



# **Burgas Connectivity Forum 2024: Connecting nations**

## *International Congress Center Burgas*

**Working languages: Bulgarian and English**

### **31<sup>st</sup> of May Program**

10:00 – 10:30      **Registration and Welcome Coffee**

10:30 – 11:00      **Greetings and Opening**

**Norbert Beckmann-Dierkes,**  
Director of Konrad Adenauer Foundation Bulgaria

**Klaus Fiesinger, /Video address/**  
Regional Director for Southeast Europe, Hanns Seidel Foundation

**Irene Maria Plank,**  
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bulgaria

**Mariya Gabriel,**  
European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth  
(2019-2023)

**Dimitar Nikolov,**  
Mayor of Burgas

11:00 – 11:15      **Setting the stage:  
Connectivity as EU-Integration tool**

**Rosen Plevneliev,**  
4<sup>th</sup> President of the Republic of Bulgaria,  
Minister of Regional development and public works (2009 -2011)

**Partners:**





11:15 – 11:30

**Setting the stage: Transport connectivity and Corridor 8**

**Georgi Gvozdeykov,**

Minister of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Bulgaria

11:30 – 11:45

**Inputs: Nuclear energy investments – regional cooperation and national security. The importance of the Nuclear Power Plant Kozloduy for energy resilience in Southeast Europe.**

**Valentin Nikolov,**

Executive Director, Nuclear Power Plant Kozloduy

11:45 – 12:00

**Inputs: EU Energy policy for energy independence. Trans-European Networks for Energy. Integrated EU energy market**

**Mariya Trifonova,**

Chief Assistant Professor, Department of Industrial Economics and Management, Sofia University

Deputy-Director of Net-Zero Lab

**Partners:**



Botschaft  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Sofia





12:00 – 12:15

**Inputs: Connecting the nations in the Balkans - tool for improvement of the business environment and diplomacy**

**Matej Zakonjsek,**

Director of Permanent Secretariat of Transport Community Treaty

12:15 – 13:00

**Panel 1:**

**Connectivity dynamics in the Southeast Europe: The new geopolitical role of the Black Sea region**

**Focus: Development of the TEN-T Network and its impact on the connectivity landscape in the Southeast Europe. The involvement of municipalities in the process of building of critical infrastructure.**

**Ardian Hackaj,**

Coordinator of Tirana Connectivity Forum

*Corridor VIII as a multi-layer connectivity vector in Southeast Europe*

**Bojan Stojanoski,**

MP in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia and Member of the Committee on Transport, Communications and Environment at the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia

*Connectivity as a tool to resolve diplomatic disputes between Bulgaria and North Macedonia*

**Claudio Poliganano, /online/**

**Region of Puglia**

*Importance of Corridor 8 in regional development*

**Moderator: Daniel Shekerletov,**

Third secretary: Transport, Intermodal Questions and Networks, Permanent Representation of the Republic Bulgaria in Brussels

13:00 – 13:30

**Discussion**

**Discussants: Dimitar Stoyanov (CNC Kozloduy), Ivelin Zanev (Executive Director of Executive Agency Exploration and Maintenance of the Danube River, Robert Yanev (Konrad Adenauer Foundation North Macedonia)**

13:30 – 14:30

**Lunch break**

**Partners:**



Botschaft  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Sofia





14:30 – 15:00

**Enhancing Road Connectivity in Southeast Europe –  
presenting the regional study takeaways**

**Yasen Georgiev,**  
Executive Director, Economic Policy Institute

**Marianna Trifonova,**  
Program Director and Senior Analyst, Economic Policy Institute



**Partners:**





15:00 – 15:45

## Panel 2:

### Innovations in connectivity

**Focus: Smart mobility and smart cities: better life quality and economic growth through innovation; How to transform the cities mobility though innovation? The trends transforming mobility's future and the impact of the Green Deal. Innovative projects that will shape the understanding of connectivity.**

#### **Anja Quiring,**

Regional Director South Eastern Europe, Ost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Wirtschaft  
*New understanding of connectivity, business and innovation*

#### **Frank Quante,**

CEO, Fraport Twin Star Airport Management AD  
*The airport as a mobility hub - Imagining an intermodal transportation crossroads for digital innovation and economic growth*

#### **Stefan Hristozov,**

Secretary, JEDA (Joint European Drone Associations)  
*Innovative Air Mobility and New Possibilities*

#### **Asen Asenov,**

Dean of Faculty of Transport, University of Ruse  
*Decarbonization of the transport: innovative projects*

#### **Moderator: Asya Filipova,**

Program coordinator, Center for Conflict Research

15:45 – 16:30

## Discussion

**Discussants: Martin Hoffmann** (Director Strategy and Research, German Eastern Business Association), **Ivo Barzov** (Key account manager, Fraport Bulgaria), **Volker Berresheim** (Chairman of the German-Bulgarian Forum)

16:30 – 16:45

## Coffee break



Partners:





16:45 – 17:30

**Panel 3: Revolutionising infrastructure and security in the Black Sea region**

**Dorian Istratii, /Video address/**

MP, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Budget and Finance,  
Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

*Evolution of connectivity needs in Moldova*

**Marius Ghincea,**

Researcher, EUI, Florence

*Security risks in the Black Sea region*

**Gábor Papp,**

Research Fellow, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs

*Geopolitics of infrastructure*

**Moderator: Romyana Zheleva,**

Researcher, Bulgarian Academy of Science

17:30 – 17:45

**Discussion**

**Doru Dragomir** (*President of the Bilateral Chamber of Commerce Bulgaria-Romania*),

**Valentin Razvan Dan** (*Political analyst, University of Bucharest*)

17:45 – 18:00

**Coffee break**

**Partners:**





18:00 – 18:45

#### Panel 4:

##### Peacebuilding and reconciliation through connectivity

**Focus:** The new economic agenda of Southeast Europe and boosting of the competitiveness of the region. Paving the way for sustainable transport connections in Southeast Europe. Common regional market and free movement of people and goods.

**Danijela Gacevic,**

Acting Director, CEFTA

*Addressing regulatory and administrative bottlenecks to cross-border trade in the Western Balkans*

**Albert Hani,**

Executive Director RYCO

*Connectivity and Youth – the way to boost the reconciliation dynamics between the nations on the Balkans*

**Stephan Malerius,**

Head of the Regional Program Political Dialogue South Caucasus, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

*Connectivity and Disconnectivity in the South Caucasus*

**Simona Nikolova,**

Research Director, RESECO Bulgaria

*Connecting nations, connecting businesses – living and working together in Southeast Europe*

**Moderator: Yana Docheva,**

Head of the International Cooperation Department, National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria

18:45 – 19:00

#### Discussion

**Discussants:** *Tvzetin Todorov* (Chairman, Bulgarian National Freight Forwarding Association), *Bojidar Yankov* (Executive Agency Exploration and Maintenance of the Danube River)



Partners:





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