

## The EU in 2016: How to face the Union's centrifugal forces

<i>Date</i>	17 June 2016
<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)
<i>Partners</i>	Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES), Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, EurActiv.sk, Ad hoc
<i>Aims</i>	The main aim of the conference is to debate how to foster resilience of the EU and member states with respect to centrifugal forces of European integration. Panelists will discuss some of the main EU projects such as currency, economic and energy unions as well as common European security policies. They will address threats to and weaknesses of existing EU policy tools and explore joint effort to solidify today's Union. Specifically, the conference will seek to highlight the role of common EU institutions, including upcoming Slovak EU Council Presidency in combating the EU's growing political and economic fragmentation.
<i>Languages</i>	Slovak and English with simultaneous interpretation

### CONFERENCE PROGRAM

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9:00	<b>Opening</b>  <i>Dušan Chrenek</i> , Head of EC Representation in Slovakia <i>Anne Seyfferth</i> , Director, FES Office in Czech Republic and Slovakia <i>Vladimír Bilčík</i> , Head of EU Program, Research Center of the SFPA
9:10	<b><u>Opening Statement</u></b>
Chair	<i>Alexander Duleba</i> , Director, Research Center of the SFPA
Speaker	<i>Miroslav Lajčák</i> , Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR
9:30	<b><u>Keynote Address &amp; Discussion</u></b>
Chair	<i>Alexander Duleba</i> , Director, Research Center of the SFPA
Speaker	<i>Maroš Šefčovič</i> , Vice President of the European Commission

10:30 **Break**

11:00 **I. Panel: Priorities and Opportunities for Slovak EU Council Presidency**

The panel will focus on the role and expected priorities of Slovakia's EU Council Presidency from 1 July 2016. Panelists will explore specific contributions to EU policymaking with emphasis on key topics such as monetary and economic union, migration, energy union and external relations. They will also discuss contingencies that could derail plans for Slovak EU Council Presidency, especially the June UK referendum on EU membership.

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

Panelists *Ivan Korčok*, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the SR  
*Dušan Chrenek*, Head of EC Representation in Slovakia  
*Helena Farrand-Carrapico*, Deputy Director, *Aston Centre for Europe*, *Aston University*, Birmingham  
*Caroline de Gruyter*, Vienna Correspondent, *NRC Handelsblad*

12:30 **Lunch**

13:30 **II. Panel: Economic Resilience of the EU: Eurozone and European Semester**

The panel will introduce European Commission report on National Reform Programs. Panelists will discuss the role of the EU in fostering economic development and cohesion in Europe. In particular, they will address the current state of the Eurozone and the so-called European Semester and table the main policy agenda and tools that the EU has to tackle in order to raise its economic resilience across member states.

Chair *Zuzana Gabrižová*, Editor-In-Chief, website EurActiv.sk

Panelists *Lívia Vašáková*, Economic Advisor, Representation of the EC in Slovakia  
*Martina Kobilicová*, Director General, International Relations Section, Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic  
*Lukáš Veselý*, Economic Advisor to Member of EP J.M. Rodrigues

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