



EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

ADAM RACHID

Rachid Adam is a Moroccan researcher specializing in transnational migration, international relations, and human rights. He was awarded an Erasmus Mundus scholarship to pursue the International Master's in Transnational Migration, studying across Belgium, Poland, and Spain. As part of his MITRA-funded research, he conducted a one-month field study in Bangkok, Thailand, exploring the intersections of migration and sexuality with a focus on migrant sex workers. He also received funding to participate in the Anthropology Methods Summer Workshop at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In addition, he holds a Master's in Governance and International Intelligence and a Bachelor's in Political Science and International Relations from the International University of Rabat in partnership with Sciences Po Grenoble. Professionally, Rachid has collaborated with institutions such as BIRMM-VUB, Myria Belgian Federal Migration Center in Belgium, ARCO IRIS Federación Andaluza LGBTI+ in Spain, and the University of Applied Sciences (KIAF) in Germany, contributing to research, policy analysis, event organization, and human rights advocacy.

Beyond academia, Rachid is dedicated to advancing diversity, inclusion, and youth empowerment. He has represented migration and human rights perspectives at international conferences in Brazil, Uganda, Germany, and Egypt, while volunteering as an Ambassador for Peace with Global Peace Chain and supporting at-risk youth with SOS Children's Village International. Fluent in Arabic, French, and English, with working knowledge of Spanish, he combines cross-cultural communication and public speaking skills with expertise in research and project management. His work reflects a strong commitment to human rights advocacy, evidence-based policymaking, and fostering intercultural understanding in the fields of migration and governance.

EVA MARIA CASTELLETTI

Eva Maria Castelletti (Italy, 2000) graduated in European and International Politics from the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, with a thesis on cooperation between Italy and Libya in the Mediterranean and the resulting violations of migrants' human rights. She is currently transforming her thesis into a book as an advocacy writer for *Refugees in Libya*. Her main field of interest is migration, with a particular focus on the MENA region. She spent one year in Montréal during high school, one Erasmus semester in Zaragoza and another in Paris, and she completed a four-month internship at the Italian Embassy in Prague.



Throughout her life, she has gained extensive work and volunteer experience focusing on the most vulnerable members of society, such as in reception centres for migrants and unaccompanied minors, as an educator for Save the Children and in a project on severe adult marginalisation run by Caritas Ambrosiana.

She loves visiting museums, reading, and going for a walk while having a good conversation. Thanks to the ELP, she is starting an internship within the Policy & Advocacy Unit of Caritas Europa.

FERNANDO SANTIAGO IZQUIERDO CASTELLANO

Fernando Santiago Izquierdo Castellano is a student of International Relations at Loyola University with a strong interest in European affairs, international cooperation, and the way European institutions translate political ideas into concrete policies.

Originally from Andalusia, he brings an open and sociable Mediterranean outlook that values conversation, curiosity, and meeting people from different backgrounds. During his studies, he has sought opportunities to experience international environments and better understand how the European Union operates in practice.

Fernando is currently in Brussels undertaking a traineeship at the Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU, where he follows discussions related to the EU's external action and international partnerships within the framework of the European Council. This experience allows him to observe closely how European policy is shaped in a multicultural and fast-paced environment.

Outside of the professional sphere, Fernando is someone who enjoys being around people and saying yes to almost any plan. He is particularly excited to discover Brussels and explore Belgium during his time here.

And, like any good Andalusian, he believes that good food brings people together — so he is already looking forward to cooking Spanish dishes and sharing them with friends along the way.

GEREON MEWES

Gereon is a young professional from the rural center of Germany. Having studied in seven different countries, he became an ambitious global citizen focused on contributing to the common good.

Foundational to Gereon's path were his two years at the United World College (UWC) in Costa Rica, where he completed his highschool degree, living in a community of 200 students from over 70 countries. UWC's focus on personal challenge, respect for the environment, idealism, and service nurtured the seeds that would make him join the ELP nine years later.

Gereon pursued his university studies at two institutions that impart global leadership and responsibility. Minerva University in San Francisco equipped Gereon with hands-on skills and critical wisdom to address the major challenges of our time, and the College of Europe in Bruges immersed him in the ongoing project of European peace and integration.

In his first years of professional life, Gereon worked for the European Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on environmental policy, trade, and innovation.



JESC's mission to achieve social and environmental justice in the European political structures and their values of human rights, freedom, and solidarity are core to Gereon's motivation to join the ELP. Beyond his ambition to contribute to the European project, he is excited to learn about the wide range of languages, cultures, and social realities the programme exposes him to.

IBRAHIMA SALL

Ibrahima Sall, born and raised in Italy, of Italian and Senegalese descent, is a young professional who thrives at the intersection of ideas, people, and action. From an early stage, he has been drawn to understanding how societies connect, grow, and collaborate across borders. He earned his Bachelor's in Economic Development and International Cooperation and is completing a Master in International Relations and European Studies at the University of Florence, combining rigorous academic learning with real-world experiences.

Beyond the classroom, Ibrahima has immersed himself in youth work, volunteering, and European projects, from Erasmus+ initiatives to digital and social networking programs aimed at personal and professional growth. He enjoys connecting people with opportunities, building bridges between ideas and action, and translating abstract concepts into projects that have tangible impact. These experiences have sharpened his skills in project coordination, communication, and intercultural collaboration.

Driven by a deep sense of responsibility and ethical leadership, Ibrahima believes that real change comes from empowering others, nurturing curiosity, and creating spaces for dialogue. He is fascinated by the potential of collective action to address shared challenges, and he actively seeks ways to turn ambition into meaningful results.

Through the European Leadership Programme, he aims not only to expand his own understanding and professional network, but also to contribute to the Fellows' community sharing insights, inspiring collaboration, and supporting peers in turning ideas into reality. Curious, resilient, and purposeful, Ibrahima combines his academic expertise with hands-on experience to make ideas actionable. For him, every challenge is an opportunity to learn, connect, and create a lasting impact at both the local and European levels.

IMOLLA GELLEN

Imola



ISABEL RODRÍGUEZ-CARRETERO

Isabel Rodríguez-Carretero is a young Spanish professional deeply motivated by the European project and the idea of service beyond borders. Originally from Andalusia, she combines a Mediterranean sense of community with a strong ambition to contribute to European public life.

Her academic journey reflects a conscious choice: she redirected her studies towards International Relations to focus on European affairs and public policy. For Isabel, Europe is not only an institutional framework but a shared space of dialogue, responsibility, and opportunity.

Having lived abroad during her Erasmus experience in Ireland, she discovered how transformative stepping outside one's comfort zone can be. Since then, she has actively sought international environments that challenge her thinking and strengthen her intercultural awareness.

Isabel is curious, reflective, and driven by purpose. She values spaces where ideas are debated with intellectual honesty and where leadership is rooted in responsibility rather than ambition alone. She is particularly interested in how institutions can generate real impact in people's lives.

Through the European Leadership Programme, she hopes to grow not only professionally but personally — learning how to lead with clarity, integrity, and courage in a complex European context.

JÁZMIN MOLNÁR

Jázmin Molnár

JOSÉ (PEPE) CASTAÑO LEMUS

Pepe is a Spanish young man, the eldest of three siblings and of all his cousins, who has just completed a Double Degree in Business Administration and International Relations at Comillas-ICADE (Madrid). Before that, he studied at the Jesuit School San José in Villafranca de los Barros (Badajoz). In other words, he has been educated within the Jesuit tradition for 17 years and has always remained closely connected with it.

Extroverted, committed, truthful and attentive to detail, he is known for his pastoral involvement and social commitment, particularly with the elderly and migrants through the Spanish MAGIS network. He concluded his university years with a thesis on the work of the Jesuit Migrant Service and the integration of migrants and refugees in Spain.

Pepe has also been deeply attached to his family, who have accompanied him both in his faith and in daily life. It is through them that he has best experienced Ignatian spirituality: loving and serving in all things and valuing deeds over words.

He now feels very grateful and motivated after being selected for the ELP in Brussels, where he is discerning his vocation of service to others, where he has experienced true happiness, and where he is seeking to clarify how to best put it into practice.



At the same time, he nurtures a strong interest in supporting the survival, growth and internationalization of family businesses, especially those that sustain the economy of depopulated areas in southern Spain. Witnessing the sacrifices of his own relatives to bring value and dignity to these regions, he dreams of contributing to the development of Spain's most forgotten and vulnerable territories; placing his talents at the service of a real purpose, rather than pursuing narrow personal interests, embodied in a true vocation for public service.

LAURA DOGLIONE

Laura is a 24-year old sustainability trainee consultant whose curiosity for how policies shape people's lives has led her across a wide spectrum of policy areas, from sustainability to agriculture and migration. Originally from Turin, Italy, she lived and worked in Maastricht, London, Geneva throughout her studies, and now she landed in Brussels. She holds a bachelor's degree in Global Law, a master's degree in European Legal Studies and two minors in Law and Technology and Migration Studies from the University of Turin. She also holds a Diploma in Transnational Legal Studies from King's College London and Georgetown Law School. Fluent in five languages, she is involved in volunteering and youth associations and aims to bring the EU, its values and opportunities closer to young people. Outside of her work on sustainability, Laura enjoys running, learning new languages and reading murder mystery novels. She joins the European Leadership Programme to grow both personally and professionally, and to forge lifelong connections.

LILLA SZABÓ

Lilla Szabó

MARTÓN PARDÁRI

Martón Pardári

MATTIA GISOLA

Mattia Gisola

PAULINE BRAATZ

Pauline is a German-Swiss young professional with experience in European public administration. Over the past three years, she has worked as a Financial Assistant at the European Parliament and will soon take up a new position within the NATO context. Growing up in a small town in Northern Germany, Pauline developed a strong interest in social justice and environmental sustainability. This passion deepened during a one-year voluntary service at a child and



youth centre in Bolivia, where she gained first-hand insight into social inequalities and environmental challenges. During her studies in Business Administration and Public Management, she focused on environmental governance and completed her Master's thesis on sustainable water governance.

After an inspiring first semester in the European Leadership Programme, during which she explored concrete career choices, Pauline decided to continue for another round. She is now excited to engage in meaningful conversations, reflect on long-term life perspectives, and build lasting connections with like-minded, value-driven peers. In her personal life, Klára is an avid traveller who loves to immerse herself in new places, always seeking to experience them from the locals' perspective. Her greatest passion is music, which she brings into her life in every form—whether it's listening, playing, or singing. When she's not working, you'll often find her outdoors—hiking, walking, running, or, whenever possible, on the water—embracing nature to recharge.

PEDRO FURTADO DE MENDONÇA

Pedro is a young Portuguese professional born and raised in Lisbon.

Having studied for 15 years in a Jesuit school, he grew up participating in retreats, pilgrimages, summer camps and other activities promoted by the Jesuits. From an early age he has been committed to social causes through tutoring children in vulnerable communities, volunteering with the elderly, with people with disabilities and assisting asylum seekers in reception centres.

He completed a bachelor's degree in management at Nova School of Business and Economics, in Lisbon, having participated in the one-month programme "Business in Europe", in Strasbourg. Afterwards, he started his professional journey at university, managing community events and research projects in the social impact field, teaching the course "Communication, Leadership and Ethics" and also supporting the development of a new degree program. He's advanced his education with training in both project management and event management.

For the last four years, Pedro has been committed to local and national politics. First, he served as Chief of Staff to Lisbon's Deputy Mayor for Social Affairs, where he coordinated the city's social efforts, such as supporting vulnerable families impacted by COVID-19, tackling homelessness and advancing innovative social investments. Later, he advised the Mayor of Lisbon, providing strategic support to the municipal executive and leading high-priority projects. At last, he worked for the Minister of Territorial Cohesion, where he oversaw the implementation of EU funding programmes and contributed to the design of policies in regional development and territorial planning.

Pedro is now transitioning his expertise in public policy to the European stage, aiming at advancing the common good within the EU institutions. In his free time, he enjoys nature, travelling and being with family and friends.

SARA NASO

Sara is an Italian lawyer with a growing professional focus on European competition law, public policy, and international cooperation. She graduated summa cum laude from Sapienza University of Rome with a Master's degree in Law, ranking among the top graduates of her cohort. During her studies, she completed a merit-based exchange semester at Suffolk Law School in Boston, where she deepened her understanding of U.S. law,



international business transactions, and environmental law. Her academic path was further enriched by a research fellowship at New York University (NYU) Law School, where she conducted comparative research for her final thesis in food law and environmental sustainability.

Following graduation, Sara received the America Youth Award from the Italy–USA Foundation at the Italian Parliament, a selective national recognition granted to outstanding graduates, accompanied by a merit-based scholarship for advanced leadership training in international relations. She subsequently qualified to practice law in Italy, successfully passing the Italian Bar Exam. Her professional trajectory spans both the public and private sectors. Sara has gained experience across private practice, corporate environments, and public institutions. After working at the Italian Competition Authority within the EU and International Affairs Directorate, she is beginning a Blue Book traineeship at the European Commission within DG Competition. She has also served as a guest lecturer for international students at Sapienza University, designing and delivering lectures on the effective development of a master’s thesis, covering research methodology, academic writing, and final defence preparation.

Sara has consistently engaged in volunteering, reflecting her belief that law and policymaking should remain connected to communities. She aspires to bring this human perspective into her future work. Outside of work, she enjoys baking and has a particular fondness for stand-up comedy as a space for shared laughter.

TAMÁS LÁSZLÓ

Tamás is a 27-year-old public policy professional from Budapest, Hungary. He currently serves as a Blue Book trainee at the European Commission’s Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), where he specialises in impact evaluation and evidence-based policy-making. He holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Political Science from Eötvös Loránd University, a Master’s degree in Economics from the University of Public Service in Budapest, and most recently earned a Master’s degree in Public Policy specialising in Quantitative Policy Analysis from Central European University in Vienna.

Tamás has gained seven years of professional experience in the Hungarian civil service, working in the Prime Minister’s Office and the Ministry of Public Administration and Regional Development. While most of his work has centred on horizontal aspects of legislation, strategic planning, and policy analysis, in recent years, he has focused on the economic dimensions of regional development and the national implementation of the EU’s cohesion policy. Committed to bridging academic research and policy-making, he has remained actively engaged in his own scholarly work. His most recent research analyses transnational dynamics in intergovernmental EU institutions using big data methods. He has also examined contemporary political theory, particularly theories of political representation, and explored democratic innovations aimed at empowering citizens. In these fields, he has participated in international research projects, including the Horizon Europe RESPOND project at Central European University and Sciences Po, and has collaborated with the HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences and the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies.

Beyond his professional ambitions, he enjoys volunteering at environmental and social care institutions, exploring world history, running, and improving his cooking skills. He is both an early bird and a night owl, loves rainy days, and has an almost irrational fascination with the English countryside.



TOMMASO SACCONI

Tommaso is a PhD candidate in Transnational Governance, currently completing his doctoral programme in Florence. His research focuses on the role of the European Commission in domestic policymaking during the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, with particular attention to policy design, governance arrangements, and institutional interaction under conditions of crisis. He studied political science in Pisa and Florence and Comparative Social Policy at Oxford, developing a solid analytical background combined with a strong interest in European governance and policy processes.

Alongside his academic work, Tommaso has gained experience working with both Italian and European institutions, both as a policy-oriented researcher and as part of staff teams supporting political and institutional actors. These experiences have shaped his conviction that analytical work is most meaningful when closely connected to concrete decision-making processes, institutional dynamics, and collective action. While he values intellectual exchange and critical reflection, he seeks professional environments where analysis is tightly linked to action and tangible impact.

His interests cut across transversal themes—such as governance, institutions, and European integration—as well as more substantive policy domains, including public administration, social policy and welfare, and ecological transition. He is particularly drawn to contexts where complex policy challenges require both conceptual clarity and practical engagement. As he approaches the end of his doctoral journey, Tommaso is looking to consolidate a professional path in a policy-oriented environment, most likely in Brussels, where he can combine analytical skills, institutional work, and relational capacity, contributing to public action with tangible social and political impact.

VANESSA CAIZA

Vanessa Caiza

YOURI DE BRABANDER

Youri De Brabander

