

Conference on the Future of Enlargement

ENLARGE WP5 working group

18-20 February 2026, Leipzig

18.02.2026

17:00–19:00 **Welcome event**

Welcome – Local host and Project leader – Dietmar Müller, Giuliana Laschi

Keynote speaker – Michael Leigh

19.00 Light Dinner Catering

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9.00-11.30 The conceptual framework

9:00-9.30 **Introduction to the project** by the project's coordinator – Giuliana Laschi (Unibo)

9:30-11:30 **Introduction to the conceptual framework** for the project followed by plenary discussion – Sonia Lucarelli (Unibo)

11.30-11.45 Coffee break

12:00-17:30 Mapping knowledge of the EU enlargement

12.00-13.00 **Identity, Borders and the Polity: The Transformation of the EU's approach to enlargement** (a max 15 minutes introductory speech followed by plenary discussion) – Kolja Raube (Leuven)

13:00-14:30 Light Lunch, Catering

14:30-15:30 **Lessons learnt from the previous rounds of enlargement** (a max 15 minutes introductory speech followed by plenary discussion) – Ioan Horga (Oradea)

15:30-16:30 **Are there alternatives to full-scale enlargement?** – Pavel Karolewski (Leipzig)

16:30–17:00 Coffee break

17:00–18:00 Enlargement to the Balkans and the Eastern Countries: a comparison (a max 15 minutes introductory speech per speaker followed by plenary discussion) – Maria Giulia Amadio Vicerè (Luiss) and Francesco Privitera (Unibo)

18:00-18:30 Meeting with stakeholders

19.00 Dinner Restaurant

20.02.2026

9:00-10:00 Framing the Future of Enlargement Research

9.00-10.00 The impact of enlargement on the EU governance – Thomas Christiansen (Luiss)

10:00-10:15 Coffee break

10:15-12:30 Wrap up meeting

To be decided:

1. *Meetings*: two conferences in Bitola (2027) and Novi Sad (2028) – establishing local organization groups
And from 2026-2028, each year, two general Zoom-Meetings and two Zoom-Meetings of each topic and regional sub-groups

2. *Activities*: throughout 2026: establishing a data/literature base on the themes and regional approaches; throughout 2027: working on a literature review on the themes and regional approaches; drafting a policy paper on the Future of Enlargements
3. *Results*: By the end of 2027: literature review on the themes and regional approaches; by mid-2028: final policy paper on the Future of Enlargements
4. fixing the final partners' membership to the subgroups and the subgroups' leadership