

PRESS RELEASE 4 May 2022 – for immediate release

Borrell, Metsola and more than 100 decision-makers gather in Florence to discuss Europe's future in times of war

The European University Institute's flagship event [The State of the Union](#) will kick off in Florence tomorrow, Thursday, 5 May 2022. The 12th edition, titled 'A Europe Fit for the Next Generation?', will feature leading policymakers, academics and private sector professionals from 40 countries. The fallout from the war will be at the heart of discussions as participants focus on the future of Europe.

The list of confirmed speakers includes EU High-Representative/European Commission Vice-President **Josep Borrell-Fontelles**, European Parliament President **Roberta Metsola** and WHO Director-General **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**.

The programme also features Spanish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Ecology **Teresa Ribera Rodríguez**, European Commission Vice-President for Values and Transparency **Věra Jourová**, European Commissioner for the Economy **Paolo Gentiloni**, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency **Fatih Birol**, Member of the European Parliament **Eva Maydell**, and [many other policy leaders and academics](#).

Impact of the war in Ukraine

Speakers will reflect on the geopolitical, economic, and legal ramifications of the war. There will be sessions covering the war's repercussions on global migration and displacement, and the effects on Europe's climate and energy policy. Also on the agenda are the EU's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, how it reflects on Europe's reputation as a powerful regulatory authority, and the need to ensure the economic and financial stability of the eurozone and EU member states.

Three days of events

Challenges such as greening the economy, demographic change, fiscal integration, and participatory democracy will also be discussed. Looking beyond Europe, The State of the Union will feature panels on the future of transatlantic relations, Africa's emerging role on the global stage, and political developments in the Western Balkans.

On Thursday, 5 May 2022, the [sessions of The State of the Union](#) will take place at the European University Institute's Badia Fiesolana, while participants will reconvene in the historic setting of Palazzo Vecchio in the heart of Florence on Friday, 6 May.

Italian Under Secretary for European Affairs Vincenzo Amendola and EUI President Renaud Dehousse will open the conference on Thursday morning.

EUI President **Renaud Dehousse** said: *“We are proud to welcome such an impressive array of top-level speakers to discuss the future of Europe. As war rages in Ukraine, it is more important than ever to focus on what unites us and identify common challenges. Over the past decade, The State of The Union Conference has established itself as a key forum for discussion on the most pertinent issues facing Europe and Europeans. Policymakers and academics meet in Florence to come up with innovative ideas for policymaking in challenging times.”*

While most speakers and a selected audience will participate in-person, a larger group of participants will engage via an online platform. The entire conference will also be livestreamed at stateoftheunion.eui.eu.

On Saturday, 7 May 2022, the public is invited to [visit the EUI's Villa Salviati and the Historical Archives of the European Union](#). Guided by EUI partner Fondo Ambiente Italiano (FAI), visitors will tour the beautiful grounds and buildings of the historic villa and enter the state-of-the-art vaults where Europe's memory is preserved.

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