

Burgas Connectivity Forum 2025 **Connecting nations**

International Congress Center Burgas
FOROS Hall and BURGAS Hall
19th of June 2025, Thursday

Working languages: Bulgarian and English (simultaneous translation)

09:30 - 10:00 Registration and Welcome Coffee

Hall Foros

10:00 - 10:10 Greetings

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

Klaus Fiesinger,
Regional Director for Southeast Europe, Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung

10:10 - 10:20 Opening remarks

Dimitar Nikolov, (TBC)
Mayor of Burgas

Alexander Beribes,
Head of the Directorate for the Western Balkans and Southeast Europe
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Berlin

10:20 - 10:50 Connectivity through the eyes of European diplomacy

H.E. Irene Maria Plank,
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Bulgaria

H.E. Maciej Szymanski,
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Bulgaria

H.E. Brandusa Ioana Predescu,
Ambassador of Romania to Bulgaria

Moderator: Zlatozara Stoilova,
Project Manager, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Bulgaria

10:50 - 11:10 Keynote: Energy connectivity and security risks

Zhecho Stankov,
Minister of Energy of Republic of Bulgaria

11:10 - 11:25 **Unlocking the Growth Potential: Regional Economic Corridors Engines of Integration and Innovation**

Matej Zakonjsek,
Director of Permanent Secretariat of Transport Community Treaty

11:25 – 11:40 **INSAIT: transforming the AI landscape in Europe**

Ivo Petrov,
Researcher INSAIT

11:40 - 12:30 **Fireside chat:
Maritime connectivity, cooperation and security**

Kalin Kalinov,
Rector of Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy Varna

Mitat Celikpala,
Vice rector, Kadir Has University Istanbul
Turkey as a regional security actor in the Black Sea region

Marius Ghincea,
Postdoctoral Researcher, ETH Zurich,
Water security challenges

Vasil Sikharulidze, (online)
Head of Atlantic Council of Georgia
Professor at Ilia State University
Minister of Defense of Georgia (2008 – 2009)

Discussion

Moderator:
Siana Ljutskanova,
Head of Department National Security,
Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy Varna

12:30 - 12:40 **DRONAMICS: Challenging the limits**

Kal Petrov,
Director New Market Development
DRONAMICS Global Ltd.

12:40 – 14:00 **Networking Lunch**

Parallel sessions – Hall Burgas and Hall Foros			
Hall Foros Digital connectivity and public administration in the digital era		Hall Burgas Enhancing regional connectivity and economic growth through partnerships	
14:00 - 14:15	Challenging the status quo: EU's digital strategy and strategical partnerships in the field of public administration Mariya Gabriel, President Robert Schuman Institute	14:00 – 14:15	Setting the stage: Economic Development through Regional Connectivity Rosen Plevneliev, 4th President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Minister of Regional development and public works (2009 -2011)
14:15 - 15:00	Fireside chat: Digital connectivity and public administration in the digital era Sonja Miekley, CEO German-Bulgarian Chamber of Industry and Commerce <i>Unlocking Business Opportunities</i> Yordan Sivkov, Head of department Electronics, Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy Varna <i>Synergies between innovation and national security</i> Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob, Executive Director, Center for Information, Democracy and Citizenship American University in Bulgaria (AUGB) <i>Digital citizenship and digital natives</i> Mariana Trifonova, Program Director and Senior Analyst, Economic Policy Institute <i>Transforming public administration through innovation</i> Moderator: Maria Tchakarova, Project Manager, Konrad-Adenauer- Stiftung	14:15 - 15:00	Discussion panel: Unlocking the growth potential: Regional economic corridors in Southeast Europe and investments in critical infrastructure Daniel Shekerletov, Second secretary: Transport, Intermodal Questions and Networks, Permanent Representation of the Republic Bulgaria in Brussels Manuela Naessl, Head of Bulgaria, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's (EBRD) Lidija Petkoska, MP, Assembly of Republic of North Macedonia Thomas Botzios, (TBC) Director for the Adriatic and the Western Balkans, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Moderator: Aleksandra Kirilova, Researcher RESECO Bulgaria
15:00 - 15:15	Coffee break		

Parallel sessions – Hall Burgas and Hall Foros

	Hall Foros Connecting the Dots: Air Connectivity, Tourism, and Stakeholder Partnerships		Hall Burgas Energy transition and Europe's competitiveness
15:15 - 15:30	Keynote: Air connectivity and tourism development Miroslav Borshosh, Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria	15:00 – 15:15	Keynote: Energy connectivity and Europe's competitiveness Petjo Ivanov, Executive Director NPP Kozloduy – New Build
15:30 - 16:30	Discussion panel: Connecting the Dots: Air Connectivity, Tourism, and Stakeholder Partnerships Frank Quante, CEO, Fraport Twin Star Airport Management AD <i>Transforming the travel experience</i> Johannes Adensamer, Managing Director of Trade Association of Bus, Aviation and Shipping Companies, Austrian Federal Economic Chamber <i>Austrian air connectivity – airports as gateways for tourism</i> Ina Schmidt, Emergency and flight physician ICARUS <i>Medical and Strategic Air Connectivity</i> Todor Ivandjikov, CEO and founder, International Aviation Services Ltd <i>Urban air mobility</i> Moderator: Maria Tchakarova, Project Manager, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Bulgaria	15:15 - 16:15	Fireside chat: Energy connectivity and Europe's competitiveness –projects for the future Mariya Trifonova, Chief Assistant Professor, Department of Industrial Economics and Management, Sofia University, Deputy-Director of the Net-Zero Lab <i>TEN-E: Europe's energy corridors</i> Vihren Stoyanov, Procurator Siemens Energy AG, <i>Energy investments for the future</i> Dorian Istratii, MP/Moldova, Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Economic Affairs, Budget and Finance, <i>Energy security and geopolitical dynamics</i> Doru Dragomir, President of the Bilateral Chamber of Commerce Bulgaria-Romania <i>Energy transition in Romania: current developments and investment</i> Martin Iliev, Managing director, WPD Bulgaria EOOD <i>Wind Energy in the Regional Energy Puzzle</i> Moderator: Dimitar Stoyanov, Board member Centre NC Kozloduy
16:30 – 16:40	Closing remarks	16:15	Coffee Break

Hall Burgas

Water connectivity

16:30 – 17:00

Discussion panel:

Water connectivity – business opportunities and security risks

Antigoni Zafirakou,

Associate Professor, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Water connectivity: the geopolitics of water – the Greek perspective

Yasen Georgiev,

Executive Director, Economic Policy Institute

Water connectivity: the geopolitics of water – the Bulgarian perspective

Silva Petrova,

Expert, Directorate EU Programmes, Projects and Public Relations

Executive Agency Exploration and Maintenance of the Danube River

Blue Corridors: The Danube's Role in Advancing Water Connectivity in Europe

Discussion

Moderator: Volker Berresheim,

Chairman of the German-Bulgarian Forum

17:00 - 17:10

Closing remarks

Zlatozara Stoilova,

Project Manager, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Bulgaria

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