

The EU in 2017: How to improve Europe's future?

<i>Date</i>	19 June 2017
<i>Place</i>	Congress Hall of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (MFEA SR), Hlboká cesta 2, Bratislava
<i>Organizers</i>	Slovak Foreign Policy Association (SFPA), Representation of the European Commission (ZEK) – EU Citizens Dialogue
<i>Partners</i>	Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, EurActiv.sk
<i>Aims</i>	The main aim of the conference is to analyze the state of the EU and explore its practical potential to provide an added value to member states. Specifically, the conference will address three key areas of EU action. First, it will offer a high level political discussion on EU tools to help innovate and modernize Europe's economy. Second, the conference will examine the EU's political architecture in the contexts of Brexit and the launch of the Commission's White paper on Europe's future. Third, the conference will also address Slovakia's policy agenda for reform following based on EU country-specific recommendations published by the European Commission in May 2017.
<i>Languages</i>	Slovak and English with simultaneous interpretation

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

9:00	Opening <i>Ivan Korčok</i> , State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR <i>Dušan Chrenek</i> , Head of EC Representation in Slovakia Representative of the FES Office (tbc) <i>Vladimír Bilčík</i> , Head of EU Program, Research Center of the SFPA
9:20	<u>Opening discussion on the EU's potential to innovate and modernize</u>
Chair	<i>Vladimír Bilčík</i> , Head of EU Program, Research Center of the SFPA
Speakers	<i>Peter Pellegrini</i> , Deputy Prime Minister of the SR <i>Maroš Šefčovič</i> , Vice President of the European Commission
10:30	Break

11:00 **I. Panel: Post-Brexit politics of the EU: multiple players in multiple cores?**

The panel will discuss the state and possible consequences of Brexit negotiations on the future of Europe. More broadly, it will address the current debate on the EU's future with reference to the Commission White paper as well as post- and pre-election political realities across the Union.

Chair *Vladimír Bilčík*, Head of EU Program, Research Center of the SFPA

Panelists *Iveta Hricová*, Director General, European Affairs Section, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR (tbc)

Richard Sulík, Member of the European Parliament

Dušan Chrenek, Head of EC Representation in Slovakia

Ed Turner, Deputy Director, *Aston Centre for Europe*, *Aston University*, Birmingham

Francesco Briganti, CEO, Employee Benefits and Welfare Institute (EBWI), Brussels

12:30 **Lunch**

13:30 **II. Panel: Defining reform priorities for Slovakia in the EU**

The panel will reflect upon the Country Specific Recommendations issued to Slovakia by the European Commission under the European Semester. Panelists will be asked to identify priority areas for reform in order to ensure continued growth, competitiveness and social and economic convergence in Slovakia against the backdrop of demographic and technological change as well as existing budgetary constraints.

Chair *Michal Lehuta*, Journalist, weekly Trend

Panelists *Lívia Vašáková*, Economic Counsellor, Representation of the EC in Slovakia

Miroslav Beblavý, Member of the Slovak Parliament

Ján Oravec, Member of Presidium, the National Union of Employers

Emil Machyna, President of Trade Union KOVO

15:00 **Conclusions and Glass of Wine**