



*Draft 04.03.2024*

# **VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM**

## **SOFIA MEETING 2024**

**CONTINUING TO BUILD ECONOMIC BRIDGES  
DURING DIFFICULT TIMES**

**21/22 April 2024**

**National Palace of Culture, Hall 6  
Bulgaria Blvd, 1463 NDK  
Sofia, Bulgaria**

Working Languages: Bulgarian and English  
Simultaneous Translation will be provided

**Sunday, 21 April 2024**  
**Boyana Residence, Building 2**

**4.00-4.20 p.m.**      **Registration**

**4.20-4.30 p.m.**      **Family Photo (By Invitation)**

**4.30-6.30 p.m.**      **OPENING SESSION**

**CONTINUING TO BUILD REGIONAL ECONOMIC BRIDGES –  
THE ROLE OF INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY AND EDUCATION**

**MODERATION**

- **Mr. Boyko VASSILEV**, Chief Editor Current Affairs, Bulgarian National Television (BNT)

**OPENING**

- **Amb. Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA**, Founder and Member of the Board, **Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum** (*in Bulgarian*)
- **Amb. Dr. Emil BRIX**, Director, Diplomatische Akademie Wien (DA)-Vienna School of International Studies, **Vienna, President of Vienna Economic Forum**

**WELCOMING WORDS**

- **H.E. Ms. Milena STOYCHEVA**, Minister of Innovation and Growth of Bulgaria (*in Bulgarian*)

**GREETING WORDS**

- **H.E. The Deputy-Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria**
- **Dr. Akkan SUVER**, President, Marmara Group Foundation, **Türkiye, Strategic Partner of Vienna Economic Forum**

**IMPULSE STATEMENT**

- **H.E. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria** (*in Bulgarian*)

**DISCUSSION:**

**MAIN STATEMENT**

- **Mag. Nikolaus-Conrad LORENZ**, Strategy Director, Canon CEE GmbH, **Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum**

**PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSION**

- **Dr. Barbara KOLM**, President Friedrich A. v. Hayek Institute, Director of Austrian Economic Center, **Austria, Strategic Partner of Vienna Economic Forum** "*No Innovations without Education*"
- **Prof. Dr. Danica PURG**, President of Bled School of Management, **Slovenia, Strategic Partner of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **Dr. Heimo SCHEUCH**, CEO, Wienerberger AG, **Member of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **High representatives of the Bulgarian, regional and international economy**

**Followed by  
6.30-8.00 p.m.**

**WELCOME COCKTAIL (for all registered participants for the VEF- Sofia Meeting 2024)**  
**Possibilities for BILATERAL TALKS (organized by VEF)**

**Monday, 22 April 2024**  
**National Palace of Culture**  
**Hall 6**  
Bulgaria Blvd, 1463 NDK, Sofia

**08.00-08.45 a.m. REGISTRATION**

**08.45-08.55 a.m. FAMILY PHOTO (by invitation)**

**09.00-09.40 a.m. I. OPENING SESSION**  
**CONTINUING TO BUILD ECONOMIC BRIDGES DURING DIFFICULT TIMES**  
**DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL COOPERATION**

**MODERATION**

- **Mr. Boyko VASSILEV**, Chief Editor Current Affairs, Bulgarian National Television (BNT)

**OPENING**

- **Amb. Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA**, Founder and Member of the Board, **Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **Amb. Dr. Emil BRIX**, Director, Diplomatiche Akademie Wien (DA)-Vienna School of International Studies, **Vienna President of Vienna Economic Forum**

**MAIN STATEMENT**

- **H.E. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria**

**IMPULSE STATEMENT**

- **TBN**

**09.45-11.15 a.m. II. SESSION**  
**ENSURING ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL STABILITY ON THE PATH TO EUROPE**  
**CHALLENGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**MODERATION**

- **Mr. Boyko VASSILEV**, Chief Editor Current Affairs, Bulgarian National Television (BNT)

**IMPULSE STATEMENTS**

- **High representative of European Investment Bank (EIB), Luxembourg (tbc)**
- **Mr. Mark BOWMAN**, Vice-President, Policy and Partnerships, European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), London

**MAIN STATEMENTS**

- **H.E. Ms. Milena STOYCHEVA**, Minister of Innovation and Growth of Bulgaria (*in Bulgarian*)
- **H.E. Mr. Bogdan BOGDANOV**, Minister of Economy and Industry of Bulgaria

**PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSION**

- **Mr. Peter HÖFINGER**, Deputy General Manager and Deputy Chairman of the Managing Board, Vienna Insurance Group AG (VIG), **Vice President of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **Mr. Kalin PESHOV**, CEO, Chairman of the Board of GBS Holding AD, **Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **High representatives of the Governments of the VEF- Member States**
- **High representatives of the Bulgarian, regional and international economy**

## Q AND A SESSION

with the Audience (led by the Moderator)

<b>11.15 -11.45 a.m.</b>	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b> <b>Possibilities for BILATERAL TALKS (organized by VEF)</b>
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<b>11.45 a.m. -1.00 p.m.</b>	<b>III. SESSION</b> <b>FROM REGION TO REGION</b> <b>ACTING TOGETHER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COMMON FUTURE</b>
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## MODERATION

- **Mr. Boyko VASSILEV**, Chief Editor Current Affairs, Bulgarian National Television (BNT)

## MAIN STATEMENT

- **TBN**

## PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSION

- **VEF- Board members**
- **Mr. Aleksandar VLAHOVIĆ**, President, **Serbian** Association of Economists, **Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **Representative**, Presidency of the Republic of **Türkiye** Investment Office, **Member of the Board of Vienna Economic Forum (tbc)**
- **Ms. Mila NENOVA**, Executive Director, InvestBulgaria Agency, **Cooperation Partner of Vienna Economic Forum**
- **Ms. Majlinda BREGU**, **Secretary General**, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), **Sarajevo**
- **High representatives of Baltic Countries**
- **High representatives of the Bulgarian, regional and international economy**

## Q AND A SESSION

With the Audience (led by the Moderator)

<b>1.00-2.00 p.m.</b>	<b>NETWORKING LUNCH</b> <b>Possibilities for BILATERAL TALKS (organized by VEF)</b>
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**2.00-4.30 p.m.**

**IV. SESSION**

**ALPHA SESSION – ASK THE DECISION MAKERS**

**BUILDING ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN DIFFICULT TIMES**

**MODERATION**

- **Mr. Boyko VASSILEV**, Chief Editor Current Affairs, Bulgarian National Television (BNT)

**PARTICIPANTS IN THE DISCUSSION**

- **H.E.H.E. PRIME MINISTERS OF THE VEF- MEMBER COUNTRIES- PATRONS OF VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM (tbc)**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION VIEW**

- **H.E. Ms. Adina VĂLEAN**, EU Commissioner for Transport **(tbc)**
- **H.E. Mr. Thierry Breton**, European Commissioner for Internal Market **(tbi)**

**Q AND A SESSION**

With the Audience (led by the Moderator)

**4.00-4.15 p.m.**

**SUMMARY WORDS**

- **Amb. Dr. Elena KIRTICHEVA**, Founder and Member of the Board, Secretary General of Vienna Economic Forum
- **Amb. Dr. Emil BRIX**, Director, Diplomatische Akademie Wien (DA)-Vienna School of International Studies, **Vienna, President of Vienna Economic Forum**

**4.15-4.30 p.m.**

**CONCLUDING WORDS**

**H.E. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria**

**Followed by**

**SPECIAL AWARD CEREMONY OF THE VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM- SOFIA MEETING 2024**

**4.30 p.m. - END OF THE VIENNA ECONOMIC FORUM- SOFIA MEETING 2024**