



Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships 2019

19th September 2019 — Kaiserstein Palace, Prague

International Conference



Program

08:30 – 09:30

Registration

09:30 – 09:40

Welcome speech

Jan Macháček

Chairman of the Board, Institute for Politics and Society (Czech Republic)

Olle Schmidt

Vice President, European Liberal Forum (Sweden)

09:40 – 10:20

Hlavní řečníci

Andrej Babiš

Prime Minister, Government of the Czech Republic (Czech Republic)

Timmy Dooley

Vice President, ALDE Party (Ireland)

10:20 – 10:40

VIP Talk I

Jacques Rupnik

Research Professor, Center for International Studies at Sciences Po in Paris (France)

Moderator: Marcela Konrádová

Analyst, Institute for Politics and Society (Czech Republic)

10:40 – 11:00

Coffee Break

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Program

11:00 - 12:15

Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships: Economic Dimension

Karel Havlíček

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade,
Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic (Czech Republic)

Chris Boyer

Vice President of Strategic Research and Communications, AT&T (USA)

Weston Stacey

Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic
(USA)

John Lloyd

Journalist, Financial Times (United Kingdom)

Miroslav Zámečník

Economic Consultant, Government of the Czech Republic (Czech Republic)

Moderator: Jan Macháček

Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Institute for Politics and Society
(Czech Republic)

12:15 - 13:00

Lunch Break

13:00 - 13:30

VIP Talk II

Tomáš Petříček

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic
(Czech Republic)

Moderator: Marcela Konrádová

Analyst, Institute for Politics and Society (Czech Republic)

13:30 - 14:45

Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships: Political Dimension

H.E. Roland Galharague

Ambassador, Embassy of the French Republic in the Czech Republic (France)

Josef Janning

Head, Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations (Germany)

Tomáš Szunyog

Deputy Head, Czech Permanent Representation to the EU; Permanent Representa-
tive to the Political and Security Committee, EU; Ambassador (Czech Republic)

Jamie Fly

President and CEO, Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty's (USA)

Erik Brattberg

Director, Europe Program; Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International
Peace in Washington (USA)

Moderator: Olle Schmidt

Vice President, European Liberal Forum (Sweden)

14:45 - 15:00

Coffee Break

15:00 - 16:15

Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships: Security Dimension

H.E. Barbara Ćwioro

Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic Poland to the Czech Republic (Poland)

Tinatin Khidasheli

Former Minister of Defense, Ministry of Defense of Georgia (Georgia)

Ulrich Speck

Senior Visiting Fellow, The German Marshall Fund of the United States in Berlin
(Germany)

Vladimir Socor

Senior Fellow, Jamestown Foundation (Romania)

Nada Kovalčíková

Program Manager, Alliance for Securing Democracy, The German Marshall Fund
of the United States in Brussels (Slovakia)

Moderator: Sebastian Vagt

Analyst, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung (Germany)

16:15 - 17:15

Networking with a glass of wine

PANEL A:

Economic Dimension



Karel Havlíček

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade,
Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic (Czech Republic)

Chris Boyer

Vice President of Strategic Research and Communications, AT&T (USA)

Weston Stacey

Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic
(USA)

John Lloyd

Journalist, Financial Times (United Kingdom)

Miroslav Zámečník

Economic Consultant, Government of the Czech Republic (Czech Republic)

Moderator: Jan Macháček

Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Institute for Politics and Society
(Czech Republic)

Under the leadership of the Trump administration, the United States of America has sought to create “fairer” trade deals with other countries. To create these “better” deals, the USA has been enacting tariffs and causing trade wars to push for these deals. Tensions between the USA and the European Union have risen because of this, particularly in regard to agricultural, automotive, and aerospace tariffs. This has created more barriers for trade between the countries and has been a main point of contention between allies. In its rhetoric, the USA has often emphasized its deficit with particular countries such as Germany, though not with the EU as a whole. However, any actions the US makes to rectify its trade deficit with individual countries will impact the entirety of the EU.



Questions:

How will these deals affect different sectors of the economy and trade between the USA and Europe? How will these disputes affect trade deficits and surpluses? How will they affect the overall level of trust within the economy?

PANEL B:

Political Dimension



H.E. Roland Galharague

Ambassador, Embassy of the French Republic in the Czech Republic (France)

Josef Janning

Head, Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations (Germany)

Tomáš Szunyog

Deputy Head, Czech Permanent Representation to the EU; Permanent Representative to the Political and Security Committee, EU; Ambassador (Czech Republic)

Jamie Fly

President and CEO, Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty's (USA)

Erik Brattberg

Director, Europe Program; Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington (USA)

Moderator: Olle Schmidt

Vice President, European Liberal Forum (Sweden)

The resurgence of nationalism has created a political situation that has international cooperation and integration attempts under attack. The “America First” movement of President Trump is one such example. This has led to countries forgoing the previous international order in favor of putting their own interests first. They are often very aggressive in their efforts, such as America’s trade wars. Brexit is another example of nations rejecting international structures. This has created issues in sustaining cooperation across the Atlantic.



Questions:

Is the political system that was created after the Second World War over? How can politicians foster international cooperation? Is the postwar approach of higher integration over, or just transforming?

PANEL C:

Security Dimension



H.E. Barbara Ówioro

Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic Poland to the Czech Republic (Poland)

Tinatín Khidasheli

Former Minister of Defense, Ministry of Defense of Georgia (Georgia)

Ulrich Speck

Senior Visiting Fellow, The German Marshall Fund of the United States in Berlin (Germany)

Vladimir Socor

Senior Fellow, Jamestown Foundation (Romania)

Nada Kovalčíková

Program Manager, Alliance for Securing Democracy, The German Marshall Fund of the United States in Brussels (Slovakia)

Moderator: Sebastian Vagt

Analyst, Friedrich Naumann Stiftung (Germany)

After the Second World War a system of Transatlantic security was established. During the Cold War period, the main interest of the USA was to counter communist regimes, the Soviet Union, and their allies. Today, their focus is more towards Asia and especially China. This has made transatlantic cooperation less of a priority. There has been increased calls for a more involved role of the “European army” and “strategic autonomy” which would decrease security dependence from the US. There is also a growing pacifism and antimilitarism in Germany. Not only do Eastern European states (the Baltic states and Poland) but also countries like the Netherlands and Denmark still see the US as a main guarantor of peace in Europe, but also as one of their only real partners in defense. The United States, along with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries have disputes over a variety of issues. This includes justified criticism by the US that other nations are not meeting their required defense spending. Military equipment has also been an area of contention. The US wants to sell their existing equipment, while Europe wants to have a larger role in developing military equipment and to be more competitive. NATO is also having issues becoming more unified in their responses and adapting their previous strategies to face new threats. This has created tensions among longtime allies and threatens the current order of the transatlantic partnership.



Questions:

Is still NATO unified and ready to act as one voice? Is NATO still an effective alliance? How will the military industry “Trade war” affect Transatlantic cooperation?

Keynote Speakers



Andrej Babiš

Czech Republic

Andrej Babiš has been the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic since December 2017. He served from 2014 to 2017 as Czech Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. He received his degree at the University of Economics in Bratislava, with studies focusing on international trade. He began his career as a trader for the Chemapol company in Bratislava, and later continued it for the Petrímex company. In 1993, he established his own company, Agrofert, which is now an international conglomerate with more than 250 subsidiaries in several industries: chemical, agriculture, food processing, forestry and timbering, ground- technologies, technology and transportation, renewable energy sources, as well as media. Since 2011 he has been the chairman of the ANO 2011 political movement, which received the second largest number of votes in the 2013 parliamentary elections.



Timmy Dooley

Ireland

Timmy Dooley has been a Fianna Fáil TD for Clare constituency since 2007. Since May 2016, he is the Spokesperson on Communications, The Environment & Natural Resources. He was elected ALDE Vice-President in 2015. He served as Fianna Fáil Spokesperson for Transport, Tourism and Sport from 2011 to 2016. From 2002-2006 he was a Senator of the administrative Panel constituency. Previously, he worked in sales and marketing and business development with a number of companies.

VIP Talk I



Jacques Rupnik

France

Jacques Rupnik was educated at the University of Paris and at Harvard, is currently a research professor at CERI-Sciences Po in Paris as well as visiting professor at the College of Europe in Bruges. Since he joined CERI, Sciences Po in 1982 he has been writing and lecturing about East and Central European history and politics and European integration. He was advisor to President Vaclav Havel in the 1990's. He was also executive director of the International Commission for the Balkans, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (1995-1996), and drafter of its report, Unfinished Peace (1996), a member of the Independent International Commission on Kosovo (1999-2000) and co-drafter of The Kosovo Report (Oxford UP, 2000). Among the various positions held: Advisor to the European Commission (2007 - 2010), member of the board of the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation in The Hague 2010-2017, and member of the board of directors of the European Partnership for Democracy in Brussels (2008-2013). He has been a visiting Professor in several European universities and at Harvard. J.Rupnik's publications include The Other Europe (1989), Le Printemps tchécoslovaque 1968 (1999), and, more recently, 1989 as a Political World Event: Democracy, Europe and the New International System, with an introduction by V .Havel, and others.

Panel A: Economic Dimension



Karel Havlíček

Czech Republic

Mr. Havlíček graduated from the Faculty of Civil Engineering of the Czech Technical University in Prague and from the PIBS at the Manchester Metropolitan University. He completed his doctoral studies at the Faculty of Business Administration of the University of Economics in Prague and obtained the Doc. title. He has been defending the interests of entrepreneurs, in particular the position of Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Association of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Crafts of the Czech Republic. As co-owner and CEO of the SINDAT Group, he developed this company into a respected investor in the small and medium-sized industry and new technologies over the past twenty years. He built the faculty of economic studies at the University of Finance and Administration. He has been a member of a number of advisory bodies of the government and ministries; since 2014 he has been a member of the Government Council for Research, Development and Innovation and since 2018 he has been its Vice-Chairman. In April 2019, he was nominated by Prime Minister for a post of Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs and Minister of Industry and Trade. On 30 April 2019, he was appointed to both positions by President of the Czech Republic.



Chris Boyer

USA

Chris Boyer is Vice President of Strategic Research and Communications at AT&T Services, Inc., where he is responsible for the development and implementation of strategic policy-based communications initiatives to advance AT&T's policy positions with relevant national or regional, high-level stakeholders and key influencers. Mr. Boyer also serves as AT&T's primary point of contact on National Security matters with several Federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Department of State, the Federal Communications Commission and the White House. He is also the former Chairman of the Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board. Mr. Boyer was also a part of AT&T's global public policy organization. He served as AT&T's policy lead working with the high-tech community in Silicon Valley and he has held positions in the company's corporate public policy, network planning and engineering, product marketing and network services departments.



Weston Stacey

USA

Weston Stacey has been the executive director of the American Chamber of Commerce in the Czech Republic since 1996. In that time, he helped initiate the introduction of investment incentives, and complete reforms of the commercial registration, bankruptcy, and public procurement processes. His previous work was as a political reporter in the USA.



John Lloyd

United Kingdom

John Lloyd is a British journalist and contributing editor for the Financial Times. He co-founded the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford in 2006, and is now a Senior Research Fellow. Mr Lloyd is also chairman of the advisory board of the School of Civic Education and has written several books, most recently "The Power and the Story" (2017).

Panel B: Political Dimension



Miroslav Zámečník

Czech Republic

Miroslav Zámečník is a Czech economist and publicist. He graduated from the University of Economics in Prague and later studied at Georgetown University in Washington. From 1994 to 1998 he represented the Czech Republic in the World Bank, and from 2000 to 2001 he worked in a leader position in a Revitalization Agency and Consolidated Bank. As a member of the Government's National Economic Council (NERV) he cooperated on anti-crisis arrangements. In addition to his consultancy practice, he currently works as an economic analyst at the Czech Banking Association and as a main economic commentator for the economic weekly Euro. In his free time, Mr. Zámečník is an enthusiastic zoologist and also a lecturer of postgraduate studies.



J.E. Roland Galharague

France

Roland Galharague is currently Ambassador of the French Republic to the Czech Republic. Roland Galharague was Special Advisor to the Director General for political and security affairs at the French Foreign Ministry from 2015 to 2017. He was ambassador to Hungary (2012-2015) and served previously as Deputy Director General for political and security affairs (2010-2012), Director for Eastern Europe (2008-2010) and Deputy Director of the Centre d'analyse et de prévision, the policy planning department of the Quai d'Orsay (1999-2002). Roland Galharague has held a number of diplomatic posts: in Washington D.C (1996-1999) as counsellor for pol-mil and east-west issues, in London as Head of the Press Office and Spokesman (2002-2005), and in Pretoria as Deputy Head of Mission (2005-2008). He began his career at the French Foreign Ministry with assignments on the CSCE and UN desks. He is an alumnus of the Ecole-Normale-Supérieure and holds degrees from the Sorbonne and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.



Josef Janning

Germany

Josef Janning is a senior policy fellow and head of the Berlin office of the European Council on Foreign Relations. His topics of focus include European integration, EU reform, European and German foreign and security policy, global governance, and transatlantic relations. Janning joined the European Council on Foreign Relations in April 2014 as senior policy fellow in the Berlin office. From 2013-2014 he was a Mercator Fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations. Prior to that he served as Director of Studies at the European Policy Centre (EPC) in Brussels. Between 2001-2010, Janning led the international policy work as Senior Director of the Bertelsmann Foundation. Earlier positions in his career include Deputy Director of the Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP) at Munich University from 1995-2007. He has also taught at the University of Mainz, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a guest professorship at Renmin University of Beijing. He has worked with leading think tanks in Europe, the US and Asia, and engaged in and led various international study groups, high-level groups and commissions. In 2005 he established and directs the CEU Center for EU Enlargement Studies.



Tomáš Szunyog

Czech Republic

Ambassador Tomáš Szunyog is a Permanent Representative to PSC. He took up the post of the Czech Permanent Representative to the Political and Security Committee of the EU on 15 August 2017. Prior to that, he served as the Director of the Security Policy Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic in Prague. From 2009 to 2014 he served as the Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one year before that he served as a Director of South-East and South European Department. He served as an Ambassador of the Czech Republic in the Republic of Slovenia from 2001 to 2005. Prior to that, he worked as a Second Secretary of Czech Embassy in the USA, since 1993 until 1994 he worked as a Desk Officer for Visegrád Group and Slovenia at Central European Department. He joined the Czechoslovak Foreign Service in 1992. In the same year he worked as Desk Officer for Ukraine at Eastern European Department. Ambassador Szunyog studied at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.



Jamie Fly

USA

Prior to his appointment, Fly served as a senior fellow, co-director of the Alliance for Security Democracy, and director of the Future of Geopolitics and Asia programs at The German Marshall Fund of the United States. He served as counselor for Foreign and National Security Affairs to Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) from 2013-17, serving as his foreign policy advisor during his presidential campaign. Prior to joining Senator Rubio's staff in February 2013, he served as the executive director of the Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI) from its founding in early 2009. Prior to joining FPI, Fly served in the Bush administration at the National Security Council (2008-09) and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (2005-08). His articles and reviews have been published in a wide variety of outlets in the United States and Europe. For his work in the Department of Defense, he was awarded the Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public Service.



Erik Brattberg

USA

Erik Brattberg is director of the Europe Program and a fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington. He is an expert on European politics and security and transatlantic relations. His current research at Carnegie focuses on the Trump administration's policies toward the EU and NATO, transatlantic cooperation in an age of great power competition, and Europe's relations with China and Asia. Brattberg was previously the 2014 Ron Asmus Policy Entrepreneur Fellow at the German Marshall Fund, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council, adjunct senior fellow at Center for a New American Security, visiting Fulbright fellow at Center for Transatlantic Relations at Johns Hopkins University SAIS, visiting fellow at the European Policy Centre in Brussels, consulting researcher at SIPRI and European Council on Foreign Relations, and a research associate at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. His numerous articles and commentary have appeared in the Washington Post, Financial Times, Foreign Policy etc. He holds a master of science in foreign service (MSFS) from Georgetown University and master's and bachelor's degrees in political science from Uppsala University.



Tomáš Petříček

Czech Republic

Tomáš Petříček is a member of the Czech Social Democratic Party. He was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs on October 16, 2018. Tomáš Petříček was the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, in charge of setting the overall policy and strategic goals of the Foreign Ministry. He previously served as Deputy Minister of Social Affairs of the Czech Republic. Before joining the government, Mr Petříček was a senior advisor in the European Parliament and had a successful career in local government in the City of Prague. He also served as a lecturer in International Political Economy at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University. He holds a PhD in International Relations and is fluent in English and conversational in French.

Panel C: Security Dimension



H.E. Barbara Ćwioro

Poland

Born in Krakow, Poland, Barbara Ćwioro attended the Jagiellonian University finishing her studies in 2001 after achieving a Masters degree in Oriental philology and Iranian studies. After this, she attended the Diplomatic Academy of the MFA of Poland, earning a degree in diplomatic-consular application in 2004. In addition to her native Polish, Mrs. Ćwioro is also proficient in English, Persian, and Italian and is fluent in French. Mrs. Ćwioro has been apart of many different departments in the MFA and has held many positions in her time there. She began in the department of Africa and the Middle East, moving to the department of the European Union, the department of Common Foreign and Security Policy, and most recently in the department of European Policy. In 2014, she took a post in the Polish Embassy in Brussels, Belgium as first counselor, chief of the economic-political section, and deputy chief of the embassy. In 2009 she published, “International efforts to stop the Iranian nuclear program Iran - 30 years after the revolution” in the quarterly National Security Bureau (BBN)- volume 12. She also participated in the work of the Inter-Ministerial Team for Iran (2006) and the Interministerial Team for Afghanistan (2009), as well as multiple internships representing Poland around the world including NATO conferences as well as in the US.



Tinatin Khidasheli

Georgia

Tinatin Khidasheli heads a Georgian think-tank Civic — IDEA, fighting soviet legacy in Georgia, confronting Russian propaganda, and advocating for sound defense and security policy for Georgia. Tinatin is teaching two courses at the Caucasus University: bachelor's program: Hybrid Warfare and Georgian Defense Policy, as well as a Challenges of 21st century Leadership at the Georgian Institute of Public Administration for Masters Programs students. Mrs. Khidasheli at different times served as the first female Minister of Defense of Georgia, she chaired the Parliamentary Committee for European Integration as well as Inquiry Commission into Violations of Freedom of Speech and Telecommunication laws at the Parliament of Georgia. Before that, she was an elected member of the Tbilisi City Council and founder and chair of the largest Human Rights advocacy group in the entire post-soviet space, the Georgian Young Lawyers' Association. Mrs. Khidasheli was a member of the National Anti-Corruption Council for four years, under the president of Georgia. Mrs. Khidasheli was presented the Freedom Fighter Award by the President G. W. Bush and CEU Impact award for the outstanding Career Achievement.



Ulrich Speck

Germany

Ulrich Speck is a senior visiting fellow at The German Marshall Fund of the United States in Berlin. His work focuses on German foreign policy, the European Union, transatlantic relations, and global order. From 2015 to 2016, he was a senior fellow at the Transatlantic Academy at GMF in Washington, DC. Previously he was a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe in Brussels, an associate fellow at the Spanish think tank FRIDE, and the editor of the Global Europe Morning Brief, a subscriber-only newsletter on EU foreign policy. From 2007 to 2009, Speck worked in different positions for RFE/RL in Prague and Brussels. His articles have appeared in the New York Times, the Financial Times, the Guardian, the Moscow Times, on CNN.com, in the American Interest and the Berlin Policy Journal, in FAZ, SZ, Tagesspiegel and elsewhere. Speck is a foreign policy columnist for Neue Zürcher Zeitung. He holds a PhD in Modern History from the University of Frankfurt/Main.



Vladimir Socor

Romania

Vladimir Socor is a Senior Fellow of the Washington-based Jamestown Foundation and its flagship publication, Eurasia Daily Monitor (1995 to date). An internationally recognized expert on the former Soviet-ruled countries in Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and Central Asia, he covers Russian and Western policies there, focusing on energy policies, regional security issues, secessionist conflicts, and NATO policies and programs. Mr. Socor is a frequent speaker at U.S. and European policy conferences and think-tank institutions. He was previously an analyst with the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute (1983-1994).



Nada Kovalčíková

Slovakia

Nada Kovalčíková is a program manager and fellow at the Alliance for Securing Democracy in GMF's Brussels office. While working on ASD's European outreach, she focuses also on transatlantic cooperation, NATO, EU - U.S. relations and emerging security challenges. She analyses information operations, efforts to counter disinformation and other threats to democracy. She has developed her expertise through working at NATO, European Parliament, French and Canadian embassies, American Field Service and several NGO and think thank projects in Belgium, Canada, France and Slovakia. Nada Kovalčíková obtained her PhD. in international relations with a focus on security threats, and masters' degrees in politics and government, European affairs and international economic relations. In addition to being a native speaker of Slovak, she is fluent in English and French, speaks Spanish and has a basic knowledge of German. Her most recent publication which she has co-authored is "The ASD European Policy Blueprint For Countering Authoritarian Interference in Democracies".

Moderators



Marcela Konrádová

Czech Republic

Marcela Konrádová is a graduate of Political Science at Masaryk University, Brno. During her studies, Marcela specialised in election studies and political marketing. In 2017, she completed her postgraduate studies focusing on comparative political science and Czech politics. Marcela has participated in several internships and trainee programs for organisations such as KohoVolit.eu or Demagog.cz, she was also an external collaborator of the Institute of Political Marketing and Campaigns.cz. She contributed to the preparation of the movement ANO 2011 or Slovak movement Sloboda a Solidarita election campaigns. On analytical positions, Marcela has worked on international projects in Germany, Serbia, Bulgaria and other countries. She cooperates externally with the Institute for Politics and Society. She also worked as a spokesperson at the Prague 8 City District Office. She is currently an external lecturer at the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University.



Jan Macháček

Czech Republic

Jan Macháček is a Czech journalist and musician, working as a commentator and analyst for the daily newspaper Lidové Noviny. Before, he worked for Hospodářské Noviny and Respekt, the latter of which he co-founded after the velvet revolution (1989) as the country's first independent media outlet. His main field of interest is Political Economics, namely the Eurozone Crisis and European integration. He writes for his daily online blog Monitor, and provides analysis for Czech Radio and Television. With his lectures, he visits international conferences and universities. He teaches journalism at the New York University in Prague. During the Communist era, he was a vocal dissident of the Czechoslovak regime and signed the human rights petition Charta 77. He was involved in samizdat publishing and underground music culture. He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Institute for Politics and Society and formerly, he was the Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Václav Havel Library. He has been repeatedly awarded as the best journalist in the country (he received the Ferdinand Peroutka Award in 2010).



Olle Schmidt

Sweden



Sebastian Vagt

Germany

Olle Schmidt was a Member of European Parliament between the years 1999-2004 and 2006-2014. He was also a delegation leader in the European Parliament for the Swedish Liberal Party, Liberalerna. In the European Parliament, Olle Schmidt was a member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs, a substitute member of the Committee on Consumer Protection and the Internal Market, the Committee on Budgetary Control, a member of the Special committee on organized crime, corruption and money laundering, a member of the special committee on the financial, economic and social crises and a member of the European Parliament Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. From 2013 until 2015, he was Vice-President for the Alde Party. He has been a directly elected member of the three political levels in Sweden: the National Parliament, the Regional Parliament of Skåne and the City Council of Malmö. Olle Schmidt was a member of the leadership in the Liberal Party 2007-2014. Currently, he is 2nd vice President of the European Liberal Forum (ELF), the Liberal foundation and the think tank of the Alde-Party. He has also been a Senior Consultant of Hume Brophy, specialized in financial services.

Sebastian Vagt is a defence analyst at the Friedrich-Naumann Foundation for Freedom. Based in Brussels, his focus is on the security and defence politics of NATO and the EU. Mr. Vagt has been a naval officer in the German military between 2004 to 2016. During this time he helped to shape the Bundeswehr's public affairs in Berlin, acted as the Executive Officer on a mine hunting vessel in Kiel, and joined a NATO Response Force mission. He earned a diploma in state and social sciences in Munich and Stellenbosch, South Africa.



The European Liberal Forum

The European Liberal Forum (ELF) is the foundation of the European Liberal Democrats, the ALDE Party. A core aspect of the forum's work consists in issuing publications on Liberalism and European public policy issues.

The foundation also provides a space for the discussion of European politics, and offers training for liberal-minded citizens. The aim is to promote active citizenship in the European Union. The foundation is made up of a number of European think-tanks, political foundations and institutes. The diversity of membership provides a wealth of knowledge and is a constant source of innovation. In turn, we provide our members with the opportunity to cooperate on European projects under the ELF umbrella.

ELF works throughout Europe as well as in the EU neighbourhood countries. The youthful and dynamic nature of ELF allows us to be at the forefront in promoting active citizenship, getting citizens involved with European issues and building an open, liberal Europe.

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The Institute for Politics and Society

The Institute for Politics and Society is a Czech think-tank founded in October 2014. The mission of the Institute is to cultivate the Czech political and public sphere through an in-depth and open discussion and to create a living platform which addresses problems and offers recipes for their solutions through international conferences, seminars, public discussions, political and social analyses available to the whole Czech society. We believe that an open discussion is a prerequisite for any successful solution to political and social problems.

Our main themes are foreign and security policy, defence, European matters, but also schooling, digitalisation, power industry, urbanism, life in a city and in the public space, values in politics and human rights in our country and abroad.

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