



EU Merit-Based Enlargement: Utopian, Dystopian or Simply Realistic?

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM - Registration

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM

Opening Remarks

Remarks from Rodrigo Ballester, Head of the Center for European Studies, MCC

Remarks from Her Excellency, C. Gülşen Karanis Ekşioğlu, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Hungary

Remarks from Ayhan Zeytinoğlu, President of the İKTİSADİ KALKINMA VAKFI (IKV)

9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

Panel 1: Who's Next, If Any? – Identifying Potential Candidates for Future EU Enlargement

This panel will examine the EU's perspective on Ukraine and its integration prospects, while also addressing the often-overlooked Western Balkans and Türkiye. Discussions will focus on the current state of EU enlargement, evaluating the potential for candidate countries to join the Union and whether merit-based accession remains viable.

Speakers:

- **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalin**, Visiting Fellow, MCC
- **Dr. László Dux**, Head of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and Enlargement Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- **Dr. Tamás Péter Baranyi**, Director for Strategy, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs
- **Prof. Dr. Tarık Oğuzlu**, Professor of International Relations and Dean of the Faculty of Science and Literature, Istanbul Aydın University
- **Assoc. Prof. Cigdem Nas**, Economic Development Foundation (IKV)

Moderator: **Damille Devenyi**, Researcher, MCC – Center for European Studies



10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Panel 2: Different Speeds to Avoid a Crash – Is an EU À la Carte the Only Way to Keep It United?

This discussion will focus on the concept of a multi-speed Europe and whether an "à la carte" approach, including opt-outs on issues like migration, is necessary to accommodate the diverse political, economic, and cultural realities of EU member states while avoiding internal friction.

Speakers:

- **Rodrigo Ballester**, Head of the Center for European Studies, MCC
- **Dr. Kálmán Pócza**, Head of the Center for Constitutional Politics, MCC
- **Prof. Dr. Sanem Baykal**, Professor of EU Law, TOBB Economy and Technology University
- **Prof. Dr. Meltem Müftüler Bac**, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Professor of International Relations and Jean Monnet chair, Sabanci University

Moderator: **Noémi Pálfalvi**, Director, MCC – International Directorate

11:30 AM - 11:45 AM

Closing Remarks

Thank you remarks from Ayhan Zeytinoğlu, President of the İKTİSADİ KALKINMA VAKFI (IKV)

11:45 AM - 13:30 PM

Reception & Lunch