



## International Symposium

**Between Domestic Power Struggles and European Leadership -  
Romania's first Presidency of the Council of the European Union  
Berlin, 11 April 2019, 14:00 – 18:30**

Conference Venue: **Hotel Maritim proArte**, Friedrichstraße 151, 10117 Berlin

Conference Committee: **Manuel Sarrazin** MP, Member of the Bundestag's European Union Committee, Vice President Southeast Europe Association  
**Christian Hagemann**, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association

Conference Language: **English**

After twelve years of membership, Romania has for the first time taken over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union on 1 January 2019. The presidency comes at a peculiar time both for the EU as well as the country. On the one hand, the project of European integration faces decisive events in the first half of 2019, including Brexit, the elections to the European Parliament, and the formation of the new Commission and budget. On the other hand, Romania has recently experienced a period of government instability and institutional conflicts, street protests, and also growing criticism from Brussels. Against the backdrop of these conditions, our panelists will shed light on Romania's priorities during its Presidency and its vision for Europe, the current political situation at the domestic level in Romania, and its impact on the presidency. Experts from think tanks and academia, members of the German Bundestag, representatives from the federal administration, media, and business will be invited to participate in the event.

## Invitation / Programme

### **14:00 Opening/Welcome:**

Manuel **Sarrazin**, MP, Member of the Bundestag's European Union Committee,  
Vice President Southeast Europe Association

## **14:15 Panel 1: The EU Level - Romania's vision for the EU**

*Chair:* **Manuel Sarrazin**, MP, Member of the Bundestag's European Union Committee, Vice President Southeast Europe Association

*Speakers:*

- Andi **Cristea**, Member of the European Parliament for the PSD, Brussels
- Miheia **Diculescu-Blebea**, Deputy Chief of Mission, Romanian Embassy in the Federal Republic of Germany, Berlin
- Valentina **Ivan**, Policy Analyst, Expert Forum, Bucharest
- Maria **Popescu**, Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Department of International Business and Economics, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest

*Guiding questions:*

- Current Issues: What is the Romanian presidency's strategy on dealing with crucial issues the EU is currently facing, including Brexit, European Parliamentary Elections, budget negotiations, Article 7 proceedings against Hungary and Poland, and the populist surge in the EU?
- Widening of the EU: Has Romania lessons for a speeding-up of the accession process in the Western Balkans? Inputs for the Eastern Partnership?
- Deepening of the EU: What is the Romanian view on inner-EU reform in the areas of migration, border management, and cohesion policy?
- Do Romania's own conflicts with the European Commission impact the presidency?

## **16:00 Coffee Break**

## **16:30 Panel 2: The National Level – Current issues in Romanian domestic politics**

*Chair:* **Christian Hagemann**, Deputy Director, Southeast Europe Association

*Speakers:*

- Alina **Mungiu-Pippidi**, Professor of Democracy Studies, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin
- Elena **Calistru**, President of the NGO "Funky Citizens", Bucharest
- Ana Maria **Luca**, Romania Correspondent, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Bucharest
- George **Jigla**, Political Scientist, Centre for the Study of Democracy, Cluj

*Guiding questions:*

- The government's judicial reforms: Undoing earlier reform success or a legitimate effort to ending EU double standards?
- Politics and street protests: How is the Romanian party system evolving? What are the prospects of newly founded parties and splits from existing parties? What is the impact on the upcoming elections?
- Government: Will the government eventually stabilize, despite of last years' turmoils and the loss of its parliamentary majority?

## **18:15 End of the symposium / Snacks and drinks to be served**

*Kindly register until 9 April using the attached form or responding by email*