

# SIENA CONFERENCE

ON THE EUROPE OF  
THE FUTURE

7<sup>TH</sup> EDITION



A THIRD WAY FOR EUROPE



11-13 JUNE 2026

  
CRAFTING THE FUTURE



**UNIVERSITÀ  
DI SIENA**  
1240



**Università  
Bocconi**  
MILANO



# **PRAGMATIC FEDERALISM AS A METHOD TO LAND IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

## **THE BATTLE FOR THE ENERGY, DIGITAL AND DEFENCE AUTONOMIES**

*DRAFT AND CONFIDENTIAL*



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## THE CONCEPT OF THE CONFERENCE

On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the UK PM Keir Starmer called a conference call with his colleagues from the EU 27 member states (plus Canada, Bahrain, Norway, and the United Arab Emirates)<sup>1</sup>. The meeting was, few days after the EU commissioner for Energy Dan Jørgensen had said that the "prolonged disruption" to energy supplies from the Iran war should make national governments consider "voluntary demand saving measures ... with particular attention to the transport sector"<sup>2</sup> and the Italian Defense Minister had acknowledged that "I am forced to know things that don't let him sleep"<sup>3</sup>. The only outcome of the meeting was to fix the date of the next meeting.

We are most likely walking powerless towards lockdowns that may resemble those forced by the Covid-19 Pandemic. We may be facing security risks that we cannot even name (according to the "Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists", we have never been so close to a nuclear event<sup>4</sup>). And in the meantime, it seems that the EU continues to be just witnessing a battle for the "artificial intelligence" that will change everything.

Europe is still the place where people can enjoy the better quality of life and, actually, better "pursue life" (life expectancy without chronic diseases is longer than anywhere else<sup>5</sup>), "liberty" (seven out of the ten most free countries of the world are in the EU; and the number one is Switzerland<sup>6</sup>) and "happiness" ("the pursuit of life, freedom and happiness" which was the fundamental right around which societies should be organized according to the that the American constitution<sup>7</sup>). And yet the acknowledgement of how worth is a "style of life", cannot become the temptation to ignore the urgency that every "style" can be endangered if we are happy to see the future slipping away from us. For Draghi this is the existential threat we are facing<sup>8</sup>; the title of the 2026 Siena conference is that the best way to "defend what we care about" is about having moral, intellectual, political credibility so to propose a new world order. A third way between a 20th-century framework that has disappeared and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/europe-up-policing-hormuz-strait-only-fighting-stops/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/brussels-urges-europeans-to-travel-less-to-avoid-spiraling-energy-costs/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/how-bad-will-europes-energy-crisis-get/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://thebulletin.org/about-us/science-and-security-board/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/gho-ghe-hale-healthy-life-expectancy-at-birth>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index/2025>

<sup>7</sup> Actually the "declaration of independence" penned in 1776 by Thomas Jefferson. The paradox was nicely remarked by Stanley Pignal at the Economist (<https://www.economist.com/europe/2025/04/10/the-thing-about-europe-its-the-actual-land-of-the-free-now>)

<sup>8</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/topics/competitiveness/draghi-report\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/topics/competitiveness/draghi-report_en)

a chaos that makes everything uncertain (including having participants fly in Siena from different countries) and would lead to destruction<sup>9</sup>.

“It is time to do something”. In one of his addresses to the European Parliament, the former President of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, acknowledged that he himself was not sure what exactly needed to be done or in what order. And yet, our only certainty is that we must change and that “member states and political parties cannot continue to say no to everything”.

Vision position is not 100% the one that Draghi has been advocating for<sup>10</sup>. And yet we need first of all to acknowledge that we really face – now more than ever – those existential threats we have been talking about for years with no consequence. Whoever wants to really try to save a “style of life” must feel the urgency to try a new approach, and the urgency grows even greater in a world that seems to have lost what little order remained with the events that marked the start of 2026 (Venezuela, Iran, Greenland).

We must reject – much more firmly than we have been able to do so far - this idea that there is no law order and yet, we must urgently understand why the 20<sup>th</sup>-century institutions became incapable of protecting international law. We cannot tolerate unilateral decisions whose prices are paid by everybody (including European families and firms), and yet we cannot limit ourselves to hopelessly “monitoring” events that we cannot control. It is necessary to distance ourselves from those who are destroying stability, and yet it is indispensable to understand where they got their political energy from. The defence of the “status quo” is no longer an option, and we need the autonomy, the “power”, the “force”, and – even more – the ideas to help design a new world order. **We need a third way and places to nurture new ideas to go beyond the clash of ideologies that cannot make sense of the mutation we are living.**

This is the starting point for the Seventh Conference on the Europe of the Future, taking place in Pontignano/Siena from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2026. This concept paper also tries to give a name to the solution through which we can try to reconstruct a method for governing complexity: Draghi called it “pragmatic federalism”; Vision – the convenor of the Conference – has been calling this paradigm “cluster of integrations”; somebody else is talking about “**coalition of the willings**”. Our only certainty is that the “Europe of the Future” will be radically different from the one we have now.

It is a certainty made even more stark by the strategy our most reliable ally has repeatedly declared: the US National Security Strategy opens gaps that a European Security Strategy

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.thinktank.vision/en/articles/democracy/europes-third-way>

<sup>10</sup> We, for instance, are convinced that any serious rethinking of Europe MUST engage citizens and that it would be a mistake to continue with a “top-down” method and work made by very small circles of so-called “experts”, each with their language. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/jul/12/young-people-eu-citizen-digital-age-erasmus-school>

must fill. We must do so by equipping ourselves with new institutional, financial, and strategic capabilities.

The Conference will seek to define more clearly what must be done to make Europe fit for the uncertainties we have not yet fully understood. And this will produce concrete proposals for each of the military, economic, and environmental questions that need strategies. It is a problem-solving exercise we need to reform the EU, but also to redesign the so-called “multilateral organisations” that – like the EU – seem to be suffering technological obsolescence. We are convinced that neither the defense of the status quo, nor the return to the “Nation States” can give us the answer we are looking for.

These will be the overarching themes of the Conference, and we will find possible answers by looking at seven of the most essential trade-offs that Europe will need to solve:

1. How can we turn a problem that is even bigger for Europe – the erosion of a rule/trade-based order - into an opportunity to lead the process that will eventually result in a new world order?
2. Can the common defence be the opportunity to change we were looking for, the shape of the Union? And how much does it really cost to equip ourselves to have enough strength to pursue our European interests?
3. Which combination of innovation policies/ financial markets integration (and growth-generating rules) can lead Europe to develop its own digital leadership (and retain control of vital information that belongs to its citizens and firms)?
4. How rapidly can we lower our energy dependency, which is a strong factor of vulnerability? Can energy security be the new name to give to a still urgent and, yes, more complex climate change agenda?
5. How to transform the mechanisms through which the EU budget is spent, so that its objectives are more efficiently achieved (especially as far as common agriculture/ cohesion policies)?
6. Is there a strategy to escape the demographic crisis that is eating away at the possibility for the "old Continent" to have a future?
7. Last but not least: what institutional settings can realistically, in a short time frame, allow Europe to respond to such existential threats, and how can we effectively engage European citizens so that Europe stops being perceived as a top-down process?

These seven questions will articulate the PONTIGNANO Manifesto, and for each of the seven, the Conference will produce a set of specific ideas (actions/proposals) to be promoted/ experimented with/ debated. The media will be key to the entire process.

The agenda will be structured in three problem-solving exercises:

1. **The first day** (Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> JUNE), four problem setting/ solving groups (PSSG from EUI in Fiesole; University of Siena; LUISS in Rome; and Ludovika University from Budapest) will present four possible solutions to four trade-offs that are posing difficult choices (democracy versus efficiency; regulations versus dynamism; operationalisation of pragmatic federalism; defence versus welfare); this work will start before the Conference and will be anticipated by a webinar on each PSSG.
2. **The second day** (Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June), universities, think tanks, and political foundations (from the entire political spectrum) will discuss six draft strategic documents on six pillars that are indispensable for a stronger Europe (energy independence, digital autonomy, defence, housing, agriculture and trade, demography and immigration).
3. **On the third day** (Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> June), the draft of the final paper will be discussed and delivered to the media. This will be followed up by several other issue-specific events in the following months.

The idea is to contribute ideas, enthusiasm, and energy that the Union needs to change, survive, and prosper in the most important moment of its history.

In the following pages, you find a preliminary structure of a project meant to be a platform for problem-solving. This multipartisan, interdisciplinary endeavour will generate some of the pragmatic, visionary ideas Europe needs more than ever.<sup>11</sup>

## THE PARTNERS

Vision - the think tank that is convening the “Siena conference on the Europe of the future” together with the **European University Institute** and the **University of Siena**, and with the collaboration of researchers at the **Ludovika University of Public Service, Bruegel, Institute of European Policy Making at the Bocconi University** and the **School of Government at LUISS** - is convinced that radical challenges require radical choices. The Siena Conference, which will celebrate its seventh edition, aims to consolidate a platform for new ideas in a multipartisan environment: the foundations/ think tanks of the six European political parties. This makes the Siena conference a pragmatic, multipartisan platform for bold proposals.

The political foundations that will partner with Vision in the seventh edition are: **the Federation of European Progressive Studies**, the **Konrad Adenauer Stiftung**, the **Green European Foundation**, and the **Institute of European Democrats**.

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<sup>11</sup>Participants are to be considered a preliminary indication, so as to give structure to the program. An (\*) shows participants still to be confirmed.

About 100 people will be at the Conference. They come from all EU countries and our most relevant neighborhood (UK, Turkey, USA, Africa, Middle East, Ukraine); the gender mix is a point of strength, and not fewer than one-third of the participants are under 30.

The Media partners of the seventh edition of the Conference are **The Conversation**, the global media agency that acts as a link between best universities and the general public, and **RAI**, Italy's TV public broadcaster. An enduring, special relation between **The Economist**, arguably the world's most authoritative magazine, and Vision will be central also to this year's edition. **QN** (La Nazione and Il Resto del Carlino) will follow the debates.

Vision thanks a group of friends who have followed the endeavor with their wise suggestions and support. Amongst them: **Maria Joao Rodrigues** (Chair of the Board of Re-imagine Europa, Former President of FEPS and Former Portugal's Minister), **Bill Emmott** (Chairman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Former Editor-in-Chief of the Economist), **Alexandra Borchardt** (Lead Author at European Broadcasting Union and Senior Research Associate at Reuters Institute), **Barbara Kolm** (Member of Austria's National Council with the Freedom Party and former Vice president of the Austrian Central Bank, President of the F.A. von Hayek Institut and director of the Austrian Economics Center), **Sandro Gozi** (Secretary General of the PDE), **Turi Munthe** (Media Entrepreneur and Board Member at GEDI), **Stephen Kahn** (Editor in-Chief at the Conversation). We also thank **John Hooper** (Correspondent for Italy and Vatican for the Economist) and **Jan Piotrowski** (Schumpeter columnist at the Economist): they are part of the inner circle of a great community.

## THE PREVIOUS CONFERENCES

The Conference's objective is to become the platform from which new ideas may emerge and be advocated, and from which new approaches to studying Europe may be experimented with and nurtured. Some of the proposals that previous conferences have advanced are<sup>12</sup>:

- a) The paradigm of the "clusters of integrations": here, the notion of "flexible geometries" is scaled up and systematized, where the European Union is proposed to transform itself into an umbrella of new (like for defense) or more advanced (like for free movements of people with a fully common border) policy integrations. These integrations are meant to be voluntary, backed by people (referenda may be an option), and flexible (with pre-defined opt-out and kick-out clauses)<sup>13</sup>;

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<sup>12</sup> Details can be found into the 2024 Pontignano Paper accessible at [https://www.thinktank.vision/images/CONCEPT\\_PAPER.pdf](https://www.thinktank.vision/images/CONCEPT_PAPER.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> See also <https://theconversation.com/the-eu-was-built-for-another-age-heres-how-it-must-adapt-to-survive-248811>

- b) A "measure less, measure better" approach to EGS-based audit of the sustainability of corporations, and specific proposals to amend the CSRD to minimize the cost of compliance with the red tape and greenwashing<sup>14</sup>.
- c) A review of digital regulations to simplify them and promote innovation, and reform of HORIZON EUROPE to launch contests among companies/ universities to create and then scale up use cases of AI used to solve concrete problems.
- d) An assessment of Next Generation EU to correct some of its pitfalls and use some of its characteristics to reform cohesion policies<sup>15</sup>;
- e) A proposal for a free and compulsory Erasmus (or civil service) and a proposal to reform the European Parliament's electoral law are positive actions to create a European demos and European political sphere, which are preconditions to further integrations<sup>16</sup>.

The way forward is to integrate more think tanks and universities into a platform designed to produce knowledge accessible to anyone who wants to study how institutions can renew themselves in the face of radical disruptions.

## THE VISION ENDEAVOUR

The Conference is one of three flagship initiatives spearheaded by Think Tank Vision. Alongside it, there is **The Dolomite/ Venice Conference on "Global Governance of Climate Change,"** whose previous editions have been organized in collaboration with Bocconi University, Politecnico Milan, Institute for New Economic Thinking (New York), CEBRI (RIO), TERI (New Delhi), Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University<sup>17</sup>, and an upcoming conference on **"Skills for the AI world"**, co-organized with the University of Southern California and *The Conversation* in Dubai. This series of events aims to establish a "new Davos," offering concrete solutions to some of the most pressing, complex questions we face as we navigate uncharted waters.

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<sup>14</sup> See also <https://www.thinktank.vision/en/media-en/articles/a-bolder-push-for-green-deal>

<sup>15</sup> See also <https://www.thinktank.vision/en/media-en/articles/nex>

<sup>16</sup> For more info <https://liberalforum.eu/publication/policy-paper-11-flexible-transnational-electoral-constituencies/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.thinktank.vision/en/media-en/events/third-dolomite-conference-on-the-governance-of-climate-change-and-sustainability>

# DRAFT AGENDA

THURSDAY 11th JUNE

CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

**13:00 – 14:00** *Registration of participants<sup>18</sup>*

**14:00 – 14:15** **INSTITUTIONAL WELCOME**

**Roberto Di Pietra** (UNISI Rector), **Paolo Boccardelli** (LUISS Rector)

**14:15 – 14:30** **SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE VII EDITION OF THE SIENA CONFERENCE**

**Lilith Verstrynge** (Political analyst, writer at El País and Le Monde Diplomatique, Professor of International Relations at Sciences Po University Paris), **Gabriele Dell’Anno** (Vision Associate)

## OPENING SESSION

**14:30 – 15:30** **PERFECT STORMS AS OPPORTUNITIES TO REIMAGINE EUROPE BEYOND IDEOLOGICAL GRIDLOCKS – MAIN IDEAS FROM THE 2025 EDITION AND FEEDBACK TO THE CONFERENCE CONCEPT PAPER FOR 2026**

**Introduction by:** **Francesco Grillo** (Vision Think Tank Director, Professor at Bocconi, and Senior Fellow at EUI)

**Discussants:** **Maria Joao Rodrigues** (Chair of the Board of Re-imagine Europa, Former President of FEPS and Former Portugal’s Labor Minister), **Barbara Kolm** (Member of Austria’s National Council with the Freedom Party and former Vice president of the Austrian Central Bank, President of the F.A. von Hayek Institut and director of the Austrian Economics Center), **Liliana Śmiech** (Chairwoman of the Foundation Council at Warsaw Institute and Director General for International Affairs at Ludovika University of Public Service), **Kalypto Nicolaïdis** (Professor at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford and Professor at the School of Transnational Governance, EUI).

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<sup>18</sup> \* Participants to be confirmed

**Chair: Lilith Verstrynge** (Political analyst, writer at El País and Le Monde Diplomatique, Professor of International Relations at Sciences Po University Paris)

**15:30 – 15:45**

## **THE TRADE-OFFS TO BE SOLVED**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE 4 PROBLEM SETTING/SOLVING GROUPS (PSSG) (4 minutes each)**

The problem-setting groups are one of the most creative features of the Conference. They will have been prepared by four groups of students and professors/tutors that have been asked to prepare a possible solution to a specific problem (most of the time, the problem will be a trade-off between two equally legitimate goals), interacting with some of the participants joining the Conference in the months before the event. Each group will distribute a paper before the event.

All 100 participants will be asked to join one of the four groups that will run in parallel in four different rooms of the Certosa. The group will present the idea, and the roughly 25 participants of each of the four groups will provide feedback to the proposal.

The rapporteurs of the four groups will report the work done in SIENA at the plenary on Saturday and will directly feed the PONTIGNANO PAPER. The final paper is meant to influence agenda-setting and the debate with fresh ideas and new methods. For each of the four papers, Vision will draft a possible follow-up/ advocacy plan together with the conference partners.

The PSSGs will be prepared by the scientific partners/universities (UNISI, EUI, LUISS, Bocconi, Ludovika University of Public Service) before the Conference. Corporate partners will provide their expertise and serve as sounding boards. Media partners will help draft the PSSG papers that will feed into the final PONTIGNANO paper.

**15:45 – 17:15**

**PROBLEM SETTING/ SOLVING GROUPS SESSIONS (each of the 100 participants will choose one PSSG to join; each group will gather into a CERTOSA room).**

#### **PSSG 1**

**IS THERE A CHOICE BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND EFFICIENCY? HOW CAN THE EU BECOME THE LAB TO STRENGTHEN TRANSNATIONAL**

## DEMOCRACY IN A POST INTERNATIONAL LAW WORLD? HOW CAN WE MAKE THE EU PROJECT POPULAR AGAIN?

### In partnership with EUI

Our world is experiencing a third democratic transformation with a global scope, involving diverse structures and practices adapted to different regions<sup>19</sup>. A core feature of this transformation is transnationalism and more citizens' engagement. Transnational democratic governance offers a pathway to democratize global governance and connect it more directly to populations, the foundation of democracy in any state.

Within this framework, the EU has served as a "laboratory" for transnational democratic governance, combining supranational and intergovernmental institutions. This system seeks to balance the EU's authority and democratic legitimacy with the representation of the twenty-seven member states and their political cultures.

However, as evidenced during past and ongoing crises, this complex model is not yet mainstream. The electoral law with which the European Parliament is elected has been the same since its inception (in 1979, much before the Berlin Wall collapsed and the World Wide Web was invented); nation states seem stronger than in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; all indexes agree that popular support for liberal democracies is declining<sup>20</sup>.

The group will try to explore the paradox of crises in both democracy and transnationalism in a world that is simply not governable by single States (the exception may be partially the US and China). Which are the innovations to be tested in Europe? How can these experimentations be scaled up and become mainstream? This PSSG will explore the trade-offs involved in achieving a fully transnational democratic governance system at the EU level, taking into account current international and internal crises.

**Introduction:** **Kalypso Nicolaidis** (Chair in Global Affairs at the School of Transnational Governance, EUI) and **Luca Verzichelli** (Professor of Political Science at University of Siena)

**Participants:** **Francesco Lapenta** (Director of Institute of Future and Innovation Studies, John Cabot University), **Domènec Ruiz Devesa** (Former S&D Group MEP and FEPS Special Advisor), **Guillaume Klossa** (President of EuropaNova and Chairman of The Conclave), **Berna Leon**

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<sup>19</sup> Nicolaidis C, 'The Third Democratic Transformation: From European to Planetary Politics' (JCMS, 2024). <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13589>

<sup>20</sup> Indexes from Freedom House, 2025 (<https://freedomhouse.org/country/scores>) and the Economist Intelligence Unit (<https://www.eiu.com/n/global-themes/democracy-index/>)

**Reyes** (Adjunct Professor at Sciences Po and Director of Avanza), **Flavia Piras** (Oxford University), **Francesca Traldi** (Scientific Director of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Italy)

**Chair: Annalisa Piras** (Director & Founder of The Wake Europe Project)

**Rapporteurs: Cihan Yalnizer** (Cultural Diplomacy Student at UNISI), **Yasmin Mousavi Najafi** (Politics, Philosophy and Economics Student at Royal Holloway, University of London and UNISI), **Sena Tan** (Public Diplomacy Student at UNISI), **Kseniia Heorhieva** (student at UNISI), **Federico Picchetti** (Public and Cultural Diplomacy Student at UNISI), **Anna Gottardo** (School of Transnational Governance Student at EUI), **Fanta Darboe** (School of Transnational Governance Student at EUI), **Yesi Xu** (School of Transnational Governance Student at EUI).

## PSSG 2

### **IS THE TRADE-OFF BETWEEN REGULATIONS AND INNOVATION UNAVOIDABLE? CAN RULES DRIVE GROWTH (WITH A FOCUS ON ENERGY AND DIGITAL AUTONOMY)?**

#### **In partnership with UNISI and EAERE supported event**

In most econometric models, there seems to be an implicit assumption that regulations can damage innovation. Indeed, regulations can be designed differently and have different impacts on industry dynamism. They can also perform differently in terms of their ability to achieve their declared objectives (protecting citizens' rights, enabling smaller firms/start-ups to compete). The session will try to understand what method can drive the design of better regulations with a focus on sustainability and digital.

The Omnibus Package of 26 February 2025 introduced a new approach to the EU regulatory process, centered on “simplification” with a focus on the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). Through this package, the European Commission aims to enhance competitiveness, support economic growth, and foster a business environment less constrained by excessive regulatory burdens<sup>21</sup>. These changes follow the difficulties encountered in implementing the EU Green Deal and the observations raised in the Draghi Report. More recently, another piece of regulation came under heavy scrutiny: the mechanisms through which

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<sup>21</sup> European Commission, ‘Omnibus package: Commission launched simplification package in February as part of increased focus on EU competitiveness’. [https://finance.ec.europa.eu/news/omnibus-package-2025-04-01\\_en](https://finance.ec.europa.eu/news/omnibus-package-2025-04-01_en)

market prices are regulated, and firms pay for the quantity of CO2 emissions (ETS) and import of carbon intensive products (CBAM).

A similar approach has been pursued with the proposal of a new Omnibus Package in November 2025 in the field of technology and digitalization. Consistent with the February package's emphasis on simplification, this initiative introduces technical amendments to a broad set of digital regulations, aiming to provide immediate relief to businesses, public administrations, and citizens, while stimulating competitiveness<sup>22</sup>.

This PSSG therefore explores the trade-offs inherent in the regulation–innovation nexus. How should EU regulation be rethought to better support innovation and the objective of achieving energy autonomy? How can we use consumers as a force for steering towards innovation<sup>23</sup>? What elements are necessary for an industrial policy capable of stimulating long-term investment and delivering tangible benefits for European companies? Why did heavy pieces of regulations appear to be powerless once eventually approved (like the ones on digital service and digital markets) and is there something to reduce the (legislative) effort and increase the results?

**Introduction:** **Simone Borghesi** (Deputy Dean UNISI)

**Participants:** **Giovanna Melandri** (Founder & Global Ambassador GSGImpact and Independent Board Member at Kering), **Mario Mariniello** (Bruegel Non-resident Fellow), **Renata Mele** (Senior Vice President Sustainability at Leonardo), **Danilo Roncasaglia** (CFO at Domy), **Jesse Scott** (Senior Fellow at the School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute), **Peter Lochbihler** (Global Head of Public Affairs at Booking.com), **Ettore Carnaede** (Chief Compliance Executive of Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena), **Massimiliano Montini** (Professor EU Law and Rector's Delegate for EU Citizenship UNISI)

**Chair:** **Stephen Khan** (Editor in Chief, The Conversation)

**Rapporteurs:** **Alessia Casamassima** (Research Associate at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies – EUI), **Jacopo Cammeo** (Research Associate at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies – EUI)

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<sup>22</sup> European Commission, 'Digital Omnibus Regulation Proposal'. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/digital-omnibus-regulation-proposal>

<sup>23</sup> Vision, A bolder push for Green Deal (2025). <https://www.thinktank.vision/en/media-en/articles/a-bolder-push-for-green-deal>

### **PSSG 3      HOW MUCH DOES DEFENDING OURSELVES REALLY COST? A STRATEGY TO EFFICIENTLY BUILD THE STRENGTH WE NEED: LESSONS FROM POLAND, HUNGARY, UKRAINE AND BEYOND**

**In partnership with Ludovika University of Public Service**

The end of 2025 (with the release of the US security strategy) and the start of 2026 (with Venezuela, tensions over Greenland, and the Iran war) plunge Europe into a dangerous world beyond our own capabilities to understand. A world, however, where existential threats can become opportunities<sup>24</sup>

The PSSG will try to find ideas to respond to uncomfortable questions and trade-offs that we must address if we want to have a strategy: is there a way for Europe to equip itself for much more dangerous times without being forced to choose between investing in defence and equally needed investments in healthcare and education? How does AI/ drones change the equation, and do technologies create opportunities for savings? Who should we more urgently defend from, and how large is the “area of influence” whose stability a European defence should preserve? How quickly and realistically can we reduce our dependency on unreliable allies (and competitors with different agendas)? What are the right incentives for European countries and European firms to share defence capabilities? What are the boundaries of a coherent enough coalition of the willing? Is an instrument like the EU “safe” efficient enough to be scaled up? Can we operationalize a European approach to nuclear deterrence that is feasible in the next couple of years<sup>25</sup>?

The PSSG will be led by a university of Budapest. It also leverages the experience of some Ukrainian think tanks that transformed the necessity to survive into a powerful lever of innovation. Vision believes that it is from

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<sup>24</sup> Vision, As the US eyes Greenland, Europe must turn a global problem into an opportunity (2025). <https://www.thinktank.vision/en/media-en/articles/as-the-us-eyes-greenland-europe-must-turn-a-global-problem-into-an-opportunity>

<sup>25</sup> At present, Europe relies primarily on the French nuclear arsenal (and, to a lesser extent, the British one). The Nordic countries have sparked a debate over the need for a "European dimension" to nuclear capability. And yet this raises technical (is it possible for Britain to decouple from the US?), institutional (Britain is not part of the EU), and moral (both France and the UK - unlike all other seven nuclear States – signed the Treaty that banned nuclear tests in 1996) issues.

the eastern part of the Union that some of the most innovative answers may come.

**Introduction:** **Csaba Zalai** (Professor of Practice, Head of the International Organisations Research Group at Ludovika University), and **Anna Molnár** (Head of the Department of International Security Studies at Ludovika University)

**Participants:** **Daniel Gros** (Director at IEP Bocconi), **Nazar Bigun** (CEO of Norda Dynamics), **Yevhen Popov** (Head of strategic partnership at Osavul), **Liliana Śmiech** (Chairwoman of the Foundation Council at Warsaw Institute and Director General for International Affairs at Ludovika University of Public Service)

**Chair:** **Márk Vargha** (Advisor, Directorate General for International Affairs, Ludovika University of Public Service)

**Rapporteur:** **Mariia Biliavska** (Student in International Relations and Public Diplomacy at UNISI)

#### PSSG 4

#### **THE “PRAGMATIC FEDERALISM” PARADIGM: WHY? WHAT? WHEN? A PROPOSAL TO “DO THE THING” THAT EUROPE NEEDS WITHOUT BEING TRAPPED BY THE CATCH-22 CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY PARADOX**

##### **In partnership with LUISS**

In a European Union exposed to growing global pressures - from protectionism and unilateral actions to the return of traditional military power - current governance structures are proving increasingly inadequate. The Union’s founding principles are under strain, and decades-old decision-making mechanisms struggle to deliver timely and coordinated responses. This structural mismatch has produced a now familiar impasse. Europe widely acknowledges the need for deeper integration in areas such as defence, security, industrial policy, energy, migration, and democratic resilience, yet remains blocked by the constitutional treaty paradox: transformative action appears to require treaty reform and overcoming the vetoes; however, treaty reforms and abolition of unanimity itself require unanimity. Is there a different path towards going beyond the current limits of the Union?

The Pragmatic Federalism paradigm is proposed as a way out of the current deadlock. Rather than conceiving federalism as a constitutional

end-state or a grand institutional design, it is understood here as a method of governance oriented toward concrete problem-solving within real-world constraints. The approach prioritizes functional integration, flexible forms of sovereignty-sharing, and the strategic use of existing legal and institutional instruments to enable collective European action where it is most urgently required, without waiting for comprehensive treaty reform.

Three characteristics of such an approach, as proposed by Vision, are: policy-based full integration; flexibility in mechanisms for opting out; and popular endorsement of strengthened integration.

By operationalizing a vision of a new European integration system, the group aims to examine which concrete mechanisms and policy tools can make Pragmatic Federalism operational within the current EU framework, and when these steps can realistically be implemented in light of political cycles and external pressures.

**Introduction:** **Giulia Ongari** (PhD Candidate in Politics at Luiss)

**Participants:** **Marco Buti** (EUI), **Sabrina Cavatorto** (Researcher at UNISI), **Karolina Borońska-Hryniewiecka** (Associate Professor at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Science and Visiting Fellow at the Florence School of Transnational Governance – EUI), **Anna Peychev** (Research Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies – EUI), **Enrico Ciappi** (Postdoctoral Researcher at LUISS), **Giovanni Orsina** (Professor of Contemporary History at LUISS and Director of the Master’s in European studies)

**Chair** **Matt Steinglass** (Europe Editor at The Economist)

**Rapporteurs:** **Anna Magnabosco** (Policies and Governance in Europe Student at LUISS), **Greta del Grosso** (Policies and Governance in Europe Student at LUISS), **Micaela Vitagliano** (Policies and Governance in Europe Student at LUISS), **Paolo Marcelli** (Policies and Governance in Europe Student at LUISS), **Victoria Bortolotti Lemos** (Public and Cultural Diplomacy Student at UNISI), **Paula Benítez Sánchez** (Public Diplomacy Student at UNISI).

**After 17:15**

**[PONTIGNANO MANIFESTO DRAFT TIME \(PER PSSG\) AND CONFERENCE FOLLOW UPS PLANNING \(ON ENERGY AND DIGITAL\)](#)**

**20:30 – 22:00**

Dinner at the Certosa di Pontignano with an exclusive wine tasting by Borgo Scopeto and Caparzo

**20:00 – 21:00**

*Certosa on Rai Radio 1 - Zapping*

## FRIDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE

### CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO

**07:00 – 09:00**

*Breakfast*

**09:00 – 09:10**

#### **INTRODUCTION TO THE 2<sup>nd</sup> DAY PROGRAM – THE PILLARS OF THE TRANSFORMATION (ENERGY, DIGITAL, DEFENCE, BUDGET, DEMOGRAPHY AND IMMIGRATION)**

**Laura Hood** (Politics Editor at The Conversation) and **Gabriele Dell’Anno** (Vision Associate)

**09:10 – 09:40**

#### **A THIRD WAY FOR EUROPE (KEYNOTE SPEECH)**

**Paolo Gentiloni** (Former European Commissioner and former Italy’s Prime Minister)

#### **PLENARY SESSIONS**

The plenary sessions will have as a starting point a paper prepared by the political foundations and other scientific partners before the Conference. Corporate partners will provide their expertise and act as sounding boards. Media partners will help to translate the sessions in conclusions/ ideas that will feed into the final PONTIGNANO paper.

**09:40 – 10:40**

#### **PLENARY 1: ENERGY INDEPENDENCE: ACCELERATING ENERGY TRANSITION TO ENHANCE EUROPEAN ENERGY SECURITY**

##### **In partnership with ERG**

What is a realistic plan to complete an energy transition. which is essential for making European firms to compete and European families to be less exposed to crises?

For years we have been “selling” the energy transition as something we need to decarbonize our economy. This was right if we consider that each generation is supposed to act responsibly for the sake of the next ones. Yet we believe that this “narrative” must be complemented to another most immediate urgency.

One of the greatest weaknesses of Europe is that we import 58%<sup>26</sup> of the energy we consume (this becomes 80% for Italy and 70% for Germany): this translates into higher bills for firms and families (again differently high in different countries) as the Draghi reports made clear; a system which is technically less stable (by definition, a decentralized production pattern is more so); higher vulnerability to countries that tend to weaponize our fragility (it happened with Russia; it is happening with our most traditional ally).

We are permanently on the edge of even more devastating energy crises, and it is telling that the reaction to those crises is about healing their symptoms, minimizing the consequences (by trying to reduce costs of fossil energy that we do not control)<sup>27</sup>. Not about developing the plan to solve the structural problem we continue to have.

We must have a clear plan to complete the energy transition because this is vital to our short- and medium-term interests. So that we can recover the moral authority to lead the agenda of climate change, and to avoid that inflation will periodically lead to recessions of which European families will pay the price<sup>28</sup>.

Europe's energy transition is about climate but it's a strategic necessity for the EU's competitiveness, resilience, security, and autonomy.

The session will introduce a paper from ERG and Vision that is meant to present a method to measure the contribution of different factors (Grids, Emission Trading System, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, Pricing, Permission for solar, on and off shore wind plant, Nuclear, Domestic Renewable plants for local communities) for different countries so that a plan can be proposed with an articulation with short and medium term actions to be acted upon.

**A proposal from VISION and ERG: Luca Bragoli** (Chief Regulatory & Public Affairs Officer at ERG s.p.a) and **Francesca Stefani** (Associate Vision)

**Discussants: Luca D'Agnese** (Head of Policy, Evaluation and Advisory at CDP and Former Managing Director Terna), **Enrico Giovannini** (Former Italian Minister of Infrastructures and Transports, and Professor of Economic and Statistics at the University of Rome "Tor Vergata"),

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<sup>26</sup> Hansen S. and Ruiz P., 'The energy transition in Europe, Part 1: More constraints than certainties' (Rabobank, 2025). <https://www.rabobank.com/knowledge/d011505124-the-energy-transition-in-europe-part-1-more-constraints-than-certainties>

<sup>27</sup> Like for the proposals to abolish the European Trading System or reducing taxes on fossil.

<sup>28</sup> Rosslowe C, 'Shockproof: how electrification can strengthen EU energy security' (EMBE, 2025). <https://ember-energy.org/latest-insights/shockproof-how-electrification-can-strengthen-eu-energy-security/>

**Christophe Grudler** (MEP Renew Europe, Committee on Industry, Research and Energy at the European Parliament), **Jesse Scott** (Senior Fellow at the School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute).

**Chair: Liliana Śmiech** (Chairwoman of the Foundation Council at Warsaw Institute and Director General for International Affairs at Ludovika University of Public Service)

**10:50 – 11:50**

## **PLENARY 2. NEW PRIORITIES FOR THE EU BUDGET (1): REDESIGN COHESION POLICIES AROUND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEMOGRAPHY<sup>29</sup>**

### **Partnership with ISTITUTO PER IL CREDITO SPORTIVO E CULTURALE**

The Europe of the Future will also need a radically different EU budget (the so called Multiannual Financial Framework of which is being currently negotiated the 2028 – 2034 expenditure period). Most of the debate is on the size and the distribution amongst policies; yet equal attention should be paid to ensuring that the mechanisms through which specific projects are awarded money, beneficiaries, and program managers (at local, national, and EU levels) are held accountable, and results are evaluated so that we can learn from mistakes and successes. The recent experience of Next Generation EU (NGEU, the common debt-funded, 750-billion-euro facility with which the EU responded to the emergency of the COVID-19 Pandemic) does, indeed, propose a radically different approach.

This is especially true for cohesion policies, which were initially meant to close gaps amongst regions and improve the employability of workers. They absorb roughly one-third of the entire budget, and their performance appears to have declined over time<sup>30</sup> in the past programming periods. Their objectives need to be recalibrated vis-à-vis the emergence of new equalities (amongst generations and within the same geographic area). And new objectives require new levers, including social infrastructures - encompassing a broad range of sectors, from affordable housing and student housing to elderly homes, from schools and hospitals to sports facilities and cultural infrastructure.

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<sup>29</sup> Vision, 'Atreiu's Dream and the Demographic Crisis' (2023).

<https://www.thinktank.vision/en/magazine/democracy/atreiu-s-dream-and-the-demographic-crisis-2>

The starting point of the session is a Vision paper advancing a proposal for reforming cohesion policies, considering their performance, as well as the successes (and apparent failures) of NGEU.

One specific focus of the session will be on social Infrastructures as an innovation: they represent a particularly compelling case, as it is both strategically important and capable of fostering innovation that can transform challenges into opportunities.

Social infrastructure is poised to play an increasingly central role in investment policies, both public and private, as it is closely linked to some of the most pressing challenges of our time: reducing inequalities, promoting public health, and enhancing territorial competitiveness.

Projections for the coming years indicate a significant increase in focus on social infrastructure, which is expected to become the third major investment area for both public and private operators, following digital assets and green transition-related investments.

Sport and culture, in this context, have the potential to capitalize on a favourable investment environment, emerging as high-potential asset classes capable of mobilizing private capital from the international market. Currently, however, sports and cultural infrastructure remain underrepresented in sustainability and strategic development agendas with respect to healthcare, education and community care service. Nevertheless, they play a crucial role in complementing and reinforcing the 2030 Agenda, making it more aligned with the evolving needs of contemporary societies.

**Key-note speech: Raffaele Fitto** [online] (Executive Vice-President of European Commission)

**A proposal from: Antonella Baldino** (CEO and Managing Director, Istituto per il Credito Sportivo e Culturale) and **Francesco Grillo** (Vision Think Tank Director, Professor at Bocconi, and Senior Fellow at EUI).

**Discussants: Paolo Canfora** (Head of Unit - Territorial Development European Commission Joint Research Centre), **Stefano Pieretti** (Regenerative Architecture Benefit Unit Leader at Nativa), **Juho Härkönen** (Professor of Sociology at EUI), **Csaba Zalai** (Professor of Practice, Head of the International Organisations Research Group at Ludovika University), **Francesco Boccia** (Chair of the PD Senators in the Italian Senate).

**Chair: Matt Steinglass** (Europe Editor at The Economist)

**12:00 – 13:00**

**PLENARY 3. NEW PRIORITIES FOR THE EU BUDGET (2): A VISION FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD FOR THE REFORM ON THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

**In Partnership with SDA Bocconi**

"There is no one in this room whose roots do not return to the earth." It was with these words that the first President of the European Commission, the German HALLSTEIN, presented the first budget of what was then called the Economic Community, and which dedicated 75% of its resources to agriculture. After seventy years, the Common Agricultural Policy is still one of the policies that define the Union, with a budget of 264 billion (for the period 2023 - 2027).

There is no other productive sector that weighs as "politically" as that of farmers, even though they represent only 5% of the employed in the EU. CAP reforms have been discussed since their establishment (and that of the Union), but in 2025, a rethink becomes essential: can a policy that explicitly aims to "support incomes" be sustainable? Is the protection of micro farms consistent with the idea of making agrifood a competitive advantage? What can be a realistic approach that preserves tradition and accelerates innovation? What is the balance between mitigation and adaptation to climate change, of which the sector is the first victim, and excessively strict rules that have contributed to slowing down the "green deal"? What will be the next evolution after the ratification of the Mercosur Agreement?

**A proposal from SDA Bocconi: Vitaliano Fiorillo** (Director of AgriLab, Bocconi)

**Discussants: Pascal Pinson** (CEO, Costa d'Oro, Italian leader in Olive oil, part of Groupe Avril, a French global leader in agrobusiness), **Alessandra Angelini** (Owner of Siena-based Elisabetta Gnudi Angelini, leader of wine producer), **Paolo Cuccia** (President of Artribune), **Massimiliano Giansanti** (President of Committee of European Farmers – COPA – and Confagricoltura), **Riccardo Parrini** (CEO at The Nest Company).

**Chair: Laura Hood** (Deputy Director Editor at The Conversation)

**13:00 – 14:30**

*Lunch at Certosa di Pontignano*

**14:45 – 15:45**

**PLENARY 4: DRAFTING THE EUROPEAN DIGITAL STRATEGY IN THE AI ERA: A THIRD WAY BETWEEN USA AND CHINA AND A TIME PLAN FOR ACHIEVING AUTONOMY**

**In partnership with REIMAGINE EUROPA**

What are the most immediate actions to be taken if Europe wants to reduce its greatest (digital) vulnerability? Can we think of an industry/ service area where there is more potential for Europe to achieve a competitive advantage by smartly using Artificial Intelligence (AI)? What needs to be changed in terms of how European financial markets and institutions identify/ finance their potential digital champions and how the European Union regulates a transformation that seems to constantly go beyond the capability of the lawmakers to make sense of its speed and implications?

These are the questions to which the session (as well as of some of the problem setting/ solving problem group of the first day of the conference) will try to answer. The objective is to draft a short manifesto with the contribution of some of the most interesting firms working for digital sovereignty.

The starting point will be a paper from REIMAGINE EUROPE that will take stock of the “package for digital sovereignty” that will be released by the European Commission a few days before the SIENA Conference and will provide a contribution reflecting the standpoint of the digital European industry.

The idea is that digital autonomy is not just one of the three freedoms we want achieve but one capable of leading all others (it is digital that is changing the equation of how much does defending ourselves cost; digital technologies are also transforming quickly the economics of energy and the list itself of what we call critical raw materials). Digital is, indeed, not just about the economy; it is about power. This makes the question so hugely important; complex; and vital to find an approach to simplify complexity.

Europe finds itself in a paradoxical position: It has become the world’s foremost standard-setter — defining the rules of data protection, digital competition, and AI governance — yet this vast regulatory work is still not biting (as the case of the case of X seems to demonstrate). We have skills (it is paradoxically demonstrated by the case of Tether itself whose top

management is almost entirely educated in Europe) and yet - with a handful of exceptions in the semiconductors industry, in music streaming applications and in service areas such as Tourism - no global digital platform is emerging from Europe as one that is capable to shape the rest of the economy (as much as Alphabet and Amazon have been doing).

On the other hand, Europe has built something that is becoming increasingly valuable as digital systems grow more complex, more interconnected and more consequential: trust. Our regulatory architecture, open data frameworks, institutional depth and industrial base in manufacturing, mobility, energy and healthcare represent assets that were less visible in the first phase of the digital economy — but may prove decisive in the next when the real challenge will be to find “an industrial problem to be solved by an extremely expensive solution” (which is the nature of the bet that AI will have to solve).

The central question this session poses is how Europe can convert those assets into a genuine competitive model: a third way distinct from both the capital-markets-driven American approach and the state-directed Chinese one.

We will also deliberately choose to consider possible specific areas – tourism, agrifood, the payment systems – where Europe can achieve leadership and can be paradigmatic of a significant shift of gear in terms of approach.

The final objective of the conference is a first draft of a plan articulated in immediate, short and medium-term actions to be launched.

**Introduction: Dimitri Lorenzani** [online] (Head (acting) of the R&D Strategy and Programme Coordination Unit - DG CNECT)

**A proposal from Re-Imagine Europa: Maria Joao Rodrigues** (Chair of the Board of Re-imagine Europa and Former Portugal’s Labor Minister) and **Erika Staël von Holstein** (Chief Executive at Re-Imagine Europa)

**Discussants: Danilo Roncasaglia\*** (CFO at Domyn), **Peter Lochbihler** (Global Head of Public Affairs, Booking.Com), **Jean Pierre Kempeneers** (former Dutch Ambassador and Board member of Nexperia), **Nicola Villa** (Member of the Global Futures Council at World Economic Forum, and Former Executive Vice President for Strategic Growth at Mastercard), **Mario Mariniello** (Bruegel Non-resident Fellow), **Sandro Gozi** (Secretary General of the PDE), **Wolfgang Oels** (COO at Ecosia), **Francesco Bonfiglio** [online] (Expert Team Member at European DIGITAL SME Alliance)

**Chair: Jan Piotrowski** (Finance and Economic Editor at The Economist)

**15:45 – 16:00**

Coffee Break

**16:00 – 17:00**

**PLENARY 5. A EUROPEAN SECURITY COUNCIL FOR A EUROPEAN SECURITY STRATEGY (A PROPOSAL)**

**In partnership with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung**

This session examines the proposal by the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies for a European Security Council (ESC) as an instrument of giving the European Union a more coherent and effective strategic capacity in a more dangerous and unpredictable international environment. The starting point is a widening gap between the seriousness of Europe's security challenges and the institutional mechanisms currently available to address them. The EU has in recent years made significant progress in the fields of security and defence, in particular on defence readiness, capabilities, industrial capacity, and support for Ukraine. Yet it still lacks a sufficiently permanent and authoritative political forum for strategic deliberation, coordination and decision-making. The proposal for a European Security Council is therefore designed to fill this evident institutional gap: Europe has more instruments than before, but still too often relies on fragmented formats, ad-hoc coalitions, and slow-moving procedures when unity, speed and political focus are required.

The ESC should be designed as an intergovernmental body within the framework of the European Council. Chaired by the President of the European Council, it would operate primarily at the level of heads of state and government, and, where necessary, at the level of defence ministers for technical coordination and implementation. Its purpose would be to provide a structured and permanent forum for discussion and decision-making on key strategic questions such as defence readiness, defence capabilities, the development of a common defence market, European support for Ukraine, and coordinated responses to other regional and global crises. Membership would be open to all EU member states, while differentiated participation could be possible. Strategic partners such as the United Kingdom, Norway and Ukraine could participate as permanent associate members. Where consensus cannot be achieved, qualified-majority voting among participating states should be possible. This would reduce the risk of paralysis and enable willing members to move forward more rapidly.

At the same time, the idea of this proposal extends beyond defence in the narrow sense. The debate on a European Security Council also touches on a broader European question: *How can the Union assure effective decision-making in policy areas where security increasingly overlaps with foreign policy, energy resilience, critical infrastructure, industrial capacity, technology, cyber defence and geopolitical responsibility?* In this respect, the ESC is not only a proposal about defence governance. It is also part of a wider reflection on how the European Union can become less fragmented, more strategically coherent and more capable of acting with unity and purpose in an era of growing geopolitical pressure.

**Introduction:** **Peter Hefe** (Policy Director, Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies)

**Discussants:** **Yevhen Popov** (Head of strategic partnership at Osavul), **Nazar Bigun** (CEO of Norda Dynamics, Kiev), **Massimo Comparini** [online] (MD Space Division, Leonardo), **Anna Molnár** (Head of the Department of International Security Studies at Ludovika University), **Giorgio Gori** (MEP S&D, Vice-Chair Committee on Industry, Research and Energy at the European Parliament), **Francesca Traldi** (Scientific Director of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Italy), **Carlo Altomonte** [online] (Associate Dean at Bocconi University and vice-president of ISPI), **Vincenzo de Luca** [online] (Former Ambassador and Strategic Consultant at Gianni&Origoni)

**Chair:** **Stephen Khan** (Editor in Chief, The Conversation)

**18:00 – 21:30**

**“From Beethoven to SPOTIFY”** Concert for Europe at Accademia Chigiana

Visit to the Accademia Chigiana art collection

Key-note Speech from **Nicola Sani** (Scientific Director of the Accademia) on how politics and arts must meet to generate a new vision and leaders for Europe

*(Following the concert and the visit, participants are welcome to enjoy dinner independently in Siena)*

## SATURDAY 13<sup>th</sup> JUNE

At Santa Maria della Scala – Siena

### PUBLIC SESSIONS DAY (IN ITALIAN, WITH TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH AND VICEVERSA)

**Note: Participants are kindly requested to bring their own earphones/headphones to access the translation service.**

*L'ultimo Giorno è dedicato alla presentazione a giornali e cittadinanza dei risultati della conferenza (il Pontignano Paper) e delle proposte sviluppate dagli studenti/ professori delle università partner del progetto. La conferenza sarà aperta agli studenti delle università di Siena e della Toscana. La giornata darà l'opportunità ad alcuni dei protagonisti della storia europea di conoscere chi potrà portare l'Europa verso nuove frontiere e ai più giovani di incontrare la memoria di un grande progetto.*

*The day will be dedicated to the presentation to media and citizens of the Pontignano Paper and of the proposals developed by the students/ tutors of the partner universities. The conference will be open to the students of the Siena and Tuscany. The day will give the opportunity to both the generation that “made Europe” and the one that will draft the “Europe of the Future” to learn from each other.*

**07:00 - 07:45** Breakfast

**08:00 – 08:30** Transfer to Sala Italo Calvino of Santa Maria della Scala – Siena

**09:00 – 09:15** **SALUTI ISTITUZIONALI E BREVE INTRODUZIONE ALL'ULTIMO GIORNO DELLA CONFERENZA DI SIENA**

**Luigi Lovaglio** (Amministratore Delegato, Monte dei Paschi di Siena), **Eugenio Giani** (Presidente della Regione Toscana), **Nicoletta Fabio** (Sindaca di Siena)

**Introduzione:** **Laura Hood** (Giornalista presso The Conversation)

**INSTITUTIONAL WELCOME AND SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE LAST DAY OF THE SIENA CONFERENCE**

**Luigi Lovaglio** (Amministratore Delegato, Monte dei Paschi di Siena), **Eugenio Giani** (President of Regione Toscana), **Nicoletta Fabio** (Mayor of Siena).

**Introducer: Laura Hood** (Politics Editor at The Conversation)

**09:15 – 09:45**

### **FIRESIDE CHAT: EUROPA COME INCONTRO TRA GENERAZIONI**

**Romano Prodi** (ex Presidente della Commissione Europea ed ex Presidente del Consiglio italiano), **Maria Joao Rodrigues** (Chair of the Board of Re-imagine Europa, Former President of FEPS and Former Portugal's Labor Minister), **Mariia Biliavska** (Student in International Relations and Public Diplomacy at UNISI), **Paula Benítez Sánchez** (Public Diplomacy Student at UNISI), **Gabriele Dell'Anno** (Vision Associate).

**Introducer: Laura Hood** (Giornalista presso The Conversation)

### **FIRESIDE CHAT: EUROPE AS A SPACE FOR INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE**

**Romano Prodi** (Former President of the European Commission and former Italy's Prime Minister), **Maria Joao Rodrigues** (Chair of the Board of Re-imagine Europa, Former President of FEPS and Former Portugal's Labor Minister), **Mariia Biliavska** (Student in International Relations and Public Diplomacy at UNISI), **Paula Benítez Sánchez** (Public Diplomacy Student at UNISI), **Gabriele Dell'Anno** (Vision Associate)

**Introducer: Laura Hood** (Politics Editor at The Conversation)

**09:45 – 10:00**

### **MUCH MORE THAN A CONFERENCE – THE SIENA FOLLOW-UPS AND A PARTNERSHIP WITH EUROPA NUOVA (EUROPA POWER FORUM IN STRASBOURG, THE PRESENTATION OF THE DIGITAL PART OF THE SIENA PAPER AT THE ITALIAN SENATE, THE EVOLUTION OF THE “GETTING THE ENERGY TRANSITION PAPER DONE”)**

**With: Francesco Grillo** (Vision Think Tank Director, Professor at Bocconi and Senior Fellow at EUI) and **Guillaume Klossa** (President of EuropaNova and Chairman of The Conclave)

**10:00 – 11:00**

### **PRESENTAZIONE DELLE PROPOSTE DEI GRUPPI PSSGS – RISOLVERE I TRADE-OFF STRATEGICI DELL'EUROPA PER IL FUTURO**

Un/a rappresentante di ciascuno dei quattro PSSG aprirà la sessione con una presentazione sintetica delle principali proposte e dei risultati sviluppati nel proprio gruppo.

Il moderatore guiderà poi una tavola rotonda per confrontare le diverse iniziative ed esplorare:

- le priorità condivise che emergono dai quattro trade-off strategici europei,
- le sfide pratiche di governance e le decisioni da prendere nel prossimo futuro,
- soluzioni concrete e di “federalismo pragmatico” per trasformare le politiche da idee a implementazione.

Per arricchire il dibattito, gli altri rappresentanti dei PSSG si uniranno al panel, offrendo prospettive complementari e trasversali - dalla sicurezza alla competitività, dall'innovazione alla riforma istituzionale.

La sessione si concluderà con un breve e mirato scambio con il pubblico, volto a individuare le intuizioni più operative per la Conferenza e per il prossimo Pontignano Paper.

**Relatori:** Rappresentanti dei quattro PSSG

**Moderatore:** **Jan Piotrowski** (Finance and Economic Editor at The Economist), **Laura Hood** (Politics Editor at The Conversation) and **Lorenzo Fioramonti** (Academic Director at Nativa and Italy's Former Minister for Education, University and Research)

## **PSSGS GROUPS PROPOSALS PRESENTATION - SOLVING EUROPE'S STRATEGIC TRADE-OFFS FOR THE FUTURE**

One representative from each of the four PSSGs will open the session with a concise presentation of the key proposals and outcomes developed in their group.

The Chair will then lead a round-table discussion to compare the different initiatives and explore:

- shared priorities emerging across the four strategic European trade-offs,
- practical governance challenges and decision points ahead,
- concrete and “pragmatic federalist” solutions to move policies from ideas to implementation.

To enrich the conversation, the other PSSG representatives will join the panel, bringing complementary and cross-cutting perspectives - from security and competitiveness to innovation and institutional reform.

A short and well-curated exchange with the audience will conclude the session, identifying the most actionable insights for the Conference and the forthcoming Pontignano Paper.

**Discussants:** Representatives of the four PSSGs

**Chair:** **Jan Piotrowski** (Finance and Economic Editor at The Economist), **Laura Hood** (Politics Editor at The Conversation), **Lorenzo Fioramonti** (Academic Director at Nativa and Italy's Former Minister for Education, University and Research)

**11:00 – 12:00**

### **PRESENTAZIONE DEL PONTIGNANO PAPER AI MEDIA**

**Introduzione:** **Francesco Grillo** (Direttore Vision Think Tank, Professore alla Bocconi e Senior Fellow all'EUI) e **Laura Hood** (The Conversation)

**Relatori:** **Maria João Rodrigues** (Presidente del Board di Re-imagine Europa ed ex Ministra del Lavoro del Portogallo), **Barbara Kolm** (Membro del Consiglio Nazionale austriaco per il Freedom Party, ex Vicepresidente della Banca Centrale Austriaca, Presidente del F.A. von Hayek Institut e direttrice dell'Austrian Economics Center), **Simone Borghesi** (Deputy Dean UNISI), **Wolfgang Oels** (Managing Director di Ecosia).

**Moderatore:** **Giancarlo Loquenzi** (Zapping, RAI)

### **PRESENTATION OF THE PONTIGNANO PAPER TO MEDIA**

**Introduction by:** **Francesco Grillo** (Vision Think Tank Director, Professor at Bocconi and Senior Fellow at EUI) and **Laura Hood** (The Conversation)

**Discussants:** **Maria João Rodrigues** (Presidente del Board di Re-imagine Europa ed ex Ministra del Lavoro del Portogallo), **Barbara Kolm** (Member of Austria's National Council with the Freedom Party and former Vice president of the Austrian Central Bank, President of the F.A. von Hayek Institut and director of the Austrian Economics Center), **Simone Borghesi** (Deputy Dean UNISI), **Wolfgang Oels** (Managing Director at Ecosia).

**Chair:** **Giancarlo Loquenzi** (Zapping, RAI)

**12:00 - 13:00**

### **FIRESIDE CHAT: COME RENDERE DI NUOVO L'EUROPA RILEVANTE (SU UCRAINA, GAZA, IRAN) PER LA DEFINIZIONE DI UN NUOVO ORDINE MONDIALE**

**Romano Prodi** (ex Presidente della Commissione Europea ed ex Presidente del Consiglio italiano), **Maria Joao Rodrigues** (Chair of the

Board of Re-imagine Europa and Former Portugal's Labor Minister), **Barbara Kolm** (Membro del Consiglio Nazionale austriaco per il Freedom Party, ex Vicepresidente della Banca Centrale Austriaca, Presidente del F.A. von Hayek Institut e direttrice dell'Austrian Economics Center), **John Fund** (National Affairs Columnist for National Review), **Xinquan TU\*** (WTO Chairholder, Dean and Professor, China Institute for WTO Studies, University of International Business and Economics), **Enrico Borghi** (Italian Senator and President of IED), **Celine El Khoury** (Studentessa Master in Sustainability Management a SDA Bocconi).

**Moderatrice: Lilith Verstrynge** (analista politica, autrice per El País e Le Monde Diplomatique, professoressa di Relazioni Internazionali presso Sciences Po Parigi)

### **FIRESIDE CHAT: HOW TO MAKE EUROPE RELEVANT AGAIN (ON UKRAINE, GAZA, IRAN) FOR DRAFTING A NEW WORLD ORDER**

**Romano Prodi** (Former President of the European Commission and Former Prime Minister of Italy), **Barbara Kolm** (Member of Austria's National Council with the Freedom Party and former Vice president of the Austrian Central Bank, President of the F.A. von Hayek Institut and director of the Austrian Economics Center), **John Fund** (National Affairs Columnist for National Review), **Xinquan TU\*** (WTO Chairholder, Dean and Professor, China Institute for WTO Studies, University of International Business and Economics), **Enrico Borghi** (Italian Senator and President of IED), **Celine El Khoury** (Master Student in Sustainability Management at SDA Bocconi).

**Chair: Lilith Verstrynge** (Political analyst, writer at El País and Le Monde Diplomatique, Adjunct Professor of International Relations at Sciences Po University Paris)

**13.30 – 14:45**

*Pranzo presso Santa Maria della Scala – Siena*

*Lunch at Santa Maria della Scala – Siena*