

Václav Havel European Dialogues is an annual international conference held in Brussels that aims to initiate and stimulate a discussion about issues determining the direction of contemporary Europe while referring to the spiritual legacy of Václav Havel. One of Havel's key principles was civic engagement based on a sense of responsibility for the future of one's society and country. As a convinced European, he stressed the need to maintain the connection between the state and its institutions, and its people. For him politics was an ongoing, deeply meaningful dialogue comparable to a theatre piece.

The conference entitled "Strengthening Democracy in the EU Neighbourhood: Integration as an Effective Leverage?" aims to contribute to EU endeavours to promote democracy and fundamental rights with special focus on EU neighbours.

The event is held under the auspices of Věra Jourová, EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, and Pavel Svoboda, Member of European Parliament, EPP.

#### 17:45 Registration

#### 18:00 Opening of the Conference:

Jakub Dürr, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the EU

Jaroslav Kurfürst, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Kingdom of Belgium

Pavel Svoboda, Member of European Parliament, EPP

**Moderator of the Discussion:** Michael Žantovský, Executive Director of the Václav Havel Library

#### 18:15 First Panel:

##### The EU's Transformative Power: Is the Dream Fading Away?

Věra Jourová / Eric Maurice / Petras Auštrevičius / David Kramer

Promoting freedom, democracy, pluralism and the rule of law are the guiding principles for EU's external action. The attractiveness of the EU's political culture played a crucial role in the integration processes of the last decades. However, 70 years after the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the fundamental values and policies of the EU are increasingly called into question, even within the Union. The appeal of populists grows with mounting public discontent in many countries. Does the EU still inspire its neighbours? Does the US share the same vision for the Western Balkans and the EU's Eastern neighbourhood? Can Europeans and Americans convince others about their agenda?

#### 19:15 Second Panel:

##### The Western Balkans on the Road: Will the EU Succeed with its Neighbours?

Jerzy Pomianowski / Šimon Pánek / Nenad Pejić

In spite of some setbacks in the face of liberal democracy that did not sidestep the EU, the fundamental values of the EU remain unchanged. But are they still seen as an inspiration by EU candidates and potential candidates in the Western Balkans, or is it rather EU's standard of living and financial support that attracts them? Are the EU's instruments effectively contributing to strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law in its neighbourhood? Is the EU engagement efficient in the face of disinformation campaigns and the involvement of third actors? How could the EU best help promoting civil society and media freedom in neighbouring countries?

#### Glass of wine



#### Věra Jourová, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality

Věra Jourová is currently European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality. In 2014, before arriving to the European Commission, Ms. Jourová held the position of Minister for Regional Development in the Czech Republic. Previous to this, from 2006 to 2013, she worked in her own company as an international consultant on European Union funding, and was also involved in consultancy activities in the Western Balkans relating to the European Union Accession. She holds a Degree in Law and a Master's degree in the Theory of Culture from the Charles University, Prague.



#### Pavel Svoboda, Member of European Parliament, EPP

Pavel Svoboda graduated in law at the Charles University, Prague, and in European law at the University of Social Sciences, Toulouse. He comes from an academic background; as a Professor of European law at the Law Faculty of Charles University in Prague, he has been following developments in EU law for the past 20 years. His former experience includes Attorney of Law, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Council of Europe, and Minister and Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Czech Republic. MEP since 2014.



#### Jakub Dürr, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the EU

Jakub Dürr took up the post of the Czech Permanent Representative to the EU in September 2018. Prior to that, he served as Deputy Foreign Minister for European Affairs at the Foreign Ministry in Prague (2016-2018). His first post as Ambassador was also in Brussels, at COREPER I (2011-2016). Before he joined the foreign service, he held the position of Deputy Minister of Education for European Affairs in Prague (2008-2009). In the previous years he worked at the Palacký University in Olomouc as the Vice-Rector for External Relations and Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science and European Studies.



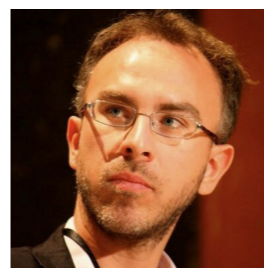
#### Jaroslav Kurfürst, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Kingdom of Belgium

Jaroslav Kurfürst joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic in 1997. Before being appointed to his current position in 2014, Ambassador Jaroslav Kurfürst served as General Director for European Affairs (2011-2014) and as Director of Security Policy Department (2004-2005) and Common Foreign and Security Policy Department (2009-2011) at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His foreign service career includes also different diplomatic posts at the Czech Embassies in Moscow and Washington.



#### Michael Žantovský, Executive Director of the Václav Havel Library

Michael Žantovský is executive director of the Václav Havel Library and a diplomat, politician, writer and translator. He is the Vice-President of the Aspen Institute Prague, member of the Forum 2000 Foundation Program Council, former Chairman of the Civic Democratic Alliance and senator of the Civic Democratic Alliance in the Parliament of the Czech Republic; former Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United Kingdom, the United States and the State of Israel. He was also the spokesman of President Václav Havel and political director at the Office of the President of the Czech Republic. His biography of his long-time friend Václav Havel, Havel: A Life, was published in November 2014.



#### Eric Maurice, Head of Brussels Office, Fondation Robert Schuman

Eric Maurice joined the Fondation Robert Schuman, a French think-tank on EU affairs, this year after a career in journalism. He was editor in chief of the Brussels-based website EUobserver from 2015 to 2018. He was previously editor in chief of the multilingual pan-European news website Presseurop, from 2009 to 2014. He started his career at the French weekly magazine Courrier international, first at the France and North America desk, then as head of the Western Europe desk. He holds a master of Contemporary History of International Relations from the Paris Panthéon-Sorbonne University and graduated from the Paris Ecole Supérieure de Journalisme. He is also an alumni from the Executive Course in European Studies of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration.





**Petras Auštrevičius, Member of European Parliament**

Petras Auštrevičius MEP is a Lithuanian politician, diplomat, civil society activist and a member of the European Parliament (since 2014) where he serves on the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), acts as a coordinator for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) in the Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI). Previously, Mr Auštrevičius was a member of the Seimas (Lithuanian Parliament) for 10 years. He has previously served as Chief Negotiator for Lithuania's membership to the European Union and as Lithuania's Ambassador to Finland. Mr Auštrevičius is a co-founder and first chairman of the Liberals Movement of the Republic of Lithuania. Mr Auštrevičius holds a diploma in economics from Vilnius State University. He pursued doctoral studies at the Institute of Economics of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and attended the diplomatic training program at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.



**David J. Kramer, Senior Fellow at Florida International University**

David J. Kramer joined Florida International University's Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs as a Senior Fellow in the Václav Havel Program for Human Rights and Diplomacy in May 2017. Previously, Kramer was Senior Director for Human Rights and Democracy at the McCain Institute for International Leadership; President of Freedom House; and Senior Transatlantic Fellow with the German Marshall Fund. Kramer served during the George W. Bush administration as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs. He also served as Executive Director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. He is author of the recent book, *Back to Containment: Dealing with Putin's Regime*.



**Jerzy Pomianowski, Executive Director, European Endowment for Democracy**

Jerzy Pomianowski has worked in international affairs for almost 30 years as Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland, director of OECD-UNDP's Partnership for Democratic Governance and Poland's Ambassador to Japan. In 2013 he led the establishment of the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) and has since served as its Executive director. Pomianowski began his career as a civil servant in 1990, just after the fall of communism, first in the Ministry of Education, and then in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He oversaw the launch of Poland Aid (2006-08) and served as Director General of the Polish Foreign Service (2005-06). From 1980-1989, Pomianowski was an active member of the democratic opposition in Poland.



**Šimon Pánek, Executive Director of People in Need**

Šimon Pánek is the co-founder and executive director of People in Need, a humanitarian organization based in the Czech Republic. People in Need provides humanitarian aid and solidarity for human rights and civil society, principally in authoritarian or conflict-ridden states and zones, including Chechnya, the Balkans, Belarus, Ukraine, and Cuba. Pánek's activism goes back to 1989, when as a student activist in the Velvet Revolution he was a leader of several anti-regime occupation strikes. Pánek served as a foreign policy specialist on the Balkans and Human Rights issues in the presidential administration of Václav Havel. Pánek is a member of the European Council on Foreign Relations ([www.ecfr.eu](http://www.ecfr.eu)), and a founding member of the Board of the European Partnership for Democracy ([www.eupd.eu](http://www.eupd.eu)).



**Nenad Pejić, Acting President and Editor-in-Chief, RFE/RL**

Nenad Pejić, Acting President and Editor-in-Chief, joined RFE/RL in 1993 when he was named the first Director of RFE/RL's Balkan Service. Prior to joining RFE/RL, Pejić held various positions with Sarajevo Television including head of the News Department, Belgrade correspondent, and Program Director. He also served briefly as the Head of Publications and Public Relations at the European Institute for the Media. Pejić lectured at universities in Ukraine, Georgia, Prague and Montenegro; international events such as NATO summits and the Salzburg Seminar; and to a number of non-governmental organizations around Europe.

# Strengthening Democracy in the EU Neighbourhood: Integration as an Effective Leverage?



Photo by: Jiří Jirů

## 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018

18:00 - 20:30

Prague House, Avenue Palmerston 16, 1000 Brussels



Permanent Representation  
of the Czech Republic  
to the European Union



CZECH CENTRE  
ČESKÉ CENTRUM



Embassy  
of the Czech Republic  
to the Kingdom of Belgium



Prague House