

Note to the file to the Head of Cabinet

Invitation by the Centre for European Policy Studies (independent Brussels based think tank) to the President

Upon your request, I have scheduled a call with [REDACTED] CEPS, to discuss about their invitation addressed to the President to give the inaugural keynote speech in the “CEPS Ideas Lab” event.

CEPS Ideas Lab

The “CEPS Ideas Lab” is CEPS annual flagship event. It is a high-level conference that normally extends over 4-5 consecutive days, by invitation-only + broadcasting a series of public seminars throughout the week. **CEPS Ideas Lab is well known and has a very good reputation among decision-makers and think tankers.** Until 2019 (up to the pandemic), CEPS Ideas Lab had 7 editions. The 2021 (8th) edition took place fully virtually.

CEPS is now planning the next 2022 edition, possibly to take place in the first week of April 2022 (6, 7 or 8 April). They hope to host it this time in physical (or at least hybrid) format and **would like to invite President von der Leyen to give an opening keynote address followed by short Q&A session.**

The central thread of the event would be a **“mid-term review of this Commission’s mandate”**. Note that the CEPS is working on a report reviewing the Commission’s proposals and key actions, that they intend to link to and publish after the CEPS Lab event. In the framework of this mid-term review, they are looking into concrete issues such as the relations between the EU and China, the follow up to the industrial policy, the Green Deal, NextGenerationEU, vaccines, etc.

Whilst suggesting the President to talk on what the Commission has done in these two first years of its mandate, **CEPS would be open to any other conducting thread or topic** the President would like to speak about. They are also open to the format (i.e. if the President would prefer a dialogue or roundtable with young people or other audience, instead of a keynote speech in plenary session, they are ready to offer other possibilities).

As regards the location, the options would be the meeting rooms of EFTA (Joseph II) or close to Gare du Midi.

CEPS:

CEPS was founded in Brussels in 1983, as an independent think tank and forum for debate on EU affairs. CEPS is one of Europe’s leading independent think tanks, ranked among the top ten think tanks in the world.

Jivka