The European Institute is UCL's hub for research, collaboration and engagement on Europe

ucl.ac.uk/european-institute
Since we last penned a foreword, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has unleashed geopolitical turmoil not seen in decades, the UK’s departure from the EU has demonstrated in real-time the trade-offs nation states face in an interdependent world; and Covid-19 has dominated our personal, professional and institutional lives.

Of course, the terms “crisis” and “Europe” are well-acquainted with each other. Political scientists already speak of the EU’s “polycrisis”, even a “crisisification” of European politics. Not that this is new. In the early 18th century, Leibniz thought Europe in a state of crisis unseen since Charlemagne; “Europe, they say, is in a critical condition”, Husserl reported in the early 20th.

The complexity of today’s interconnected challenges reminds us of the purpose and value of what we do at UCL. As Hannah Arendt put it, there is also “the opportunity, provided by the very fact of crisis— which tears away facades and obliterates prejudices—to explore and inquire into whatever has been laid bare of the essence of the matter”. There has certainly been no shortage of academic expertise across UCL’s eleven faculties to do just that.

Crises also challenge us to transform how we do things. Covid-19, for better or for worse, has brought about a revolution in hybrid teaching and academic engagement. Brexit has meant reforging our partnerships and policy engagement with European universities in new, more resilient ways. And Russia’s aggression has led to unprecedented action, across the university sector, to support displaced Ukrainian students and academics.

Responding effectively requires greater international cooperation – and a keener understanding of Europe’s histories, cultures, politics, economics and more. We therefore see the role of the European Institute, UCL’s hub for research, education and engagement on Europe, as more important now than ever.

Following a period of reorientation, including a new home in the UCL Faculty of Laws, we have this past year delivered new practice-led teaching programmes, provided leadership for UCL’s institutional strategy on Europe, piloted work on international policy engagement, created opportunities for academics to engage high profile external audiences, fostered new clusters of scholarship and creativity, and showcased UCL ideas and expertise through blogs, podcasts and short films.

As we begin a new academic year, we remain committed to making a difference within and beyond UCL, and to playing our small part in helping to ensure Europe is equipped with the talent and ideas required to meet the challenges we face head on.
Directors’ Foreword

The European Institute acts as an important hub for UCL’s research, teaching and education on Europe. From hosting the EU Ambassador to the United Kingdom to convening a series of roundtables on the future of European science collaboration, the Institute has played a vital role in cultivating relationships and convening discussions at the highest levels, to ensure UCL remains a key player in European debates.

Dr Michael Spence AC
President & Provost
University College London

The European Institute’s events and research on hot topics and deep problems – from erosion of the rule of law in the EU to how climate change affects democracy – keep UCL students and faculty engaged in policy evolution across Europe, maintaining networks of influence and thought leadership for the long term that can weather the ups and downs in the UK-EU relationship.

Dr Heather Grabbe
Director
Open Society European Policy Institute & Visiting Professor
UCL European Institute
Europe at UCL

UCL is a world-leading hub for the study of Europe and the EU. We teach over 30 European languages and have at least 300 academics working specifically on Europe.

UCL is proud of its diverse community of European staff and students. 10% of the student population and 20% of the staff population comes from EU countries.

UCL enjoys close partnerships with leading universities and research organisations across Europe, from KU Leuven to Inria and influences EU policy through LERU, the Russell Group and Universities UK.

Through the UCL Cities’ Partnership Programme, UCL aims to foster long-lasting multidisciplinary partnerships with other global cities, starting with Rome, Paris and Stockholm.

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, UCL created an Academic Sanctuary Fellowship programme for displaced scholars in partnership with the Council for Academics at Risk (CARA), which has so far brought 16 Ukrainian scholars to UCL.

UCL has benefited from EU funding, programmes and networks. UCL was the 4th most successful higher education institution in winning EU research funding under Horizon 2020 (2014-2020), while 350 UCL students per year undertake Erasmus mobility.
About the UCL European Institute

Established in 2010 and a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence since 2016, the European Institute is UCL’s hub for research, education and engagement on Europe.

Internally, we enable, develop and support UCL research and teaching activities on Europe across faculties and foster an environment where work on Europe can flourish.

Externally, we engage with policy professionals, civil society and the public to maximise the reach and impact of UCL ideas and expertise.

Since 2020, the European Institute has been located in the Faculty of Laws, with funding contributions from Laws, Arts & Humanities, Social & Historical Sciences and the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies (SSEES).

We work across UCL’s faculties to create, curate and showcase research, teaching and engagement on Europe, drawing in new audiences from politicians to cultural institutes, diplomats to businesses and putting UCL expertise to work in the world.

Since 2020, we have placed a strategic focus on institutional leadership, innovative education, supporting the research environment and enhancing UCL’s reach through public, policy and student engagement.
## About the UCL European Institute

### UCL European Institute in numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Events</th>
<th>UCL Academics</th>
<th>Student Satisfaction</th>
<th>Published Blogs</th>
<th>Unique Views</th>
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We hosted or co-hosted **33 public events**, with over **2000 registered participants**, on topics from democratic backsliding to European academic cooperation, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine to reform of the Human Rights Act.

We provided a platform for **48 UCL academics** from **seven UCL Faculties** and **58 external speakers**, from Bill Browder, Head of the Global Magnitsky Justice Campaign to His Excellency João Vale de Almeida, EU Ambassador to the United Kingdom; Sophie Pedder, Paris Bureau Chief at The Economist to Dr Olesya Khromeychuk, Director of the Ukrainian Institute London.

We delivered an innovative new practice-led MSc module involving 12 senior practitioners and achieving an average **student satisfaction rating of 4.7 out of 5**.

We published **52 blogs** on the dedicated UCL Europe blog, with contributions from 40 UCL academics across 7 faculties and 18 externals and almost **20,000 unique views** this academic year.

We produced **7 new videos** on topics from Politics, Opera and the Russian State to the significance of 1066, as well as **2 new Talking Europe podcasts**.

We delivered a year-long Music Futures programme which supported **9 music-related projects** across UCL and culminating in a **4-day festival** of concerts, conversations, performances, film premiers, a lego workshop and a dinner party.
It has been intellectually rewarding, as well as a great pleasure, to work this year with the European Institute, especially on Music Futures. The energy and commitment they generate is far greater than would be expected given their small team. Their experience of building intellectual community, supporting small grant projects, and making the most of limited resources has been invaluable in bringing together colleagues of all disciplines working on music and sound studies. There is now scope to establish a research centre in this field, to the benefit of staff and students across UCL.

Professor Nicola Miller
Director
UCL Institute of Advanced Studies
Institutional leadership on Europe

As the turbulence in EU-UK relations persists, the European Institute plays an important role in shaping and informing UCL’s European engagement strategy, including the university’s response to war in Ukraine, and maintaining constructive dialogue with European partners.

We convened a series of high-level roundtables with research leaders, and European Institute Visiting Professor Carlos Moedas, to take stock of EU-UK research relations and identify opportunities for continued cooperation.

We welcomed EU Ambassador João Vale de Almeida to the UCL European Institute Advisory Board and to UCL for a lecture on EU-UK relations in a changing world, followed by a student-led Q&A and dinner with UCL leadership.

We hosted and contributed to diverse policy discussions on European research and higher education, from a dialogue with the French Embassy in the United Kingdom and the British Council France on the Future of Academic Cooperation in Europe, to a seminar on EU-UK mobility hosted by the UK Mission to the EU, post-Erasmus.

Shaping UCL’s European strategy and maintaining dialogue with EU partners
Leading UCL’s response to Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine

We convened senior civil servants, academics, diplomats and parliamentarians for a closed policy dialogue with former Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid on The transatlantic security paradigm: How has the world changed and how should the West respond?

We showcased UCL expertise in relation to the war through a mini-series of cross-disciplinary perspectives on the UCL Europe blog and hosted a cross-faculty networking workshop, in partnership with UCL Institute for Advanced Studies.

We held a public panel event on the implications of the war for the future of European society, security and integration, with the Rt Hon Sir David Lidington, in partnership with SSEES.

We also brokered UCL academic expertise to advise on UCL’s corporate response to the war.
The European Institute’s roundtable discussion on the UK-Swiss-EU research relationship was a really valuable resource for the Embassy’s work. It managed to bring the leadership of the major research institutions and funders in both countries together and delivered a perspective for bilateral collaboration within and outside EU programmes. This has given the Embassy a foundation for developing a stakeholder perspective which will inform how we establish the new UK-Swiss research relationship at policy level.

Kersti Kaljulaid
Former President of the Republic of Estonia 2016-2021

I was delighted to return to UCL, which is famous for its expertise on Europe, Russia and the Baltics, for a stimulating exchange on the serious challenges facing our continent, with leading academics and influential policymakers. This is a historic time and it’s essential that we make the right decisions now to determine Europe’s future and security.

Dr Lutz-Peter Berg
Head of Science and Innovation
Embassy of Switzerland to the United Kingdom

UCL European Institute is an important hub of research, teaching and debate on Europe and the European Union. I am delighted to join its external Advisory Board and look forward to contributing to its further development.

His Excellency
João Vale de Almeida
EU Ambassador to the United Kingdom
This year, we delivered a new module, European Politics, Policy and Law in Practice, offered as part of the MSc in European Politics and Policy run by UCL School of Public Policy. The module complements academic study with a curated programme of conversations and skills-oriented sessions with practitioners, leveraging the Institute’s strong networks across EU policymaking communities.

Sessions focused on themes from climate change and energy policy to the response to Covid-19, UK-EU relations and the EU’s interinstitutional dynamics. In addition, students learned core professional skills, from stakeholder mapping to developing policy briefings.

12 senior practitioners from a diverse range of backgrounds contributed, and students gave the module an average rating of 4.7 out of 5.
Innovative teaching and practice-informed pedagogy

The taught module that the European Institute provides for postgraduate students was an amazing opportunity to engage with key stakeholders, and provided a real insight into decision-making at the highest level of European politics.

Robert Birch
MSc European Politics and Policy, 2022

This [European Policy and Practice] module broadened my areas of policy expertise and [deepened] my knowledge of how the EU works on a day-to-day basis, which will be invaluable assets in my future career.

Emily Blumenthal
MSc European Politics and Policy, 2022

I had the enormous pleasure of discussing EU energy policies and the role of the European Parliament with a group of highly engaged and well-informed MSc students, who asked pertinent questions and showed a real capacity for grasping complex trade-offs and thinking outside the box for policy solutions.

In fact, this intensive session gave me several new ideas to use in my daily work of delivering research and analytical support for EU level decision-makers.

My impression is that the MSc in European Politics and Policy is a rigorous and cutting-edge programme that is equipping the students with important skills in policy analysis, which they can explore and develop in a wide range of potential career paths.

Dr Alex Wilson
EU Energy Policy Specialist
European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)

With colleagues in Arts & Humanities, we are also developing the European Literary Map, an innovative teaching tool that will encourage students to explore London through the eyes of leading European artists, intellectuals, musicians and scientists, and for use in UCL summer schools.
Enhancing the research environment

Through our own academic work, by hosting Visiting Professors, and by coordinating cross-disciplinary networks and initiatives, the European Institute fosters an environment where research on Europe across the disciplines can flourish.

We are also a proud Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence and act as the contact point for UCL’s UACES membership.

“...an important forum of vibrant debate in London over the EU’s future and raison d’être. In particular, our panel discussions on the judgment K 3/21 of 7 October 2021 of the Polish Constitutional Tribunal challenging the primacy of EU law over national Polish law and on the daunting question of How to strengthen EU democracy and the Rule of Law against the backdrop of illiberal backsliding stood out as highlights in the last year. Students, practitioners and academics from various disciplines were able to come together and exchange their views on these burning issues. I personally gained new insights and fresh impetus for my own academic work. The UCL European Institute is offering an invaluable contribution in our difficult times in the best Enlightenment tradition of the old European salon."

Dr Oliver Gerstenberg
Senior Lecturer
UCL Faculty of Laws
Dr Claudia Sternberg and Dr Uta Staiger are co-editing a book *Parliament Buildings: the Architecture of Politics*, which brings together distinguished researchers and architects to explore how parliament buildings shape and are shaped by politics across Europe, for publication by UCL Press in 2023.

Dr Uta Staiger has co-edited a special free to access edition of the journal Global Policy: *“Brexit: Past, Present and Future”*, which brings together twelve senior academics from political science, law and history, among them European Institute Academic Director Professor Piet Eeckhout, for a diachronic analytical perspective on Brexit.

We hosted Professor Nomi Lazar, full Professor of Politics in the Graduate School of Politics and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa, as a Visiting Professor at UCL European Institute to pursue research on European extremist movements’ use of apocalyptic rhetoric and the threat this can pose to constitutional regimes.

“From political extremism to climate activism, Europe is alive with talk of apocalypse. Yet, we understand little about how and when these volatile narratives work. In the course of a wonderful visit, the European Institute hosted workshops and discussions with interdisciplinary scholars, centred around these subjects, which have significantly advanced my project to develop a core theory of apocalyptic rhetoric.”

Professor Nomi Lazar
Professor of Politics
University of Ottawa
Music is among the most cherished unifying principles of our troubled age. The ecumenical experiment of UCL Music Futures illustrated this vividly.

The Music Futures initiative brought together a rich diversity of disciplines - ranging from architecture and archaeology to cognitive neuroscience and musical performance - spanning UCL and academic and artistic partnerships with Europe and beyond, all united by a common commitment to musical scholarship and creativity.

The resulting Festival built interdisciplinary bridges and dialogues that were often surprising and always inspiring. In the case of my own research group, it has seeded a new collaboration dedicated to developing music-based therapies informed by brain science, to enhance well-being and resilience in people with dementia.

Professor Jason Warren
Professor of Neurology
Wellcome Trust Senior Clinical Fellow and Honorary Consultant Neurologist
UCL Faculty of Brain Sciences
Music Futures Festival Programme
17-23 June 2022

- Singing Cultural Memories of Places and Spaces
- Visit to PEARL: UCL’s new Person-Environment-Activity Research Laboratory
- Playing with Purpose: instruments for (more than) music
- Italian Opera in Global and Transnational Perspective
- Film premiere and screening: Singing Truth to Power: Politics, Opera and the Russian State
- Re-imagining the musical bandstand in the 21st century
- What constitutes music?
- UCL Anthrobeats – Data Dance: The Sound of Space and Mobility
- The Vinteuil Centenary: Music, Memory and Repetition in Proust
- Ukrainian-themed closing Buffet and Drinks
Extending UCL’s reach

Through partnerships, engagement and a lively programme of public events, the European Institute showcases UCL’s expertise and ideas on Europe to diverse publics, policy and professional communities across Europe.

We also aspire to inspire and engage UCL students with an interest in Europe, from across the disciplines.

The European Institute hosted or co-hosted 33 public events, with colleagues across UCL and external partners, reaching a combined audience of over 2000.

France 2022: A very uncertain Presidential election, chaired by Professor Philippe Marlière, and co-hosted with SELCS.

Taking on Putin from the Magnitsky Act to Resisting Russia’s War on Ukraine. Chaired by Dr Ben Noble and co-hosted with SSEES and IOE, UCL’s Faculty of Education and Society.

The Human Rights Act Reviewed, a lecture by Sir Peter Gross with UCL Faculty of Laws.

Annual Sakharov Debate with the European Parliament Information Office: Covid-19 and intergenerational equity with Professor Sir Richard Blundell, Professor Danny Dorling and Frances Fitzgerald MEP.
The French higher education and research community has long-standing relationships with UCL and especially with the UCL European Institute.

This year, the French Embassy has strengthened ties with the Institute, post-Brexit and in the context of the French Presidency of the EU Council, through both the Night of Ideas and a policy dialogue on the evolution of academic competition and collaboration in Europe.

We believe that these successful joint events will serve to further strengthen our links and formalise our collaboration in the future.

Dr Minh-Hà Pham
Counsellor for Science and Technology
Embassy of France to the United Kingdom
We showcase UCL ideas on Europe through academic commentary, short films and podcasts.

We published 52 posts on the UCL Europe Blog, which had almost 20,000 unique views over 12 months.

‘Speaking Truth to Power: On Politics, Opera and the Russian State’ explores themes of artistic representation, truth and political assassination in Putin’s Russia. It was produced as part of the Music Futures initiative.

We facilitate exchange with policymakers in the UK, Brussels and beyond.

Our successful mini-series on the Values of Europe, featured blog contributions from eight European Ambassadors. UCL SSEES student Freya Proudman, Professor Ronan McCrea and Dr Mart Kuldkepp.

We produced two new Talking Europe podcasts with UCL academics.

African American Entertainers in pre-Jazz Europe explores the arrival of Black American entertainers in Central Europe ca. 1900 with Dr Jeff Bowersox, UCL SELCS.

We hosted President Kersti Kaljulaid for a closed policy roundtable on the future of European security, with senior parliamentarians, civil servants, academics and diplomats; delivered a new cross-UCL project on global policy engagement including bespoke training sessions and resources; and provided support for two policy translation projects within UCL Faculty of Laws.

Being able to bring together academic experts with leading figures working on issues such as the rule of law and the future of the Union allows students to see how what they are learning both fits into a bigger picture and has concrete applications on the ground.

Professor Ronan McCrea
Professor of Constitutional and European Law
UCL Faculty of Laws

We released two new short films, drawing on and showcasing UCL research expertise.

We facilitated exchange with policymakers in the UK, Brussels and beyond.
We actively seek to create opportunities for UCL students through our work, enabling them to benefit from the European Institute’s networks.

We produced five careers videos with European Institute Advisory Board members who share their career trajectories and advice with UCL students.

We curated two EU careers sessions for the UCL Department of Political Science Careers week, with input from EU and UK diplomats and UCL alumni in policy roles in Brussels.

We curated an event on the Polish Constitutional Tribunal and the Supremacy of EU Law for LLM students impacted by Covid-19 and partnered with the EU Student Think-Tank on an event on EU Democracy and Democratic Backsliding.
Extending UCL’s reach through public, policy and student engagement

The future of European values and the revitalisation of democracy depends on young people. We are eager to act but we continue to face barriers. We need structural, organisation and financial support to help turn our ideas into initiatives, alongside mentorship from those with greater connections, networks, experience and know-how.

Freya Proudman
UCL SSEES student & UK Young European Ambassador – EU Neighbours East

The module European Politics, Policy and Law in Practice enabled me to understand how to apply my knowledge through concrete skills. I learnt from luminaries in the field and practised research and policy communication. In addition, the European Institute allowed me to participate in unique events, such as the EU Ambassador’s visit. Being able to ask questions and sit at the same table with the Ambassador and my peers was a very special moment for my personal and professional aspirations.

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Dr Kirsty Hughes
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Scottish Centre on European Relations

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BOZAR

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Royal United Services Institute

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Mayor of Lisbon

Anisia Morel
Legal Counselor
French Embassy to the United Kingdom

John Peet
Special reports & Brexit editor
The Economist

Quentin Peel
Associate Fellow
Europe Programme
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Johnny Pitts
Writer
photographer and broadcaster

Dr Martin Porter
Executive Chair
Brussels Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership

Philip Souta
Head of UK Public Policy
Clifford Chance LLP

His Excellency João Vale de Almeida
EU Ambassador to the United Kingdom

Janet Zmroczek
Head of European and American Collections
The British Library

This year we are proud to have partnered with:

UCL School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies
UCL Faculty of Arts & Humanities
UCL Department of Political Science – School of Public Policy
IOE UCL’s Faculty of Education and Society
The Bartlett
UCL Institute of Advanced Studies
Office of the Vice-President for External Engagement
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WHY HAVE A MIND IF YOU CAN'T CHANGE IT?