



EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

ANGELICA RESTORI

Angelica comes from Parma, in Italy. Her family involved her in volunteering activities since she was still 11 years old, in Brazil and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Helping others became an inner need as she volunteered for 2 years as a paramedic on the ambulances during high school. Her humanitarian attitude led her to pursue her studies in Law at Bocconi University in Milan (Master of Arts, M.A.), with the aim of putting the acquired knowledge at the service of people in need of protection. During her law school years, she realized she was particularly passionate about Human Rights after a work experience at the United Nations in New York. Her curiosity towards different teaching methods led her to study also in Paris and in London, and she obtained a second master degree in diplomacy while doing her legal traineeship for a law firm as an external consultant for the EU institutions. Recently, she also obtained her LL.M. cum laude from College of Europe, with a special mention (très bien) for her thesis on EU migration law. Angelica is a fully qualified lawyer, and is now working as a Blue Book trainee at the European Commission. Having always been genuinely curious and open towards other cultures, she studied several languages since an early age (she now speaks fluently Italian, English, French, Spanish and Portuguese). She describes herself as a very active person. She loves running, swimming, training, cooking, reading, dancing and singing. She's passionate about a healthy lifestyle, but also art, and enjoys travelling and visiting museums.

ANIS BELGACEM

Anis Belgacem is a modest and devoted young professional, Tunisian national he is pursuing his master's degree in European studies in Germany putting him at the heart of an international setting. A path he cherishes and that drives him to make a difference. His experiences have shaped him into a well-rounded person, and he greets each new opportunity with an open heart and a dedication to continued learning and progress. His academic path coupled with his experiences with several international NGOs has given him a thorough awareness of European politics as well as the desire to make a significant contribution. He sees his path as part of a lifelong learning process. Anis is motivated by his desire to make a positive difference in the world. He is passionate about creating opportunities for the most vulnerable and marginalized and believes that everyone deserves a chance to reach their full potential. Anis got expertise in communication, research, and advocacy via his academic journey, mainly as a Researcher at CAWTAR and a Research Assistant in several projects. These experiences have helped him to improve his organizational, international work, ethnography, and report-writing abilities. His work with a Tunisian NGO focusing on youth issues and education humbles him and serves as a reminder that learning is a continual process. Anis has always been involved in civil society be it as a founding member of an NGO in his home town



Gafsa, Tunisia, or as a volunteer with Amnesty International and the Red Crescent in Tunisia. This has led to his commitment to humanitarian work which serves as a guiding concept in the course of his life.

Anis's Motivation to Become an ELP Fellow is to use his knowledge and experience to make a meaningful contribution to the world. He hopes to use this opportunity to build his network, gain new skills, and make a positive impact. He is a firm believer in the power of collective action and the power of individuals to bring about positive change.

BARBARA FRUZSINA DEME

Barbara Deme is a 26-year-old ELP fellow and comes from a Hungarian German and Transylvanian family. Due to her family's international background, she became open to other cultures. Barbara obtained her B.A. Degree in International Relations at the Corvinus University of Budapest. After that, she continued her studies with a Double Degree Program in International Relations and Political Science at the Andrásy University of Budapest and the University of Wuppertal. Next to her studies, she was a member of Rajk College where she could widen her horizons with extracurricular activities and be an active community member. To deepen her knowledge of international politics, she interned at the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, where she published a policy brief about the Green Alliance, environmental cooperation between the European Union and Japan. From October 2023 she will work as a Project Assistant at the European college university Association, in order to help students with international mobility and responsible citizenship.

BENJAMIN CHRISTOPHER ILG

Benjamin is 29 years old and comes from Esslingen in the South West of Germany. He has worked as Briefing and Communication Coordinator in the European Commission (JRC) for a year, after having done a traineeship in the EU Delegation to Mexico. His educational background is in international politics and economics. In his free time, Benjamin follows a variety of hobbies, ranging from Salsa dancing to Boxing. He enjoys cooking healthy meals and travelling. His most recent travel was a road trip in the Western Balkans and Central Europe in summer. Benjamin's motivation to become an ELP fellow was his desire to seek inspirational encounters both professionally and personally.

ELENA PEREZ-VELASCO

Elena Pérez-Velasco is a young Spanish professional starting her career as a trainee at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). Elena takes every opportunity she has to get to know human stories and immerse herself in heart-to-heart conversations. Some of her most inspiring experiences were an alternative stay at the Pine Ridge Reservation (South Dakota, USA), a development internship at A Safe Haven Foundation, which contributes to ending homelessness (Southeast Chicago, USA), the MAGIS experience at the JRS center in Villanova de Gaia (Portugal) and the summer camps of Misioneros de la Esperanza (Cordoba, Spain). She loves to develop her leadership through challenging roles, as she has done as president of the Loyola Andalucía Chapter of Alpha Sigma Nu (2019-20) and current president of its Young Alumni Advisory Council (2022-2024). Her international education has further shaped this ethos: Master in European Public Policy Analysis (College of Europe, 2022-23), double degree in Business and International Relations from Loyola Andalucía University (2016-2022), Bachelor of Business Administration from Loyola University Chicago (2017-2020) and Fellow of the 2021 cohort of the IAJU Global



Citizenship Program organized by Georgetown University. With a strong commitment to social justice and equality, Elena wants to pursue a career in European public policy to contribute to reducing socio-economic disparities, with a particular focus on democracy, education and housing.

ERIK HAYES GOMEZ

Erik Hayes Gomez is a 24-year-old Spanish young professional currently undertaking a traineeship at the Assembly of European Regions. He was born in the city of Lleida, Catalonia and was nurtured by his Catalan mother and British father. Since his early years, he has been exposed to multiple languages, fostering a sense of openness and understanding towards other cultures and customs. Living in this environment motivated him to learn from others' cultures and appreciate the power of communication. Having completed his degree in Communications, Media, and Audiovisuals, he felt compelled to gain more hands-on experience and participated in a volunteering programme in Germany. Despite starting from scratch without prior knowledge of German, this experience pushed him to adapt to a new environment and view his challenges as opportunities to surpass personal limits. He considers himself fortunate to have encountered numerous captivating individuals who have influenced his path towards self-improvement, continuously inspiring him to delve deeper into self-discovery. Through his participation in the ELP programme, Erik aspires to take an active role in politically targeted circles and forge meaningful connections with both peers and mentors. "In the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity" Albert Einstein

FABRIZIO NAPOLI

Fabrizio Napoli is a research trainee with FINABEL (European Army Interoperability Centre) and a member of the International Team for the Study of Security (ITSS Verona). He holds an MA in Eastern European and Eurasian Studies from the University of Bologna and a BA in Philosophy, International Studies, and Economics from Ca' Foscari University of Venice. His research focuses on international relations and security in Europe and the former Soviet Union, particularly Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Caucasus. Moreover, he has a keen interest in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, energy and climate security, and hybrid warfare. When free from commitments, Fabrizio is an avid reader, movie watcher, budget traveler, and vinyl collector.

GERGŐ BARNA BALÁZS

Gergő is from Hungary and is currently participating in the European Commission's Blue Book Traineeship programme, working with international trade and competition aspects of maritime transport at DG MOVE. An enthusiast of public international law, he completed law school at Eötvös Loránd University and obtained specialized master's degrees from Université Paris II Panthéon-Assas and the University of Oxford. Having been engaged with international law in seven countries in four languages, he gained diverse work experience, including the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a leading Dutch law firm, and a major German research centre. Gergő's ambition is to drive positive change globally through a career in law combining research, practice and teaching. Beyond his legal ambitions, as an avid community organizer he has founded and managed several student societies. Currently, he is coordinating international projects aimed at making the world of international law more accessible for young professionals. In his free time, Gergő enjoys visiting museums, attending theatre performances, learning languages, and taking a stroll by a lakeside.



LOUISE EVERARTS

Louise is a Belgian law student who recently graduated from the College of Europe in Bruges and is currently working at the EU & International Department of the Federation of Belgian Enterprises. During her legal studies at KU Leuven, Université Saint-Louis, Université Montesquieu and at the College, Louise was always eager to deepen her knowledge of European foreign policy, especially in promoting and protecting human rights within and across European borders. The very reason why Louise started her legal studies and pursued her LL.M. was to gain an understanding of law as a tool to strive for the Christian values of justice and human dignity. This curiosity turned into a passion after participating in the VVN Modal United Nations Conference and the ELSA Summer School in Diplomacy & Law in Belgrade. Louise is a social and open-minded person with an active lifestyle. In her leisure time, Louise enjoys running, dancing and singing. Her greatest passions are travelling, music and literature. Since her primary education, Louise has spent most of her spare time in the music academy, where she practised ballet and jazz dance, and played the violin. During her years in secondary school, Louise developed her interest in languages, history and politics. Since her legal studies, Louise worked in various law firms and various law fields, ranging from alien law to environmental and corporate law. Louise has complemented her professional development with negotiation, mediation, and language courses. At the College, she also actively participated in various student associations. After completing her bar traineeship, Louise intends to work in human rights within the European institutions. With the ELP, she is looking forward to gaining insight into leadership from another perspective and contributing to the ELP community and the broader society.

LUCIA ALBANO

Lucia is an Italian young professional, determined to do her part for EU integration. She graduated in Law at the University of Trento in Italy, spent 1 year of Erasmus in Hamburg and specialized in EU law with an LL.M. at the College of Europe in Belgium (Bruges). As for her professional experience, she worked in a Law firm for 1,5 years in Italy. She is now happily starting her career in Brussels, where she works at the legal affairs unit of DG SANTE, European Commission, as a Bluebook trainee. She is indeed very interested in EU health law and policies, a field in rapid evolution following the Covid-19 pandemic, and one of those areas where there is clearly a margin for further integration - to the benefit of everybody's right to health -. In general and regardless of the specific policy field, she enjoys contributing to EU policy-making and implementation efforts through her legal expertise. Throughout the years she has also grown through constant social involvement, especially at the international level (extra-curricular activities, short-term Erasmus projects, voluntary work in a pro-European association). She loves speaking languages, investing in her personal growth and trying to leave a positive mark wherever she finds herself in. In her free time, Lucia enjoys discovering new countries, cooking, catching up with friends at least with very long phone calls, listening to podcasts unrelated to her expertise, trying to stay fit... and much more.

LUISA DORIANNA BEMBA

Luisa is a third-culture child of French and Italian nationalities, born in Germany, but the truth is her Europeanness was unveiled during her Erasmus in Potsdam. Polyglot, she effortlessly bridges cultural gaps, acutely epitomizing multicultural communication. Her international background has led her to develop a keen interest in international cooperation and diplomacy. What sets Luisa apart is not just her diverse personal and professional background (European External Action Service, Consulate General of France in Miami, Embassy of France in Berlin...) but also



her ability to blend it with a deep commitment to fostering understanding and collaboration: she brings a unique perspective to the global stage, navigating complex diplomatic relations in a poly-crises world. As a first-generation graduate in her family, she is naturally curious and has an insatiable thirst for knowledge, which explains her commitment to lifelong learning (College of Europe, Sciences Po Strasbourg, and Sorbonne alumna) and excellence. Guided by the values she cherishes most - altruism, determination, and audacity - she is convinced that through compassionate leadership, one can change the world one step at a time. She aspires to be a catalyst for change and a source of inspiration. Beyond her academic and professional endeavors, Luisa is engaged in associative life, dedicating time and energy to causes that matter to her and to people in an attempt to give back to the community. Finally, to manage all her commitments, Luisa tries to live by the principle of *mens sana in corpore sano* practicing a wide array of sports activities (dance, yoga, archery, boxing, volleyball, among others). During her free time, she enjoys a good book or movie with fine food - rumor has it, she has discerning taste but she will be happy to try delicacies from ELP fellows' home countries. With passion and purpose, we can achieve remarkable heights!

MARIA CORDERO-FERNÁNDEZ

Maria Cordero-Fernández, a 27-year-old Nicaraguan woman, demonstrates a profound commitment to socio-environmental justice. Her journey through a Jesuit school provided her with the foundational elements to develop her passion for combating injustices. During this period, she volunteered in various projects, allowing her to get a closer look at poverty and social inequalities prevalent within her country. At the same time, she discovered her calling for environmental advocacy and organized a student-led environmentalist movement. Maria's connection with nature motivated her pursuit of Environmental Engineering in her homeland. She spent a couple of years working as an environmental consultant for private industries. However, the shifting socio-political landscape in Nicaragua in 2018 prompted her realization that she wanted to redirect her professional trajectory towards more socially impactful avenues. She applied for a position as a research assistant at Nitlapan-Nicaragua, where she dedicated two years of service. During this interval, she came to comprehend the intricate nature of social-ecological systems, particularly in historically marginalized rural areas. This experience also facilitated her recognition of the pivotal role of participatory action-research as a catalyst for reflection and transformative change. In 2021, Maria was awarded with an Erasmus Mundus scholarship to pursue an International Master's in Rural Development. This experience required her relocation to a different EU country each semester, which not only enriched her academically but also challenged her positively on a personal level. Interacting with fellow international students enabled her to broaden her perspective on shared struggles and emphasized the importance of strengthening connections to address these issues collectively. Recently, she completed her master's program with outstanding academic achievements. Maria is now looking forward to continuing the next chapter of her professional journey, harnessing her privileges to contribute meaningfully to the betterment of society.

MÁTYÁS TOMPA

Matyas works as a trainee in the European Economic and Social Committee in the Consultative Commission for Industrial Change section. He holds a Bachelor's degree in international Business from Corvinus University of Budapest and a Political Science degree from the Central European University in Vienna. Over the years, he has familiarized himself with various topics ranging from philosophy and political economy to social theory and international relations. In the past few years, Matyas' interests have mostly focused on industrial policy, political



economy from a financial standpoint, and political communication. He has also paid increased attention to the V4 region in the past year, working on political communication, writing for political parties, and examining their relation to environmentalism. Right now, building in his experience as a researcher and a consultant, he is working on the realization of the Blue Deal umbrella opinion and is an active participant in bringing the stakeholders on water together in the EU.

MILENA MACHAŁA

Milena is a 25-year-old Polish professional currently serving as a Blue Book trainee within the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship, and SMEs (DG GROW). Her academic journey took her from the University of Warsaw, where she pursued her law degree, to the University of Poitiers, expanding her international perspective. Additionally, she completed a British law course at the British Law Centre, a joint initiative by the University of Cambridge and the University of Warsaw. She was honored to receive a scholarship from the Rector of Warsaw University for her academic achievements for two consecutive years. Additionally, her master's thesis received recognition as it won a prize in a competition organized by the Polish Competition Authority and the Polish Competition Law Association. Professionally, Milena gained experience over nearly three years at an international law firm, specializing in competition and consumer protection law. Her interests primarily revolve around antitrust law, especially in the ever-changing context of digital markets and emerging technologies. Furthermore, Milena is passionate about environmental sustainability and the circular economy. She seeks opportunities to contribute to the development of policies and practices that promote eco-friendly solutions and drive the transition to a more sustainable future. Beyond her professional pursuits, Milena has a passion for sailing. Whether it's navigating the Baltic or exploring the Mediterranean, she finds solace and excitement in the open waters. She's also an avid diver, exploring the beauty of the underwater world in her free time.

REBECCA SCHÖLER

Rebecca Schöler is a 22-year-old German ELP fellow currently completing an internship at the public affairs agency Erste Lesung GmbH in Brussels. After participating in various cultural exchange programs in France, the US, the UK, and Brazil during and after high school, she decided to major in International and European Governance, a binational and interdisciplinary double-degree between Sciences Po Lille and the University of Münster, where she momentarily pursues a master's degree after already obtaining her bachelor's degree. She specialized her French master's in communication and media and wrote her bachelor thesis about the SPD's communication strategy during the 2021 federal elections. Rebecca could already gain experience in the work with political institutions during her internship at the state parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia in Düsseldorf and as a Representative for social affairs and housing at the General Student's Committee in Münster. Moreover, she worked as a Working Student in Communications at Uniper SE, where she became enthusiastic about Public Affairs and the crossover between politics and the private sector. Rebecca is passionate about volunteering, which has been a big part of her life especially due to her political engagement at the university of Münster and due to her participation in Rotaract Service Acts in Münster, Gelsenkirchen and Lille.



REGINA BUONO

Regina Buono is a young Italian professional who graduated with a master's degree in Languages and Cultures for International Cooperation and Communication from the University of Milan. She also holds a bachelor's degree in Intercultural Mediation. Born in Ischia, an island in Southern Italy, Regina has always been passionate about languages and cultures. She is fluent in Italian, English, Russian, French, Spanish, and has a basic understanding of German. With a keen interest in migration, human rights, and humanitarian action, Regina believes in fundamental values such as the right to life, freedom, and equality. Having moved to Brussels a year ago, she worked as a project management intern at the World Youth Alliance, focusing on human rights. Following that, she worked for another NGO, ECOS, on environmental sustainability. Currently, Regina serves as an integral ecology research and policy network assistant for the Laudato Si Research Institute. She is committed to standing with the poor and marginalized, advocating for social justice, and working towards reconciliation on social and environmental issues. Regina is a curious person with diverse interests, ranging from writing, reading, caribbean dances, and cooking to trekking and volunteering. She is always in search of new experiences, considering them a unique opportunity to get involved and continue learning. Volunteering holds a special place in her heart, and she actively cares about issues such as environmental sustainability and humanitarian action.

TERESA PALLARES RAMOS

Originally from Spain, Teresa Pallarés Ramos began her career in Brussels as a Blue Book Trainee at the Directorate General of Home Affairs and Migration, followed by a communications role at Caritas Europa. Currently, she holds the position of Advocacy Officer for YouthProAktiv while concurrently honing her research skills at the Laudato Si Research Institute at Oxford University. She is a historian by training, with postgraduate degrees in International Relations, International Migration, and additional training in anthropology, Middle Eastern Studies and educational sciences. Likewise, she followed a teacher training programme at Brockwood Park School, an independent school founded by the philosopher J. Krishnamurti. There, she taught history, global studies and human ecology. In the previous years, she linked her academic background with professional experience in the third sector, working in several countries with different peoples and organisations which shared a common denominator: social justice. Witnessing the hopes and distress of those seeking sanctuary in the EU led her to the field of border studies. In this sense, working at the Commission has offered her a hands-on understanding of some of the key topics that she plans to develop towards a PhD in Migration Studies. Hailing from a deeply political family, she is actively engaged in local politics, focusing on integration strategies centred around culture, education, and sports. She loves languages (learning Arabic is one of her present goals), travelling, hiking, vegan cuisine, modern art, and classical music.

ZUZANA BOHÁČOVÁ

Zuzana is a programme manager and former civil servant coming from the Czech Republic. She holds a Bachelor's degree in International Territorial Studies and a Master's degree in International Security Studies, both earned from Charles University in Prague. She also completed study exchanges at the University of Twente in the Netherlands and at Sciences Po Lille in France. Zuzana's academic pursuits were fuelled by a keen interest in human security, climate security, and the intricate human-technology nexus. This led her to undertake a Blue Book



Traineeship at the Health and Digital Executive Agency of the European Commission and later she joined the Czech Ministry of Environment during the Czech EU presidency. She also developed her interest in sustainable development and intercultural learning through her internships a volunteering experiences in a consulting firm and a few NGOs and she spent ten months as a volunteer in the Brittany region of France. Having moved around quite a bit she speaks English, Czech, French and Spanish, and always loves to learn about different cultures and travel to new countries.

