

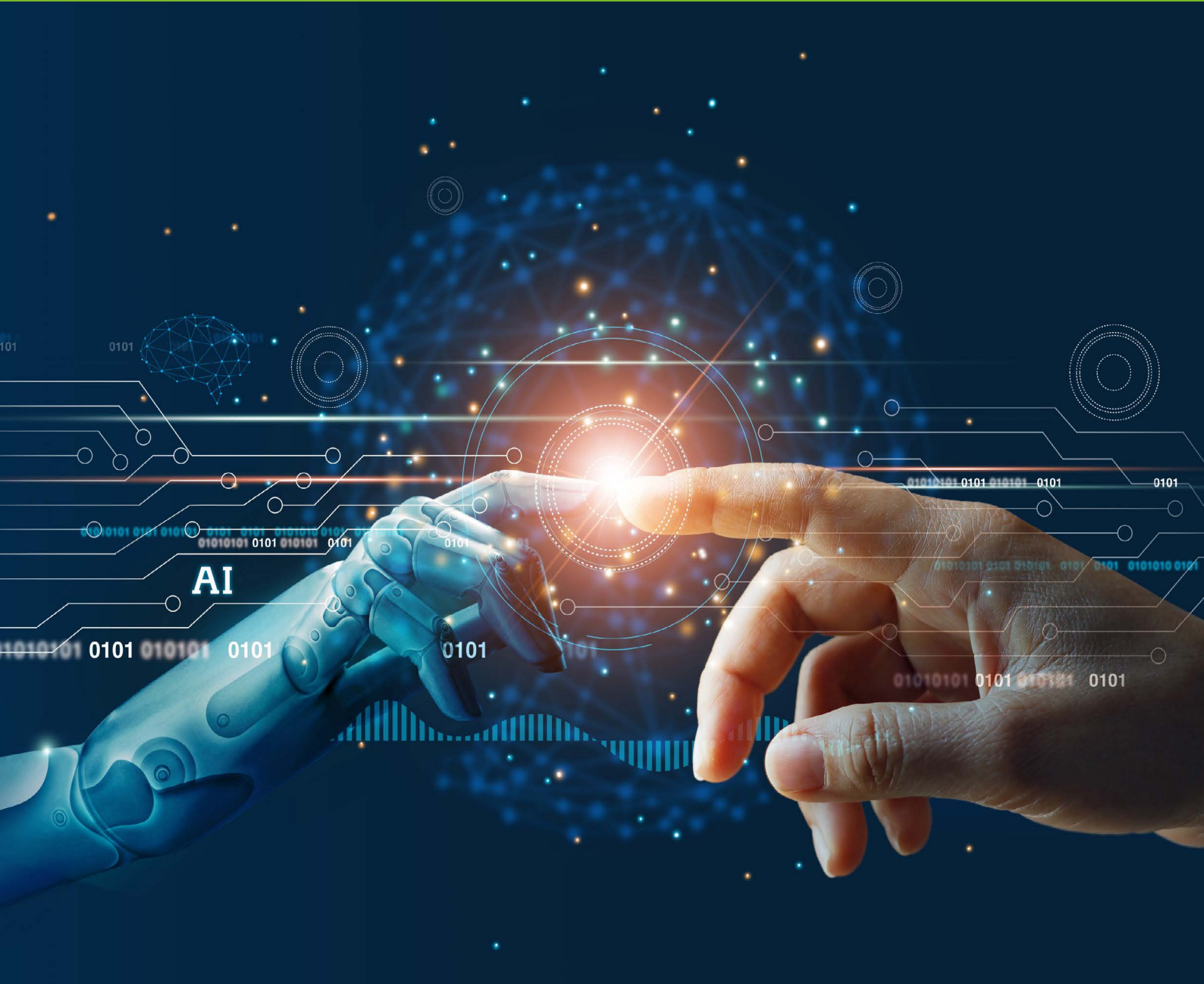
EPFMA Bulletin



83 · June 2023

European Parliament Former Members Association

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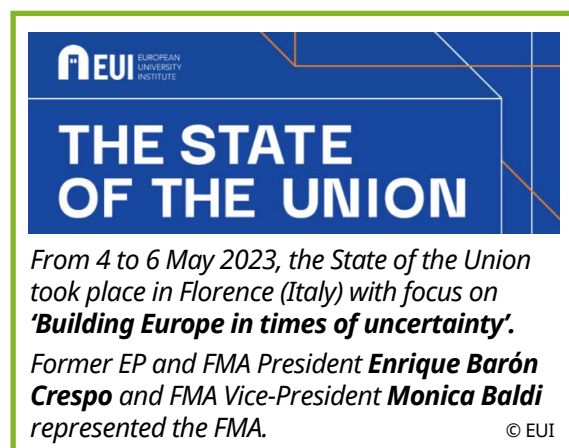
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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editorial Board would like to thank all those members who took the time to contribute to this issue of the FMA Bulletin. We would like to draw your attention to the fact that the decision to include an article lies with the FMA Editorial Board and, in principle, contributions from members who are not up-to-date with the payment of the membership fee will not be included. Due to the long time lag between the call for contribution and the publication, some articles may be outdated.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Member,

As you know, on 17 April 2023, the Bureau of the European Parliament adopted a new decision on former Members, which entered into force on 1 May. From now on, to access Parliament's premises, former MEPs will have to submit a request for their badge to be reactivated. I have sent you an email outlining the new procedure. The Former Members Association (FMA) stands by you and supports you, so do not hesitate to contact our Secretariat if you encounter any problems. We will continue to monitor this situation very closely and maintain a real dialogue with the authorities of the European Parliament, especially with Quaestors Fabienne Keller and Christoph Hansen who are responsible for relations with the FMA.

During our General Assembly, which took place on 4 May 2023, following the resignation of Pier Antonio Panzeri as a Member of the administrative board and the FMA, I announced that the vote on the proposal to remove Mr Panzeri had become moot and was therefore cancelled.

I want to thank all my colleagues who participated in the FMA's Annual General Assembly and who voted in the election of the new Management Committee. I want to extend a warm welcome to the newly elected Member Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl. On behalf of the entire Committee, I would like to express our gratitude for the confidence that you have placed in us. I would also like to thank all the Members who attended the assembly online or in person for their active participation and valuable contributions. We are always more than happy to listen to your concerns.

The FMA has always advocated for political dialogue. It is for this reason that we organised a visit to Sweden on the occasion of the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the EU, as reported on in this edition. Under my guidance, a delegation of 17

Members of the FMA participated in a two-day programme which was devised with the support of the EP Liaison Office in Stockholm. We want to thank the Swedish Members of the FMA, Hadar Cars and Charlotte Cederschiöld, for their participation and precious help in organising the visit. A special thanks also to the other Members of the delegation. It was a real success.

The FMA's annual events took place on 3 May and 4 May and they were a great success thanks not only to our esteemed speakers and guests, but also to the hard work of our Secretariat, which is supported by the administrative board. I especially wanted to thank them. Furthermore, many of you attended our annual memorial service which is held in honour of former MEPs who have passed away. Notably, we honoured the memory of José-María Gil-Robles Gil-Delgado, former President of the Parliament and of the FMA, who was respected and loved by all. We remember his words: 'I am very, very old now, and since I first began dreaming about the EU back in the late 1940s, I have done nothing but imagine and build its future as best I could'. We received some very positive messages, especially from the families of former MEPs who are no longer with us. I am also very grateful for your participation in the dinner debate with guest speaker Paolo Gentiloni, European Commissioner for Economy. His speech on years of change in Europe after the pandemic and the war in Ukraine was much appreciated by all and enabled a constructive exchange of ideas to take place. All the recordings and photographs from our events can be found on our website.

On 9 May we celebrated Europe Day and the 73rd anniversary of the Schuman Declaration. All the work that has been done since then is remarkable. At a time when there is a war taking place along the EU's borders and some of our Member States feel directly concerned and

threatened, I sincerely hope that the EU will continue to strengthen its unity and guarantee long-term peace, just as Robert Schuman wanted back in his day.

Among other things, the FMA contributed to this day by organising activities within the framework of our EP to Campus Programme.

We have more great events planned, including the major conference 'Can the European Union learn from its past experiences?', which will be held in Florence on 16 June. The event is a collaboration between the FMA, the Historical Archives of the EU and the Italian National Agency Erasmus+ Indire.

The FMA is also looking forward to two new online Librorum events which are taking place in the coming months: on July 6, Mr Martinez will present his work, and on September 14, it will be Ms Sauquillo's turn to do the same.

Moreover, on 1 July, Spain will take over the Rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU. I look forward to heading a delegation to Madrid in October on this occasion. You will be provided with all the necessary information on this shortly.

This edition of the newsletter is all about the 'digital twin'. We live in an age where technology and digitalisation are progressing at an alarming rate and this concept has become a big topic of conversation. In this edition, you will find articles written by Members of the FMA on the subject.

Happy reading and I look forward to engaging with each and every one of you further when we next meet.

With my best regards,

Dr. Klaus Hänsch
FMA President

Key facts

General Product Safety Regulation

(March session - P9_TA(2023)0090)

The updated law will ensure that products in the EU, whether sold online or in traditional shops, comply with the highest safety requirements. The new regulation extends the obligations of economic operators (such as the manufacturer, importer, distributor), increases the powers of market surveillance authorities and introduces clear obligations for providers of online marketplaces. Products coming from outside the EU can be placed on the market only if there is an economic operator established in the European Union, who is responsible for its safety.

Strengthening the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women

(March session - P9_TA(2023)0091)

New legislation will require EU companies to disclose information that makes it easier for employees to compare salaries and to expose existing gender pay gaps. Under the rules adopted by the Parliament's plenary, pay structures to compare pay levels will have to be based on gender-neutral criteria and include gender-neutral job evaluation and classification systems. Vacancy notices and job titles will have to be gender neutral and recruitment processes led in a non-discriminatory manner.

Fluorinated gases regulation

(March session - P9_TA(2023)0092)

Parliament is ready to negotiate with EU governments on further reducing fluorinated gases emissions, to meet EU and global climate goals. MEPs want a steeper phase-down of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) on the EU market from 2039 onwards, with a full HFC production and consumption phase-out by 2050 (Annex VII). This target would align the updated rules with the EU's 2050 climate neutrality goal.

Revision of the EU Emissions Trading System

(April session - P9_TA(2023)0098)

The reform of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) was adopted.

It increases the ambition of the ETS, as GHG emissions in the ETS sectors must be cut by 62% by 2030 compared to 2005-levels. It also phases out free allowances to companies from 2026 until 2034 and creates a separate new ETS II for fuel for road transport and buildings that will put a price on GHG emissions from these sectors in 2027. Parliament also voted to include, for the first time, GHG emissions from the maritime sector in the ETS and agreed to the revision of the ETS for aviation.

Deforestation Regulation

(April session - P9_TA(2023)0109)

To fight climate change and biodiversity loss, the new law obliges companies to ensure products sold in the EU have not led to deforestation and forest degradation. While no country or commodity will be banned, companies will only be allowed to sell products in the EU if the supplier of the product has issued a so-called "due diligence" statement confirming that the product does not come from deforested land or has led to forest degradation, including of irreplaceable primary forests, after 31 December 2020. As requested by Parliament, companies will also have to verify that these products comply with relevant legislation of the country of production, including on human rights, and that the rights of affected indigenous people have been respected.

Information accompanying transfers of funds and certain crypto-assets (recast)

(April session - P9_TA(2023)0118)

MEPs approved the first piece of EU legislation for tracing transfers of crypto-assets like bitcoins and electronic money tokens. The text aims to ensure that crypto transfers, as is the case with any other financial operation, can always be traced and suspicious transactions blocked. The law would also cover transactions above €1000 from so-called self-hosted wallets (a crypto-asset wallet address of a private user) when they interact with hosted wallets managed by crypto-assets service providers. The rules do not apply to person-to-person transfers conducted without a provider or among providers acting on their own behalf.

Universal Decriminalization of Homosexuality, in light of recent developments in Uganda

(April session - P9_TA(2023)0120)

MEPs denounce Uganda's anti-LGBTIQ Bill and call for the universal decriminalisation of homosexuality and transgender identity. Parliament highlights that the Bill, which proposes the death penalty, life imprisonment or up to 20 years in prison for the offences of 'homosexuality' or its 'promotion', violates the Ugandan Constitution, Uganda's obligations to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, and international law. MEPs express their concern over the possible impact of the Bill in the African region, given the growing trend of criminalising LGBTIQ people in some parts of Africa, such as Ghana, Niger and Kenya.

Macro-financial assistance to Moldova

(May session - P9_TA(2023)0124)

Parliament voted to top up macro-financial aid for Moldova by up to €145 million to help the country cover part of its funding needs in 2023. MEPs endorsed the Commission's proposal to give the Moldovan government support to stabilise the country's economic situation. As a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Moldovan economy shrunk, and the uncertain economic climate has negatively affected investment and trade in the country.

EU/Euratom/Ukraine Association Agreement: temporary trade liberalisation supplementing trade concessions applicable to Ukrainian products

(May session - P9_TA(2023)0125)

Parliament gave its green light to suspending EU import duties on Ukrainian exports of agricultural products for another year to support the country's economy. MEPs approved a proposal to renew the suspension of import duties, anti-dumping duties and safeguards on Ukrainian exports to the European Union for another year, against the background of Russia's war of aggression that is hampering Ukraine's ability to trade with the rest of the world.

Other main dossiers discussed in the plenary sessions were:

14.03.23

Lithuania's President **Gitanas Nausėda** urged the EU to continue supporting Ukraine in its fight for freedom and to keep its doors open to Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine.

He **shared his country's experience towards independence** and the long path to Europe, which in a way resembles Ukraine's current fight for freedom.

14.03.23

MEPs back **new rules for fair access to and use of industrial data**.

The volume of data generated by humans and machines is increasing exponentially and becoming a **critical factor for innovation** by **businesses** and by **public authorities**.

14.03.23

Parliament adopted the revision of the so-called **Effort Sharing Regulation**. It sets binding annual reductions for greenhouse gas (GHG) emission and currently regulates roughly 60% of all EU emissions.

16.03.23

The Parliament is ready to negotiate with Council for an **EU-wide digital wallet**.

The new digital identity framework would provide EU citizens with **digital access to key public services across EU borders**.

20.04.23

The European Parliament adopted **three resolutions on the respect for human rights in Russia, Afghanistan and Nigeria**.

Russia must release Vladimir Kara-Murza, Alexei Navalny and all other political prisoners. Afghanistan's de-facto authorities must restore **women's access to education** and their **participation in public life**.

Nigeria must **abolish blasphemy crimes**.

09.05.23

Parliament approved **Spain's request** for **support** from the **European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF)**.

MEPs acknowledged that "the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine have reduced economic competitiveness across the Union, including in Spain".

09.05.23

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz debated with MEPs during the **'This is Europe' series**, calling for a united Europe capable of changing to secure its place in the world of tomorrow.

He stressed that Europe has a **global responsibility** beyond its borders "because the **well-being of Europe** cannot be separated from the well-being of the rest of the world."

11.05.23

Parliament stresses **normalising relations between Belgrade and Pristina** is a priority and a precondition for the EU accession of both countries.

11.05.23

MEPs have voted to approve the European Union's accession to the Convention on **preventing and combating violence against women**, concluding Parliament's role in the process.

Six years after the EU signed the **Istanbul Convention**, it has still not been ratified because of the refusal of a few member states.

11.05.23

The European Parliament adopted **three resolutions** on the **respect for human rights**.

The **Algerian authorities** must bring laws limiting freedom of expression in line with international human rights standards. **Belarus** must release Viktor Babaryka and all political prisoners and end cruel detention conditions. The Myanmar military junta's violent and illegitimate rule must end and the civilian government must be restored.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/plenary>





EUROPE DAY DEDICATED TO WOMEN

On 9 May, Florence celebrated Europe Day with an event titled 'Intelletto delle Donne' ['Female Intellect'], which was a great success. It was held in the prestigious Palazzo Guadagni Strozzi Sacratì, headquarters of the Tuscany Regional Council in Piazza Duomo and was organised by the Council under the leadership of Tuscany's Governor, Eugenio Giani, with the support of Toscana delle Donne, Women20 Italia, Ars Pace and WDIT (We Do It Together).

The event, which was supported by EPFMA, featured speeches by myself and prominent members such as the former President of the European Parliament, Enrique Barón Crespo, who said that 'the emancipation of women is natural intellect' and Professor Isabella De Martini, who emphasised the opportunity we have 'to rethink gender equality not just in terms of intellect but also in physical terms'. Cristiana Muscardini attended as a special guest.

In this momentous period, it was considered important to celebrate Europe Day by accentuating women's role in the Community, in medicine, in entrepreneurship, in the arts, in culture, in cinema, in cultural diplomacy and in international peace and mediation processes, as recognised by the UN.

'Intelletto delle Donne' makes an important contribution that raises

awareness, basing itself on knowledge acquired through years of education/training and experience, not to mention the vitally important role it plays in cultural diplomacy and economic and social growth.

Women form the majority of the European population and were the stars of the show at Florence's Europe Day celebrations. The event kicked off with the Women20 conference. Participants put forward proposals to be presented to the Indian G20 presidency, and the Global Gender Medicine Board was launched. The board is coordinated by Professor Flavia Franconi based on the Charta de Florentia signed in 2021. The following figures spoke at the conference, which was chaired by myself and coordinated by journalist Luca Telese: Elvira Marasco, President of the AW20 Italia association; Pam Rajput, W20 India; Hardiani Uli Silalahi, President of W20 Indonesia; Virginia Littlejohn, Head of the US delegation to the W20; and Linda Laura Sabbadini, President of the 2021 Italian delegation to the W20 and a prominent figure in the world of medicine.

Ars Pace celebrated Europe with a performance that highlighted the EU's commitment to international relations and its contribution to intercultural dialogue through the implementation of programmes such as Erasmus+,

presented through two Italian-Spanish projects: Peacemusic by Assisi Suono Sacro and Eticdance by Florence Dance Festival. There was also a preview of the 'Europa' dress, a work of art created by the German-Italian designer Regina Schrecker for the project 'Arte e Moda dal Mondo. Donna Portatrice di Pace' ['Art and Fashion in the World. Woman Bearer of Peace'] by Antonella Ferrari, President of Feel, an association promoting art and culture through representative pieces of sartorial art that offer original interpretations of the identity-based heritage of nations. Women are thus conceived as weavers, interlacing threads to produce the fabric of relationships, dialogue and peace, symbolically worn on the catwalk. A key moment was the joint recognition given by Tuscany Regional Council and Ars Pace to Professor Renaud Dehousse, President of the European University Institute, for his invaluable work in the context of the 'Grande Civis Europae' project.

A conference on female leadership was held in the afternoon, chaired by Cristina Manetti, Head of Cabinet of the Tuscany Region, with speeches by Lina Gálvez Muñoz, Vice-President of the European Parliament's Industry and Research Committee as well as by Cristina Acidini, Antonella Mansi, Lucia Aleotti, Alessandra Petrucci and Irene Senesi.

Next, Lady Monika Bacardi, Milly Carlucci, Greta Scarano and Cinzia Th Torrini took part in a presentation of the film production company WDIT Italia curated by the founder, director and producer Chiara Tilesi, who was presented with the 'Pegaso delle Donne' ['Pegasus of Women'] award. The event closed with a special screening of the film 'Tell It Like A Woman'.

Monica Baldi

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Prof. Renaud Dehousse (EUI President) awarded both by the President of the Tuscany Region and as "Grande Civis Europae" by Ars Pace by the FMA Vice-President Monica Baldi and former EP & FMA President Enrique Barón Crespo, Florence 9 May 2023.

GENDERING MULTI-LEVEL PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

In 2019, whilst still a serving British MEP, I hosted an event in the European Parliament for a group of academic researchers from several European universities who were collectively engaged in a European Research Council (ERC) funded project known as EUGenDem. The five year project aimed to provide a systematic analysis of the gendered policies and practices of the political groups in the EP, addressing crucial questions about European party politics.

The research and analysis conducted during the project has led to more than 70 scientific publications which are featured on the project website. Outcomes include the publishing of the first ever authoritative collection of scholarly insights, based upon original research, into the parliament's political groups. The publication, 'European Parliament's Political Groups in Turbulent Times' (2022), is an analysis from multiple perspectives - political group formation and function, policy-making, Euroscepticism and populism, and interactions with external actors. Overall, the EUGenDem team collected a dataset consisting of 140 interviews with MEPs, staff, and the EP secretariat, 193 pages of ethnographic observations (resulting from 55 days, 440 hours in the field); as well as EP and political group statutes, programmes, and policy documents.

EUGenDem was highly focussed on formal and informal parliamentary practices in relation to gender and diversity and it was in this context that I and another former British MEP, Elspeth Attwooll (1999-2009), were invited to speak at an event at the University of Glasgow in March along with two women MSPs (Members of the Scottish Parliament).



Our Roundtable followed on from the presentation of several academic studies and explored the actual day-to-day experiences of being a woman in parliament. Although coming from two different political groups both Elspeth and I had felt more empowered in our work in a European context than if we had been elected to Westminster where arcane practices still prevail and misogyny is rife.

The EUGenDem project began in 2018 shortly after the advent of the #MeToo movement and when the #MeTooEP campaign had just begun with the aim of combatting sexual harassment and pushing for exemplary working conditions within the institution. The normative abuse of power, largely by white men, was therefore under the spotlight everywhere. The richness of the EUGenDem data sets point to a collective willingness to address the issue of gender disparity, and although the research has thrown up some uncomfortable reading it reflects a largely open institution, unlike many national parliaments.

Questions about the make-up of committees, parliamentary Intergrups, country delegations and Election Observation Missions

were included in the Roundtable discussion. Having been a co-chair of the Anti-racism and Diversity Intergroup I was well placed to talk about our work combatting specific forms of racism such as anti-Gypsyism, Afrophobia, Islamophobia and anti-semitism. I also explained how my political group (Socialists & Democrats) used an intersectional approach and a gender-sensitive lens in policy making to ensure that inequalities and multiple discrimination were properly addressed. Meanwhile, Elspeth reflected on the EP's introduction of gender mainstreaming and the push to increase the number of female commissioners. It is notable that the presidents of both the EP and the Commission are currently women.

EUGenDem is an important and timely body of research which speaks directly to the current political crises in Europe, and provides an understanding of their gendered underpinnings. Further information can be found on the project website: <https://blogs.helsinki.fi/eugendem-project/>

Julie Ward

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WE DESERVE CITIZENS OF PEACE

I had recently been elected as an MEP in 1989. I remember taking part in the demonstrations that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall and seeing the enthusiasm of Europe's young people as they took action to tear down borders and defensive walls and try to relax global tension.

It was a time when the notion of European Union citizenship was created, introduced by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Having EU citizenship means non-discrimination on the grounds of nationality, the right to live and move freely around the EU, to vote and run in European and local elections and to benefit from consular protection. Citizens can submit petitions to the European Parliament, make complaints to the European Ombudsman and launch or support European Citizens' Initiatives on matters that affect them.

They have the right to contact and receive an answer from any institution in any EU official

language. Lastly, they can access the institutions' documents and enjoy equal opportunities to join the EU civil service.

Today, the circumstances and demands are very different. The unexpected out-and-out war triggered by Putin's invasion of Ukraine, right on Europe's doorstep, has already led to the worst violation of human rights we have ever seen. It has led to deaths, criminal acts, atrocities, destruction and widespread displacement and is pulling apart what we have achieved. One hundred million people have been forced to flee due to violence, conflict and human rights violations; and USD 2 million in military spending has not been derailed by either the pandemic or the problems in the food supply chain.

For this very reason, in the face of such critical and complex circumstances, we should focus on the original foundations of the European project to fulfil and deliver

its goals of peace and progress and offer citizens greater prospects of peace and security.

It's time to renew and regulate our foundations based on those goals of peace and progress. And be aware that we must build the European dimensions and responsibilities of the future using the pillars on which the Union was founded: 'to preserve peace and strengthen international security; to promote international cooperation; democracy and the rule of law; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.' European citizens have a clear desire to live in peace, free from war, and to safeguard and enjoy guarantees of self-defence.

"European citizens have a clear desire to live in peace, free from war, and to safeguard and enjoy guarantees of self-defence."

Our recommendation for today's European citizens is to acknowledge that they are citizens of peace. This proposal enhances our trust in the EU and our safety, which are grounded in our right to participate in public affairs and the recognised right to our own safety. It reflects the efforts of the vast majority of citizens who are against war, people who share the basic culture of peace that inspired the EU and feel empowered to help put an end to armed conflict.

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IRELAND MARKS 50 YEARS OF EU MEMBERSHIP WITH EXHIBITION PAYING TRIBUTE TO FEMALE MEPS



Grace O'Sullivan MEP (Greens), Emer Costello (S&D), Frances Fitzgerald MEP (EPP), Nuala Ahern (Greens), Patricia McKenna (Greens), Martina Anderson (GUE/NGL), Maria Walsh MEP (EPP) © John Mcelroy, Maxwell Photography

As a former Member of the European Parliament, it was both an incredible honour and humbling experience to feature in an exhibition showcasing all of Ireland's female MEPs since 1973. To mark 50 years of EU membership, the European Parliament Liaison Office in Ireland commissioned a photographic exhibition of the female Members of the European Parliament who represented Ireland (both north and south) since 1973. A book accompanying the exhibition written by Dr Sinéad McCool provides a vivid pen portrait of each of the 27 MEPs.

The exhibition entitled "Mná na hÉireann – Irish Female MEPs Past and Present" was launched in the Photo Museum Ireland on 2 March 2023, in the run-up to International Women's Day on 8 March. The exhibition and accompanying book documents the significant contribution of Irish women to European policy-making. There have been just 23 female MEPs in the Republic of Ireland since we joined the EU 50 years ago.

Northern Ireland joined on the same day as the Republic with the accession of the United Kingdom to the EU. In total, 27 women across the island of Ireland have served in the European Parliament since 1973. The first female Irish MEP to be elected was Eileen Desmond (Labour, S&D) in 1979. The portrait photographs were taken by renowned Estonian photographer, Kaupo Kikkas. Kikkas manages to capture the individuality and distinctive personality of each of the female representatives from Síle de Valera, one of Ireland's first female MEPs, right up to the five incumbents.

Writing in the foreword of the book, the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola said: "Ireland has come a long way over the past 50 years, but recent state commemorations of Irish Independence in the 'Decade of Centenaries' programme have highlighted that women still have to fight for a number of causes in the 21st century, to bring equality to all aspects of Irish women's lives."

The work is a testimony to the evolution of attitudes regarding gender equality and to the gradual increase of Irish female representation in the European Parliament. I hope it [the exhibition] will inspire other Irish women to stand for election at the local, national or European level, because equal representation starts with equal involvement in politics, which is the guarantee of a more equal and democratic future."

The exhibition ran for almost two weeks coinciding with many International Women's Day events across Dublin and proved to be incredibly popular with Dubliners and visitors to the capital alike. It was also a popular destination for school tours. For far too long women have been missing from the portraits and statues that adorn our public buildings. The exhibition is scheduled to be displayed in the Oireachtas, the Irish Houses of Parliament, Leinster House, Dublin in June and July – a building that displays portraits of many former Prime Ministers and Presidents and just two of these are women (President Mary Robinson and President Mary McAleese). Launching the exhibition, Frances Fitzgerald MEP highlighted the importance for young people to see "women on walls".

The exhibition will find a permanent home when the new European Parliament office in Dublin opens early in 2024. The beautifully crafted book *Mná na hÉireann* can be downloaded here: <https://op.europa.eu/s/ybPO>

Emer Costello
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THE MAGYC PROJECT POLICY DIALOGUE ON EU MIGRATION GOVERNANCE

As the number of Mediterranean crossings increase once again, humanitarian crises and emergency measures are back on the frontstage of the European agenda. In many European cities, asylum-seekers continue to spend homeless nights, and the EU migration and asylum policies have made little progress since the crisis of 2014-2016. Yet, research offers ways forward for the European migration and asylum strategies, but often remains unknown by policy-makers.

Over the past four years, the Horizon 2020 project MAGYC (Migration Governance and asYlum Crises) which gathers 12 partner universities and research centres from EU and neighbouring countries, has focused on Migration Governance and Asylum Crises across the time and space dimensions together, to investigate the local and translocal levels of governance.

MAGYC has shown how policy decisions on migration and asylum were often taken in reaction to crises, rather than in anticipation of the changing migration and asylum dynamics.

Partners came to the conclusion that EU migration policy is designed from crisis to crisis, always in an emergency mode. Doing this perpetuates the understanding of migration as a phenomenon to be stopped, which in turns legitimizes fences and hard borders: in other words, fortress Europe. This crisis-to-crisis framing fails to recognize that people will continue to migrate and therefore this social fact needs to be addressed structurally.

The policy dialogue was a unique opportunity for EU policy-makers to exchange with the team of researchers from the EU-funded project MAGYC. In particular, this event reflected on evidence-based research in various EU and non-EU countries including Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and the Horn of Africa, as well as Libya and Syria. The dialogue offered ways forward for the European agenda on migration, as well as reflections on the lessons to be drawn from the recent influx of Ukrainian refugees.

Indeed, the war in Ukraine has resulted in a far greater flow of refugees than the Syrian war. The difference in the response to Ukrainian refugees in comparison to Syrian refugees is remarkable: "EU directives working as they should for some, yet not for all."

Walls, fences, borders are symptoms of the failure of the EU Migration and asylum policy.

Taking into account the most conservative data (first instance asylum applications), 75% of irregular border crossings to the EU are actually people with a high likelihood of obtaining refugee status. This means that spikes in irregular border crossings correlate to humanitarian crises elsewhere.

Participants highlighted the weaponization of migration: Migration management has been instrumentalized and turned into a foreign policy issue whereby migrants become pawns in the negotiations of foreign aid, via readmission agreements for instance.

"European countries clearly have the capacity but lack the will" to manage migration.

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THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE WAR IN UKRAINE

The European Union was built on foundations of peace and its objective is to achieve peace in Europe and the world. Its founding pact, the Lisbon Treaty, explicitly states: 'The Union's aim is to promote peace and the well-being of its peoples.' The same applies for its external policy: 'In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall contribute to the peace and security' of all peoples. In my view, these are not abstract proclamations. Peace is paramount for the EU's survival. And the EU can only serve as a model for humanity if it is an active agent of universal peace.

In this regard, the war in Ukraine presents us with a difficult problem. Are the decisions taken by the Commission, for example, really in the interest of peace on our continent? Our recent trip to Stockholm has shown their dangerous ambiguity. When the Commission offers financial assistance to the Government of Kyiv to rebuild destroyed civilian infrastructure, it is doing the right thing because it is working towards peace. When it subsidises arms deliveries to Ukraine, it is straying from its goal.

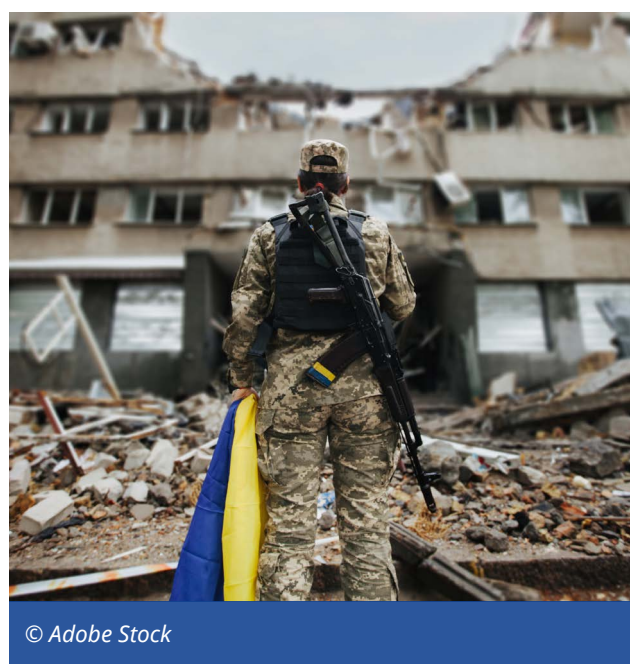


The same is true when it funds the production of ammunition in Europe to increase the Ukrainian arsenal. It is fuelling war, not peace. Some will say it is helping a country that has been unjustly attacked. I stand by my assertion that the Commission does not comprehend the serious confusion into which it is dragging the EU. It should leave matters of war to NATO, which was created for this very purpose. Today, almost all EU Member States are also NATO members. It is there, and only there, that decisions on war must be taken.

To achieve peace, bridges must be built and maintained. It is war that destroys them. When the fighting comes to an end, the EU will be in a poor position to rebuild the bridges that it has so fervently destroyed. It will be unable to make a positive contribution towards peace with its Russian neighbour.

The same ambiguity is also present in Ursula von der Leyen's announcement that Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia are part of the 'European family' and were called on to become members of the EU. In and of itself, this goal may be serving peace. However, as things stand, it is stirring up internal conflicts in these nations and expanding the war with Russia. We bear a serious responsibility in deciding on how to respond to the Ukrainian conflict: remain faithful to the values on which the Union was founded, or stray towards another type of European project – the risks of which seem, in my opinion, to be insufficiently thought through. I very much hope that the Parliament realises this and that it helps the Council and the Commission see the situation more rationally.

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The Commission's ten 'packages of sanctions' against Russia present the same ambiguity. Placing an embargo on all exports of products that could bolster the Russian army is justified. This is the EU working towards peace. But drawing a new 'Iron Curtain', even stricter than the last, in order to cut off Russia? Such actions fuel the war. In particular, putting a stop to sports, tourism and cultural exchanges goes beyond what is necessary.

FMA ACTIVITIES



EPFMA
PEAAD



FMA ANNUAL MEETING

FMA ANNUAL EVENTS, 3-4 MAY 2023

This year's events were a fine balance of commemoration, celebration, stimulation and elections.

The Annual Memorial Service provided a solemn homage to Former MEPs who had died in 2022 and 2023. Othmar Karas, First Vice-President of the European Parliament (EP), spoke movingly on behalf of all when he said "we honour (deceased members) for their life's work their ideas, their passion and vision. We honour them for their contribution to the European democracy project" especially in times of the "threats to liberal democracy, nationalism, populism, polarization"

Klaus Haensch, President of the FMA expressed particular praise and respect for Jose Maria Gil Robles, who was both a former President of the Parliament and the FMA, for his ability to "combine great humanity, with great firmness and fine irony"

Particularly poignant was when the son of a deceased Former Member told me how he was both moved and appreciative of the honouring of his own father.

The theme of the preservation and furthering of liberal democracy based on consensus and conciliation was the leitmotif of the presentation and roundtable discussion in the Parliament's library of the biography of former FMA and EP President, Hans-Gert Pöttering, entitled "A European Conscience".

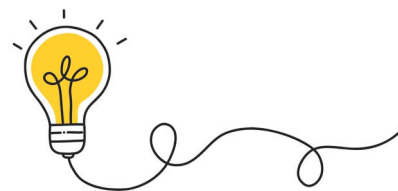
Further food for thought was provided after the Annual Dinner by presentation from our guest speaker, Paolo Gentiloni, EU Commissioner for Economy. His topic "Years of change: Europe after the pandemic and the war in Ukraine" was wide ranging and simulating, stressing the resilience of the European project and confidence in our ability to survive and overcome the grave challenges times of recent times, the covid pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Signor Gentiloni also raised the pertinent question of whether "we can different ways of funding common projects", a plea which must be very much on his mind as Commissioner for Economics".

The election to the Executive of the FMA produced one welcome new member, in the personage of Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl; this happily increases the number of women on the FMA Executive by one, which translates more impressively to an increase of 10% !

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More pictures of the 2023 FMA Annual Events and all other activities are available via the **FMA Flickr Account:**

www.bit.ly/FMAFlickrAccount



Pictures taken during the FMA Annual Events on 3-4 May 2023. Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni with FMA President Klaus Hänsch, 2023 Annual Memorial Service, Librorum Roundtable Discussion, New Management Committee, Annual General Assembly
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VISIT UNDER THE EU PRESIDENCY

A VISIT TO THE SWEDISH PRESIDENCY

In late March, the Former Members Association visited Stockholm to take a closer look at the Swedish Presidency in the first half of 2023, which had reached the halfway mark.

The group consisted of around 20 former MEPs chaired by Mr Klaus Hänsch, former President of the European Parliament, and, of course, included Ms Elisabetta Fonck, who can be relied upon to ensure everything runs smoothly. She was assisted by Mr Klas Jansson, acting head of the EP Liaison Office in Stockholm. To minimise the time spent travelling, most of the group's meetings were held near their hotel in the city. The high points of the visit were the meetings with Mr Christian Danielsson, State Secretary to Ms Jessica Roswall, Minister for European affairs, and with Mr Göran von Sydow, Director of the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, a government agency.

Mr Danielsson presented the four priorities for the presidency, namely security, competitiveness, the green transition and the rule of law and he explained their implications for current issues and challenges for the presidency. The second presentation charted Sweden's relations with EU-affairs over time. Both presentations stimulated a lively debate.

Still on the political side of the programme, there was an hour-long discussion on environmental issues with Ms Jytte Guteland, a former MEP who is now on the Swedish Parliament's Committee on European Union Affairs.

Another hour was spent with Swedish MPs representing three different parties in the governing majority. The visit started in the morning with a meeting at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the EU's agency aimed at strengthening Europe's defences against infectious diseases.



The FMA Delegation during a meeting with Mr Christian Danielsson, State Secretary to Ms Jessica Roswall, Minister for European Affairs, 31 March 2023

The visit was led by the ECDC's director, Dr Andrea Ammon, at the agency's impressive building on Gustav III:s Boulevard. There were of course many questions about COVID-19. The centre's experts presented a lot of information about its activities and explained its efficient system for gathering knowledge about diseases within the EU.

The visitors had arrived in Stockholm just in time to see the newly opened Europa Experience in Kulturhuset, located in the heart of the city. Here teachers, students and the general public can get information and inspiration on the EU, using modern technology to display information on our fantastic and diverse European Union.

Another hour was spent with Swedish Members of Parliament from three different parties of the governing majority, representing the Speaker's office.

The visit in Stockholm ended with a digital meeting with 100 Swedish teachers in the European Parliament Ambassador School Programme, who took part in a discussion with Mr Hänsch, Mr Peterle and Ms Cederschiöld. Dinner the first evening was served at Tak, a restaurant with excellent views over Stockholm.

The guest speakers were the former MEP Mr Hadar Cars (who played an important role in Sweden's accession to the EU) and myself (former MEP and Vice-President of the European Parliament). We both spoke about how Sweden's relationship to the EU has evolved, with the country's position now consolidated with 60 % of the population in favour of the EU, which is one of the best scores in the EU. We both expressed our view that the future debate on the euro in Sweden should one day lead to the country's adoption of the single currency.

The visitors also touched upon the issue of Sweden's recent application for membership of NATO. 28 out of 30 NATO countries have ratified Sweden's membership. Türkiye, now in the run-up to elections in May, has hesitated because of Swedish rules on freedom of speech. Most members of NATO have a constitution enshrining freedom of speech, as it is a part of our fundamental rights. A Swedish membership of NATO is to be expected to be in place before the next Presidency.

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FROM ENGAGED NEUTRALITY TO ENGAGED MULTILATERALISM

The visit of FMA members to Sweden and their discussions with representatives of the Swedish Parliament and Government revealed a Sweden that is much more engaged for Europe than before. Behind this new direction in Swedish policy is not only the fact that it is occupying the presidency of the EU for the first half of 2023, but also and especially the Russian war against Ukraine. This has been a major factor in pushing Sweden to engage more deeply within the multilateral and community structure of the EU. Of course, the main strategic orientation of both the government and the opposition is directed towards NATO membership. Still, Turkey and Hungary continue to block Sweden's accession to NATO. This is in part because Sweden has been following a policy of promoting human rights and a progressive asylum policy, which has been aggravating Hungary and Turkey alike. Sweden made a clear commitment that it would not sacrifice its human rights principles in order to gain Turkish and/or Hungarian assent for its NATO application.

Concerning asylum, the government intends – independently of outside pressure – to introduce some stricter criteria into the Swedish legislation. And Sweden will look more closely into financial contributions given by private organisations to groups suspected of supporting terrorist activities. This will be part of a broader reform aimed at enforcing a stronger and more consistent anti-crime agenda.

In any case, Sweden hopes that the opposition of the two hesitant governments can be overcome soon! Especially as Finland now has full backing for its NATO accession. It was also interesting for FMA members to learn about the strong connection between Swedish and Finnish neutrality, and Sweden's role in supporting its neighbour's position. Especially as Finland has now joined NATO.

Concentration on Europe versus global engagement

It became clear that for all representatives of Sweden, the Russian aggression is a turning point not only for Sweden but for the whole of Europe. To give up neutrality, which has evolved over the years into non-alignment, was not easy but necessary. Most of the Swedish speakers underlined that defence should be concentrated within NATO but that the European Union should be strengthened in terms of its overall security policy. In this respect, there is close cooperation between the government and the opposition. Some of participating former MEPs feared that the new orientation of Sweden might undermine and reduce the long-standing Swedish engagement for peace and reconciliation. Support for Ukraine and NATO membership might overshadow and undermine Sweden's traditional policy of guaranteeing asylum for those who are persecuted at home and its support for democratic movements in their countries around the world.

“Most of the Swedish speakers underlined that defence should be concentrated within NATO but that the European Union should be strengthened in terms of its overall security policy.”

There are some differences in the attitudes of the government and the opposition with regard to global cooperation and aid. For the opposition, and especially the Olof Palme International Center, global activities, including development aid, should not be cut. The government, on the other hand, has asked the respective institutions to concentrate their work on Europe and in general to reduce their public relations and campaigning activities.

Migration and Enlargement

One very important issue for the government is the discussions about the migration package. The Swedish Council Presidency wants to speed up these discussions so that the legislation can be concluded during the Belgian Presidency in the first half of 2024. Concerning migration, the Swedish Government, like other governments, follows a stricter line. A reference to the Danish line was made.

One issue that will certainly also have to be dealt with by the Belgian Presidency is that of the enlargement strategy. Support for Ukraine in general, and specifically for its preparation for sincere accession negotiations, is a priority. Nevertheless, the government is aware of the imperative to respect the needs and expectations of the Western Balkan countries. There must be no special fast-tracked negotiations for Ukraine while the Western Balkan countries continue with a slower, regular accession process!

Climate change and energy transition

Sweden is known for its progressive environmental and climate policy. However, FMA members observed some differences between government and opposition representatives concerning the speed of the energy transition and the implementation of climate policy goals. Again, overall there is fundamental, cross-party agreement on the importance of climate policy and the respective investments in view of the US Inflation Reduction Act. More investment is needed to keep Europe competitive and on the right track to reach its climate policy goals. Europe is the leader in terms of climate legislation but not when it comes to the investments needed to implement its climate goals.

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A VISIT TO THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL (ECDC)

One of the highlights of this study trip was the working visit to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. This EU agency is still little known among the general public, but performs very important tasks. It employs 341 people. Its focuses exclusively on infectious diseases, of which there are 59 in the EU.

We were given a detailed presentation by head of department Vicky Lefebvre on the role the ECDC played during the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that, already with the first reports of Chinese infections, all alarm bells went off immediately among experts. Efforts were made to gather as much information as possible internationally, even though there was hardly any available at first. When the first infections were reported in Italy and the virus had thus found its way to Europe, all staff members stopped what they were working on in their specific areas of interest and turned their attention exclusively to COVID-19. 'We worked very long days from seven in the morning till 10 at night. Every day there was a meeting with top experts to discuss the information coming in.'

As time went on, more and more became known and the institute started issuing advice to national agencies and governments on measures to be taken, such as vaccinations, social distancing, lockdowns, face masks, school closures, curfews and much more. In practice, policies sometimes varied quite widely from country to country. There were also marked differences in terms of public acceptance of the measures. Member States did however decide to procure vaccines jointly, following the Commission's proposal.



The FMA Delegation members with ECDC Director Andrea Ammon at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in Stockholm, 30 March 2023

At the scientific level, a lot of information was exchanged within the EU. The ECDC was also constantly liaising with its contacts outside Europe, for instance in the United States and, of course, with the World Health Organization.

ECDC director Dr Andrea Ammon informed us of the main conclusions for the future that the Centre had drawn in the aftermath of the pandemic.

First of all, it is of utmost importance that national health systems are put in order so that they can better cope with future outbreaks. Staff shortages in the sector were identified in many Member States. Efforts will therefore have to be made to improve working conditions, career prospects and the attractiveness of jobs. Second, the way in which vaccination campaigns are designed needs to be re-examined across the board with a critical eye. Past mistakes should not be repeated. Third, citizens need to be (much) more involved in the measures to be taken. The acceptance rate needs to increase significantly. This is a difficult task because groups among the population from diverse backgrounds will have to be approached differently.

Fourth, it has become clear that global cooperation in all relevant areas is indispensable. There is a very high level of interdependence globally, both with regard to the emergence of epidemics and to finding solutions.

Fifth, coordinated surveillance based on harmonised monitoring systems should be established at EU level. Sixth, Member States should agree on benchmark criteria and the EU crisis response plan / preparedness plan should be implemented across the board at national level. Finally: it is already common practice for the ECDC to be invited to attend Council meetings bringing together national health ministers to answer questions and provide advice.

The question of which measures have proved most effective is difficult to answer because sometimes one measure can have a knock-on effect on another, which can be both positive and negative.

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OLOF PALME INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

The President of the FMA, Klaus Hänsch, who led the visit of former MEPs to Stockholm paid tribute to Sweden for its progressive influence in the world. He spoke of the importance of Sweden in the development of the European Union and said:

"I believe strongly that your country, together with all the other Europeans, has the power and the will to hold our continent as a global home of freedom and peace, security and justice, economic and social welfare, climate resilience and energy security."

Klaus Hänsch, a former President of the European Parliament, spoke at the Stockholm meeting of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union at a ceremony in Oslo on 10 December 2012. The prize recognised the EU's contribution over 6 decades to promoting peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights.

The Olof Palme International Centre which was set up in Stockholm in 1992 is named to honour his life and work of the former Swedish Prime Minister and especially to promote the concept of Common Security.

At the height of the cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union Olof Palme as Sweden's Prime Minister challenged the idea that security was based on military strength including weapons of mass destruction but on a common security including climate change, the warming of the planet, poverty and inequality, the lack of empowerment of women, and terrorism.

Palme promoted the view that "military force is not a legitimate instrument for resolving disputes between nations" and that "Security cannot be attained through military superiority". He was active in peace making in South Africa, the Middle East, and the United Nations set up a Commission of Common Security with Olof Palme as the Chair.

The former Prime Minister was murdered in February 1986 whilst leaving the cinema in Stockholm with his wife and there is still uncertainty as to who was responsible. In response to the tragedy of the murder of Palme, an annual peace lecture was

launched in Leeds where Palme had visited the local university as a student politician.

Since the tragic death of Olof Palme in February 1986 Leeds has hosted speakers to help promote his ideas of common security including Lisbet Palme who came from Stockholm to Leeds, John Hume from Northern Ireland, and US Senator George Mitchell.

The 2022 Leeds Palme lecture marked the 40th anniversary of Olof Palme's UN Commission on Disarmament and Security and was given by the Secretary General of the Olof Palme International Centre of Stockholm, Anna Sundstrom, the former policy advisor at the Swedish Ministry for foreign Affairs.

I was privileged to visit the Centre and meet staff who are working on peace, democracy and human rights and with development co-operation in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Southern Africa. The Centre was established in 1992 by the Swedish Social Democratic Party of Sweden with support from the Trade Union and Co-operative unions.

We had an excellent exchange when two members from the Centre addressed the full group of former MEPs and I hope this will help increase links with both present and former members of the European Parliament and increase the promotion of the concept of Common Security in the interest of life on the planet.

Michael McGowan

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Meeting of the FMA Delegation with Olof Palme Centre Representatives
Mr. Johan Schmidt and Mr. Björn Lindh on 31 March 2023

A BRIT LOOKS BEYOND BREXIT

The study visit to Stockholm was my first since I left the Parliament in 1999. I wasn't certain what to expect and this was compounded by the knowledge that my country has left the EU. One of my reasons for embracing this opportunity was that I wanted to find out what other Europeans think of the British decision to leave. Our country has been obsessed with the issue since the 2016 referendum, but I don't know how this is understood elsewhere.

I was delighted that there were several former colleagues on the visit who were respected MEPs during my own mandate. They kindly spoke English and were happy to give a glimpse of how Britain is now viewed by our neighbours. They did understand that there is a difference between the behaviour of our government, which at least one described as "childish", and the British people. It was absolutely clear that they all hoped the UK would one day return to the EU.

Meeting the Swedes, many of whom were involved in managing the Swedish revolving presidency of the EU Council, was challenging. For a start, they were all from a much younger generation. They are living in an EU as it is now, not as it has been in

the past. Britain's departure was only mentioned when I specifically raised it; for them, Europe without Britain is business as usual. When asked, they made it clear that both Britain and the EU are diminished by our absence.

The Swedes kindly set out their priorities in the presidency. It was summed up by one speaker as wanting Europe to be "safer, greener, freer". It did not come as a surprise that they saw security as their number one consideration. This has meant that they, and their neighbours Finland, have had to re-evaluate their long-standing commitment to neutrality, and make it clear they stand with the Ukrainians.

The Swedes see their NATO application as part of a commitment to Europe's security.

Again, I asked about future British involvement. The Swedes understand that full membership was no longer a possibility, as they had similar issues about joining the Euro-zone. They welcomed the recent mature approach, especially in respect of Northern Ireland, but also hoped for closer co-operation with the Horizon research programme, the Erasmus student exchange scheme and security.

Whilst in Stockholm, we also visited the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, an EU agency, to learn at first hand of their heroic efforts during the pandemic to keep us safe. Once again, there was hope that the UK will soon sign an agreement which will enable the UK and EU to resume working together on controlling infectious diseases.

"There [at ECDC] was hope that the UK will soon sign an agreement which will enable the UK and EU to resume working together on controlling infectious diseases."

A meeting with representatives of the Olof Palme International Centre provided an opportunity for us to look beyond the immediate boundaries of the EU. Founded in memory of the late Swedish Prime Minister, the Centre is funded by the Swedish Social Democratic Party and their trade union colleagues.

They provide support for trade unionists and human rights workers in developing countries.

It is unlikely that Britain will re-join the EU in my own lifetime, but it is clear that we can work more closely together. Our neighbours in Europe have an appetite for closer cooperation. We can have a shared future.

David Hallam

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Meeting of FMA Delegation members with First Deputy Speaker of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag) Mr Kenneth G Forslund, 30 March 2023

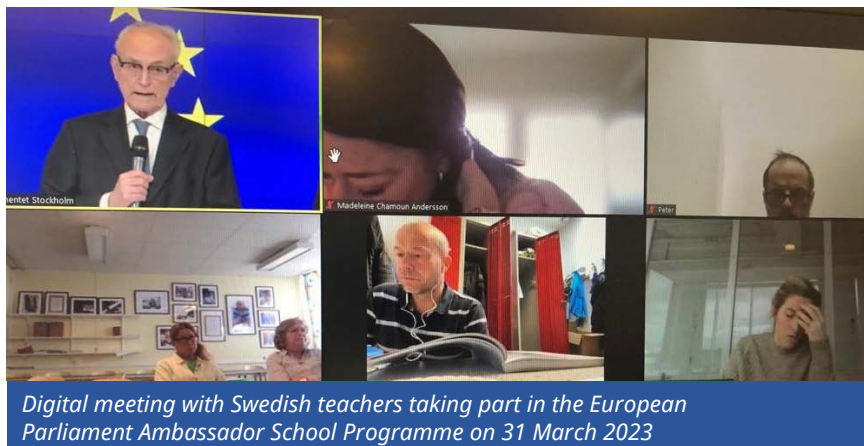
INVITE YOUNG PEOPLE TO DARE TO DREAM

It seems more important than ever to stick together, have trust and dare to dream. Klaus Hänsch describes the challenges facing today's EU and emphasizes the importance of countries not developing backwards and becoming protectionist.

The world my Junior Ambassadors at Riksgymnasiet in Örebro grow up in, is a world of climate crisis, they know they have to work hard to improve the climate. They know that any place can be hit by climate disasters in the future and be uninhabitable. Sometimes maybe for a little while sometimes maybe forever. They know that we will have to move our home to different places and welcome others whose homes are destroyed. In such a world, a sense of security rests in the fact that there are 27 countries that are ready to help each other create a new home, a global home.

Charlotte Cederschiöld emphasized that even though we have different backgrounds, we have the same wishes and dreams and that it is important to demand the rule of law and justice. In the past, it was unthinkable that democratic development could decline. My students grow up in a world where it is important to defend human rights. They ask what they can do to help defend these rights in other countries and they ask what happens if Sweden develops in the same direction. What will life be like if xenophobic parties win and peel away one human right after another?

The European Union is one of the world's largest contributors and therefore the Junior Ambassadors want to contribute with their own projects. They have collected and paid the school fees for a girl in Gambia and are writing letters. They learn that the only furniture the family owns are two chairs and a carpet. The whole family sleeps on the carpet. The girl whose schooling we finance has the same dreams as the students.



She dreams of becoming a professional soccer player and studying to become a teacher in order to help others make their future choices. The students' conditions between these countries are completely different, yet their dreams are the same.

Every country has its challenges. Here, the ambassadors have also collected clothes for regional health for vulnerable women and children in Örebro. In every country there are people who need help and if we all contribute what we can, we will eventually create a safer world together.

In the past, a war in Europe seemed unthinkable. I dream that my students will never lose their lives in senseless wars. The war in Ukraine reminds us of everyone's responsibility to preserve the peace.

I have a dream, Alojz Peterle sang before he began his speech, the main point of which was aimed at one of the EU's basic values: unity in diversity. We are all different, even within the same country we can have different values, backgrounds, religions and culture. The right to be different is what makes us strong together.

"I have a dream, Alojz Peterle sang before he began his speech, the main point of which was aimed at one of the EU's basic values: unity in diversity."

The future EU will face many challenges, the war in Ukraine, the aftermath of the pandemic, inflation and the erosion of human rights. In all of this, the EU is strong and has shown solidarity, and when life is at its toughest, I want to end with Peterle's words about how important it is to "invite young people to dare to dream".

Dare to dream of a better world, a secure future and find what makes them happy.

Kristina Sjöblom

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COOPERATION WITH EUI/HAEU

LECTURE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF THE 'FRANCO SACCHETTI' INSTITUTE

After a Covid 19-related hiatus, I was glad to return to Florence to visit the Historical Archives of the European Union, where I once again took part in a meeting with students. Run by the Historical Archives, these events help raise awareness about the EU among students of different ages from various educational institutions.

A number of current and former MEPs are invited to these meetings to talk about developments and share their knowledge with the young students.

This year I had the chance to meet Class 2A, who are second-year students attending the Istituto Franco Sacchetti's (Franco Sacchetti Institute) lower secondary school, which is based in San Miniato. Despite their young age, they struck me as being very interested, and paid close attention. They were not only keen to learn more, but thanks to their excellent teachers they were already very knowledgeable about the European Union. The students also prepared a timeline, which covered the processes underlying the transformation of the European Economic Community into the European Union we know today.

The end result was a rigorous and detailed chronology. I suggested that they add a few more key events, namely the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent reunification of Germany, as well as the European Convention, which led to the signing of the Constitutional Treaty in Rome by both the MEPs who,

like me, had attended the Convention, and the EU heads of state and government. The Constitution itself never entered into force, having been rejected by referenda in both France and the Netherlands.

The students' timeline of European integration was also missing another key event, namely the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force after the failed ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. Lisbon is particularly important in that it granted increased powers to the European Parliament. Though Parliament is the EU's only directly elected institution, it has always condemned the Union's democratic deficit. The Lisbon Treaty has gone some way to reducing it, though it is still the case today that the Council does not always take Parliament's majority vote into account during conciliation.

During the debate, I reminded the students of just how important EU enlargement has been for eastern Europe's former Soviet states, especially in light of the bloody war that Russia is waging on Ukrainian soil, and the major ramifications this conflict is having today. Having studied the topic beforehand, the students also had an in-depth discussion on Brexit with the MEPs and former MEPs present.

As the guest speaker, I joined the students in an entertaining exercise

that had been suggested by Dr Hernández Nova, in which we had to bring an object to the meeting, something that was connected either to our own lives or to our family history. One student brought a book; another a picture of their grandfather's vineyard, which symbolised tradition; another had a photo of their dining room table, capturing the time families spend together at home. My contribution was the Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi, because it expresses an ideal I have always strived towards, which is best summarised in the following verses: O Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace; where there is hatred, let me bring love; where there is offence, let me bring forgiveness; where there is discord, let me bring union, where there is despair, let me bring hope.

The meeting's organisers had also asked me to share the song, the lyrics that are dearest to me, so I chose Edith Piaf's *Je ne regrette rien* (I don't regret a thing), specifically when she says: I don't regret what was done to me, not a thing, neither good deed nor ill, for every day is a new beginning and life never stands still.

In conclusion, I'd like to restate my great appreciation for this initiative, which the Historical Archives have been running for a number of years. Everyone here, myself included, heartily recommends visiting this one-of-a-kind repository. I would like to thank the Members and former Members who joined, along with the students and their teachers, and hope to see everyone again soon. Needless to say, it is our sincere hope that these young people keep learning about the EU, partly so that their involvement can forge a more politically united Union.

Lest we forget, young people represent hope for the future, for a better society.

Cristiana Muscardini

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Cristiana Muscardini during her lecture to Secondary School children at the Historical Archives of the EU on Europe Day, 9 May 2023 © HAEU / EUI

FORMER MEMBERS NETWORK

FP-AP TO PARIS AND OSLO

During the first months of this year, a number of activities took place in which our European Parliament Former Members Association (FMA) had a significant involvement. These were meetings we attended held by our sister association the 'European Association of former members of parliament of the member states of the Council of Europe' (FP-AP). For the first time, a number of the mentioned initiatives were suggested and organised by both associations. It should be noted that a large number of former parliamentarians are members of both associations. One need look no further than me for an example: first I was a Member and even President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and then I had a seat in the European Parliament for three terms. My case is by no means exceptional, as there are at least a dozen or so former parliamentarians in similar situations whom we often meet during various activities. Many of the colleagues who passed through both institutions are playing a decisive role in the efforts to arrive at the best possible cooperation between the two associations. It seems obvious that such cooperation has an overwhelmingly positive effect when it comes to reaching common positions and, especially, when it comes to achieving the most effective way of working for those of us in both institutions who have decided to dedicate ourselves to the European integration process that the EU represents. This applies even if that work is done at the Council of Europe, which is an irreplaceable and permanently relevant component in, for example, the progress of values such as defending human rights, which, as an essential task of the Council of Europe, also plays and should carry on playing a leading role in everything that the EU and its Member States represent and do. I refer to a number of activities that have taken place in various capitals of our continent, all with a significant turnout from fellow FMA members.

It is worth taking into account the fact that the progress we have made has helped strengthen the presence of members of both associations mentioned in the activities referred to, and it has meant that decisions and conclusions have been reached effectively by the former parliamentarians concerned as a whole. I would like to specify that the activities mentioned were held or are to be held in three different countries, on different dates and involving different people.

The first meeting I would like to mention is the FP-AP General Assembly, which took place in Paris from 22 to 24 February. Perhaps the most notable thing for some of us is to highlight that taking full part at this General Assembly was a delegation from our European Parliament Former Members Association, comprising Teresa Riera and myself, along with former national parliamentarians who had once been Members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The meeting comprised two events: a larger one held on 24 February at the seat of the French National Assembly, the lower house of the French Parliament, and another held on 23 February at the Senate. On 22 February, there was also a very interesting outing to the neighbouring area of Marne-la-Vallée, during which we got to speak with representatives from various levels of the French authorities. It included a visit to the delightful Château de Ferrières-en-Brie in the area that hosted us. We enjoyed an excellent atmosphere of cooperation and friendship at these meetings. There were, however, two subjects where unanimity was more complicated to achieve, perhaps to the surprise of some of us.

One was the situation concerning our colleague Mr Panzeri and the sanction that had been imposed on him, to all intents and purposes expelling him from our association, of which he had become a Board Member.

There were no fundamental differences between the colleagues present, but there were some nuances of opinion expressed that perhaps the rest of us had not expected. Something similar happened with the subject of the invasion of Ukraine by Putin's Russia. A clear and rigorous resolution text condemning the invasion was approved, but this does not alter the fact that there were three or four speeches that appeared less in tune with the general opinion of the participants, although the text that was finally adopted was quite radical in its condemnation of the invading power.

In any case, the main point of the Paris meeting was to approve the 2023 budget and to update and clarify a number of points in the FP-AP's rules and statutes. Also during the General Assembly, it was announced that a seminar on climate change would take place in the city of Lugano, Switzerland, in late September. At the end of the meeting, our French socialist colleague Jean-Pierre Fourré passed on the FP-AP presidency to our Austrian conservative colleague Walter Schwimmer, whom he will join as Vice-President.

From 4 to 6 May 2023, I also participated in the trip to Oslo, where FP-AP held a seminar entitled '*Are democracies under pressure today?*'. We debated the role that European former parliamentarians of all kinds can play in defending and advancing the continental coordination project that the EU has become, and, perhaps above all, in promoting the values that we proclaim as the hallmark of the EU.

Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez

*S&D, Spain (1999-2014)
micar@email.com*

EP TO CAMPUS PROGRAMME

EP TO CAMPUS EXPERIENCE AT TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, ESTONIA | 17 FEBRUARY 2023 | ON CAMPUS

Founded in 1918, Tallinn University of Technology is the only technical university in Estonia. TalTech is a university for engineering, business, public administration and maritime affairs. The visit organized by the EP to Campus program at Tallinn University of Technology, Department of Law had as audience the students of the Faculty of Tallinn Law School, the Comparative Constitutional Law and Human Rights course and we interacted with the Taltech School of Business and Governance.

After giving a presentation of the architecture of the European institutions, we developed a constructive interactive discussion about the concrete role of an MEP at both European and national level. I was pleased to observe the interest of young people towards European politics as a whole, but especially towards the concrete activity of a politician who represents their rights and interests at the European level. We all agreed that gender equality as well as representativeness is very important in balanced decision-making, and the European Union has

taken significant steps in this regard. We focused on the role of the European Parliament in the decision making of the EU. The students came with many questions to the discussion table regarding the need for each member state to have a number of representatives in the European Parliament, at the level of the European Commission and in the European institutions in general so that each member state can defend its national interests.

Being concerned with comparative constitutional law, the students addressed the risk of losing or diminishing national sovereignty in European unity and diversity. Digitization was a lively topic of discussions, especially since Estonia is one of the most digitized EU member states. Estonia is the only country in the world where 99% of public services are available online 24/7. In Estonia, the only public activities that cannot be done online are marriage, divorce and real estate transactions. However, for example, if a person wants to change their surname to that of their partner, they can register to receive the necessary documents

before marriage.

Everything except the signature from the marital status can be solved online. Estonia among the global leaders in digitization, cyber security or autonomous cars, has successfully implemented online voting and offers digital citizenship even to people who do not live in Estonia.

Present at the GoTech World 2022 conference, the largest IT&digital business event in Romania, the first female president in the history of Estonia, Kersti Kaljulaid, explained to Euronews: "The digital signature infrastructure means a digital ID that allows us to sign documents online, to we authenticate and encrypt information, without specific elements, just a simple thing, a digital passport".

As Estonia borders Russia and Romania borders Ukraine, the students were very concerned about the war between Russia and Ukraine, as well as the risk margin of the countries neighbouring the two states involved in armed aggression, both EU member countries, and the measures that The European Commission took them under this aspect, namely to protect its members from the imminence of an armed attack, as well as humanitarian aid and any other kind granted to Ukraine or Russia-EU relations. In relation to this topic, I mentioned the measures of the European Commission, the sanctions taken against Russia, the Resolution of the European Parliament.

Maria Gabriela Zoană
S&D, Romania (2018-2019)
av_zoana@yahoo.com



Maria Gabriela Zoană during her lecture on campus in Estonia at Tallinn University, 17 February 2023

EU-UKRAINE RELATIONS IN TIME OF WAR

KYIV MOHYLA ACADEMY, UKRAINE | 20 FEBRUARY 2023 | ONLINE

I have given talks and lectures in many parts of the world - including in some unusual and potentially dangerous places. This was the first time that I had been warned by the organiser, I might be interrupted by an air raid. I was addressing a conference in Ukraine, supported by the FMA, on the subject of EU-Ukraine relations in time of war. Fortunately I was able to get through my talk and answer questions without being disturbed by President Putin's bombs and missiles. But it is a testament to the courage and resilience of the people of Ukraine that university staff and students were prepared to participate in a conference when their world might literally be exploding around them.

I recognised that there is an obvious and understandable frustration in Ukraine at the time taken to make key decisions in relation to the provision of the military equipment requested by Ukraine's leadership. The most recent example being the controversy about the provision of tanks. That same frustration moved on to a similar debate about the provision of strike aircraft.

Why is it that the nations of the West are taking so long to take the necessary decisions? That debate goes to the heart of the discussion - how the EU operates in times of war. I noted that CFSP has operated much better than expected - certainly more effectively than in previous conflicts involving EU nations. The EU has talked the talk on Ukraine with a series of supportive resolutions, committing to "support Ukraine and the Ukrainian people against Russia's ongoing war of aggression for as long as it takes". In Kyiv however, I suspect from the perspective of President Zelensky's office that the EU has not walked the walk - with a gap between the EU's rhetoric and the reality of its practical commitments, at least militarily.

Yet the EU has provided humanitarian, political, financial and military support together with a comprehensive set of economic sanctions. I also noted that my former colleagues in the European Parliament have consistently been at the forefront of efforts to support Ukraine, agreeing an 18 billion euro loan for 2023. Yet I acknowledged that all of this is still seen as being insufficient by Ukraine's leaders.

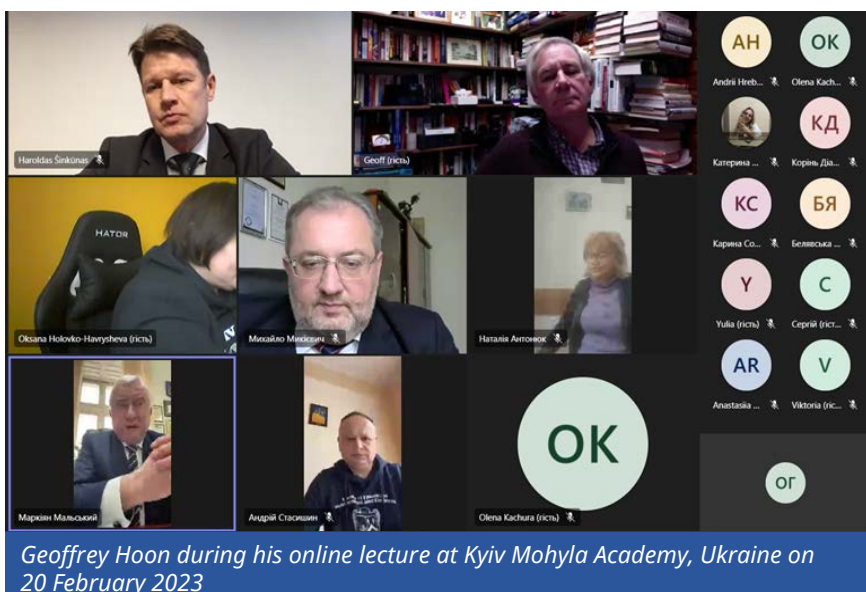
Why is that? The foreign policy side of CFSP in terms of policy making, initiatives and resolutions has usually worked well. What is lacking is a practical commitment to the development of a common defence policy - putting into practice what has been agreed in principle. The individual member states of the EU, in common with almost all sovereign nations, jealously guard the question of when to commit their armed forces into military action and allow the use of their military equipment. The deployment of a country's armed forces and the use of its military equipment is essentially a domestic political issue. Countries retain the right to export the military equipment that they have manufactured or procured. The decision on the export of equipment resides in the capitals of member states and cannot yet be decided at the EU level in Brussels. In the case of German built Leopard tanks even surplus Polish owned tanks could not be exported to Ukraine without Berlin's prior agreement.

The courage of the people of Ukraine has highlighted the limits of EU practical cooperation in the field of defence and security. At a time when politics in most European countries is focussed inwards, on domestic issues to do with immigration, health and economic growth, the experience of Ukraine will serve as a lesson that no country or international organisation can afford to ignore external threats. For the EU that means building a practical defence and security policy - one that is not necessarily subject to the internal politics of individual member states - one that can be used whenever there are threats to the European neighbourhood. Ukraine's war is also Europe's war.

Geoffrey Hoon

SOC, United Kingdom (1984-1994)

geoff.hoon@outlook.com



GUIDING STEPS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF SMARTER AND MORE ENGAGED CITIZENS IN A SUSTAINABLE EU

ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA UNIVERSITY, ROMANIA | 14 MARCH 2023 | ON CAMPUS



Jan Dhaene during his lecture at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Romania, 14 March 2023

This was the first time after the COVID-pandemic that a meeting with students 'in person' was again possible.

I had already been to Poland, France and Bulgaria as part of the 'EP to Campus' programme before Covid. Now I saw Romania on the FMA list and, as my youngest son is now married to a Romanian, it caught my attention. The description also particularly appealed to me: New trends in EU Economics. But I had never heard of the university or of the city of Iasi. A quick search revealed that it had been the old historic capital of the Kingdom of Moldova. A beautiful city with a long and eventful history.

What is now the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University (UIAC) was founded in 1860 and is the first modern university in Romania. The Library is world-famous. I was received there by Professor Constantin-Marius Apostoae and Professor Irina Bilan of the Faculty of Economics. I was able to stay at the university's hotel, not far from campus.

The title of my talk ended up being: 'Guiding steps for the next generation of smarter and more engaged citizens in a Sustainable European Union'. I focused mainly on the Green Deal and the Fit for 55 programme, but also on current issues: the Critical Raw Materials Act and the NetZero Industry Act. I also looked at green competition with the United States in light of its new legislation: The Inflation Reduction Act, to fight inflation and green their industry.

I especially wanted to enter into a dialogue with the students, as they will see a new industrial revolution. The EU wants to lead the world in implementing the Paris climate agreement and be the first continent free of CO2 emissions by 2050. I wanted to give a positive message. This narrative is not evident in Romania. But the Just Transition Programme and support for regions and Member States are also struggling. I wanted to make it clear that they are taken on board in the new sustainable industrial policy: leaving no-one and nobody behind.

I held two sessions for some 20 students, in the morning and afternoon. In the afternoon, there were many students from Moldova in the class. They can, after selection, get a study place in Romania. They are highly motivated students. Moldova is eager to join the EU and has been a candidate country since 2022. I was there as an OSCE election observer in 2010 and witnessed a demonstration of young people carrying the European flag. There is a fear that Moscow is destabilising the country.

This is geopolitics, right next to Ukraine. The EU should not be naïve and should accept Moldova into the EU as soon as possible.

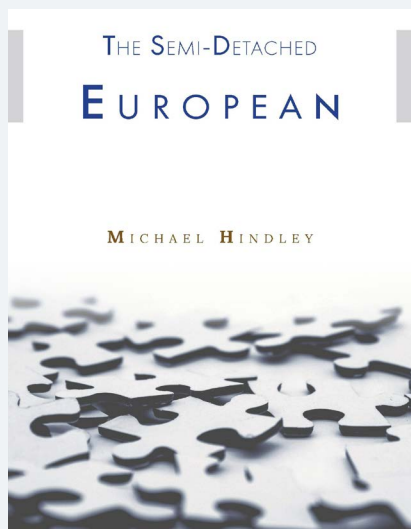
This is an urgent matter, which perhaps the FMA could raise. The future of these young people would change drastically and the country would become an even more important trading partner for Romania as well. Moreover, from a historical point of view also, this region belongs in the EU, as I was able to see abundantly clearly through the many beautiful monuments in the city of Iasi, in the very east of the EU.

Jan Dhaene
Greens/EFA, Belgium (2002-2004)
jantedhaene@gmail.com



THE SEMI-DETACHED EUROPEAN

by **Michael Hindley**, published by Manipal Universal Press (May 2021)



The life and career of Michael Hindley, the author of this book, mirror the history of the United Kingdom's post war relationship with Europe. The title, *Semi-Detached European*, draws inspiration from the complex historical, economic, political, social and psychological developments surrounding this relationship, which the author has been tracking since the end of the Second World War – first as a student, and later as a politician and university professor. *Semi-Detached* conveys in a fine manner that genuinely multifaceted ambiguousness which has seen the UK never fully join nor fully leave the so-called 'European mainstream'.

My colleague Michael Hindley's brilliant book is a real page-turner, one made even more gripping and topical by events in the last few years, which have seen the pandemic drive Great Britain and Europe further apart, something felt particularly keenly by families – including the author's – with relatives living on a continent that had become inaccessible.

And who better to write it than Mr Hindley, with his unrivalled grasp of European affairs.

A lover of German language and culture, he married his Polish wife in 1980, at the height of the *Solidarność* movement. Their daughter is married to an Italian and they have two Italian speaking children who live in Turin. Each year, Michael and his wife reside for extended periods in France. Hindley's studies in modern literature and international humanitarian law were a major boon to his political career at the European Parliament. It was only natural that he would become a successful author, as well as a columnist for major international newspapers and magazines and a lecturer at various universities across the world.

Why did Hindley write a book on such an important topic, one that still provokes heated debate in both the UK and Europe? His aim is to provide an 'outsider's perspective' on the events which brought the UK and Europe together, and those that later drove them apart.

The author explains this in the introduction by quoting Robert Burns: 'It is salutary and beneficial to see ourselves as others see us'. It is with this guiding principle in mind that Hindley takes the reader through all the post war events that marked this relationship, from the Suez Crisis in 1956 – when the UK began to take an active interest in the Common Market's swift success – to the UK's decision to leave the EU in 2017.

Elected in 1984, Hindley witnessed events first-hand in his 15 years as a Member of the European Parliament. That period saw the clash between Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's conservative vision on the one hand, and Jacques Delors' social market on the other. In his time as an MEP, Hindley witnessed the accessions of Spain, Portugal, Sweden, Austria and Finland, as well as the introduction of the euro, the signing of the Schengen Treaty and the reunification of Germany following the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Hindley's book provides a respectful, insightful and thorough analysis of Europe's transformation from the Common Market to the European Union, and the tensions arising from the role played in this by the United Kingdom. The book also features seldom-known yet accurate historical, social and financial facts.

Even Hindley's analysis of the 2016 Referendum – which Prime Minister David Cameron called to quell dissatisfaction with EU policies within his party's ranks and to stem voter defections to UKIP, the surging nationalist and populist party – is moderate, impartial and open to fresh interpretation through current and future historical debate.

Isabella De Martini

ECR, Italy (2013-2014)

isabella.demartini@outlook.it

UPCOMING EVENTS

ACTIVITIES

16
JUNE 2023

High-level hybrid conference 'Can the EU learn from experience?'

On Friday 16 June, the FMA is co-organising the high-level hybrid conference 'Can the EU learn from experience' with the Historical Archives of the European Parliament and INDIRE Erasmus+. The event will be livestreamed here: bit.ly/ExperienceEU-16June.

6
JULY 2023 &
14
SEPTEMBER 2023

Librorum (online)

On Thursday 6 July from 17.00 to 18.15, FMA Member **Jean-Claude Martinez** will present his latest book 'The great book of the civilization of Morocco' during an online Librorum event. On Thursday 14 September from 17.00 to 18.15, FMA Member **Francisca Sauquillo** will present her latest publication in "Tiempo de paz."

28-29
SEPTEMBER 2023

FMA Study Visit to Paris

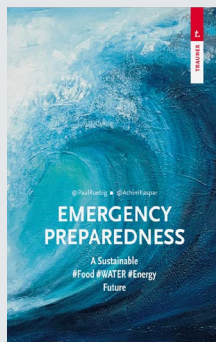
From Thursday 28 to Friday 29 September, the FMA will organise a study visit to Paris. More information about the visit and the opening of registrations will be communicated shortly via mail, the FMA social media channels and the FMA website.

19-20
OCTOBER 2023

FMA Visit to Spain

On the occasion of the Presidency of the Council of the EU, the FMA is organising from Thursday 19 to Friday 20 October a visit to Spain. More information about the visit and the opening of registrations will be communicated shortly via mail, the FMA social media channels and the FMA website.

FMA MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS



"EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS" BY PAUL RÜBIG (2023)

The demand for water, one of the fundamental necessities of life, is growing at a faster rate than the world population. Agriculture and other industries are becoming even more intensive water users, climate change has already had immense effects all over the world, and competition between different user groups is increasing over time. At the same time, billions of people all over the globe still don't have access to safe drinking water and safely managed sanitation services. But we can learn to do better. In order to do so, the essays in this book assess current challenges and highlight the need for more water-efficiency and customer-driven technological innovation in various fields. They also provide solutions, show best-practice examples, and find answers to some of the most pressing issues in water management around the globe. The dialogue about current challenges in water and wastewater management has only just begun and must be brought to the forefront for the chance at a sustainable water future.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Jo Leinen was elected as Senior Fellow of the Foundation for Progressive European Studies (FEPS)

"As responsible rapporteur in the 2004-2009 legislature for the Statute of European Political Foundations, it is a pleasure to work in this progressive think tank for European ideas and solutions", Jo Leinen declared. The focus lies on three priorities: democracy, climate and multilateralism."

NEW MEMBERS





Brussels, 4 May 2023

Dear Member,

Re: RESULTS OF THE VOTES

Please find below the detailed results of the votes which took place at the Annual General Assembly of the Association on 4 May 2023:

1) The election for five members of the FMA Management Committee:

The following members were elected in the order below and will now serve on the Management Committee for a period of two years until the Annual General Assembly meeting of 2025:

1. Teresa RIERA MADURELL
2. Godelieve QUISTHOUDT-ROWOHL
3. Michael HINDLEY
4. Manuel PORTO
5. Miguel Angel MARTINEZ MARTINEZ

There were 159 votes cast, of which one was ruled invalid leaving a total valid poll of 158.

2) The vote on the Annual Report 2022:

	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
To approve the Annual Report	143	0	1

There were 159 votes cast, of which 15 were left blank and none ruled invalid, leaving a total valid poll of 144.

3) The vote on the Annual Accounts 2022:

	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
To approve the Annual Accounts	143	1	0

There were 159 votes cast, of which 15 were left blank and none ruled invalid, leaving a total valid poll of 144.

Following the resignation of Mr Pier Antonio Panzeri from the Association as a Member of the Board and of the FMA, the vote on the proposal to expel Mr Panzeri became without purpose and it was repealed.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who took part in these elections.

Yours sincerely,

Renate HEINISCH

Vitaliano GEMELLI

Scrutineer


Scrutineer


FMA AT WORK

MEMBERS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Klaus
HÄNSCH



Monica BALDI



Jean-Pierre
AUDY



Teresa RIERA
MADURELL



Michael
HINDLEY



Miguel Angel
MARTÍNEZ
MARTÍNEZ



Edward
McMILLAN-
SCOTT



Manuel PORTO



Godelieve
QUISTHOUDT-
ROWOHL



Paul RÜBIG

FMA BUREAU

President: **Klaus HÄNSCH**

Vice-President: **Monica BALDI**

Treasurer: **Jean-Pierre AUDY**

Secretary: **Teresa RIERA MADURELL**

LIST OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

FMA Bulletin Editorial Board:

Ms Baldi (Chair), Mr Audy, Mr McMillan-Scott, Ms Riera Madurell and Mr Rübig.

EP to Campus: Mr Hindley (Chair), Mr Porto and Ms Quisthoudt-Rowohl.

Relations with Budgets Committee, DG Finance: Mr Audy.

Dinner Debate: Ms Baldi.

Delegates to the Bureau of the European Association of Former Members (FP-AP): Mr Martínez Martínez and Ms Riera Madurell. If necessary they will be substituted by Mr Audy.

FMA Communication: Ms Baldi (Chair) and Mr Hindley.

Delegates to the Annual General Assembly, seminars and colloquies of the FP-AP: Mr Audy, Mr Martínez Martínez and Ms Riera Madurell. Besides the FMA delegates or their substitutes and in agreement with the European Association, other FMA Management Committee Members may participate in the annual seminars or colloquies at their own expense.

Relations with Former Members Associations outside Europe: Mr Martínez Martínez (Chair), Mr Audy, Ms Quisthoudt-Rowohl and Ms Isabella De Martini (FMA Member with advisory role).

Annual seminar and relations with think tanks, policy institutes and foundations: Ms Riera Madurell (Chair), Ms Baldi, Ms Quisthoudt-Rowohl and Mr Rübig.

Archives: Ms Baldi.

Working Group on Democracy Support and Election Observation: Mr McMillan-Scott (Chair), Mr Hindley, Mr Martínez Martínez and Ms Quisthoudt-Rowohl.

Relations with the House of European History: Mr Martínez Martínez.

Relations with the European University Institute (EUI): Ms Baldi.

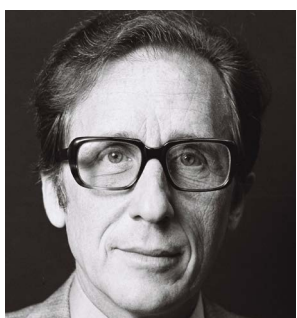
IN MEMORIAM



Ulrich IRMER

✝ 12 April 2022
LD, Germany (1979-1984)

He served as a German Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Irmer represented *Freie Demokratische Partei*.



Giorgio RUFFOLO

✝ 16 February 2023
SOC, PES, Italy (1979-1983, 1994-2004)

He served as an Italian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Ruffolo represented *Democratici di Sinistra*.



Elena MARINUCCI

✝ 31 March 2023
PES, Italy (1994-1999)

She served as an Italian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Ms Marinucci represented *Socialisti democratici italiani*.



Charles-Ferdinand NOTHOMB

✝ 19 April 2023
EPP, Belgium (1979-1980)

He served as a Belgian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Nothomb represented *Parti social-chrétien*.



Guido SACCONI

✝ 2 May 2023
PES, Italy (1999-2009)

He served as an Italian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Sacconi represented *Partito Democratico*.



Tom SPENCER

⚔ 4 May 2023

EPP-ED, United Kingdom (1979-1984, 1989-1999)

He served as a British Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Spencer represented the Conservative and Unionist Party.



Roberto CICCIOMESSERE

⚔ 26 May 2023

TGI, NA, Italy (1984-1989)

He served as an Italian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr CiccioMessere represented *Partito radicale*.



Guido BODRATO

⚔ 8 June 2023

EPP-ED, Italy (1999-2004)

He served as an Italian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Bodrato represented *Partito popolare italiano*.



Silvio BERLUSCONI

⚔ 12 June 2023

EPP-ED, Italy (1999-2001, 2019-2022)

He served as an Italian Member of the European Parliament. At the national level, Mr Berlusconi represented *Forza Italia*.

José María GIL-ROBLES GIL-DELGADO

Former EP (1997-1999) and FMA (2006-2010) President

⚔ 13 February 2023
EPP, Spain (1989-2004)

"José María was a great European: a figure who is emblematic of European history after the Second World War. He was an outstanding politician, a man of authority, open, intelligent and conciliatory, able to combine great humanity with great firmness and a fine sense of irony."

Quotation of FMA President Klaus Hänsch during the 2023 Memorial Service.



DIGITAL TWINS

DIGITAL TRANSITION AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



DIGITAL GLOBAL OBSERVATORIES

HOW DIGITAL TWINS CAN HELP SHAPING OUR COMMON FUTURE IN TIMES OF INCREASING UNCERTAINTY AND UNSETTLED LIVES?

How far advanced computing together with design and use of digital twins can help shape our common future in times of increasing uncertainty and unsettled lives? This question has motivated the organization of the 6th Gago Conference on European Science Policy, 23-24 October 2023, in Barcelona¹, in an way to discuss challenges and opportunities for digital twins in health, urban planning and the environment to consider human agency², be centered on people and be based on changing collective behaviors leading us to safer, cleaner and more “collectively” resilient and cooperative societies.

The context

Recent unexpected threats to our common safety and public goods, including public health, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the increasing activity of individual digital

terrorism and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, have shown that our societies are not as safe as we thought. In association with the climate disaster we all are facing, demographic forecasts and the tensions resulting from increasing water scarcity affecting the world's most vulnerable communities, we are facing unprecedented threats that should foster a clear call for action.

The analysis clearly shows that every forecast for world societies in the coming decades will be strongly affected by the emerging trends in the growing digitalization of our communities and economies. It includes the increasing world relevance of the Global South and the critically relevant role of European led cooperation.³

Advantages and Threats

Although the advantages and disadvantages of digital observation and governance based

on centralized and decentralized digital networks are still subject to many uncertainties requiring comprehensive technical and policy debates, the use of advanced computing together with decentralized digital networks and blockchain control is only partially immune to biases.

Blockchain algorithms incentivize and ultimately give preference to participants that have access to more nodes, therefore, to the most active ones. Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help by modelling the information flows and learning different participants' critical use patterns. Such practices can then provide input to set the parameters that govern the behavior of blockchain algorithms.

However, the massified use of AI-enabled innovations is also not free of additional questions because the “power it has to make us act in the ways it predicts reduces our agency over the future”.⁴

In predicting our behavior, AI systems can end up changing it. Consequently, collective human wisdom needs to be strengthened so that emerging regulatory issues for an increasing digital age should help promote critical approaches to AI, with clear accountability and clarity about boundaries and purpose, as well as responsibility.⁵

¹ Details in: <https://www.cienciaviva.pt/gagoconf/6th-edition>.

² See details and definition at UNDP (2022), <https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2021-22>.

³ See the platform K4P Alliances: <https://k4palliances.com/>.



Logo of the Gago Conference, organised this year on 23-24 October 2023 © Ciência Viva

⁴ Helga Nowotny (2021), “In AI we Trust: power, Illusion and Control of predictive algorithms”, Polity Books

⁵ Thelisson, E., Morin, J.-H., Rochel, J. (2019), “AI Governance: digital responsibility as a building block”, 2 DELPHI 167

"However, the massified use of AI-enabled innovations is also not free of additional questions because the power it has to make us act in the ways it predicts reduces our agency over the future."

It requires rethinking of the techno-centric narrative of progress, embracing and harnessing uncertainty, as well as abandoning the fantasy of control over nature and the illusion of techno-centric dominance of AI-enabled innovations.⁶ The issue is clear in that it creates tensions between developers/promoters and human-led policy making, which need to be informed by negotiations of trade-offs. Above all, it requires a transdisciplinary approach to collective behaviors⁷ and consideration of "human agency" across economics, philosophy, law, science and technology studies, history and sociology to engage with all the necessary ingredients of an emerging decentralized digital age and AI-enabled innovations.

The policy debate

Following Joseph Henrich (2016)⁸, among others, we know that our collective brains arise from the synthesis of our cultural and social natures and that larger and more interconnect societies produce more "know-how".

6 Karamjit S. Gill (2022), Book review, "Nowotny 2021: In AI we trust", *AI& Society*, January 2021
7 See, for example, the work of Bak-Coleman et al (2021), "Stewardship of global collective behavior", *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, June 21, 2021.

8 J. Henrich (2016), "The secret of our success: how culture is driving human evolution, domesticating our species, and making us smarter", Princeton University Press.

The rationale for this discussion also relies on the fact that the climate crisis is probably the biggest challenge humanity is facing. The Paris Agreement is perhaps the most impactful health agreement of the 21st century"⁹, however, there is no sustainable development without guaranteeing the rights of all people. Future actions must take into account the connection between the "ecological footprint" indicators and those associated with the "social footprint" (i.e., poverty, inequality, and violation of basic rights).

The latter means changing and developing green/blue economies and healthier societies.

"Understanding technology change as a common public good will allow citizens to be an integral part of future developments."

It means changing our daily routines and work habits, as well as our cities, transport, agriculture, and industry, in a way achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere and the carbon removed from it. This balance – or net zero – will happen when the amount of carbon we add to the atmosphere is no more than the amount removed.

By focusing digital observation and governance on our emerging collective behaviors we will guarantee the sustainability of the populations, simultaneously with their right to develop. This means "digital humanism" and the guarantee of a transdisciplinary approach to digital twins in a way to foster healthier lives and the development of sustainable and healthy territories.

9 WHO (2021).

Understanding technology change as a common public good will allow citizens to be an integral part of future developments. This will help policymakers to better understand how digital observatories can be used to develop further to make public services more effective by delivering seamless services, cutting down digital bureaucracy and giving citizens back their most precious asset, namely their time. In addition, it will drive new policy options to enhance the governance and regulation of decentralized digital networks, including those in the public sector, ensuring high standards of conduct across all areas of public sector practice, promoting public sector effectiveness and delivering better service to its users.

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DIGITAL TWINS



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We can define Digital Twin as a continuously learning digital copy of real-world assets, systems and processes that can be queried for specific outcomes¹. Creating a digital duplicate of a system was practised at NASA starting in the '60s. One of the first performances of this practice was a model of Apollo 13 aimed at simulating the conditions on board in real-time to avoid the mission's failure. The first crystallisation of the concept was in the works of Michael Grieves and Joan Vickers at NASA in 2003². It was redefined at NASA in 2012 as an integrated multiphysics, multiscale, probabilistic simulation of a system, which mirrors the life of a corresponding physical artefact based on historical data, physical model, and real-time sensing. Since then, the digital twin concept has become popular, although with diverse approaches and understandings. These different interpretations go from mimicking the whole functioning of a physical object, including the capacity to manipulate it through the digital twin, to a broader

sense that emphasises the ability to anticipate the future state of a (complex) system using AI-based techniques and simulations. Digital twins use both real-world data — including physical and behavioural characteristics — and synthetic data to create a true-to-reality, simulated model of an environment, object or person to run scenarios and study the model, for example, in the case of precision medicine or the case of smart cities. When paired with AI, digital twins can run what-if scenarios and make forecasts based on the available data.

"Using digital twins can provide various benefits, such as accelerated risk assessment and production time, improved efficiency, predictive maintenance, real-time remote monitoring and improved team collaboration."

Today, a digital twin is an AI-based virtual representation of the characteristics and behaviours of a physical entity used to study and foretell its conduct without experimenting with the actual object. In general, as closely as the use of a digital twin is to a concrete physical object, the more precise its representation is.

One extraordinary example of this technology's ambition and scientific importance is the European Digital Twin Ocean (DTO). DTO aims to provide consistent high-resolution, multi-dimensional descriptions of the ocean. This includes its physical, chemical, biological, socio-ecological and economic dimensions, with forecasting periods ranging from seasons to multi-decades³. At the same time, when digital twins are applied to more comprehensive systems, like socio-economic (e.g. smart cities) and human interactions, they lean towards projection and simulation more. When citizens' participation is important this technology may require a massive amount of sensitive personal data to create increasingly detailed digital twins, raising GPRD concerns; responsible design and deployment are essential. Therefore, privacy and data protection are among the main ethical issues related to digital twins. Digital twins, the Internet of Things, 5G and Edge computing are expected to be decisive technologies in the next decade's industrial markets (Industry 4.0), enabling significant improvements in complex systems design and operation.

³ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/eu-missions-horizon-europe/restore-our-ocean-and-waters/european-digital-twin-ocean-european-dto_en

¹ <https://www.digitalurbantwins.com>
² https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-38756-7_4

Using digital twins can provide various benefits, such as accelerated risk assessment and production time, improved efficiency, predictive maintenance, real-time remote monitoring and improved team collaboration.

Europe is investing in supporting SMEs to adopt Digital Twins to rationalise the manufacturing process, make predictions regarding expected machine failures and predict maintenance needs⁴. In 2011 Marc Andreessen wrote a seminal article in the Wall Street Journal, "Software is eating the World⁵." Nowadays, we can argue without exaggeration that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is eating software.

Today, AI and digital twins are transforming software development and testing. Digital twins enhanced with AI-based technologies can be a valuable tool for decision-makers to accelerate and improve decision-making and optimise operations.

Digital twins help to test new technologies virtually, simulate behaviours, reduce risk and improve return on investment in various industries and city planning. For example, Barcelona and Bologna are working together to have their Urban Digital Twins⁶. Also, Helsinki, Rennes Métropole, and Rotterdam have plans to develop their Digital Twins.⁷

The Digital Europe Programme⁹ is expected to sustain the acceleration of Local Digital Twins in the forthcoming years by providing funding and also legislating its deployment.

"Europe actively promotes the adoption of digital twin technologies through various initiatives."

Europe Digital Twin Market share was estimated to be 900M€ in 2019 and is expected to register a lucrative growth with a Compound annual growth rate of over 30% between 2020 and 2026 and is expected to surpass a valuation of \$8.1KM€⁸. Europe actively promotes the adoption of digital twin technologies through various initiatives.

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4 <https://digitbrain.eu>

5 <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424053111903480904576512250915629460>

6 https://www.barcelona.cat/infobarcelona/en/tema/city-council/agreement-with-bologna-to-develop-urban-digital-twins_1193911.html

7 <https://eurocities.eu/latest/ctrlaltddelete-borders/>

8 <https://www.ashvin.eu/2022/04/15/the-digital-twins-market-an-overview/>

9 <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/activities/work-programmes-digital>



BEYOND THE AI HYPE: BALANCING INNOVATION WITH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Recent developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) have generated much interest from media and the general public. Using AI methods, machines can sense, classify, analyse, draw inferences, act, and, most importantly, learn from past data and experience. It allows us to generate text, create art, make complex decision and it is increasingly able to replace tasks previously only able to be executed by people. Reading how the media portrays AI, we can easily be led to believe that it is a magic thing with the capacity to solve any and every problem humankind ever faced. But AI is not magic, AI is an artefact, an engineered system. We, people, make AI happen, it does not appear out of nowhere nor it is able to determine its own purpose.

As AI systems enter everyday life and are accessible to the public, an important issue is to understand the social, legal and ethical impact of these systems.

When should an AI system be used and who should decide? What does it mean for an AI system to make a decision? What are the moral, societal and legal consequences of the actions and decisions of such systems? Who should be held accountable for decisions made by an AI system? How can these systems be controlled once their learning capabilities bring them into states that are possibly only remotely linked to their initial, designed, setup?

In order to ensure that AI applications are used for the benefit of humankind and for the improvement of well-being and environmental sustainability, AI systems must be introduced in ways that can be trusted, and that respect human and civil rights. That is, we need to consider the ethical, legal and societal impact of AI applications alongside their economic contribution and technologic innovation.

Current efforts at regulation, notably by the European Union, are only one of the possible ways to address this challenge. It is however important to realise that regulation alone will not do the job, and that wrongly placed regulation may be worse than none.

Firstly, it is important to realize that AI systems don't exist in a vacuum, they are always inserted in a socio-technical, organizational context where rules, regulations, and procedures already exist that can and should apply to the development and use of AI. That is, the development and use of AI is already subject to regulation.

Secondly, the narrative that 'regulation is contrary to innovation' is deadly both for innovation as for regulation. In fact, innovation is not a race, but an opportunity for exploration. There is no deadline, there is no finish line.



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Regulation, ethics, responsibility are not hurdles to innovation but road signs/ beacons pointing the direction to go. But for this regulators, developers, users and those affected need to work together on designing the regulations. Creativity is needed to innovate and bring these together: better algorithms, more accurate decision making, but fair, inclusive and sustainable; efficient but explainable; accurate but sustainable.

Many of these are not engineering questions, not solvable by computation. As a field of science AI is inherently multidisciplinary. Innovation requires embracing all disciplines, all groups, all differences.

Regulation can provide the stepping stone. The way society and our systems will be able to deal with these questions will, for a large part, determine our level of trust, and ultimately, the impact of AI in society, and the existence of AI. Digital transformation, and in particular the use of AI, is challenging the social contact and providing both risks and opportunities for democracy. The question is not whether AI is controlling us but who is using AI to control and influence us. The current ideal of democracy is grounded on the individual's right to self-determination. By affecting people's self-determination, AI is potentially affecting the democratic process. For the good or for the worse.

On the one hand, it is becoming increasingly challenging to know and trust democratic institutions, as information manipulation, bots and algorithmic filters are increasingly distorting the picture of society that reaches them through digital media.



On the other hand, AI can empower citizens and strengthen democratic accountability. Harnessing the potential of digital transformation as a force for the global democratic good requires strategic policy action.

“Digital transformation, and in particular the use of AI, is challenging the social contact and providing both risks and opportunities for democracy. The question is not whether AI is controlling us but who is using AI to control and influence us.”

Finally, a fundamental precondition to trustworthy development and use of AI is extensive training and education. Responsible AI is not just to develop trustworthy systems, but to ensure that all of us can trust ourselves and trust each other to use the system responsibly.

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THE UNCANNY BIG DIGITAL TWINS

The new kid on the block is different from those who came before. He/she/it/they/ - whatever fits a twin - is both charming and insidious in making us believe that 'it' resembles us. Charming, if it wants to please us. Insidious, when it lies and deceives, just like we do. Before its arrival, we thought we know the digital twins: repositories of tissues, DNA or special cells for interventions that would be impossible otherwise; simulation models of 'what if' a planned city highway will not be built as protests by the Last Generation have become too insistent to ignore. Many are simulations in complex systems, like following a nascent traffic jam in real time or an approaching hurricane, warning about potential harm. As I show in my book, we are creating a digital mirror world populated by digital twins. Satellites, sensors, cameras above and below ground, in the skies and under the sea, provide data useful to monitor environmental degradation or forbidden mining. They enable (forbidden) facial recognition or medical diagnostics and they can model supply chains to explore how to prevent their disruption.

The new kid on the block is a digital twin but differs from those already around. It is an uncanny digital twin, designed to make us believe that we converse with another human. It answers with words formed in probabilistic sequences that are semantically and syntactically correct but is without clue whether they are 'true' or 'false', nor whether they make any sense. Based on an enormous trove of texts and images taken from the Internet and an innovative combination of unsupervised training and reinforcement



learning, modulated by millions of parameters of writing styles and tones, the Big Digital Twin achieves the illusion of conversing with a human. Its performance continues to surprise the experts. Its proneness to errors and 'hallucinations' raises major concerns among the public and policymakers. Its potential for future profits leads to a fierce competition of 'be fast and break things'. The Big Digital Twin is no longer alone. There is now a whole bunch of them, invading the economy, our daily lives, and the socio-political world.

"The new kid on the block is a digital twin but differs from those already around. It is an uncanny digital twin, designed to make us believe that we converse with another human."

Some concerns are well known: the possibility of job losses, this time hitting professionals and the middle class; the lack of transparency, as the big

corporations jealously guard knowledge where their data come from and which algorithms they deploy; the fear of surveillance; of criminal abuse; amplification of bias and discrimination. This time the stakes are higher. Not what the signatories of the OpenLetter want us to believe, warning that 'ever more powerful minds that no one can control' will take over.

Instead, more transparency is needed and a public discourse on the real risks. For Big Digital Twins are powerful allies in the hands of those who know how to use them. They can start major misinformation campaigns, target individual profiles and elicit the emotional states that fit their goals. The production of fake news, scams or customized malware can be raised to an automated, industrial level.

Of course, the Big Digital Twins also bring benefits, from productivity gains for business to forcing us to re-think and re-invent the ways how our education system functions or how to redesign the health system by utilizing superior diagnostics

and interlinking health data for better therapeutic outcomes. They open new and fascinating questions about human cognitive abilities, when a Big Digital Twin, for instance, does arithmetic at the level of a good mathematician, but in ways unknown to human mathematicians.

Academic institutions become marginalized in resources, human talent, and access to data. These are necessary to monitor, improve, and shape a pluralistic digital ecosystem that enables citizens to participate meaningfully in an open democratic society.

Prof. Helga Nowotny

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"The biggest risk comes from the concentration of economic and political power in hands of a few big corporations. This creates a worrisome imbalance with democratic processes, institutions, and the erosion of the public sphere."

The biggest risk comes from the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a few big corporations. This creates a worrisome imbalance with democratic processes, institutions, and the erosion of the public sphere.

The Big Digital Twins – by now you know their names and owners - cannot be left in the hands of a few powerful companies. They must become a public good, democratically governed and benefitting all.

The increased capabilities of digital platforms to target, manipulate and polarize public opinion poses a serious threat to open democratic societies. The fierce competition for market shares among the tech giants induces more private investments, further dwarfing public investment.

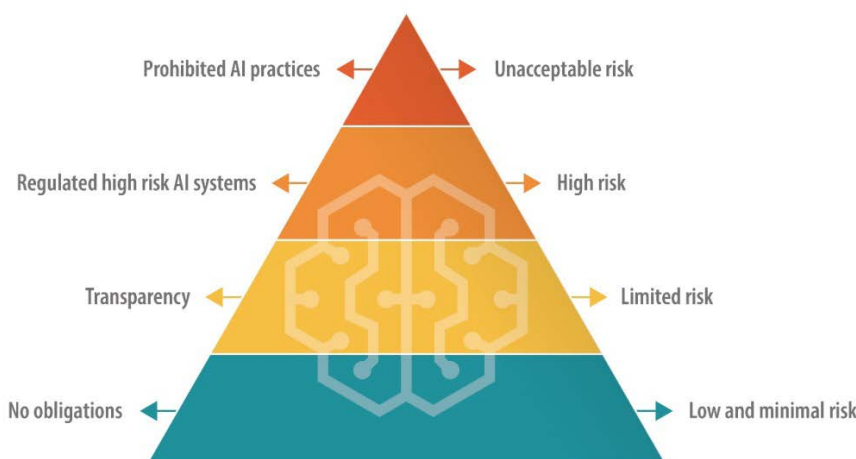
This contribution is based on my book "In AI We Trust. Power, Illusion and Control of Predictive Algorithms", Polity Press, 2021 and the "Statement of the Digital Humanism Initiative on ChatGPT", March 2023, <https://dighum.ec.tuwien.ac.at/statement-of-the-digital-humanism-initiative-on-chatgpt/>

Artificial Intelligence Act

The European Commission unveiled a new proposal for an EU regulatory framework on artificial intelligence (AI) in April 2021. The draft AI act is the first ever attempt to enact a horizontal regulation of AI.

The proposed legal framework focuses on the specific utilisation of AI systems and associated risks. On 14 June 2023, MEPs adopted its negotiating position on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act ahead of talks with EU member states on the final shape of the law, prepared by the committees on the Internal Market (IMCO) and Civil Liberties (LIBE).

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(Ref.: 20230609IPR96212)



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