

## European Parliament establishes a European Order of Merit

**To mark the 75th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, the European Parliament establishes the first European distinction of its kind, a European Order of Merit.**

Ahead of the 75th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration – the founding moment of European unity – the European Parliament’s Bureau has decided to establish the European Order of Merit, the first European distinction of its kind granted by an EU Institution.

This new civilian distinction will honour the achievements of individuals who have made significant contributions to European integration and European values. All Member States - but Ireland<sup>[1]</sup> - award distinctions in national orders, reflecting a shared commitment across the Union to recognise excellence and reward contributions that enrich society. There is currently no similar distinction at European Union level. The European Order of Merit aims to fill this gap, reaffirming a shared European identity at a time when global challenges call for stronger unity.

*“Europe is built by its people and the European Order of Merit is for them,” said President Metsola. “This Order celebrates those who lead with courage, act with conviction, and believe – like Robert Schuman – that peace, democracy and dignity are not just ideals, but actions. On the 75th anniversary of Europe’s boldest beginning, we honour those who continue to build it.”*

Proposals for appointment to the Order may be made by the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, Heads of State or Government, and Speakers of national parliaments of the Member State. Each year, up to 20 laureates will then be appointed to the Order by a dedicated committee comprising the President of the European Parliament, two Vice-Presidents, and four eminent European personalities.

The first ceremony of conferral is expected to take place by 2026.

With this initiative, the European Parliament pays tribute to the enduring spirit of European unity – from its post-war beginnings to today’s challenges.

<sup>[1]</sup> Ireland does not have a system of national orders; instead, it confers honorary titles and awards, such as the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad.

## Further information

[Factsheet The European Order of Merit](#)

## Contacts

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