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Foreword

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FOREWORD

The European Union Center of California hosted the joint Claremont–University of California Undergraduate Research Conference on the European Union on April 9, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions on in-person meetings, the conference was held online via ZOOM. A total of twenty students presented papers written on various topics related to the European Union. These students represented fourteen different schools: *Brigham Young University, Claremont McKenna College, Colgate University, Cypress College, East Tennessee State University, Freie Universität Berlin, George Mason University, Pennsylvania State University, Pomona College, Sciences Po Paris, University of California-Berkeley, University of Florida, University of Kentucky, and University of Washington.* This volume is a compilation of the best papers presented at the conference.

The student conference was modeled on professional academic conferences. Each student presented her own research to a panel moderated by a faculty discussant whose primary tasks included providing constructive feedback and stimulating discussion of the issues at hand. The conference was likewise designed with specific goals in mind: to promote the visibility of European Studies and expose the participants to different intellectual and academic traditions within this field; to motivate student research and hone analytical, writing and presentation skills; and to strengthen the curriculum in European Studies at participating campuses by encouraging faculty interaction with students, not only with respect to their expertise in particular research areas but also by conveying general knowledge about contemporary Europe to students. The research presented in this volume reflects a collaborative effort to involve students in academic research and policy debates on issues involving the European Union.

The subject matter in the papers reflects the diversity of interests among the student authors. **Austin Bicknell** compares the secessionist movements in Scotland, Catalonia and Flanders, and concludes that, contrary to current academic consensus, European integration has allowed such independence movements to grow stronger. **Charlotte Coon** considers the benefits and drawbacks of the Schengen Agreement in light of the recent security, migration, and health crises suffered by Europe, and argues that the agreement is central to European integration and needs to be preserved, albeit not without significant reforms. **Licinia Güttel** highlights the gender gap in the representation of women at the national and European level, and credits the higher representation of women in the European Parliament to ambitious national rules in some member states and the parties' role as gatekeepers, rather than to the institutional rules of the EP. **Ethan Kable** discusses how the EU's attitude towards Chinese outward foreign direct investment in the last decade has changed from open and unrestricted to guarded and critical. **Katherine Kramer Gaines'** statistical analysis shows a positive correlation between the level of female representation in legislative chambers and the quality of migrant integration policies in EU member states, and provides further support for the critical representation threshold argument. **Annalise Simons** examines the push and pull factors that underlie the disparate levels of net migration in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and attributes the variance in migration flows to differences in economic well-being and in immigration policies among the three Baltic states. Finally, **Naomi Tilles** tests competing theories of the Green party success in the 2019 European Parliament elections, and proposes that the unique gains of the Greens can be explained by different voter priorities and party issue framing for both environmental and pro-EU issues.

The conference was hosted by the European Union Center of California, and the administration of the conference by Center's staff, headed by Agnieszka Lazorzcyk, was indispensable to its success. In addition, we owe a debt of gratitude for the financial and administrative support provided by the Claremont Colleges and the European Union Center of Excellence at UC Berkeley.

We are grateful as well to our keynote speakers: *Andrej Auersperger Matić* and *Ryan Meilak* of the European Parliament Liaison Office in Washington DC, who spoke about the role of the European Parliament in European Union decision making; and *Dr. Craig Parsons* of the University of Oregon, for his thought-provoking address titled "Which has More of a Single Market: The EU or the US?"

Special thanks are due as well to the faculty discussants who shared their time and expertise with the students. These include *Valerie D'Erman* (*University of Victoria*), *Ivy Hamerly* (*Baylor University*), *Tobias Hofmann* (*University of Utah*), *Branislav Radeljić* (*Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi and Universidad Nebrija*), *Hans Rindisbacher* (*Pomona College*), and *Jennifer Taw* (*Claremont McKenna College*). The participation of these individuals established a high standard for the conference and greatly enriched the experience of the students.

Ultimately, the success of the conference was due to the outstanding contributions of the student participants. As the selections in this volume make clear, their papers demonstrated both intellectual maturity and genuine research skills. The result was a conference that was stimulating for students and faculty alike.

Corey Tazzara, Director
European Union Center of California