



Aspen – GMF Bucharest Forum 2024

The Era of Twin Revolutions

October 24 – 25 | 13th edition | NORD Events Center

A flagship public diplomacy event where global leaders engage with the Black Sea area and beyond, the Aspen – GMF Bucharest Forum bridges Trans-Atlantic conversations and creates a process of reflection on the region and its impact within the international agendas.

Organizers: Aspen Institute Romania, German Marshall Fund of the United States

With the support of: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, USAID, Ministry of National Defence, Embassy of Greece, Embassy of Sweden

Knowledge Partners: The Aspen Institute US, Aspen Institute Kyiv, Aspen Central Europe, Aspen Ananta Centre India, Center for the Governance of Change at IE University Madrid, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung KAS, College of Europe, HRCC

Main Partners: PPC Romania, Google, UniCredit, Rompetrol, Qualcomm, Coca Cola, OMV Petrom, Uber, Premier Energy

Partners: Lockheed Martin, E.ON, Mastercard, Electroalfa, MSD, Enevo Group

Supporters: Aqua Carpatica, Cotnari

Media Partners: PROTV, DC Media Group, Curs de Guvernare, Calea Europeană, KissFM

DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1 - October 24

08:30 - 09:30 Registration & Welcome Coffee

09:30 - 09:50 Introductory Remarks

- **Alessio Menegazzo**, CEO & Country Manager, PPC Romania; Acting President, Aspen Institute Romania
- **Clara Volintiru**, Regional Director, German Marshall Fund of the United States

09:50 - 10:10 Keynote Speech

- **Mircea Geoană**, Former Deputy Secretary General, NATO; Founding President, Aspen Institute Romania

10:10 - 10:20 Coffee Break

10:20 - 11:00

Panel Session

Emerging Tech's Role in Shaping Democracy

Presented by The Center for the Governance of Change at IE University Madrid

The world is witnessing a rise in polarization, illiberalism and nationalism, and a decline in trust in institutions. Dissatisfaction with democracy is at an all-time high and there is a sharpening of competition and conflict between democracies and autocracies worldwide. Several factors contribute to this democratic backsliding, but many experts blame technology, citing engagement optimization fueling conflict or the rapid spread of dis- and misinformation. However, if deployed appropriately, technology can be part of the solution. In particular, AI and other emerging technologies hold the promise of strengthening democratic processes by enabling effective participation, deliberation and collaboration. As trust in institutions continues to decline, the future of democracy hinges on effectively utilizing the powerful possibilities provided by technology. In this panel, we will explore how democratic countries and societies today can foster technological solutions that help defend our countries against malicious acts and enhance governance mechanisms.

- **Axel Dauchez**, Founder and CEO, Make.org
- **Matthias Daub**, Founder of Societec, Former Senior Partner at McKinsey
- **Mihnea Crăciun**, Managing Director, Endeavor Romania
- **Julie Majerczak**, Director of the Brussels office, Representative to the European Institutions, Reporters Without Borders
- **Daria Cătălui**, Advisor, European Union Agency for Cybersecurity / Aspen Fellow

Moderator: Alex Roche, Associate Director, Center for the Governance of Change at IE University Madrid

11:00 – 11:10

Spotlight Conversation

Beyond the Border: Moldova at a Turning Point

- **Natalia Gavrița**, Member of Supervisory Board, National Bank of Moldova

Moderator: Cristina Cileacu, Journalist, DIGI24

11:10 – 11:30

Spotlight Conversation

Spiraling Conflicts in the Middle East

- **Nicolas Tenzer**, Chairman, Center for Study and Research on Political Decision
- **Kim Dozier**, Global Affairs Analyst, CNN

Moderator: Cristina Cileacu, Journalist, DIGI24

11:30 – 11:45

Spotlight Conversation

On Leadership and Transatlantic Perspectives

- **Elliot Gerson**, Executive Vice-President, Policy Programs and International Partners, The Aspen Institute US

Moderator: Kim Dozier, Global Affairs Analyst, CNN

11:45 – 12:30

Panel Session

Regional Security and Perspectives for the War in Ukraine

Presented by The Aspen Institute Kyiv

This panel will explore the evolving security dynamics in the region in light of the ongoing war in Ukraine. Decision-makers and experts in geopolitics, defense, and security will analyze the conflict's impact on regional stability, the role neighboring countries can have in conflict resolution, as well as wider geopolitical implications. Discussions will focus on current military developments, humanitarian challenges, and the broader implications for European security architecture and NATO's strategic positioning. The session aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of both the short-term and long-term prospects for peace and security in the region.

- **Simona Cojocaru**, State Secretary for Defense Policy Planning and International Relations, Ministry of National Defence of Romania
- **Katarína Mathernová**, Ambassador of the European Union to Ukraine (**online**)
- **Andriy Shevchenko**, Head of Mission to Ukraine, Ukrainian World Congress, Former Deputy Minister of Defence/ Aspen Alumnus

Moderator: Denis Poltavets, Director of Program Development, Aspen Institute Kyiv

12:00 - 13:00

SIDE EVENT (Debate, By Invitation Only, Closed Door Format)

The Social Media Debate: Who Should Tackle Misinformation?

Romania's national debate team, renowned for its participation in the World Schools Debate Championships, will facilitate a formal debate on the topic: "Is it the primary responsibility of social media platforms to combat misinformation?"

This session will explore different perspectives on the role of social media in addressing the challenges of misinformation, with participants assessing the arguments presented by the debaters.

12:30 - 13:15

Panel Session

The Reconstruction of Ukraine and the Role of CEE Countries

Presented by The Aspen Institute Kyiv & The Aspen Institute Central Europe

The war in Ukraine has posed a critical test to Europe's commitment to economic and military security, as it continues to inflict human suffering, devastate the nation's economy, and strain Western resources. While the international community yearns for an end to the conflict, it is increasingly clear that support for Ukraine's defense remains paramount, and attention is now turning to the complex challenges of post-war recovery and the creation of a secure European order. Central and Eastern European countries, acutely aware of the threats posed by Russian aggression, are poised to play a pivotal role in both these endeavors. What are the steps that the CEE community is taking to support the reconstruction of Ukraine?

- **Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze**, Head of the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Ukraine's EU Integration (**online**)
- **Kyrylo Kryvolap**, Managing Partner at Civitta UA and Founder of the NGO Center for Economic Recovery
- **Spiros Lambridis**, Ambassador, Special Envoy of Greece for Ukraine
- **Jakub Landovsky**, Executive Director, Aspen Central Europe, Former Czech Ambassador to NATO
- **William Tompson**, Head of the Eurasia Division, Global Relations and Co-operation Directorate, OECD

Moderator: Denis Poltavets, Director of Program Development, Aspen Institute Kyiv

13:15 - 14:00

Networking Lunch Break

14:00 - 14:45

Panel Session

Unleashing the Potential of AI to Drive Innovation and Economic Growth

This panel will explore the transformative role of AI in driving innovation and boosting economic growth across Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). As AI continues to revolutionize industries worldwide, the CEE region is uniquely positioned to harness its potential for technological advancement, economic development, and global competitiveness. Speakers will discuss how AI can be leveraged to foster entrepreneurship, improve productivity, and address regional challenges such as digital transformation, labor shortages, and skill development. The discussion

will also examine key policy initiatives, investment strategies, and collaborative opportunities that can help accelerate AI adoption across multiple sectors.

- **Marius-Viorel Poșa**, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization, Romania
- **Caspar Schauseil**, Managing Director, Digital Hub, Knauf Group
- **Cezara Panait**, Head of Government Affairs & Public Policy, Google Romania and Moldova/ Aspen Alumna
- **Antonella Valmorbida**, Secretary General, European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA)

Moderator: Radu Puchiu, Director, Aspen Technology & Society Program/ Aspen Alumnus

14:45 – 15:30

Panel Session

Cyber Resilience and Network Security in the Context of the AI Revolution

As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms industries and societies, it brings both unprecedented opportunities and significant cybersecurity challenges. This panel will delve into the evolving landscape of cyber resilience and network security as AI becomes deeply integrated into critical systems and infrastructure. Key topics will include how AI-driven solutions can enhance cybersecurity defenses, the potential vulnerabilities introduced by AI applications, and the role of machine learning in detecting and mitigating cyber threats. Experts will also explore regulatory frameworks, ethical concerns surrounding AI in cybersecurity, and strategies for building robust, adaptive systems that can withstand emerging threats in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

- **Dan Cîmpean**, General Director, National Cyber Security Directorate of Romania/ Aspen Alumnus
- **Steve Purser**, Head of the Core Operations Department, European Union Agency for Cybersecurity
- **Joseph Albitar**, Chief Security Officer, Real Time Payments & Transfer Solutions, Mastercard
- **Alexandru Suditu**, General Manager, Enevo Cybersec/ Participant Aspen Young Leaders Program 2024

Moderator: Daria Cătălui, Advisor, European Union Agency for Cybersecurity / Aspen Fellow

15:30 – 16:15

Panel Session

The Growth of Financial Markets in Central and Eastern Europe

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is experiencing a dynamic transformation in its financial markets, driven by economic development, regulatory alignment with the European Union, and increasing investor interest. This panel will explore the key factors fueling the growth of financial markets across the region and the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Discussions will cover trends such as the rise of capital markets, the expansion of private equity and venture capital, the digitalization of financial services, and the role of sustainable finance in shaping the future. Panelists will also assess the region's integration into global financial networks, the impact of geopolitical risks, and how CEE countries are positioning themselves as emerging hubs for innovation and investment.

- **Natalia Gavrilița**, Member of Supervisory Board, National Bank of Moldova
- **Marius Cara**, Head of EIB Group Office in Romania, European Investment Bank
- **Cosmin Vladimirescu**, General Manager Romania and Croatia, Mastercard

- **Dóra Piroška**, Associate Professor, International Relations Department, Central European University, Vienna
- **Marcin Prusak**, Managing Director, BGK - Polish Development Bank

Moderator: Clara Volintiru, Regional Director, German Marshall Fund of the United States/ Aspen Alumna

16:00 – 18:00

SIDE EVENT (Roundtable, By Invitation Only, Closed Door Format, Chatham House)

Bolstering Competitiveness and National Security: the Role of Intellectual Property in Advancing Technology & Innovation Leadership

Governments across the world have recognized the strategic importance of maintaining technological leadership in key areas, including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and advanced telecommunications. Over the last several years, the European Union and the United States have shown a clear commitment to building strong Transatlantic leadership in key technologies. Yet, uncoordinated, ill-conceived and sometimes contradictory regulatory actions risk undermining the achievement of this goal, by eroding the ability of Western companies to maintain their technological edge and lead in the development of key technologies. Policies related to intellectual property rights (IPRs) are a case in point.

16:15 – 17:00

Panel Session

Boosting European Competitiveness: What Future for the IMEC Economic Corridor?

Presented by The Aspen Institute Ananta Center India

The IMEC Economic Corridor is poised to revolutionize global trade and cooperation. By connecting India, the Middle East, and Europe, this ambitious initiative promises to create a robust economic axis, facilitating the seamless movement of goods, services, and capital. The corridor will not only stimulate economic growth and job creation but also foster stronger diplomatic ties and strategic partnerships among the participating nations. Moreover, the IMEC has the potential to diversify trade routes, promote energy security, and enhance supply chain resilience, making it a cornerstone of a more interconnected and prosperous world.

- **Florin Spătaru**, State Counsellor to the Prime-Minister of Romania / Aspen Alumnus
- **Indrani Bagchi**, CEO, Ananta Centre, India
- **Tim Peter**, Policy advisor for the Competitiveness of Europe, Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS), Berlin

Moderator: Roxana Voicu - Dorobanțu, Associate Professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Aspen Fellow

17:00 - 17:30

Spotlight Conversation

Addressing the Digital Divide: Ensuring Nobody is Left Behind by the Digital Revolution

As the digital revolution reshapes economies, societies, and daily life, ensuring equitable access to digital tools and technologies has become a critical challenge. This conversation will explore strategies to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that all communities, regardless of geography, socioeconomic status, or demographics, can fully participate in the digital age. Panelists will discuss key issues such as expanding broadband infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and making technology more affordable and accessible. Additionally, the conversation will focus on the role

of public policy, private sector initiatives, and international cooperation in overcoming barriers to connectivity.

- **Selena Souah**, Board Member, Aspen Institute France
- **Roozbeh Aliabadi**, Co-Founder & CEO, ReadyAI

Moderator: Cosmin Stan, News Anchor, PRO TV

18:00 - 21:00 Power Cocktail Reception (By Invitation Only)

Day 2 - October 25

8:30 - 9:00 Registration & Welcome Coffee

9:00 - 09:15 Introductory Remarks

9:15 - 10:00

Panel Session

The Green Economy and Green Energy Transition - A Paradigm Shift for Industry, Finance and Consumers?

As Europe accelerates its green energy transition in response to climate change and sustainability goals, industries, financial institutions, and consumers are at the forefront of this paradigm shift. This panel will explore how the push for a green economy is transforming traditional sectors, reshaping financial markets, and altering consumer behavior across Europe. Key topics include the role of government policies, innovation in renewable energy technologies, the impact of sustainable finance on investment strategies, and how businesses are adapting to green regulations. Panelists will discuss challenges and opportunities, such as decarbonization, supply chain adjustments, and balancing growth with environmental responsibility.

- **Sorin Elisei**, General Director for Energy Policy, Ministry of Energy of Romania
- **George Agafitei**, Head of Institutional Affairs and Sustainability, PPC Romania
- **Claudia Griech**, Director General, E.ON
- **Ana Maria Borlovan**, Head of Driver Operations Central and Eastern Europe, Uber
- **Andrei Covatariu**, Research Fellow, Centre on Regulation in Europe (CERRE)/ Aspen Alumnus

Moderator: Corina Murafa, Energy & Climate Policy Expert / Aspen Fellow

10:00 - 10:10

Keynote Speech

- **Konstantinos Fragkogiannis**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Economic Diplomacy, Greece

10:10 - 10:55

Panel Session

Ensuring Energy Security in a Turbulent Geopolitical Context

Amid increasing geopolitical tensions, energy security remains a critical concern for Romania and its surrounding region. This panel will examine how the region is navigating the challenges posed by shifting global alliances, supply disruptions, and the evolving landscape of energy production and consumption. Key discussion points will include the diversification of energy sources, the role of domestic resources, including renewables, natural gas and nuclear, and regional cooperation to enhance energy resilience. Panelists will also address the geopolitical impacts of the energy transition, the role of EU policies, and the risks posed by external dependencies.

- **Mihaela Mihăilescu**, Associate Director, Deputy Head for Romania, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- **Christina Verchere**, CEO, OMV Petrom

Moderator: Corina Murafa, Energy & Climate Policy Expert / Aspen Fellow

10:55 - 11:40

Panel Session

Sustainability Shaping Cities and Communities

The critical role of sustainability in shaping the future of urban areas has never been clearer than it is today. As the world faces the urgent challenge of climate change, cities and communities are at the forefront of implementing sustainable solutions. The panel will reunite experts and decision-makers to discuss innovative strategies and solutions to promote sustainable transportation, reduce carbon emissions, improve energy efficiency, and enhance the overall quality of life in cities and communities.

- **Alexandra-Maria Bocșe**, State Adviser - Department of Climate and Sustainability, Presidential Administration of Romania
- **Gemma Webb**, CEO & President of Directorate, RetuRO SGR
- **Alice Nichita**, Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Director, Coca-Cola HBC Romania
- **Ana-Maria Atonoaie**, Partnership & Corporate Relations Director, Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Moderator: Nicoleta Deliu, Head of Corporate Communication and CSR in BCR, Aspen Fellow

11:40 - 12:00 Coffee Break

12:00 - 12:40

Panel Session

Shaping the Balkans' Future: EU Enlargement on the Horizon

Presented by The College of Europe

This panel session will delve into the critical topic of European Union (EU) enlargement and its implications for the Balkan region. Expert panelists will discuss the current state of the enlargement process, key challenges and opportunities, and the potential impact of EU membership on the economic, political, and social development of the Western Balkans.

Keynote Address: Filip Ivanović, Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, Government of Montenegro

- **Oana Cristina Popa**, Expert, EU Enlargement Hub, TEPSA, Former Head of Delegation of European Union to Montenegro
- **Tiago Antunes**, Senior Fellow, School of Transnational Governance, Former Secretary of State for European Affairs, Government of Portugal
- **Ioannis Armakolas**, Head of the South-East Europe Programme, The Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy

Moderator: Odeta Barbullushi, Resident Professor, College of Europe in Tirana

12:40 - 13:10

High-level Conversation on NATO and European Security

- **H.E. Nicolas Warnery**, French Ambassador to Romania
- **General Dominique Trinquand**, Former Head, French Military Mission to the UN and NATO
- **General Daniel Petrescu**, Former Chief of the Romanian Defence Staff, Ministry of National Defence/ Aspen Alumnus

Moderator: Radu Tudor, Political and Defense Analyst

13:10 - 14:00 Networking Lunch

14:00 - 14:45

Panel Session

Countering Disinformation and Misinformation and Deterring Against Hybrid Warfare

In today's interconnected world, disinformation and misinformation pose significant threats to national security and democratic values. Hybrid warfare, a combination of traditional and non-traditional military tactics, often relies on these tools to undermine target nations. This panel will explore strategies to counter disinformation and misinformation, deter hybrid warfare, and protect critical infrastructure. How can we effectively identify and counter false or misleading information spread through various channels, including social media, traditional media, and online forums? How can we enhance the resilience of societies and institutions to disinformation and misinformation, and foster media literacy among citizens?

- **Digne Lubina**, Information Environment Assessment, Public Diplomacy Division, NATO HQ
- **Magnus Hjort**, Director-General, Psychological Defence Agency, Government of Sweden
- **Julie Majerczak**, Director of the Brussels office, Representative to the European Institutions, Reporters Without Borders
- **Katja Christina Plate**, Head of the KAS Offices Romania
- **Tatiana Cojocari**, Expert, Watchdog Moldova/ Aspen Alumna

Moderator: Alina Inayeh, Defense and Security Expert

14:45 – 15:00

High – Level Conversation: Perspectives for Transatlantic Relations

This high-level, dynamic conversation on the evolving landscape of transatlantic relations will explore the strategic priorities shaping the US-EU alliance, the impact of global security challenges, and the future of cooperation in defense, diplomacy, and economic policy – in the context of key elections in the United States but also in important European countries. How can the transatlantic partnership navigate existing global security threats while strengthening shared values in a rapidly changing world?

- **Jane Harman**, Chair of the United States Commission on the National Defense Strategy (**online**)

Moderator: Kim Dozier, Global Affairs Analyst, CNN

15:00 - 15:45

Panel Session

Economic Security & the Supply Chain Conundrum

In an increasingly interconnected world, the resilience of global supply chains is critical to national and economic security. This panel will explore the vulnerabilities exposed by recent disruptions and examine how governments and businesses are rethinking their approaches to supply chain management. Experts will discuss strategies for securing critical resources, reducing dependency on foreign suppliers, and building more robust, flexible supply networks - with a focus on the solutions needed to address the supply chain challenges of today and tomorrow in the Black Sea region, which presents a complex landscape of opportunities and risks. How can countries in the region work together to address common challenges and capitalize on shared opportunities?

- **Claudiu Staicu**, Director General, Large Infrastructure Operational Program, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Romania/ Aspen Fellow
- **Andriy Shevchenko**, Head of Mission to Ukraine, Ukrainian World Congress, Former Deputy Minister of Defence/ Aspen Alumnus
- **Oleksandr Kubrakov**, Former Deputy Prime Minister for Reconstruction, Former Minister for Communities, Territories, and Infrastructure Development, Ukraine (**online**)
- **Yordan Bozhilov**, President of Sofia Security Forum, Bulgaria

Moderator: Roxana Voicu - Dorobanțu, Associate Professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies/
Aspen Fellow