

Debate on the occasion of the entry into force of the Lisbon treaty National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria

19 December, Sofia,
Plenary hall of the National Assembly

Background of the event

The National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria is launching an information and communication campaign dedicated to the most pressing issues on Europe's agenda. This campaign is organized on the initiative of the parliamentary Committee on European affairs and EU funds monitoring. The idea behind is the understanding that the European project today, more than any other time in history, calls for intellectual depth, imagination, fresh ideas, political courage, and committed support and trust on the part of citizens. The strategic goals of the initiative include, inter alia, engaging citizens in an active and direct dialogue with the National Assembly on the most topical issues on the European agenda, fostering a communication partnership with civil society, and engaging a wide circle of stakeholders in the discussion of draft legislation and topics relating to Bulgaria's membership of the European Union.

The main activity in the framework of the initiative will be the **monthly public talks** and discussions at the Bulgarian Parliament on the challenges the European Union is currently faced up with. Target audience will include, as a matter of priority, students and young people with an active political stance as well as policy stakeholders. The main participants in the initiative will be parliamentarians, representatives of different institutions and sectoral organizations, opinion makers and civil society activists. The discussions will be broadcast live on the Bulgarian parliament's website whilst the organizers will be seeking to achieve wide public coverage.

The very event on 19 December

The debate on 19 December 2011 is the kick-off event of this information and communication campaign, formally dedicated to the second anniversary of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Mr Jean-Dominique Giuliani and Mr Elmar Brok will honor the beginning of the initiative as keynote speakers and main participants in the debate.

Each of the keynote speakers will start with a **10/15-minute** speech in which he will address the audience with his (why not provocative) position on the hottest topics on Europe's agenda in the context of the financial and economic crisis and the suggested solutions of the problems. As this event is not a closed expert forum, the audience will be given the opportunity to debate with the honorable guests on their positions and ideas. The debate is also an opportunity for the keynote speakers to further deploy their insights and main thesis.

The keynote speakers

Mr Jean-Dominique Giuliani - Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation
Mr Elmar Brok - Member of the European Parliament (EPP, DE)

Program of the debate *

(19 December, Sofia, Plenary hall of the National Assembly)

- 10:00 - 10:15 official launch of the campaign by Ms Monika Panayotova
(Chair of the parliamentary Committee on European affairs and EU
funds monitoring)
- 10:15 - 10:30 welcome speech by Mrs Tsetska Tsacheva
President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria
- 10:30 - 10:45 keynote speech by Mr Jean-Dominique Giuliani
Chairman of the Foundation "Robert Schuman"
- 10:45 - 11:00 keynote speech by Mr Elmar Brok
Member of the European Parliament (European People's Party)
- 10:00 -12:00 debate with Bulgarian NGO representatives, diplomats, Bulgarian MP
and Bulgarian students

* interpretation English - Bulgarian - English will be provided by the organizers