

GENERATION NEXT – EUROPE'S FUTURES CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 24–25, 2018
VIENNA

The **Generation Next – Europe's Futures** conference is organized by **Aspen Institute Romania (AIR)**, **Aspen Institute Central Europe (AICE)** and the **Institute for Human Sciences (IWM)**, with the support of **Erste Group and ERSTE Foundation**. The conference will serve as the first in a series of Future of Europe Task Force meetings, planned to be held in Austria and Romania during their respective EU Presidency terms. The gathering seeks solutions and encourages action to face the upcoming challenges both to the European Union and to the regions of Central and South East Europe.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2018

Venue: ERSTE Campus, Am Belvedere 1, 1100 Vienna

19:00 **Dinner** (BY INVITATION ONLY)

Welcome by the host: **Boris Marte**, Head of Erste Innovation HUB and ERSTE Foundation Deputy Chairman of the Managing Board

Welcome by the organizers: **Shalini Randeria**, Rector of Institute for Human Sciences, **Mircea Geoană**, President of Aspen Institute Romania, **Ivan Hodáč**, President and Founder of Aspen Institute Central Europe

Keynote Speaker: **Katarína Matheriová**, DDG for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations

SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

Venue: Hotel De France, Schottenring 3, 1010 Vienna

8:30 **Registration**

9:00–9:10 **Opening Remarks**

Mircea Geoană, (RO) President, Aspen Institute Romania

Jiří Schneider, (CZ) Executive Director, Aspen Institute Central Europe

Ivan Vejvoda, (RS) Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna

9:10–10:00 **Keynote Speech**

Andrä Rupprechter, (AT) Principal Advisor on Austria's Presidency of the Council of the EU, Federal Chancellery of Austria, General Secretariat of the Council of the EU

Victor Negrescu, (RO) Minister Delegate for European Affairs, Romanian Government

Alexandr Micovčín, (SK) Director General of European Affairs on behalf of the Slovak Presidency in the Visegrad Group

Andreas Treichl, (AT) CEO Erste Group

10:00—11:15 The Future of Europe: Is There a Common Way Forward?
Europe is facing a variety of challenges, both politically and economically. Recent developments have opened debates on the future shape and direction of the European Union. The purpose of this panel is to push the deliberative process about the future of Europe beyond the existing divides between Member States, to outline scenarios accentuating the EU as a solution rather than a source of problems. **An open debate of political and business leaders from Central and South East Europe, including the Austrian Presidency, will seek to provide concrete policy recommendations for improving EU governance to the successive EU Presidencies, while focusing on providing fresh ideas to the coming European Summit in Sibiu, which will play a key role in shaping the EU for the decades to come.**

The panel starts with brief presentation of **The CEE Prosperity Report 2018 by James Sproule, Senior Fellow, Legatum Institute**

Moderator: **Tim Judah**, (UK) Journalist/ERSTE Foundation IWM Fellow
Speakers: **Rosa Balfour**, (UK) GMF US/ERSTE Foundation IWM Fellow
Stefan Lehne, (AT) Carnegie Europe/ERSTE Foundation IWM Fellow
Maria Skóra, (PL) Senior Project Manager, Progressives Zentrum Berlin/AICE Alumna
Louisa Slavkova, (BG) Executive Director, Sofia Platform/AIR Fellow

11:15—11:45 Coffee Break

11:45—13:00 Digital Europe: Is Digitalization Bringing More Unity or Disparity to the EU?
While Industry 4.0, digitalization and artificial intelligence offer effective solutions for a number of actual challenges, they also raise concerns about their social impact, employment, education, and last but not least, about governance. Central and South East European countries are the most dynamic within the EU. Their fastest convergence is happening in digitalization. The region's digital infrastructure is relatively well developed, as Central and South East European member states are almost on par with the EU15 in terms of internet access and mobile broadband usage. However, the low level of digital public services (eGovernment) remains their main drawback. Despite the abovementioned developments, the countries in the Central and South East Europe are the most threatened by the digital revolution. **The panel will seek solutions to avoid the digital divide threatening the EU both externally and internally. Digitalization, often perceived as a threat, can bring inclusive solutions as well. This panel will look for recommendations boosting competitiveness and connectivity across the EU, with a special focus on Central and South East Europe.**

Moderator: **Thomas Seifert**, (AT) Editor-in-Chief, Wiener Zeitung
Speakers: **Octav Dan Paxino**, (RO) State Secretary, Ministry for European Funds, Romanian Government
Péter Árvai, (HU) CEO and Co-Founder, Prezi
Pavel Kysilka, (CZ) CEO and Founder, 6D Academy
Diana Rusu, (RO) Executive Director, Spherik Accelerator/AIR Fellow
Roland Sommer, (AT) Managing Director, Platform Industry 4.0

13:00—14:00 Buffet Lunch

14:00—15:30 Roundtable Discussion with members of the Aspen and IWM communities in South East and Central Europe

Will the basic democratic structures in member states hold against the influx from the extremist political parties? Is the European Union vital without a shared foreign policy on state-on-state aggression within Europe, without a joint asylum policy or while enlargement is yet a distant promise? Does the European Union still wield a positive vision of the future? Scrutiny of politics and policies by forward-thinkers from civil society, academia and business.

Conference Rapporteurs:

Ivan Vejvoda, (RS) Head of Europe's Futures Program, Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna

Clara Volintiru, (RO) Associate Professor, Department of International Business and Economics Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies/AIR Alumna

Roundtable:

Vladimír Bartovic, Director, Institute for European Policy EUROPEUM

Piotr Buras, (PL) European Council on Foreign Relations/ERSTE Foundation IWM Fellow

Jan Jakub Chromiec, (PL), Analyst, Batory Foundation/AICE Alumni

Vít Dostál, (CZ), Research Director, Association for International Affairs

Yasen Georgiev, (BG), Executive Director, Economic Policy Institute Sofia/AIR Fellow

Gerald Knaus, (AT) European Stability Initiative/ERSTE Foundation IWM Fellow

Mădălina Mocan, (RO) Associate Teaching Assistant, Babes-Bolyai University/AIR Fellow

Ionuț Stanimir, (RO), Director of Marketing and Communications, Banca Comercială Română, Erste Group/AIR Fellow

Zsuzsanna Szelényi, (HU) Politician and former MP/ERSTE Foundation IWM Fellow

Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, (RO) IWM Visiting Fellow

Roxana Voicu-Dorobanțu, (RO) Associate Professor, Academy of Economic Studies/AIR Fellow

THE LANGUAGE OF THE CONFERENCE IS ENGLISH.