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Europe and the World
Winter School 2026

Security Challenges for the EU in Turbulent Times

9–13 February 2026 | Universidad Complutense de Madrid



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The school is designed to be a dynamic and reflective space in which to explore crucial issues concerning the different dimensions and challenges facing Europe in the field of security. Through a five-day intensive problem-solving exercise and with a multidisciplinary approach, the Winter School programme aims to raise awareness and promote dialogue on these global challenges. Under the guidance of academics and practitioners, students will analyse the outcomes of current policies and develop recommendations to address pressing challenges, such as the complexities of implementing a new European defence policy, the debate on the relationship between security and migration, and concerns about how to address critical dependencies and improve energy security.

After an opening session, the students will attend lectures and panel discussions on the key issues addressed. The analysis will be carried out both through the formation of working groups with the participating students, and through roundtable discussions with leading experts. In particular, there will be three roundtable discussions with panels of experts, one for each of the three main themes of the WS. This activity will significantly enhance the quality of our education, research and outreach through interdisciplinary and multicultural collaboration.

By bringing together students and academics from different European universities, the school will promote collaborative work and peer learning, facilitating the exchange of best practice and pedagogical innovation. The combination of theoretical and practical approaches to critical issues relating to migration flows, European defence challenges and strategic dependencies will enrich both teaching and research. Moreover, the focus on relevant contemporary problems will strengthen our social impact and promote active engagement in addressing global and European challenges. This collaborative environment will also set new standards of quality and create opportunities for future projects and strategic alliances.

The Winter School offers an interdisciplinary approach, allowing students to explore complex issues from different perspectives (political, economic, social, environmental). Students will combine plenary lectures and group work with a variety of social events and excursions in Madrid, such as cultural visits and guided tours of emblematic areas of the city.



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Working Groups



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The Una Europa Europe and the World Winter School “Security Challenges for the EU in Turbulent Times” will take place from 9-13 February 2026, with an introductory online session on February 6. The contents and structure of that session will be communicated to all students in advance.

General objectives of the Winter School:

- Strengthen the BAES programme of the Una Europa Alliance.
- Strengthen collaboration between BAES programme participants.
- Value the importance of transdisciplinarity and collaboration in scientific research.

Specific academic objectives of the Winter School:

- Reflect on the tension between security and humanitarian imperatives in the current migration landscape.
- Assess the main difficulties in migration governance in view of the need to maintain a balance between security and protection.
- Reflect on the new defence challenges posed by current geopolitical instabilities.
- Assess the development of new defence plans alongside the role of European defence in an increasingly unstable geopolitical landscape.
- Analyse the main challenges arising from strategic dependence on raw materials and key elements in value chains in the EU.
- Assess ongoing regulatory changes aimed at strengthening energy security in the EU.

Contents and dynamics of Working Groups:

After a Welcome Session (Monday 9, 10:00-11:00), students will be divided into three Working Groups (WGs), one for each of the three themes: Migration, Geostrategy and Defence, and Strategic Dependence and Energy Security. Students have been previously distributed in these three groups according to the preferences revealed in a previous online survey.

The first WG session, on Monday 3 (11:30-13:00), will be a Lecture outlining the policy landscape and the main challenges facing the topic in the corresponding Working Group. Subsequently, smaller working groups are formed in each working group, with 4-5 students each. Each WG will work on a case or issue presented by the teacher, in the general context of the working group's topic.

The remaining four sessions of the WGs will be devoted to developing the case and preparing a presentation, always with the assistance of the teachers.

The final session (Friday 13, 9:30- 11:30) will bring together all the students of the three WGs to share the main conclusions drawn from the work developed and the experiences from the Round Tables. In the first part of this final session, each WG will present the conclusions on the work developed, with a time limit of 5 minutes.



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Programme



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Date	Schedule
Friday 6 February	09:30–12:00 Online session
Monday 9 February	09:30–10:00 Registration UCM Faculty of Law 10:00–11:00 Welcome Session UCM Faculty of Law 11:00–11:30 Coffee break Cafeteria 11:30–13:00 Working Groups: Lecture UCM Faculty of Law 13:00–15:00 Lunch (Faculty Cafeteria) and transport (own means) 15:00–18:00 Understanding City Life A visit to Madrid city centre *
Tuesday 10 February	09:30–11:00 Working Groups: Session 1 UCM Faculty of Law 11:00–11:30 Coffee break Cafeteria 11:30–13:00 Working Groups: Session 2 UCM Faculty of Law 13:00–15:00 Lunch (Faculty Cafeteria) and transport (own means) 15:00–17:00 Post-graduate opportunities within UnaEuropa Faculty of Law 17:30–19:30 Minigame round: Where do you stand? **
Wednesday 11 February	09:30–11:00 Working Groups: Session 3 UCM Faculty of Law 11:00–11:30 Coffee break Cafeteria 11:30–13:00 Working Groups: Session 4 UCM Faculty of Law 13:00–15:30 Lunch Faculty Cafeteria 15:30–17:00 Panel 1: Geopolitical Risks and Defense CESEDEN
Thursday 12 February	09:30–11:00 Panel 2: Migration Management: Between Security and Humanitarian Imperatives Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla 11:00–12:15 Coffee break (own means) and transport (own means) 12:15–14:00 Cultural visit Museo Reina Sofía 14:00–16:00 Lunch and transport (own means) 16:00–17:30 Panel 3: Strategic Dependences in the UE Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla
Friday 13 February	09:30–11:30 General Assembly and Conclusions UCM Faculty of Law 11:30–12:00 Farewell Coffee Cafeteria, UCM Faculty of Law

* With the support of the Research Group on Urban Sociology

** Organised by the Una Europa UCM Student Local Task Force

Please note: this programme is not final and may be subject to changes or modifications.



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ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITA DI BOLOGNA



Participants



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Welcome Session

With the participation of the Vice-Rector for International Relations, Cooperation and Volunteering (UCM) and the Dean of the Faculty of Law (UCM)

Panel 1: Geopolitical risks and defence

Participants:

- Capit. Abel Romero, Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies (IEEE)
- Prof. Andrés de Castro García, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED)
- Prof. Mariano Bartolomé, Universidad Camilo José Cela (UCJC)
- Prof. Heriberto Cairo Carou, Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM)

Moderator: Prof. Carmelo Danisi, Università di Bologna

Location: Higher Centre for National Defence Studies (CESEDEN). Paseo de la Castellana, 61

Panel 2: Migration management: between security and humanitarian imperatives

Participants:

- Prof. Gabriele Abbondanza, Universidad Pontificia de Comillas and Research Group on International Migrations (GEMI)
- Dr. Fedele Verzola, Italian Ministry of Defense
- Prof. Ruth Ferrero Turrión, Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) and Research Group on International Migrations (GEMI)

Moderator: Claudia Finotelli. Associate Professor of Sociology at Universidad Complutense de Madrid and Research Group on International Migrations (GEMI)

Location: UCM Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla. Calle del Noviciado, 3

Panel 3: Strategic dependences in the EU

Participants:

- Miguel Muñoz Rodríguez, Head of Climate Policies and Alliances, Iberdrola
- Maria Teresa Nonay Domingo, Strategy & Planning Director, Enagas
- Prof. Gonzalo Escribano Frances, UNED and Head of the Energy and Climate Programme at the Elcano Royal Institute

Moderator: Diego Rodríguez, Professor of Economics at Universidad Complutense de Madrid and Research Associate at Fedea.

Location: UCM Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla. Calle del Noviciado, 3



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Teaching Staff

- Valentina Benincasa. Ph.D. in Social Anthropology, UCM.
- Claudia Finotelli. Associate Professor of Sociology at UCM and Research Group on International Migrations.
- Joanna Orzechowska-Waclawska. Assistant Professor at the Institute of European Studies, Jagiellonian University in Krakow.
- Diego Rodríguez Rodríguez. Professor of Applied Economics at UCM and Associate Researcher at Fedea.
- Giulia Cimini. Junior Assistant Professor, Università di Bologna.
- Maria Carvalho Cavalcanti Martins. Doctoral Researcher | FCT Fellow. Leuven International and European Studies Centre.
- Carmelo Danisi. Associate Professor of International Law. University of Bologna.

Cultural visit (Madrid center):

- Margarita Barañano Cid. Associate Professor of Sociology at UCM.
- Andrés Walliser. Associate Professor of Sociology at UCM.

Coordinators

- Universidad Complutense de Madrid: Diego Rodríguez
- Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie: Joanna Orzechowska-Waclawska
- KU Leuven: Olha Skrypal
- Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna: Carmelo Danisi
- Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne: Francois-Xavier Nérard

Local organizers (UCM)

- Luis Antonio Anguita Villanueva (Faculty of Law)
- Claudia Finotelli (Faculty of Political Science and Sociology)
- Diego Rodríguez Rodríguez (Faculty of Economics and Business)

Locations

- Faculty of Law (UCM). Metro station: Ciudad Universitaria, Line 6.
- Higher Centre for National Defence Studies (CESEDEN). Paseo de la Castellana, 61.
- UCM Biblioteca Histórica Marqués de Valdecilla. Calle del Noviciado, 3. Metro station: Noviciado, Line 2.
- Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. Metro station: Estación del Arte, Line 1



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