



Pan-European Integration Processes: Towards a Mutual Vision through Cross-Border Synergies

*International
Conference*

27 October 2016

**CONCEPT
AND AGENDA**

Supported by:



Embassy of Austria in Minsk

MINSK DIALOGUE BACKGROUND

The Minsk Dialogue (MD) was launched in March 2015 as a Track-II (non-governmental) diplomacy platform with a focus on international relations and security on the European continent. The initiative's rationale was to create an expert-level platform for open and high-quality international discussions beyond geopolitical divides about the most challenging pan-European issues. Up to date, four successful and well attended international conferences have taken place within the MD framework, which gathered in Minsk leading experts from the EU, Russia, Eastern European countries and the USA, as well as representatives of international organisations and the diplomatic community. Each conference was addressed by high-level officials: the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus and his deputies, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, the Head of the EU Delegation in Belarus, and others.

After the conferences, the organisers prepared non-papers presenting the core points of agreement and innovative policy recommendations (for Track-I and Track-II stakeholders) developed during conference deliberations. The non-papers were widely circulated among governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and used as a source for follow-up research.

CONFERENCE IDEA

In recent years, academic and policy discussions about pan-European integration processes and relations between regional integration projects have been marred by geopolitical tensions and lack of dialogue. However, the practical need to develop cooperative ties and mutually reinforce integration effects for the benefit of common people, businesses and governments across Europe and Eurasia keep the issue relevant for researchers' and policy-makers' agenda. Thus, the core challenge today is to go beyond geopolitics-loaded discourses and focus on practical opportunities and challenges to pan-European integration processes.

The conference will work on the assumption that a way to greater pan-European integration goes through cross-border cooperation and synergies that result gradually from such mutually beneficial cooperation. To that end, the Minsk Dialogue expert group will prepare a report with an overview of current academic and policy discussions about pan-European integration processes and ideas on how to move these discussions onto a more pragmatic level. The report will be presented at the conference and guide discussions during the conference sessions.

The event will run in parallel with the high-level official conference on pan-European integration processes co-organised by the Government of Belarus and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, a Eurasian Economic Union Commissioner and other officials will also participate in our Track-II conference.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

- To examine ways to advance pan-European integration processes by facilitating cross-border cooperation in various areas of mutual interest (economic growth and business opportunities, security challenges, and energy infrastructure).
- To discuss conceptual frameworks for advancing pan-European integration.
- To promote informed discussions about pan-European integration processes and challenges in the media.

FORMAT

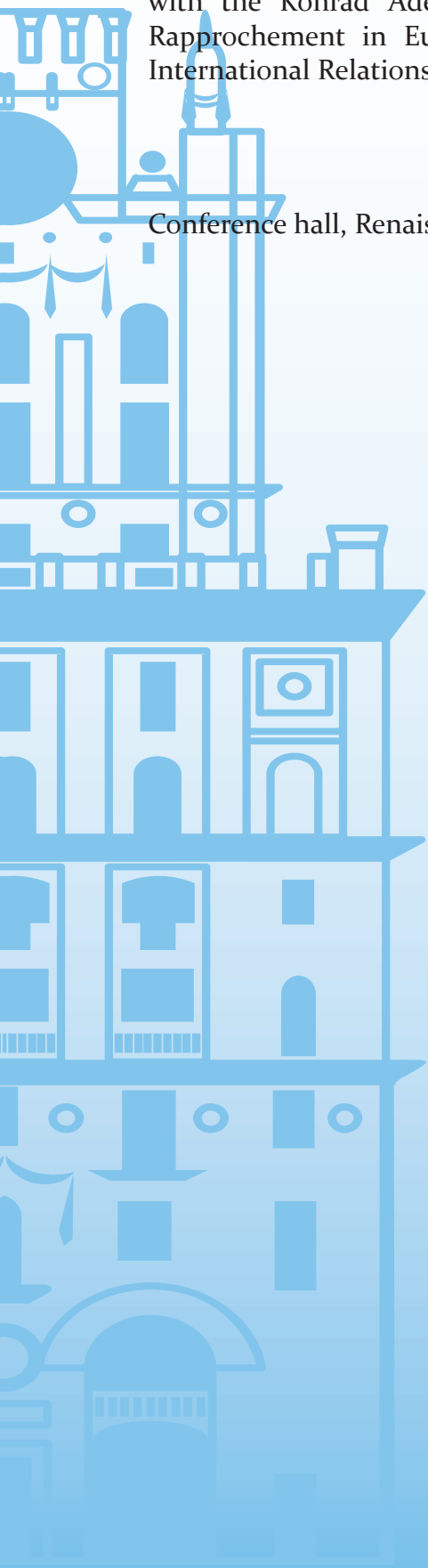
Four sessions in the form of panel discussions, all open to the media. Experts, academics and diplomats are invited as participants.

ORGANISERS AND SPONSORS

The conference is organised by the Minsk Dialogue Track-II Initiative (Belarus) in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany) and the Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe (Austria-France), and supported by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), and the French and Austrian Embassies in Belarus.

VENUE

Conference hall, Renaissance Hotel (1E Dzerzhinsky Avenue, Minsk).



AGENDA

9.30-10.15	<p>Opening ceremony, welcoming remarks</p> <p>Vladimir Makei <i>Minister of Foreign Affairs, Belarus</i></p> <p>Tatyana Valovaya <i>Member of the Board – Minister in Charge of Integration and Macroeconomics, Eurasian Economic Commission</i></p> <p>Margot Klestil-Löffler <i>Alternate Secretary General, Central European Initiative, Austria</i></p> <p>Andrea Wiktorin <i>Head of Delegation, Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to Belarus</i></p> <p>Peter Jankowitsch <i>Board Member, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, Austria-France; former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Austria</i></p> <p>Wolfgang Sender <i>Country Director Belarus, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Germany</i></p> <p>Yauheni Preiherman <i>Head, Minsk Dialogue Track-II Initiative, Belarus</i></p>
10.15-11.15	<p>Session 1. Presentation of the expert report, discussion about its key concepts and recommendations.</p> <p>Christian Bluth <i>Project Manager, Bertelsmann Foundation, Germany</i></p> <p>Roza Turarbekova <i>Assistant Professor, Belarusian State University, Belarus</i></p> <p>Elena Korosteleva <i>Professor of International Politics, University of Kent; Director, Global Europe Centre; LSE Dahrendorf Professorial Fellow, UK</i></p> <p>Moderator Yauheni Preiherman <i>Head, Minsk Dialogue Track-II Initiative, Belarus</i></p>
11.15-11.45	<p><i>Coffee break.</i></p>

11.45-13.00

Session 2. Panel discussion **Economic Growth and Cross-Border Energy Infrastructure.**

Peter Havlik

Senior Economist and former Deputy Director, Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies, Austria

Alena Semak

Assistant Professor, Belarusian State University, Belarus

Hrant Kostanyan

Researcher, Centre for European Policy Studies, Belgium; Senior Key Expert, College of Europe Natolin, Poland

Irina Tochitskaya

Academic Director, IPM Research Centre, Belarus

Moderator

Florent Marciacq

Charge de mission, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, Austria-France; research associate, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

13.00-14.00

Lunch.

14.00-15.30

Session 3. Panel discussion **Mutual Security: a Pan-European Security System as a Solution to Cross-Border Challenges?**

Haidemaria Gürer

Head, Department of Eastern Europe, South Caucasus, Central Asia, The European Neighbourhood Policy and Eastern Partnership, Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, Austria

Lessya Karatayeva

Chief Researcher, Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan

Martin Vukovich

Deputy Director, "Dialogue-Europe-Russia"; Former Ambassador to Russia, Austria

Andrei Skryba

Researcher, Centre for Comprehensive European and International Studies, Higher School of Economics, Russia

Dzianis Melyantsou

Senior Analyst, Belarusian Institute for Strategic Studies, Belarus

Moderator

Wolfgang Sender

Country Director Belarus, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Germany



15.30-16.00	Coffee break.
16.00-17.30	<p>Session 4. Panel discussion Ways to Intensify Cross-Border Economic Exchange and Improve Mutual Competitiveness.</p> <p>Michael Angerer <i>Regional Manager, Austrian Chamber of Commerce, Austria</i></p> <p>Natalia Kondratieva <i>Scientific Secretary, Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia</i></p> <p>Tony van der Togt <i>Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Netherlands</i></p> <p>Julien Vercueil <i>Director, Department of International Trade, National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations, France</i></p> <p>Moderator Daniel Krutzinna <i>Managing Partner, Civitta; Supervisory Board Member, Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus, Belarus-Germany</i></p>
17.30-18.00	Closing remarks.