

Programme

European Office of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung
Political Academy of the Austrian People's Party

NET@WORK 2022

EU-MENA Relations in Times of Crisis - how to ensure Strategic Cooperation with our Southern Partner?

Tuesday, 15 November 2022, 13:30 to 14:30 CET

Double Tree by Hilton, Rue Gineste 3, 1210 Brussels

More than a decade after the revolutionary movements in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the achievements of the "Arab Spring" remain ambivalent. In the majority of the Arab countries today, authoritarian regimes are back in power while countries such as Syria, Libya and Yemen suffer from the consequences of ongoing civil war and terror. Even in Tunisia, a trend of democratic backsliding can be observed. On the one hand, current geopolitical developments give the region new significance in terms of economic, energy and migration issues. On the other hand, the war in Ukraine is forcing the EU, as well as the recently founded European Political Community, to shift their focus to its neighbours in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, political turmoil and instability in MENA pose huge challenges to Europe, of which security policy is just one aspect. Being located in the EU's immediate neighbourhood, it is important to ensure that MENA is not overlooked alongside other current foreign policy matters. The purpose of this discussion is to examine the current state of EU-MENA relations and to provide an outlook for the future: Where do the political systems in MENA stand today and which role can the EU play to support democracy and stability in the region? How can the EU ensure cooperation on current geopolitical issues to support European interests? How can the European Political Community safeguard that MENA is not left behind in future political cooperation?

Speakers:

- **Dr. Isabelle Werenfels**, Senior Fellow Africa and Middle East, German Institute for International and Security Affairs
- **Wolfgang Puzstai**, AIES Senior Advisor, Austria Institut für Europa- und Sicherheitspolitik
- **Ajla Hotic**, Senior Policy Adviser, European People's Party

Moderation

- **Dr. Christina Bache**, Associate Researcher, Center for Migration, Diversity, and Justice, Brussels School of Governance, Vrije Universiteit Brussels; Chair, United Nations, Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME)