



On the Agenda

EU-Russia Relations

29 October 2020, 09h30 – 10h30 (CET), Zoom Webinar

ABOUT THE EVENT

In a renewed era of clashes between the two blocs, how will EU-Russia relations change in the short- and long-term?

EU-Russia relations have never been an easy affair, especially following years of conflict in their common zone of influence – the Eastern Partnership countries. Inside the Russian Federation, some trends that have characterised the country since the end of the Cold War seem to remain unchanged: the fear of an external threat, the discontent of the population, the suitability of economic and political structures. The external repercussions of these internal contradictions have led to increasingly provocative behaviour. Information warfare, Nord Stream 2, authoritarian trends in domestic politics, and accusations of interference in foreign elections are just some of the reasons of concern for the European Union. The negotiations for a Free Trade Area from Lisbon to Vladivostok with the EU's fifth largest trading partner seem to be a distant memory.

On top of these tensions, recent events have shown potential to ignite new clashes between the two neighbours. Vladimir Putin's support for Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus, and the poisoning of Putin's opponent Alexei Navalny, have raised the question of Russia once again within the circles of power in Brussels and in some Member States. These events are now reigniting the debate over new sanctions towards Russia, and tension is clearly on the rise in all corners of Europe.

As Europe's biggest and most populous neighbour, good relations with Russia are crucial for our security and prosperity, and it is in the interest of all involved parties to improve the relations between the two blocs.



EVENT SCHEDULE

09h25 Participants connect to the Zoom event

09h30 Opening Remarks

Hilde Vautmans, Member of the European Parliament, Renew Europe Group and President of the Board of Directors, European Liberal Forum

09h38 Introduction by the Moderator

Beatriz Ríos, EU Affairs Reporter

09h40 First intervention

Bernard Guetta, Member of the European Parliament, Renew Europe Group

09h45 Second intervention

Daniel Mitov, Consultant, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Bulgaria

09h50 Third intervention

Amanda Valentin, Deputy Secretary-General, Swedish International Liberal Centre

09h55 Moderated debate

10h27 Conclusions

10h30 End of event

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