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State of Europe – the festival of politics and ideas

A new Renaissance

EVENT REPORT



With the support of



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Executive summary

Defining the course of recovery from the trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic was the dominant theme of the 2021 edition of State of Europe, *Friends of Europe's* flagship annual event, which for 18 years has gathered high-level speakers from government, civil society, business and academia to address the continent's most pressing issues.

The European Union surprised many last year with its rapid adoption of a seven-year budget framework and the NextGenerationEU recovery fund which together will inject over €2tn into the economy – Europe's largest-ever stimulus package – in response to the pandemic's debilitating impact on growth.

State of Europe welcomed the plan's focus on a green digital transition. Now Europe has to make progress fast with effective and accountable implementation of the plan, building a sustainable, fair and resilient economy. That means redoubling efforts to fight climate change and a recognition that rapid digital transition is key to unlocking progress in all other areas.

Ways to achieve that were outlined in '[Connected Europe: A digital brand for a just transition](#)', a special report released by *Friends of Europe*, in partnership with Vodafone, during the event.

To learn from the tragedy of COVID-19, Europe requires a new Renaissance, based on a stronger, more cohesive Union to address economic, environmental, social and technological challenges and forge global partnerships. To that end, a new social contract is crucial to redefine the roles of government, business and citizens, and to ensure their relationship is built on trust, transparency and inclusion.

To achieve the full potential of positive change, an overhaul of local, national and European governance is required, in order to be able to develop new employment and education opportunities. Europe needs a smart-investment rethink, the fast rollout of prevention-based approaches to health policy and a leadership role in the emerging space-based economy.

Underscoring the unique perspective of State of Europe, participants included an astronaut, bestselling author of children's books and a woman elected as the youngest mayor in Afghanistan, alongside leading politicians, business leaders and civil society figures from across Europe and beyond.

Routes to recovery

State of Europe recognised the EU recovery package as a turning point. That's not only because of its size and focus on forging a greener, digital and more resilient Europe, but also for the new financial powers it bestows on the European Commission, authorising it to raise up to €800bn on capital markets on behalf of the EU as a whole.

"This is really a watershed in what has happened in the history of European Union," said **Etienne Davignon**, President of Friends of Europe, Belgian Minister of State and former European Commission Vice-President. "It is one of the most significant decisions in relation to the handover of power to an institution and not simply to a coalition of states."

At the forefront of efforts to maximise the fund's impact, **Céline Gauer**, European Commission Director-General and Head of the Recovery and Resilience Task Force (RECOVER), stressed the importance of using the money for reforms that make Europe's economy fairer for citizens and more attractive for investors.

"If you just start spending, you will simply, maybe, go back to where we were before, but it is a shared



“It is one of the most significant decisions in relation to the handover of power to an institution and not simply to a coalition of states

Etienne Davignon, President of Friends of Europe, Belgian Minister of State and former European Commission Vice-President

objective not to go back, but to try and bounce forward,” Gauer told the meeting. “The first thing is really trying to use this as an opportunity to have reform.”

For all the positive feedback on the recovery plan’s size and direction, several discussants cautioned that its impact will depend on national governments following through on their commitments to ensure the money is spent effectively and in line with the overall goals.

“It’s the implementation phase everyone’s looking forward to now,” said **Dharmendra Kanani**, Director

and Chief Spokesperson at Friends of Europe. “Next year is really crunch time in terms of whether we’ll see if member states have been fibbing or are really going to do what they said they’ll do on paper.”

Gauer assured the meeting that the recovery plan is performance-based, and national governments’ spending plans would be closely monitored by the Commission to ensure compliance with the goals of the green digital transition.

Speaking for the Italian government, **Anna Ascani**, Italian Undersecretary of State for Economic Development and Vice President of the Democratic

Ivan Bogdan-Gruia, Vice-Chair of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies & **Hélène Conway-Mouret**, Secretary of the French Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and the Armed Forces





1. **Anna Rathsmann**, Director-General of the Swedish National Space Agency; **Susmita Mohanty**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Earth2Orbit
2. **Josef Aschbacher**, Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA)
3. **Luca Parmitano**, Astronaut of the European Space Agency (ESA)
4. **Solveigh Hieronimus**, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company and Co-leader of the McKinsey Center for Government (MCG)
5. **Francesca Cavallo**, Bestselling author of "Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls", Founder & CEO of Undercats and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)



Party, welcomed European oversight to ensure accountability within national spending plans and the recovery package’s interlinked green, digital and social objectives.

“We have to put up a new model that should be green, inclusive, prosperous and sustainable,” she said. Ascani was among several discussants who underscored the role of digital progress as an enabler for the wider change Europe needs.

“The most important thing we can do is use the digital transition because digital has a disruptive power that can boost the social and green transition,” she added, pointing out that Italy will be directing 27% of its recovery funding towards digital initiatives, with a particular focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

A global effort that brings in both public and private sectors is indispensable to ensure that any economic recovery from the pandemic can also effectively confront the climate emergency, said several speakers.

“This recovery is different from any other recovery we’ve been facing because it has to be green and sustainable,” stated **Philippe Donnet**, Group Chief Executive Officer of Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A. “There will be no recovery, if it’s not sustainable. To achieve that, all of us need to be united. There will be no sustainable recovery without cooperation at all levels.”

Much aligned with the key messages of the Connected Europe report, he recommended a



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Philippe Donnet, Group Chief Executive Officer of Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.

revised regulatory framework to support small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), develop green bonds and leverage the huge potential of public-private partnerships – for example, the €11bn investment firepower of Europe’s insurance industry – in supporting the green digital transition. “I am quite confident that the recovery will be strong because we created the right conditions,” Donnet concluded.

The EU’s borrowing programme is enjoying significant success in generating investor interest and has already raised over €200bn, explained **Gert Jan Koopman**, Director-General for Budget (DG BUDG) at the European Commission. “Across the globe, investors are looking at Europe from a different perspective,” he said. “We’re typically 10 to 12 times oversubscribed, so there’s massive demand.”

By setting an example on green bonds, the EU is helping mobilise the private investment that is essential for financing the green transition and attaining climate targets.

“We know that investments will have to increase annually, every year, by about €360bn to meet our climate targets. This will have to be financed and, I think, it’s evident that this can only succeed if the private sector contributes alongside the public sector,” Koopman explained.

“Our green bonds are the biggest green bond framework worldwide,” he added. “So, what we’re doing is also developing the market, showing a way forward, allowing private investors to move into this space.”



“Across the globe, investors are looking at Europe from a different perspective

Gert Jan Koopman, European Commission
Director-General for Budget (DG BUDG)

The increase in the EU's powers to raise and spend money should be matched by institutional advances, argued **Nicola Giammarioli**, Secretary General at the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). That requires progress at the Conference on the Future of Europe, he said, as well as in areas such as banking and capital markets union.

“For the long-term perspective of Europe, for sustainable growth and for the benefit of our citizens, we need to move forward, also in completing the architecture of Europe,” Giammarioli said.

Participants also signalled the economic risks as the pandemic eases. They include the impact of prolonged high levels of public debt, supply chain weaknesses and shortages of materials and labour, plus the dangers of overheating and inflation as economies accelerate.

With growth rates surging in many countries, **Klen Jäärats**, Director of European Union Affairs for the Government of Estonia and 2015-2016 European Young Leader (EYL40), suggested it was time to hold off on recovery fund spending. “We actually should stop it, at the moment, for a while and spend it a little bit later,” he told the meeting's opening plenary session. “Macroeconomically speaking, we shouldn't be doing this at this very moment.”

Europe's spending plans should also focus more on efforts to fill cross-border infrastructure gaps rather than pumping money into “national pet projects”, Jäärats said.



“If we understand that we are all in this together, then the only way we can get out of it is together

Roberta Metsola, First Vice-President of the European Parliament and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

The economic risks are compounded by political concerns, such as a return to pre-pandemic complacency amid the sense of returning normality, or threats to European unity from politicians eager to grab EU money but unwilling to adhere to its core values.

"If we understand that we are all in this together, then the only way we can get out of it is together," cautioned **Roberta Metsola**, First Vice-President of the European Parliament and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40). "This challenge is also making sure that our value system remains intact, a big challenge across the European Union."

Italy's Ascani had a clear message for governments setting out to undermine Europe's democratic base. "If you want to use the money, you have to share the values. This is part of the foundation of our Europe," she said. "We cannot abandon this kind of approach because, if we decide that money counts more than values, then the idea of European Union can be abandoned too. We have to be strong in this sense."

In the final session of State of Europe, participants broke up into a series of roundtables to produce concrete recommendations for European policymakers.

Dragoş Pîslaru, Member of the European Parliament and Co-rapporteur of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), led a discussion on economics which advocated for a new form of economic governance, arising from a broad consultation process, culture of solidarity and partnerships between the private and public sectors, civil society and philanthropists.



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Anna Ascani, Italian Undersecretary of State for Economic Development and Vice President of the Democratic Party

“Such a partnership will ensure that there can be social impacts at grassroots level and guarantee that a balance can be struck between government intervention and market forces,” he said. “We need to place [citizens] at the centre of the process and make them feel like they have a meaningful role.”

Institutional change should also work to build a more joined-up approach among government agencies, breaking down bureaucratic barriers holding back progress.

“Part of the radical reform required is about institutional reform,” said Friends of Europe’s Kanani. “Member states [have] to think radically, differently and not have these huge silos with divas at the top as ministers, with a huge barrage of staff but actually not creating coherent policy.”

In a wider sense, the conference heard how

a sustainable future should be based on new narratives that break with the legacy of colonialism and exploitation running deep in European societies.

“The stories we tell each other have a dramatic impact on our lives, on our democracies and on our planet,” said **Francesca Cavallo**, bestselling author of “Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls”, Founder and CEO of Undercats and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40).

“For our economies to be sustainable, we need more sustainable stories,” she added. “It has been clear for decades now that we must put an end to the predatory behaviour that we have had towards our natural resources. To stop behaviour that seems so ingrained in our culture, though, we must understand how we came to believe that exploiting nature was such a good idea.”

Sacha Alanoca, Senior AI Policy Researcher at the Future Society (left) and **Marisa Monteiro Borsboom**, Board member and Chief Legal Officer at Women in Tech



Good COP or bad COP?

State of Europe took place 18 days before the start of the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, a meeting widely viewed as another last chance for world leaders to limit the rise in global temperatures and maintain the Earth as a liveable planet.

Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), had a sobering message ahead of the Glasgow summit: even if all currently scheduled efforts to fight global warming are implemented, the world would still face an average increase in global temperatures of 2.1°C, instead of the 1.5°C that scientists estimate as the maximum permissible, according to a new IEA report.

That estimate is despite encouraging signs, such as Europe's ambitious decarbonisation efforts, the likelihood that the world will reach peak oil demand in 2025 and rising sales of electric cars – which, Birol said, now make up 20% of new sales in the Chinese market. What's needed is greater international effort to increase the use of clean energy in the developing world, added Birol's colleague **Laura Cozzi**, Chief Energy Modeller at the IEA: "emerging economies will need trillions, not billions."

"The nations of Europe should also focus more on international climate diplomacy, in addition to reducing the emissions at home," he said. "If we cannot get the emission reductions in all the parts of the world, whatever we do in Europe will not change anything."



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Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA)

The COP26 host city will be doing its best to get that message across, said **Susan Aitken**, Leader of Glasgow City Council. She was clear that the time has come for government leaders across the world to move from words into action on climate change. “This COP needs to be about more than targets and pledges. It needs to be about those practical measures that are going to reduce emissions.”

Aitken pointed out that city authorities like hers are often running ahead of national governments in implementing climate action measures, but they lack support.

“Municipalities can't do this on our own,” she said. “We need governments to stand alongside us and, indeed, stand behind us in delivering this ... We need the private sector, we need investors, we need global finance to shift perspective and shift their focus and priorities as well to shift the investments to low-carbon interventions.”

While cities are taking a lead role, contributors said the rural world should not be forgotten. **Jocelyn Blériot**, Executive Lead – Institutions, Governments and Cities at the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, pointed to the impact of agriculture on greenhouse gas emissions; **Bogdan-Gruia Ivan**, Vice-Chair of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies Committee on Information Technologies and Communications, suggested payments to landowners to preserve forests as a way of preserving biodiversity and capturing carbon; and **Violeta Bulc**, Founder of Ecocivilisation and former European commissioner for transport, called for a renewed focus on villages.

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Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council

“An important part of the EU are villages. In some of the EU countries as much as 50% of people still live in rural areas. With COVID-19, that number is increasing,” she wrote on the meeting’s chat line. “So, [why] are we talking only about cities? The EU has introduced in its strategies also the concept of a smart village ... can this dimension still be brought to attention too?”

With much of the world undergoing an energy price crisis, Birol insisted the reasons were not linked to the transition to green technologies. “There is an unfair and inaccurate campaign ... that is the first crisis of green energy transition,” he said. Instead, there is a combination of contributing factors, including surging demand as economies emerge from pandemic shutdowns, combined with extreme weather events and technical issues at some key production facilities.

Tamsin Rose, Senior Fellow for Health at Friends of Europe, underscored the importance of reaching an equilibrium between respecting climate targets while fuelling the economic bounce back from COVID-19. “This is a critical year for the energy transition. It's a time when we have to make a balance between affordability and our ambitions on climate change and trying to get our economies kick started,” she said. “Finding a spot between those three different priorities will be a challenge.”

Birol noted the importance of digitalisation in modernising energy systems, but cautioned of the emerging security risks as energy infrastructure becomes more dependent on digital technology. “On the one hand, digitalisation will make our energy systems more modern, cleaner, much more flexible, but we should be very careful about the cyber security-related issues, as energy is the lifeblood of our economies and social lives,” he said.

Cozzi concluded on a positive note, adding that there is no contradiction between going green and going for growth. On the contrary, she said, investing in clean energy will bring clear economic advantages.

“For the first time in human history, we are expecting economic growth to go up and emissions to go down,” Cozzi said. “From now on, the story of the world is going to be growth and decarbonisation go hand in hand.”



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Laura Cozzi, Chief Energy Modeller of the International Energy Agency (IEA)



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1. **Masami Onoda**, Director of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Washington D.C. Office
2. **Laura Piovesan**, Director for Sustainability at the European Investment Bank (EIB)
3. **Nicolas Moës**, Head of Operations & AI Policy Researcher at The Future Society; **Malcolm Byrne**, Irish Senator and 2014 European Young Leader (EYL40)
4. **Magid Magid**, Founder and Director of Union of Justice and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)



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Europe's digital destiny

A centrepiece of State of Europe was the launch of [‘Connected Europe: A digital brand for a just transition’](#), a report showing how the continent can achieve a successful, green and resilient digital transformation.

The report was the result of a year-long pan-European study led by Friends of Europe in partnership with Vodafone. The work brings a unique cross-sectional approach, based on consultations with 300 citizens from 16 European countries and debates between citizens and policymakers.

It calls on government, industry and society to work together to build an effective European digital ecosystem, drive a digital-for-green transition and bridge social and geographical divides to ensure nobody is left behind.

“Europe’s recovery, resilience and global leadership depend on digital infrastructure. The pandemic has shown us just how essential connectivity is. At the same time, the EU has recognised the huge advantages of digitalisation for business, citizens and society,” explained **Ben Wreschner**, Chief Economist and Head of Public Affairs at Vodafone.

He was among several discussants who called for partnerships between the public and private sectors to drive forward the green digital recovery.



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“This report is a call to policymakers, industry and society to work together to enable the digital ecosystem, drive the digital-for-green transition, develop systems that will power the next generation, connect remote communities and bridge the digital divide,” Wreschner said. “Vodafone is committed to the benefits of digitalisation; however, we must ensure that Europe’s policy environment encourages the critical investment from industry that will underpin this bold digital ambition.”

Introducing the report, **Lindsey Nefesh-Clarke**, Founder and Managing Director of Women’s Worldwide Web (W4), a crowdfunding platform for women’s empowerment, and 2012 European Young Leader (EYL40), highlighted some of its main findings: the green digital transition should be viewed as a combined process to lead Europe into recovery; social and geographical technology gaps must be closed to ensure nobody is left behind in this transition; emphasis should be placed on improving public trust in digitalisation; and data must be harnessed to drive value for industry and social good.

“A key premise of the report is that the societal transformation required to foster a successful, green, resilient Europe depends precisely on broad-based support, mobilising citizens to be part of a paradigm shift,” she said. “Citizens ... want Europe to stand for fairness, quality, affordability and sustainability. The report argues that we have an opportunity to strengthen Europe’s digital brand, built on these values.”

Several participants underlined digital’s role as a crucial enabler to push forward Europe’s green



“Looking at both governments and the private sector, what we’ve seen in 10 months of COVID-19 is worth almost 10 years of digitalisation efforts before. How do you actually, structurally harness that?”

Solveigh Hieronimus, Senior Partner at McKinsey&Co. and Co-leader of the McKinsey Center for Government (MCG)

agenda, boost economic competitiveness and build a more equal and resilient society.

“Digitalisation represents a fundamental element to achieve robust, resilient and inclusive recovery after COVID-19,” said **Salvador Estevan**, Director General for Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence at the Spanish Ministry for Economic Affairs and Digital Transformations. “We have to promote a digital and sustainable economy as the basis of the recovery.”

Spain has earmarked almost a third of its recovery plan funding for digital, he explained. “Digital transformation is a bridge towards sustainability,” Estevan concluded. “It is an essential tool to gain competitiveness, obviously, and to promote economic growth, obviously. However, digitalisation is also a driver for sustainability, both in a socio-economic and an environmental aspect.”

While the unprecedented European funding plans are an important step forward, public-private partnership and greater citizen engagement are essential for the green digital transition, speakers said. The pandemic-driven momentum behind the switch to digital has to be maintained.

“Looking at both governments and the private sector, what we’ve seen in 10 months of COVID-19 is worth almost 10 years of digitalisation efforts before,” said **Solveigh Hieronimus**, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company and Co-leader of the McKinsey Center for Government (MCG). “How do you actually, structurally harness that? ... What do we learn? What’s actually the muscle being built when it comes to digitalisation?”

Laura Piovesan, Director for Sustainability at the European Investment Bank (EIB), agreed on the need to facilitate greater public and private investment in digital infrastructure and the rollout of digital technologies. She highlighted a 2019 study pointing to a €250bn shortfall in digital infrastructure investment in Europe.

Piovesan gave particular attention to closing technology gaps and ensure that vulnerable social groups and remote geographical regions do not get left behind in the digital transformation. “Digital technology can play a significant role in growth, sustainability and inclusiveness, but also, we are fully aware of the significant gaps that Europe has to fill in order to profit from these opportunities,” she noted.

Key to digital inclusiveness is making good on plans for lifelong learning – or as the Connected Europe report puts it, ‘anytime, anywhere education’ – so that people whose jobs are affected by the digital transformation can adapt to new realities, argued **Andreas Schaal**, Director of Global Relations at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

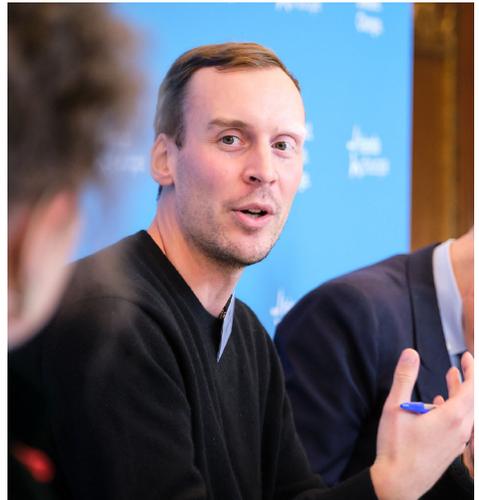
“Vocational training should not be only at the beginning of your professional career but needs to continue for the whole professional life,” he said. “It’s not only about technology and cognitive skills, you also need to invest in social and emotional skills because people will need to work more and more in teams, using more and more self-responsibility.”

Post-COVID healthcare: digital, preventative and European

Digital is also critical to modernising healthcare, a reality made clear during the pandemic where telemedicine and distance consultations became the norm. **Mina Gaga**, Greek Alternate Minister for Health, was among the speakers who recognised the value of digital in conjunction with other healthcare approaches. “Digital innovation can help diagnose care wherever the citizen lives, but it doesn’t provide a solution to surgery,” she said. “We need to deliver personalised care, but we also need to think about mobility.”

An effective expansion of digital-health solutions requires a European approach to draw on the full benefits of data sharing. “We need to prioritise data sharing and data interoperability,” said **Aleksandra Torbica**, Associate Professor at the Department of Social and Political Sciences and Director of the Centre for Research on Health and Social Care Management (CERGAS) at Bocconi University. “At the start of the pandemic, one of our biggest challenges was to have meaningful comparative data across countries, given the differences in data reporting.”

Digital healthcare systems need to build around patients, contended **Johannes Schildt**, Co-Founder and CEO of Kry and Livi and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40). Schildt’s start-up in Sweden has pioneered a digital healthcare model that



“Health should always be centred around the patient

Johannes Schildt, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of KRY and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

enables patients to see doctors by remote video connection. Its mobile app is already available in Sweden, Norway, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, and Schildt wants to go further.

“European patients have been ready for e-health for some time,” he said. “My aim is to create a European health system. The language barrier isn’t an issue, but you do need standardisation and frameworks.”

“Health should always be centred around the patient,” Schildt continued, “but a lot of companies today are building systems for systems’ sake, rather than thinking about patients.”

Several discussants emphasised how the coronavirus crisis has revealed the importance of a more joined-up European approach to health care. “We arrived at results so quickly for COVID-19 because we worked together,” said Gaga. “Health services and life expectancy can vary within regions. This is why we need to balance European, national and regional strategies, as well as prevention.”

She added that Europe has to be autonomous when it comes to producing medicines.

Torbica advocated the creation of a pan-European network for disease control to help strengthen early-warning systems. “The virus has been blind to borders and our regional differences, and concrete actions need to be taken at the pan-European level to strengthen governance,” she said. “We need this multilateral, rules-based system in which everyone recognises the pan-European nature of the issue. No country can do this alone.”



“We need this multilateral, rules-based system in which everyone recognises the pan-European nature of the issue. No country can do this alone

Aleksandra Torbica, Associate Professor at the Department of Social and Political Sciences and Director of the Centre for Research on Health and Social Care Management (CERGAS) at Bocconi University

Moving forward from the pandemic, Europe should rebalance the intergenerational pact, protecting the elderly while creating opportunity for youth. Europe also requires a health policy rethink focused on prevention and fully utilising data and personalised monitoring to identify early signs of chronic disease. Early-warning systems should also be developed to spot the signs of future pandemic risks.

“Half of chronic diseases could be prevented by public health measures,” said **Ruediger Krech**, Director of the Department of Ethics and Social Determinants of Health at the World Health Organization (WHO). “We need joined-up government to identify risks so that we don’t see another pandemic in our lifetime.”

Referring to the specific case of cardiovascular disease, **Jean-Luc Lemercier**, Corporate Vice-President of Europe, Middle East, Africa, Canada & Latin America at Edwards Lifesciences, highlighted the need for urgent political engagement to support the development of early-warning systems.

“When it comes to cardiovascular diseases, the most important element is detection – the earlier the better,” he said. “We have the knowledge, but we need the money allocation and the commitment. We need action.” He added that we cannot have a disease that kills so many Europeans without having a deliberate action against it. Targeting screening plus early detection is a good element to prevent diseases and this is exactly what we are asking for.



“Finance ministers are at the centre of policymaking and are often the No. 2 in the government – this is not the case for health ministers. We need to make this coordination much stronger because if there are inadequate investments, it will be a human and financial catastrophe

Mario Monti, Chair of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development, former prime minister of Italy and Trustee of Friends of Europe

To ensure adequate levels of financing flow towards healthcare solutions, **Mario Monti**, Chair of the WHO’s Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development, former prime minister of Italy and Trustee of Friends of Europe, proposed heightened coordination between health and finance ministers at an international level.

“The G20 should set up a global health and finance board,” he said. “Why health and finance? Because

finance ministers are at the centre of policymaking and are often the No. 2 in the government – this is not the case for health ministers. We need to make this coordination much stronger because if there are inadequate investments, it will be a human and financial catastrophe.”

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1. **Jean-Luc Lemercier**, Corporate Vice-President of Europe, Middle East, Africa, Canada & Latin America at Edwards Lifesciences
2. **Dragos Pislaru**, Member of the European Parliament and Co-rapporteur of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)
3. **Céline Gauer**, European Commission Director-General and Head of the Recovery and Resilience Task Force (RECOVER)



The new diplomacy

To fulfil the potential of any new Renaissance, Europe should reach out globally to establish a more cooperative, multilateral international order, based on open trade and the rule of law. It should take a leadership role, using diplomacy as a counterweight to the growing influence of authoritarian states in a global context marked by great power rivalries and ideological competition.

A number of participants stated that Europe missed a chance to boost its leadership credentials by failing to push for an equitable global distribution of coronavirus vaccines. Now the EU should up its game, in support of worldwide action to fight climate change and meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

“Our teams on the ground in 149 countries and territories are working with governments to ensure that any recovery investments also support a green and fair recovery that will drive the Sustainable Development Goals,” **Amina J. Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group, told the conference in a video presentation. “Across all of these areas, we need strong leadership from the EU, other member states, civil society and the private sector.”

One session of State of Europe was devoted to the changing nature of diplomacy, marked by the



“We need strong leadership from the EU, other member states, civil society and the private sector

Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group

growing influence of civil society players who are making inroads in a field dominated by inter-state relations.

“Civil society has become a major diplomatic actor, driving international relations,” said **Jamie Shea**, Senior Fellow for Peace, Security and Defence at Friends of Europe and former NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General. “Civil society is networked globally, increasingly via the new communications and social media. Civil society is vocal. Sometimes – unlike us in government – they actually know what they want, rather than perpetually grappling with intractable options and dilemmas and trying to find a way forward. Civil society is very flexible, very adaptable, very skilled on where to apply pressure to get things done. They educate by example and by role models.”

One of those role models is **Zarifa Ghafari**, Afghan activist and former mayor of Maidan Shahr, a city with a population of some 35,000 in central Afghanistan. She spoke out on the importance of renewed international support for the Afghan people following the Taliban takeover.

Ghafari pointed to the failures of traditional diplomacy that allowed the Taliban to return, notably the international support heaped on former warlords instead of the new forces emerging within Afghan civil society, and the neglect of the countryside as aid and security efforts were concentrated in Kabul and other big cities.

Now that the Taliban are back in power, Ghafari said international actors should press them to respect human rights, in particular the rights of women; put pressure on Pakistan and its intelligence agency



“Let’s put politics aside, let’s try to be human

Zarifa Ghafari, Afghan activist and former mayor of Maidan Shahr

to end interference in Afghanistan; and not allow politics to hold back the provision of desperately needed humanitarian aid to the Afghan people.

“There are so many children dying because of lack of food. They are not receiving enough to eat, so they are dying. So, I request everyone, in the case of Afghanistan at this point now, in a specific situation, let’s put politics aside,” she said. “Let’s try to be human. Let’s try to have humanity and humanitarian aid.”

Now based in Germany after being forced to flee her homeland, Ghafari appealed for international support for exiled activists who will continue to defend the rights of their people from afar.

Finding a place in space

Looking beyond even global influence, politicians in Europe were told they must invest more in space, or risk being left behind by China, the United States and other competitors in the increasingly vital space-based economy.

“Space globally is becoming extremely important,” said **Josef Aschbacher**, Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA). “If you are not a space superpower, you cannot be a world superpower.”

Europe has acquired global leadership in some areas, notably space science and the satellites Gaia and Galileo, which provides the world’s most precise navigation signal. In other areas, however, it is slipping behind. Europe spends less than half on space than its main competitors, moderator Kanani, pointed out.

“Europe is at a crossroads,” Aschbacher continued. “There is excellence within Europe, but we need politicians to take decisions on where we want to go. We need to invest, otherwise we will be thrown out of the race.”

Various participants highlighted the differences in the risk-taking culture between Europe and the US.



“If you are not a space superpower, you cannot be a world superpower. There is excellence within Europe, but we need politicians to take decisions on where we want to go. We need to invest, otherwise we will be thrown out of the race

Josef Aschbacher, Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA)

“We need to change the way we do business in space,” said **Paraskevi Papantoniou**, Head of Space Policy of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Defence Industry and Space (DG DEFIS). “There is five times less venture capital in Europe than in the US and we are lagging behind. We need more risk-taking in Europe and we should leverage private resources.”

Aschbacher underscored the scale of today’s space economy and the importance of space-based technology for life on Earth. “Many people don’t know they are using satellites every single minute of every single day,” he said. “If you switched the satellites off, life would be very different, if not devastating, because many things just wouldn’t work.”

Anna Rathsmann, Director-General of the Swedish National Space Agency, also underscored the importance of space assets. “It’s not just for fun, we are trying to build up different tools and systems in space to better understand our Earth,” she said. “Europe needs independent access to space ... We need to be competitive with the rest of the world.”

Environmental protection is one area where space tools are playing a crucial role. **Luca Parmitano**, an astronaut at the ESA, showed a video presentation that highlighted environmental disasters viewed from space.

“Our planet is getting hotter, as if it has a fever,” he said. “It’s a vicious circle – the more forest we burn, the less water we have, the drier the deserts, leading to desert storms. As we can see from space, human presence can impact the environment



“As we can see from space, human presence can impact the environment everywhere. This is why we need cultural and technological change to tackle the fever

Luca Parmitano, European Space Agency (ESA)
Astronaut

everywhere. This is why we need cultural and technological change to tackle the fever.”

Following on from Parmitano’s presentation, Aschbacher explained the potential of space technology to help countries tackle climate change, react to environmental crises, such as fires and storms, and prevent collisions between space debris.

Susmita Mohanty, Founder and Chief Executive Office of Bangalore-based space company Earth2Orbit, stated that she “would love Europe to take a leadership role in space as an environmental watchdog”.

In this vein, she wished Europe would not “piggyback on NASA”, adding that she “always wanted Europe to have its own space transportation system” because, for her, “interplanetary travel is no different to intercontinental travel”.

There was widespread agreement on pushing a multilateral approach to space. “No single country can do this alone,” said **Masami Onoda**, Director of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) office in Washington, D.C. She advocated for a new moon mission by a coalition of countries.

“We need to work together multilaterally, and Europe can help make this happen,” Onoda said, adding that “a set of agreed common principles and rules need to be agreed to ensure even-handed access to, and exploitation of, space resources.”



Politics, policies and ideas

In the closing roundtable session, participants offered a series of ideas on the future of Europe for the consideration of policymakers at the European, national and local levels, as well as private sector leaders.

Europe needs to:

- Focus more on **climate diplomacy**, which should include an increase in financing to support the green transition in developing countries because the EU's climate change measures won't make a difference without a global effort
- Invest more in STEM education and in 'anytime, anywhere education' to help citizens adjust to the impact of digitalisation on labour markets because **education** is key for Europe's digital transition
- Improve trust in the **digital transition**, securing citizens' engagement, and ensure that nobody is left behind in the development of infrastructure and rollout of technology, which involves working to close digital gaps at social and geographic levels; governments and legislatures should also tighten oversight and enforcement to make sure digital is a force for good and reassure citizens on issues such as data protection
- Allocate €1bn to a **participatory budgeting process** within the EU's digital transition funding, allowing citizens to vote on how the money is spent using a 'Eurovision-style model'
- Continue to recognise the importance of **cities** in driving the green digital transition, but also avoid neglecting small towns, villages and the countryside when it comes to digital infrastructure, green transport and energy in Europe, as well as development aid and security diplomacy internationally, given how neglect of the countryside gave the Taliban a base for their comeback in Afghanistan
- Set up **citizens' assemblies**, in cooperation with **local authorities**, to maximise proactive public engagement in the green transition and empower citizens as 'owners', rather than just 'consumers', of the transition to a green future

- Grant greater control over green transition initiatives, such as transport choices and infrastructure planning, to local authorities
- Establish a new form of **EU economic governance**, arising from a broad consultation process, resting on a culture of solidarity and founded on partnerships between the private and public sectors, as well as civil society and philanthropists; such a partnership will ensure social impact at the grassroots level, establish a balance between government intervention and market forces, and help overcome misinformation and alienation among citizens by giving them a meaningful role at the centre of economic decision-making
- Reset and revitalise its **relationship with Africa** as the first step in developing a brave and ambitious strategic overhaul of Europe’s foreign policy; this should start by improving communication on both continents to explain the essential nature of the partnership
- Mandate the Commission to work with African partners to bring on board diverse voices that will widen and deepen the Africa-Europe relationship, by encouraging cooperation between the private sector, civil society, individuals and governments
- **Invest more in space**, particularly by creating better conditions for public-private partnerships and developing venture capital initiatives to leverage private resources
- Switch the **focus of healthcare and the budget allocated to it** to prevention, screening and early detection rather than the treatment of illness, with a strong focus on mental health and non-communicable diseases; address unhealthy lifestyles through education and infrastructure changes across all levels of governance, from EU institutions to local communities
- Develop a pan-European network of **disease control and prevention** to act as an early warning system and coordinate emergency responses



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1. **André Loesekrug-Pietri**, Chairman and Scientific Director of the Joint European Disruptive Initiative (JEDI) and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)
2. **Loubna Bouarfa**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of OKRA Technologies
3. **Dharmendra Kanani**, Director and Chief Spokesperson at Friends of Europe
4. **Lindsey Nefesh-Clarke**, Founder & Managing Director of Women's Worldwide Web (W4) and 2012 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Programme

08:30-09:20 CEST

Early bird
masterclasses

FESTIVAL OPENING

The world in 2030: will Europe be ready?

Systemic shocks, climate change, changing demographics, global economic shifts and the accelerating rollout of disruptive technologies are just some of the challenges that Europe and the world face as we move into the future. How can the EU ensure that democracy, justice, and equality not only survive but thrive in this new era? How can Europe harness the future?

These early bird masterclasses will look into the key issues that Europe should lead on if it wants to be a global leader and value setter in 2030 and beyond.

Conversation tables on these topics will be discussed by futurists and other thinkers, including:

TABLE 1 – AI in the midst of a global pandemic: looking at the use and implications of disruptive technologies in crisis response strategies

Sacha Alanoca, Senior AI Policy Researcher & Head of Community Development at The Future Society

TABLE 2 – Democratic decline and renewal prospects

Mathew Burrows, Director of the Foresight, Strategy, and Risks Initiative at the Atlantic Council

TABLE 3 – Economic global shifts: how can Europe harness the future?

Fabienne Goux-Baudiment, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of ProGective

TABLE 4 – The accelerating rollout of disruptive technologies: how will it impact the demographic changes and a growing human population?

Nicolas Moës, Head of Operations & AI Policy Researcher at The Future Society

TABLE 5 – Industrial innovation for the green transition

Laurent Bontoux, Senior Foresight Expert at the European Commission Joint Research Centre

MODERATOR

Jamie Shea, Senior Fellow for Peace and Security at Friends of Europe and former NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General

09:30-09:45 CEST

Plenary

– scene setting

Harnessing the power of speed

The new world moves fast. To remain ahead of the curve, Europe needs to be forward-looking rather than simply reactive, embedding a ‘black swan’ mentality into policymaking so that no future crisis will ever shake us as much as those we face today.

The speed at which systems have transformed shows that Europe can be agile and effective. The recovery plans are a key tool to keep the momentum of this transition. If we are able to maintain the speed of change we have seen over the past months, we could expect the best outcomes for a new social contract, in which basic services, healthcare, education and housing are informed by our key values of inclusion, fairness and sustainability.

What are the key lessons from 2020 and what should resilient systems and sustained growth look like for the future?

FIRESIDE CHAT WITH

Solveigh Hieronimus, Senior Partner at McKinsey & Company and Co-leader of the McKinsey Center for Government (MCG)

Céline Gauer, European Commission Director-General and Head of the Recovery and Resilience Task Force (RECOVER)

CLOSING REMARKS

Etienne Davignon, President of Friends of Europe, Belgian Minister of State and former European Commission Vice-President

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director and chief spokesperson at Friends of Europe

09:45-11:00 CEST

Plenary

– opening session

Don't take the foot off the pedal too quickly

After a shock like 2020, governments need growth to pay back what has been invested in society, otherwise bankruptcies and unemployment- currently kept artificially low- will increase. We need to continue to spend – but wisely.

The problem is not debt per se. If it stems from productive investments in infrastructure, health, education, innovation and other public goods, debt determines future growth and yields high returns.

Exiting the crisis, how should governments manage significant public debt and the shadow of hyperinflation while trying to realign economies through recovery and resilience plans?

WITH

Anna Ascani, Italian Undersecretary of State for Economic Development and Vice President of the Democratic Party

Philippe Donnet, Group Chief Executive Officer of Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.

Gert Jan Koopman, European Commission Director-General for Budget (DG BUDG)

Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director and chief spokesperson at Friends of Europe

11:30-11:45 CEST

Session I

Change starts and stops with us

WITH

Francesca Cavallo, Bestselling author of “Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls”, Founder & CEO of Undercats and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)

11:45-13:00 CEST

Session I

A critical year: energy transition between climate change, affordability and recovery

2021 sees the release of the IPCC’s latest alarming report and a critical international summit at COP26 in Glasgow, against the backdrop of an uneven and bumpy global recovery from the pandemic. Energy prices are climbing, commodity and consumer supply chains are stretched, hundreds of billions are being spent on recovery measures, and new climate targets are being announced in many countries. In Europe, the EU Climate Law sets a legally binding target for the Union to become climate-neutral by mid-century, and an ambitious set of measures is being prepared to support the transformation to 2030 and beyond.

This year’s World Energy Outlook from the IEA aims to provide a guide in this uncertain and dynamic context.

OPENING REMARKS

Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA)

WITH

Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council

Laura Cozzi, Chief Energy Modeller of the International Energy Agency (IEA)

MODERATOR

Tamsin Rose, Senior Fellow at Friends of Europe

11:30-11:45 CEST

Session II

A journey around the Earth, our common starship

WITH

Luca Parmitano, Astronaut of the European Space Agency (ESA)

11:45-13:00 CEST

Session II

Race to space

Space is highly strategic. As Europe sets out a strong space strategy to assert its position as a global leader, what are the technological, financial, environmental and geopolitical challenges in the race to space? How can we ensure safe, autonomous, reliable and affordable access to space – while preserving its assets?

WITH

Josef Aschbacher, Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA)

Susmita Mohanty, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Earth2Orbit

Masami Onoda, Director of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
Washington D.C. Office

Anna Rathsmann, Director-General of the Swedish National Space Agency

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director and chief spokesperson at Friends of Europe

14:00-15:15 CEST

Session III

Digital for a successful Europe

Ambitious digitalisation in line with the values of the EU is a key tool to recovery and lays the foundation for the Union's sustained growth and competitiveness.

In order to be successful, Europe will need forward-looking digital legislation that regulates in advance of adversity, rather than simply punishing afterwards. Europe must rapidly put in place a unified digital market and the hard infrastructure to guarantee sovereignty and advance global leadership, while simultaneously providing all citizens with fair access to high-quality connectivity to combat widening inequalities.

This kind of digital policy encompasses the interests of society, the economy and government and supports the Union in its green transition. How do we make all this happen?

WITH

Salvador Estevan, Director General for Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence at the Spanish Ministry for Economic Affairs and Digital Transformations

Roberta Metsola, First Vice-President of the European Parliament and 2018 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Laura Piovesan, Director for Sustainability at the European Investment Bank (EIB)

Ben Wreschner, Chief Economist & Head of Public Affairs, Vodafone

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director and chief spokesperson at Friends of Europe

Friends of Europe will present the results of a year-long pan-European initiative supported by Vodafone, in its report "Connected Europe: A digital brand for a just transition". Policymakers have some tough challenges ahead but this report shows how Europe can achieve a successful, green and resilient digital transformation through collaboration and with citizens at the heart of the debate.

#ConnectedEurope

14:00-15:15 CEST

Session IV

Health is the new Europe

To sustain prosperity in Europe, governments need to invest in ‘healthy life extension’. For every euro spent on healthcare, four are generated.

This gives governments the best return on investment for their citizens and economy. The pandemic has unlocked new cash for health at both EU and member state level, so how can we strategically allocate it to find new and innovative ways to organise healthcare effectively at the local, national and European levels?

What innovation can be the smart enabler of the new social contract?

WITH

Mina Gaga, Greek Alternate Minister for Health

Jean-Luc Lemerrier, Corporate Vice-President of Europe, Middle East, Africa, Canada & Latin America at Edwards Lifesciences

Mario Monti, Chair of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development, former prime minister of Italy and Trustee of Friends of Europe

Johannes Schildt, Co-Founder and CEO of Kry and Livi and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Aleksandra Torbica, Associate Professor at the Department of Social and Political Sciences and Director of the Centre for Research on Health and Social Care Management (CERGAS) at Bocconi University

MODERATOR

Tamsin Rose, Senior Fellow at Friends of Europe

15:45-16:15 CEST

Session V

What is the future purpose of foreign policy and diplomacy in a changed world?

Global challenges require global solutions and collaboration informed by multilateralism and fair-trade practices. Hopes for a more cooperative multilateral order, based on open trade and the rule of law, have given way to great power rivalries, ideological competition and a growing willingness by many states to use military power to intimidate neighbours or force to resolve disputes.

With the rise of authoritarian states, how can the EU strengthen its geopolitical weight and, together with its partners, successfully use diplomacy to promote democratic models of governance without imposing them by force or applying a one-size-fits-all approach?

WITH

Zarifa Ghafari, Afghan activist and former mayor of Maidan Shahr

MODERATOR

Jamie Shea, Senior Fellow for Peace and Security at Friends of Europe and former NATO Deputy Assistant Secretary General

16:30-17:30 CEST

Closing session

What's in the cards for 2022

In the post-COVID reset, temporary government funding will be withdrawn and the full economic cost of the pandemic will need to be addressed. The inequalities in our society, so sharply revealed by COVID-19, urgently need to be fixed. Governments seeking to rein in public debt will look to save money and boost economic growth. The policy decisions of the next months will define the winners and losers of the transition. Citizens expect fairness and transparency in the way that the record-breaking recovery and resilience package is spent.

This set of parallel conversation tables will produce the recommendations to be included in our #StateofEU report published in November which will be socialised and distributed among top policymakers and influencers. It will also serve as a basis to provide a meaningful hook of engagement with citizens.

Conversation tables on:

DIGITAL TRANSITION

Lindsey Nefesh-Clarke, Founder & Managing Director of Women's Worldwide Web (W4) and 2012 European Young Leader (EYL40)

André Loeseckrug-Pietri, Chairman and Scientific Director of the Joint European Disruptive Initiative (JEDI) and 2013 European Young Leader (EYL40)

GREEN TRANSITION

Magid Magid, Founder and Director of Union of Justice and 2019 European Young Leader (EYL40)

HEALTH

Loubna Bouarfa, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of OKRA Technologies

EUROPE'S ECONOMIES

Dragoş Pîslaru, Member of the European Parliament and Co-rapporteur of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

EUROPE'S ROLE IN THE WORLD

Samir Abdelkrim, Founder & Chief Executive Officer of Emerging Valley and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Cecilia Malmström, Visiting Professor at Göteborg University, former European commissioner for trade and Trustee of Friends of Europe

MODERATOR

Tamsin Rose, Senior Fellow at Friends of Europe

They joined us

Jamila Aanzi

Member of the Appeal Advisory Committee Childcare Allowance, Ministry of Finance of The Netherlands, European Young Leader (EYL40)

Samir Abdelkrim

Author of Startup Lions, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Emerging Valley, Member of the Africa Europe Foundation Strategy Group on Digital, European Young Leader (EYL40)

Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen

European Commission Director-General for Communication (DG COMM)

Susan Aitken

Leader, Glasgow City Council, United Kingdom

Sacha Alanoca

Senior AI Policy Researcher and Head of Community Development, The Future Society, France

Alberto Alemanno

Jean Monnet Professor of EU Law, HEC Paris, France, European Young Leader (EYL40), Trustee of Friends of Europe

Alesia Alldervishi

Advocate, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Albania Office

Paul Ames

Freelance Journalist, Portugal

László Andor

Secretary-General, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), Trustee of Friends of Europe

Irena Andrassy

Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Croatia to the EU

Laima Liucija Andrikiene

Member, National Parliament, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Lithuania

Anna Ascani

Italian State Secretary for Economic Development

Josef Aschbacher

Director-General, European Space Agency (ESA) (ESA)

Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou

Vice-Chair, European Parliament Committee on International Trade (INTA), Trustee of Friends of Europe

Petras Austrevicius

Member, European Parliament Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE)

Boris Azais

Director, Public Policy Europe & Canada, Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD)

Matthew Baldwin

Deputy Director-General, Land, Waterborne, Aviation, European Commission Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE)

Giulio Barbolani di Montauto

Senior Administrator, European Space Agency (ESA) Liaison Office with the EU

Natalie Barkei

Head of EU Affairs, DocMorris, The Netherlands

Céline Begon

Space Attaché, Permanent Representation of France to the EU

Brando Benifei

Member, European Parliament Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO)

Jérôme Béquignon

Senior Coordinator, European Space Agency (ESA) (ESA) Liaison Office with the EU

Noura Berrouba

Member of the Governing Body, European Youth Parliament, Germany

Nienke Beuwer

Director of External Communications, McKinsey Global Institute, The Netherlands

Fatih Birol

Executive Director, International Energy Agency (IEA)

Laure Blanchard-Brunac

Director of Policy & Partnerships, European Development Finance Institutions (EDFI)

Jocelyn Bleriot

Executive, Editorial and Public Affairs, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, United Kingdom

Anna Lisa Boni

Secretary-General, Eurocities

Roberta Bonometti

Journalist, United Kingdom

Laurent Bontoux

Senior Foresight Expert, European Commission Joint Research Centre

Loubna Bouarfa

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, OKRA Technologies, United Kingdom

Violeta Bulc

Founder, Ecocivilisation, former European Commissioner for Transport, Slovenia

Mathew Burrows

Director, Foresight, Strategy, and Risks Initiative, Atlantic Council, United States of America

Kevin Butler

Senior Consultant, FourTold, United Kingdom

Malcolm Byrne

Senator, Seanad Éireann (Irish Senate), European Young Leader (EYL40)

Geert Cami

Co-Founder and Secretary-General, Friends of Europe, Member of the Executive Committee, Africa Europe Foundation

Erika Casajoana

Deputy Representative, Government of Catalonia Delegation to the EU

Francesca Cavallo

Bestselling author of “Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls”, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Undercats, European Young Leader (EYL40)

Armin Cerkez

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Youth Power, Germany, European Young Leader (EYL40)

Joanna Cherry

Member, House of Commons, Exiting the EU Committee, United Kingdom

Patrick Child

Chair of Steering Committee, Mission Innovation, United States of America

Marie Claerbout

EU Affairs Senior Manager, ENGIE

Carine Claeys

Special Envoy for Space, European External Action Service (EEAS) Secretariat General

Francesca Colombo

Head, Health Division, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Vincenzo Conforti

Head of Government Relations & Public Affairs for the European Union, ABB Europe

Hélène Conway-Mouret

Secretary, Senate, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and the Armed Forces, France

Ianina Cozari

Journalist and producer TV-7" Moldova and Cozaripress, Moldova

Laura Cozzi

Chief Energy Modeller, International Energy Agency (IEA)

Tracey D’Afters

Head of Communication, Friends of Europe

Daniel Daianu

Member of the Board, National Bank of Romania, Trustee of Friends of Europe

Xavier Damman

CitizenCorner.brussels, European Young Leader (EYL40)

Etienne Davignon

President, Friends of Europe, former Belgian Minister of State and European Commission Vice-President

Giulia Del Brenna

Head of Unit, Strategy and regulation: single market and industrial policy, European Commission Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW)

Blazenka Divjak

Professor, University of Zagreb Faculty of Organisation and Informatics, Croatia

Andreea Dobra

Campaigns Policy & Public Affairs Lead, Vodafone, United Kingdom

Philippe Donnet

Group Chief Executive Officer, Assicurazioni Generali S.p.A.

Mikolaj Dowgielewicz

Director-General and Permanent Representative, European Investment Bank (EIB), Trustee of Friends of Europe

Sorin Ducaru

Director of the EU Agency SatCen, former Assistant Secretary-General for emerging security challenges at NATO and Trustee of Friends of Europe

Isabelle Durant

Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), former Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium, Trustee of Friends of Europe

Angelina Eichhorst

Managing Director Europe, European External Action Service (EEAS) Directorate for Europe and Central Asia (EURCA)

Darren Ennis

Senior EU Affairs Adviser, Vodafone, United Kingdom

Michele Esposito

EU Correspondent, ANSA (Italian News Agency), Italy

Salvador Estevan

Director-General for Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation, Spain

Marjut Falkstedt

Secretary-General, European Investment Bank (EIB), Luxembourg

Fabio Fantozzi

Journalist, LaPresse, Italy

Tomas Fénix

Former Vice-President, European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA), European Young Leader (EYL40)

Josep Figueras Marimont

Director, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, World Health Organization (WHO) European Centre on Health Policy

Erzsébet Fitori

Head of European Affairs and Relations, Vodafone

Mary Fitzgerald

Journalist and Researcher in Euro-Mediterranean Affairs, specialising in Libya, European Young Leader (EYL40), Trustee of Friends of Europe

Francesco Foglia

Journalist

Stefan Fule

Consultant, International Advisory Council, Czech Republic, Trustee of Friends of Europe

Nathalie Furrer

Director, Friends of Europe

Mina Gaga

Greek Alternate Minister for Health Services

Céline Gauer

European Commission Director-General and Head of the Recovery and Resilience Task Force (RECOVER)

Basil Galaval

Head of International Relations and Communications, DIKTIO Network for Reform in Greece and Europe, Greece

Zarifa Ghafari

Former Mayor, Maidan Shahr, Afghanistan

Nicola Giammaroli

Secretary-General, European Stability Mechanism, Luxembourg

Luca Giansanti

Head, European Government Affairs, Eni

Guillaume Gillet

Director, European Affairs, ENGIE, France

Flora Giorgio

Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE)

Ana Gomes

Diplomat, Former Member of the European Parliament, Friends of Europe Trustee

Javier Gonzalez

Entrepreneur, Telice, Spain, European Young Leader (EYL40)

Fabienne Goux-Baudiment

Founding President, proGective, France

Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic

Former President of Croatia, Trustee of Friends of Europe

Amara Graps

Executive Director, Baltics in Space, Latvia

Jan Grauls

Senior Adviser at Ernst and Young, former Secretary-General of Belgium's Foreign Affairs Department and Member, Board of Friends of Europe

Linda Griffin

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Solveigh Hieronimus

Senior Partner, McKinsey and Company, Co-lead of McKinsey's global Center for Government (MCG), Germany

Martin Hojsik

Member, European Parliament Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)

Edita Hrdá

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