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**Walter Gros** is Country Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) in Albania since January 2016. Mr. Gros has been a member of KAS since 1988. From 2003 until 2015, he was Head of the Finance and Project Management Department at the Central Department of European and International Cooperation of KAS. He was also Coordinator for Administration at the Central Department and International Cooperation of KAS from 1996 until 2003. As a youngster, he was politically active in the local government of his city of birth. Mr. Gros also served as Head of Social, Sport and Culture Department and Head of Subject Area and Social Help/ Home Assistance at the Association of Municipal Administration in Unkel, Germany.



**Dr. Klaus Fiesinger** is regional director for Southeast Europe of the Hanns Seidel Foundation. In this function, he is responsible for promoting the European idea, international dialogue, cross-border cooperation, political culture and civic education in new EU member states, candidate countries as well as potential candidate countries. Since 1992, he has been head of the Division for Central, East and Southeast Europe and Central Asia at the Hanns Seidel Foundation in Munich. Furthermore, Dr. Fiesinger is member of IDM, the Austrian Institute in Vienna for the Danube Zone and Central Europe as well as of "Südosteuropa Gesellschaft". Dr. Fiesinger received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of Munich. He is author of the book "Ballhausplatz - Diplomatie 1945-1949." From 2004 until 2012, he was visiting professor at the Andrassy University in Budapest. Occasionally he gives lectures on Euro-regions, cross-border police cooperation and political education.



**Prof. Dr. Wulf Lapins** is Head of Office of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Tirana. Since 1993, he has helped in the establishment and management of the country offices of the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation in the Baltics, East and Central Europe, South Caucasus, Central Asia, Western Balkans - in Kosovo. Since May 2017 to present, he manages the country office in Albania as well. Mr. Lapins has finished his studies in Political Science, History and Educational Psychology in Düsseldorf/Bonn, Germany.



**Ardian Hackaj** is Director of Research at Cooperation and Development Institute - an independent Tirana-based think tank. He has authored research works on the Berlin Process, on youth, migration, connectivity and Belt & Road Initiative in the Western Balkans. During his career, Mr. Hackaj has held management positions at the College of Europe-Bruges, International Organization for Migration, United Nations, and the EU Commission. He holds an MA from College of Europe, a BA in International Economics from Université Lumière, Lyon II, and a University Diploma in European Studies from Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Lyon.

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**Knut Fleckenstein** is a Member of the European Parliament. He is part of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, the Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly and to the Delegation to the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. During his professional career, Mr. Fleckenstein has worked as executive manager at Workers' Samaritan Federation Hamburg (1994-2009) and has been a member of the executive board of HANSETRANS transport and logistics group. Mr. Fleckenstein has served at the State Parliament of Hamburg as a Spokesperson and Head of Protocol, as well as spokesperson and Head of Cabinet of the Vice Mayor and as Head of European Affairs Department at the State Government Hamburg. He is Member of the SPD party since 1974, member of the Hamburg executive of the SPD and member of the European Affairs Committee of the SPD Executive since 2008. He is the founding President of Cultural Forum Hamburg, Partner and Chair of the Supervisory Board of the Ernst Deutsch Theatre Company Hamburg and member of the Executive for Social Democratic Cultural Forum Berlin and Bertini Prize Association Hamburg.



**Mario Holzner** is Deputy Director of the Vienna Institute for International Economic Studies (wiiw). His research focuses on macroeconomic analysis, financial markets and income distribution. He coordinated a large research network within the Global Development Network Southeast Europe and has recently worked on issues of competitiveness of Western Balkan countries as well as short-term and long-term effects of infrastructure developments in the SEE region. Mario Holzner is also a lecturer in applied econometrics at the University of Vienna, Department of Economics. He obtained his PhD at the Vienna University of Economics and Business in 2005.



**Eduard Shalsi** is the Chairman of the Committee of Productive Activities, Trade and Environment, in the Parliament of Albania. He is also former Minister of State for Local Government and Anticorruption in 2017. In 2003, after 7 years in the banking sector, Mr. Shalsi became CEO of Insurance Institute SA (INSIG SA), the first insurance company in Albania, and a year later he was appointed firstly as Chief of Staff of Edi Rama (at that time, Mayor of Tirana) and later in the 2007 as Deputy Mayor of Tirana. He has been elected MP in the district of Tirana in 2009, in District of Berat in 2013 and has been active in the Parliament. He was elected MP during the 2017 elections, but this time in the district of Korca. As MP, he is also Member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Member of the EU-Albania Association-Stabilization Commission. In 2016, Mr. Shalsi has been elected President of the Albanian Chess Federation.

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**Martin Henze** is a German businessman and economics' politician. He studied law and economics in Germany and the USA. Mr. Henze has participated in different settings that aimed the integration of Eastern European countries into the EU and in the integration of the GDR into the Federal Republic of Germany. He has numerous publications in the field of infrastructure development & financing. Mr. Henze is specialized in topics of transport and health sector. He is a member of the board of the small business association of the CDU, chairman of the commission of the north for transport, infrastructure, mobility and of the economic council of the CDU.



**Dr. Stephen Stork** is a lawyer by training, with an extensive background in EU policies & their implementation. His assignments include policy work at the European Commission in the fields of budget, taxation and customs and in the implementation of policies pertaining to public finance management, public administration reform, judicial reform as well as education & labour market policies. He has lectured on constitutional, business & private law & published several articles in these fields. His postings include assignments to Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia & Albania.



**Akil Kraja** is an elected member of the Tirana Municipal Council and Chairman of the Public Services Commission. He is also the Executive Director of the Freedom and Democracy Foundation of the Democratic Party of Albania. Mr. Kraja graduated in International Public Management simultaneously from the French School of Public Administration (ENA), the Bocconi University in Milan and the Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po). He is specialized in development policies affecting entrepreneurship, agriculture and the rural economy. In parallel with his public engagement, he is also the Secretary General of the Albanian Microfinance Association. Previously, he has served as Project and PR Manager at the Albanian Savings and Credit Union, after heading the SME and Exports Department of the Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA). He returned to Albania in 2012 after various experiences abroad, including at the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and the Government of Kosovo etc.

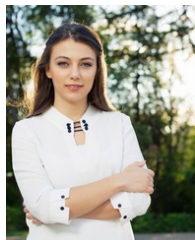


**Dr. Florent Marciacq** is Deputy Secretary General & Research Fellow at the Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, a Vienna-based intergovernmental organisation promoting European integration in the WBs and regional cooperation in Eastern Europe & the Caucasus. He is the cofounder and coordinator of the following track-2 diplomatic initiatives: the "Western Balkans Reflection Forum", launched in support of the Berlin process, and "Eastern Partnership Reflection Forum", launched in Minsk in 2017. Florent Marciacq holds a Ph.D. in political sciences from the University of Vienna & Luxembourg. He was until recently an associate researcher at the European Governance Research Group of the University of Luxembourg, OSCE researcher in residence in Prague & guest researcher at the Austrian Defence Academy in Vienna.

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**Etjen Xhafaj** serves as Deputy Minister of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs in Albania. He has served as Director of the Minister's Cabinet at the Albanian Ministry of Finance (2016-2017), Director of the Minister's Cabinet at the Ministry of Economic Development, and Entrepreneurship Trade (2013-2015) & at the Financial Services Volunteer Corps (USAID) Program Officer (2003-2005). From 2005 onwards, he has worked on translation of text, legislation and studies for a variety of public and private institutions, both national and foreign, such as the OSCE, the World Bank, IMF, etc. He has been member of several working groups that have drafted and prepared studies and publications on policy, economics, development, employment etc. In 2013, he has been a co-writer of the study on the development of the Albanian democracy over the Transition period, in collaboration with the National Democracy Institute and representatives from left wing parties from Eastern Europe. He holds an Associate Degree on International Relations from the Community College of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, USA, a B.A. in Diplomacy and International Relations and in International Economics from Schiller International University, Paris, France, Master's in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA.



**Kejdi Mehmetaj** has finished her studies at the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Tirana. She has attended many trainings related to her political engagement, both in Albania and abroad. Mrs. Mehmetaj has been engaged in the political forum of the Youth Movement for Integration. In 2012, she was elected vice chairwoman of the movement. In 2013, only in her 20s, she received her first mandate as a member of the Albanian Parliament, a position that was followed by that of the vice chairwoman of the Socialist Movement for Integration Parliamentary grouping. Since 5 years now, she is part of the Commission on Education and Public Information, as well as the Women's Alliance of Members of the Albanian Parliament. During her work, she has constantly focused on issues concerning education, employment and EU integration. Mrs. Mehmetaj has also been engaged in international relations. In addition to her position as International Secretary at SMI, in 2015 Mrs. Mehmetaj was also elected Vice President of the International Youth Socialist Grouping. During the 2016 National Congress of SMI, Mrs. Mehmetaj was voted to remain in her capacity as Vice Chairwoman of the Party.



**Adnan Ćerimagić** (Bosnia and Herzegovina) is European Stability Initiative (ESI)'s Analyst since January 2015 and part of ESI team since August 2013. Before joining ESI Adnan has worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo and Brussels. He also did a traineeship in the Secretariat of the EP's Foreign Affairs Committee and worked for the European Training & Research Centre for Human Rights & Democracy (ETC) in Graz. He studied law at the University of Graz and EU international relations & diplomacy at the College of Europe in Bruges. At ESI, he is researching EU enlargement policy, the WBs' EU integration process and Turkey.



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**Peter Grk** is the National Coordinator for Western Balkans and Secretary-General of Bled Strategic Forum at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia. Previously, he chaired the Committee on the Civilian Aspect of Crisis Management in Brussels, and has been an adviser to the foreign minister and chief foreign policy adviser to the prime minister. Between 2013-2014 Mr. Grk served as Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister of Slovenia. In 2011, he has been the Political coordinator at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to UN (New York). During his career, Mr. Grk has assumed different positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Slovenia, such as Advisor in the Cabinet of the Foreign Minister, Head of Unit for Middle East, Head of Unit for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU and European Correspondent. He has also served as Attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Ankara and in Copenhagen. He holds a degree in political science.



**Mak Selimovic** is a passionate activist for regional reconciliation and cooperation. He graduated from Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service where he developed a strong interest for Peace and Justice studies, regional and local cooperation. In the past, Mak served for the United Nations ICTY and was an accredited member of BIH's delegation to the UNODC Congress. Mak currently heads the Bosnia and Herzegovina Association for United Nations. Mak is fluent in English and Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, and thinks he still remembers some German and Arabic.



**Dafina Peci** is a political analyst, who works as a Secretary General for National Youth Congress of Albania and as a professor assistant on the Classic and Contemporary Political Philosophy at the University of Tirana. Since an early age, she contributed on community development and youth engagements into politics, accessing and leading different youth organisations, networks and campaigns. Step by step she adhered to local youth organisations initially and then to national structures in the role of leader, which made her competent in the field of youth policy and in the political discourse on civil society. Dafina has also been engaged in the working group to establish Regional Youth Cooperation Office since in the very first steps and she is the representative of Albanian youth in the Governing Board of this structure. This initiative brought her personally and professionally near a larger scale of youth policy and political perspective also.

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**Valdrin Lluka** serves as the Minister of Economic Development in the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, responsible for the development of the energy, mining and ICT sectors and the supervision of all public enterprises in Kosovo. Before being nominated as a Minister, Lluka was an executive and entrepreneur with more than 12 years of experience in private sector development, management, management consulting and leadership development. He holds an MBA degree from the University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management and BA degree in Economics and Information Systems from the American University in Bulgaria. During his professional experience, Lluka demonstrated ability to develop, implement, and oversee innovative promotional activities to attract foreign investment in Kosovo and promote local products abroad through the Kosovo Investment and Enterprise Support Agency, a Government Agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry where he served for 4 years as the General Director. Lluka led the National Council of Economic Zones as appointed by the Cabinet of the Government of Kosovo & served at several economic development boards in & outside of Kosovo.



**Ilir Bejtja** is a professor of economics, graduated from the Economics and Industry at the University of Tirana, Faculty of Economics in 1988. He is graduated in Master's degree in the CoDe Joint European Master on Comparative Local Developments at the University of Trento, Italy. He has completed his doctoral studies at the University "Aleksandër Moisiu" Durrës in 2013. In the period September 2009 – May 2013 he was a member of the Parliament of Albania for the Elbasan District. Mr. Bejtja has been a lecturer at Elbasan's "Aleksandër Xhuvani" University since 1998 and ongoing, as a full-time and part-time lecturer in Marketing subjects. Until 2009, Mr. Bejtja has held various positions as Marketing Specialist, Management and Design Project at "The Right Choice – Consultancy on Law and Economy" (2008 – 2009), Executive Director at the "Market and Economical Research Institute" (2004-2006), Regional Coordinator and Consultant for the Elbasan, Korca and Vlora Districts at the Institute for Surveys and Observations (2003 – 2007), Coordinator of Projects at Co-Plan Tirana, Institute for Habitat Development, 2005, Customs Officer and Head of Customs-Clearance Section in Elbasan (1991-1998). Mr. Bejtja is also Chairman of the Supervisory Board, FK Elbasani, since 2003 and member of the Marketing Commission at the ECA – European Club Association, UEFA in 2006-2009. From October 2013 until September 2017, he held the post of Deputy Minister of Energy and Industry. Currently Mr. Ilir Bejtja is an advisor to the Minister of Infrastructure and Energy.



**Mathias Dornfeldt** is currently Assistant Professor for energy policy and diplomacy at University of Potsdam. He has worked for Aspen Institute Germany, Körber Foundation, UN, OSCE Presence in Albania, Council of Europe in BiH, IOM and the German Federal Foreign Office.

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**Dirk Buschle** is Deputy Director of the Energy Community Secretariat since 2011 and has led its legal unit since 2007. As Chairman of the Energy Community Dispute Resolution and Negotiation Center, he is also responsible for dispute resolution and negotiations and has acted as mediator in high-profile investor-state conflicts in the energy sector. He is a certified negotiation facilitator. Prior to his current position, Dirk was Head of Cabinet of the President of the Court of Justice of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) in Luxembourg. Mr. Buschle is also Professor and Chairholder of the European Energy Policy Chair at the College of Europe in Bruges. He teaches the annual course “European and International Energy Policy and Governance”. He graduated in law from Constance University, Germany, and earned his Ph.D. at St. Gallen University in Switzerland. He has widely published in different areas of European policy and law, and has lectured at Universities of Reykjavik, Constance and St. Gallen as visiting professor.



**Fabio Tambone** is currently Director and Head of External International Relations of the Italian Regulatory Authority for Energy Networks and Environment – [www.arera.it](http://www.arera.it). He is the Secretary General of MEDREG (Mediterranean energy Regulators), the organization gathering 25 energy Authorities in Mediterranean basin ([www.medreg-regulators.org](http://www.medreg-regulators.org)). He is also Senior Advisor to the President of WAREG ([www.wareg.org](http://www.wareg.org)), the network of European Water Regulators. Mr. Tambone previously worked at the World Bank in Washington DC, at the European Commission in Brussels, and for other private and public organizations carrying out strategic research and managing international cooperation projects on energy and other industrial sectors. He graduated in economics at University of Bologna, he earned an MBA at MIP-School of Management (Politecnico di Milano), and attended a Leadership executive programme at Bocconi University. He has made several publications and was invited as speaker at high-level national and international events.



**Enio Civici** did the primaries in the Austrian institute “Herman Gmeiner” and finished high school in 2005 in the state school “Sami Frasheri”. Then he continued his studies for “International Markets and new technologies” at the “Luigi Bocconi” University in Milan. Back in Tirana in 2009, Mr. Civici graduated in 2010 in a three-year “Bank and Finance” degree at the “European University of Tirana”. He attended a postgraduate degree in the World Bank on “Corporate Governance” and graduated in 2012. Since 2010, he works at the “SCAN Media Group” as a journalist. Since 2013, he holds the position of Director of Information. For the past 5 years, Mr. Civici has been running a television program with the format of “Hard Talk” with a total of 560 interviews conducted. He has also worked as a consultant on financial markets for several banks such as CREDINS BANK, ABI BANK and ALPHA BANK operating in Albania. He has published more than 110 articles in various Albanian and foreign media platforms. Mr. Civici is specialized in economic journalism, financial market analysis and macroeconomic consultancy.



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**H.E Ilir Meta** began his political activity in 1990, as an active participant in the students' movement. He was one of the founders of the Albanian Euro-socialist Youth Movement (FRESSH). Mr. Meta was elected member of the General Steering Committee at the June 1992 Congress and member of the Socialist Party Presidency from 1993 until July 2003. During the period 1993-1996, Mr. Meta held the position of the Deputy Chairman of the Socialist Party and from 1994 to 1996 the position of the Secretary of International Relations. On September 2004, Mr. Meta founded a new political force in Albania, the Socialist Movement for Integration (LSI). In 2005, Mr. Meta was elected Chairman of LSI. He has been State Secretary for European Integration in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998 and then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Governmental Coordination in 1999. During 1999 – 2002, he has been Prime Minister of Albania. Whereas from 2009 to 2010, Mr. Meta served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and later on as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, Trade and Energy (2010-2011). Since 1992, Ilir Meta is elected Member of Parliament in all legislatures of the Albanian Parliament. In 2013, Mr. Meta was elected Speaker of the Albanian Parliament, a position he held until April 2017, when he was elected President of the Republic of Albania. He graduated in Political Economy in the Faculty of Economy, University of Tirana, where he also attended his postgraduate studies.



Since September 2018, **H.E Luigi Soreca** is EU Ambassador, Head of the European Delegation to Albania. Prior to this appointment, Mr Soreca was Director for Security in DG HOME of the European Commission, with responsibilities in the fight against terrorism and radicalisation, organised crime, drug trafficking, corruption and cybercrime. He was in charge of the EU support for law enforcement cooperation at European and international level, and Member of the Management Board EUROPOL, CEPOL (police training) and EMCCDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction). In the Juncker Commission, he coordinated the services' efforts for the preparation, adoption and implementation of the European Agenda on Security in April 2015. During the terrorist events in 2015-2017 in the EU, from this position, he has coordinated the EU policy response to the attacks in terms of new legislative and policy initiatives, including the preparation and adoption of the Directives on Terrorism, Firearms and Money Laundering, the Action Plan on Firearms and Explosives and the creation of the EU Counter-Terrorism Centre at EUROPOL. Luigi Soreca has overseen the work of the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and was the Chair of the EU Internet Forum. In the area of drugs trafficking, he was also responsible for the EU Action Plan on drugs trafficking for 2017-2020. He was the Commission representative in the G7 Senior Officials "Rome-Lyon" Group, which deals with global terrorism and transnational organised crime. He also negotiated several international agreements on behalf of the EU with third countries, including with the USA on PNR and TFTP. During the migration crisis in summer 2016, he was appointed as Special Commission Envoy to Italy for the launch of the relocation process under Council Decision 2015/1523.

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From 2006 to 2013, Mr. Soreca had the privilege to coordinate the launch and the implementation of the Visa Liberalisation Dialogues with countries in the Western Balkans, including Albania, the Eastern Partnership and with the Russian Federation. He coordinated the preparation of the roadmaps for Visa Liberalisation focusing on achieving justice reform, the establishment of solid track record on corruption and organised crime, including drug trafficking, and the protection of human rights in the countries concerned, including Albania. Following the conclusions of the Visa Dialogue, he coordinated the launch of the post-visa liberalization mechanism to monitor the potential misuse of those countries' citizens of their freedom of movement and right of asylum into the Schengen area. Luigi Soreca joined the European Commission in 2001.



**Dr. Johann Sattler** has been Ambassador of the Republic of Austria in Albania since April 2016. Before that he headed the WBs department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Vienna for three years. From 2008 to 2013, Dr. Sattler served as Managing Director / Publisher for the WAZ Media Group and for Axel Springer in Moscow. Before that, he occupied various posts such as Deputy Head of the Secretary General's Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Counselor for Political Affairs at the Austrian Embassy in Washington & Cabinet Member of the EU Special Representative for South Eastern Europe (Stability Pact) in Brussels. Dr. Johann Sattler studied Political Science & Slavic Studies at the Universities of Innsbruck / Prague / Moscow. From 1994 to 1996, he graduated from the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna. In 1996, he joined the Diplomatic Service of the Republic of Austria, whereas in 2008 he received his doctorate from the University of Vienna.



**Dr. Etilda Gjonaj** was appointed as Deputy Minister of Justice on May 2017. She has served as Commissioner of the Ombudsman's Institution, being in charge of the Section of Central and Local Public Administration Issues (2014 - 2017). For about two and a half years, she has been an expert of the Technical Secretariat, set up at the Special Parliamentary Commission on Justice Reform (2015-2017). During this period, she has been part of working groups for the formulation of a number of draft laws of the Justice Reform package. Mrs. Gjonaj has been a civil society activist, providing contribution to human rights for more than 11 years. During 2003-2004, she has contributed in her capacity as Program Manager for justice programs, legal and institutional reforms, elections and strategic litigation of human rights cases at the Albanian Helsinki Committee. For several years, she has been engaged as part time lecturer at the Department of Criminal Law, Faculty of Law, University of Tirana. Mrs. Gjonaj has graduated from the Faculty of Law, University of Tirana, completed 2-year postgraduate studies in criminal law at the same university with a Master of Science degree in Criminal Science. She currently attends doctoral studies in criminal science for Doctor of Science, Faculty of Law, University of Tirana. Mrs. Gjonaj is the author of a number of publications, research studies and scientific articles in local and international legal journals in the field of justice.

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**Wiesław Tarka** is Ambassador ad personam at the European Policy Department and Western Balkan Summit Coordinator at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Poland. During 2015-2018, Mr. Tarka served as Poland's Ambassador to Sweden, whereas during 2012-2017 he was Director of the Foreign Service Inspectorate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other positions include that of Poland's Ambassador to Croatia, office at the Polish Embassy in Stockholm, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Interior and Administration and as Deputy Director of Warsaw City Hall. During 2005-2007 he has been chair of Polish Part of Cross-Border Cooperation Committees and is now Chair of the Inter-ministerial Committee of the Outer Border Management Task Group. Mr. Tarka has concluded his studies at the University of Warsaw.



**Alexandru Ene** serves as Director of Western Balkans and Regional Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Romania. He has joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998, as diplomatic attaché in the Policy Planning Unit. Between 1999 and 2001, he was advisor, then senior advisor to the OSCE Romanian Chairman-in-Office for OSCE-area conflicts. Between 2002 and 2006 he joined the Romanian Permanent Mission in Vienna, as first secretary, then as Head of the International Cooperation Bureau. He also served as contact point for NATO Caucus, alternate chair for various OSCE or related committees and bodies and chief officer for relations with the media. Since 2007, he was deputy director for regional cooperation and from 2009 director for Western Balkans and regional cooperation. He is responsible for the Western Balkans file for the upcoming 2019 PRES RO of the Council of the EU. He is the national coordinator and senior official at the relevant bodies of South-Eastern European cooperation formats (SEECF, RCC etc.) as well as other regional cooperation formats and initiatives (BSEC, CEI, CBSS etc.). In 2014, he was special MFA representative for SEECF Chairmanship-in-Office. Main areas of expertise include: comprehensive security, conflict resolution, regions of particular interest for Romania, such as the Balkans, Black Sea, the Eastern neighborhood and Russia.



**Mr. Klaus Wölfer** serves as Director of the Department for EU-enlargement and South-East Europe at the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs in Vienna from September 2017. His previous work includes Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Turkey (2012-2017), Ambassador to Indonesia, Singapore and Timor-Leste (2007-2011), Head of the Directorate General for the Arts, Federal Chancellery (2002-2006) and from 1991-1996 as responsible for the then Balkan-Crisis-Zone (Political Department) at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs/Vienna. Mr. Wölfer has served in many Austrian Embassies like in Rome, Belgrade, Budapest and Zagreb. He has graduated from Law studies in Vienna and the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna.

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**Ardian Hackaj** is Director of Research at Cooperation and Development Institute – an independent Tirana-based think tank. He has authored research works on the Berlin Process, on youth, migration, connectivity and Belt & Road Initiative in the Western Balkans. During his career, Mr. Hackaj has held management positions at the College of Europe-Bruges, International Organization for Migration, United Nations, and the EU Commission. He holds an MA from College of Europe, a BA in International Economics from Université Lumière, Lyon II, and a University Diploma in European Studies from Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Lyon.



Since June 2016, **H.E. Susanne Schütz** serves as the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Albania. Previously she has served as Permanent Representative and Head of political Department at the German Embassy in Rome. During 2010-2012, Ambassador Schutz acted at the Federal Foreign Ministry as Head of Division for Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldavia. During her career, Mrs. Schütz has worked at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Embassy in Kiev, Moscow and Tel Aviv. The ambassador has graduated in Studies of Slavic, English and American Studies in Münster, Los Angeles, Berlin and Leningrad. She has a M.A. from FU Berlin and also attended the Diplomatic Academy.



**Mr. Knut Fleckenstein** is a Member of the European Parliament. He is part of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, the Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly and to the Delegation to the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. During his professional career, Mr. Fleckenstein has worked as executive manager at Workers' Samaritan Federation Hamburg (1994-2009) and has been a member of the executive board of HANSETRANS transport and logistics group. Mr. Fleckenstein has served at the State Parliament of Hamburg as a Spokesperson and Head of Protocol, as well as spokesperson and Head of Cabinet of the Vice Mayor and as Head of European Affairs Department at the State Government Hamburg. He is Member of the SPD party since 1974, member of the Hamburg executive of the SPD and member of the European Affairs Committee of the SPD Executive since 2008. He is the founding President of Cultural Forum Hamburg, Partner and Chair of the Supervisory Board of the Ernst Deutsch Theatre Company Hamburg and member of the Executive for Social Democratic Cultural Forum Berlin and Bertini Prize Association Hamburg.

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**Mrs. Sonila Qato** is a law graduate (2001) at the Faculty of Law, University of Tirana and since 2005 holds the title "Lawyer". In 2007 she attended the World Bank's Public Procurement qualifications, which she concluded with the title "Expert". Her educational background includes a European Union Master's degree in European Studies from the University of Tirana (2008). Mrs. Qato has directed the General Directorate of Urban Development and Territorial Control, part of the Municipality of Tirana from 2008 to 2011, which was preceded by the function held as Head of Infrastructure Procurement Sector, Public Procurement Directorate, in the Municipality of Tirana (2002-2007). Furthermore Mrs. Qato served as Secretary of Tirana's Territorial Adjustment Council (TAC; 2008-2011); Chairperson of the Citizens, Municipalities and Transports Licensing Commission, at the Municipality of Tirana; Chairman of the Administrative Appeals Commission of Fines, City Council of Tirana (2008-2011); Chair of the Technical Urban Council, Tirana Municipal Council; Member of the Task Force of the public property, headed by the Prime Minister (2014-2016). Mrs. Qato has also worked as an external lecturer and is the co-author of the university module "Legal Urbanism" at the Faculty of Architecture and Faculty of Urban Planning, of Polis University. From 2012 to 2013 she served as Chief Cabinet of the Leader of the Socialist Party of Albania.



**Mrs. Majlinda Bregu** is an accomplished Albanian Politician, a strong EU believer, and a promoter of women's rights and empowerment. She also has a prominent career as university professor and journalist. Mrs. Bregu was elected as a Member of Parliament for three consecutive legislatures, (2005-2017) as a Democratic Party member. From March 2007 to September 2013, she served as Minister of European Integration and the Government Spokesperson. Both duties, which she passionately accomplished, allowed her to domestically steer the increasing challenges of European Integration membership and promote abroad the importance of the membership perspective for the stability of the region. During 2013 – 2017, Mrs. Bregu chaired the European Integration Committee at Albanian Parliament and the National Council for European Integration. In her parliamentary career, she was consistently working for an all-inclusive approach and far-reaching consensus on the European perspective of Albania and the region. Additionally, she has actively supported and contributed to the civil society forum established under Berlin process. As from April 2018, Mrs. Bregu is appointed as the Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council, the operational arm of the South-East Europe Cooperation Process, which mission is to sustain focused in the regional cooperation in South Eastern Europe through a regionally owned and led framework that also supports European and Euro-Atlantic integration.



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**Christophe Hillion** is Professor of European Law at the universities of Leiden and Oslo, research professor at the Norwegian Institute of International studies (NUPI) and senior researcher at the Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (SIEPS). He has published on external relations, enlargement and constitutional law of the European Union. His present research focuses on the implications of Brexit for the European integration process, as well as on the protection of the rule of law and fundamental rights in the EU, and in its external action.



Ambassador **Erwan Fouéré** is Associate Senior Research Fellow at Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS). Prior to joining CEPS in 2013, he was the Special Representative for the Transdniestrian settlement process during the Irish 2012 Chairmanship of the OSCE, and continued a number of conflict mediation activities subsequently. During his 38 year career with the EU institutions, he was the first to assume joint responsibility of EU Special Representative and Head of Delegation in the EU External Service when was appointed in that double capacity in Macedonia ( 2005-2011 ), the first Head of Delegation in South Africa ( 1994-1998 ), and the first Head of Delegation in Mexico and Cuba ( 1989 - 1992 ). He was awarded the Order of Good Hope, Grand Officer, by President Mandela in 1998.