



▶EUROPE AS A TASK

Programme

Note: This is a tentative version of the programme and may be subject to change. Please check for updated version via www.taskeurope.eu.

Tuesday, May 5, 2026, Spanish Hall, Prague Castle

13:00–14:00 Arrival and Registration of the Participants

Caution: Access to the venue will be restricted between 14:10 and 15:00.

14:30–15:00 Keynote Speech

Keynote speech by H. E. *Petr Pavel*, President of Czechia

Keynote speech by H. E. *Alexander Stubb*, President of Finland

15:00–15:30 High-level Chat

H. E. *Petr Pavel*, President of Czechia

H. E. *Alexander Stubb*, President of Finland

15:30–16:30 Expert Discussion: European Geopolitical Reset with the Economic Security in the Forefront

David Müller, Director General for European Union and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Czechia

Maria Demertzis, European University Institute

Violeta Luca, Chief Executive Officer, Vodafone

Radek Špicar, Vice-President, Confederation of Industry

16:30–17:30 Glass of Wine

Wednesday, May 6, 2026, Museum of Decorative Arts

08:00–09:00 Arrival and Registration of the Participants

09:00–09:15 Words of Welcome and Opening Remarks

Milena Hrdinková, Advisor to the Prime Minister on EU Affairs, Czechia

09:15–09:45 European Chat: Bringing Geoeconomics into the Game

Michal Pěchouček, Rector, Czech Technical University in Prague

09:45–10:15 Presentation: Thin Ice, Thick Tensions: Europe and Polar Power Politics

Chiara Rinaldi, Intelligence Analyst, Research & Analysis Division, Politico

Izabela Kantor, Intelligence Analyst, Research & Analysis Division, Politico

10:15–10:45 Coffee Break



10:45–12:00 ***Fishbowl: Building Realistic European Scale-up Strategy for Digital SMEs***

The Commission has launched a comprehensive strategy to transform Europe into the best place in the world to launch and grow technology-driven innovative companies. The EU does not lack start-ups nor talent to generate innovation, but scaling presents a persistent weakness. Firms have to navigate 27 legal systems, with compliance costs that increase as they grow. Capital markets remain shallow and fragmented. Companies looking to scale therefore continue to turn outside the EU for both capital and market access. This discussion will focus on three areas where progress has been repeatedly stalled: whether simplification can meaningfully reduce burden on companies; whether the Savings and Investment Union can deliver deeper and more integrated capital markets; and whether the “28th regime” can function as a practical, business-friendly alternative rather than an additional layer.

Heleen Bakker, Director General for European Cooperation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands

Alexandr Hobza, Cabinet of Executive Vice-President Stéphane Séjourné, European Commission

David Müller, Director General for European Union and Foreign Trade, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Czechia

Christophe de Nijs, Director General for European Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Belgium

Tomáš Pospíšil, Chief Analyst, Czech Startup Association

Moderator: Filip Křenek, EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy

12:00–13:15 ***Lunch***

13:15–14:15 ***Fishbowl: Digital Sovereignty in a Cold Transatlantic Climate; Dependencies and Choices for Europe***

The EU's reliance on U.S. tech companies means that four in five European enterprises are tied to foreign platforms for their data operations. As the EU has recognized this as a threat to its autonomy, the block has developed a set of tools, including the AI Act and DSA that seem to be open for revision as current geopolitical shifts show unsustainability of EU's tech regulation in its current form. The lack of innovation is one of the key causes of Europe's economic decline. The key question is how to balance EU's high-tech competitiveness with tech sovereignty.

Jean Carberry, Assistant Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, Government of Ireland

Dita Charanzová, Board Member, CEPS

Vladimíra Chlandová, Board Member, Vodafone

Lukáš Kačena, Government Envoy for AI, Czechia

Michael Toutonghi, former Corporate Vice President and founder of the eHome division at Microsoft

Věra Jourová, former Vice-President of the European Commission for Values and Transparency

Moderator: Asya Metodieva, Institute of International Relations Prague, Czechia



14:15–14:45 Coffee Break

14:45–15:45 ***Fishbowl: Exploring New Instruments for Boosting European Defence Industry***

The current security environment is reshaping the EU's ambition for its defence industry, highlighting bottlenecks in scaling up European defence production and ways to overcome them. Initiatives such as SAFE and common procurement are assessed in terms of their potential to reduce fragmentation of the European defence market despite persistent national instincts. The debate will also address how Europe can balance rapid procurement with innovation and competitiveness, while strengthening its strategic autonomy and maintaining the transatlantic relationship.

Arthur De Liedekerke, Partner & Senior Director, Rasmussen Global

Radka Konderlová, Director General for Industrial Cooperation, Ministry of Defence, Czechia

Andra Migiu, Head of Division for the Security and Defence, European Investment Bank

Milosz Momot, Head of Unit, Defence Industry Programmes Directorate, DG DEFIS, European Commission

Moderator: Boris Kaliský, Association for International Affairs

15:45–16:00 ***Closing Remarks: European Outlook***

16:00–17:30 *Glass of Wine*

