

Budapest Forum 2026

New Dynamics of Democratic Change

October 1, 2026 - CEU, Nádor street 15., H - 1051 Budapest

9:00–9:15 Opening Speeches

Municipality of Budapest, Political Capital Institute, CEU Democracy Institute

9:15–9:35 Keynote Speech

Carsten Q. Schneider, Interim President and Rector, Central European University

9:35–10:00 Award Ceremony and Keynote Speech

Presentation of the Budapest Freedom Award 2026, followed by a keynote address

10:00–10:20. Keynote Speech

Gergely Karácsony, Mayor of Budapest

10:20–11:15 Cities under pressure: Municipal resilience in an age of overlapping crises

Mar Jiménez, Commissioner for European Affairs, Barcelona

Kata Tüttő, President of the Committee of the Regions

Thomas O. Melia, Senior Fellow, Georgetown University, Former Assistant Secretary of State

Moderator: **Edit Inotai**, Senior Fellow, Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy

11:15–12:15 Resilient Democracies in a Fractured World

Péter Balázs, Former Commissioner and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary

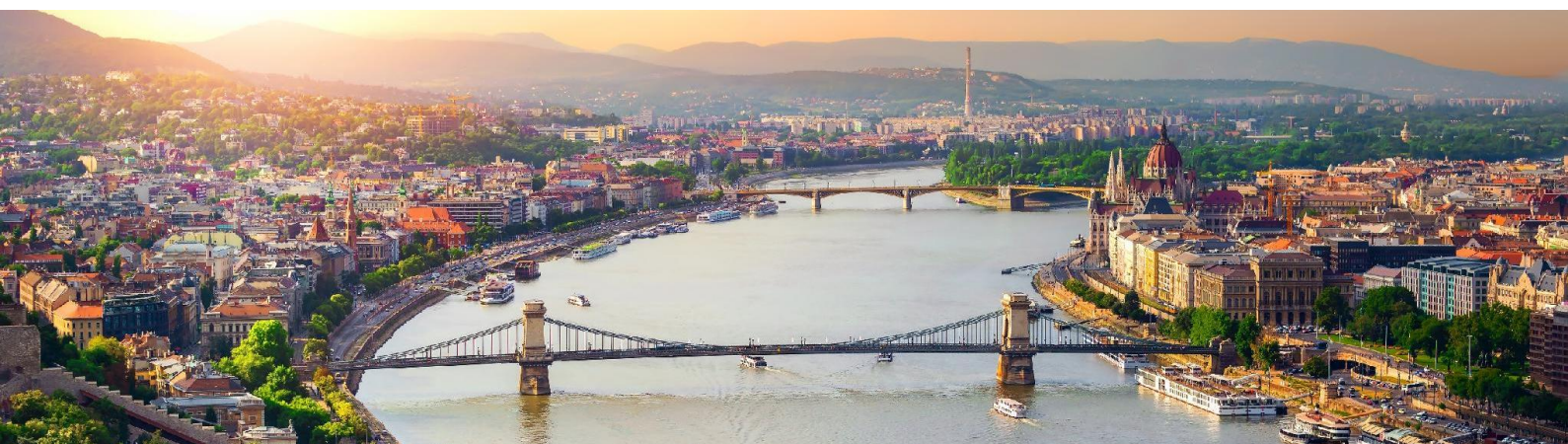
Jan Philipp Albrecht, Co-president, Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung

Stefánia Kapronczay, Human Rights & Narrative Strategist

Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers

Moderator: **Adéla Jurečková**, Director, Prague Office of Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung

Lunch break 12:15–13:00



13:00–14:00 Between Washington, Brussels, and Taipei: Security in a Changing World

Tamás Csiki Varga, Senior Research Fellow at the John Lukacs Institute for Politics and Strategy,
Public Service University

Roland Freudenstein, Martens Center

Ivana Karásková, China Team Lead, Association for International Affairs

I-Chung Lai, President, Prospect Foundation, Taiwan

Moderator: **Bernadett Szél**, Research Affiliate, CEU Democracy Institute; MOFA Taiwan Fellow, 2025

14:00-15:00: Europe's 2027 Electoral Turning Point: Populism, Fragmentation and the Future of Mainstream Politics (In cooperation with Friedrich Naumann Foundation)

Dániel Hegedűs, Deputy Director, Institut für Europäische Politik

Nathalie Tocci, Professor, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies

Jean-Yves Camus, Research Fellow, Institut de relations internationales et stratégiques

Leszek Jażdżewski, Editor-in-Chief, Libertel; Vice-President, Fundacja Libertel

Moderator: **Lars-André Richter**, Director, Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Prague

15:00–16:00 After illiberalism: rebuilding democratic institutions and reintegrating Hungary into Europe

Zoltán Fleck, Professor, Eötvös Loránd University

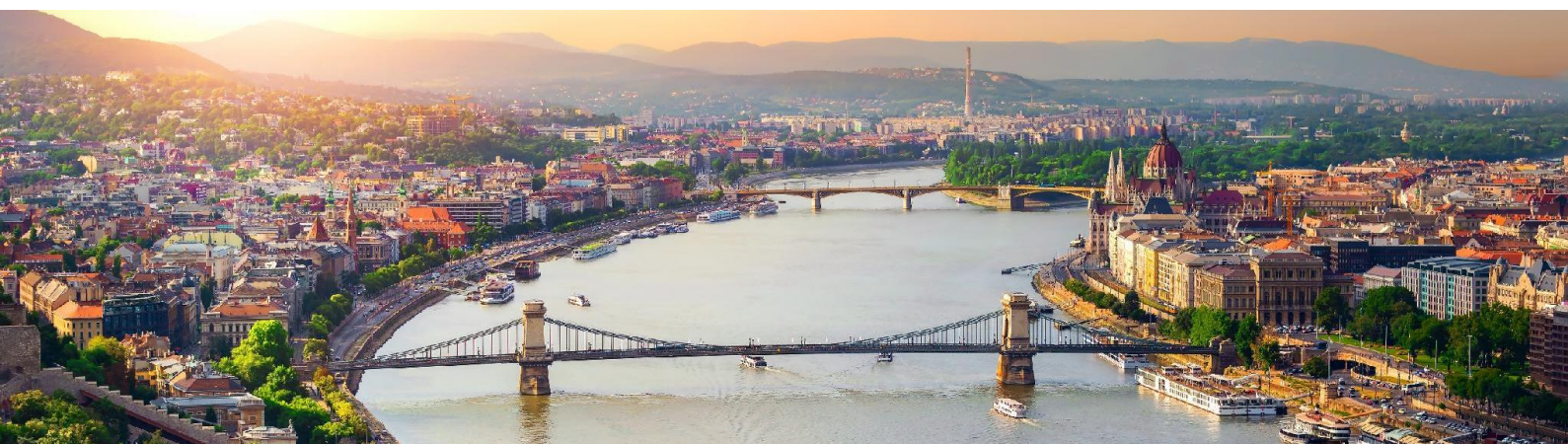
Kim Lane Scheppele, Laurance S. Rockefeller Professor of Sociology and International Affairs,
Princeton University

Sergey Lagodinsky, Member of the European Parliament

Renáta Uitz, Senior Research Fellow, Central European University Democracy Institute

Moderator: **Péter Krekó**, Political Capital Institute

16:00-16:30 Coffee break



**16:30-17:30: Is there a common Central European response to today's crises?**

Keynote speech: **Jakub Stefaniak**, Secretary of State, Chancellery of the Prime Minister of Poland

Botond Feledy, Director, Hungarian Institute of Foreign Affairs

Jakub Wisniewski, Director, Wacław Felczak Institute for Polish-Hungarian Friendship

Zoltán Varga, CEO, Central Media Group

Dominika Hajdu, Director for Policy and Programming, GLOBSEC

Moderator: **Zsuzsanna Szelényi**, Program Director, Central European University Democracy Institute

17:30–18:00 Lessons from the past: what does the revolution of 1956 teach us about the crises we are facing today? (in Hungarian)

TBA

18:00–19:00 Narratives of the past, struggles of the present: democracy and social cohesion in Hungary (in Hungarian)

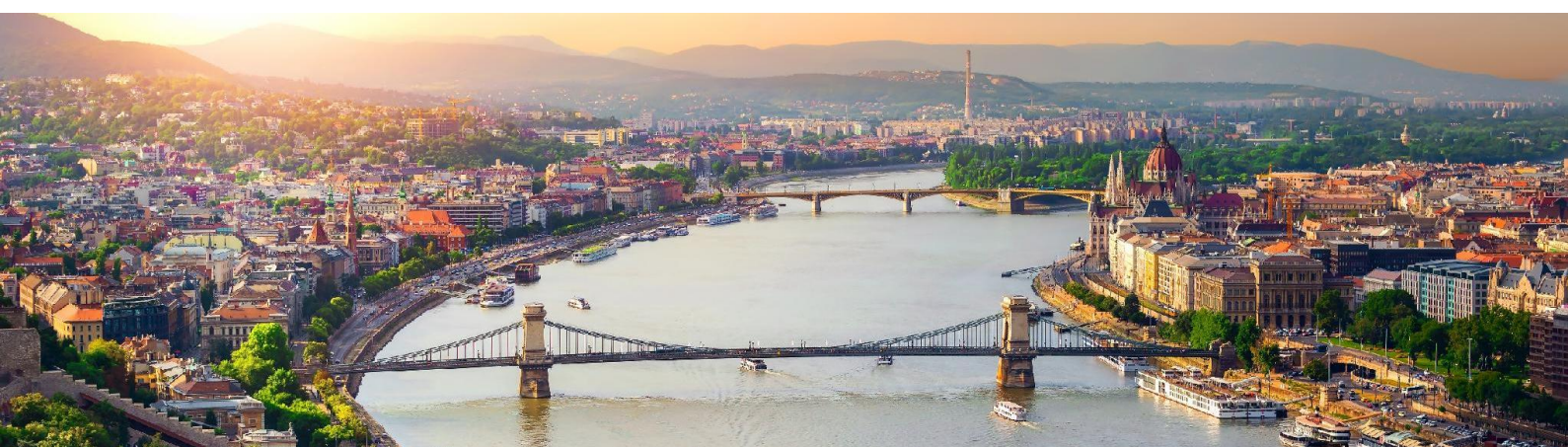
Keynote speech: **TBA**

Andrea Szabó, Senior Research Fellow, Eötvös Loránd University Centre for Social Sciences

István Hegedűs, Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society

Péter Csunderlik, Research Fellow, Eötvös Loránd University

Moderator: **Benedek Jávor**, Head of Representation of Budapest in Brussels





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