Villa Vigoni 40 JAHRE ANNI

Centro italo-tedesco per il dialogo europeo
Deutsch-Italienisches Zentrum für den Europäischen Dialog

TRECCANI CULTURA FONDAZIONE

Villa Vigoni Autumn School in European Studies 2026

"Europe in the Age of Global Power Politics: The Future of Normative Power, Civil Power, Soft Power?"

VILLA VIGONI, 27-30 OCTOBER 2026

PROMOTED BY VILLA VIGONI
AND FONDAZIONE TRECCANI CULTURA

IN COOPERATION WITH
IEP @BOCCONI UNIVERSITY | UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA | UNIVERSITY OF SALENTO |
EUROPA-UNIVERSITY OF FLENSBURG | UNIVERSITY OF HAMBURG |
BUCERIUS LAW SCHOOL | FUDAN UNIVERSITY OF SHANGHAI |
THE HOPKINS-NANJING CENTER (SAIS)

Bocconi IEP INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN POLICYMAKING @BOCCONI UNIVERSITY

ALMA MATER STUDIORUM UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA | DIPARTIMENTO DELLE ARTI

UNIVERSITÀ DEL SALENTO L'Università dei due mari

FUDAN UNIVERSITY 復旦大學

Europa-Universität Flensburg

Universität Hamburg DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

BUCERIUS LAW SCHOOL HOCHSCHULE FÜR RECHTSWISSENSCHAFT

HOPKINS NANJING CENTER 中美中心

WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE *YOUNG VILLA VIGONI* PROGRAMME

GIOVANE / JUNGE

For decades, the European Union has been described as a *normative power*, a *civil power*, and, more recently, a *soft power* actor. These concepts captured Europe's distinctive role in international affairs: shaping global governance through rules, economic interdependence, diplomacy, and the promotion of values rather than military force. Yet the return of geopolitical competition, the erosion of multilateralism, and the emergence of a more fragmented international order raise fundamental questions about the continued relevance of these paradigms. Is Europe entering an era in which power politics overrides normative influence, or is the European Union adapting its traditional instruments to a more contested global environment?

The *Villa Vigoni Autumn School in European Studies* aims to critically examine these questions through an interdisciplinary dialogue that brings together political and economic analysis, historical reflection, and legal perspectives. Participants will explore how geopolitical competition, technological rivalry, and economic security concerns are reshaping the European Union's external action and fostering debates on strategic autonomy, industrial policy, and defense cooperation. At the same time, the Autumn School will situate these developments within the broader historical evolution of European integration and transformations of international order, while also examining how international and European law, regulatory power, and rule-making capacities continue to shape Europe's global role in an increasingly conflict-prone environment.

By combining these perspectives, the *Villa Vigoni Autumn School in European Studies* seeks to foster a nuanced debate on Europe's future role in global power politics and to engage a new generation of scholars in rethinking Europe's place in a changing world.

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TRECCANI CULTURA
FONDAZIONE

Programme

Villa Vigoni

27 – 30/10/2026

Tuesday, 27 October

15:30	Departure of the collective shuttle from Milano Centrale railway station (meeting point: Piazza IV Novembre, right outside the station)
17:30	Arrival at Villa Vigoni & Check-in
18:45	Welcome & Aperitif | **Christiane Liermann Traniello**, General Secretary, Villa Vigoni | **Marta Leonori**, General Secretary, Fondazione Treccani Cultura
19:30	Welcome Dinner

Wednesday, 28 October

08:00 – 09:00 Breakfast

Opening Remarks

Moderator: **Matteo Scotto**, Villa Vigoni

09:00 – 09:15	**Welcome Speech** (online) | **Massimo Bray,** General Director, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani | **Yijia Jing,** Dean of the Institute for Global Public Policy, Fudan University
	Opening Keynote
09:15 – 09:30	| **Paloma Lopez-Garcia,** Director, Institute for European Policymaking (IEP), Bocconi University
09:30 – 09:45	**Open Discussion**

SECTION I – Europe in the Age of Global Power Politics: The Future of Normative Power, Civil Power, Soft Power? | Political and Economic Perspectives

| Moderator: **Matteo Scotto**, Villa Vigoni

09:45 – 10:00	**Lecture 1 – Andrea Colli,** Bocconi University | *The Changing Nature of Soft Power in the Long Run: the European Experience*
10:00 – 10:15	**Lecture 2 – Ulrich Glassmann,** University of Flensburg | *Europe's Role in an Era of Weaponised Interdependence in the Global Economy*
10:15 – 10:30	**Lecture 3 – Rosalba Famà,** Institute for European Policymaking (IEP), Bocconi University | *Financing the EU as a Geopolitical Actor: Readiness 2030 and beyond*
10:30 – 10:45	**Lecture 4 – David Arase,** The Hopkins-Nanjing Center (SAIS) | *Brief Comments on the European Union's Efforts to Influence the Geopolitical and Geoeconomic Direction of a Dynamically Developing Indo-Pacific Region*
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee Break
11:15 – 12:00	**Open Discussion**
12:00 – 13:00	**Working Groups**
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch
15:00 – 16:00	Guided tour of the historical villa and park
16:00 – 16:15	Coffee Break

SECTION II – Europe in the Age of Global Power Politics: The Future of Normative Power, Civil Power, Soft Power? | Legal Perspectives

| Moderator: **Alberta Ivaldi**, Villa Vigoni

16:15 – 16:30	**Lecture 1 – Jörn Axel Kämmerer,** Bucerius Law School | *Farewell to the "Gentle Civilizer"? Public International Law at Stake*
16:30 – 16:45	**Lecture 2 – Markus Kotzur,** University of Hamburg | *On the Path to New Strategic Autonomy or Farewell to Europe as Normative Power – the Union's (Normative) Capacities at Stake*
16:45 – 17:15	**Open Discussion**
17:15 – 19:00	**Working Groups**
19:30 – 21:00	Dinner

Thursday, 29 October

08:00 – 09:00 Breakfast

SECTION III – Europe in the Age of Global Power Politics: The Future of Normative Power, Civil Power, Soft Power? | Historical perspectives

| Moderator: **Christiane Liermann Traniello**, General Secretary, Villa Vigoni

09:00 – 09:15 **Lecture 1 – Gennaro Imbriano,** University of Bologna
| *Soft Power: an Ideological Concept? A Historical-Conceptual Perspective*

09:15 – 09:30 **Lecture 2 – Ubaldo Villani-Lubelli,** University of Salento
| *Soft Power under Pressure: EU Strategic Autonomy in an Era of Geopolitical Rivalry*

09:30 – 09:45 **Lecture 3 – Marco Milani,** University of Bologna
| *Between Rivalry and Engagement: Europe, China and East Asia in a New Age of Global Power Politics*

09:45 – 10:00 **Lecture 4 – Weizhan Meng,** Fudan University
| *Material Bipolarity, Ideational Tripolarity, and the Selective Reconfiguration of Global Governance: The Structural Effects of Trump's Second Term*

10:00 – 11:00 **Open Discussion**

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:30 **Working Groups**

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:30 – 17:30 **Keep fit and network: group walk to Val Sanagra**
(hiking shoes are highly recommended)
Alternative, depending on weather conditions: **walk along the lakeside**

17:30 – 19:00 **Working Groups**
Coffee Break available

19:30 – 21:00 Dinner

FIRESIDE CHAT

| Moderator: **Matteo Scotto**, Villa Vigoni

21:30 – 22:00 **Enrico Fardella,** University of Naples "L'Orientale"; SAIS Europe, Bologna
| *Same Dreams, Different Beds: Europe–China Relations from the Past to the Future*

22:00 – 22:30 **Open Discussion**

Friday, 30 October

08:00 – 08:50 Breakfast & Check-out

STUDENTS' PRESENTATIONS & FINAL DISCUSSION

| Moderator: **Alberta Ivaldi**, Villa Vigoni

09:00 – 09:20 **Group 1 | Regulatory Power, Green Regulation, Technology and EU Standard-setting**

Giorgio Di Bella, University of Bologna | **Andrea Castiglione**, Bocconi University | **Francesca Maria Frassanito**, University of Salento | **Janne Lena Hümme**, Bucerius Law School | **Gwenael Leclerc**, EUF Flensburg | **Jiayi Lin**, Fudan University | **Maryanne Xu**, Johns Hopkins University Nanjing

09:20 – 09:40 **Group 2 | Strategic Autonomy, Economic Security, Defence and Industrial Renewal**

Emanuele Albanese, University of Bologna | **Paul Ludwig Bringmann**, SDU Sønderborg, Denmark & EUF Flensburg | **Liwei Chen**, Johns Hopkins University Nanjing | **Lea Maria Marchi**, Bocconi University | **Lennart Sunnus**, Bucerius Law School | **Yiting Wang**, Fudan University | **Huanxuan Zhu**, Fudan University

09:40 – 10:20 **Open Discussion: Groups 1 & 2**

10:20 – 10:40 Coffee Break

10:40 – 11:00 **Group 3 | Normative Power, Rule of Law, Human Rights, Democratic Legitimacy**

Serena Ceccarelli, University of Salento | **Yu Feng**, Fudan University | **Jakob Härterich**, Bucerius Law School | **Bijan Khodadadeh**, University of Hamburg | **Thea Kruse**, EUF Flensburg | **Giada Mazza**, Bocconi University | **Anna Viola**, University of Bologna

11:00 – 11:20 **Group 4 | Soft Power, Cultural Diplomacy and Europe's Global Influence**

Franziska Bachmann, University of Hamburg | **Khawaja Basit Rehman**, Fudan University | **Julia Darayanni**, University of Bologna | **Anna Decataldo**, University of Salento | **Rebecca Heuer**, EUF Flensburg | **Leonardo Scaglione**, Bocconi University | **Eva Sudbrack**, Bucerius Law School

11:20 – 12:00 **Open Discussion: Groups 3 & 4**

12:00 – 12:30 **Final Remarks, Feedback & Follow-up**

13:00 Departure with packed lunch from Villa Vigoni
(collective shuttle, expected arrival at Milano Centrale railway station by 15:00-15:30)