



European Strategy and
Policy Analysis System

ESPAS – at the heart of EU foresight

ESPAS YOUNG TALENT NETWORK

2023-2024

AN INTER-INSTITUTIONAL EU PROJECT



European
Parliament



European
Commission



Council
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Union



European
Committee
of the Regions



European
External Action
Service



European Economic
and Social Committee



European
Investment Bank



European Union
Institute for Security
studies



European Court
of Auditors



ESPAS

The European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS) is a collaborative project between European Union institutions and bodies to analyse the medium- and long-term trends affecting the EU. This dialogue was established in the early 2010s to promote longer-term thinking in the EU policy process and encourage the Union's institutions to cooperate more closely on strategic foresight.

ESPAS YOUNG TALENT NETWORK (YTN)

The YTN gathers a diverse community of young professionals from all of the EU institutions and bodies engaged in the ESPAS process. Members of this peer network of driven, inquisitive and creative thinkers engage in strategic foresight together, injecting it into their everyday work and building a tightly knit network of young professionals across the institutions. By pooling their expertise and innovative thinking, they seek to offer a different perspective and approach on global trends and their challenges.



Simonetta Cook

Political Advisor, Cabinet of the President of the European Council, Charles Michel (YTN Group Coordinator),

Simonetta's work spans over 15 years in the EU institutions, covering legislative drafting, inter-institutional relations, and advising on European Council issues. She began her experience in the European Parliament, before moving to the Council and the European Council. She previously worked in private practice on corporate and EU regulatory law. Simonetta is deeply engaged in female empowerment, and is a fervent - although occasionally critical - supporter of the EU.



Caroline Bauwens

Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM), European Parliament Caroline is a Belgian from Brussels. She works in the DG COMM Editorial Coordination Unit, and has previously worked at the Web Communications Unit in the same DG. She has a passion for multimedia content, languages, and the way social media has shifted marketing, political and other perspectives. Caroline strongly dislikes meetings that could be an email – and weak coffee!



Barbara Beros

Advisor to Director for Human Resource Support and Social Services, Directorate-General for Personnel (DG PERS), European Parliament

Barbara is a human resources expert, passionate about employee wellbeing and a strong believer in human-centric organisations. Having worked in corporate communications in Croatia, she moved to Luxembourg, and has since been working on making the European Parliament an even more enjoyable place to work. As a strategic thinker, and curious by nature, she is always on the lookout for opportunities to learn and develop new perspectives.



Gaia Bottoni

Administrator, European Economic and Social Committee

Gaia works in the Section for Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment (NAT). She is responsible for dossiers related to environmental protection and biodiversity, and is strongly engaged in the EESC's work on youth engagement. In particular, she coordinates the organisation of the recently-launched Youth Climate and Sustainability Round Tables, and the ongoing implementation of structured and meaningful youth engagement within the EESC.



Menno Cox

Head of Sector for the global aspects of online platforms, Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT), European Commission

Menno deals with policy on online platforms, including the proposed rules for digital gatekeepers (Digital Markets Act and Digital Services Act). He is also ferociously interested in everything, and his participation in the Young Talent Network of ESPAS helps feed this hunger. Prior to his work at the European Commission, he worked as a lawyer at an international law firm, based in Amsterdam. He holds an LLM in European Law from Leiden University.



Marlene Erll

Analyst, Analysis and Research Team, Council of the EU

Marlene studied Asian and European Affairs in the United Kingdom and China, focusing on strategic narratives and China's global governance ambitions. She joined the Council's Analysis and Research Team in September 2021, where she currently works on a variety of topics, ranging from the future of EU-China relations and United States politics to food security and the governance of the internet. She is also convinced that her Twitter habit improves her foresight work.



Guido Fara

Auditor at Chamber II 'Investment for cohesion, growth and inclusion', European Court of Auditors

Guido graduated in Economics and EU Political Studies at the Bocconi University in Milan, and the College of Europe in Bruges. After a traineeship in the European Commission (DG Competition) and working experience in consultancy, Guido joined the European Court of Auditors in 2015 as a performance auditor. Since then, he has participated and led several audits in the field of transport, focusing on high-speed rail, large transport infrastructure projects and intermodal transport. Guido also delivers performance audit training across Europe.



Salvatore Finamore

Political Administrator, Analysis and Research Team, Council of the EU

Political Administrator, Analysis and Research Team

Salvatore holds a PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Cambridge, with a focus on foreign policy analysis and EU-China relations. He is a former lecturer and academic editor. He joined the Council in 2017, and has been a member of the Analysis and Research Team since it was established in 2020. His current research interests include China, Russia, the green transition and foresight methodology.



Martin Höflmayr

Policy Analyst, Economic Policies Unit, Directorate-General for Parliamentary Research Services (DG EPRS), European Parliament

Martin's work at EPRS focuses on economic and monetary policy issues. His professional experience prior to joining the Parliament included positions at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (in the Office of the Chief Economist), the European Central Bank and the Austrian Central Bank. He holds an MSc degree in economics from the Vienna University of Economics and Business.



Polina Khomenko

Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Trade (DG TRADE), European Commission

Polina works on World Trade Organization (WTO) policy and negotiations dealing with WTO reform in particular. Previously, she was responsible for bilateral trade relations with Ukraine and Moldova within DG TRADE. She holds a double Master's degree in European political economy and European affairs from the London School of Economics and Sciences Po Paris.



Johannes Kruse

Policy Officer, Chief Economist's Unit, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission

Johannes works in the Chief Economist's Unit of DG Research and Innovation, focusing on strategic issues regarding research and innovation policy. Before that, he worked at the European External Action Service, focusing on the Western Balkans and the South Caucasus, and at the German development agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), working on the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. He studied political science and international relations in Tübingen, Kalamazoo, Uppsala and Bremen.



Agnieszka Kurant

Acting Head of Unit, Directorate-General for Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences (DG LINC), European Parliament

Agnieszka joined the European Parliament in 2005, serving as a political adviser in the area of civil liberties, home affairs, migration and the Eastern EU Neighbourhood. She joined the administration in 2015 and, since 2020, has managed a team responsible for enabling meetings with multilingual remote participation, ensuring legislative activities, as well as political and administrative cooperation, can continue in the European Parliament.



Aleksandar Latinov

Auditor at Chamber II 'Investment for cohesion, growth and inclusion', European Court of Auditors

Aleksandar is an EU law and political science graduate who studied at the University of Luxembourg, the Columbia Law School in New York, and the College of Europe in Bruges. He was a student-assistant at the Max Planck Institute in Luxembourg for International, European and Regulatory Procedural Law, a trainee in the cabinet of a judge at the Court of Justice of the EU, and an intern in the Office of the President of Eurojust. Since 2017, he has been an auditor at the European Court of Auditors with a focus on performance audit, and an interest in foresight and the EU's innovative technological policies: EU space programmes; 5G networks; e-Government; and high-performance computing.



Alessandro Massolo

Case Handler, Directorate-General for Competition (DG COMP), European Commission

Prior to taking up his current position, Alessandro was an economic advisor to Commissioner Gabriella Muscolo at the Italian Competition Authority, having previously worked at the TLC & Communications and Credit Departments. Before joining the Italian Competition Authority, he worked at the Brattle Group. He holds a PhD in Law and Economics from Luiss University, and an MA in European Law and Economic Analysis from the College of Europe. He is a teaching assistant at Luiss University, Rome. His main field of research and publication is big data, artificial intelligence and regulation.



Raúl Muriel Carrasco

Policy Officer, European Economic and Social Committee

Raúl supports one of the EESC Directors on the coordination of policy. He also works to support the EESC Foresight, Studies and Policy Assessment Unit, and participates in the ESPAS Project Team. He has more than 13 years of professional experience on policy evaluation and social research. In his current job, he also deals with the Better Regulation Agenda. He has experience teaching public policy evaluation at several universities, including the College of Europe.



Sara Nanino

Policy Officer, Global Economic Issues, European External Action Service

Sara studied diplomacy and specialised in international economic relations. She worked for a well-known multinational company, for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and for a London-based think tank, before joining the EU Institutions. She is currently working on global economic issues.



Sarah Neehus

Evaluation Assistant, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission

Sarah holds a double degree in Public Policy & Human Development from Maastricht University and the United Nations University. She has a particular interest in harnessing the potential of aligning evidence-based policy-making with strategic foresight. Prior to joining the European Commission in 2019, she worked in this field, applying foresight methodologies in the context of tourism development.



Edgar Oganessian

Policy Assistant to the Director of Resources, Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM), European Commission

Edgar joined the Commission in 2018, and has since had the opportunity to work in DG COMM, the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) and DG CNECT. In his personal time, he enjoys board games and other hobbies that help one adopt new perspectives. His interest in foresight is driven by a desire to bring different ways of thinking to the way we work, in order to better appreciate the complexity of the tasks we undertake, and the varied and often asymmetrical impacts of decisions taken at all levels. Although his home country of Estonia is known for innovative approaches to applying digital technologies, Edgar believes that foresight is one of the areas that benefits most from human-to-human 'offline' collaboration.



Anja Palm

Policy Officer, Early Warning and Conflict Prevention, European External Action Service

Anja graduated in law from the University of Bologna and holds a Transnational Law LLM from King's College London. She has worked as a research fellow at the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), focusing on the EU's foreign policy on migration and conflict. Before joining the EEAS in November 2019 as a policy officer, she worked at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EEAS as a seconded researcher. She now implements the EU conflict early warning system, with a focus on Sub-Saharan Africa and combining quantitative and qualitative tools.



Krisztina Perlaky-Tóth

Policy Officer, Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and Economic and Social Cohesion, European Economic and Social Committee

After studying economics and economic policy analysis, Krisztina joined the Section for Economic and Monetary Union and Economic and Social Cohesion in 2016. She works on economic policies, particularly on EMU and the EU's economic governance framework. She also deals with issues related to the EU's investment plans (InvestEU programme), and statistics.



Dafni Piffer

Audiovisual Producer, Internal Communication and Multimedia Unit, Directorate-General for Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC), European Parliament

Dafni studied Cinema and Media Engineering, and previously worked as a freelance filmmaker. He joined the European Parliament in 2016 and currently produces, with a small team, in-house videos – mainly for internal communication. Some of these productions have won international awards – including golds at the Cannes Corporate Media & TV Awards and the World Media Festival, among others. He is constantly searching for new narratives and disruptive communication techniques, and in foresight finds an endless source of ideas.



Angela Ramallo Ros

Auditor at Chamber II 'Investment for cohesion, growth and inclusion', European Court of Auditors

Angela studied Law and Business Administration in Spain and Comparative Business Law in Germany and Australia. She worked in a law firm, an energy company, the Red Cross and the Spanish Congress of Deputies. Angela was a trainee at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Law in Heidelberg, and at the European Parliament. Since 2020, she has worked at the Court dealing with different topics including SME business support, youth unemployment initiatives and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) infrastructure projects.



Christina Ratcliff

Parliamentary Research Administrator, Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies, Directorate-General for Internal Policies of the Union (DG IPOL), European Parliament

Growing up trilingual (English, French and Spanish), EU values have always been of central importance to Christina. She studied European Management in the United Kingdom and Spain before moving to Brussels to work for the European Commission. She joined the European Parliament in 2011, and especially enjoyed working in the Transport and Tourist (TRAN) Committee Secretariat. She then moved to the Policy Department for TRAN, followed by the Policy Department for Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), dedicated to providing key expertise to Members of the European Parliament and their committees.



Katharina RETTIG

Political Administrator, Environment and Climate Change, Council of the EU

Katharina studied political science in France and the United Kingdom and worked in EU communication. She joined the Council in 2015, first doing media monitoring and analysis before joining the press office. She was seconded to the Bulgarian Presidency in 2018 to support the communications team. Katharina now works on environment and climate change and tries to save nature one step at a time.



Vasile Rotaru

Head of Sector, Methodology of Integrated Approach, European External Action Service

Vasile holds a PhD in International Relations with a thesis on the Eastern Partnership and its impact on EU-Russia relations. Before entering the diplomatic corps, he conducted academic research in Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Romania, and the United States. Vasile joined the EEAS in January 2021 as a head of sector within the Integrated Approach for Security and Peace 1 division.



Julia Ruppel

Policy Officer, Election Observation & Democracy Support, European External Action Service

Julia studied international relations, public law and economics. After working for several years in academia, including as a Marie Curie Research Fellow among other things, Julia completed her PhD in Peace and Conflict Studies in the United Kingdom. She joined the EEAS in April 2019, working on democracy support and election observation in sub-Saharan African countries. She is also the EEAS focal point for the European Endowment for Democracy and the Council of Europe regarding democracy related matters. Julia worked for a British Member of the European Parliament as a foreign policy advisor; the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and as international election observer for the EU, the Carter Center, and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR).



Pierre Saglier

Political Administrator, Advisor to the Director-General for General and Institutional Policy, Council of the EU

Pierre is French, and studied Political Science in France and the United Kingdom. He joined the Council in 2015, working on transport and digital files. In 2016, he joined the Brexit Task Force, representing the Council in the EU negotiating team. Since 2021, he has been an advisor to the Director General for General and Institutional Policy, focusing on European Council preparations and Interinstitutional relations.



Guido Sala Chiri

Political Administrator, Directorate-General for Justice and Home Affairs – Fundamental Rights and Values and Rule of Law, Council of the EU

Guido studied politics and law. After a few years in academia, he joined the Council in 2012. He worked extensively on agricultural files, covering legislation and the preparation of EU positions/negotiations in international organisations and fora. He currently focuses on rule of law issues. Guido is also very interested in environmental and social themes and is reasonably confident that the EU will develop further its global lead in these areas.



Petra Sapina

Political Administrator, Employment and Social Policy, Council of the EU

Petra studied languages and political science. She joined the Council as a translator before moving into communications and being seconded to the Croatian Presidency as a press officer. She now works as a policy officer in the area of employment and social affairs.



Isabel Fernandez Sarabia

Institutional Policy Officer, European Investment Bank

Isabel specialised in international relations of the EU, with a particular focus on development cooperation and the EU financial architecture for development. She has worked with the European Commission (African Peace Facility), the EU Delegation to Morocco, several non-governmental organisations and a think tank. Isabel is currently with the European Investment Bank, at its Brussels office, covering Latin America and Asia as well as trade and connectivity matters.



Julia Shah Fiorovanti

Policy Officer, migration and integration policies, Committee of the Regions

Julia is a First-Class Honours graduate, who first worked as a lawyer linguist for the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Central Bank. In 2020, she joined the Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX) of the European Committee of the Regions as a policy officer in charge of migration and integration policies, with additional responsibilities related to subsidiarity, rule of law and foresight.



Saskia Stolk

Political Administrator, Advisor to the Director-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, Council of the EU

Saskia studied languages and European studies before joining a consultancy firm specialised in scenario planning. She joined the Council in 2013, working on financial services and economic governance, and moved to its Analysis and Research Team in 2020. She now is advisor to the Director-General for Economic and Financial Affairs. Saskia is interested in a wide range of topics, from crypto assets to political polarisation.



Sébastien Trenner

Policy Officer, United States and Canada, European External Action Service

Sébastien studied business administration, international relations, European public administration and microfinance. After early experiences working in the private sector, he spent about 14 years focusing on socio-economic development in various locations around the world (including the European Commission, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM), International Labour Organization (ILO), GIZ, and the World Bank). Sébastien joined the EEAS in July 2020, acting as the focal point for the EU-US Energy Council and a range of sectoral work for both EU-USA and EU-Canada cooperation, including all external aspects of the European Green Deal, Arctic matters, connectivity, research and innovation, and space.



Filiz Unsal

Institutional Policy Officer, European Investment Bank

Filiz studied Finance and Financial Law in the Netherlands and United States. She joined the European Investment Bank five years ago, after working in the private sector in management consultancy and the banking sector. At the EIB, Filiz initially focused on operational strategy; today she works as an Institutional Policy Officer covering EU mandates, small and medium-sized enterprise (SME)/Midcap policy and Operational Plan/ Strategic orientations of the EIB.



Vaia Vaena

Lawyer Linguist-Adviser on legislative technique, Directorate-General for the Presidency (DG PRES), European Parliament

Vaia is a Greek lawyer who specialised in public finance law before joining the Parliament, where she has worked as a lawyer linguist since 2011. She now supports colleagues by focusing on legislative technique, after following the work of several parliamentary committees. Vaia is an eternal optimist, and a believer in human rights and the rule of law.



Anneleen Van Landeghem

Analyst, Asia, European External Action Service

Anneleen holds an MA in China Studies and an MSc in Finance. She studied in Leuven, Harbin, Hong Kong and Taipei. After three years with a Dutch agri-business in China, Anneleen worked for almost nine years for Luxembourg's Embassy in Beijing and the Consulate-General in Shanghai. She joined the EEAS in November 2020 as an Asia Analyst.



Anne van Nistelrooij

Team leader, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission Anne works on consumer policy and, in this capacity, she is inter alia responsible for the follow-up of the New Consumer Agenda, its governance. Before joining the consumer policy unit, Anne worked on gender equality, and humanitarian assistance. She is a graduate in political science and international relations, and worked in civil society organisations and development cooperation, before joining the European Commission in 2014.



Jeroen Vandeur

Policy Officer, energy and space, Committee of the Regions

As an engineer in environmental sciences and environmental technology, Jeroen worked for several years in the private sector before joining the Commission for the Environment, Climate Change and Energy (ENVE) in the Committee of the Regions to work on energy and space policy.



Julia Walschebauer

Political Assistant to the Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General for Energy (DG ENER), in charge of coordination of the Just and Green Energy Transition, European Commission

Julia is responsible for working within ENER and with other Commission services on the implementation of the European Green Deal. She previously worked on clean energy research and innovation, as well as on electrification and renewable energy deployment in Sub-Saharan Africa. Julia holds degrees in Political Economy from the London School of Economics, and in Business and Finance from Maastricht University, and is keen to take a step back from daily work, to look at innovative ideas to tackle the common challenges that the EU institutions will face in the medium- to long-term.

**Disclaimer**

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