



International Conference of the Institute of European Democrats

EU AT THE CROSSROADS: HOW WILL 2017 NATIONAL ELECTIONS CHANGE THE FACE OF EUROPE?

Friday 5 May 2017

Hotel Tatra, Namestie 1.maja 5, 811 06 Bratislava, Slovakia

PROGRAMME

08:45 – 09:15 **Registration and Welcome Coffee**

09:15 – 09:25 **Welcome Speech**

- ★ **Luca BADER**, CEO of the Institute of European Democrats (IED).

09:25 – 09:40 **Introductory Speech**

- ★ **Karla WURSTEROVÁ**, Director of the Department of European Policies of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

09:40 – 11:10

PANEL I.

EU at the Crossroads from political perspective:

European Election Storm of 2017 – Netherlands, France, Great Britain and Germany

Moderator: **Alena BAŠISTOVÁ**, Member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic and university lecturer.

- ★ **Samuel ABRAHÁM**, Political scientist, lecturer on EU politics and Rector of Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (BISLA) in Slovakia.
- ★ **Karen HENDERSON**, British political scientist and senior lecturer on EU politics at the Comenius University and BISLA in Slovakia.
- ★ **Karl ILGENFRITZ**, Political advisor and one of the spokespersons on EU Affairs for Freie Wähler in Germany.
- ★ **Martin LEVENEUR**, Executive manager of the European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP) and Member of Mouvement Démocrate of France.

Questions and Answers

Key points:

- Can the victory of pro-European VVD in the March's parliamentary elections in the Netherlands serve as a hope for similar defeat of the populist parties in France and Germany? Or will the elections in France and Germany bring surprising results as was the case in the British vote for Brexit and the election of Donald Trump for the US president in 2016?



- What can we expect to happen in the EU if Emanuel Macron wins the French presidential elections? On the contrary, what we can expect if Marine Le Pen enters the Élysée Palace?
- How will the June's parliamentary elections in the Great Britain influence the Brexit negotiations? What impact these elections may have on the future of European Union?
- What will be the face of Europe if Angela Merkel defends her position in September's German general elections? What may happen if she is defeated in the elections? And what may happen if AfD gains a high number of votes in the elections?
- To what extent will the national elections in 2017 decide about the future of the EU and democracy in Europe? How will the EU look like at the end of the year 2017?

11:10 – 11:30

Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00

PANEL II.

**EU at the Crossroads from ideological perspective:
Future of the EU – How to defeat populism and save the idea of united
Europe in the popular elections?**

Moderator: **Alena BAŠISTOVÁ**, Member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic and university lecturer.

- ★ **Roman BRECELY**, Politician and former Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic.
- ★ **Barbora MEŠŠOVÁ**, Lawyer from the League for the Human Rights in Slovakia and Expert on migration.
- ★ **Ján ORLOVSKÝ**, Director of the policy institute Open Society Foundation in Slovakia.
- ★ **Roman VILKOVIČ**, Journalist and Editor in Chief of PlusCS London in the Great Britain.

Questions and Answers

Key points:

- Why we have come to the situation when we have to seriously fear the victory of anti-European, populist and often openly extremist political parties in the national elections in EU Member States? What is behind unprecedented growth of their popularity? Why do voters believe and vote for these politicians / parties?
- To what extent the current crisis in the EU can be compared to the situation in Europe in the 1930s? What important lessons we should learn from this period?
- What impact does the migration into Europe have on the rise of political populism and extremism?
- What should democratic and pro-European political parties do in order to defeat populist parties in the elections? How should they explain the dangers of voting for populism to voters?
- What developments can we expect in the national elections across EU Member States in forthcoming years in general and the elections to the European Parliament in 2019 in particular?

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch

The Conference is organized with the financial support of the European Parliament and in collaboration with the Slovak organization Mladí Európania (ME, Mladí Európania).

Find out more about the activities of the Institute of European Democrats: www.iedonline.eu