

International Conference of the Institute of European Democrats

# EUROPEAN UNION

## BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL EXTREMISM

Friday 6 October 2017, 9:00 – 14:00

Hotel Yasmin, Tyršovo nábřeží 1675/1, 040 01 Košice, Slovakia

### Moderator

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**Alena BAŠISTOVÁ** is the Member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the Chairwoman of the Committee on Social Affairs and the Member of the Mandate and Immunity Committee of the National Council. She is also the university professor at the Faculty of Business Economics of the University of Economics in Bratislava with seat in Košice and at the University of P. J. Šafárik in Košice. She is an individual member of the Parti Démocrate Européen-European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP), member of ALDE Group of the European Parliament. In past, she was the Director General of the Fund of Social Development in the Slovak Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, the Chairwoman of the management committees in several national projects, the academic researcher and professor. She cooperates with a high number of non-profit organizations and communities and she supports charity projects.

### Speakers – Welcome Speeches

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**Luca BADER** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute of European Democrats (IED). He is also a Member of the Board of Directors of Leonardo, an Italian global high-tech company, partially owned by the Italian government. In past, he served at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy. He was responsible for Europe and North America at the Democratic Party (PD) in Italy. He was advisor of the Committee of Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Italian Parliament. He worked for the National Democratic Institute of Washington D.C., advising the program on building Institutions and political parties. He studied International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science and at the University of London in the United Kingdom. He did research visits at the Columbia University in New York and at the Institute of International Affairs in Rome.





**Roman BREČELY** is a Member of the Board of the Institute of European Democrats (IED) and former Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic. Before entering politics, he was the Director and the Chairman of Boards in several industrial consortiums and he was also a businessman. He worked in the energy sector where he was responsible for managing investment processes. He is a strong supporter of the European project and more intense activity of Slovakia in the framework of the functioning of the EU and European integration itself. He graduated from the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava and the City University of Seattle in the USA.

**Anna Lujza FUREKOVÁ** is Acting President of the Slovak Youth Organization Mladí Európania (Young Europeans, ME) and also a Partner Member of the European youth organization Young Democrats for Europe (YDE). She is active in public sector and cooperates in the youth projects focused on improvement of participation of young people in political sector and decision-making processes. She completed the exchange study programme at Nanjing University in China. During her stay in China, she involved in the AIESEC Project of Nanjing University within which she acted as a teacher of English for children of economic migrants. She currently studies Chinese and German philology at the Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic. Her areas of interest include international relations, human rights, anthropology and geopolitics.



## Speakers – 1. panel

**Grigorij MESEŽNIKOV** is President, Program Director and Co-Founder of the Institute for Public Affairs (IVO) in Bratislava. He is also well-known political analyst, he regularly analyses Slovak and European political developments for domestic and international media. In past, he worked at the Comenius University in Bratislava (1983-1993) and at the Political Science Cabinet of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (1993-1997), he was a Secretary of the Slovak Association for Political Sciences (1994-1998) and he lectured at Trnava University's Department of Political Science (1996-1997). His frequent essays have appeared in scholarly journals and magazines in the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, France, Ukraine, Germany, Denmark, USA and Great Britain. He studied philosophy and social sciences at the Faculty of Arts of the Moscow State University (MGU) in Russia. He also did the study programme „Ethnicity and Pluralism in American Politics“ at the USIA and USDA Graduate School in Washington, the study programme „Study in Democracy for Central Europeans“ in Stockholm and the study visit in the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington.



**Michal VAŠEČKA** is sociologist and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. He is a Director of Bratislava Policy Institute and he lectures also at the Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts in Bratislava. As a visiting scholar, he operated at the New School University in New York (1996-1997), University of London (1998), Georgetown University in Washington (2008-2009), University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (2015), and at the ISGAP at Oxford University (2016). He is a founder of the Center for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK) in which he served as a Director in the period 2006-2012. In 1998-2005 he operated at the Slovak think-tank Institute of Public Affairs (IVO) as a Program Director on expert analysis of the Slovak transformation process with a focus on national minorities and the state of civil society in Slovakia. He was also a consultant for the World Bank (2000-2008, 2011-2012). At the moment, he also serves as a representative of the Slovak Republic in the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), human rights body of the Council of Europe, as a chairman of the Board of the Fulbright Commission in Slovakia and a Research Associate at the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg. He studied sociology at the Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic.

**Jakub DRÁBIK** is historian at the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV) in Bratislava and external lecturer at the Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. In his research, he focuses on the comparative studies of fascism – especially British and Czech fascism – and the history of normalization. He is the author of the monographs *Mýtus o znovuzrození /Myth of Rebirth/* (2014) and *Fašista /Fascist/* (2017). He is also a frequent commentator in the media and he acts as deputy editor-in-chief of the history information portal HistoryWeb. He studied history at the Institute of World History at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. In the United Kingdom, he completed several study and research stays, and he also operated as a Visiting Research Scholar at the Oxford Brookes University in Oxford in the academic year 2012-2013.



## Speakers – 2. panel



**Andrzej POTOCKI** is the Vice-President of the Polish political party Stronnictwo Demokratyczne and Vice-President of the Parti Démocrate Européen-European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP), member of ALDE Group of the European Parliament. He is also the coordinator of the opposition coalition KOD (Committee for the Defence of Democracy) against the current Polish ruling party. He began political activity in the Polish Solidarity movement and he was among the founder members of the Civic Movement Democratic Action (ROAD). He was the associate of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the member, political officer and acting chairman of the numerous OSCE observation missions in Balkans. He graduated from the Catholic University of Lublin, Poland.

**Jose Felix MERLADET** is Guest Professor at the Faculty of Humanities of University of Deusto in Bilbao and at the Faculty of Economics at the University of Navarra in Pamplona, Spain. He is also the Deputy Secretary-General of the European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP). He had extensive and rich experience in working for the European Commission for many years. He served as Deputy Head of Delegation and Chargé d'affaires of the European Commission in Maputo, Mozambique, and Head of Development Cooperation Section of the Delegation of the European Commission in New Delhi, India. He also worked for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Spanish Embassy for Uruguay, Paraguay and Mercosur in South America. He previously served as the Chief of the Cabinet for Relations with the European Commission of the Basque Regional Government, Member of the Board of the Colegio Mayor Cesar Carlos in Madrid, Professor of international law at the University of Navarre and as a lawyer. He regularly publishes articles and essays on international relations and economics. He is the founding President of two Rotary Clubs in Spain and he is engaged in social work in India. He graduated from the Harvard Law School at the University of Harvard in the USA, he studied international relations at the Institut d'Etudes politiques in Paris and the Université libre de Bruxelles.



**Gabriel EŠTOK** is a lecturer, fellow and deputy at the Department of Political Science of the University of Pavel Jozef Šafárik in Košice. Besides Slovak universities, he lectured at the universities in the United States, Poland and the Czech Republic. In his research and academic career, he focuses on the issues of regional integration – especially European integration – and the geopolitics of the Central European region. In addition, he focuses on the issues of democracy and democratic deficits. He actively publishes at home and abroad. He studied political science at the Faculty of Arts of the Prešov University in Prešov, Slovakia, and at the Philosophical Faculty of the University of P.J.Šafárik in Košice, Slovakia. He has completed several study visits abroad.