



INVITATION

Public Panel debate:

Promoting the democratic role of European political parties in a citizen-centered EU

Thursday, 23 November 2017, 10:30 – 12:30

Venue: Asia Platform, 26 Rue de la Loi (10th Floor), 1000 Brussels

Programme: Attached

In his State of the Union 2017, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker stated that the “Union needs to take a democratic leap forward”, and referred explicitly to the role of European political parties in the next European Parliament elections, new rules on the financing of political parties and foundations, transnational lists, and the Commission’s Citizens Dialogues and democratic conventions.

This follows a recent trend of increased attention to enhancing democracy and transparency in European Union (EU) decision-making. European political parties play an important role, but face challenges to bring messages to EU citizens, and to make citizens more aware of EU politics.

A report, commissioned by the Office of International IDEA to the European Union, was compiled by Professor Steven Van Hecke (KU Leuven) on “Reconnecting European political parties with EU citizens”. The report analyses the role of European political parties based on history, regulatory framework and reality, with a focus on their connection with EU citizens and the formulation of recommendations from various perspectives, such as regulation, national parties, challenges to democracy, and individual membership.

**The Office of International IDEA to the European Union invites you to a
public panel debate:**

“Promoting the democratic role of European political parties in a citizen-centered EU”

Thursday, 23 November 2017, 10:30 – 12:30

The objective of the event is to debate the conclusions and recommendations of the above-mentioned report among institutional, political, NGO, academic and media representatives, followed by an exchange of views with the audience.

Please register before 20 November 2017, via the following link: <http://bit.ly/2yYCsWu>



DRAFT PROGRAMME

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10:00 – 10:30	Registration
10:30 – 10:40	Welcome Axel Goethals, CEO, European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS)
10:30 – 10:45	Keynote Address ➤ Luc Van den Brande , Special Adviser to the President of the European Commission and former Minister-President of Flanders and Vice-President of the EU Committee of the Regions: <i>“Citizens at the center of a more democratic EU”</i>
10:45 – 11:15	Presentation of the report “Reconnecting European political parties with EU citizens” ➤ Steven Van Hecke , Associate Professor in Comparative and EU Politics, KU Leuven Comments by representatives of European political parties
11:15 – 12:00	Panel debate <u>Moderator:</u> ➤ Andrew Bradley , Director and Head of Office, Office of International IDEA to the EU <u>Discussants:</u> ➤ Klaus Welle , Secretary-General of the European Parliament (tbc) ➤ Herman De Croo , Minister of State and Flemish Member of Parliament, former Speaker of the Parliament (tbc) ➤ Emma Klever , Head of Policy, European Movement International ➤ Rob Heirbaut , EU Correspondent, Flemish Radio- and Television Network Organisation (VRT) ➤ Emilie Van Haute , Associate Professor, Centre d’étude de la vie politique, Université Libre de Bruxelles
12:00 – 12:20	Plenary discussion (Q&A)
12:20 – 12:30	Summary of key take-aways ➤ Steven Van Hecke , Associate Professor in Comparative and EU Politics, KU Leuven
12:30 – 13:30	Light lunch

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. International IDEA’s mission is to support sustainable democratic change by providing comparative knowledge, and assisting in democratic reform, and influencing policies and politics. In addressing our mission, we focus on the ability of democratic institutions to deliver a political system marked by public participation and inclusion, representative and accountable government, responsiveness to citizens’ needs and aspirations, and the rule of law and equal rights for all citizens.