



**PRESS RELEASE 3 May 2023 – for immediate release**

## **150+ decision-makers gather in Florence to discuss geopolitics, green economy, digital transition**

The European University Institute's flagship event [The State of the Union](#) will kick off in Florence tomorrow, Thursday, 4 May 2023. The 13<sup>th</sup> edition, 'Building Europe in times of uncertainty', will host leading policymakers, top scholars, and world-renowned experts from across Europe and beyond.

This annual high-level conference on global affairs will feature **35 sessions** addressing the most urgent issues on the European agenda, including the **war in Ukraine** and its impact on the daily lives of citizens, the fight against **climate change**, the **rule of law**, and the **digital transition**.

With more than **150 prestigious speakers and moderators**, the intense event programme will see the participation of **Josep Borrell Fontelles**, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission. The Institute will also welcome **Borut Pahor**, Former President of the Republic of Slovenia, and **Norbert Röttgen**, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the German Bundestag. A speech by the President of the Republic of Italy, Sergio Mattarella, will be read on his behalf during the event.

A number of foreign ministers from across the European Union are also featured in [the event programme](#), including **Rastislav Káčer**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Slovak Republic; **Tobias Billström**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sweden; **Alexander Schallenberg**, Federal Minister for

European and International Affairs, Republic of Austria; and **Antonio Tajani**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Italy.

EUI President **Renaud Dehousse** said: "The State of the Union is the key European event that puts top scholars in the room with policy makers to dig deep into the most pressing issues on the EU agenda. This year we will focus on the green and digital transitions, security, and global economics – all issues the EUI can contribute to through its outstanding research."

### Three days of events

The event will kick off at the **EUI's Badia Fiesolana on 4 May** and will continue at **Palazzo Vecchio on 5 May**. On the afternoon of 5 May, the EUI will invite local youth to Salone de' Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio for a dynamic and interactive event: '**SOU4YOU** - The State of the Union for Young European Citizens'.

On **6 May**, the EUI will welcome the public to Villa Salviati, home to the EUI's Departments of History and Law and the Historical Archives of the European Union. The **Open Day** will be devoted to artistic discovery and leisurely activities, including musical performances, family entertainment, an art exhibition, and a historical enactment. 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.

### FOLLOW ONLINE

While most speakers and a selected audience will participate in-person, the entire conference will also be **livestreamed** at [stateoftheunion.eui.eu](https://stateoftheunion.eui.eu).

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