

International Conference on the Western Balkans

The Europe We Want. The Europe We Need 2020

21st -22nd of October 2020

online via ZOOM

AGENDA

21st of October, 2:00 pm – 5:15 pm

2:00 pm Opening and welcoming remarks by

Dr. Stephan Holthoff-Pförtner

Minister for Federal, European and International Affairs of the
State of North Rhine-Westphalia

Keynote

Prof. Dr. Florian Bieber

Director of the Centre for Southeast European Studies, University of Graz

2:45 pm **Panel 1: State of Play: what is the current Role of Civil Society regarding the
Accession Process in the Western Balkans?**

Prof. Dr. Florian Bieber

Antonella Valmorbida

Secretary General of ALDA, European Association for Local Democracy

Aleksandra Tomanić

Executive Director of the European Fund for the Balkans

Krisela Hackaj

Executive Director, Cooperation Development Institute

Chair: **Mirko Schwärzel**

Head of EU-Affairs, National Network for Civil Society, Germany (BBE)

Break

4:00 pm **Panel 2: Which Instruments are currently available to Support civil society in the Western Balkans? What are their strengths and weaknesses?**

Dr. Vedran Dzihic

Senior Researcher at the Austrian Institute for International Politics und Vienna University

Goran Buldioski

Director, Open Society Initiative for Europe

Santiago Alonso Rodriguez

Head of the Western Balkans Unit
at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Genoveva Ruiz Calavera

Director, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
at the European Commission

Paulina Fröhlich

European Hub for Civic Engagement & Head of Programme „Future of Democracy“,
Progressives Zentrum

Chair: **Tobias Flessenkemper**

Member of the board, Southeast Europe Association

5:00 pm Summary of the first day and closing:

Matilda Alku

Alumni of the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation's scholarship programme

Evening event on the 21st of October

6:00 pm – 7:45 pm

Consolidating the EU in the Western Balkans: a Challenge for Politics and Society.

- 6:00 pm Welcoming Remarks by
Dr. Stephan Holthoff-Pförtner
Minister for Federal, European and International Affairs of the
State of North Rhine-Westphalia
- Keynote:
Etilda Gjonaj
Minister of Justice of the Republic of Albania
- 6:30 pm Panel discussion:
Minister Dr. Stephan Holthoff-Pförtner
Minister Etilda Gjonaj
Member of the Bundestag **Manuel Sarrazin**
President of the Southeast Europe Association
Prof. Dr. Vesna Pusić
former Minister of European and Foreign Affairs of Croatia and Member of
Parliament
Ivan Nikolovski
researcher at the Center for European Integrations at the Institute for
Democracy "Societas Civilis", Skopje and former president of the Young
European Federalists North Macedonia
Chair: **Valeska Esch**
Deputy Executive Director and Program Director Europe,
Aspen Institute Germany
- 7:30 pm Final Remarks and Acknowledgements by Minister **Dr. Stephan Holthoff-Pförtner**

22nd of October, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

9:00 am Welcoming remarks by
Member of the Bundestag **Manuel Sarrazin**
President of the Southeast Europe Association

Keynote:

Eva Maydell MEP
President European Movement International

9:30 am **Panel 1: Cross-border Cooperation in Civil Society**

Anna Rurka
president of the Conference of NGOs of the Council of Europe

Doede Sijtsma
special commissioner for relations to Germany of the Dutch provinces Gelderland und
South-Holland

Đuro Blanuša
Secretary General of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office, RYCO

Chair: **Florian Feyerabend**
Desk officer for the Western Balkans at the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation

Break

10:50 am **Panel 2: Steps Forward**

Milan Nič

Head of the Robert Bosch Center for Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, and Central Asia at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP)

Member of Parliament **Ovidiu Gant**

Romanian Chamber of Deputies

Ambassador **Susanne Schütz**

Director for South-Eastern Europe, German Foreign Office

Member of the Bundestag **Peter Beyer**

Member of the Board of the Southeast Europe Association

Milena Lazarevic

Programme Director, European Policy Centre, EPC, Belgrade

Chair: **Dr. Jana Puglierin**

Head of the Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations

11:45 am **What can each of us contribute to until the next conference?**

Development of a roadmap, involving all participants

Chair: **Dr. Mark Speich**

State Secretary for Federal, European and International Affairs and Plenipotentiary of North-Rhine Westphalia to the Federal Government, together with

Tobias Flessenkemper and

Mirko Schwärzel

Final Remarks and Acknowledgements:

Minister Dr. Stephan Holthoff-Pförtner

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