

# The 2<sup>nd</sup> Skopje Debate on Europe

17–19 November 2023

## *Programme*

### **Friday 17 November**

Whole day    Arrival

18:30        **Opening**

Venue: Čifte Hammam, National Gallery of Macedonia

#### **Kosovo Between Geopolitical Token and Conflictual Reality**

##### *Panel discussion*

Kosovo is not only a country in Southeast Europe, diplomatically recognized by most EU members and currently receiving international attention due to the threat of its conflict with Serbia escalating. ‘Kosovo’ has also been turned into a symbolic token used in a geopolitical game. The rule-based world order is constantly put into question, not only by Russia and Serbia but also a whole range of European and global politicians and opinion-makers. “All rules are off,” they say. “Look at what happened in Kosovo.” What is at the core of this argument? And how harmful is the gap between the symbol ‘Kosovo’ and the real problems that need to be addressed – in Kosovo, in the region, in Europe?

Speakers: **Sonja Biserko** (Serbia), **Veton Surroi** (Kosovo) and **Sergei Lebedev** (Russia; in exile)

Moderator: **Steinar Bryn** (Norway)

20:30        Dinner reception

## Saturday 18 November

11:30      **Skopje Tour**  
*Excursion*

13:30      Lunch

16:00      **Might and Rights. The Role of Minorities and Majorities in Southeast Europe**  
*Panel discussion*

Venue: Čifte Hammam, National Gallery of Macedonia

The relation between minorities and majorities is key to many of the conflicts in Southeast Europe and the instrumentalization and 'weaponization' of minority groups by both domestic and foreign politicians remain a threat to stability. At the same time, the power of the majority – might – comes with great responsibility and the rights of minorities must be safe-guarded. How can a more constructive relationship between majorities and minorities be thought? What are the pillars of an inclusive society? These questions go well beyond ethnic, linguistic or religious groups and concern LGBTQ and women's rights as well.

Speakers: **Robert Alagjovovski** (North Macedonia), **Linda Gusia** (Kosovo),  
**Gorana Pebić** (Serbia) and **Manol Peykov** (Bulgaria)

Moderator: **Kristof Bender** (Austria)

17:30      Coffee break

18:30      **Literature in Times of Conflict**  
*Discussion and reading*

Venue: Čifte Hammam, National Gallery of Macedonia

What is the place of literature in a world torn apart by war, social conflict and political turmoil? How free can literature be in an increasingly unfree world? And what do art and literature actually do with their freedom?

Speakers: **Elife Krasniqi** (Kosovo), **Arian Leka** (Albania), **Nikola Madžirov** (North Macedonia), **Sergei Lebedev** (Russia; in exile)

Moderator: **Vladimir Jankovski** (North Macedonia)

20:30      Dinner reception at the German Embassy

## **Sunday 19 November**

### **10:00 Internal Networking Session**

*Discussion*

Venue: CSP Centar - Jadro

A three-hour internal and off-the-record network session provides the opportunity to openly discuss contested issues in the region and to initiate concrete cooperation projects such as common educational schemes or formal or informal discussion platforms.

Moderators: **Carl Henrik Fredriksson** (Sweden/Austria) and **Artan Sadiku** (North Macedonia)

**13:00** Lunch and departure