



## The Renewal of Liberal Democracy: Vision, Strategy, Competition, Parties and Civil Society

- hybrid international conference organised by the Hungarian Europe Society -

Date: 21 April 2023, Friday

Venue: Ibis Styles Budapest Center, Budapest 1074 Rákóczi út 58.

The protagonists of liberal democracy and open society – liberal-minded political actors, civil groups and citizens - face ongoing populist ideological attacks against the fundamentals of our liberal political system as well as the erosion of shared universal and European values in big portions of the populations. Although an anti-liberal U-turn has not occurred globally, the emergence of authoritarian states, especially Russia and China, and the significant influence of illiberal political entrepreneurs within the international democratic community have recently made the serious challenge more salient. It is still not too late to conceptualise how a wide circle of stakeholders, who believe in the future of liberal democracy and the liberal world order – including the reform capability of the European Union - might and should react assertively to the major political threat of our current era. There are positive examples worldwide which give us hope about the resilience of liberal political regimes. In worse cases – just like in Hungary – the political renewal of pro-European and liberal-minded actors need much more intellectual, visionary, strategic, organisational and communicative innovations in order to regain their dominant role in the political arena and the public spheres.

### Program

8.30 – 9.00 In-person Registration

9.00 – 9.15 Welcome

- **István Hegedűs** (Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest):

9.15 – 11.00 First Session: The Authoritarian Populist Challenge in the Twenties of the Twenty-First Century

Moderator: **István Hegedűs** (Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest)

Speakers:

- **Zsolt Enyedi** (Professor of Political Science, Democracy Institute, Central European University, Budapest-Vienna): Illiberal Ideologies and Autocratisation

- **Ramona Coman** (Director of the Institute for European Studies, Université libre de Bruxelles): How European Liberal Democracy Is Being Contested and What This Means for the EU and Its Member States



- **Péter Krekó** (Director, Political Capital; Habil. Associate Professor, ELTE Faculty of Education and Psychology, Budapest): Propaganda, Conspiracy Theories, Pseudoscience and the Protagonists of Liberal Democracy

- **Ábel Bojár** (Research Director, 21 Research Center, Budapest): Political Polarisation, Identity, Ideology and Voter Behaviour

11.00 – 11.20 Coffee Break

11.20 – 13.20 Second Session: Successes and Failures of Liberal Democrats in Search of Political Renewal

Moderator: **Erik Uszkiewicz** (Vice-Chairperson, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest)

Speakers:

- **Csaba Tóth** (Senior Partner, Mentat Consulting, Budapest): Political Innovations by Democrats?

- **Roman Jakič** (President, LIBSEEN, Former Minister of Defence & MP/MEP, Ljubljana): Liberal Reactions to Nationalism on the Balkans

- **Mikuláš Minář** (Founder and Former Chairman, Million Moments for Democracy, Prague): The Czech Example: Civil Society and Parties Against Populists

- **Tomasz Sawczuk** (Head, Political Department, Kultura Liberalna, Warsaw): Responses to Illiberalism: Lessons from Poland

13.20 – 13.30 Farewell Remarks

- **Zsuzsanna Szelényi** (Visitor Researcher and Program Director, CEU Democracy Institute Leadership Academy; Member, Hungarian Europe Society, Budapest)

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