

FACT SHEET

THE EUROPEAN ORDER OF MERIT

Marking the 75th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, the European Parliament establishes the European Order of Merit to honour individuals who advance **European integration and European values.**

European Parliament

WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN ORDER OF MERIT?

- It is the first European distinction of its kind granted by an EU Institution to honour the achievements of individuals (not organisations) who have made significant contributions to European integration, democracy, and fundamental values set out in the EU Treaties.
- Laureates will receive a badge, a ribbon bar, and a certificate signed by the President of the European Parliament.
- The European Order of Merit will consist of three levels of increasing distinction.

WHY A EUROPEAN ORDER OF MERIT?



- **To celebrate people's significant contributions to advancing the European integration.** It complements national distinctions and decorations by recognising efforts that strengthen Europe as a whole.
- **To reaffirm shared values:** At a time of global uncertainty, it honours those who defend peace, democracy, and human dignity.
- **To inspire future generations:** It highlights civic courage and commitment to European ideals.
- **To mark a historic moment:** Launched on the 75th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration — the starting point of European unity.

WHO CAN BE NOMINATED?

Individuals, both EU and non-EU citizens, who have significantly contributed to European integration or promoted and defended values enshrined in the European Union Treaties (e.g., human rights, democracy, rule of law). Not eligible: Members and staff of EU institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies during their mandate or service.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

Proposals for appointment may be made by the President of the European Parliament, the President of the European Council, the President of the Commission, the EU Heads of State or Government, Speakers of the national parliaments of the EU Member States. The decision is taken by a Selection committee established by the Bureau of the European Parliament for 4 years. The committee is composed of the President of the European Parliament, two Vice-Presidents and 4 eminent European personalities.

NEXT STEPS

- The first award ceremony is expected to take place by 2026.
- The decision to appoint individuals to the Order will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union.