

EUROPE DAY CELEBRATION

The EU and US: Building Transatlantic Communities What does it mean to be European?

A roundtable of the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence

Florida International University | Modesto A. Maidique Campus
11200 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33199

Friday, May 8, 2026 – 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Roundtable Participants: Biographical Notes

PANELISTS



Hon. Christofer Burger

Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Miami

Christofer Burger has been Consul General of Germany in Miami since August 2023. He previously served as spokesperson to Foreign Ministers Annalena Baerbock and Heiko Maas. He has held diplomatic posts in Nicaragua, Iraq and was seconded to the U.S. Department of State's Office of the Special Presidential Envoy to the Coalition to Defeat ISIS during the Trump administration. He holds an M.A. in Islamic Studies and Economics from Freie Universität Berlin.



Hon. Lisette den Breems

Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Miami

Lisette den Breems assumed her duties as Consul General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Miami on August 14, 2023.

She began her diplomatic career with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2000, holding various positions such as Second Secretary at the Embassy in Bogotá /Colombia, First Secretary at the Embassy in London/UK, Deputy Head of the Migration and Development Division, Stabilization and Humanitarian Aid Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hague/Netherlands, and most recently, as Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy in Santiago de Chile/Chile.

Ms. den Breems studied Communicative Arabic at the school of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London and holds a Master of Arts in Cultural Anthropology and Sociology of Non-Western Societies from the University of Leiden and a Propaedeuse in Environmental Studies from the University of Wageningen.



Hon. Sarah Kavanagh

Consul General of Ireland

Consulate General of Ireland in Miami

Sarah Kavanagh took up her post as Consul General of Ireland in Miami in October 2022 and is leading the establishment of Ireland's first Consulate General in Florida.

She comes to Miami from the Human Rights Unit of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin where she served as Deputy Director. Prior to joining the Department in 2020, Ms. Kavanagh served as Special Adviser to the Minister for Justice and Equality (2017-2020) and Special Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade (2014-2017). From 2005-2014, she worked for in the Houses of the Oireachtas (Parliament of Ireland) in a range of policy, strategy development and political communication roles.

Ms. Kavanagh is originally from Galmoy, Co. Kilkenny. She holds a Barrister-at-Law Degree (2012) and a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Studies (2010) from the Honorable Society of King's Inns, Dublin. She also holds Masters Degrees in Political Communication (Dublin City University, 2017) and Politics (University College Dublin, 2021) and a BA Degree in History and Politics (University College Dublin 2020).



Hon. Michele Mistò

Consul General

Consulate General of Italy in Miami

University of Trieste: Degree in International and Diplomatic Sciences, November 8, 1999.
University of Geneva and University of Lausanne: LL.M. in International Economic Law and European Union law. University of Siena: PhD in Comparative Public Law, 2007.
Following a competitive examination, appointed Secretary of legation in the diplomatic career on probationary period, December 29, 2003. At the Diplomatic Institute, professional training course «Costantino Nigra», December 29, 2003 – September 28, 2004. (In application of the Dir. Gen. for European Countries, Office III and the Dir. Gen. for Cultural Promotion and Cooperation, Office V). Confirmed in office on September 29, 2004 and appointed Secretary of Legation at the Dir. Gen. for Cultural Promotion and Cooperation, Office V, September 29, 2004. Second Secretary of Trade in Copenhagen, April 24, 2006. Confirmed in the same post as First Secretary of Trade, December 29, 2007. Confirmed in Copenhagen as First Secretary, April 29, 2010. First Secretary of Trade in Podgorica, May 21, 2010. Head of the Secretariat of the General Inspectorate of the Ministry and of the Offices abroad, May 14, 2014. Counsellor of Legation, July 2, 2014. From November 2015 to May 2016, he attended the professional refresher course for Counsellors of Legation provided for by art. 51, paragraph 1, letter a) of Law n. 96, June 4, 2010, organized by the

Dir. Gen. for Resources and Innovation. Head of the Secretariat of the Dir. Gen. for Resources and Innovation, January 15, 2019. Counsellor of Embassy, July 2, 2020. First Counsellor in Moscow, February 12, 2021. Head of the Secretariat of the Dir. Gen. for Resources and Innovation, August 23, 2022. Consul General of Italy in Miami, August 4, 2023.

Commander of the Royal Order of the Dannebrog (Denmark), 2011.

Medal of Merit of the Presidency of Montenegro for the contribution to the development of bilateral relations, 2015.

Knight of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, 2020.

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MODERATORS



Markus Thiel, Ph.D.

Director, Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence

Professor, Politics & International Relations

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

Florida International University

Florida International University, Miami and director of FIU's Jean Monnet Center of Excellence. Dr. Thiel's research interests are the political sociology of the EU and European (Union) Politics more generally, as well as Human Rights and Identity Politics. He graduated with a Ph.D. from the

University of Miami in 2005 and has published several EU-related articles and book chapters in peer-reviewed journals including the Journal of European Integration, the Journal of Common Market Studies and others. In addition, his research on the political sociology of the EU produced the monographs 'The Limits of Transnationalism' (Palgrave, 2011) and 'EU Civil Society and Human Rights Advocacy' (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), as well as 5 co-edited volumes on: 'Diversity and the European Union' (with Lisa Pruegl, Palgrave, 2009), 'Identity Politics in the Age of Globalization' (with Roger Coate, Lynne Rienner/First Forum Press, 2010), 'European Identity & Culture: Narratives of Transnational Belonging' (with Rebecca Friedman, Ashgate, 2012), 'Sexualities in World Politics: How LGBTQ Claims Shape International Relations' (with Manuela Picq, Routledge, 2015) and 'EU Development Policies between Norms and Geopolitics' (with Sarah Beringer & Sylvia Maier, Palgrave, 2019). Most recently, he published 'The EU's international LGBTI rights promotion: promises & pitfalls' (Routledge, 2021), and co-authored 'The Politics of Social In/Exclusion in Europe' (Palgrave/Springer, 2023, with Ernesto Fiocchetto & Jeffrey Maslanik).

He teaches CPO 3103 Comparative (Western) European Politics, CPO 3104 EU Politics, INR 3214 International Relations of Europe, INR 3502 International Organizations, as well as graduate courses on European/EU Politics, International Organization and Research Design in IR. He supervises doctoral students in the areas of EU Politics, International Organizations and Political Sociology



Tatiana Kostadinova, Ph.D.

Director, European & Eurasian Studies

Professor, Politics & International Relations

Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

Florida International University

Tatiana Kostadinova is a professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations and the director of the European & Eurasian Studies Program at FIU. She received her Ph.D. in Political Science from Florida State University. Her research and teaching interests include elections, institutions, democratization, political corruption, and populism. She has been the recipient of several grants, among which the American Political Science Small Research Grant (2002) and a Fellowship Program Award from the German Marshall Fund of the United States (2003-2004). Kostadinova is the author of two books. In *Bulgaria 1879-1946: The Challenge of Choice* (East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, 1995) she explored institutional arrangements, party competition, and voting patterns in Bulgarian parliamentary elections. The second book, *Political Corruption in Eastern Europe: Politics After Communism* (Lynne Rienner, 2012) analyzed the emergence of corruption as a major obstacle to successful democratic transition. Her findings turn the attention to the eroding impact of malfeasance on citizen trust in institutions and the role of the European Union for promoting integrity in public life. Other publications include journal articles in *American Journal of Political Science*, *Electoral Studies*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *European Journal of Political Research*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Party Politics*, and *Europe-Asia Studies*.

Professor Kostadinova's primary teaching area is comparative politics. At the undergraduate level, she teaches courses on Russian and Eastern European politics, electoral behavior, and research methods. Her graduate level courses include seminars on democratic transitions, political parties, political corruption, and advanced research.



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