



Bled  
Strategic  
Forum  
2016

5 – 6 Sep 2016  
[www.bledstrategicforum.org](http://www.bledstrategicforum.org)

## 11th Bled Strategic Forum – Safeguarding the Future

Ljubljana, 30 June 2016 – Recent developments have undermined the common feeling of security, stability, and freedom. The world has been caught in a maelstrom of geostrategic upheavals, the response to which will significantly affect our common future based on shared values and norms. Organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the Centre for European Perspective under the title *Safeguarding the Future*, the eleventh Bled Strategic Forum, to be held on 5 and 6 September, will try to provide an appropriate response to these threats and challenges. The main event will again be accompanied by the Business BSF and Young BSF, whereas less common topics will be in the spotlight of the debates on *Hidden Dimensions of International Relations*.

### Bled Strategic Forum (BSF)

The **Leaders' Panel**, held under the aegis of the Slovenian President, will feature a debate on security challenges facing the world today. Current developments in the international community give cause for concern; the number of factors of instability is on the rise, and an inability to deal with them might lead to serious regional and global negative security scenarios.

The panel discussion on **Water Risks in Global Perspectives** will confront the issues of water shortages, pollution and climate change in relation to threats to peace and sustainable development. As global trends show no improvement in the situation, the panel will examine how to address these issues appropriately and discuss the role of water as an "instrument of peace".

The European Union has been disturbed by geostrategic shifts, eroded trust in institutions, a decline in solidarity among Member States and a stampede of conservative and exit movements, the migration crisis, and terrorist attacks. The future and reform of the European project will be the focus of the panel on the **European Union: Integration vs. Disintegration**.

Energy fluctuations and instability are another cause for concern in the international community. The panellists in the **Energy Geopolitics** debate will discuss energy prices, diversification of supply, the gravity of security risks, and the challenges of guaranteeing universal access to energy and eliminating energy poverty. Particular attention will be devoted to implementing the Paris climate agreement and the transition to innovative low-carbon solutions.

Security discussions are dominated by talks of national security and the states' military capabilities in the event of armed conflict and too often lose sight of the implications for the security of the individual. However, lasting peace cannot be achieved without providing for the security within a country. The **Human Security: You and I Matter** panel discussion will shed light on risk factors for individuals, development and respect for human rights.

Terrorism, conflicts in Syria and Ukraine, the migration crisis, and hybrid and cyber threats show that security in the Euro-Atlantic area cannot be taken for granted. The panel on **Reinventing European Security** will discuss how to effectively adapt European security and defence structures to the

geostrategic reality and to new types of threat, which is vital for ensuring long-term stability and security on the continent.

The debate on the Western Balkans, a recurrent topic at the Bled Strategic Forum, will assess how current developments in Europe affect the EU's attractiveness to membership candidates and other countries in the region in a panel entitled **Western Balkans: Is the EU Still a Pull Factor?**. Some of their leaders have already voiced the opinion that EU membership has lost its appeal, which should serve as a serious warning to the EU to speed up integration processes and deepen cooperation.

Certain less frequently discussed issues will be in the limelight in the **Hidden Dimensions of International Relations** discussions. The Night-Owl Session dedicated to radicalisation, and organised together with the German think-tank Global Diplomacy Lab (GDL) under the title **Ordinary radical(s): In Search of a Meaningful Response**, will deal with preventive action, reasons behind an increasing radicalisation of youth, and possibilities for education and employment in the form of an innovative and active discussion.

Growing tensions already pose a risk to security and stability around the world, and emerging challenges and new threats further erode trust between generations, nations, states, interest and social groups. **The Key Disruption of the Future (Needs to be Trust)**, one of the debates in the Hidden Dimensions of International Relations series, will address trust as a key factor in ensuring future welfare and security, despite many unavoidable disruptions.

Another discussion in the series, **Terrorism and the Media: An Uneasy Relationship**, will focus on the interaction, dependency and inseparability that characterises the coexistence of terrorism and the media. It will look at the phenomenon of sensationalist coverage of terrorism and explore how to ensure objective reporting without promoting terrorist acts and spreading fear among the general public.

## Business BSF

The business forum, which is an important medium of economic diplomacy, will be dedicated to seeking innovative opportunities and will focus on major challenges faced by European and global businesses. It is organised in cooperation with the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia – AmCham Slovenia, IEDC – Bled School of Management and the Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Slovenia.

The number one priority of today's companies, **digital transformation** – the topic of a dedicated panel of the same name – opens up many opportunities, but can be hard to handle, as it changes the existing business culture, models and philosophy, people and technology. In a changing context, only companies that are able to adapt can survive; and the changes they make will enable them to evolve into innovative providers of highly integrated products, solutions and services.

The discussion on **Smart Cities and Cognitive Communities** will look into the communities which decide to enhance their quality of life by making use of information and communication technologies, thus ensuring better connectivity and an optimum use of energy, materials, services and financial resources.

The increasingly advanced and globalised world is challenging the well-established concepts of mobility, which has a significant impact on the development of the automotive industry. The panel on **Mobility and the Future of the Automotive Industry** will discuss the ability of the industry to adapt to changes in the modern world while taking into consideration new environmental, social and economic realities of contemporary societies.

Tourism is greatly dependent on global security. At present, terrorism is the main global threat, while security challenges are further exacerbated by migration waves. With Ljubljana being the 2016 European Green Capital and the Global Green Destinations Day taking place in Slovenia this year, tourism and sustainability experts on the **Security and Sustainability in Tourism** panel will attempt to

answer questions about global security challenges and the importance of sustainable development in tourism.

## Young BSF







Under the title Generation of Global Citizens, from 2 to 5 September the sixth edition of Young BSF will bring together successful and innovative young leaders, diplomats, academics, representatives of NGOs and business professionals from all around the world. They will discuss three topical and interrelated issues: youth mobility and political participation, intergenerational cooperation, and smart cities. Young BSF will again provide an opportunity for creative discussions and for the networking of participants from Slovenia and abroad, who will be granted access to the debates at the Bled Strategic Forum.

---

## Bled Strategic Forum in brief

The Bled Strategic Forum has become established as a leading international high-level conference in the region and is developing into a successful platform for in-depth strategic debate among leaders and decision-makers from the public and private sectors on pressing regional and global issues. Attracting some 500 participants, including heads of state and government, ministers, diplomats, business professionals, academics, young people and media representatives from around the globe, it offers ample opportunities for bilateral and multilateral meetings and networking among political and business leaders.

---

 [www.bledstrategicforum.org](http://www.bledstrategicforum.org)  
 [youtube.com/user/bledstrategicforum](https://youtube.com/user/bledstrategicforum)  
 [www.flickr.com/photos/bledstrategicforum](https://www.flickr.com/photos/bledstrategicforum)  
 [facebook.com/BledStrategicForum](https://facebook.com/BledStrategicForum)  
 [@BledStrategicF](https://twitter.com/BledStrategicF)  
 [info@bledstrategicforum.org](mailto:info@bledstrategicforum.org)