



Burgas Connectivity Forum 2026 **Connecting nations**

BURGAS
27th of May 2026

Working languages: English

**27th of May 2026,
Wednesday**

Cities, Corridors and Gateways: Europe's Strategic Connectivity and the Black Sea

***Place: Conference room,
Cultural House of Neftohimic Burgas Floor 2
1 Troikata Square, 8000 Burgas***

12:30 – 13:00

Registration and Welcome Coffee

13:00 – 13:30

Opening

Mihail Hadzhiyanev,
Chair of the Municipal Council Municipality of Burgas

Vesna Baltina,
Deputy Mayor Municipality of Burgas

Norbert Beckmann-Dierkes,
Director Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Bulgaria

13:30 – 14:00

**Fireside chat: Burgas' Vision for Connected Cities - Mobility,
Ports, Universities and Digital Solutions for the Future**

Prof. Dr. Milen Baltov,
Rector Burgas Free University
BoR of European University of Islands, Ports, and Coastal Territories
European Ocean Board.
*From Coast to Corridor: The Role of Universities in Shaping Regional
Connectivity*

Ambassador Dr. Merve Safa Kavakci,
First Deputy Secretary General BSEC PERMIS
*Advancing Black Sea Connectivity: Regional Cooperation and Economic
Integration*

Moderator: Yassen Georgiev,
Executive Director Economic Policy Institute (EPI)

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13:50 – 14:00

**TRIPCO - Transforming Bulgaria's public transport
Pilot project Burgas**

Manuela Maneva,
Founder TRIPCO

14:00 – 14:30

**Discussion Panel
Connecting cities, Connecting future**

Ekaterina Yordanova,
Chair of the Committee on International Cooperation and Tourism, European Programs and Projects
Municipal Councillor GERB- UDF, Sofia Municipal Council

Ardian Hackaj, (online)
Coordinator of Tirana Connectivity Forum

Dr. Volker Berresheim,
Chairman of the German-Bulgarian Forum

Stanislav Kimchev,
Deputy Mayor of Blagoevgrad

Discussion

Moderator: Dr. Stefan Hofmann,
Director Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Romania

14:30 – 15:00

Insights Driving change - Transport and Mobility Projects for the Future

Radoslav Marinov,
Head of Development
TopMobility
The Future of Urban Transport: Access over Ownership

Dr. Ina Schmidt, (online)
President ICARUS e.V.
Health-Driven Mobility Innovation: Lessons from Aeromedical Operations

Todor Ivandjиков,
Founder and CEO
President of BAIA (Bulgarian Aviation Industry Association)
Aviation and Urban Mobility: How New Air Technologies Will Transform Cities

Discussion

Moderator: Deyan Filipov,
Assistant Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Bulgaria
Co-Founder BG Positive

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15:00 – 16:00

Discussion Panel

The Game of Corridors:

Power, Resilience, and Competition in Global Connectivity

Velina Tchakarova, (online)

Founder and Geopolitical Analyst FACE

The New Game of Corridors: Connectivity as Geopolitical Power

Dr. Valentin Krüsmann,

Researcher

Center for East European and International Studies (ZOiS)

Arben Cejku,

Executive Director of the ACGG (Albanian Centre for Good Governance)

Daniel Shekerletov,

Second secretary: Transport, Intermodal Questions and Networks

Permanent Representation of the Republic Bulgaria in Brussels

Moderator: Martin Yanev,

Deputy Chairman Green Transport Cluster

16:00 – 16:20

Discussion

16:20 – 16:30

Closing remarks

Zlatozara Stoilova,

Project Manager, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Bulgaria

16:30

Transfer to Port Burgas

17:00 – 18:00

Visit to Port Burgas: Gateway to the Black Sea

20:00

Opening dinner

Burgas Connectivity Forum 2026

Invitation only

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