

Public Discussion with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia

Daring more Europe!

More democracy in the Western Balkans for a stronger European Union

5th June 2019 from 10h00 to 12h00

Fondation Jean Jaurès in Paris, 12 Cité Malesherbes, 75009 Paris

A rare success story in Europe was written in Skopje and Athens last year: The governments of Greece and North Macedonia led by their Prime Ministers Alexis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev solved a 27-year-long lasting name dispute. By changing its constitutional name to Republic of North Macedonia, the government in Skopje courageously paved the way towards NATO-membership and EU-accession-talks and proved that unlike most of its neighbors in the Western Balkans, North Macedonia is both willing and able to find and commit to political compromise in order to move towards a European and Trans-Atlantic partnership. A membership candidate for years, North Macedonia has been promised a perspective in the European Union and with the upcoming European Council, the country could finally receive a date to start accession talks. Using the example of North Macedonia, this high-level roundtable should reflect critically on the idea of European Enlargement and the current role as well as potential impact of the EU in the Western Balkans. Why is it important for the EU to remain committed in the region? Why is North Macedonia's relationship to the EU more than a matter of foreign policy? What is at stake in North Macedonia and in the region for the EU? Can North Macedonia and its social democratic government maintain their speed of reforms and become a positive example for security and democracy to the other countries in the strategically important Western Balkans?

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Welcome: **Sébastien Gricourt**, Director of the Observatoire des Balkans, Fondation Jean Jaurès

Eva Ellereit, Director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Office in Skopje

Keynote: **Radmila Shekerinska**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defense, Republic of North Macedonia

Commentary: **Ioannis Armakolas**, Fellow at ELIAMEP & Assistant Professor at University of Macedonia

Open discussion moderated by **Florent Marciacq**, Deputy Secretary General, Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe and Senior Fellow, Centre international de formation européenne

The event will be held in French and English with simultaneous translation.