



PAST IED EVENTS:
April-July 2017



NEXT IED EVENTS:
September-October 2017

GETTING TO KNOW OUR WORK

NEWSLETTER September 2017



EDITORIAL

Devastated by Brexit and alarmed by the victory of Donald Trump, many Europeans have fallen into a great despair at the end of 2016. Many of us became seriously worried about the future of European project and the future of democratic order in general. Fortunately, eight months later, there is nothing different but everything has changed.

The defeat of Geert Wilders' party in the March's parliamentary elections in the Netherlands, overwhelming victory of Emmanuel Macron in the presidential elections and En Marche! in the parliamentary elections in France and the humiliation of Theresa May's plan for hard Brexit in the recent British elections have given us a clear sign that Europeans want to defend the EU. In addition, the opinion polls show that more and more people are now in favour of the European project and want to proceed towards greater integration in economic, security, defence or environmental policies.

The Institute of European Democrats analysed all these developments with great attention. In April in Bilbao, we organized the seminar dedicated to the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine and its impact on security situation in Middle East, Europe and rest of the world. In May, we welcomed many experts in Bratislava in order to discuss the 2017 national elections in Europe and their impact on the

future of European integration. Hauwa Ibrahim, winner of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize and member of the fact-finding commission regarding the 219 girls kidnapped by Boko Haram from Chibok, honoured us by her presence at our May's conference in Nicosia that focused on a very serious issue of violence against women. The Visegrad Four and the rise of populism in this region became the main topic of our June's workshop in Budapest. The same month in Warsaw, we welcomed several intelligence analysts to debate the current disinformation practices and their impact on the stability of the EU. Finally, at our July's event in Milan, together with many academicians and politicians, we discussed the possible turning point in the US climate policy and the new position of EU on climate and energy issues after Brexit.

We are very proud of our activities through which we network with many significant experts, politicians and analysts and contribute to global debate on the most important and challenging issues of today's world. We are keen to continue in this mission and work hard in the second half of 2017 in order to deliver quality policy proposals and suggestions how to improve the functioning of the EU and eliminate the threats our liberal democratic order is still facing nowadays.

Focus on the ongoing conflict in the Middle East –

Israel – Palestine: A New Chance for Peace?

International Seminar, 27 April 2017, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain



[Click here to access the Programme of the event](#)
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IED in collaboration with *Sabino Arana Fundazioa* organised the Seminar titled “[Israel – Palestine: a new chance for Peace?](#)” which took place on Thursday **27 April** in **Bilbao, Basque Country**, at the seat of Sabino Arana Fundazioa.

Speakers (in the order of speeches):

Juan Maria Atutxa, President of Sabino Arana Fundazioa.

Flaminia Baffigo, Coordinator of IED.

Jorge Dezcallar de Mazarredo, Ambassador of Spain.

Bassem Eid, Palestinian human rights activist based in Jerusalem.

Yaniv Schacham, New media and campaigning manager of “Peace Now” in Israel.



The conflict between Israel and Palestine is the ongoing struggle between Israelis and Palestinians over mutual recognition, borders settlement, control of Jerusalem, water rights and Palestinian right of return. It is one of the most complex and chaotic problems in the Middle East region which started in the mid-20th century and lasts until nowadays. Although the latest round of peace negotiations were suspended in 2014, the conflict is now moving towards a new stage following the election of Donald Trump as the new president of the United States – the country which has a significant influence over the states in the Middle East. Based on the experience of past failed attempts to bring the creation of the two states, the international seminar tried to deliver balanced responses for this never-ending problem whose resolution would represent a significant contribution for achieving peace not only in the Middle East but also for improving security situation in Europe and rest of the world. The event was attended by representatives of NGOs, Embassies, civic society and media.

Main outcomes and proposals:

- the current status-quo in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is unsustainable;
- the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would significantly contribute to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East and also to improve security situation in Europe and rest of the world;
- the international community needs to be careful in negotiations because it cannot bring more destabilization to highly unstable Middle East region, mainly with regards to Israel – the only stable entity in the region;
- Israel’s government and the Palestine Authority should deliver greater initiative in searching for the settlement;
- the EU and the international community should re-evaluate foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and reach for a renewed peace process between Israelis and Palestinians;
- it seems that the only possible way how to resolve the dispute and bring peace and stability to the region is the two-state solution – one state living next to the other and respecting the right of self-determination.

[Read the FULL REPORT on this event!](#)

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Event dedicated to the future of the European Union –

**EU at the Crossroads: How will 2017 national elections
change the face of Europe?**

International Conference, 5 May 2017, Bratislava, Slovakia

[Click here to access the Programme of the event](#)
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Facing a number of crucially important elections taking place in several EU Member States in the course of the year 2017, IED together with *Mladí Európania* (*Young Europeans, ME*) organized the international conference titled [“EU at the Crossroads: How will 2017 national elections change the face of Europe?”](#) which took place on Friday 5 May 2017 in Bratislava, Slovakia.

***Speakers (in the order of speeches):***

Flaminia Baffigo, Coordinator of IED.

Antonio Parziale, Honorary Consul of Moldova in Slovakia and Founder of Mladí Európania.

Beáta Kostilníková, European Policies Department of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

Samuel Abrahám, Slovak political scientist and Rector of Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts in Slovakia.

Martin Leveneur, Executive manager of the European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP).

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.

Roman Brečely, Member of Board of IED and former Slovak Minister of Transport.

Barbora Meššová, Lawyer from the League for the Human Rights in Slovakia.

Ján Orlovský, Director of Open Society Foundation in Slovakia.

Roman Vilkovič, Journalist and Editor in Chief of PlusCS London in the Great Britain.

Moderator:

Alena BAŠISTOVÁ, Member of the Slovak Parliament and university lecturer.



With regards to an unprecedented rise of populism, nationalism and euroscepticism in the European Union, the conference discussed four most important elections in Europe this year: the Dutch parliamentary elections that took place in March, the French presidential elections (that were just before its second round at the time of the event), June's parliamentary elections in Great Britain and the German federal elections scheduled for September. The conference was attended by a high number of students, representatives of NGOs, Embassies and media.

Main outcomes and proposals:

- we live in the longest peaceful and most prosperous time Europe has ever experienced but we never can take peace and prosperity for granted;
- history teaches us that nationalism and populism always led to war in Europe;
- the reason why populists have gained popularity lies in their abuse of fears and problems of citizens – populists use negative emotions, simple language, popular slogans and attractive promises to attract people;
- EU needs to regain trust of citizens who turn to euroscepticism and populism by demonstrating that Europeans live in the most prosperous and stable region in the world just thanks to the existence of the EU;
- democratic political politicians, media and NGOs must promote that policy proposals of populist parties are empty phrases that are not feasible to be fulfilled and *not* the solutions to their problems;
- professional journalism must be based on objective information and true facts in all circumstances so people can access fact-based information vis-à-vis “alternative” and misleading information;
- Brexit is one off event which is not relevant to populist politics in the EU and it will very likely have much greater negative impact on the UK than on the EU;
- only united approach of all EU Member States can save Europe from populism.

[Read the FULL REPORT on this event!](#)

Women's Spring Event –

How long do we still have to go? How can we stop violence on women?

International Conference, 13 May 2017, Nicosia, Cyprus

[Click here to access the Programme of the event](#)

[Click here to access the Biographies of speakers](#)

On Saturday 13 May 2017 in Nicosia, Cyprus, IED together with *Citizens' Alliance* organized the conference titled "[Women's Spring Event: How long do we still have to go? How can we stop violence on women?](#)". The aim of the conference was to discuss one of the most serious and alarming violation of human rights in global society – violence against women and girls. Rooted in inequalities between women and men, it involves crimes such as sexual assaults, physical and psychological abuse, rape, forced marriage, female circumcision, forced sterilization and any other act of gender-based violence that results in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women. Global estimates published by the World Health Organization show alarming results – about 1 in 3 (35%) women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime; however, this number can be much higher considering the fact that many women and girls are afraid to report these crimes and the society still lacks effective mechanisms to combat this type of violence. The conference welcomed several significant public figures who dedicated their lives to the fight against violence on women, including Hauwa Ibrahim, a Nigerian human rights lawyer and the winner of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize in 2005. She is well-known for being appointed by President Good-luck Jonathan of Nigeria to be a member of the fact-finding commission regarding the 219 girls kidnapped by Boko Haram from Chibok.



Speakers (in the order of speeches):

Marina Demetriou, President of Women's Alliance.

Flaminia Baffigo, Coordinator of IED.

Yiorgos Lillikas, President of Citizens' Alliance.

Maria Epaminonda, President of Cyprus Women Lobby and Executive Director of the Cyprus Family Planning Association.

Georgia Bouri, Social worker, Counsellor on Mental Health and Head of the Department of Equality and Discrimination in the Municipality of Athens.

Androula Christofidou Henriques, Psychologist and Honorary President of the anti-human trafficking network 'Cyprus STOP trafficking'

Luca Attanasio, Italian Journalist and Writer.

Hauwa Ibrahim, Nigerian Human Rights Lawyer and Winner of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2005.

Moderator:

Katerina Christofides, Cypriot journalist



Main outcomes and proposals:

- violence against women occurs in all parts of the world, in all cultural and economic environments and concerns women and men of all educational and social levels;
- violence against women is not a ‘female issue’ but social and political problem which has an impact on whole of society;
- three main problems in tackling violence against women that must be addressed by governments:
 1. most of crimes are not reported by victims or by their neighbours/family;
 2. governments lack proper mechanisms to help victims and there are no specialized services for victims that would respond to their individual needs;
 3. penalties for aggressors are inadequate and non-dissuasive in terms of sexual violence;
- tolerance of violence means complicity – all individuals need to take responsibility and put an end to tolerance of violence and perpetuation of stereotyped gender-based perceptions, sexism and inequality between men and women;
- there are no effective policies targeted against the night clubs who sexually exploit women;
- implementation of the Istanbul Convention which is the first international binding legal framework to combat violence against women should be binding for all states without exception because the ratification of this document ensures that states are accountable for their actions in relation to violence against women;
- there is the most urgent to increase awareness of the causes and consequences of violence on women through media, politics and civic and non-governmental sector.

[Read the FULL REPORT on this event!](#)

Spotlight on the Visegrad Four and Populism –

V4 EUROPE – Pieces of Populism in Europe and how to overcome the Challenge

International Workshop, 8 June 2017, Budapest, Hungary

[Click here to access the Programme of the event](#)

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In the current political era, populist forces seriously threaten dominant liberal and democratic values, undermine human rights and constitutional checks and balances, and build illiberal states inside four Central European countries – Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia – that are also known under the common name the Visegrad Group or V4. IED decided to address this and in collaboration with *Hungarian Europe Society* organized the international workshop titled [“V4 Europe – Pieces of Populism in Europe and how to overcome the challenge”](#) which took place on Thursday **8 June 2017** in **Budapest, Hungary**. The goal of the event was to discuss the current populist threat, analyze the main features, driving forces and technique of populists and suggest fresh policy proposals in order to

overcome populism at national level within the V4 region as well as at the European level in general. The workshop welcomed a number of speakers coming from national parliaments, academia and well-know European think-tanks and NGOs who discussed the rise of populism in, and not only, Central European region. They elaborated comprehensive political-ideological visions, institutional and structural renewal and fresh policy proposals in order to overcome the populist threat at national, regional and European levels.

Speakers (in the order of speeches):

François Pauli, Member of the Board of the Institute of European Democrats (IED), Deputy Secretary-General of the ALDE Group, EP, Brussels.

Zsuzsanna Szelényi, Member of the Hungarian Parliament, Member of the Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest, Member of the Board of IED, Brussels.

Milada Anna Vachudova, Jean Monnet Chair in EU Studies, Associate Professor of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Ivan Vejvoda, Permanent Fellow, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna.

Anna Visvizi, Head of Research, Institute of East-Central Europe, IESW, Lublin.

Alena Holka Chudžíková, Senior Research Fellow, CVEK, Bratislava.

Márta Pardavi, Co-President, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Budapest.

Bulcsú Hunyadi, Senior Analyst, Political Capital, Budapest.

Bartłomiej E. Nowak, Foreign Affairs Secretary, Nowoczesna, Warsaw.

Balázs Váradi, Senior Researcher, Budapest Institute.

Miroslav Beblavý, Associate Senior Research Fellow, Center for European Policy Studies, Member of the Slovak

Parliament, Bratislava.

Andrzej Potocki, Vice-President, European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP) and Vice-President, Stronnictwo Demokratyczne, Warsaw.

Jacek Kucharczyk, President of the Executive Board, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw.

Dániel Hegedüs, Research Consultant, Freedom House, Berlin and Member of the Hungarian Europe Society.

Edit Inotai, Senior Fellow, Center for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy, Budapest.

Milan Nič, Senior Fellow, German Council on Foreign Affairs, DGAP, Berlin.

Olga Wysocka, Deputy Director, Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Warsaw.

Moderators:

Zsuzsanna Végh, Vice-chair, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest.

Zsuzsanna Szelényi, Member of the Hungarian Parliament and Member of the Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest, Member of the Board of IED, Brussels.

István Hegedüs, Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest.



Main outcomes and proposals:

- migration has become a source of political competition – increasing number of migrants coming to Europe gives a perfect momentum to populists to spread xenophobic rhetoric;
- elections Netherlands and France have stopped the rise of populism but there is still significant support for populist politicians across the continent;
- Visegrad states face similar challenges in respect to their historical, cultural and geopolitical development;
- populists use nationalism to justify illiberal policies and diverting attention from real problems and their bad governance; they also use lack of information about certain issues, e.g. migration, to spread “alternative facts” and misinformation;

- Visegrad countries experience a significant polarization in their political spectrum with more and more parties turning to authoritarianism and nationalism;
- people vote populists out of uncertainty and fear;
- historical and cultural reasons influence actual strength of popular support for populists in particular country;
- one of the ways how to tackle populism is education – teaching people to think critically and to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong;
- we need to analyze all “pieces of populism” in order to reverse negative trends in the voting behaviour and counter illiberal and anti-European forces in the V4 and the EU;
- democratic politicians with the help of civic organizations, NGOs and media must provide the strong alternative to populist policies.

[Read the FULL REPORT on this event!](#)

Current Security Challenge –

Russian Disinformation War against Poland and Europe.

International Conference, 23 June 2017, Warsaw, Poland

[Click here to access the Programme of the event](#)

[Click here to access the Photos from the event](#)

IED together with *Fundacja Samorządność i Demokracja* organized the international conference titled “[Russian Disinformation War against Poland and Europe](#)” which took place on Friday **23 June 2017** in Nowy Świat 58 in **Warsaw, Poland**.



The main purpose of the event was to analyze one of the most controversial phenomena of today’s world – the spreading of disinformation in society. Disinformation can be characterized as false information intended to deceive and mislead public opinion or obscure the truth. The investigations of American and European intelligence agencies and cybersecurity companies have many clues to suggest that the extensive international disinformation and hacking campaign is coordinated directly from Kremlin in order to protect and even strengthen the administration of Russian President Vladimir Putin and spread his political impact across Russia’s borders. Russian disinformation war is thus a very serious and dangerous activity which directly threatens the EU and liberal democratic order in general. As a result, the EU Members States have to address this issue with great attention and formulate effective tools how to counter it. The event gathered former intelligence officials and experts on disinformation who discussed the proposals how to combat this serious security challenge.

Speakers (in the order of speeches):

Adriana Ciefova, Project Manager of IED.

Andrzej Potocki, Vice-President of European Democratic Party (PDE-EDP) and Vice-President of Stronnictwo Demokratyczne.

Kazimierz Wóycicki, Publicist, philosopher and historian.

Marta Kowalska, Vice-President of the Foundation Centre for Analysis of Propaganda and Disinformation.

Piotr Niemczyk, Security Specialist and former chief of Polish intelligence.

Vincent V. Severski, Lawyer, former intelligence and disinformation officer and writer.

Tomasz Smura, Head of the research office of the Foundation K. Pulaski.

Piotr Fedusio, Lawyer.

Adam Lelonek, President of the Foundation Centre for Analysis of Propaganda and Disinformation.

Main outcomes and proposals:

- Disinformation War is real war led by the current Russian government against the European integration and liberal democracy; it is one of the most serious security challenge for the EU;
- European intelligence agencies need to provide the mechanisms so foreign hackers and agents of influence will not be able to break to our systems; European governments need to allocate more financial resources to counter-policies and create professional governmental institutions for combating disinformation;
- all people should have bigger responsibility for what they say or write;
- one of the long term solution is education – people need to learn how to verify information;
- European countries need to act against the disinformation practices on the governmental level much more intensively because NGOs are hopeless to fight it on their own;
- online and print media should have more responsibility over information they publish;
- all actors on both, governmental and nongovernmental level, need to be much more united because internal divisions only support Russian propaganda.

[Read the FULL REPORT on this event!](#)

Heated Debate –

The Climate and Energy Agenda in the Evolving Global Scenario.

International Conference, 6 July 2017, Milan, Italy

[Click here to access the Programme of the event](#)

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IED in cooperation with the *Center for a Sustainable Future (CFS)* organized the international conference on ["The Climate and Energy Agenda in the evolving Global Scenario"](#). The event took place on Thursday **6 July 2017** at the **University of Milan, Italy**.

The aim of the conference was to deal with such issues as the US energy independence; the Paris Agreement positive momentum triggered by the ambitions of China and the US; the possible turning point in the US climate policy; the new position of EU on climate and energy issues after Brexit. How these events will impact the global climate and energy agenda of the next ten years?



At the same time, despite the successful reduction of its greenhouse gases emissions (decreased from 19% of the global share in 1990, to 11% in 2013, down to 4-5% in 2030), the Europe has not been able to plan a medium/long term climate and energy policy able to effectively adapt and be competitive in the varying global scenario.

The European dependency on energy imports (almost 70% of its natural gas, 90% of its oil and 40% of its coal and nuclear fuel) together with the persisting economic stagnation and the recent rise of

populism and nationalism are tough challenges that Europe is struggling to win.

The conference therefore investigated on:

- The perspectives of the future global climate and energy scenario;
- The geopolitical consequences of the quickly evolving energy market;
- The impact of the Brexit and the new climate sceptical US Presidency on energy prices;
- The role of the Europe and its capacity to maintain leadership and competitiveness.



The climate change is happening and is caused by human activity. As a consequence, it is the obligation of all countries of the world to address this issue and formulate the necessary and adequate policies how to reduce the negative impacts of human activity on our environment.

Speakers (in the order of speeches):

Francesco Rutelli, President of the Center for a Sustainable Future.

Giuseppe Sala, Mayor of Milan.

Chiara Tonelli, Vice Rector for Research of the University of Milan.

Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency.

Giampiero Massolo, President of ISPI (Italian Institute for International Political Studies).

Alessandro Lanza, Member of the Scientific Committee of the LUISS University in Rome.

Marzio Galeotti, Member of the Scientific Committee of the University of Milan.

Alberto Martinelli, Professor Emeritus at the University of Milan and President of the International Social Science Council.

Antonio Navarra, President of the Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change.

Simona Bonafé, Member of the European Parliament (Committee on Environment, Health and Food Safety and Economic Affairs; Delegation for relations with the United States and with the People's Republic of China).

Li Ruiyu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Italy.

[Read the Presentations of Speakers!](#)

What's next?

OUR NEXT EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Smart Mobility Forum 2017.

IED Conference in cooperation with *Repubblica Futura*
Republic of San Marino, 22nd September 2017

European Union between Democracy and Extremism.

IED Conference in cooperation with *Mladí Európania*
Košice – Slovakia, 6th October 2017

Presentation of the Brochure on Fighting Populist Arguments and Defending the idea of united Europe.

IED Publication.

Topics of the brochure:

1. Migration and Schengen
2. Detached Workers and Social Dumping
3. European Social Model
4. Defence of Trade and Industry



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