

→ 2024

# Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies

Publications / Events /  
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Activity Report





Wilfried  
**Martens Centre**  
for European Studies

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Activity  
Report 2024

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The Wilfried Martens Centre  
for European Studies is the  
political foundation and  
think tank of the European  
People's Party (EPP) and is  
dedicated to the promotion  
of Christian Democrat,  
conservative and like-minded  
political values.

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## A word from our President, Mikuláš Dzurinda

2024 was another year of seismic shifts. The EU faced a barrage of challenges, reshaping the global landscape and demanding a fundamental reassessment of our collective future. This annual report by the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies provides insightful information on our key areas of focus from the past year, demonstrating our commitment to providing actionable solutions for the EU's present challenges.

To me, four defining moments have stood out over the past year. The first is Ukraine's steadfast fight; as the war rages on, its impact continues reverberating across the Eastern Partnership region and beyond. From the Middle East to Africa, the conflict exposes a dangerous alignment of authoritarian powers, demanding a unified and decisive response.

The second is the shifting political tide; the European Parliament elections signalled a surge in support for nationalist agendas. The rise of the so-called "far-right" challenges the foundations of European cooperation, prioritising national sovereignty over shared solutions and raising concerns about certain member states' alignment with Russia.

The third is "the wake-up call"; namely, the diagnosis formulated by Mario Draghi in his landmark report. It serves as a stark assessment of the EU's competitiveness, highlighting critical gaps in economic performance, technological advancement, and our ability to counter evolving threats. The message is clear: we must act decisively to close the gap with those who are outperforming us.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the message sent to Europe by the United States: it is time for you to lead. The US elections have underscored the need for Europe to take greater responsibility for its own security and stability of its neighbourhood. This demands a strategic overhaul and a strengthening of our defence capabilities.

Amidst these complex circumstances, the Martens Centre maintained a strong record of achievement. We were proud to strengthen and expand our relationships with key EPP decision-makers in Brussels, contributing to policy discussions at a critical juncture for the EU. While celebrating these successes, we remain acutely aware of the growing influence of right-wing parties and will continue our efforts to counter this concerning trend.

2024 was a year of intense activity and dynamic engagement. Through impactful research, numerous collaborative projects with our valued member foundations and partners, and proactive communication initiatives, we have significantly amplified our influence at both the EU and national levels. The inaugural Global Synergy Conference fostered a truly global dialogue on sustainability, while our flagship European Ideas Forum provided a key platform for the first public appearances of newly appointed Vice President of the European Commission Henna Virkkunen and Commissioner Andrius Kubilius. Our strategic 7Ds publications have stimulated debate, inspired action, and generated considerable interest. It is particularly gratifying to note that the ideas and recommendations from the 7Ds Defence - Extended publication have directly informed the White Paper on Defence prepared by Commissioner Kubilius.

These accomplishments are a testament to the exceptional dedication and unwavering commitment of the entire Martens Centre team. I extend my deepest gratitude to our invaluable network of experts, researchers, member foundations, and partners, whose contributions and support have been essential to our success. Your insights and expertise have been instrumental in shaping our mission and driving our impact.

We invite you to engage with this Activity Report 2024, confident that it will provide valuable insights for your work and areas of interests. We wish you a productive and engaging reading.

Mikuláš Dzurinda  
President of the Wilfried Martens Centre  
for European Studies



# Publications

As the European People's Party (EPP)'s political foundation, the Martens Centre monitors, analyses and contributes to the debate on EU policy that is relevant for both experts and the broader European public. Our six main research themes cover a wide range of political issues. Taking these themes as its point of departure, the Martens Centre produces research papers and policy briefs, and organises events and conferences.



All of our publications are available at:  
[www.martenscentre.eu/publications](http://www.martenscentre.eu/publications)



JAN. COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION  
**Transatlantic Trade and Technology: Partners or Rivals?**  
By Dimitar Lilkov,  
Clara Riedenstein and  
Bill Echikson  
This publication in cooperation with CEPA assesses the EU-US Trade and Technology Council's progress since 2021 and calls for reforms to enhance transatlantic cooperation on AI, green tech, and supply chains.



MAR. RESEARCH PAPER  
**Did Secularisation Kill God? Changes in Religiosity and Values Among Natives and Migrants in Europe**  
By Tommaso Virgili and  
Benedetta Panchetti  
Edited by Vít Novotný  
This study assesses secularisation trends in the EU, and specifically which groups tend to remain more religious than natives. It calls for policies that promote secularism and integration while balancing national differences and individual rights.



RESEARCH PAPER  
**Interparty Relations in the European Parliament 1952–2024: Between Cooperative and Adversarial Politics**  
By Luciano Bardi and Jacopo Cellini  
Edited by Federico Ottavio Reho  
This publication explores the European Parliament's evolving party dynamics. Despite declining seats for major groups, cooperation between core groups persists. It also discusses agreement levels between political groups in the context of potential alliances.

POLICY BRIEF  
**The Northern Ireland Protocol and Why It Still Matters**  
By Michael O'Neill  
Edited by Eoin Drea

This paper examines how Brexit impacted the Irish border, highlighting the threat it posed to the fragile peace established by the 1998 Belfast Agreement. The border issue revealed the complexities of Brexit, challenging both the peace process and future UK-EU relations.

POLICY BRIEF  
**Reconnecting the British to Europe: Strategic Imperatives and Inconvenient Truths**  
By Dirk Hazell  
Edited by Eoin Drea

This brief advocates for UK-EU cooperation in key areas like environment, defence, and finance, alongside strengthening ties through youth mobility, civic engagement, and cultural exchanges to reinforce shared European values.

POLICY BRIEF  
**Building a Transatlantic Approach to Economic Security**  
By Andrew Yeh and Sam Goodman  
Edited by Dimitar Lilkov

This study highlights the economic security challenges posed by China and the divergent approaches taken by the EU and US. It recommends deeper transatlantic cooperation in areas like green tech investment, data security, and automotive protection.

APR. MARTENS CENTRE PUBLICATION  
**Russian Economy: Still Standing, But Stuck**  
By Vladimir Milov  
This analysis challenges claims of Russia's economic resilience to sanctions, revealing worsening conditions beneath purportedly strong macroeconomic figures. It offers policymakers insights to strengthen sanctions and limit Russia's war financing.



RESEARCH PAPER  
**Why Europe Needs a Nuclear Deterrent: A Critical Appraisal**  
By Adérito Vicente  
Edited by Ionela Ciolan

This paper evaluates the need for a European nuclear deterrent amid rising security threats from Russia and China, stressing the importance of NATO and the Non-Proliferation Treaty while offering policy recommendations for EU defence strategy.

MARTENS CENTRE PUBLICATION  
**A Better Deal for Climate and European Competitiveness: Policy Proposals for the European Centre-Right**  
By Dimitar Lilkov

This publication critiques the EU's Green Deal, pointing out economic costs, energy security concerns, and challenges in reaching carbon neutrality by 2050. It calls for a more realistic strategy and urges the European centre-right to lead with a feasible, values-driven approach.

MARTENS CENTRE PUBLICATION  
**Keeping the European Momentum: A Pan-European Study on EU Enlargement and Deepening**  
Edited by Peter Hefe

This study was conducted in collaboration with IPSOS, to understand EU citizen views on EU enlargement, EU deepening, and potential treaty changes for the successful integration of new EU members.

MAY IN BRIEF  
**The Athens Effect: 5 Reasons Why France (and the EU) Should go Greek on Debt**  
By Eoin Drea  
This paper highlights the significant progress made by Greece to improve its debt sustainability, reduce its debt-to-GDP ratio, and regain investment grade status.  
  
MARTENS CENTRE PUBLICATION  
**EU-Taiwan Ties in a New Reality: Time for an Upgrade**  
By Zsuzsa Anna Ferenczy

This study discusses deepening EU-Taiwan relations, amid growing European awareness of Taiwan's strategic importance and shifting global power dynamics.

POLICY BRIEF  
**The Future of European Development Cooperation: A Centre-Right Perspective**

By Peter Hefe and Samuel Crooks  
This brief critiques the EU's development aid, questioning its effectiveness amid rising competition from China and India. It proposes a new centre-right framework to address policy flaws and protect the EU's global influence.

POLICY BRIEF  
**Coming out of the Shadows: The European Stability Mechanism and Euro Area Governance**  
By Jürgen Matthes  
Edited by Eoin Drea

This analysis suggests reforming the European Stability Mechanism to provide loans without requiring reforms, helping maintain financial stability and promote sound economic policies, rather than relying on the European Central Bank's current approach.



POLICY BRIEF  
**Confronting Europe's Labour Shortage: A Strategic Blueprint to Attract Global Talent and Reverse Population Decline**  
By Teona Lavrelashvili

This brief discusses the EU's labour shortage, driven by demographic decline. It calls for attracting global talent, setting migration targets, enhancing reskilling, and digitising migration processes to ensure EU prosperity.

JUN. POLICY BRIEF  
**Explaining the Rise of the Radical Right in Europe**  
By Wojciech Gagatsek  
Edited by Federico Ottavio Reho  
This publication explores the rise of radical-right parties in Europe, focusing on their shared ideology, electoral success, and political impact, driven by voter attraction and strategic party actions.  
  
MARTENS CENTRE PUBLICATION  
**Fortifying Economic Security: The EU's Response to China's Risk**  
By Jakub Janda, Marcin Jerzewski, Zuzana Košková, and David Toman

This paper analyses the EU's economic security approach toward China, reviewing risks, de-risking strategies, and lessons from Japan, the US, and Taiwan. It offers recommendations to strengthen the EU's economic resilience.

THE 7DS  
**The 7Ds In Depth**  
Edited by Klaus Welle and Peter Hefe

As a follow-up to the 2023 7Ds document, we published this deeper, more extensive set of proposals to help EU policymakers during the final negotiations and finalisation of the EU's strategic priorities ahead of 2024-2029.

POLICY BRIEF  
**Enhancing Election Integrity by Strengthening EU Defences Against Disinformation**  
By Alexander Romănişyn  
Edited by Dimitar Lilkov

This brief analyses the EU's strategy against disinformation, identifying challenges in current regulations and offers recommendations to protect democratic processes and ensure fair elections.

NON-PAPER  
**Proposal for the European Commission White Paper on The Future of European Defence**  
Edited by Ionela Ciolan

This non-paper was written to support the European Commission's White Paper on the Future of European Defence. It emphasises preparing for extreme military contingencies and strengthening the European Defence Union.

THE 7DS  
**The 7Ds Extended**  
Edited by Klaus Welle and Peter Hefe  
As the culmination of the 7Ds project, this study seeks to act as a catalyst for change and action in the EU across a range of policy areas by providing important context and detailed recommendations, thanks to its roster of expert authors.

JUL.

08

→ 2024

SEP.

OCT.

NOV.

DEC.

09



OCT. 2024

Keeping the European Momentum:  
A Pan-European Study on EU  
Enlargement and Deepening



Edited by Peter Hefele

At the dawn of a new legislature and the constitution of a new College of Commissioners, the Martens Centre conducted a data-driven study across all EU-27 member states. To better understand EU citizens' attitudes and their views towards the enlargement and deepening of the European Union, the research project looked to answer questions such as: What are the conceptions of "Europe" across different socio-demographic groups and countries? How do citizens of the EU member states resonate with the perspective of a larger and deeper Union? What are the attitudes of different socio-political groups towards various models of integrating those candidate members in the EU? What has to be changed within the European treaties to make any further enlargement and deepening into a success story, and not a failure for the Union?



COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION DEC. 2024

Financing Politics in Europe:  
a Political Party Roadmap for  
More Transparency and Effectiveness



Edited by Thibault Muzergues

This publication explores the many ways in which money and politics interact, and provides a roadmap for political parties to act for a more transparent and effective financing of European politics: from state subsidies to private fundraising, from regulation to oversight institutions, from protecting European politics from the influence of foreign authoritarian actors to funding European political parties, the authors provide an in-depth analysis of the tools that politicians have to better fund politics in Europe.



THE 7DS PROJECT DEC. 2024

The 7Ds for Sustainability:  
Extended



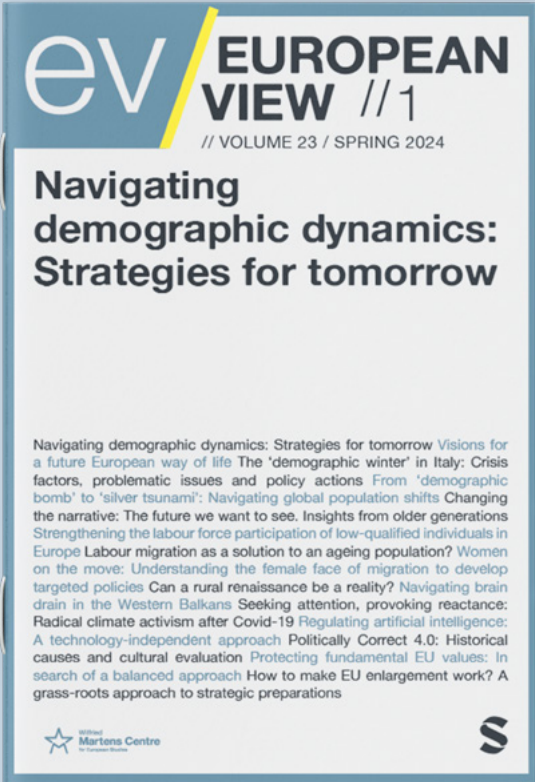
Edited by Klaus Welle and Peter Hefele

The 7Ds for Sustainability: Extended is the culmination of the 7Ds project. This comprehensive document was born out of the collaborative efforts of the Martens Centre research team, under the guidance of Klaus Welle, and a group of renowned external experts. The 7Ds for Sustainability: Extended aims to be more than just a set of principles: it seeks to act as a catalyst for change and action and provides a much-needed compass for Europe to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead, by providing a nuanced and actionable framework across a range of policy areas.



The European View is the policy journal of the Martens Centre. An intellectual platform for politicians, opinion makers and academics, it tackles contemporary themes of European politics, focusing on one specific theme in each issue.

The journal contributes to the debate in the most important fields of European and international politics. What makes it unique is its hybrid nature: its capacity to involve esteemed academics and experts, on the one hand, and high-level politicians and decision-makers, on the other.



VOL. 23 - ISSUE 1 SPRING, MAY 2024

Navigating demographic dynamics:  
Strategies for tomorrow

Edited by Sara Pini

The EU faces demographic challenges due to declining birth rates, ageing populations, and labour shortages, straining social programs and economic growth. While migration offers some relief, factors like career priorities and high living costs contribute to lower birth rates. The Martens Centre's 7Ds for Sustainability seeks solutions for a stable, integrated Europe. Acting as a companion piece to the 7Ds project, this issue of the European View explores these shifts, analysing migration and economic sustainability, while emphasising solutions for long-term stability.



VOL. 23 - ISSUE 2 AUTUMN, NOV. 2024

Overcoming the geography of  
discontent: New perspectives and  
innovative solutions

Edited by Sara Pini

The EU strives for unity but faces persistent regional disparities, fuelling economic inequality, social tensions, and political polarisation. Rural communities often feel overlooked, driving discontent and extremism, while cities struggle with overcrowding and housing shortages. To bridge this divide, the EU must invest in infrastructure, tailor rural policies, rethink alienating regulations, and support flexible work. This issue of the European View explores these challenges and proposes solutions for a more inclusive and equitable future.



# Events

In 2024, we organised a host of timely and thought-provoking events, touching on events relevant to Brussels and beyond. We also participated in yet another successful EPP Congress, held this year in Bucharest, before finishing up the year with our flagship event, the European Ideas Forum!



All of our events are available at:  
[www.martenscentre.eu/events](http://www.martenscentre.eu/events)



# In-house Events

JAN.

23/01 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Moldova: Perspectives and Challenges for the Future**  
This was a closed, experts discussion on the future of Moldova's EU prospects and the geopolitical challenges that the country faces.



11/07 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Stay Calm and Keep Brexiting! UK's General Election – Implications for the EU and the UK**  
In the aftermath of the 2024 UK General Election, this event examined the potential impact of Labour's victory on EU-UK relations. Our experts discussed whether a Labour-led government could improve ties with Brussels, the limits of its European policy, and opportunities for deeper cooperation.

FEB.

09/02 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Middle Class Concerns and European Challenges**  
A presentation event in Athens based on the pan-European, data-driven study of the Martens Centre on middle-class perspectives in Europe.

17/02 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Forging a New Security Paradigm for the Mediterranean: Policy Innovations and Partnerships to Address Complex Risks**  
This was an experts' roundtable on a thought-provoking discussion about the Mediterranean, exploring concrete ways to help bridge political divides in areas of mutual concern.

20/02 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Trade and Technology Partners or Rivals? Unlocking the Potential of Transatlantic Cooperation**  
This event was the opportunity to present our study written jointly with CEPA, examining the future of the EU-US Trade and Technology Council (TTC), specifically focusing on tech cooperation, trade alignment, and its resilience amid political shifts.



→ 2024

APR.

11/04 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**From Margins to Mainstream: The Far Right's Threat in European Politics**  
This event was organised during the IX Delphi Economic Forum. The esteemed speakers tried to highlight the imminent dangers that liberal democracies face from the rise of populist, anachronistic and demagogic leaderships around the world.



01/10 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Europe's Nuclear Dilemma: Evaluating the Need for a Common European Nuclear Deterrent**  
At a critical time for European security, we organised this discussion to better understand the continent's evolving security landscape and the role of nuclear deterrence amid rising threats. The panel assessed the feasibility of a collective European nuclear deterrent, and provided recommendations for balancing NATO commitments and non-proliferation goals.

02/10 HYBRID EVENT  
**European Green Deal 2.0: A Better Bargain for Climate and Competitiveness**  
In order to assess the European Green Deal's progress and its challenges amid economic and geopolitical shifts, we convened this panel of experts to discuss the policy adjustments needed to balance decarbonisation, energy security, and competitiveness while ensuring financial and social sustainability.

OCT.

MAY

15/05 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**From Boom to Bust: How can Germany Restart its Economic Engine?**  
We organised a discussion on the challenges facing the German economy, including low growth, a cooling property market, and costly transitions in energy, geopolitics, and demographics. Our expert panel provided suggestions for reform priorities and provided scenarios around the political impact of economic slowdown.



06/11 HYBRID EVENT  
**What Kind of Migration for Europe? The Big Picture for the EU and its Member States**  
This event explored migration trends in the EU, challenging common perceptions by examining data drawn from our publication on legal migration, family reunification, and labour market integration. The conversation also considered how migration can address workforce gaps and its broader social impact.

07/11 HYBRID EVENT  
**Georgia and Moldova at the Ballot Box: What Impact on EU Integration and Enlargement Process?**  
Following the crucial elections in Moldova and Georgia, we held this discussion in order to discuss the elections' impact on the political climate and future prospects for both countries, especially the implications for EU enlargement, while examining challenges like Russian interference and democratic setbacks.

14/11 HYBRID EVENT  
**Confronting Europe's Labour Shortage: A Strategic Blueprint for Thriving in the Future Global Talent Competition**  
This event tackled Europe's labour shortage, driven by an ageing population and shrinking workforce, especially in rural areas. Marking the launch of our paper "Confronting Europe's Labour Shortage," it offered strategies to attract global talent and provided key recommendations to ensure Europe's long-term growth and competitiveness.

NOV.

JUN.

26/06 IN-PERSON EVENT  
**Did Secularisation Kill God? Changes in Religiosity and Values among Natives and Migrants in Europe**  
As the launch event of our publication of the same name, this conversation centred on the shifting role of religion in Europe, where secularisation is advancing but religious values still shape culture and politics. Discussants looked at differing secularisation trends across faiths and their impact on centre-right politics.



10/12 HYBRID EVENT  
**Exploring Parliamentary Alliances: EPP and the Dynamics of Coalition-Building in the EP**  
To launch our publication analysing shifting dynamics in the European Parliament ahead of its tenth legislative term, we convened a panel of experts to explore evolving cooperation between key political groups, focusing on the EPP and the future of coalition-building. The discussion highlighted the EP's unique role in shaping political strategies and its resilience despite challenges.

DEC.

JUL.



Unifying Visions, Unlocking Sustainable Realities: The Role of Europe, Asia and Latin America in Global Economic Transition

2024 saw the inaugural edition of the Global Synergy Conference, held on 14th February. This event was the first of its kind hosted by the Martens Centre, and brought together a global line-up of panellists from Latin America to South-East Asia. The event sought to provide insight on the issues driving the day across the globe and offer perspectives on how the EU should approach these.



OPENING REMARKS  
Mikuláš Dzurinda,  
President, Martens Centre



PANEL 01  
Euro-Asian Trade - Unlocking the Power of Sustainable Markets

In the realm of EU-Asia trade relations, a pertinent question arises – is the current framework fostering the transformation into a sustainable economy effectively in both Europe and Asia? This question is of great significance, as sustainable economic growth has become a paramount objective in today’s global context. This panel considered how private companies can best contribute to this objective and enhance collaboration, as well as in which fields Europe has a comparative advantage and is attractive for Asian nations, among other relevant issues.

- Speakers
- Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou,  
Member of European Parliament,  
Vice-Chair INTA Committee, Greece

Shreekant Gupta,  
Professor, Department of Economics,  
University of Delhi, India

Renu Kohli,  
Senior Fellow, Centre for Social and  
Economic Progress, India

Andreas Moerke,  
Professor of Business Administration,  
Intercultural Management and Business Ethics,  
Hochschule Worms, Germany
- Moderator
- Peter Hefe­le,  
Policy Director, Martens Centre

PANEL 02  
Navigating a New Era for Great Power Politics

By working together, Europe and Asia possess the potential to create a powerful force in advocating for a stable international order. Strengthening diplomatic ties and fostering strategic partnerships between nations is key to global stability. Emphasising dialogue, cooperation, and adherence to international rules and norms will further bolster this collective effort. This panel examined how Europe and Asia can jointly contribute to a stable, multilateral, rule-based international order, which counters the rise of totalitarian regimes.

- Speakers
- Christina Chen,  
Research Fellow, Institute for National Defence  
and Security Research, Taiwan

Theresa Fallon,  
Founder and Director, Centre for Russia Europe Asia  
Studies, Belgium

Shairee Malhotra,  
Associate Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, India

Andreas Schwab,  
Member of European Parliament, Germany
- Moderator
- Tomi Huhtanen,  
Executive Director, Martens Centre

PANEL 03  
Innovation and Technology as a Driver of EU-Asia Relations

Innovation and technology play a pivotal role in fostering sustainable development. In particular, they can drive progress in critical areas including renewable energy, smart cities, circular economy, and sustainable agriculture, contributing to a greener and more resilient future. By harnessing innovation and technology, both Europe and Asia can accelerate the adoption of renewable energy sources, optimise energy efficiency, and reduce carbon emissions. The discussion centred on how collaborative platforms, strong legal frameworks, and the leveraging of promising business models could pave the way for a mutually beneficial and impactful partnership.

- Speakers
- Zsuzsa Anna Ferenczy,  
Assistant Professor, National Dong Hwa University  
in Hualien, Taiwan

Konstantinos Kyranakis,  
Deputy Minister of Digital Governance of Greece

King Wang Poon,  
Director of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities,  
Singapore University of Technology and Design, Singapore

Ivan Štefanec,  
Member of European Parliament, Slovakia
- Moderator
- Sandra Pasarić,  
Project Officer, Martens Centre

PANEL 04  
EU-Latin America - Partnering up with MERCOSUR

The MERCOSUR deal holds vast potential in fostering trade, investment, and economic cooperation. The business community will play a crucial role in facilitating the sustainable transition in EU-Latin America trade relations. Harmonising regulations and improving market access has the potential to significantly boost bilateral trade, offering new avenues for economic growth and collaboration, while promoting sustainability and upholding social responsibility. This final panel discussed the crucial aspect of embracing sustainable practices, addressing regulatory challenges, and acknowledging geopolitical implications in cultivating a thriving and mutually beneficial partnership between EU and MERCOSUR countries.

- Speakers
- Nicolas Albertoni,  
Deputy Foreign Minister of Uruguay

Eleonora Catella,  
Deputy Director of International Relations,  
BusinessEurope, Italy

Antonio López-Istúriz White,  
Member of European Parliament, Spain, Secretary General  
of the Centrist Democrat International (IDC-CDI),  
Secretary Treasurer, Martens Centre

Sandra Rios,  
Director, Centre for Studies in Integration and  
Development, Brazil
- Moderator
- Luis Blanco,  
General Coordinator, Centrist Democrat International  
(IDC-CDI)



CLOSING REMARKS  
Tomi Huhtanen,  
Executive Director, Martens Centre



# EPP Congress 2024 Sideline Programme

Our presence at the EPP Congress is a chance for us to deepen our understanding of the key issues facing Europe and driving its policymakers, and 2024 was no different. From our purpose-built interview booth, we organised a series of important discussions with a set of private stakeholders, and hosted interviews with EPP leaders and representatives, including President Manfred Weber, Commissioners Valdis Dombrovskis and Margaritis Schinas, Prime Ministers Petteri Orpo of Finland and Leo Varadkar of Ireland, and Italian Deputy Prime Minister Antonio Tajani, among many others.

## Interviews with Private Stakeholders

### INTERVIEW 01

#### Building a Healthier Tomorrow: The Role of Medical Innovation in the EU

Guest     Roberta Savli,  
Executive Director Public Affairs, EFPIA

Host     Eoin Drea,  
Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

### INTERVIEW 02

#### Fostering a Competitive and Resilient Tech Industry in Europe

Guest     Riccardo Masucci,  
Director of Security and Technology Policy,  
Intel Corporation

Host     Dimitar Lilkov,  
Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre



### INTERVIEW 03

#### A Europe Fit for the Digital Age: Reflections and Future Directions

Guest     Claudia Selli,  
Vice President, International External and  
Regulatory Affairs, AT&T

Host     Sara Pini,  
Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

### INTERVIEW 04

#### Stronger Together: Envisioning the Future of Transatlantic Relations

Guest     Susan Danger,  
CEO, AmCham EU

Host     Federico Ottavio Reho,  
Strategic Coordinator and Senior Research Officer,  
Martens Centre



Guest     Manfred Weber,  
EPP President and EPP Group Chairman

### INTERVIEW 05

#### Navigating Disruption: What Place for Social Media in our Modern Democracies?

Guest     Marco Pancini,  
Head of EU Affairs, Meta

Host     Margherita Movarelli,  
Head of Communications and Marketing,  
Martens Centre

### INTERVIEW 06

#### Exploring the Growth Potential in Europe: AI and Technology

Guest     Karen Massin,  
Head of Government Affairs & Public Policy -  
EU Institutions, Google

Host     Dimitar Lilkov,  
Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

→ 06-07 MAR. 2024

## Interviews with EPP Leaders



Guest     Antonio Tajani,  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of  
Foreign Affairs of Italy



Guest     Željana Zovko,  
MEP



Guest     Valdis Dombrovskis,  
European Commission Executive Vice  
President and Commissioner for Trade



Guest     Margaritis Schinas,  
European Commission Vice President and  
Commissioner for Promoting the European  
Way of Life





## NET@WORK EPP Congress Edition

→ 06-07 MAR. 2024

Net@Work 2024's title, "Eyes Ahead: Forging the EU's Path", reflects the ambitions of the different policy debates we organised: bringing together Europe's leading centre-right think tanks to discuss the pressing issues shaping the continent's future. Organised as part of our EPP Congress Sideline Programme, Net@Work 2024 provided a vital platform to address challenges ranging from geopolitical strategy and energy security to technological innovation and demographic shifts. Throughout both days of debates, Net@Work 2024 sought to bridge national perspectives with EU-level decision-making.



### Event Aims

- To promote and increase the cooperation within our organisation's network of political foundations and think-tanks;
- To bring national priority subjects to Brussels and discuss them at an EU level;
- To harmonise and find a common ground for discussion;
- To advocate centre-right political content.



# NET@WORK

## POLICY DEBATE 01

### Securing A Sustainable Future: Navigating Between Climate Scepticism and Green Idealism

KKA, Romania / INAK, Slovenia

- Speakers    Marko Balažic,  
President, Slovenian People's Party (SLS)
- Iuliu Winkler,  
MEP, Vice-Chair INTA Committee, EPP
- Maria da Graça Carvalho,  
Executive Board Member, Martens Centre
- Moderator   Dimitar Lilkov,  
Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

## POLICY DEBATE 02

### A Vision for Europe: The European Parliament's Perspective

AZAD, Malta

- Speaker     Roberta Metsola,  
President, European Parliament
- Moderator   Tomi Huhtanen,  
Executive Director, Martens Centre



## POLICY DEBATE 03

### Is Demographics the Next Big Challenge for the EU?

KKID, Greece / ZHDZ, Croatia

- Speakers    Dubravka Šuica,  
Vice-President for Democracy and Demography,  
European Commission
- Sofia Zacharaki,  
Minister of Social Cohesion and Family Affairs, Greece
- Moderator   Sandra Pasarić,  
Project Officer, Martens Centre

## POLICY DEBATE 04

### Labour Immigration from Outside the Bloc: Problem or Remedy?

CEDER, Belgium / Reformismo21, Spain

- Speakers    Dolores Montserrat,  
MEP, Chair PETI Committee, EPP
- Annelies Verlinden,  
Minister of Interior, Institutional Reforms,  
and Democratic Renewal, Belgium
- Moderator   Vít Novotný,  
Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

## POLICY DEBATE 05

### EU Energy Policy in a Time of Transition: Realities and Priorities

CDAwi, Netherlands / GCI, Cyprus

- Speakers    Harris Georgiades,  
MP, Clerides Institute Chairman,  
former Minister of Finance, Cyprus
- Tom Berendsen,  
MEP, EPP
- Moderator   Peter Hefele,  
Policy Director, Martens Centre

## POLICY DEBATE 06

### Expanding EU's Reach: The Geopolitical Imperative of Enlargement

PolAk, Austria / NTPT, Slovakia

- Speakers    Reinhold Lopatka,  
Member of the National Council of Austria,  
ÖVP's Spokesperson for Foreign and European Affairs
- Ivan Štefanec,  
MEP, EPP
- Moderator   Katerina Jakimovska,  
Senior Project Officer, Martens Centre



## POLICY DEBATE 07

### What Role for the EU in Defence?

TOPAZ, Czechia / IJEK, Slovenia

- Speakers    Ondřej Kolář,  
MP, Chamber of Deputies of Czechia
- Matej Tonin,  
Chair of the Slovenian National Assembly delegation  
to the NATO PA, President of New Slovenia –  
Christian Democrats (NSI)
- Moderator   Ionela Ciolan,  
Research Officer, Martens Centre





# 14<sup>th</sup> Transatlantic Think Tank Conference: The Future of Transatlantic Relations

The 14th edition of our Transatlantic Think Tank Conference was the fruit of another great cooperation with our partners at the Hudson Institute and the International Republican Institute. The 2024 edition focused on the myriad regional and global challenges facing the transatlantic alliance, and the great resolve which the Alliance has shown when tested.



→ 23-24 JUL. 2024



SESSION 03

Defending the Indo-Pacific and  
Containing China

SESSION 04

Transatlantic Trade and  
Technology and Safeguarding  
the Global Economy

SESSION 05

Powering the Future in a World  
of Energy Insecurity

SESSION 06

Confronting the Alliance of  
Authoritarian Regimes and their  
Threat to the World Order

CONCLUDING REMARKS

WELCOMING REMARKS

The State of the Unions

SESSION 01

A Year of Elections –  
How Will These Shape the Future  
of Transatlantic Relations?

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A Look Ahead to the US Elections

SESSION 02

Turning the Tide in Ukraine and  
Ending Russia's War







# European Ideas Forum Brussels

→ 2024

For the 16th edition of the European Ideas Forum, we provided the same stimulating in-person experience for attendees while maintaining the high-quality, TV studio-style broadcast that has become a hallmark of our flagship event. As in previous editions, the discussions and panels united policymakers, scholars, past and present political leaders, and industry experts to examine the pressing issues and challenges facing the European Union. This year, Martens Centre President Mikuláš Dzurinda opened the forum, before giving the floor to EPP President Manfred Weber who delivered a video message.

As always, EIF featured timely panels with high-level speakers on topics as diverse as demography, geopolitics, and the global tech race. This year, we were proud to present exclusive discussions and interviews with European Commissioners Henna Virkkunen and Andrius Kubilius, and European Parliament President Roberta Metsola.

We also organised a media partnership panel and interview with FT Live and Euronews, considerably broadening our reach and exposing a wider audience to our European Ideas Forum. Over the two days of discussion, EIF was proud to feature partner interviews with private sector actors: Audrey Scozzaro Ferrazini, Marco Pancini, Claudia Selli, Sarah Herrlinger, and Agnieszka Krukowska Van Handenhove all brought their invaluable perspectives to our policy conversations.

At the end of yet another successful edition of the European Ideas Forum, Antonio López-Istúriz White, EPP Group MEP and Martens Centre Secretary-Treasurer, provided the closing remarks.



Opening Remarks  
Video Message

Manfred Weber,  
EPP President and  
EPP Group Chairman



Opening Remarks

Mikuláš Dzurinda,  
President, Martens Centre

The European Ideas Forum 2024 was presented by  
Anna Nalyvayko, Senior Project Officer, Martens Centre &  
Theo Larue, Editorial and Publications Officer, Martens Centre



Day 1 featured a panel on Europe’s demography, immigration, and changing societies, a crucial discussion at a time when demographic shifts and migration challenges are reshaping the continent. Speakers, including policymakers and experts, debated how Europe can address these changes while maintaining social cohesion. This was followed by an exclusive one-on-one conversation between European Parliament President Roberta Metsola and the Martens Centre’s Margherita Movarelli, where they examined Europe’s future in an evolving global landscape. We then heard from a series of private actors on topics ranging from competitiveness, to AI, to the digital transition. Later, a panel on Europe’s geopolitical role brought together high-profile experts to discuss how the EU can navigate increasing global uncertainties and strengthen its strategic position in world affairs. We ended the day with a media partnership interview with Euronews, featuring Martens Centre Academic Council Chairman Klaus Welle.



PANEL 01

Europe’s Demography, Immigration, and Changing Societies: How Many Reasons to Panic?

- Speakers
- Rainer Münz, Senior Research Associate, Martens Centre
  - Sofia Zacharaki, Minister of Social Cohesion and Family Affairs, Greece
  - Nicole de Moor, State Secretary for Asylum and Migration of Belgium
- Moderator
- Vít Novotný, Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Europe’s Future in Focus

- Speaker
- Roberta Metsola, President, European Parliament
- Moderator
- Margherita Movarelli, Head of Communications and Marketing, Martens Centre



MEDIA PARTNERSHIP INTERVIEW

The Europe Conversation with Euronews

- (in cooperation with Euronews)
- Speaker
- Klaus Welle, Martens Centre Academic Council Chairman; former Secretary General of the European Parliament
- Moderator
- Shona Murray, European Affairs Correspondent, Euronews



PANEL 02

Defining Europe’s Role in Today’s Geopolitics

- Speakers
- Kawa Hassan, Nonresident Fellow, Stimson Center Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Program
  - Theresa Fallon, Founder and Director, Centre for Russia Europe Asia Studies
  - Antonio López-Istúriz White, MEP, AET Committee Member, EPP Group; Martens Centre Secretary-Treasurer
- Moderator
- Peter Hefe, Policy Director, Martens Centre



INTERVIEWS

Achieving Competitiveness Through Innovation

- Speaker
- Audrey Scozzaro Ferrazzini, Vice-President Government Affairs EMEA, Qualcomm
- Moderator
- Peter Hefe, Policy Director, Martens Centre

Joining the AI Race: How To unlock Europe’s Potential

- Speaker
- Marco Pancini, Head of EU Affairs, META
- Moderator
- Peter Hefe, Policy Director, Martens Centre

Competitive Solutions for a Digital Future

- Speaker
- Claudia Selli, Vice President Int. External and Regulatory Affairs, AT&T
- Moderator
- Peter Hefe, Policy Director, Martens Centre



Day 2 began with a policy discussion on securing Europe’s place in the global innovation and tech race, with panellists examining how the EU can maintain competitiveness amid rapid technological advancements. This tied nicely into the following private actor interviews, which discussed technology and accessibility and life sciences and competitiveness. A media partnership panel organised with FT Live then explored the role of trade in relations between democracies, addressing the economic and political shifts shaping global commerce. The day continued with an exclusive discussion on European defence policy, drawing on the insights of EU Commissioner for Defence and Space Andrius Kubilius in his first public appearance after taking office. We capped off Day 2 with an exclusive interview on technology and sovereignty with European Commission Executive Vice President Henna Virkkunen, also joining us in her first public appearance in her new post.

PANEL 03

Securing a Space for Europe in the Global Innovation and Tech Race

- Speakers
- Andreas Schwab, MEP, EPP Coordinator for the IMCO Committee, EPP Group
  - Anthony Gooch, Secretary General of the European Round Table for Industry; Advisory Council Member, Martens Centre
  - Alina Polyakova, President and CEO, Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA)
- Moderator
- Dimitar Lilkov, Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre



MEDIA PARTNERSHIP PANEL

Building a New Coalition of Trading Democracies with FT Live

- Speaker
- Iuliu Winkler, MEP, EPP Group; Vice-Chair, INTA Committee
  - Daniela Schwarzer, Executive Director for Europe and Eurasia, Open Society Foundations
  - Glenn Magerman, Associate Professor of Economics, ECARES, ULB; Visiting Fellow, Oxford Martin School, Oxford University
  - Julia Friedlander, CEO, Atlantik-Brücke
- Moderator
- Andy Bounds, EU Correspondent, Financial Times



EXCLUSIVE DISCUSSION

A New Era for European Defence Policy

- Speakers
- Andrius Kubilius, Commissioner for Defence and Space, European Commission
  - Camille Grand, Distinguished Policy Fellow, ECFR
- Moderator
- Tomi Huhtanen, Executive Director, Martens Centre



INTERVIEWS

The Role of Technology in Advancing Accessibility

- Speaker
- Sarah Herrlinger, Global Head of Accessibility, Apple
- Moderator
- Dimitar Lilkov, Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre

Life Sciences as a Driver of EU Competitiveness

- Speaker
- Agnieszka Krukowska Van Handenhove, Director Government Affairs & Policy EMEA, Johnson & Johnson
- Moderator
- Dimitar Lilkov, Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Balancing Technology, Sovereignty, and Political Realities

- Speakers
- Henna Virkkunen, European Commission Executive Vice President and Commissioner for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy, European Commission
- Moderator
- Eoin Drea, Senior Research Officer, Financial Times

CLOSING REMARKS

- Antonio López-Istúriz White, MEP, EPP Group, Secretary-Treasurer, Martens Centre



# Common Projects

2024 saw continued cooperation between the Martens Centre and its vast network of like-minded organisations, which brings together 31 member foundations and 22 official partners from all over Europe and beyond.

As always, the Martens Centre and its network organised a selection of online and hybrid common projects which sought to bring the member states and Brussels closer together through the power of communication.



All of our common projects are available at:  
[www.martenscentre.eu/type-of-event/common-projects/](http://www.martenscentre.eu/type-of-event/common-projects/)



Common Projects → 2024

JAN. 15/01 CONFERENCE, VIENNA  
**The contested continent. Africa in the focus of the world powers**  
WMCES/PoIAk

24/01 CONFERENCE, BRUSSELS  
**Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing in the EU**  
WMCES/Reformismo21

JAN. — NOV. SEMINARS, TURIN  
**Politicalcall**  
WMCES/Grossman Study Center

JAN. — DEC. COLLABORATIVE E-PUBLICATION, LJUBLJANA  
**Dished Out: AI**  
WMCES/INAK

FEB. 19/02 CONFERENCE, BERLIN  
**Cafe Kyiv: Disinformation As A Destabilising Tool to Democratisation and EU's Enlargement**  
WMCES/KAS Berlin

22/02 CONFERENCE, VIENNA  
**Two Years After 24th of February**  
WMCES/PoIAk

22-25/02 CONFERENCE, BRNO  
**Green Future, Youth Creation – Advancing Sustainability through Research and Development**  
WMCES/IKDP

MAR. 01/03 CONFERENCE, VIENNA  
**Europa Matinée**  
WMCES/PoIAk

11-12/03 CONFERENCE, BRATISLAVA  
**CEE-Asia Forum 2024**  
WMCES/KAS Prague/Central European Institute of Asian Studies

15-17/03 CONFERENCE, BUDVA  
**Prioritising Anti Corruption in the Western Balkans**  
WMCES/RSI

MAR. — NOV. COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION  
**Cyprus: 50 Years from the Turkish Invasion, 20 Years from the EU Accession**  
WMCES/ KAS Greece & Cyprus

APR. 05-07/04 SEMINAR, DOJRAN  
**Cross-border Cooperation and Exchange of Knowledge in Renewable Energy Sources: Water Management and Solar Photovoltaic Technologies**  
WMCES/KAS Skopje

18/04 ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION, LONDON  
**Climate Realism: Popular Support to Finance the Green Transition**  
WMCES/HSS London

18-21/04 CONFERENCE, MIAMI  
**Miami Conference**  
WMCES/JHS

20/04 CONFERENCE, ZAGORJE OB SAVI  
**What it will take to feel safe in the EU?**  
WMCES/INAK

APR. — NOV. ROUNDTABLE, BRUSSELS  
**EU Migration Policy Briefing**  
WMCES/KAS Europe

APR. — DEC. CONFERENCE, VILNIUS  
**Towards a European Belarus**  
WMCES/KAS Belarus

MAY 14/05 CONFERENCE, ATHENS  
**The European Union, Greece, and the Regional Developments in the Mediterranean, the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe**  
WMCES/KAS Greece and Cyprus

24-26/05 SEMINAR, NIŠ  
**Annual Seminar: Serbia's Foreign Policy – A Closer Look at the EU Accession**  
WMCES/HSS Belgrade

MAY. — SEP. CONFERENCE AND COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION, SOFIA  
**The Agenda of the New EU Institutional Cycle**  
WMCES/HSS Bulgaria

JUN. 11/06 CONFERENCE, VIENNA  
**Climate Protection Symposium**  
WMCES/PoIAk

15/06 PUBLICATION LAUNCH, HELSINKI  
**NATO-Finland – The New Strategy of Security and Defence Policy**  
WMCES/TOIVO

17-20/06 SEMINAR, SKOPJE  
**Society and Religion: Ethnic groups Identity and Nationalism**  
WMCES/KAS Skopje

18-20/06 — , WARSAW  
**Rule of Law Academy for Eastern European Countries**  
WMCES/RSI

JUN. — DEC. COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION, BRUSSELS  
**Financing Politics in Europe: a Political Party Roadmap for More Transparency and Effectiveness**  
WMCES/IRI

JUN. — DEC. COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION, TALLINN  
**Fortifying Europe's Security**  
WMCES/Pro Patria Institute



12-13/09 CONFERENCE, BUDAPEST  
**Budapest Energy and Security Talks**  
WMCES/Equilibrium Institute

27-29/09 CONFERENCE, VISBY  
**Visby Conference**  
WMCES/JHS

27-29/09 CONFERENCE, SKOPJE  
**Regional School Security 2024: Regional Cooperation in Coping with the Ongoing Security Challenges**  
WMCES/KAS Skopje

SEP. — NOV. SEMINARS, VILNIUS  
**Series of EU Discussions**  
WMCES/Institute for European Right

SEP. — DEC. COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION, SKOPJE  
**Intersecting Paths: Strategic Autonomy, Enlargement, and the Future of EU-Western Balkans Relations**  
WMCES/KAS Skopje

01-02/10 CONFERENCE, WARSAW  
**Warsaw Security Forum 2024**  
WMCES/Casimir Pulaski Foundation

03/10 SEMINAR, BRUSSELS  
**US Elections and Transatlantic Relations: Navigating a Changing Landscape**  
WMCES/HSS Brussels

07-10/10 CONFERENCE, BUDAPEST  
20-24/10 CONFERENCE, VIENNA  
**How Europe Works 2024**  
WMCES/PoIAk

10/10 CONFERENCE, PRAGUE  
**Resilient Europe – Confronting New Threats to Democracy**  
WMCES/CIS

11-13/10 SEMINAR, BAILE HOMOROD  
**EU Camp 2024**  
WMCES/KKA

18-20/10 ROUNDTABLE, THESSALONIKI  
**Greece and North Macedonia: Charting an EU Course Through Stormy Waters**  
WMCES/KAS Greece & Cyprus

OCT. — NOV. SEMINARS SKOPJE, BITOLA & SHTIP  
**Cathedra Adenauer ‘24**  
WMCES/KAS Skopje

05/11 CONFERENCE, SKOPJE  
**NATO – 75 Years of Unity fostering Cooperation and Ensuring Collective Defence: Security Challenges for Europe**  
WMCES/KAS Skopje

05-07,17-20/11 — , BRUSSELS  
**How Europe Works: a first hand perspective on EU institutions for EaP and WB countries**  
WMCES/RSI

07-08/11 CONFERENCE, VIENNA  
**28th European Security Forum**  
WMCES/PoIAk

08-09/11 SEMINAR, PRAGUE  
**European Youth Dialogue 2024**  
WMCES/EAD

08-10/11 CONFERENCE, GHEORGHIENTI  
**Training Weekend for Students**  
WMCES/KKA

10-14/11 SEMINAR, MUNICH  
**After the US and EU Elections: Consequences and Results for Transatlantic Relations**  
WMCES/HSS Washington

13/11 CONFERENCE AND COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATION, PRAGUE  
**Resilient democracy: What challenges and threats we face?**  
WMCES/PoIAk/TOPAZ

14/11 SEMINAR, ROME  
**Information Integrity and Privacy in the Time of Digitisation and Artificial Intelligence**  
WMCES/Circolo Esperia

18-20/11 CONFERENCE, BRUSSELS  
**Latin American Visitors Programme**  
WMCES/FAES

19-20/11 CONFERENCE, ATHENS  
**Athens Security Forum 2024**  
WMCES/HSS Athens/KAS Athens

21/11 CONFERENCE, PARIS  
**Border Control and Asylum Processing: A Transatlantic Approach**  
WMCES/Immigration and Demography Observatory

21-24/11 CONFERENCE, ATHENS  
**Securing Europe's Future: Overcoming Challenges**  
WMCES/KAS Greece & Cyprus

22/11 CONFERENCE, VILNIUS  
**Crisis of European Identity? War, Sovereignty, and the New Radicalisms**  
WMCES/IER

25/11 CONFERENCE, LUHACOVICE  
**European Founding Fathers**  
WMCES/EAD

27/11 CONFERENCE, PRAGUE  
**Persecution for Faith 2024**  
WMCES/IKDP

03/12 BOOK PRESENTATION, NICOSIA  
**Cyprus: 50 Years from the Turkish Invasion, 20 Years from the EU Accession**  
WMCES/KAS Greece & Cyprus

04-06/12 CONFERENCE, VALLEE D'AOSTE  
**Grand Continent Summit 2024**  
WMCES/Groupe d'Etudes Geopolitiques

06-08/12 CONFERENCE, ODORHEIU SECUIESC  
**Debate Club Final**  
WMCES/KKA

13-15/12 SEMINAR, BELA  
**Chateau Bela Strategic Forum**  
WMCES/GLOBSEC

13-15/12 CONFERENCE, BAILE FELIX  
**EU Academy**  
WMCES/KKA



# Outreach

Crucial to our efforts of developing centre-right thought in Europe is our coordinated outreach strategy. We make use of traditional and emerging media and produce a variety of audiovisual and written content in order to increase the visibility of our activities and our researchers, promote our content to a wider audience, and continue to be part of the discussion on the European Union in Brussels and beyond.



All of our outreach content can be found at:  
[www.martenscentre.eu/news/](http://www.martenscentre.eu/news/)



# Our Formats

Our structure as a pan-European platform for centre-right ideas means we are always involved in discussions in a variety of policy areas and seek to diversify our content in order to attract as wide an audience as possible.

Our goal is always to bring the European debate closer to the people it impacts the most—the European public. In 2024, we utilised various formats to achieve this, including:

## PODCASTS



### The European View Podcast NEW

The newest addition to our roster of podcasts, the European View Podcast is a sister product to our biannual policy journal. Hosted by Sara Pini, Senior Research Officer and European View Deputy Editor-in-Chief at the Martens Centre, podcast episodes explore in a bit more depth individual articles from the journal's latest issue, in order to provide better context and more complete information to our readers, who are also listeners!



### Her and EU

Starring Loredana Teodorescu, Martens Centre Academic Council Member, Her and EU discusses gender equality in the EU. This year, one of our guests was Sofia Zacharaki, Minister of Social Care and Family of Greece.



### Brussels Bytes

Hosted by Dimitar Lilkov, Martens Centre Senior Research Officer, this podcast series tackles novel issues of digital policy, online privacy, and FinTech, featuring a balance of academics, policymakers and private sector actors, reflecting the multi-layered nature of digital policy.



All of our audiovisual content is available online. Scan the QR code to start enjoying it now!

## VIDEOS



### Bridge the Channel

Starring Angelos Chrysogelos, Martens Centre Research Associate, Bridge the Channel keeps our viewers informed about EU-UK relations, the latest political developments in the Anglosphere, and their impact on political decisions made in the EU.



### 7Debates

The 7Debates are a partner product to the larger 7Ds Research Project. These video panels enable us to present the importance of each of the 7 policy areas explored by the research. This year, among others, we hosted a discussion on De-risking Globalisation with Herman Van Rompuy, former President of the European Council.



### Video Op-eds

Realising that many people consume information on the go nowadays, we devised a way to bring our insights to a larger audience in today's fast-paced world: Video Op-eds! These combine the bite-size, incisive nature of the op-ed with the convenience of the podcast!



### Thinking Talks

Our principal video interview format aimed at discussing a variety of issues with important guests across the EU sphere and beyond. This year, we held conversations with guests such as Giovanni Orsina, Željana Zovko MEP, and Tim Bale.

## EDITORIAL

### Martens Centre WhatsApp Channel

In 2024, we launched a dedicated WhatsApp channel to give our audience direct access to our most relevant work; it's the best place to make sure you don't miss any of our events, publications, and blogs! You can join by scanning the QR code below.



### Vital Questions

Our short written interview format, where we bring together key actors of certain spheres, such as members of our Honorary Board or experts in a policy field, to answer specific questions and offer their unique insights on the matters at hand.



### Migration Update

The Migration Update is a monthly compilation of relevant news stories created by the Martens Centre's migration expert, Vít Novotný. It is sent to our subscribers and relevant contacts in this policy field, and exists to provide a factual base for migration debates within the European centre-right.



Throughout the year, we have consistently monitored the Martens Centre website to ensure its visual modernity and technical advancement, aiming to enhance the experience for our visitors. Specifically, we focused on improving loading times and ensuring all our content was accessible and up to date, truly making our website a one-stop shop for anything Martens Centre our audience might be after.

### Website visitor trends:

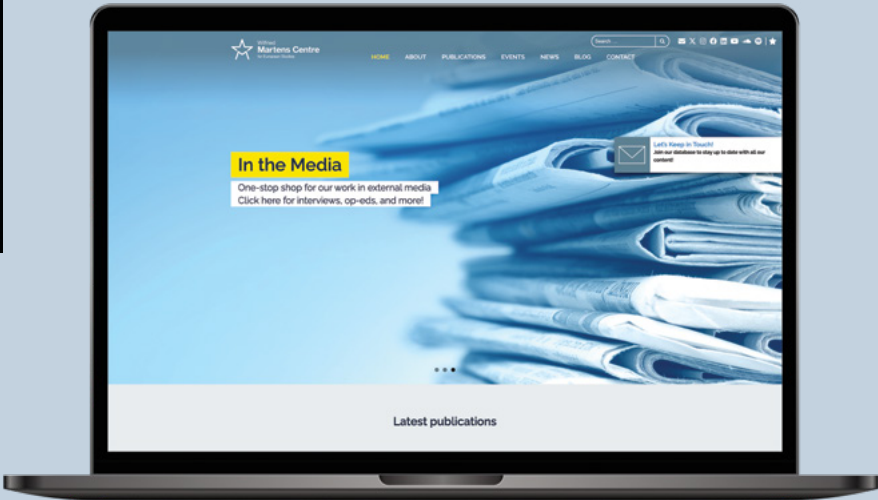
In 2024, pages on the Martens Centre website were viewed a total of **243,961 times**, up **24%** from last year!

In 2024, here is where our audience from around the world logged in from:

1.	Belgium	23.81%
2.	United States	12.47%
3.	Germany	9.71%
4.	United Kingdom	4.44%
5.	Italy	3.70%
6.	France	3.37%
7.	Netherlands	2.95%
8.	Luxembourg	2.41%
9.	Hong Kong	2.34%
10.	Singapore	2.32%
	Rest of the World	32.48%



Visit us at  
[www.martenscentre.eu](http://www.martenscentre.eu)



### Key Martens Centre Activities in 2024

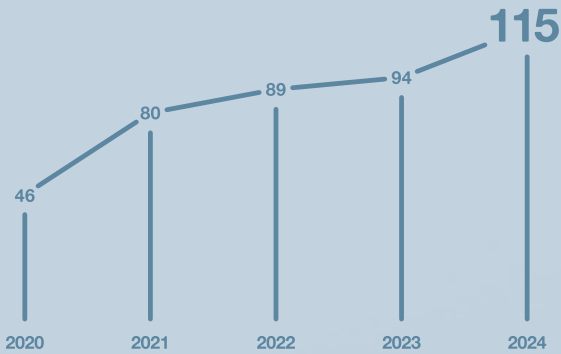


We published **25 policy briefs, research papers** and other **publications**.



We organised a total of **77 in-house events** and **common projects** in Brussels and across Europe, in conjunction with our member foundations and partners.

### Media Visibility Growth



2024 was another record year for our media presence! We have enjoyed consistent growth in this domain. We were present **115 times** across various media platforms.

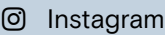
### Social Media Follower Count:



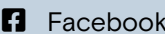
30,517



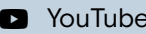
9,087 +29,29%\*



2,323 +19,15%\*



52,798



2,080 +13,66%\*

(\*) year-on-year



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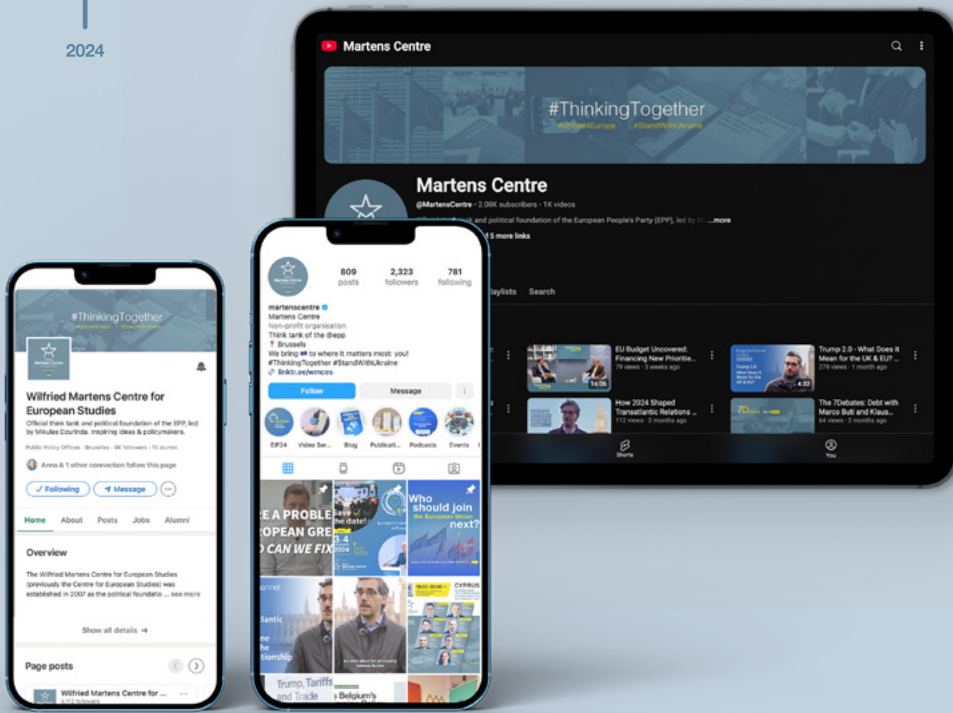
@martenscentre



Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies



CESThinkingEurope





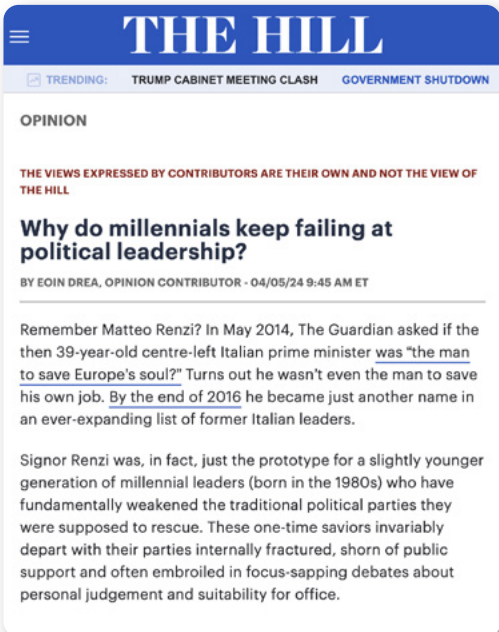
A selection of our media output in 2024:



Our experts were invited to participate in Euronews' Election Night live coverage during the 2024 European elections, sharing their insights on the results and their implications.

Martens Centre experts have been regularly invited to contribute to various media outlets reporting on topics relating to our work. Our researchers have also been extensively quoted by media discussing their areas of expertise. This demonstrates the Centre's relevance in public discussion at the very highest level, and is a testament to our strong presence in the European, and increasingly global, media landscape.

As part of our commitment to help inform the public debate as much as possible, we also developed media partnerships to expand our reach and bring together new members of our audience with our established contacts. This allows us to promote our wide offer of products, from policy papers to podcasts, to the relevant audiences across the EU.



Eoin Drea quipped about the relative struggle for millennials to succeed in political leadership roles for The Hill.



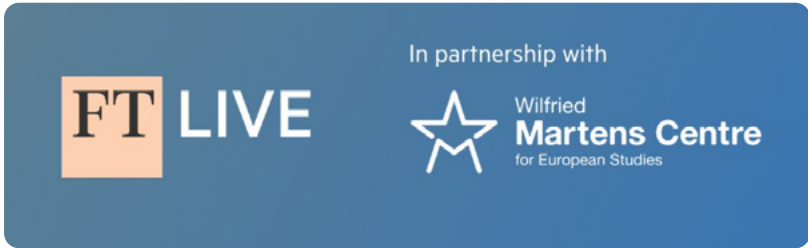
Our Executive Director was a guest of Euronews' "Brussels, my love?" to speak about European readiness for Trump 2.0 back in April.

European Ideas Forum  
Media Impact

This year at the European Ideas Forum, we organised two media partnerships. We sought to join forces with major media actors in order to increase the reach of our flagship event and broaden our audience.



The first partnership was a special edition of Euronews' The Europe Conversation, which achieved 521K impressions on LinkedIn and through digital advertising, and reached a total of 18 million viewers on television across Europe!



The second was a panel organised in partnership with FT Live, which was streamed on social media and achieved over 270K impressions on LinkedIn and upwards of 1 million impressions on X!

These were some of the media outlets which featured Martens Centre experts in 2024. We also continued to expand our presence in non-English media, broadening our reach beyond our usual audience.





# About us

The Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (formerly the Centre for European Studies) was established in 2007 as the political foundation and official think tank of the EPP.

It embodies a pan-European mindset based on centre-right, Christian Democrat, conservative and like-minded political values and research. It serves as a framework for national political foundations linked to member parties of the EPP.

The Martens Centre helps prepare EPP programmes and policy documents. It organises seminars and training on EU policies and on the process of European integration. The Centre also contributes to formulating EU and national public policies. It produces research papers and books, policy briefs and the twice-yearly European View journal. Its research activities are divided into six clusters: party structures and EU institutions, economic and social policies, EU foreign policy, environment and energy, values and religion, and new societal challenges. Through its papers, publication launches, conferences and online activities, the Martens Centre offers a platform for discussion among experts, politicians, policymakers and the European public.

At the beginning of 2014, the Centre was renamed in honour of its late president and founder, Wilfried Martens, the EPP's long-standing president and a former prime minister of Belgium.



Find out more about us at  
[www.martenscentre.eu/who-we-are/](http://www.martenscentre.eu/who-we-are/)



# Executive Board

This board is composed of a maximum of eight members, including the President and the Secretary Treasurer, all of whom are elected by the General Assembly of the Centre. Its roles range from drafting the annual programme based on agreed research priorities and ensuring the legal representation and financial supervision of the activities of the Centre, to steering the expansion of the Centre's network of member organisations.



Mikuláš Dzurinda  
President



Antonio López-Istúriz White  
Secretary Treasurer



Joseph Daul



Roberta Metsola



Hans-Gert Pöttering



Peter Egardt



Arjen Siegmans



Maria da Graça Carvalho



Mikuláš Dzurinda  
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Jan Peter Balkenende



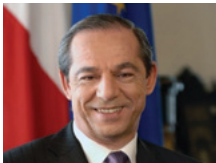
José Manuel Barroso



Jan Krzysztof Bielecki



Carl Bildt



Lawrence Gonzi



Jyrki Katainen



Juhan Parts



Antonis Samaras



Jacques Santer



Wolfgang Schäussel



Herman Van Rompuy

# Honorary Board

The Honorary Board aims to reinforce the expertise of the Centre, not only for enhancing the think-tank's expert profile, but also in order to boost its intellectual capacity, enabling our experts to address the EU's current and future challenges. The members of the board are all former prime ministers or former heads of EU institutions belonging to the EPP family, with a successful track record of country and institutional reforms.

IN MEMORIAM



John Bruton (1947-2024)



# Academic Council

To increase the academic scope of the Martens Centre and to ensure its research, studies and activities meet the highest scholarly standards, the Executive Board nominates esteemed academics and researchers as members of the Academic Council.



Klaus Welle  
Chairman



Ignacio Cosido



Franck Debié



Olof Ehrenkrona



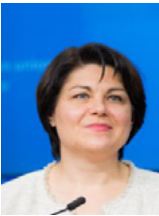
Werner Fasslabend



Peter Fischer-Bollin



Geir Flikke



Natalia Gavrilita



Anthony Gooch



Jacob Kirkegaard



Antonis Klapsis



Stefan Lunte



Giovanni Maddalena



Madalena  
Meyer Resende



Valérie Niquet



Salome Samadashvili



Marina Skordeli



Anthony Teasdale



Loredana Teodorescu



Teija Tilikainen



Lucie Tungul



Žiga Turk



Steven Van Hecke

# Individual Members

Individual members are politically likeminded, senior-level professionals active in European politics, European institutions and related organisations. They participate in meetings of the General Assembly and offer their perspective on the overall strategy and goals of the Martens Centre and on how to attain them.



Timothy Beyer Helm



Jacob Lund Nielsen



Nicolas Pascual  
De La Parte



Kostas Sasmatzoglou



Filippo Terruso



Antti Timonen



Marianne Thyssen

# Political Auditors

Our Political Auditors are senior professionals from the worlds of politics, consultancy, and academia, who are affiliated with our Member Foundations. They are responsible for conducting an independent appraisal of the Centre's financial activities and provide assurance to the General Assembly and the Executive Board on financial aspects of the Centre.



Peter D.P. Noordhoek



José Herrera



Clauspeter Hill



Pantelis Sklias

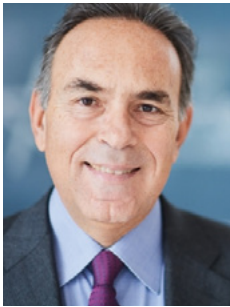


# Research Associates

Research associates and senior research associates are politically like-minded academics who contribute research papers, short analyses and blogs, and give advice on current affairs.



SENIOR  
Paolo Alli



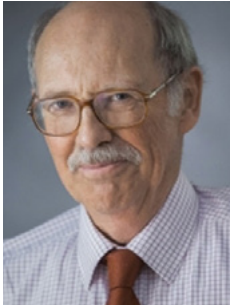
SENIOR  
Constantine  
Arvanitopoulos



SENIOR  
Michał Boni



SENIOR  
Jolyon Howorth



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Lars Jonung



SENIOR  
Bruno Maçães



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Rainer Münz



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Jarosław Pietras



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Michael Benhamou



Giselle Bosse



Edward Hunter Christie



Angelos Chrysogelos



Hans Geeroms



Magnus Norell



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Tommaso Virgili



Luigi Crema



Jürgen Matthes



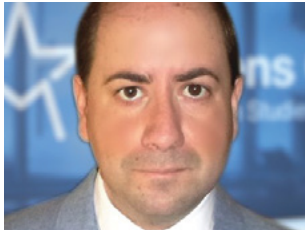
Michael O'Neill



Rumiana Stoilova



Garvan Walshe



André P. Debattista



Vladimir Milov



Dalibor Roháč



Nikolaos Tzifakis



Michael Wohlgemuth



# Staff 2024



Tomi Huhtanen  
Executive Director



Peter Hefe  
Policy Director



Margherita Movarelli  
Head of Communications and Marketing



Federico Ottavio Reho  
Strategic Coordinator and Senior Research Officer



Panos Tasiopoulos  
Head of External Cooperation and Events



Viktória Jančošíková  
Manager of the President's Office



Sara Pini  
Senior Research Officer



Dimitar Lilkov  
Senior Research Officer



Katerina Jakimovska  
Senior Event Officer



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Eoin Drea  
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Gavin Synnott  
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Brand and Visual Communications Officer



Anna Rożniatowska-Fidos  
Senior Financial and EU Grants Officer



Sandra Pasarić  
Project Officer



George Dimakos  
Project Officer



Ionela Ciolan  
Research Officer



Eleftheria Katsi  
Communications and Press Officer



Julian Bonnici  
Communications and New Media Officer



Theo Larue  
Editorial and Publications Officer



Djamel Kitouni  
Senior IT Officer



Stéphanie Honorez  
Receptionist & Office Manager

# Visiting Fellows

The Martens Centre takes an active interest in a wide range of political issues with a particular emphasis on studies related to European policy. Therefore, each year it offers visiting-fellow positions of 6 to 12 months to dynamic, motivated and innovative individuals with the appropriate academic credentials.



Teona Lavrelashvili  
Georgia

# Internships

The Martens Centre offers internships of three to six months to university graduates and young researchers from Europe and the rest of the world. The internship programme is intended to provide the trainees with the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of European affairs and to gain close insight into the daily work of the European institutions in Brussels.



Michele Pertosa  
Italy



Ernest Su  
Taiwan



Erik Swärdh  
Sweden



Matúš Babulík  
Slovakia



Ana Palčič  
Slovenia



Alessandro de Ciccio  
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Mihael Koščak  
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Arnaud Navarre  
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Gabriele Scalise  
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Are you interested in an internship with the Martens Centre? Apply now!  
Please visit [www.martenscentre.eu/join-team](http://www.martenscentre.eu/join-team) for more information.



# Member Foundations

The Martens Centre works closely with 31 member foundations from all over Europe.



Academy for the Development of a Democratic Environment  
Akkademja għall-Iżvilupp ta' Ambjent Demokratiku (AZAD)  
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Association Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria  
Сдружение 'Граждани за европейско развитие на България' (GERB)  
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Europietiškos dešinės institutas (IER)  
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Konstantinos Karamanlis  
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Ινστιτούτο Δημοκρατίας  
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Centar za nove inicijative  
Центар за нове иницијативе (CNI)  
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and Strategic Studies,  
Lebanon



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