



Article 17 dialogue seminar 'The ethical and social impact of artificial intelligence'

*8 June 2026
Berlaymont Building (room S9), Brussels*

Bios of speakers

Opening session



Magnus Brunner is the European Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration, a position he holds since December 1, 2024. In this role, he is responsible for strengthening internal security, designing and implementing Migration and Asylum policies, enforcing integrated border management and leading the dialogue with religious and philosophical associations.

Prior to his current role, Mr Brunner served as Austria's Federal Minister of Finance from December 2021 to November 2024. He also held the position of State Secretary in the Ministry of Climate Action, Energy, Environment, Mobility Innovation, and Technology from January 2020 to December 2021. Earlier in his career, he was a member of the Federal Council for the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) from May 2009 to January 2020. Mr Brunner holds a Doctor of Law degree from the University of Vienna and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) from King's College London. He was born and raised in the region of Vorarlberg, Austria."



Antonella Sberna is Vice-President of the European Parliament, responsible for Parliament's implementation of Article 17 TFEU. She is an Italian politician (Fratelli d'Italia/ECR) and currently serves as a Vice-President of the European Parliament. After graduating in Public Relations from IULM University, she worked at the European Parliament and later at the Consulate General of Italy in Los Angeles, USA. Following eight years at the Italian Senate, she held a management position at a Communication and Institutional Relations agency until 2023.

Her political career began in Brussels in 2005, with active involvement in the youth movement. This early engagement led to significant electoral successes in 2013 and 2018 in the Municipality of Viterbo, Italy, where she served as Councillor for Social Services, Youth Policies, and Family Policies. She was elected to the European Parliament in June 2024 and currently sits on the Committee on Regional Development (REGI), the Special Committee on the Housing Crisis in the European Union (HOUS), and the Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (DLAT).



Dr Lucilla Sioli is the Director of the "EU AI Office" within Directorate-General CONNECT at the European Commission. She is responsible for the coordination of the European AI strategy and its governance, including the AI Continent Action Plan, the Apply AI strategy, the implementation of the AI Act and international collaboration in AI and AI for good. She is also responsible for the coordination of the R&D&I activities in the field of AI and for the implementation of innovation activities in key strategic sectors such as healthcare, robotics and advanced manufacturing.

Lucilla holds a PhD in economics from the University of Southampton (UK) and one from the Catholic University of Milan (Italy) and has been a civil servant with the European Commission since 1997.

1st session – ‘Quo vadis society?’ Current social and ethical challenges



Professor Markus Krienke is Full Professor of Modern Philosophy and Social Ethics at the Faculty of Theology in Lugano and Director of the Rosmini Chair. He also teaches Philosophical Anthropology at the Pontifical Lateran University and Catholic Social Teaching at the Theological Faculty of Northern Italy in Milan. He lectures in Moral Philosophy and Professional Deontology at the Progetto Uomo Institute of the Pontifical Salesian University, based in Montefiascone (VT), and in History of Political Thought at the European School of Economics (ESE) in Milan. Additionally, he collaborates with the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Messina.

After earning his Doctorate and Habilitation at the University of Munich (2003–2009), he obtained a Master's degree in Philosophy from the University of Trento in 2011, and in the same year received the Italian national academic qualifications in Theoretical Philosophy and Moral Philosophy.

He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts and of the Italian Scientific Committee of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, as well as Senior Fellow at the Tocqueville-Acton Center. He serves on the scientific boards of the Luigi Stefanini Foundation, and is Interlocutore Referente of the Pontifical Academy of Theology. He is part of the editorial and scientific committees of several academic journals and yearbooks, including *Anthropologica*, *Rivista Rosminiana di filosofia e di cultura*, *Rosmini Studies*, *La Società*, *Journal of Modern Science*, *Guttadauro*, *Bollettino per la Storia del Movimento Sociale Cattolico in Italia*, among others.

He is a member of the Christian Union of Business Executives (UCID) in Lombardy, a founding member of the Christian Union of Entrepreneurs in Ticino (UCIT), and of the Listening Group for Victims of Abuse in Religious Contexts (GAVA). He sits on the board of the Osservatore Democratico in Massagno (Lugano), the Scientific Committee of the Foundation of Italian Switzerland for the Help, Support, and Protection of Children (ASPI), the Academy of Lutheran Studies in Italy (ASLI), and the Blest (Bocconi Lab in European Studies). He collaborates with various media outlets, including *L'Osservatore* (Mendrisio), the blog *naufraghi.ch*, *Corriere del Ticino*, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (RSI), *Teleticino*, and others. His research focuses on the thought of Antonio Rosmini, modern metaphysics, themes in political philosophy and human rights, ethical issues in economics, Europe, and, more recently, the challenges arising from Artificial Intelligence, transhumanism, and posthumanism.



Professor Dr. Jörg Kopecz studied theoretical physics and protestant theology at the Joh. Gutenberg University Mainz and Univ. of Washington, USA. He holds a PhD on Neuroscience and Machine Learning of the Ruhr University Bochum (RUB). After having founded a spin-off from the RUB on AI, Prof. Kopecz was part of the Senior Management of Siemens AG, responsible for power plant automation in Europe/CIS.

In 2013, he joined the German protestant Church assembly (Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag) as CFO and COO (at that time under Secretary of State Frank Walter Steinmeier).

Since 2017, he has been appointed Professor for digital Transformation and Management at the FOM University of Applied science in Bonn and is Head of the Institute for Transformationmanagement iTM in Bonn, Berlin and Nürnberg.

Jörg Kopecz is active in various honorary positions of the Protestant Church in Germany: He is board member of the Council of Protestant Entrepreneurs (Arbeitskreis evangelischer Unternehmer), is appointed member of the synod of the Evangelical Church Rhineland (EKiR), acting also in the council on social ethics of the EKiR).

His focus is on connecting theological and ethical aspects and challenges on Artificial Intelligence and transformational aspects within non-profit and profit organisations.



Dorothea Winter, whose doctorate in philosophy addressed intentionality and artificial intelligence, is a Research Associate in the Master's programme in Applied Ethics (Digital Ethics specialisation) at Humanistische Hochschule Berlin, a state-recognised humanist university of applied sciences in Berlin.

Her research, situated within the Digital Humanism framework, addresses ethics, democratic theory and aesthetics in relation to artificial intelligence and digital transformation. She has worked on the ethics board of the German Research Center for Artificial Intelligence (DFKI) and on the project „Ethics in Agile Software Development“ at the Bavarian Research Institute for Digital Transformation (bidt); as part of her work at DFKI she contributed to the second edition of the German Standardization Roadmap on Artificial Intelligence (DIN/DKE, 2022), prepared on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action with a focus on the EU Artificial Intelligence Act.

Her forthcoming book (*Reclam*, 2 September 2026) examines how artificial intelligence can become a threat to democratic systems and what should be done to counter it.

2nd session – How to live with AI ? Legal and regulatory tools



Hedi Blili-Gouyou serves as Chief Data Officer with extensive experience at the intersection of AI governance, regulatory compliance, and data strategy. A graduate of CentraleSupélec (MSc in Artificial Intelligence), he has designed large-scale governance frameworks aligned with GDPR and the EU AI Act, and led data transformation programmes across complex institutional environments.

He publishes regularly on AI regulation and data governance in *Towards Data Science* and *Medium*. He participates in this seminar as a member of the European Association for Free Thought (AEPL), on behalf of which this intervention was prepared. His current work focuses on operationalising the AI Act as a strategic asset rather than a compliance burden — turning normative constraints into competitive infrastructures.



Thomas Ploug is a Professor of data and AI ethics at Aalborg University, Denmark, serving as Director of both the Centre for AI Ethics, Law, and Policy, and the Centre for Ethics Education. His research centers on safeguarding individuals and their autonomy in an era increasingly defined by AI-driven profiling and decision-making.

A leading voice on explainable AI (XAI), Ploug advocates for "effective contestability," ensuring individuals have the practical means to understand and challenge AI-driven outcomes. His extensive work in AI ethics also shapes critical frameworks around patient rights in diagnostics, data privacy via "meta-consent" models, and the core drivers of public trust in technology.



Florin Pop is a distinguished professor of computer science within the Faculty of Automatic Control and Computers, and the head of the Doctoral School of Automatic Control and Computers, National University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest. His pioneering research spans a wide range of areas, including Large-Scale Distributed Systems, Cloud-Fog-Edge Computing, Big Data, Cybersecurity of distributed systems, and optimization based on numerical methods.

His publication record includes more than 350 papers (in journals, conferences, and edited books), of which 30 are in Q1/Q2 journals, including 15 in the Top 10 journals in the field of Computer Science, Theory & Methods. In recognition of his outstanding research results, he is the recipient of the following awards: IBM Faculty Award, 6 Best Paper Awards, best young researcher in Software Services, Oracle PhD Performance Scholarship, IBM Research Fellowship, Award of the Romanian Academy, Outstanding Reviewer Award for several journals, and Top reviewers in Computer Science.

He is an IEEE Senior and ACM Senior Member. He holds a degree in Orthodox theology from the University of Bucharest (2024), with theological concerns related to the spiritual and apologetic dimensions of the dignity and authenticity of humans in today's technical society.

Concluding remarks



Philip McDonagh is Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Humanities at Dublin City University and Director of the Centre for Religion, Human Values, and International Relations.

As a diplomat, Philip served as Deputy Head of Mission in London from 1994 to 1999, working full-time on the Northern Ireland peace process in the build-up to the Good Friday Agreement. Later he served as Ambassador to India, the Holy See, Finland, and Russia and as Permanent Representative to the OSCE. Both as a serving diplomat and afterwards, Philip has been involved in initiatives to bring lessons from the Good Friday Agreement to other situations, including India/Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the Korean peninsula, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Colombia, and conflicts in Europe.

He is the Director of the Centre for Religion, Human Values, and International Relations. Over the last few years, the Centre has led multi-stakeholder projects of “engaged research” on the future of the European Union, the economics of belonging, resilience in global food systems, the ethics of AI, comparative peace processes. The project on the ethics of AI, which continues, was launched under EU auspices in 2024 (European Future Talks).

In 2025, the Centre received an official request from the Taoiseach’s Department to assist in developing a structured dialogue with faith and non-confessional groups in the spirit of Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. As of April 2026, the Dublin City Interfaith Forum is co-located with the Centre and is working towards the creation of an interfaith network across the island.

He co-authored a book, *On the Significance of Religion for Global Diplomacy* (Routledge 2021).



Nacira Boulehouat is currently Director at the Secretariat-General of the European Commission in charge of democracy, security and technological sovereignty. Prior to this, she was the Head of unit for "Migration Management Coordination" in the European Commission, Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs from 2020 to 2025, focusing on migration management support to Member States under pressure. From 2017 to 2020, she was Head of unit "Disaster Risk Reduction, European Voluntary Humanitarian Corps" in the European Commission, Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). Previously she was Deputy Head of unit "Organised Crimes and Drugs" unit of Security Directorate of the European Commission Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (2015-2017).

She has worked in different assignments under the EU Common Foreign and Security policy, notably in relation to the Middle East and the European Neighbourhood policy for 10 years. She was deputy head of the Middle East unit at the European External Action Service, dealing with the Syria crisis and its regional ramifications from 2011 to 2015. Before that, she has worked on the enlargement policy at the time of negotiations for the accession of ten countries to the EU. From 2000 to 2014, she worked in the Directorate General for Fisheries on preparing candidate countries for joining the EU and on establishing the Structural Fund for fisheries. Nacira Boulehouat was posted in the EU Delegation to Cyprus from 1998 to 2000.