



**European Committee  
of the Regions**

Brussels, 27 March 2018

**NOTICE OF MEETING  
WORKING GROUP ON RELATIONS WITH WESTERN BALKANS**

Meeting No	<b>22</b>
Chair	<b>Franz SCHAUSBERGER (AT/EPP)</b> Representative of the Province of Salzburg
Venue	European Committee of the Regions, Rue Belliard 101, 1040 Brussels (room JDE 70)
Date	3 May 2018
Interpreting	DE/EL/EN/HR/BS/SR/SQ (listening into) DE/EL/EN/FR/HR/BS/SR/SQ (speaking)

**3–3.15 p.m.**

1. **Adoption of the agenda** (COR-2018-01395-00-00-CONVPOJ-TRA)

**Approval of the minutes** of the 21st meeting held in East Sarajevo (COR-2018-01394-00-00-PV-EDI)

2. **Statement by the Chair**

**3.15–4.30 p.m.**

3. **EU – Kosovo<sup>1</sup> relations: recent developments and impact on sub-national authorities**

For the European Committee of the Regions, the role of local and regional representatives in the enlargement process is fundamental by illustrating the benefits of EU membership and encouraging people to make use of the instruments offered by the EU. Furthermore, the enlargement process should be an inclusive exercise, involving all of society.

**Dr Bernard Nikaj**, Ambassador of the Republic of Kosovo in Brussels

**Lukas Mandl**, Member of the European Parliament (AT/EPP)

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<sup>1</sup> This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status of Kosovo, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

**David Cullen**, Head of Unit, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo, European Commission, Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

**Shpend Ahmeti**, Mayor of Pristina

**Srdjan Popović**, Mayor of Gračanica (tbc)

**4.30–4.45 p.m.** Coffee break

**4.45–5.15 p.m.** **Briefing: The issue of local democracy in the city of Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

In the city of Mostar, no local elections have been held for ten years. The Committee of the Regions is monitoring the issue together with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

The Congress is responsible for strengthening local and regional democracy in the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe and assessing the application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. The Congress is made up of two chambers: the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. The Congress and CoR meet regularly to coordinate joint action.

**NN**, Member of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe [*invitation issued; the Congress Reflection Group will be established and speaker nominated by the Congress Bureau in March*]

**Dr Franz Schausberger** (AT/EPP), Chair of the Working Group on Western Balkans

**5.15–6.15 p.m.** **Digital transformation of the Western Balkans**

Digital technology and its successful adaptation are key factors in the successful transformation of the Western Balkans economy and public administration. What is happening in the world of technology, within the EU's various initiatives, and in the region itself that could enhance public services and make the work of local authorities easier and more efficient?

**Gazmend Turdiu**, Deputy Secretary General, Regional Co-operation Council (RCC) (RCC participation confirmed, name pending final tbc)

**Nicholas Cendrowicz**, Deputy Head of Unit, Regional Co-Operation and Programmes (Western Balkans), European Commission, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

**Erion Veliaj**, Mayor of Tirana (tbc)

**Alin Nica** (RO/EPP), Mayor of Dudeștii Noi, Member of the Committee of the Regions, Rapporteur  
on *Mid-term review of the Digital Single Market*

**6.15–6.30 p.m.**      **Any other business.**

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