



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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Change and challenges – but also continuity, after 40 years

Against the backdrop of a tense European and global policy arena, the EU will see lots of change in 2024. Up to 60 % of the MEPs elected during the 2024 European Parliament elections will be new faces, and they'll soon be followed by a new European Commission and a new President of the European Council. Meanwhile, on the other side of the Atlantic, there will be an age-defining US presidential election, with huge implications for Europe, both economically and geopolitically.

CEPS is ready to tackle these challenges head on. With Elżbieta Bieńkowska as the new Chair of the CEPS Board, she will be bringing a wealth of knowledge on how to effectively deal with these challenges. She was Single Market Commissioner in the Juncker Commission, and before that a Deputy Prime Minister in the Tusk government. We are also happy to have Andrea Renda as the new CEPS Director of Research. He brings impressive expertise on a wide variety of pressing topics, stretching from better regulation and the digital transformation to the transatlantic agenda and AI regulation.

We intend to strengthen our relations with our members and reach out more often (but also more effectively), not only at the EU level but also at the Member State one, as well as further develop our ties with foundations. We are involved in a record number of EU-funded Horizon projects, stretching across themes ranging from geopolitics to climate, governance to migration.

We can look back with pride on an eventful 40th anniversary year in 2023. We had a fascinating debate at Bozar in central Brussels on 28 February on the theme of 'The Europe we want', as well as the first official CEPS Alumni gathering in September. We transitioned to a new Chair with a lively debate on EU enlargement. In the meantime, we managed to nurture the Brussels policy debate with a broad set of publications, covering all areas of European policy in its global context.

I would like to take this occasion to thank Joaquin Almunia for his several years' service as CEPS Chair and Cinzia Alcidi and Steven Blockmans for their almost four years as Co-Directors of Research.



Karel Lannoo

Karel Lannoo
CEPS Chief Executive Officer

HIGHLIGHTS



Elżbieta Bieńkowska appointed as new Chair of the CEPS Board

Elżbieta Bieńkowska was formally appointed as the new Chair of the CEPS Board on 3 November, the first woman to hold this position.

She will work with CEPS' Board, along with the dedicated team of CEPS researchers, policy analysts and experts. She will have a particular focus on safeguarding CEPS' reputation as an independent think tank, as well as supervising the management team.

She brings with her a wealth of experience in public administration at both the national and European levels. From September 2014 to December 2019, she served as the European Commissioner for the Single Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship, and SMEs.

She was also a member of the Polish Senate, Deputy Prime Minister of Poland, Minister for Infrastructure and Development, and Minister for Regional Development in the government of Donald Tusk.

New Director of Research

The CEPS Board officially appointed Andrea Renda as Director of Research for a three-year term. He will be leading the organisation's agenda and research priorities from 1 November 2023 onwards. He will work closely with the CEPS Senior Research Fellows to promote research excellence and relevance. He will also be responsible for ensuring the quality of research methodologies and outputs.

Andrea has taken over from current co-Directors Cinzia Alcidi and Steven Blockmans, who jointly held the position since October 2020. Both Cinzia and Steven will continue their invaluable contribution to CEPS as Senior Research Fellows – Cinzia on economic policy, jobs and skills, and Steven in the domains of foreign policy and institutions.



CEPS turns 40

CEPS was the first European think tank to actively advise EU policymakers. Today, we're still the largest independent think tank in Brussels. We've had a front row seat for the most important developments in Europe over the past 40 years, from the fall of Soviet communism and the development of the Single Market in the 1980s, to the birth of the euro in the 1990s, and the global financial crisis of the 2000s.

Now, in the geopolitically uncertain world of the 2020s, we've branched out into other fields such as migration, the digital economy, jobs and skills, and security policy. In the years ahead, we must confront the climate crisis, Great Power rivalry, the return of war to Europe and a multitude of economic problems.

The Europe we want. The Europe we need.

To mark CEPS' 40th anniversary, we hosted a reception followed by a thought-provoking high-level panel debate at Bozar with:

- **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General, Council of Europe
- **Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya**, Head of the United Transitional Cabinet of Belarus
- **Margrethe Vestager**, Executive Vice-President for the Digital Agenda and Commissioner for Competition Policy



Marija Pejčinović Burić



Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya



Margrethe Vestager



Don Graves



Věra Jourová



Arnoldas Pranckevičius



Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen



Didier Reynders

IL 2023 10th edition

For the 10th edition of Ideas Lab, 'Moving Europe from darkness into light', we hosted a two-day event bringing together our team of researchers and leading experts in EU policymaking across many different fields.

With Russia's war in Ukraine, the EU's central mission – to bring peace and prosperity to Europe – has become more difficult but it's now even more essential than ever before. The war has vividly illustrated the importance of shared values and the enhanced security that common institutions can create. Twelve months after the start of the war, this Ideas Lab worked to evaluate whether the EU's responses have worked. Did they create the more resilient Union that we need to safely navigate a much more dangerous world?

The 2023 edition examined how well the EU has fared in facing up to the challenges of 2022 and what still needs to be changed.

It also brought together the 'Next Generation' of Europeans - the CEPS Young Thinkers - with more seasoned experts in EU policymaking across many different fields.

For the 2023 edition, the +120 speakers included:

- **Věra Jourová**, Vice-President for Values and Transparency, European Commission
- **Didier Reynders**, Commissioner for Justice, European Commission
- **Don Graves**, United States Deputy Secretary of Commerce
- **Arnoldas Pranckevičius**, Ambassador, Permanent Representation of Lithuania to the European Union
- **Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen**, Director-General for Communication, European Commission
- **Cecilia Malmström**, Former European Commissioner for Trade
- **Jaap de Hoop Scheffer**, former Secretary General, NATO

HIGHLIGHTS

CEPS first alumni event

CEPS also marked its 40th anniversary with a first Alumni Gathering on 28 September 2023. This event welcomed back former staff members, visiting scholars, interns, and collaborators to rejoin the CEPS community. It provided an opportunity for the official launch of the CEPS Alumni Network.

The gathering was a great reunion, bringing together people who have been a part of CEPS' four decade-long journey. They shared stories from their CEPS days and (re)connected with colleagues from different eras, whilst CEPS staff presented their current work and ongoing projects.

The event also featured prominent alumni who have made significant contributions to the European policy landscape, including:

- **Declan Costello**, Deputy Director-General, DG ECFIN, European Commission
- **Camilla Brückner**, Director, UN/UNDP office in Brussels
- **Ilaria Maselli**, Head of Trade Flow Insights and Economics, Maersk

Diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI) at CEPS

To mark International Women's Day (#IWD2023), this year CEPS launched a week-long series of op-ed-style expert commentaries to highlight the insights and expertise of some of our most talented young female researchers. They covered various topics, ranging from pandemic preparedness to the myth of the gender-equal platform economy, from corporate due diligence to the EU's fiscal framework. We aim to repeat this exercise in 2024.

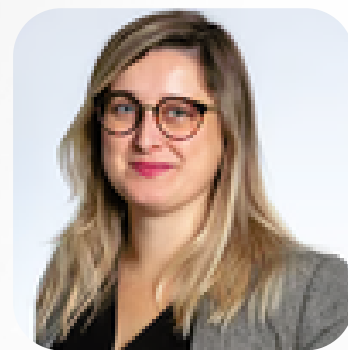
Internally, CEPS has also put a lot of emphasis on DEI in 2023, driven by the work of its dedicated Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Committee (DEIC), only launched at the beginning of the year. DEIC has worked throughout the year to help foster a truly inclusive and diverse culture at CEPS. These include staff training, a CEPS Mentorship Scheme as an additional form of guidance for junior staff members, and working with the CEPS HR Department to ensure all CEPS job vacancies are DEI-sensitive. » [Learn more](#)



Declan Costello



Camilla Brückner



Ilaria Maselli



NEW TASK FORCES





The digital euro

Issuing a retail central bank digital currency (CBDC) is a high priority for most of the central banks around the world. With a digital currency, central banks would open their balance sheets to the broader public more than ever before. So far, several countries have fully launched a digital currency, a dozen are running their own small-scale trial rollouts, and many more are in the process of exploring and developing such an instrument.



Alongside this global effort, in October 2021 the European Central Bank (ECB) launched a two-year investigation phase of the digital euro project. The aim is to address key issues related to its design and distribution. A digital euro would not replace physical cash, but rather complement banknotes and coins. It would be offered to the public, e.g. individual users (subject to certain holding limits), business users and governments or other public authorities, for retail payments.



From a geopolitical and central bank perspective, issuing a central bank digital euro (CBDE) is quickly becoming a matter of necessity. Nonetheless, the possible implications of a CBDC are so pervasive that its design and implementation require careful examination and planning. Equally, we need a thorough understanding of the potential consequences. » [Learn more](#)



High Level Group: Bolstering EU democracy

Since the introduction of direct elections to the European Parliament (EP) in 1979, the EU has become increasingly democratic. The EP has been continuously strengthened and tied more closely to the European Commission to make the EU's main executive institution more accountable; national parliaments have been more involved, particularly over the safeguarding of the subsidiarity principle; and participatory democratic instruments have been more recently introduced, such as the European Citizen's Initiative.

However, all this did not do away with the notion of the EU's democratic deficit and citizens' demands for democratically legitimate government and decision-making processes. This thus leads to a crucial question – what is the real issue with EU democracy and how can we solve it? » [Learn more](#)

Reinventing the EU's trade and investment relations with China in a contested and profoundly changing world order

Most recently, in the context of accelerated decoupling from the US and the war in Ukraine, China has even deliberately strengthened its global strategic position with a more assertive anti-Western narrative.

China is thus increasingly perceived as a competitor and even more so as a systemic rival.

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RESEARCH PRIORITIES



RESEARCH PRIORITIES

CEPS aims to make an authoritative contribution to European decision-making processes by increasing awareness about new challenges and opportunities, as well as providing educated insights. Revealing global trends and guided by the markers on Europe's political agenda, CEPS intended to concentrate its research activities for 2023-24 on three thematic clusters:

- Navigating the choppy waters of geopolitics
- A changing economic environment
- Overcoming the EU's internal governance issues

These research priorities follow on from those set for 2021-22 but have been accentuated by the momentous developments following Russia's invasion of Ukraine – an energy crisis, the return of inflation, and a spike in defence spending. In implementing these overarching research priorities, CEPS takes a strong multidisciplinary approach and aims to develop synergies between ongoing initiatives and new opportunities in each of its teams.



Navigating the choppy waters of geopolitics

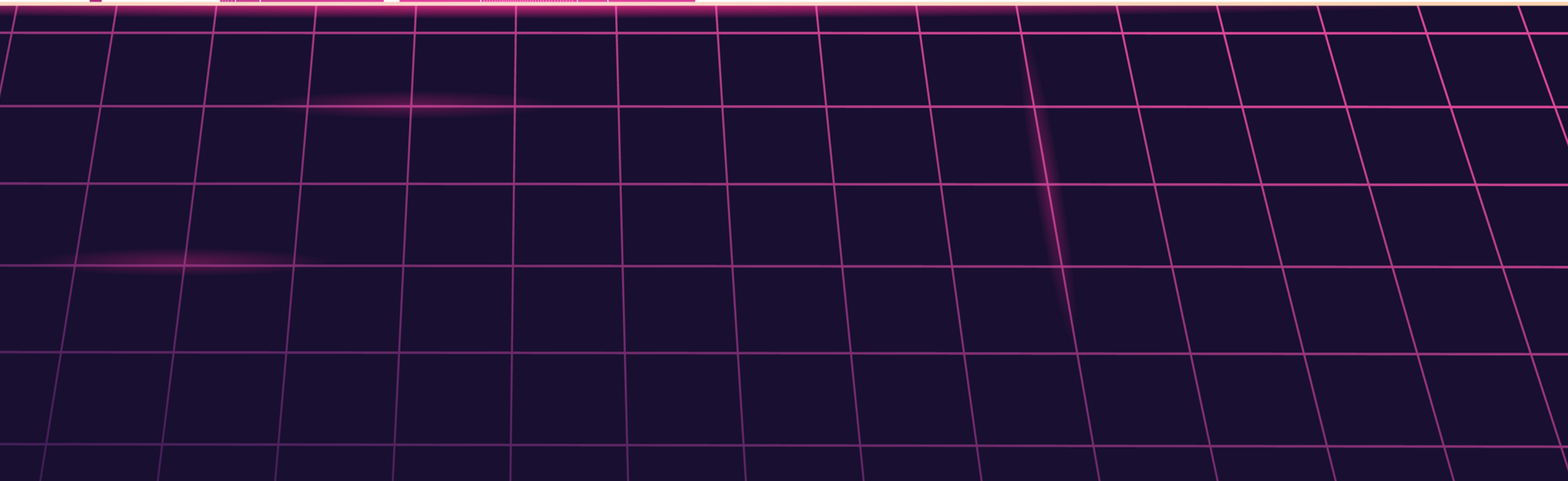


A changing economic environment



Overcoming the EU's internal governance issues

CEPS IN THE POLICY DEBATE



For think tanks, measuring impact is the Holy Grail. Elusive as it may be to establish a direct causal link between an idea proposed in a think tank publication and the eventual outcome, CEPS' work and home in Brussels gives it a louder voice in ongoing debates. Since a think tank's main objective is to provide decision-makers with high quality and objective policy research on policy-relevant subjects, it's worth offering a glimpse of the critical role CEPS plays in the political and policy arenas, not only at EU level but also on a wider international scale.

JANUARY

Sophia Russack: Proudly represented CEPS in the Franco-German group that has proposed innovative reforms to reshape the EU's institutional structure.

Andrea Renda: appointed Fellow at DG GROW for 2023. This is the first time that DG GROW has selected academics for this distinguished advisory role.

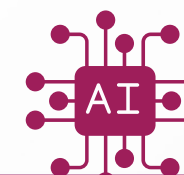
Sergio Carrera: Speeches at a Conference and a Task Force in Cape Town, South Africa as part of the Horizon 2020 ASILE project on asylum governance.

FEBRUARY

Steven Blockmans: Hearing on 'Extraterritorial sanctions and EU vulnerabilities' for the Dutch government's Advisory Council on International Affairs (which fed into their report on the international role of the euro).

Andrea Renda: Named Chair of the OECD Working Group on Artificial Intelligence Risk and Accountability.

Steven Blockmans: Speech on 'The EU Magnitsky Act' at the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' annual conference on EU sanctions policy.



MARCH

Irina Kustova: Speaker on the [panel discussion](#) 'Fuel of the future: can hydrogen be the key to decarbonisation?' together with the Vice President of the European Investment Bank, the Deputy Director of DG ENER and several industry representatives.

Caterina Astarita and Alexandre Ounnas: Presented a report about the impact of Covid-19 on income mobility and distribution at the 8th European User Conference for EU-Microdata in Germany.

Vasileios Rizos: Keynote speech during the [InterBattery 2023 Conference](#) organised by the South Korean Ministry of Trade, Industry & Energy and the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency.

Timothy Yeung: Presented the study on 'The European public health response to the Covid-19 pandemic: lessons for future cross-border health threats' at the European Parliament.

Hannah Ameye: Spoke at the CSAE conference in Oxford, UK, on Agricultural transformation, farm size, and nutritious foods in Africa.

Artur Bogucki and Paula Gürtler: Presentation of the Horizon 2020 FlexiGroBots project - 'ELSE factors for autonomous robot fleets' at the European Robotics Forum in Odense, Denmark.



APRIL

Tinatín Akhvediani: Named among the [Most Prominent and Promising Women in the EU](#).

Jelmer Nagtegaal: Presented the study 'Disclosure, inducements, and suitability rules for retail investors' in an event organised by Generali on 'The Economy in the service of the people? The EU retail investor strategy under discussion'.

Steven Blockmans: Speech on EU integration and pre-accession processes at Kyiv Mohyla Business School's 'Strategic Architects' programme for Ukraine's First Lady, the President's Office, members of the Ukrainian government and parliament, key industries and NGOs.

Steven Blockmans: Speech on 'staged accession' at the Balkan foreign ministerial meeting on EU enlargement, organised by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Irina Kustova: Presented an [Ecorys-CEPS study](#) prepared for the European Parliament's ITRE Committee on 'The Revision of the Third Energy Package for Gas',

Sergio Carrera: Speech presenting the final research findings of the Horizon 2020 CHACHIPEN project and an accompanying [policy brief](#) at a conference organised by CEPS at the European Parliament.



MAY

Francesco Corti: Keynote speaker at the debate on the 'Social Tracking Methodology in the EU Budget' in Porto.

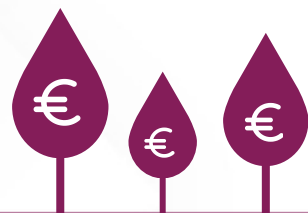
Steven Blockmans: Panel chair on EU enlargement at the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Lennart Meri Conference (Tallin).

Clément Perarnaud: Presented the 'Digital Connectivity Masterplan for the Global Gateway' [report](#) to the EU Confederation of Development Organisations (CONCORD).

Stefania Benaglia: Took part in the 'Festival dell'Economia 2023' in Trento.

Edoardo Righetti: Contributed to the conference 'Embracing the long war: Scenari per l'Europa', the final event of the 'Rome Foreign Policy Club: Gruppo di riflessione strategica su Italia, multilateralismo e interconnessioni' project (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, Italy).

Steven Blockmans: Baltic Assembly, gave a keynote speech on the future of the Eastern Partnership (Tallinn).



JUNE

Tinatín Akhvediani: Spoke at the 'Conference on the Three Seas Initiative', organised under the patronage of the President of Poland, Andrzej Duda.

Andrea Renda: Speaker at [Campus Party](#), the largest event on the digital economy in Latin America.

Andrea Renda: Host and moderator of the dedicated [stakeholder panel](#) of the 4th TTC ministerial meeting in Luleå, Sweden.

Fredrik Andersson: Gave the keynote speech at the '33rd Audit and Assurance conference' in Edinburgh, Scotland. He also presented the 'Study on the Audit Directive and the Audit Regulation'.

Fanny Sauvignon: Briefed the European Parliament's Delegations for relations with India (D-IN) on the [practical means for EU-India climate and energy cooperation](#).

Irina Kustova: Participated in the International Federalism Days 2023 in Munich organised by the Hanns Seidel Foundation.



Fanny Sauvignon and Stefania Benaglia: Published a paper for the G20 entitled 'Enhancing interoperability between connectivity initiative to achieve the SDGs and Paris Climate Goals'

Andrea Renda: Recorded a podcast with EurActiv, entitled 'The man behind the AI Act'.

Fanny Sauvignon, Stefania Benaglia and Rosanna Fanni: Took part in the [AESCON](#) - Asia Europe Sustainable Connectivity Scientific Conference.

Andreas Kopp: Spoke at the Working Party for Competitiveness and Better Regulation of the European Council on 'Regulatory burden reduction rules and the new competitiveness target indicators proposed by the Commission'.

Dylan Macchiarini Crosson: Speaker at the NATO Youth Summit.

Sergio Carrera: Gave a [speech](#) at the High-Level Task Force on EU Migration and Asylum Cooperation with third countries to discuss the key research findings and policy recommendations of the Horizon 2020 ASILE project



JULY

Sergio Carrera: Speech at the 'Conference on the European Arrest Warrant, Mutual Trust and the Rule of Law' at the European Parliament. He also presented STREAM project's final [policy brief](#).

Cinzia Alcidì: Participated in a panel on 'Making climate policy part of the considerations within fiscal policy', organised by the Dutch Council of State and the Network of EU IFI Institutions.

Apostolos Thomadakis: Spoke at a panel on 'How can we improve Value for Money for Retail Investors?', organised by the German Insurance Association (GDV), on the Retail Investment Strategy.

Tinatin Akhvlediani: Hosted a panel discussion with the Prime Minister of Croatia and the Director General of the European Commission's DG Near on the 10th anniversary of Croatia joining the EU.

Tinatin Akhvlediani: Participated in a high-level briefing seminar for the UK ambassador to Ukraine, her intervention covering Ukraine's reconstruction and sustainable recovery.

Apostolos Thomadakis: Moderated a session on 'The future of financial advice – how to ensure financial advice works for consumers?', organised by DG FISMA in the context of the 'Roundtable on the Distribution of Retail Investment Products'.

AUGUST

Steven Blockmans: Participated in the European Commission's High-Level Working Dinner with think tanks on the 2023 State of the Union.

Andrea Renda: Speaker at the European Forum Alpbach on the topic of 'War and peace in the Digital Age'

Tinatin Akhvlediani: Spoke at the European Forum Alpbach on the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on the EU economy.

SEPTEMBER

Christian Egenhofer: Present at the [Euro-Atlantic Resilience Forum](#) in Bucharest.

Irina Kustova and Edoardo Righetti: Spoke at the EU-US Emerging Leaders Visitors Programme at the EEAS on energy security and green industrial policy.

Steven Blockmans: Took part in the informal General Affairs Council side event on institutional reform due to enlargement.



OCTOBER

Sophia Russack: 'The Group of Twelve' submitted the results of its work in September 2023 and presented [their recommendations](#) to all 27 Ministers for European Affairs in the General Affairs Council.

Vasileios Rizos: Speaker during the [EUROPAEUM Conference](#) on Economic Strategic Autonomy.

Sergio Carrera: Presented the key research findings and policy recommendations at a conference and Task Force meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, part of the Horizon 2020 ASILE project on asylum governance.

Irina Kustova: Spoke at a workshop entitled 'Women in CCUS', jointly organised by two Horizon Europe projects, C4U and CaLby2030.

Steven Blockmans: Gave a briefing on the staged accession model at the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Stefania Benaglia: Gave a briefing on Global Gateway to the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).



NOVEMBER

Sergio Carrera and Davide Colombi: Gave a presentation to the European Parliament's LIBE Committee on a study led by CEPS on the 'Substitute impact assessment: Proposal for a regulation addressing situations of instrumentalisation in the field of migration and asylum'.

Damir Gojsic: Spoke at the EU SME Assembly on the Late Payment Observatory.

Cinzia Alcidi: Took part in the 'European Employment and Social Rights Forum' to speak about the social impacts of the digital transformation.

Steven Blockmans: Gave a briefing to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Bundestag on the potential impact of Ukraine's membership on the EU's institutional architecture and foreign and security policy at the Embassy of Estonia in Berlin.

Cinzia Alcidi: Presented a report on the EU's strategic economy during a dedicated EESC session.

Stefania Benaglia: Briefed EFTA on the Global Gateway.

DECEMBER

Andrea Renda: Speaker and moderator at the International AI summit; speaker and moderator at the OECD AI Ministerial Meeting; guest on Rainews24 to discuss the EU's autumn economic forecast.

Apostolos Thomadakis: Spoke on a panel on 'Identifying key obstacles to markets, infrastructures, regulations and methods of overcoming them' during the 2023 FinReg Congress in Warsaw, Poland.

Andrea Renda: Speaker at the annual conference of the European Commission's Regulatory Scrutiny Board; Keynote address at the annual meeting of Confindustria in Brussels; Keynote speaker at the European Parliament event for the 10th anniversary of DG SAFE; guest on the Financial Times 'Next Five' podcast; panellist at the European Commission's Open Workshop on the State of the Digital Decade.

Sergio Carrera: Interventions at the United Nations Global Refugee Forum (GRF) based on the research findings and recommendations of the Horizon 2020 ASILE project in the context of a linked event to the GRF (organised by CEPS in cooperation with the Danish Refugee Council and the Global Refugee Network), and at a GRF Speaker's Corner; selected to be one of the group members of the Global Academic Interdisciplinary Network (GAIN) that participated in the GRF.

Other impact:

A CEPS paper was mentioned in the European Commission's 2022 [strategic foresight report](#).

In January 2023, the French and German Ministers for Europe, Anna Lührmann and Laurence Boone, invited 12 independent experts to form a working group on EU institutional reforms. Their mandate: to develop ideas on how the EU can be prepared for the accession of future Member States. CEPS' Sophia Russack was a member of this group.

After several months of deliberation, 'The Group of Twelve' submitted the results of its work in September 2023 and presented their recommendations to all 27 Ministers for European Affairs in the General Affairs Council.

Their [report](#) is based on two observations. First, the accession of new Member States is a geostrategic imperative, and requires rapid progress. Second, the EU itself is not yet ready to welcome new members.

THE YEAR IN PUBLICATIONS



CEPS' exceptionally strong in-house research capability empowers us to produce over 100 publications every year, spanning more than 15 topics.

In 2023, the year we celebrated our 40th anniversary, more than ever we aspire to meet the challenge set down in our motto – 'thinking ahead for Europe'. Our publications very much form the backbone of our endeavours to achieve this.

We hope you enjoy browsing back through some of our most prominent publications of the last year.

**AGRICULTURE, FOOD
SECURITY, RURAL AND
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The cost of non-rurality

This report aims to contribute to the debate on EU rural development policy by presenting a methodology to understand the net costs and benefits of investing in rural areas to society as a whole. By doing so, it asks whether rural depopulation is just a rural problem or whether the consequences have a bearing on the whole of society, and in particular urban areas. » [Learn more](#)

The EU-Africa partnership and development aid: Assessing the EU's actorness and effectiveness in development policy

Development aid is considered a policy area where the EU is particularly influential. This CEPS In-Depth Analysis report provides an overview of the evolution of global and European governance in development policy and relations with the African continent. Exploring the period 1995-2021, the research highlights how global governance in development aid and relations with Africa have evolved in terms of both the tools used and the actors involved during the last decades. » [Learn more](#)

**AI, DIGITALISATION
AND INNOVATION**

What's in a name? Getting the definition of Artificial Intelligence right in the EU's AI Act

One of the most significant pieces of EU legislation that will be finalised over the coming months is the AI Act, which is still a source of heated debate among policymakers and stakeholders. One of the key issues that has been discussed over the last year is how the Act should define Artificial Intelligence.

In this short CEPS Explainer, Andrea Renda and Alex Engler argue in favour of a broader definition of AI, with a high degree of autonomy given to a dedicated AI Office to tailor the Act's application to the specificities of algorithms in individual sectors and use cases. » [Learn more](#)

A Digital Connectivity Masterplan for the Global Gateway

In this report, we offer recommendations to the European Commission for the development of a Digital Connectivity Masterplan for the Global Gateway, based on the EU's strengths as well as on emerging needs in the Global South. » [Learn more](#)

EU policymakers – you've done a (mostly) good job on the AI Act. Now finish it already

Andrea Renda, the new CEPS Director of Research, writes that he has been mostly impressed with how EU policymakers have handled the long process of finalising the EU's AI Act, but stresses that with other countries and regions threatening to overtake the EU in the rapidly evolving field of AI regulation, it's now time for them to hurry up and finish the job. » [Learn more](#)

Quantum Technologies and Cybersecurity: Technology, governance and policy challenges

As the new world of quantum technologies emerges, we need to seize the opportunity to decide how they can help us promote better societies and a more sustainable future. To tackle these issues, CEPS launched a Task Force on Quantum Technologies and Cybersecurity in March 2023. The Task Force's goal was to draw attention to the technical, ethical, market and governance challenges posed by the intersection of quantum technologies and cybersecurity. » [Learn more](#)



ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

Economic integration during an age of geopolitical instability

As the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent Russian invasion of Ukraine have fundamentally altered the dynamics of economic integration, and the rivalry between the US and China increasingly points towards a tectonic shift from the multilateral rules-based trading system, strategic autonomy has taken centre stage in EU policy discourse as a potential redress to the risks stemming from this shift. But what is it? And what does it actually imply? » [Learn more](#)

What ways and means for a real strategic autonomy of the EU in the economic field?

As the EU is gearing up to respond to challenges that could signal a tectonic shift from the multilateral rules-based trading system that has been the hallmark of the post-World War Two era, the EU can ill afford to be vague about what strategic autonomy means. This in-depth study, prepared by CEPS, was commissioned by the EESC at the request of the EESC Employers Group. » [Learn more](#)

How to save the Stability and Growth Pact

A long time ago, elected politicians realised that they cannot be trusted with providing stable monetary policy. Consequently, they delegated the task to independent central banks. More than two decades of trying have provided ample evidence that, like the case of monetary policy, elected officials also cannot be entrusted with activating financial sanctions when rules are being broken. This CEPS Policy Brief passionately argues that this role should be given to an independent fiscal council. » [Learn more](#)

EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Job retention schemes between the Great Recession and the Covid-19 crises

Should we make SURE a permanent instrument? To answer this, one might look at whether SURE has been effectively taken up by Member States and used to support Job Retention (JR) schemes and other similar measures. This CEPS In-Depth Analysis study tries to fill this gap by providing a first illustration of how the design of JR protection schemes impacted their use across the EU27 countries, both during the Great Recession and the Covid-19 pandemic. » [Learn more](#)

How can early childhood education and care policies empower citizens?

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) policies have great potential to help future adults and parents, especially as the first few years in a child's life can be key to their development and for their parents' (especially the mother's) reentry into the labour market. However, the provision of ECEC services in the EU, their take up and their quality differ vastly across Member States, and thus so are the expected outcomes. This Policy Brief provides some concrete recommendations on how to bolster and improve ECEC services so they can benefit and support all children and their families. » [Learn more](#)

The RRF role in strengthening active labour market policies and public employment services

This study analyses the measures addressing Pillar 4 (social and territorial cohesion) of the RRF. It focuses on two policy domains: active labour market policies and public employment services. The study zooms in on the reforms and investments included in the RRF plans of three EU Member States (Italy, Spain and Croatia) and assesses their relevance, effectiveness and coherence. » [Learn more](#)

ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Chemical recycling of plastics

In recent years, the challenge of plastic waste generation has become a prime concern in the global political arena. At the EU level, a dedicated strategy on plastics was adopted that led to the Single-Use Plastics Directive. Despite this, plastic waste management data show that achieving a circular economy for plastics in the EU is a long way off. This In-Depth Analysis report looks at the challenges associated with plastic waste generation and discusses the potential of using chemical recycling technologies as part of an ecosystem of solutions for increasing the circularity of plastics. » [Learn more](#)

Could the EU Electricity Market Design Reform sabotage the very internal energy market it is supposed to uphold?

The Council of the EU and the European Parliament were earlier this year scrutinising and tabling amendments to the European Commission's proposal to reform EU electricity markets.

This short CEPS Explainer focused on two highly controversial issues at the heart of the Council and Parliament's respective positions – namely suggested amendments to Article 66a concerning possible future electricity price crises, and the resort to inframarginal revenue caps. » [Learn more](#)

Jobs for the green transition

In recent years, the concept of green jobs has been the focus of increasing attention from both policy and research circles. At the EU policy level, the green transition is seen as an opportunity to create jobs in existing and emerging economic sectors. The need for re- and upskilling workers to ensure a socially just green and digital transition is also increasingly being highlighted in the policy debate.

» [Learn more](#)



EU BUDGET AND PUBLIC INVESTMENT

The Recovery and Resilience Facility: What are we really monitoring with a performance-based approach?

The introduction of milestones and targets (M&Ts) to monitor National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) has been welcomed as a positive step for the EU budget, a shift away from simple money managing to one focused on achieving policy objectives. Drawing on Italy as an example, this CEPS Explainer highlights the current limits of the M&Ts, being sometimes overly aggregated or too vague. » [Learn more](#)

Social tracking methodology for the EU budget

This study examines how well the expenditure from the EU budget for social policies is monitored and tracked. Effective tracking to enable programme progress to be assessed is important for the policy process, and to be able to detect, qualify and quantify any deviation from the initial plans and targets.

In short, adopting performance budgeting implies a shift in the focus of budgeting, from managing (i.e. 'how much have we spent?'), to the achievement of policy objectives (i.e. 'what have we accomplished with our money?')

» [Learn more](#)

EU INSTITUTIONS AND POLICYMAKING

The Radicality of Sunlight

To offer ideas for the debates that will necessarily unfold, especially as we move towards the 2024 European Parliament elections, SWP and CEPS formed a High-Level Group on bolstering EU democracy, composed of 23 politicians, officials, diplomats, and scholars from across Europe and from a wide range of Member States, institutions, and political parties.

The group's final report's key theme revolves around the concept of the 'Radicality of Sunlight' – a simple but powerful image that allowed the group's members to coalesce around a series of recommendations, organised into five pathways that could significantly bolster the EU's democracy and democratic accountability. » [Learn more](#)

FINANCE

A study on the application and impact of Directive (EU) 2015/2366 on Payment Services (PSD2)

Technological development has spurred a fast-paced evolution in payment services. Importantly, progress in FinTech led to the involvement of many new players and brought new payment solutions to the market. While cash remains popular, there is an irreversible trend towards cashless payments. The Covid-19 pandemic has seen a further increase in the popularity of non-cash payments. This study contributes to the evaluation of the PSD2 undertaken by the European Commission. » [Learn more](#)

EU Corporate taxation in the digital era

A new study 'EU corporate taxation in the digital era', highlights the main developments in corporate taxation over the last few decades in both the EU and the US. It analyses MNEs' activity and profit shifting, and the impact of a 15 % minimum corporate tax. It also discusses the critical points in Pillar Two's design that have raised concerns and require careful calibration.

Finally, it proposes recommendations on how to improve Pillar Two's functioning and how to implement the Business in Europe: Framework for Income Taxation BEFIT, stressing the importance of simplicity and uniformity. » [Learn more](#)

A digital euro beyond impulse

The digital euro must offer a compelling value proposition and clear benefits to consumers and merchants in the EU, while the EU's legislative framework should allow for these benefits to gradually emerge over time. There is a need to minimise the risk of crowding out European private solutions, which would impact competition and the attractiveness of the European payments market, while at the same time hinder the digital euro's adoption. » [Learn more](#)

FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

Template 2.0 for Staged Accession to the EU

The Template for Staged Accession to the EU was first published in the autumn of 2021, following the European Commission's publication of the revised enlargement methodology and the persistently stagnating accession process of the Western Balkans countries.

Emerging from wide-ranging consultations and a series of issue papers that delved into the specific elements of the Model, this revised Template 2.0 presents a comprehensive proposal on how to amend the EU's current accession policy. » [Learn more](#)

An EU global gateway ... to what?

What is Global Gateway's unique offer? How does it beat the competition? Why is Global Gateway a values-based offer and what does this entail in practical terms? Global Gateway deserves scrutiny and efforts to define its purpose and added value, both within and outside the EU. As this CEPS Explainer outlines, a resources aggregation approach 'à la IMEC', holds the potential to better connect the narrative and build the EU's external power. The strategic connectivity clusters (SCCs) approach streamlines international connectivity cooperation. » [Learn more](#)

Regional actor, global player: Can the EU get the best of both worlds?

The collapse of Europe's security order coincides with a period of global transformation. If the EU is serious about retaining its influence as a global actor, it must rethink its traditional way of doing business with the 'Global South' and learn how to autonomously navigate an unpredictable – and often fractious – multipolar world. » [Learn more](#)

HUMAN RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

The European Arrest Warrant: Trust, fundamental rights, and the rule of law

Unveiling the complexities of the European Arrest Warrant system, this report scrutinises the delicate interplay between mutual trust, fundamental rights, and the rule of law. Crafted through research by the STREAM Academic Network, this study draws insights from 14 Member States, revealing divergent interpretations and applications of the system. As the tension between prioritising mutual trust and upholding EU values comes to the forefront, the report dissects the far-reaching implications, particularly amidst challenges to EU values in certain Member States. » [Learn more](#)

INTERNAL MARKET, INDUSTRY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMES

The single market is still the EU's strategic imperative

Complaints about the state of the single market, lengthy wish lists and calls for 'urgent' action should be taken seriously but not lead to the conclusion that the EU single market is too fragile or 'nearly broken'. This is absolutely not the case. If competitiveness is maintained by business and supported by EU regulation where justified, the single market will not only remain the 'hardcore' of the Union but also its card in the world economy for many years to come. » [Learn more](#)



MIGRATION, ASYLUM AND BORDERS

Policing search and rescue NGOs in the Mediterranean

This CEPS In-Depth Analysis report examines the Italian government's practices of responsibility evasion and selective disembarkation of SAR NGO vessels, the ensuing diplomatic row with the French government over the 2022 Ocean Viking affair, and the introduction of a Code of Conduct sanctioning SAR NGOs in January 2023. The report argues that upholding justice at sea is not a 'pick and choose' game for governments and migration policymakers. » [Learn more](#)

An assessment of the state of the EU Schengen area and its external borders

Commissioned by the European Parliament's LIBE Committee, this study assesses the state of play of the EU Schengen area and the latest legal and policy developments with direct relevance to the Schengen acquis. It analyses the impact of these developments, and the role of 'declared crisis', on the Schengen Borders Code, Luxembourg Court standards and EU Treaty principles and fundamental rights.

The study calls for an approach based on 'merited or deserved trust' to uphold the legitimacy of the Schengen area.

» [Learn more](#)

Proposal for a regulation addressing situations of instrumentalisation in the field of migration and asylum

This substitute impact assessment of the European Commission's proposal for a regulation addressing situations of instrumentalisation in the field of migration and asylum was requested by the European Parliament's LIBE Committee in the absence of a European Commission impact assessment accompanying the proposal. It reviews the problems identified by the Commission and the objectives of the instrumentalisation proposal. » [Learn more](#)

TRADE

The EU's aim to de-risk itself from China is risky... yet necessary

Europe's quest for strategic autonomy and economic security has come with repeated calls to reduce critical dependencies on 'systemic rivals' such as China.

Ursula von der Leyen has called for de-risking, including 'stress-testing our relationship to see where the greatest threats lie concerning our resilience, long-term prosperity and security'. Yet, China's dominance in key strategic sectors and products is so overwhelming that partial or total 'de-coupling' may not mean de-risking. To the contrary, it may be a very risky endeavour. » [Learn more](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH

Alternative Futures of EU Integration after the Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic is having a profound impact on EU integration, and on the role of the EU in the global governance context. In this report, we present four possible scenarios that may materialize in the coming years, and up to 2040, by using an 'alternative futures' approach. This is an exploratory method deployed to develop a better understanding of what may yet happen, as opposed to postulating what is most likely to happen.

» [Learn more](#)

Being prepared is all that's needed to address the European Commission's transparency woes

The Covid-19 pandemic caught the European Commission off guard but its fast response helped to stop a bad situation from becoming catastrophically worse. It pushed for joint stockpiling and procurement which paved the way for an ambitious institutional reform, the European Health Union. However, a veil of secrecy covered the process and today, as the urgency of securing Covid-19 vaccines has waned, that lack of transparency is coming back to haunt the Commission. » [Learn more](#)

From germs to guns and steel – how the world could waste the Covid-19 crisis

The pandemic shock led to a massive domino effect, opening cracks in the multilateral order; spurring a 'syndemic' made up of disinformation, co-morbidities and mental distress; leading millions back into poverty and dozens of countries to the edge of bankruptcy; pushing health workers into burnout and the whole world into recession; and paving the way for an age of 'permacrisis'. Yet there is no sign that the global community has learnt the many hard lessons the pandemic has to offer, and this does not bode well for the future. But the EU can – and should – take a leading role to ensure that global health remains firmly on the global agenda. » [Learn more](#)

RUSSIA, UKRAINE AND EUROPEAN SECURITY

How successful have Western sanctions against Russia actually been?

The sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU and other Western economies primarily targeted its economy to weaken its ability to finance the war. Although the adverse impact of the sanctions on the Russian economy is evident, the damage has not yet been large enough to end the war.

This CEPS Explainer outlined how the main damage from sanctions will come from Russia's structural disconnection from the EU, both a difficult export market to replace and a source of capital that's impossible to substitute. » [Learn more](#)

The EU accession prospects of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia

In the week following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 all three East European states associated with the EU – Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia – submitted applications to accede to the EU.

In response, the European Commission published 'Opinions' in June, setting out in each case conditions that should be met for these applications to advance on the path towards membership. This paper reports on the first half-year of the work undertaken by the three states to meet these conditions.

» [Learn more](#)

One year of war in Ukraine: understanding what has happened and what needs to happen next

The sanctions imposed on Russia by the EU and other Western economies primarily targeted its economy to weaken its ability to finance the war. Although the adverse impact of the sanctions on the Russian economy is evident, the damage has not yet been large enough to end the war. This CEPS Explainer outlined how the main damage from sanctions will come from Russia's structural disconnection from the EU, both a difficult export market to replace and a source of capital that's impossible to substitute.

» [Learn more](#)

DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

An analysis of industrial relations and gender equality at European and national level

Gender equality is a fundamental value and right promoted by the EU. Significant progress has been achieved over the past few decades, but gender inequalities persist, particularly in the labour market. This report's main conclusions confirm the importance of industrial relations for the promotion of gender equality and can be seen as aligned with the recent initiative to strengthen social dialogue as part of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan. » [Learn more](#)

The gender-equal platform economy is a myth – fixing it requires firm action

Work in the platform economy – or the 'gig economy' – is on the rise. The EU's platform economy, which ranges from food delivery and taxi services to platforms where workers perform multiple tasks online, grew almost fivefold between 2016 and 2021.

Digital labour platforms are a novel way of organising working relationships but they facilitate transactions between real world individuals and are built using real world data – a world that is full of biases. As things stand, there is no reason to believe that digital labour platforms will advance gender equality. But all hope is not lost and improvements can – and should – be made. » [Learn more](#)

Gendered migrant integration policies in the EU: Are we moving towards delivery of equality, non-discrimination and inclusion?

Considering the war in Ukraine, where most of the refugees who came to the EU were women and children, policymakers and authorities are concerned about how to implement 'gender responsive' and 'gender sensitive' or 'gender aware' initiatives without reproducing gender stereotypes but instead respond to newcomers' specific needs. In this ITFLOWS project report, lessons are drawn from EU integration and inclusion policies and practices towards third country nationals.

» [Learn more](#)

THE YEAR IN EVENTS





European Commission's 2023 enlargement package and Moldova's European path

In an ever-shifting geopolitical landscape, EU enlargement has risen to the top of the agenda for EU policymakers. The eagerly anticipated enlargement package from the European Commission, released on November 8, provided valuable insights into the path forward for the next wave of EU enlargement. On the very day of the publication of the European Commission's enlargement package, CEPS was honoured to welcome Nicu Popescu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova, and Gert Jan Koopman, DG Near Director General. This high-level discussion delved into the EU's enlargement report, and looked at the assessment of the European Commission on the progress made by candidate countries, with a focus on Moldova.

Speakers:

- **Nicu Popescu**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of Moldova
- **Gert Jan Koopman**, Director-General, DG NEAR, European Commission
- **Tinatin Akhvlediani**, Research Fellow, CEPS (moderator)



In 2023, CEPS hosted a series of high-profile events featuring many distinguished speakers. Our highlighted section below encompassed a broad spectrum of topics, spanning from discussions on enlargement to climate and taxation. These events brought together experts and thought leaders, providing comprehensive perspectives on crucial issues.

Continuing the continent's transformation: EU enlargement 10 years after Croatia's membership

10 years ago, Croatia joined the EU as the latest new member. With the start of Russia's war in Ukraine, the enlargement discussion has fundamentally changed. Moving away from calls to freeze further enlargements, the EU now needs to expand to protect its strategic interests in its neighbourhood. We were honoured that Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković joined us for a discussion on the achievements of his country's EU membership, but also on the next steps, from the countries in the Western Balkans to Ukraine and Moldova.

Speakers:

- **Andrej Plenković**, Prime Minister, Croatia
- **Gert Jan Koopman**, Director-General, DG NEAR, European Commission
- **Tinatin Akhvlediani**, Research Fellow, CEPS (moderator)

EU-Australia opportunities for cooperation on climate & energy

The Hon Chris Bowen MP was appointed Minister for Climate Change and Energy on 1 June 2022. As Minister for Climate Change and Energy, he is focused on driving climate action, investment in technologies that lower carbon emissions, and securing a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy system.

Since his appointment, Australia has enshrined in legislation its new ambitious emissions reduction target of 43% by 2030 and its earlier commitment to net zero by 2050. He is leading the implementation of a substantial and rigorous suite of new policies across the economy to drive the transformation to net zero economy.

Internationally, Minister Bowen is working to address energy security, costs and emissions by strengthening Australia's partnerships in the region, and with likeminded countries, to develop and secure clean energy supply chains. He is leading Australia's engagement in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Australia's bid to host the COP31 UN Climate Summit in 2026 in partnership with Pacific island nations.

The EU's energy and climate policy is characterised by accelerated movement towards a rapid clean energy transition, with a focus on ensuring energy affordability and security. This event explored how Australia and the EU can do more together to deliver ambitious climate action?

Speakers:

- **Chris Bowen**, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Australia
- **Marc Vanheukelen**, EU Ambassador at Large for Climate Diplomacy, European External Action Service
- **Christian Egenhofer**, Associate Research Fellow, CEPS (moderator)

Making the OECD's corporate tax agenda work in the EU

A historic process is under way in the EU, with the unanimous agreement to implement the Minimum Tax Directive (Pillar Two), and a forthcoming proposal for the apportionment of corporate tax income (Pillar One). This will put an end – at least for the EU – to the current system of international coordination on corporate income tax, which is based on the individuation of separate entities, the reference to intra-group transactions, and the 'arm's length principle' for transfer pricing between related parties.

Set up in February 2022 to examine the two-pillar solution agreed at OECD level, a dedicated CEPS Task Force brought together a balanced working group of industry experts, academia, EU institutions and national authorities to engage in both research and several high-level discussions. The report, 'EU corporate taxation in the digital era – The road to a new international order', discusses the critical points in the design of the two-pillar solution agreed at OECD level.

The focus is primarily on Pillar Two, where there has been significantly more progress than Pillar One. The report puts forward concrete recommendations on how to improve Pillar Two's functioning and how to implement the 'Business in Europe: Framework for Income Taxation' (BEFIT) in the EU.



Andrej Plenković



Chris Bowen



Anu Bradford



Elodie Lamer

EVENTS

This seminar to launch the report discussed how international cooperation on corporate taxation can be achieved and how Pillar Two would be implemented in Europe and coordinated with BEFIT.

Speakers:

- **Vieri Ceriani**, Chair of the Task Force; Former Under-Secretary of State, Italian Ministry of Finance and Economy (Monti Government)
- **Apostolos Thomadakis**, Research Fellow, ECMI and CEPS
- **Gerassimos Thomas**, Director-General, DG TAXUD, European Commission
- **Jaime Salmerón**, Head of EU Tax Policy and CFO Netherlands, Repsol
- **Marlies de Ruiter**, Partner, Global International Tax Policy Leader, EY
- **Maarten de Wilde**, Professor of International and European Tax Law, Erasmus University Rotterdam
- **Elodie Lamer**, Journalist, Tax Notes (moderator)

Assessing the growing tech regulation rivalry between the EU, US and China

Over a decade after first coining the term 'Brussels Effect', Columbia Law Professor Anu Bradford has published a thought-provoking follow-up with her latest book, 'Digital Empires: The Global Battle to Regulate Technology.'

Through an assessment of the US, China and the EU's respective efforts to regulate technology, she explores the ongoing push-and-pull between the three dominant digital powers and how their competing regulatory approaches and tech companies are colliding in the international domain.

Bringing together academic, think tank and institutional perspectives, this event aimed to generate a discussion on the key issues and questions raised by Digital Empires and explore the implications of Bradford's latest work.

Speakers:

- **Anu Bradford**, Henry L. Moses Professor of Law and International Organization
- **Charlotte Siegmann**, PhD student in Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **Dr Paul Timmers**, Research Associate, University of Oxford, Oxford Internet Institute
- **Andrea Renda**, Director of Research, CEPS
- **Camille Ford**, Researcher, CEPS (moderator)

Social Investments for resilient economies and societies: EU fiscal rules fit for future

On 26 April 2023, the European Commission presented a proposal for a reform of the economic governance framework.

The objective is to strengthen debt sustainability and promote sustainable and inclusive growth through gradual fiscal consolidation.

Following the Commission's proposal, the Spanish and Belgian Presidencies of the Council of the EU launched an Informal Working Group on Social Investment (IWGSI). The IWG's main objective is to open a political debate on empirical evidence on micro and macroeconomic economic and social returns of social investments and reforms, as well as monitoring and evaluation methodologies for tracking social investment returns.

The IWG counts 23 Member States, DG EMPL, the chairs of EMCO and SPC, the European Parliament's EMPL Committee and European Social Partners. The IWG's activities will be the basis for the preparation of the ECOFIN-EPSCO (JUMBO) council meeting that will take place in March 2024. This High-level Conference was the occasion to present the key messages and preliminary findings of the IWG's activities.

Speakers included, among others:

- **Milagros Paniagua**, Secretary General of Objectives and Policies for Inclusion and Social Welfare, Ministry Inclusion, Social Security and Migrations, Spain)
- **Prof. Enrico Giovannini**, Professor, Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata)
- **Justina Jakštienė**, Vice Minister of Social Security and Labour Ministry Lithuania
- **Nicolas Schmit**, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights
- **José Luis Escrivá**, Minister of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration, Spain
- **Frank Vandenbroucke**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Affairs and Health, Belgium
- **Margarida Marques**, Member of the European Parliament



Gert Jan Koopman



Milagros Paniagua



José Luis Escrivá



Frank Vandenbroucke

THE YEAR IN THE MEDIA



In 2023, our research has garnered attention from prestigious outlets such as Politico, The Financial Times, Forbes, The New York Times, the BBC, The Guardian, EurActiv, Euronews, and many more. These media mentions not only underscore the significance of our work but also amplify our global influence. Below, you'll find a curated selection of our top media mentions from 2023.

The New York Times

How Nations Are Losing a Global Race to Tackle A.I.'s Harms

[READ MORE](#)

Forbes

AI Aspiring Toward All-In Global Geopolitical Multilateral Unity Arrangement For Sake Of Humanity Says AI Ethics And AI Law

[READ MORE](#)

Deutsche Welle

Italy: Meloni pressured by welfare cuts and slowing economy

[READ MORE](#)

Euronews

Euroviews. Will EU leaders take up the quantum challenge in front of them?

[READ MORE](#)

Financial Times

Can Europe go green without China's rare earths?

[READ MORE](#)

Politico

Carbon trading for farmers is back on the table

[READ MORE](#)

Bloomberg

Global Minimum Levy Won't Stop EU Tax Competition, Report Says

[READ MORE](#)

Le Monde

Enlargement of the European Union: France and Germany try to steer the debate

[READ MORE](#)

BBC

Ukraine gets European Commission backing for talks on Ukraine membership

[READ MORE](#)

Euractiv

Make banks safe again

[READ MORE](#)

The Guardian

As Ukraine and others queue to join, is EU ready for enlargement?

[READ MORE](#)

Le Grand Continent

For a single European defense market

[READ MORE](#)

Política Exterior

The EPC one year later: imperfect image

[READ MORE](#)

Euronews

Money spent by EU on migration policy becoming 'complex' to track - expert

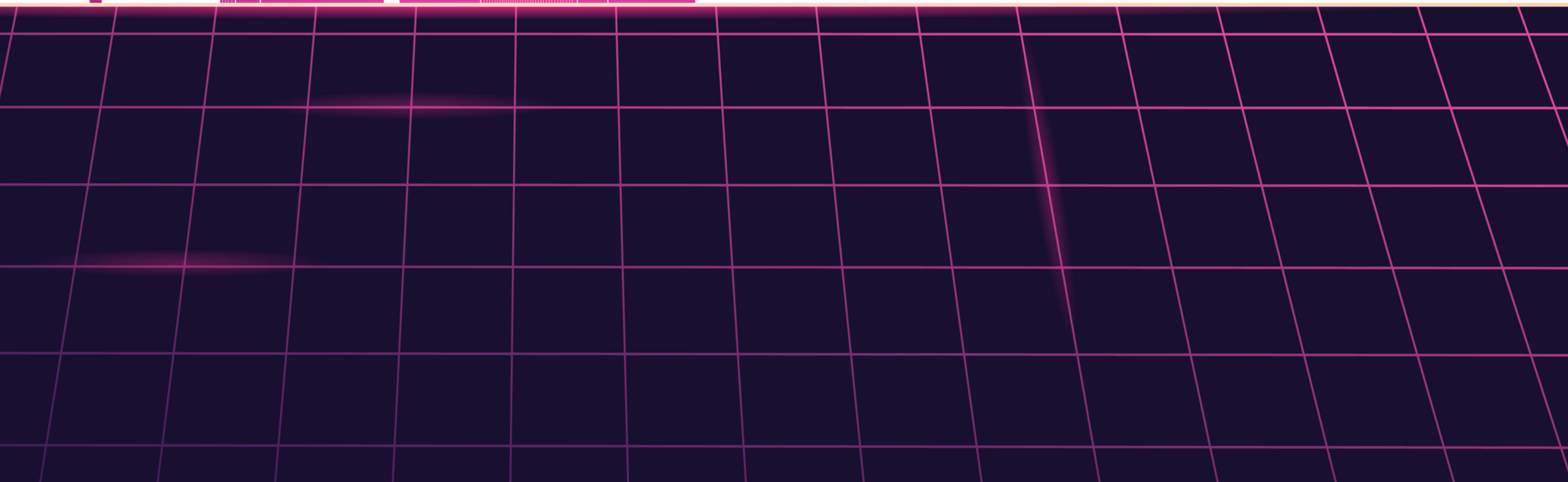
[READ MORE](#)

Politico

Two wars threaten to overload Europe's leaders

[READ MORE](#)

HORIZON EUROPE PROJECTS



Horizon Europe is the most extensive EU Research and Innovation programme to date, spanning seven years from 2021 to 2027. CEPS is proud to be involved in 20 Horizon Europe and Horizon 2020 projects in 2023

A Human-Centred and Ethical Development of Digital and Industrial Technologies 2022 - It Takes Two to Tango: A Synergistic Approach to Human-Machine Decision Making (TANGO-2)

TANGO argues that for AI to fully develop its enormous potential in terms of positive impact on individuals, society and the economy, we need to completely rethink the way in which AI systems are conceived. A symbiosis should be established between humans and machines, in which all parties are aligned in terms of values, goals and beliefs, and support and complement each other to reach objectives beyond what each would be able to do by themselves.

CEPS will provide an analysis of the ethical, legal and socio-economic (ELSE) factors that arise in theorising, developing and applying the project to ensure ethical decision making in human-machine interaction. CEPS will also monitor compliance with existing and forthcoming EU law and provide recommendations for policymaking.

Motivations, experiences and consequences of returns and readmissions policy: revealing and developing effective alternatives (MORE)

In recent years, the Returns and Readmissions policy has become the preferred solution for the EU and its member states to address migrants living in situations of irregularity. Yet, different actors have raised concerns over the lack of effectiveness of the policy, violations of migrant’s fundamental rights associated with its implementation and the dependency on third countries for its application. In the first phase of the project, MORE will provide an exhaustive analysis of the development of the policy and its supporting evidence to understand why it has become a preferred solution and why it has been understood to be ineffective.



In parallel, the project will examine the development, rationale, objectives, supporting evidence and implementation for 6 alternative policies that are or have been implemented in EU member states and the UK. The project will look at when and why these are or were implemented and why they have not become the main response to situations of administrative irregularity among migrants in the EU.

Through AI from Disinformation to Trust (AI CODE)

The media sector is exposed to and undergoing continuous innovations that occur at a pace never seen before and have a non-negligible impact on citizens, democracy and society as whole. Media professionals are not, however, currently well-equipped with supporting tools or knowledge to operate in such emerging environments.

Consequently, there is a tremendous need for innovative (AI-based) solutions ensuring media freedom and pluralism, delivering credible and truthful information as well as combating highly misinformative content. The main goal of the AI-CODE project is to evolve state-of-the-art research results (tools, technologies, and know-how) from past and ongoing EU-funded research projects that are focused on disinformation into a novel ecosystem of services that will proactively support media professionals through trusted information production through AI.

CEPS will analyse the ethical, legal and socio-economic (ELSE) factors that arise in theorising, developing and applying the project, and it will provide guidelines on the ethical requirements of the services provided.

CEPS will also develop an ethics handbook with best practices and policy recommendations in the specific context of next-generation social media, working together with developers and final-users to apply an ethical approach on the deployment of novel technologies, and to identify the policy needs of a constantly evolving sector.

Transforming and Defending Multilateralism: European Union Support for More Robust, Effective and Democratic Global Governance (ENSURED)

ENSURED, a project with 14 partners from the EU, US and the BRICS, studies how the EU and its members, in a contested world in transition, can transform and defend global governance to make it more robust, effective and democratic.

ENSURED provides support for the EU and its members to lead the transformation and defence of multilateralism. It outlines strategic choices and develops decision support and communication products that the EU and its members can use, such as an online toolkit, policy recommendations and strategic narratives. ENSURED thus advances our knowledge about global governance transformation and provides the EU and its members with the tools to navigate a world in transition.

Multidimensional Transition Pathway Analysis for Sustainable Futures: Exploring Alternative Paradigms and Broadening Policy Options through Innovative Scenario Development (MultiFutures)

Funded under Horizon Europe, MultiFutures will mainly focus on assessing and developing transition scenarios based on alternative economic paradigms.

This involves extending established transition scenarios (e.g. the EC's 'Long-Term Strategic Vision' scenarios or the IEA's net zero scenarios) to include alternative economic paradigms that are based on a wide spectrum of sound economic and social theories and have demonstrated their potential to address global challenges.

CEPS, in leading the project's WP5, mainly focuses on the implications of each integrated policy scenario on different aspects of society and the environment, the MFA framework, integrated policy scenarios, and real-world policy implications of the scenarios. This will allow for the development of policy pathways towards alternative futures. CEPS is also involved in all other WPs within the project.

Projects awarded in 2023, to be started in 2024:

CEPS was awarded significant projects in 2023 that are scheduled to start in 2024. Of note is its pivotal leadership role in the groundbreaking REUNIR project as well as its participation in projects including:

TRANSIENCE

PESCO-UP

NEUROCLIMA

Political Perspectives for the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans (REUNIR)

Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine has ended the post-Cold War European security order, creating new realities in countries neighbouring the EU and shattering illusions in several Member States about the Kremlin's true intentions. By granting candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova and a European perspective to Georgia, the EU has rejected a Russian sphere of influence and instead determined where its future borders should lie. But this decision has not yet led to policies tailored to effectively respond to a geopolitical context which also sees China and other actors competing for influence.

REUNIR's ultimate objective is to provide evidence-based policy recommendations to strengthen the foreign policy arsenal of the EU to support the countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans to withstand malign foreign influence and stay the course on the European integration track.

CEPS IN NUMBERS





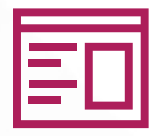
116.5K

Total followers



13.7K

New followers



1,695

Unique posts



10.7K

Shares+likes



2876

Mentions
(twitter only)



+1360

Media mentions



720.1K

Website unique
visitors

58

Researchers

23

Countries

17

Topics

123

Publications

84

Events

+3K

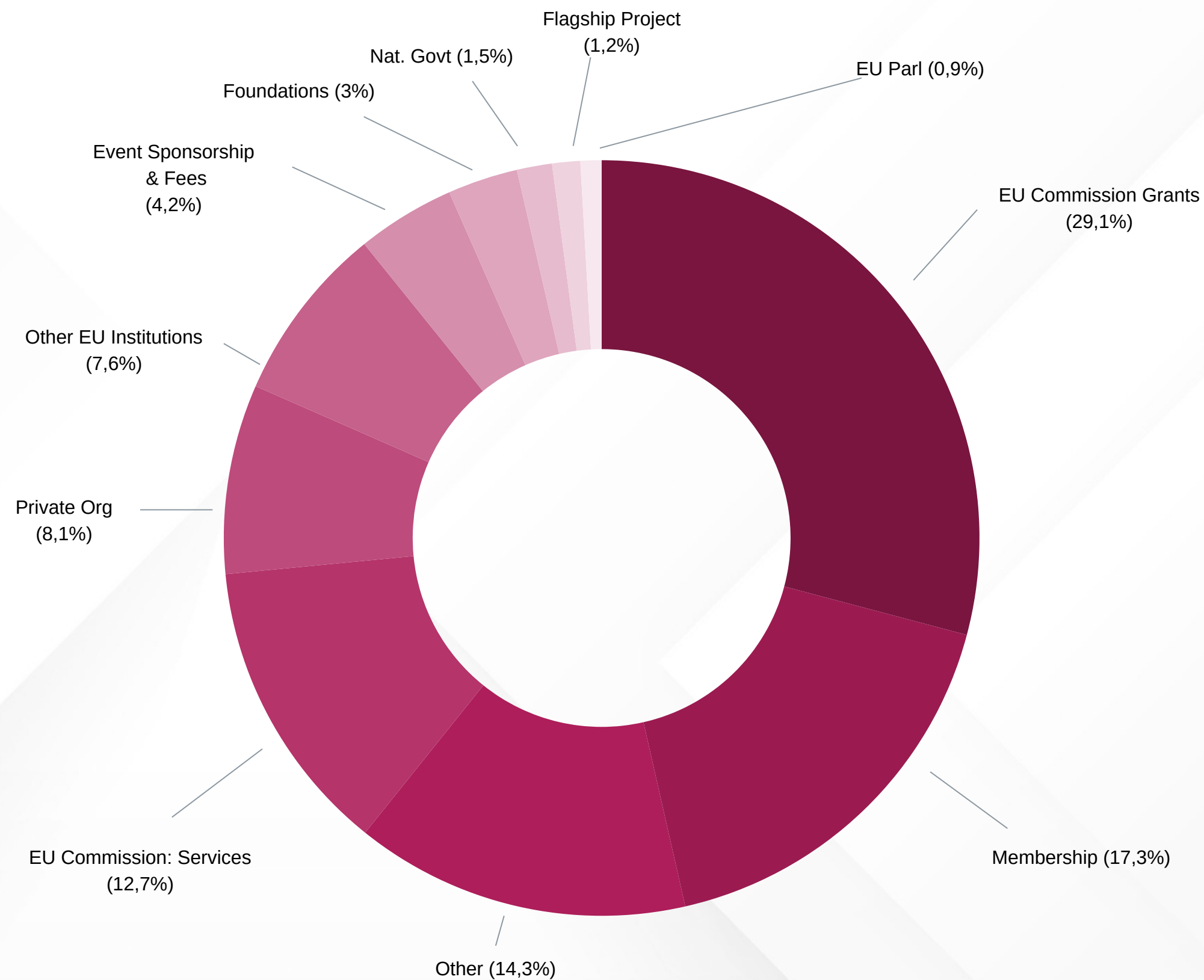
Attendees

150

Members

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW





CEPS' revenues come from a wide variety of sources, which is fundamental to ensuring our independence. Our 2023 income is expected to have originated from many different sources, with the bulk of our net revenues (over 40 %) most likely stemming from calls for tenders and grants from the EU institutions. We received a further 17,3% from membership fees that include a diverse group of corporations and institutions.

The remaining income would have been generated through projects with private organisations (8,1%), national governments (1,5%) and foundations (3 %), as well as through the organisation of events, such as the Ideas Lab. This breakdown does not include revenue earmarked for CEPS' various project partners.

MEMBERSHIP



Our membership network comprises approximately 150 members hailing from diverse industries and associations. At CEPS, we greatly value this broad membership base as it serves multiple vital purposes. Not only does it bolster our mission and uphold our independence, but it also enables us to stay attuned to Europe's ever-evolving landscape. Additionally, our esteemed members act as invaluable sounding boards, essential for testing the practicality of our policy recommendations.

It's imperative to note that CEPS steadfastly declines any donation that might compromise our commitment to absolute independence in setting our research priorities. Moreover, we ensure that no member can contribute more than 2.5 % of CEPS' annual income, further safeguarding our impartiality.

By joining CEPS, you lend support to our pursuit of independent and high-quality research that significantly contributes to shaping policy dialogues at both the European and global levels. In return, our members gain exclusive opportunities. These include direct interaction with EU decision-makers in a multitude of settings, both formal and informal. Members participate in well-informed and balanced discussions concerning European affairs, enabling them to access expert insights into political issues and legislative proposals.

If you would like to find out more about CEPS membership, visit [the website](#) or email laura.nicolas@ceps.eu

KNOWLEDGE

Deepen your insights of current and future policy implications by accessing briefings from CEPS researchers.

NEWS

Receive a weekly member newsletter for important updates on research and publications. Be among the first to learn about the latest policy developments.

RESOURCES

Learn and exchange views on the most important EU policy developments by being part of CEPS Task Forces, the Summer School, and CEPS' main annual event, Ideas Lab.



PLATFORM

Use a neutral platform to co-host special events with CEPS, ensuring a well-informed and balanced discussion. You also have the opportunity to commission independent research on a topic of joint interest.

NETWORK

Expand the visibility of your organisation by engaging with the CEPS network. CEPS hosts regular gatherings of its corporate and institutional members representing industry, regulators, institutions, associations, and academia.

EVENTS

Engage in thought-provoking discussions with diverse stakeholders while taking advantage of complimentary access to CEPS Ideas Lab, exclusive thematic roundtable sessions, high-profile speaker events, expert briefings, and members-only webinars.

Membership packages

CORPORATE
PREMIUM

- ✓ Exclusive roundtable discussions with our experts.
- ✓ High-level briefings hosted by our CEO, Karel Lannoo, and by our senior researchers from different units.
- ✓ Free access to our Task Forces
- ✓ Unlimited invitations to all our members events at CEPS premises and online
- ✓ Exclusive collaboration opportunities through the possibility to co-host special events with CEPS free of charge
- ✓ Free access to ECMI and ECRI membership network
- ✓ Access to our annual survey on CEPS research priorities
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We serve as an impartial platform, fostering dialogues and proffering viable solutions for EU policymaking. This is accomplished through a spectrum of initiatives, including research projects, the publication of findings, the facilitation of task forces, and the organization of regular events and workshops.

At CEPS, our researchers are distinguished experts who offer profound insights and astute policy analysis spanning a wide spectrum of areas. These encompass economic and financial matters, strategies for enhanced regulation, the burgeoning digital economy, trade policies, energy and climate-related issues, as well as the complex domain of foreign policy, among others. Through our multifaceted approach, we endeavor to contribute significantly to the development of well-informed and effective policies within the European Union.



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