



PROFILE OF SPEAKERS

Heidi HAUTALA, MEP,

Vice-President of the European Parliament. Member of the Working Group on Information and Communication Policy.



Heidi Hautala has been elected to the European parliament for a third time in the 2014-2019 term. She was formerly an MEP from 1995-2003 and 2009-2011. She is the only Finn to have chaired a European parliament political group or committee. As chair of the parliament's subcommittee on Human Rights, she had the unique opportunity to influence the human rights situation all over the world.

Heidi also gained prominence in promoting binding referendums and citizens' initiatives. In 2001 she was involved in the foundation of the Initiative and referendum institute Europe (IRIE). From 2007 she was a founding member and honorary vice-president of the EU-Russia centre, based in Brussels. In 2008 she was invited to be chair of the green European foundation, which is close to the European green party. Before becoming the minister for international development, Heidi chaired the European parliament subcommittee on human rights, which has the task of monitoring and promoting human rights throughout the world.



Mikuláš DZURINDA

President of the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (WMCES). Former Prime Minister of Slovakia.



Mikuláš Dzurinda was elected president of the WMCES in December 2013. He is the former Prime Minister of Slovakia (1998-2006) and has held various positions in government since first entering politics in 1990. Once he became Prime Minister and formed a coalition government in 1998, Dzurinda introduced far-reaching reforms which have enabled Slovakia to begin the process of joining the EU and NATO. After being re-elected in 2002, Dzurinda led Slovakia to become a member of the EU and NATO in 2004, a process which he actively took part in from the beginning. Since Slovakia gained independence in 1993, Dzurinda has also held the position of Minister of Transportation and more recently that of Minister for Foreign Affairs (from July 2010 to April 2012). Dzurinda is a founding member of the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (SDKÚ-DS) and was Chairman of the party from 2000 to 2012. From 2012 to 2016 he was a member of the Slovak Parliament. In 2007 he was awarded the F.A. Hayek International Prize for reforms and fight against bureaucracy.



Iñigo MÉNDEZ DE VIGO

Member of the Spanish Congreso de los Diputados, Former Minister and President of College of Europe.



Iñigo Méndez de Vigo y Montojo graduated in Law from the University Complutense de Madrid in the late 70s before he joined the European institutions about ten years later. From 1992 until 2011 he was a member of the European Parliament. During his time at the Parliament, he served as chairman of the European Parliament Delegation to the Convention drafting the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, Vice-President and rapporteur of the Convention (1999-2000) and Chairman of the European Parliament Delegation to the Constitutional Convention on the Future of the Union. Further, he served as Minister of Education, Culture and Sport between 26 June 2015 and 1 June 2018. Currently he is the president of the Commission of Education and Professional Skills in the Spanish Parliament.