for Fair and Sustainable Economy at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre), and **DG RTD** and **CONNECT*** (online).

Chair: Iain Martin (The Times)

THURSDAY 12th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

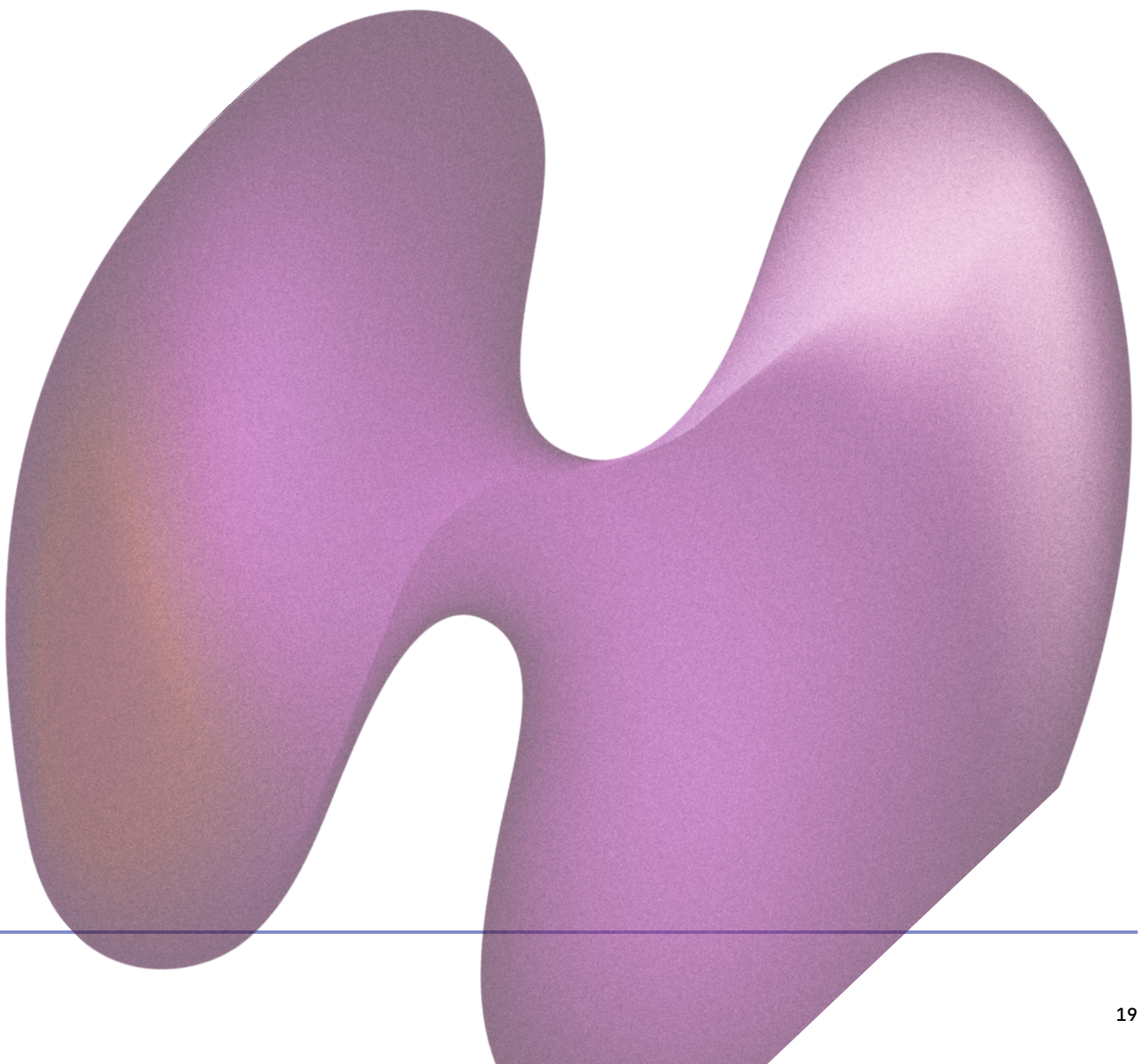
18:30-19:00

Transfer to Siena. Gathering at the Vision information desk.

APERITIVO WITH BUFFET AT THE GALLERY AT MONTE DEI PASCHI DI SIENA (THE OLDEST BANK IN THE WORLD)

22:00-22:30

Transfer to the Certosa. Gathering at the bus drop-off



FRADAY 13th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

8:00-9:00

Breakfast

9:00-9:20

Introduction to the 2nd day
with the Master of Ceremonies **Annalisa Piras** (Director Wake Europe Project) and **Greta Aurora Zottoli** (Vision associate)

9:30-10:30

Plenary 3. After the elections: the future of the transatlantic alliance (in partnership with New Direction)

The Transatlantic Alliance is the most important relationship for both Europe and the United States. The relationship between Europe and the US extends far beyond its utility as a strategic, defence alliance, covering a plethora of other areas. Trade, innovation, investment, culture, and a shared history all help to ensure that the Transatlantic relationship remains central to the future of both sides.

Introducer: **Robert Tyler** (New Direction)

Discussants: **Thibault Muzergues** (the International Republican Institute), **Lorenzo Montenari** (Americans for Tax Reform), **Erik Jones** (EUI - Director of Robert Schuman Center), **Sandra Whiphram** (Co-Director Doc Society Trustee), and **Gerlinde Niehus** (Deputy Director, Defence and Security Cooperation, NATO Headquarters).

Chair: **Bill Emmott** (Chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and former editor of The Economist)

10:30-10:45

Coffee Break

10:45-11:45

Back to the problem-solving groups to finalize the draft report

★ The participants will gather in the same group working rooms of the previous day

FRADAY 13th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

12:00–13:00

Plenary 4. Building a viable European security architecture (in partnership with Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies)

The Russian aggression on Ukraine and isolationist tendencies inside the US have clearly demonstrated that Europeans will have to take more responsibility for their own security and territorial defence within both NATO and the EU. They have to close the capability gaps that exist in almost all dimensions of military and civil defence to overcome a number of structural weaknesses. The European Union can play a decisive role in this process. It has the political, legal and financial infrastructure and showed remarkable initiatives and action during the last two years. Still, many member states haven't realised the need for a "Zeitenwende" and lack the will to contribute to substantial steps towards a true European Defence Union. Enhancing Europe's own capabilities will also contribute to the EU's objectives to achieve "open strategic autonomy" and to become an influential global player.

The session will analyse the changing geopolitical environment and the consequences of the Russian war on Europe's security. It will then discuss options for strengthening the European security and defence pillar and the integration into a larger concept of resilience.

Introducer: **Peter Hefe** (Policy Director Martens Center)

Discussants: **Paola Tessari** (Senior Researcher in the Security Programme at IAI - Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome/Italy), **Ionela Ciolan** (Research Officer for Security and Defence, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies, Brussels/Belgium), **Michael Benhamou**, (Executive Director OPEWI – Europe's War Institute, Paris/France), **Bill Emmott** (Chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and former editor of The Economist).

Chair: **Aleksandar Metodijev** (Independent journalist)

13:00–14:00

Lunch

14:15-15:15

Plenary 5. The future of the EU's energy project - integrating energy security, social, climate and democratic dimensions (in partnership with Gree European Foundation)

The EU's energy project is unmistakably one of transition (from fossil fuels to a new clean energy system), with the European Green Deal representing the biggest cornerstone of the current EU legislative and political transformation framework. Recent crises and volatile social, environmental, geopolitical and economic contexts have confirmed the importance of pursuing decarbonization and the energy transition at a fast pace, but they also expose and amplify the risks related to insufficient social support for climate action and transition policies.

Within this context and at the start of new mandates in Parliament and Commission, the EU finds itself with a new challenge. How can it advance its Energy Project, and thus how can it be improved on 4 key dimensions at the same time: energy security, social aspects, climate and sustainability, and finally democracy? Successfully integrating and addressing this array of concerns means putting systemic narratives and policies at the core of the future of the EU's Energy Project.

During this panel, organised by the Green European Foundation, speakers will identify key barriers and opportunities to advance in that direction.

Introducer: **Taube Van Melkebeke** (Policy manager of Green European Foundation)

Discussants: **Camille Defard** (Head of the Jacques Delors Energy Centre and Research Fellow in EU Energy Policy), **Sandra Tzvetkova** (Senior Policy Advisor at E3G, working on EU Politics in the Political Economy and Governance program), **Chiara Antonelli** (Head of Programme, Climate and Circular Economy at the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP), **Massimiliano Montini** (Jean Monnet Chair on Circular Economy for the Internal Market and Rector's Delegate for European Citizenship of the University of Siena) and **Simona Suardi** (Senior Advisor on Energy for the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament).
Chair: Seden Anlar (Independent Journalist & Political Communicator)

15:15-16:15

Plenary 6. Environment, resources and cooperation in the Mediterranean (in partnership with UNISI and EUI)

Political borders and unions offer unparalleled opportunities for robust, integrated climate policy. The EU's Green Deal, a suite of ambitious, largely binding, climate legislation is a prime example of this. However, they also artificially restrict the field of cooperation to within specific borders, a risky limitation in the face of notoriously cross-border climate impacts.

The EU's Southern border with the Mediterranean is as relevant for climate futures as its Northern border with the Arctic, additionally layered with the social complexities of climate change, including resource conflicts, migration, energy access, and climate disasters.

In the face of this, building on a rich history of Mediterranean cooperation and diversity, and on environmental economics cooperation around the world, we see ample scope for sustainable collective environmental progress. The University of Siena and Vision have long supported Mediterranean cooperation in research and development, most notably in Prime Minister Prodi's advocacy of a Mediterranean University, and we are honored to support missions in this direction.

Introducer: **Simone Borghesi** (President European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists and Vice Rector of the University of Siena)

Discussants: **Romano Prodi**, (Former President of the European Commission and Former Italian Prime Minister), **Valeria Costantini** (Economics Department Director at Roma Tre and President of the Italian Association of Environmental and Resource Economists), **Marcello Scalisi** (Director of the Mediterranean Universities Union (UNIMED)), **Angelo Riccaboni** (President of the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)), **Carmen Arguedas**, (President of the Spanish-Portuguese Association of Natural and Environmental Resource Economics), and **Raja Chakir** (Steering Committee of the French Association of Environmental and Resource Economists).

Chair: **Annalisa Piras** (Director Wake Europe Project)

15:15-16:15

Parallel session. The future of the conference on the Europe of the future (brainstorming with the European political foundations and the conference scientific partners)

FRADAY 13th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

Introducer: **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision Think Tank, Professor at Bocconi University and Visiting Fellow at the EUI) and **Roberto Di Pietra** (Rector of the University of Siena)

Discussants: **Taube Van Melkebeke** (Policy manager of Green European Foundation), **Peter Hefe** (Policy Director Martens Center), **Robert Tyler** (Senior Policy Advisor, New Direction), **Daniel Gros** (Director of the Institute of European Policy Making at Bocconi University), **Francesco Cappelletti** (Senior Policy and Research Officer, European Liberal Forum), and **Maria João Rodrigues** (President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and former Portuguese Minister of Employment).

Chair: **Chiara Mezzogori** (Vision associate)

16:15-16:30

Coffee Break

16:30-17:30

Plenary 7. The next generation EU as the blueprint of a permanent common fiscal capacity? An assesment

Four years ago, one of the longest council meetings in history took the historical ("Hamiltonian") decision to respond to the Covid-19 crisis with a grand fiscal plan (the "Next Generation EU") financed by EU common debt. Four years later the case for replicating or making permanent a common fiscal capacity appear even stronger (digital and energy transitions, as well as defense offer examples of "European common goods" to be collectively funded). Yet, the preliminary evaluations of the results of the NGEU offer, at the same time, lessons to be learnt (and considered to reform the entire EU budget).

Introducers: **Marco Buti** (Tommaso Padoa Schioppa Chair at the Robert Schuman Centre, EUI and former Director-General for Economic and Financial Affairs at the European Commission) and **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision Think Tank, Professor at Bocconi University and Visiting Fellow at the EUI).

Discussants: **Daniel Gros** (Director of the Institute of European Policy Making at Bocconi University), **Giancarlo Giorgetti*** (Italy's Minister of Economy), **Gregorio De Felice** (Chief Economist Intesa Sanpaolo), **Giovanna Melandri** (President of Human Foundation and Board Member of the Global Steering Group for Impact Investment; Former Italy's Minister for Cultural Heritage and Youth Policies), **Stefania Baroncelli** (Professor at Università di Bolzano), **Andrea Maffezzoni** (CFO, Monte Paschi Siena), and **DG ECFIN*** and **REFORM*** (online).

Chair: **John Hooper** (The Economist)

FRADAY 13th SEPTEMBER

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

16:45–18:30

Parallel Session in Siena (Palazzo Pubblico). How to turn a problem (overtourism) into an opportunity (of more sustainable and added value experience) is smaller art cities?

The extraordinary growth of tourism in this beginning of the millennium, only temporarily interrupted by the pandemic, represents an economic, political and social challenge to which local communities can only respond with specific and concrete solutions, given the extreme difficulty (and probably impossibility) of national and European levels to express a common line. The search for the sustainability of tourism, which is increasingly aware of the limits to growth (and in particular to the kind of growth achieved so far), requires a new phase of planning. At stake is the possibility not only of solving the problems created by such a tumultuous growth, but also the opportunity to truly enhance its contribution to socio-economic development. In this session we will try to compare experiences and perspectives with a special focus on smaller art cities.

Introducer: **Nicola Bellini** (Sant'Anna School, Pisa).

Discussants: **Robert Lanquar** (Commissioner, Fondation Paradigma Córdoba para la Convivencia), **Antonella Galdi**(D) (Deputy Secretary General of ANCI), **Pierpaolo Campostrini** (Managing Director, CORILA), **Rocío Blanco Gregory** (Prof. of Sociology at University of Extremadura), and **Paolo Canfora** (Programme Manager for Fair and Sustainable Economy at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre).

Chair: **Laura Silvia Battaglia** (Rai Radio 3)

✳ This session main language is Italian

18:30–19:00

Transfer to Siena. Gathering at the Vision information desk.

TASTING BUFFET AT LOGGIA DEI NOVE – PALAZZO DEL BUON GOVERNO (SIENA) – PARRALLEL TO THE SIENA CONFERENCE ON RADIO 1 ZAPPING WITH GIANCARLO LOQUENZI (RAI)

22:00–22:30

Transfer to the Certosa. Gathering at the bus drop-off

SATURDAY 14th SEPTEMBER

UNIVERSITY OF SIENA

8:00-9:00

Breakfast

9:00-9:30

Transfer to Siena (with luggage). Gathering at the Vision information desk.

Master of Ceremonies Annalisa Piras (Director Wake Europe Project)

9:50-10:00

Institutional Greetings: **Eugenio Giani** (Governor of Region Toscana), **Nicoletta Fabio** (Siena Major), **Roberto Di Pietra** (Rector of the University of Siena)

10:00-10:30

The State of the Union (2) - An eupinions poll by the Bertelsmann Foundation and IEP - How EU citizens see EU institutions and their leaders? - **Simon Hix (EUI)**

A survey conducted before the 2024 European Parliament elections on the recognition of, and attitudes towards, Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen. The survey was conducted in December 2023, with 13,000 respondents in 7 member states. The main results are that 75% of Europeans could correctly identify President Von der Leyen, which is much higher than for previous Commission Presidents. However, only 30% of Europeans felt informed enough to assess President Von der Leyen's performance. On average, these citizens rated President Von der Leyen's performance positively (6 out of 10), and viewed her handling of the war in Ukraine as her biggest achievement. Despite being a politician from the centre-right, President Von der Leyen is rated more favourably by citizens on the left than on the right. In general, European citizens view problem-solving, crisis management, and having relevant experience as the most desirable characteristics for a Commission President. Nevertheless, only 38% of respondents regarded the opportunity to influence who should be the next President as a motivating factor in deciding whether to vote in the European elections.

SATURDAY 14th SEPTEMBER

UNIVERSITY OF SIENA

10:30-11:30

Plenary 8. A full-capacity Europe: industrial renewal and investment strategy. How can competitiveness and competition benefit all member states? (Financials; policy coherence; international dimension; green & clean tech; EU capacity) (in partnership with the Foundation for European Progressive Studies)

It is beyond doubt that other major economies have started a rather aggressive industrial policy supporting clean technologies and strategic industries. The EU has launched a Green Deal Industrial Plan in the last legislature and a STEP with very little money for strategic technologies. Insofar, industrial renewal in Europe rests very much in the hands – and state aid – of member states. How can the competitiveness agenda of the Union and the new paradigms of strategic autonomy and economic security find a comprehensive and coherent strategy that elevates Europe internal market without endangering convergence? What are the policy tools, the financial backing and the governance system that the Union should promote in order for to boost capacity in key sectors? Can clean and digital industrial capacity go hand in hand with a job-rich agenda?

Introducer: **David Rinaldi** (Director of Studies and Policy, FEPS)

Discussants: **Lina Gálvez Muñoz** (MEP, S&D Group SPAIN), **George Papaconstantinou*** (Director, School of Transnational Governance, EUI and former minister of finance and of energy of Greece), **Sebastian Mang*** (New Economics Foundation), and **Francesca Bria*** (Mercator Stiftung, former president of the Italian Innovation Fund and former CTO of the City of Barcelona).
Chair: **Anne-Élisabeth Moutet** (The Telegraph)

11:30-12:30

Presentation of the proposals from the 4 problem-solving groups, discussion and the way forward

✳ by the Chair and Rapporteur of each group together with the students from the University of Siena and EUI (15 minutes per group)

12:30-14:00

Closing buffet lunch at the Rectorate at University of Siena

SATURDAY 14th SEPTEMBER

UNIVERSITY OF SIENA

14:00-15:00

Presentation of the Pontignano Paper to the Media

Introducers: **Francesco Grillo** (Director at Vision Think Tank, Professor at Bocconi University and Visiting Fellow at the EUI).

Discussants: **Antonio Tajani*** (Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs), **Maria João Rodrigues** (President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and former Portuguese Minister of Employment), **Irene Tinagli** (MEP for S&D Group), **Sandro Gozi** (MEP Renew Europe, Italy's former State Secretary for European Affairs and Secretary General of the European Democracy Party), and **Dace Melbarde** (MEP, Vilnius/Latvia).

Chair: Giancarlo Loquenzi (RAI)

15:00-16:00

Lectio magistralis with president *Mario Draghi**

VISION TEAM

Who worked on this *visionary* project

Francesco Grillo, Vision Director

Greta Aurora Zottoli, Vision Associate

Chiara Mezzogori, Vision Associate

Sarah Scully, Vision Associate

Valerio Rosa, Vision Associate



Vision Think Tank

Vision is the think tank that brings together researchers and young Italian professionals who all share work and study experiences gained in the best universities and European capitals, and the belief that the technological revolution we are experiencing will lead to a radical change in the form of institutions and in the governance of economic systems.

