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Press release

Launch of the Jacques Delors Institute's *Grande Europe* Centre dedicated to enlargement

The Jacques Delors Institute announces the launch of its *Grande Europe* research center on the EU enlargement process. Supported by the Open Society Foundations, this new center, which takes its name from a Delors expression about the wider Europe, will have a focus on the Western Balkans.

Its creation was presented at a seminar with think tanks and civil society actors from this region held on 10th November at the *Quai d'Orsay* and closed by the Secretary of State for European Affairs, Laurence Boone.

The initiative supports the new impetus given to enlargement following the applications of Ukraine and Moldova and the relaunch of negotiations with Balkan countries. Through its publications, events, exchanges and training, the *Grande Europe* centre will provide a better understanding of the candidate countries and develop an analysis of the issues at stake in their accession, and moreover, of the architecture of the continent, which is being shaken up by the current war in Ukraine and to which the European Political Community is seeking to respond.

"In a changing international order, we must rethink the Wider Europe and follow the European integration process with the Balkans as closely as possible. This is the vocation of this new Center" said Enrico Letta, President of the Jacques Delors Institute.

"The war in Ukraine has suddenly highlighted the strategic importance of accelerating the integration of the candidate countries. This Center will make it possible to take the full measure of this in a key country of the Union such as France", expressed Daniela Schwarzer, Executive Director for Europe and Eurasia at the Open Society Foundations.

"After the Energy Centre, the Grande Europe Centre will strengthen our think tank's European expertise on a key issue for the organisation of our continent", said Sébastien Maillard, Director of the Jacques Delors Institute. This project will be lead by Lukas Macek, Associate Researcher at the Jacques Delors Institute and Director of the Dijon campus of Sciences Po, with which the new Center will cooperate.

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The Jacques Delors Institute is a European think tank founded by Jacques Delors in 1996 (under the name Notre Europe), at the end of his presidency of the European Commission. Based in Paris, it is chaired by Enrico Letta and directed by Sébastien Maillard. It operates in collaboration with the Centre Jacques Delors (Hertie School, Berlin) and Europe Jacques Delors (Brussels).