



EUROPEAN STUDENT CONFERENCE 2021

Toward a Revived Transatlantic Alliance

Concept Note

June 4–June 6, 2021



With the support of the
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EUROPEAN
HORIZONS

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OUR MISSION AND IMPACT

European Horizons is a global, student-led policy incubator whose mission is to give young people a voice in shaping the future of Europe and transatlantic relations. We believe that in today's increasingly polarized and divided world, our youth's novel perspective is more valuable than ever. Their impact needs to reach beyond their responsibility as voters, and into the decision-making process of domestic and supranational institutions.

We equip our members with relevant tools, skill sets, and connections to amplify their voices in the political arena. European Horizons empowers the youth with policy-writing and leadership workshops, high-level conferences to incubate and share ideas, and a growing network of alumni and policy-makers. We further the reach of their impact by publishing independent research in the Review of European and Transatlantic Affairs (RETA) and other academic publications. We are committed to innovating and adjusting to changing realities in order to continue supporting and educating our members effectively.

Based on our values of inclusivity and diversity, we are dedicated to building an extensive network of university chapters around the world. Our 60+ chapters from Japan to California contribute to multifaceted perspectives and allow us to face our differences head on. They organise domestic and regional conferences and conduct academic research to enrich our understanding of today's complex problems and help us come up with innovative solutions.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

As an established global policy incubator, European Horizons has an excellent track record in the policy arena:

- Recently, we published our first book in collaboration with ASKO Europa Stiftung, seeking to solve the question: *How can digital technologies build a more integrated Europe?* This book was published by Nomos, a highly rewarded German academic publisher.
- We publish our yearly Review of European and Transatlantic Affairs, an academic journal with contributions from undergraduate and graduate students, scholars, policymakers, and politicians from around the world. The review is accessible in university libraries worldwide.
- We regularly contribute to the European Commission's consultation process. In September 2020, we submitted, in collaboration with the In Strat Foundation, a joint contribution on the New Competition Tool and the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the ex-ante regulatory instrument. We also contributed to the December 2020 consultation on legal migration.
- For the past six years, we have organised high-level conferences in the United States, Europe, and Asia for more than 1,200 young policy enthusiasts. Our conferences serve as a platform for innovation and policy incubation, and lead to publishing independent research in our journal and other relevant academic publications.
- We have a diverse network of policy-makers and like-minded organisations. Close relationships with stakeholders like the European Parliament Liaison Office to Washington, D.C., the Konrad Adenauer-Stiftung, or the European Student Think Tank enable us to share and multiply our thoughts through collaboration, and ultimately amplify the voice of students.

ESC2021: OVERVIEW

When and where: On June 4-6, undergraduate and graduate students from across the United States, Europe, and all over the world will come together virtually for the sixth annual European Student Conference to discuss some of the major challenges facing the European Union and transatlantic relations today.

How and what: Students will be selected from universities around the world, in a competitive application process. They will be joined at the conference by dignitaries from politics, diplomacy, business, academia, and the media, who will share their knowledge and expertise with the students in workshops and panel discussions. Before and during the conference, the students will craft policy memos that shed new light on European challenges in the realms of Democracy, Security and Defense, Enlargement, and Internet Governance.

Why: The aim of the European Student Conference is to connect students to professionals and policy-makers in discussion of current affairs. Students will be encouraged to take on these challenges, by engaging in critical thinking and enriching discussion and debate. Students will also learn or expand their knowledge of policy writing with the help of experts.

FORMAT

The conference is structured around three main formats:

- **Keynote speeches** will be held by some of our guests from the world of European politics and transatlantic relations in the opening and closing plenaries, followed by questions from the audience.
- **Three panels** will be held throughout the course of the conference, each featuring up to three guest experts, as well as a moderator. Each 60-minute panel will focus on a select topic currently dominating our discussion and understanding of Europe. Panels are followed by ~20 minutes of questions from the audience.
- **Workshops** of up to 20 students, advised by guest experts and members of our policy portfolio, will each tackle one of the conference themes outlined on the following page. Students will arrive at the conference having already prepared drafts of their policy memos, and will revise their ideas in light of their group discussions in three workshop sessions throughout the conference. Each group will present a final policy memo proposing concrete policy solutions on the final day of the conference.

PURPOSE & THEMES

The conference will be framed thematically around a number of key challenges facing Europe. Participants will seek to resolve these challenges with one another and with the guidance of the guest experts, professors, and decision-makers. The aim of the conference is to make progress toward understanding and tackling these challenges by coming up with concrete plans of action for implementing the policy visions and strategies students develop and by identifying steps that conference participants themselves can take.

The headline challenge of this year's conference is **“Toward a Revived Transatlantic Alliance.”**

Within their workshops the students will discuss the following themes:

I. Reimagining the Transatlantic Alliance

- a. How can the EU and the Biden administration strengthen the transatlantic alliance to prepare for future pandemics, climate change, and other looming hybrid threats in the 21st century?
- b. America is back. But its commitment to the transatlantic alliance remains uncertain. How can the NATO security structure be reinvigorated, and what should the EU do to hedge against resurgent American isolationism in 2024?
- c. The pandemic has highlighted the fragility and interconnectedness of global supply chains. How should the transatlantic alliance counter recent protectionist tendencies while at the same time strengthening national security during global crises? And how should it conduct its vaccine diplomacy and distribution efforts?

PURPOSE & THEMES

2. Defending Democracy against Cyber Threats

- a. How can Europe and the United States act (jointly or independently) to counter misinformation and disinformation, protecting against hate speech and discrimination, while also upholding freedom of expression?
- b. How can the EU and the US mitigate against malicious actors in cyberspace seeking to undermine the integrity of democratic elections? How should the transatlantic partnership be leveraged to strengthen cyber resilience?
- c. How should governments protect their citizens and businesses against cyber threats? And how should the transatlantic alliance position itself with respect to suppliers in the rollout of 5G infrastructure?

3. Strengthening the Eastern Partnership

- a. When the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict erupted last year, the EU was caught flat-footed. How should the lessons learned from Europe's inaction inform policy? How can Europe strengthen its partnership with Armenia and Azerbaijan going forward?
- b. Belarus presents another unresolved conflict in Europe's immediate Eastern vicinity. How should the EU promote democratic norms and European values abroad without becoming too interventionist. How else should the EU support the people of Belarus?
- c. From Bulgaria to Poland, Eastern member states have undermined democracy and engaged in Euroscepticism. How should democratic institutions and values be strengthened in the Eastern European context? How can we bring both Brussels and Eastern Europe closer together? Especially considering the effects of and the response to the pandemic?

OUTCOME

Before the conference, students in groups will discuss their policy ideas in groups for the themes of their respective workshops and formulate them into policy memo. At the conference, students will present their policy memo to one another, as well as to the decision-makers and experts. During the workshops, they will exchange ideas and engage in common discussion with other participants in order to refine their policy solutions. The solutions will have a concrete, structured form, assigning each step of the process to relevant authorities to further underline the plausibility of the solution's framework. They will present the final versions of the policy-papers during the final presentation session.

After the conference, the students will be encouraged to share their policy ideas for the future of the European Union and transatlantic relations with their university communities. For prior editions of the conference please visit:

<http://europeanhorizons.org>

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Day 1: Friday, June 4

TIME (CET)	TIME (EST)	ACTIVITY
3.00–4.00 PM	9.00–11.0 AM	Welcome Speeches
4:15-5:15 PM	10:15-11:15 AM	Panel 1
5:15-5:45 PM	11:15-11:45 AM	Coffee Break
6.00-7.00 PM	12:00-1:00 PM	Keynote Speech 1
7.00-8.00 PM	1.00-2.00 PM	Workshop Sessions
8.00-8.30 PM	2.00-2.30 PM	Coffee Break
8.30-9.00 PM	2.30-3.30 PM	Panel 2

Day 2: Saturday, June 5

TIME (CET)	TIME (EST)	ACTIVITY
4.00-5.00 PM	10.00–11.00 AM	Workshop Sessions
5.00-5.30 PM	11.00-11.30 AM	Coffee Break
5.30-6.30 PM	11.30-12.30 PM	Panel 3
6.30-7.30 PM	12.30-1.30 PM	Workshop Sessions
7.30-8.00 PM	1.30-2.00 PM	Coffee Break
9.00-11.00	3.00-5.00 PM	Social Event

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Day 3: Sunday, June 6

TIME (CET)	TIME (EST)	ACTIVITY
4.00-5.00 PM	10.00-11.00 AM	Policy Memo Presentation
5.00-6.00 PM	11.00-12.00 PM	Keynote Speech 2
6.00-7.00 PM	12.00-1.00 PM	EuH Presentation and Farewell

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Thomas Mayr-Harting

Ambassador Thomas Mayr-Harting was Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia in the European External Action Service from 2015 to 2019. He served as Head of the European Union Delegation to the United Nations in New York from 2011 to 2015. From 2008 to 2011 he was the Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN in New York, representing Austria in the UN Security Council in 2009 and 2010. Ambassador Mayr-Harting joined the Austrian Foreign Ministry in 1979. He served, inter alia, at the Austrian Embassy in Moscow and as Ambassador to Belgium and NATO, Special Representative for the Western Balkans and Political Director.

PANELS

REIMAGINING THE TRANSATLANTIC ALLIANCE PANEL

June 4th 10:15-11:15 AM EST

Gorana Grgic

Dr. Gorana Grgic is currently at the NATO Defense College as the 2021 Partners Across the Globe Research Fellow. She is a jointly appointed Lecturer at the Department of Government and International Relations and the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney. Gorana is also an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Western Australia and a former Visiting Scholar at the Harvard Center for European Studies.

Her research interests include US politics and foreign policy, transatlantic relations, conflict resolution and democratisation. Gorana strongly believes in translating scholarly work to help improve public debate and decision making in all aspects of domestic politics and international affairs. She has consulted government and corporate entities in Australia, United States and Europe. She has also been a regular political analyst for the ABC News Australia and has had work published in a number of leading Australian and international media outlets and policy institutes. Prior to her academic career, Gorana worked for the United Nations Development Programme in Croatia and Special Broadcasting Service in Australia.

Jeremy Shapiro

Jeremy Shapiro is the research director of the European Council on Foreign Relations. His areas of focus include US foreign policy and transatlantic relations. Shapiro was previously a fellow with the Project on International Order and Strategy and the Center on the United States and Europe at Brookings, where he edited the Foreign Policy program's blog Order from Chaos. Prior to Brookings, he was a member of the U.S. State Department's policy planning staff, where he advised the secretary of state on U.S. policy in North Africa and the Levant. He was also the senior advisor to Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon, providing strategic guidance on a wide variety of U.S.- European foreign policy issues.

Rachel Rizzo

Rachel Rizzo is an adjunct fellow at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), working in the Transatlantic Security Program. Her research focuses on European security, NATO, and the transatlantic relationship. Prior to joining CNAS, Ms. Rizzo worked at the Atlantic Council's Brent Scowcroft Center on Strategy and Security. She began her career as a financial analyst at Goldman Sachs. Ms. Rizzo has co-authored numerous CNAS reports including *More Than Burden Sharing: Five Objectives for the 2018 NATO Summit*, *Defining Moment: the Future of the Transatlantic Security Relationship*, and *Transatlantic Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific: Recommendations for the Next U.S. Administration*. Her writing has appeared in publications such as *Politico*, *Foreign Policy*, *Defense One*, *The Hill*, *The National Interest*, *World Politics Review*, and *War on the Rocks*. She is a frequent commentator on European security, and has provided analysis for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *NPR*, *the LA Times*, *The Atlantic*, *Politico*, *Foreign Policy*, *Vox*, and *The Daily Beast*, among others. Ms. Rizzo received her M.A. in Security Policy Studies from the George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs where she focused on Defense Analysis and Homeland Security Policy. She graduated from the University of Utah with a B.A. in Finance.

DEFENDING DEMOCRACY AGAINST CYBER THREATS

June 4th 2:30-3:30 PM EST

Nad'a Kovalcikova

Dr. Nad'a Koval íková is a program manager and fellow at the Alliance for Securing Democracy (ASD) in the German Marshall Fund's Brussels office. While leading the ASD's European outreach, she focuses on emerging security challenges, NATO, EU foreign affairs, security and defence, transatlantic cooperation and election security. She analyses information operations, efforts to counter disinformation and other threats to democracy.

Prior to joining GMF, she has developed her expertise by working at NATO, the European Parliament, the French and Canadian embassies, and several NGO and think tank projects in Belgium, Canada, France, Slovakia, the UK, and the USA. Nad'a Koval íková obtained her PhD. in international relations with a focus on globalization and security threats, and masters' degrees in politics and government, European affairs and international economic relations. In addition to being a native speaker of Slovak, she is fluent in English and French, speaks Spanish and has a basic knowledge of German. She has frequently spoken at international public events and her work has appeared in news media such as Euractiv, EUObserver, Politico, Bild, Agenda Pública, Slovak RTVS, Pravda, Euranet, Het Financieele Dagblad, The Atlantic, and others.

Asaf Lubin

Dr. Asaf Lubin is an Associate Professor of Law at Indiana University Maurer School of Law and a Fellow at IU's Center for Applied Cybersecurity Research (CACR). He is additionally an affiliated fellow at Yale Law School's Information Society Project, a Faculty Associate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, and a visiting Scholar at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem Federmann Cyber Security Research Center.

Dr. Lubin's research centers around the intersection of law and technology, particularly as it relates to the regulation of cybersecurity harms, liabilities, and insurance as well as policy design around governmental and corporate surveillance, data protection, and internet governance under both domestic and international law. His work draws on his experiences as a former intelligence analyst, Sergeant Major (Res.), with the Israeli Defense Forces' Intelligence Branch as well as his vast practical training and expertise in national security law and foreign policy.

Dr. Lubin's work additionally reflects his time spent serving as a Robert L. Bernstein International Human Rights Fellow with Privacy International, a London-based non-for-profit devoted to advancing the right to privacy in the digital age and curtailing unfettered forms of governmental and corporate surveillance.

Florence G'Sell

Florence G'sell is a full professor of private law at the University of Lorraine and co-head of the Digital, Governance and Sovereignty Chair of Sciences Po Paris. Her research focuses on the legal challenges of digital technology, ranging from the disruptive phenomena caused by technological progress (AI, blockchain) to the issues raised by the regulation of platforms. She recently edited « Le Big Data et le droit » (Daloz, 2020).

STRENGTHENING THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

With a special message from Lawrence Meredith (Director for Neighbourhood East and Institution Building in European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations)

June 5th 11:30-12:30 PM EST

Richard Giragosian

Mr. Richard Giragosian is the Founding Director of the Regional Studies Center (RSC), an independent “think tank” located in Armenia, and serves as a Visiting Professor at the College of Europe’s Natolin Campus. He served on the staff of the Joint Economic Committee (JEC) of the U.S. Congress for nine years and has worked as a consultant for the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Union Delegation to Armenia, the OSCE and the U.S. Departments of Defense and State, among others.

Giragosian has also contributed to a dozen books, most recently including “Armenia’s transition: The challenges of geography, geopolitics and multipolarity,” in Broers, Laurence and Anna Ohanyan, Editors, Armenia’s Velvet Revolution. Authoritarian Decline and Civil Resistance in a Multipolar World (forthcoming from I.B. Tauris, September 2020), “Small States and the Large Costs of Regional Fracture: The Case of Armenia,” in Ohanyan, Anna, Editor, Russia Abroad. Driving Regional Fracture in Post-Communist Eurasia and Beyond (Georgetown University Press: 2018) and other chapters in: Kamrava, Mehran, Ed., The Great Game in West Asia: Iran, Turkey and the

South Caucasus, Georgetown University, Doha, Qatar (Oxford University Press: 2017); “Twenty-Five Years On: Armenia’s Difficult Period of Statebuilding,” in Hunter, Shireen, Ed., The New Geopolitics of the South Caucasus. Prospects for Regional Cooperation and Conflict Resolution, (Rowman & Littlefield: 2017).

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