

## **8 th UNESCO MOST Winter School Lasting Peace and Human Security**

**February 22– 27, 2026, Kőszeg, Hungary**

### **Speakers**

#### **Timothy Yaw Acheampong (University of Szeged, Hungary)**

Timothy Yaw Acheampong is a Ghanaian PhD Research Fellow based at the Institute of International Economics and Business, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, University of Szeged in Hungary and a former Research Fellow of iASK. He obtained his PhD in Economics from the University of Szeged and a Master of Philosophy degree in Development Studies from the University of Cape Coast. His research interests are in various areas of Development Studies including sustainable development, and the digital economy. His career objective is to contribute positively to global, national, and local development efforts through teaching, research, and community service.

#### **Sajma Ademović (University of Donja Gorica, Montenegro)**

Sajma Ademović is a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Humanistic studies, department of International Relations and Diplomacy at the University of Donja Gorica. She earned her PhD from Akdeniz University as a scholarship recipient of the Government of the Republic of Türkiye. Sajma has participated in and presented at numerous international conferences. She has received numerous awards for academic excellence including the award from the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. Her research interests include: International relations and diplomacy, Europeanization, Theory of Nationalism, Ethnicity and Identity, Democratization and Authoritarianism, Politics of Power and Identity.

#### **Izabella Agárdi (iASK, Hungary)**

Izabella Agárdi is a historian and holds a Ph.D. from Utrecht University. Her research interests are oral history, gender studies, rural women's history, contemporary historiography and literary theory. She focuses on the intersections of personal and public narratives, practices of periodization and tropes of narrating 20th-century history in Central Europe. She is the author of the book *On the Verge of History: Women's History Telling in Central Europe after the 20th Century*, Ibidem, 2022.

#### **Başak Z. Alpan (Middle East Technical University, Turkey)**

Başak Z. Alpan is a Professor of and a Lecturer in European Politics and Political Sociology at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Türkiye. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Birmingham with her research on the Turkish discourses on 'Europe' in the post-1999 period. She conducts research and extensively writes on the European integration, discourse theory, post structuralism, Turkish-EU Relations and football and identity. Alpan worked in many EU-funded projects as a

researcher, including FREE (Football Research in an Enlarged Europe), and FEUTURE (the Future of Turkey-EU Relations). She is currently the Coordinator of the European Studies Programme of the Middle East Technical University and the Jean Monnet Network LEAP ('Linking to Europe at the Periphery').

**Iván Bába (iASK, Hungary)**

Dr. Iván Bába is a lecturer professor at the University of Public Administration and the Hungarian University of Sports Science. Subjects taught at the universities are diplomacy and protocol, art of diplomacy, management and administration in foreign affairs, international negotiations and theory of international relations. He served in Hungarian diplomacy as ambassador of Hungary in Poland and permanent state secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his published studies and books he is dealing with the political systems and international relations from a Central European perspective.

**Orsolya Bajer-Molnár (Center for Pathophysiology, Infectiology and Immunology, Medical University of Vienna, Austria)**

Orsolya Bajer-Molnár is a Senior Postdoctoral Fellow at the Medical University of Vienna, where her research bridges evolutionary biology, public health, and participatory science. Her work focuses on integrating transdisciplinary methodologies into infectious disease prevention, with particular emphasis on pathogen evolution, citizen science, and engagement of vulnerable communities in surveillance efforts. She has held research and teaching positions across Europe, the United States, and Brazil, and has contributed to internationally recognized frameworks for preventive public health policy. She is an active member of the European Citizen Science Association and regularly advises on science-policy interfaces related to epidemic preparedness.

**Kehinde Balogun (Catolica University of Portugal)**

Kehinde Balogun is currently conducting PhD research on Indigenous Psychology at the Catolica University of Portugal. Motivated by her role and responsibilities in co-designing the Wellbeing, Indigenous Knowledge, Sustainability and Equity (WISE) Transformation Initiative at the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) in Bonn, Germany. Kehinde's current research explores how Indigenous self-transcendental wisdom impact human behaviour and societal flourishing. Prior to WISE, she worked at the intersection of Climate Risk Insurance and Disaster Risk Reduction at UNU-EHS, utilizing her previous work experience from South Africa, that was enabled by degrees in Disaster Risk and Business Management.

**Balázs Barta (Pannon Business Network; iASK, Hungary)**

Balázs Barta graduated from the Budapest University of Economics and further pursued management studies in the United States (Wharton, UPenn) and France (INSEAD). He earned his PhD at the University of Sopron, Institute of Engineering and Manufacturing Sciences. After nearly a decade of leadership experience at multinational corporations, he founded PBN in

2006, focusing on applied research and development. Within PBN, the Digital Innovation Hub emphasizes manufacturing digitalization and multidisciplinary research on humanoid robots for social purposes.

**Béla Báthly (The Mayor of Kőszeg, Hungary)**

Mayor of Kőszeg from October 2019. He was previously Deputy Mayor and Member of the Vas County Self-Government Office from 2006 to 2019. He was originally a language teacher and has worked as an interpreter in several cross-border projects and international cooperation initiatives.

**János J. Bogárdi (iASK, Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary, University of Bonn, Germany)**

János Bogárdi is a senior fellow at the Centre for Development Research at the University of Bonn, Germany since 2012, senior scientific advisor Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg, Hungary since 2017, and research professor at the National University of the Public Service, since 2023. He held positions in research and consulting in Europe and Africa (1969-1985). He is a former associate professor for water resources management at the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok (1985-1988) and full professor Wageningen Agricultural University, the Netherlands (1989-1995), the Section Chief at UNESCO International Hydrology Programme in Paris (1995-2003), and the founding director of the United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security and Vice Rector in Europe (2003-2009).

**Katalin Bogyay (President of UNESCO National Commission of Hungary; President of UN Association of Hungary; Founder of Women4Diplomacy International; Former UN and UNESCO Ambassador of Hungary & President of UNESCO 36th General Conference)**

Ambassador Katalin Bogyay is the President of UNESCO National Commission of Hungary, the President of UN Association of Hungary, Founder of Women4DiplomacyInternational and Lecturer at the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy. She is a Member of Board of Trustees of MOME/Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Foundation (2024-) , Member of Ludovika College Board & Mentor/Lecturer of Ludovika College at National Public Service University, International Advisory Board Member of the Institute of Cultural Diplomacy, Germany, and sits on the Steering Committee of Budapest World Science Forum. Ambassador Bogyay served as the 15th Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, New York and as her country's Permanent Delegate to UNESCO in Paris. She was elected unanimously as President of UNESCO's 36th General Conference (2011- 2013) in Paris, the 3rd ever women to this position since 1945. She was unanimously elected in 2020 to Chair the UN 75th General Assembly's Third Committee - Social, Humanitarian, Cultural and Human Rights Issues- in New York. Bogyay writes books on art, culture and diplomacy. She is also a Radio Talk Show Host &Television Commentator.

**Mariam Bregvadze (ECOSOC, RECOVI, CEDAC, Georgia)**

Mariam Bregvadze is an accomplished Georgian political scientist researcher and Ph.D. student in Political Science at Caucasus International University. She is affiliated with Sokhumi State University as a Master of Diplomacy and International Politics and has served as a specialist for the National Agency of Public Registry. Mariam is an active United Nations Representative and Delegate for the ECOSOC-accredited NGOs CEDAC and RECOVI, holding official accreditation at the UN headquarters in Geneva, Vienna, and New York. In 2025, she was honored with the Youth Peace Award from the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality for her outstanding contributions to peacebuilding and civic engagement. As a scholar with the Cyber Jurisprudence International Initiative, her research and professional work focus on digital diplomacy, international humanitarian law, global conflict transformation, and the role of memory in security studies.

### **Klára Breuer (Ambassador of Hungary to the Republic of Finland)**

Klára Breuer is a Hungarian diplomat, who currently serves as the ambassador of Hungary in Helsinki. Ambassador Breuer joined the Hungarian Foreign Service in 1991 after the democratic changes and held different bilateral and multilateral posts in Hungary and abroad. Among others, she served as ambassador of Hungary in Lisbon; in earlier years she was the diplomatic advisor of the late President Ferenc Mádl and the Chief of Cabinet for Foreign Minister János Martonyi. She is a lecturer of the Hungarian Diplomatic Academy and gives presentations on soft and public diplomacy. She enjoys mentoring young people who are interested in a career in diplomacy.

### **Emil Brix (Austrian Research Association, Austria)**

Dr. Emil Brix, born 1956 in Vienna, diplomat and historian, is President of the Austrian Research Association. 1984-1986 Political Secretary for the parliamentary group of the Austrian People's Party; 1986-1989 Head of Cabinet of the Minister of Science and Research; 1990-1995 Austrian Consul General in Cracow/Poland; 1995-1999 Director of the Austrian Cultural Institute in London; 2002-2010 Director-General of Foreign Cultural Policy at the Ministry for European and International Affairs; 2010-2015 Austrian Ambassador to the UK; 2015-2017 Austrian Ambassador to the Russian Federation; 2017-2025 Director of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien. He holds a PhD from the University of Vienna and was awarded Dr. hc. by University of Drohobytch/Ukraine, University of Cluj-Napoca/Romania, and West University of Timisoara/Romania. He is Foreign Member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences. Ambassador Brix is the President of the Vienna Economic Forum. He published numerous books and articles on Austrian and European history of ideas and on contemporary Central Europe.

### **Daniel R. Brooks (University of Toronto, Canada; iASK, Hungary)**

Daniel R. Brooks is Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (Academy of Science) and Fellow of the Linnean Society of London. He has been awarded honorary doctorates from Stockholm University and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and has been a Visiting Fellow of the Ciencias sem Fronteras program of

Brazil and the Stellenbosch Institute of Advanced Study, Stellenbosch, South Africa. Dan is an evolutionary biologist whose work ranges from field studies of the evolution of pathogen-host systems in tropical wildlands to foundational studies of evolutionary theory. He was a pioneer in developing research programs integrating phylogenetic information in studies of ecology and behavior, notably *Phylogeny, Ecology and Behavior: A Research Program in Comparative Biology* (Univ. Chicago Press, 1991), *Parascript: Parasites and the Language of Evolution* (Smithsonian Inst. Univ. Press, 1993), and *The Nature of Diversity: An Evolutionary Voyage of Discovery* (Univ. Chicago Press, 2002), with Deborah A. McLennan. He now focuses his efforts on the interface between science and science policy, integrating evolutionary principles into proactive and effective action plans for coping with the challenges of global climate. Dan is the author of more than 400 scientific publications, including more than 10 books. His most recent books are *The Stockholm Paradigm: Climate Change and Emerging Disease* (Univ. Chicago Press, 2019) with Eric Hoberg and Walter Boeger, and *The Major Metaphors of Evolution: Darwinism Then and Now* (Springer, 2020) and *A Darwinian Survival Guide* (MIT Press, 2023) with Salvatore Agosta.

### **Lika Chimchiuri (UN ECOSOC NGO CIRID, Sokhumi State University, Georgia)**

Lika Chimchiuri is a young Georgian legal researcher and Ph.D. student in Law at Caucasus International University, affiliated with Sokhumi State University as an invited lecturer, Assistant to the Rector, and former Assistant of the Forensic Medicine Laboratory at the Faculty of Law and Diplomacy. She is a UN Representative and Delegate of CIRID NGO (ECOSOC consultative status) and a member of the Young Scientists' Council of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences. In 2025, she received Georgia's State Minister's Office Peace Award for Youth for an innovative peace initiative promoting dialogue, reconciliation and sustainable peace. Her research focuses on international humanitarian law, international criminal law, AI, cybercrime, digital sovereignty and peacebuilding.

### **Sean Cleary (Strategic Concepts Pty, South Africa)**

Seán Cleary founded the FutureWorld Foundation, and is an Advisory Council member of the *Club de Madrid*, *Climate-KIC*, and the *Institute of Advanced Studies, Kőszeg*; a Faculty Member of the *Parmenides Foundation*; a Senior Advisor and Senior Fellow of the *Salzburg Global Seminar*; Special Adviser to the *Global Solutions Initiative*, a Diplomacy Moderator of the *Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator*, and a Director of Companies. He saw diplomatic service in Iran (1970-1975), the USA (1978-1983), and Namibia - where he facilitated all-party negotiations, the release of political prisoners, and the adoption of a Bill of Rights. He served on the Facilitating and Preparatory Committee of South Africa's National Peace Accord and chaired the Working Group on the Code of Conduct for Political Parties. He studied social sciences, philosophy and law in South Africa and Iran, and has an MBA from Henley Management College and has lectured widely on global corporate strategy, development and conflict resolution.

### **David Daou (UNU-EHS, Germany)**

Dr. Daou has been a researcher for the past 18 years, during which he worked with the top European institutions, including the Joint Research Centre in Ispra (Province of Varese, Italy) as well as the European Space Agency, the Dutch Meteorological Institute, the Canadian Space Agency, European Lidar Network, Environment and Climate Change Canada, the AEROCAN Network as well as working as an expert to evaluate projects for the European Commission. Dr. Daou is also working in the field of ethical AI, data science and analytics, software programming and is currently a research manager for climate risks modelling at UNU-EHS in Bonn. He is also teaching AI and remote sensing courses for the Joint Masters program between UNU-EHS and the University of Bonn.

### **Philippe De Lombaerde (UNU-CRIS, Belgium)**

Philippe De Lombaerde (PhD, RWTH) is the Director of the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS), based in Bruges (Belgium). His areas of expertise include: regional economic integration, comparative regionalism, trade policy, and regionalisation and globalisation indicators. Prior to his current position, he has worked at the Neoma Business School, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, National Institute of Development Administration (Bangkok), and the University of Antwerp, among other appointments. His most recent edited books include the Handbook of Regional Cooperation and Integration (Edward Elgar, 2024) and Essays on Global Regionalism (two volumes, Springer, 2026).

### **Gergely Deli (Ludovika University of Public Service)**

Professor Gergely Deli has been Rector of the Ludovika University of Public Service (LUPS) since the 1st of February 2022. He also worked as Dean of the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies in 2021 and has since then been a Lecturer in the Department of Constitutional and Legal History of said Faculty. He is a legal scientist, a former senior advisor to the Constitutional Court and a professor at LUPS, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), and the Széchenyi University of Győr, where he also served as Head of the German Law Centre. Professor Deli speaks six languages and is fluent in English, German and Spanish. His area of expertise is Roman law. He received his law degree from ELTE and his doctoral degree from Pázmány Péter Catholic University. He conducted post-doctoral work at Széchenyi University and also studied in New York and Cambridge. He is the author of several books and publications and an editorial board member of many scientific journals. He earned the title “Doctor of the Academy” of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2023. Professor Deli is an honorary citizen of Bátorfyerénye.

### **Vedran Džihčić (OiiP, Austria)**

Dr. Džihčić is a Senior Fellow at the Austrian Institute for International Affairs (OiiP) and a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations, School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University, Washington D.C. He is a founding director of the Center for Advance Studies Southeast Europe at the University of Rijeka, a Lecturer at the University of Vienna and various universities in the Western Balkans and a member of The

Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG). His research interests focus on democracy and transition processes, EU integration, civil society and protest movements, foreign policy, conflict research and nationalism.

**Gábor Földvári (Institute of Evolution, HUN-REN Centre for Ecological Research, Hungary)**

Gábor Földvári graduated as a biologist, obtained PhD in veterinary parasitology. He thought various zoology, parasitology and parasite ecology courses in English, German and Hungarian. He had research visits at Complutense University (Madrid), Konrad Lorenz Institute (Vienna); Natural History Museum (London). He was guest lecturer in veterinary universities of Madrid, Brno and Vienna. His research, focuses on parasitology, disease ecology, and eco-epidemiology of ticks and tick-borne pathogens and how climate change and biodiversity loss influences it. He leads the Eco-epidemiology Research Group in the Institute of Evolution, HUN-REN Centre for Ecological Research, Budapest and chairs the EU-funded COST Action PRAGMATICK.

**Balázs Hankó (Ministry of Culture and Innovation of Hungary)**

He graduated as a pharmacist from the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Semmelweis University. He earned his PhD with summa cum laude distinction in 2005 and obtained specialist qualifications in pharmaceutical management, supply, hospital and clinical pharmacy, and pharmaceutical care. He began his career at Semmelweis University, later serving as Chief Pharmacist and Vice-Rector for Strategy and Development. He has nearly 20 years of teaching experience and has held the title of University Professor since 2023. Between 2010 and 2020, he worked as a pharmaceutical advisor and ministerial commissioner in the health and higher education sectors. From 2020 to 2022, he served as Deputy State Secretary for Higher Education, and since December 2022 as State Secretary responsible for higher education, innovation, vocational and adult education. Since 1 July 2024, he has served as Minister for Culture and Innovation.

**Vujo Ilić (IFDT, Serbia)**

Vujo Ilić is a research fellow at the Institute of Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. He holds a PhD in political science from Central European University in Budapest, where he specialized in comparative politics. His research focuses on elections, political participation, democratic backsliding, and political violence in Southeast Europe. At the Institute, he has worked on several EU-funded research projects dealing with political trust, democratic innovations, and participation in democratic processes. Vujo frequently serves as an expert for domestic and international organizations, primarily in the development of public policies and the design of empirical research, especially surveys. He has received several awards, including the Central European University Best Dissertation Award, and the Association for the Study of Nationalities Best Doctoral Paper Award.

### **Boglárka Jakabfi-Kovács (MOME, Hungary)**

Dr Boglárka Jakabfi-Kovács obtained her degree in architecture and her PhD from Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME). Her research focuses on systems-based design strategy, the urban implications of the degrowth paradigm, and the integration of these approaches into design education. For the past five years, she has been teaching courses on climate adaptation, systems thinking, and gamification. A family house she co-designed with MARP Studio received both the House of the Year Grand Prize and the Big See Award in 2020. In 2025, she served as symposium chair of the first international symposium focusing on the architecture of degrowth.

### **Jody Jensen (iASK, Hungary)**

Dr. Jensen is the Director of Transdisciplinary Research and Collaboration at iASK. She is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Political Sciences at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. She was the Director of the International Studies MA Program at the University of Pannonia Kozseg Campus and awarded a Jean Monet Chair in European Solidarity and Social Cohesion (ESSCO). She is the Director of International Relations at the Institute of Social and European Studies (a Jean Monet Centre of Excellence) which she helped to found. She served as the national and regional director of Ashoka: Innovations for the Public that supports social entrepreneurs. She teaches frequently abroad and also works for the European Commission. Her areas of research are prefigurative and subterranean politics, new social and political movements, particularly in East and Central Europe and the Balkans; looking at the conjunction of the social and natural sciences in the study of complexity as it translates to social phenomena and change.

### **Rodoljub Jovanović (IFDT, Serbia)**

Rodoljub Jovanović is a Research Fellow and a Coordinator of EduLab at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. He holds a PhD in Human Rights from the University of Deusto and works at the intersection of social psychology, education, and peacebuilding in post-conflict societies. His research focuses on youth, collective memory, and the role of education and civil society in reconciliation processes, particularly in the Western Balkans. His work involves close cooperation with educators, youth initiatives, and civil society actors across borders, exploring how grassroots engagement, memory work, and digital practices can contribute to dialogue, non-violence, and sustainable peace.

### **Malkhaz Kakabadze (Former Ambassador, Former Minister, Tbilisi, Georgia)**

Malkhaz Kakabadze is a Georgian diplomat, researcher, and public leader with decades of experience in international relations, conflict resolution, and European integration. He has served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to Sweden and Finland, Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Minister for Conflict Resolution. He has also worked as a researcher at Swiss universities and as director of a private organization in Switzerland. He holds an MA in Economic and Social Geography from Tbilisi State University.

**Donato Kiniger Passigli (World Academy of Art and Science; Global Peace Offensive Center, Italy)**

Donato Kiniger Passigli is Vice President, World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS), and former UN Senior Official serving for over three decades in highly sensitive missions. He currently leads an international dialogue-driven peace-building initiative called “The Peace Offensive” and acts as the principal advisor of “UNWASTED” a global campaign for environmental sustainability. He was the Co-chair of the UN-WAAS Human Security Campaign for All. Donato specialized in international relations, conflict resolution and public affairs. Donato collaborates with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and prominent universities teaching mediation and communication techniques.

**Gergő Kocsis (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary)**

Gergő Kocsis serves as Deputy State Secretary for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary. He obtained his law degree from the University of Pécs and pursued further studies as a scholarship holder at the Université de Cergy-Pontoise in France. He completed his doctoral studies in international law at the University of Pécs, obtaining his absolutorium in 2016. Between 2012 and 2013, he worked as a trainee lawyer, and in 2013 he began his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade under the Hungarian Public Administration Scholarship Programme. In 2014, he served as a legal officer, followed by his role as Council of Europe desk officer at the Ministry between 2014 and 2016. From 2016 to 2022, he was posted in Strasbourg as a diplomat at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the Council of Europe. Between 2022 and 2025, he served as Head of the United Nations Department. Since May 2023, he has been Permanent Representative of Hungary to the Danube Commission, holding the rank of Ambassador. From June 2023, he served for one year as Secretary of the Danube Commission, and since October 2023, he has been Chair of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) of the Diplomatic Conference responsible for the revision of the Belgrade Convention. He represented Hungary in proceedings related to requests for advisory opinions pending before the International Court of Justice in both 2024 and 2025.

**Zsolt Tibor Kosztyán (iASK, Hungary)**

Throughout his career, Professor Kosztyán has combined academic research with institutional leadership. He served as Head of the Department of Quantitative Methods at the University of Pannonia (2015–2024) and as Senior Research Fellow at the MTA-PE Budapest Ranking Research Group (2017–2022). His research focuses on project planning and management, matrix-based project planning methods, agile project methodologies, risk-based control charts, economic and social network analysis, and higher education rankings and student mobility. Professor Kosztyán holds dual PhD degrees: in Management and Business Administration (2006) and in Informatics (2011), both with summa cum laude distinction. He completed his habilitation in 2014. Notable scientometric achievements: cumulative impact factor of 237.808, 357 publications, 738 citations (513 independent). Among his 69 international journal articles,

25 are ranked D1 and 21 are ranked Q1. His research has been published in leading journals including Expert Systems with Applications, Technological Forecasting and Social Change, Knowledge-Based Systems, Computers and Industrial Engineering, Scientometrics, Journal of Informetrics, and Nature Scientific Data.

**Elira Luli (iASK, Hungary; Luarasi University, Albania)**

Dr. Elira Luli is a Lecturer and Researcher at “Luarasi” University and a Visiting Lecturer at Tirana (State) University, possessing diverse expertise in academia, civil society, and public administration. She received her International Relations and Political Science doctorate from the European University of Tirana in 2017 and was awarded a George C. Marshall Center Alumni Scholar in 2022, after completing a Group research Project on the topic Democratic Backsliding and Security Governance. In July 2024, she finished her post-doc Research Fellowship at the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg, Hungary, under the general project topic “EU and Western Balkans”.

**Szabolcs Márka (iASK, Hungary; Columbia University, USA)**

Szabolcs Márka holds the ‘Walter O. LeCroy Jr. Professor’ chair of Physics at Columbia University. He is an experimental physicist and serial inventor with broad interdisciplinary expertise, currently interested in biophysics and astrophysics. He is a co-discoverer of cosmic gravitational waves and a pioneer of multimessenger astrophysics. His work integrates gravitational waves, high-energy neutrinos, and gamma rays into a unified framework for exploring the universe. Beyond fundamental discovery, he believes scientists have a responsibility to improve human life on Earth. He is committed to applying scientific creativity to help people live happier, healthier, and longer lives and believes that science, art, and exploration together make life worth living.

**Zsuzsanna Márka (iASK, Hungary; Columbia University, USA)**

Dr. Zsuzsa Márka is an astrophysicist at Columbia University. She is a co-recipient of several prizes, including the Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics, for the first direct detection of gravitational waves. She built the timing-distribution hardware for multiple ground-based detectors, initiated new directions in multimessenger astrophysics, and is developing novel machine-learning-based approaches to efficient signal detection. Dr. Márka is a proponent of open data, open software, and open hardware, and of providing research opportunities to students of all ages and backgrounds. Dr. Márka believes that educating young minds for the beauty and value of scientific endeavors is key to long-term progress in science.

**Nenad Markovikj (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, North Macedonia)**

Nenad Markovikj, PhD is a tenured professor at the political science department of the Law Faculty “Iustinianus Primus” in Skopje. He is one of the founders of one of the biggest think-tanks in North Macedonia – the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje (IDSCS). He is a member of the editorial board of the biannual political journal “Political Thought” published by IDSCS and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Skopje. Prof. Markovikj

is a former president of the Macedonian political science association (MPSA) and one of the founders of the Balkan political science association (BPSA). Between 2019 and 2024, he was a member of the Security Council of the Republic of North Macedonia, an advisory body to President Stevo Pendarovski. Prof. Markovikj has more than two decades of experience as a researcher on various socio-economic, cultural, religious and security issues. His methodological scope includes both qualitative and quantitative research methods such as interviews, focus groups and public opinion polls. He is skilled in drafting and conducting questionnaires for qualitative and quantitative research as well as data interpretation. He has basic knowledge of SPSS as well as advanced analytical and academic writing skills. His latest interests include socio-economic and security issues, as well as topics related to nationalism and nation building, regional issues in Southeast Europe, Europeanization, political and legal culture, human rights and freedoms etc.

**Tshilidzi Marwala (Rector of the United Nations University, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Tokyo, Japan)**

Professor Tshilidzi Marwala is the Rector of the United Nations University and an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations. He assumed office as the University's seventh Rector on 1 March 2023. He holds a PhD in Artificial Intelligence and Engineering from the University of Cambridge and a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (magna cum laude) from Case Western Reserve University. Previously, he served as Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg, where he led major initiatives in research development, digital transformation, and student success. His work has contributed to global discussions on artificial intelligence, technology governance, and their societal implications. He is the author of 30 books and co-holder of five patents. He is a Fellow of leading academies, including The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and has served since August 2023 as a member of the United Nations Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board. His honours include the Order of Mapungubwe, South Africa's highest national award, and the Academy of Science of South Africa's Science-for-Society Gold Medal. He has received honorary doctorates in engineering from Tshwane University of Technology (2024) and the University of Pretoria (2025), and was named the 2021 IT Personality of the Year by the Institute of IT Professionals South Africa and one of the 100 Most Influential Africans of 2024 by New African magazine.

**Mirela Metushaj (Aleksandër Moisiu University of Durrës, Albania)**

She is a university lecturer in Diplomacy and Security Studies at the Faculty of Political Sciences and Law, Aleksandër Moisiu University of Durrës (UAMD), Albania. She also recently won a competitive scholarship to undertake a Visiting Professor programme at the University of Teramo, Italy. She holds a PhD in Geopolitics and International Relations from the University of Tirana and a degree in Political Sciences and International Relations from the Scuola di Scienze Politiche Internazionali "Cesare Alfieri" at the University of Florence. She began her academic career in the early 2010s, combining both teaching and research in the fields of diplomacy, geopolitics, and international security. Since 2019, she has been a full-time lecturer at UAMD, where she teaches courses on international diplomacy, strategic studies, and regional security,

while also mentoring students in their research projects. Between 2015 and 2019, she served as the Head of Quality Assurance at the same institution, contributing to institutional development and academic evaluation standards in line with European higher education reforms. Prof. Metushaj's academic research focuses on the strategic interplay between geography, political identity, and international power structures, particularly in the Western Balkans. Her work analyses how geopolitical constraints and regional dynamics affect diplomatic behaviour, security strategies, and regional cooperation.

### **Rock Missamou (Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

Rock Missamou is a water governance and diplomacy professional based in Budapest, holding dual citizenship of Hungary and the Republic of Congo. He holds an MSc in International Water Governance and Water Diplomacy, with expertise in water as a catalyst for peace-building, climate resilience, and sustainable development. His work bridges Europe and Africa, advancing water-based solutions to migration, youth empowerment, and conflict prevention. Fluent in French, English, and Hungarian, he brings an intercultural perspective, strategic insight, and hands-on experience navigating complex political, environmental, and institutional water challenges, partnerships, and policy processes across Africa and its transboundary river basins.

### **Ferenc Mislivetz (iASK, Hungary)**

Dr. Mislivetz is the Founder and Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK), a Jean Monnet Professor and Full Professor at the University of Pannonia. He has taught and conducted research at various universities in Europe and the United States, including the University of Bologna, and Columbia University in New York. He is the Founder and Director of the board of the Institute for Social and European Studies Foundation (a Jean Monnet European Centre of Excellence). He has served as the President of the Social Sciences unit of the Hungarian UNESCO Committee and holds a UNESCO Chair in Cultural Heritage and Sustainability in Kőszeg. He has received numerous awards, including the Knight's Cross of the Hungarian Republic.

### **Erzsébet Nagy Rózsa (Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

Professor at the Department of International Relations and Diplomacy and a renowned expert on Middle Eastern affairs. Her research focuses on foreign policy analysis, Islamic world politics, and regional diplomacy. She has served as a consultant and public commentator on international relations and energy security. Her publications address the geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East and their impact on European security. Through her teaching and policy engagement, she promotes cross-cultural understanding and a critical approach to global power relations.

### **Gergely Németh (Defence Innovation Research Institute of Hungary)**

Dr. Gergely Németh is a senior defense policy expert and executive with extensive experience in strategic foresight, multinational capability development, and defense innovation. Since September 2024, he has served as Chief Executive Officer of Hungary's Defence Innovation and Research Agency. Previously, he led Strategic Foresight at NATO's Supreme Allied Command Transformation, directing major long-term security assessments and pioneering the application of artificial intelligence in defense research. He has held senior leadership roles within the Hungarian Ministry of Defence and NATO Headquarters. Dr. Németh holds a PhD in War Studies and has received national and international distinctions for his contributions to defense transformation.

### **Tamás Novák (iASK, Hungary)**

Tamás Novák is currently the Head of International Relations of the Institute of Advanced Studies Kőszeg (iASK). He is also actively engaged in fostering and strengthening the international collaboration of Hungarian higher education, a mission he considers of paramount importance. From 2018 until August 2025, he served as Science and Technology Diplomat at the Hungarian Consulate General in New York. Prior to this, he held several leadership positions at the Budapest Business School, including Chair of International Business, and also served as a research fellow at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 2013–2014, he spent a year at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington, D.C., as a research fellow of the Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation. Tamás holds an MSc in Economics and a PhD in International Relations from Corvinus University of Budapest.

### **István Peták (Genomate Health; iASK, Hungary)**

Dr. Peták is a physician-scientist who has contributed internationally to three transformative technologies in medicine: In 2003, the first companion diagnostics for the targeted therapy of lung cancer; in 2008, multigene molecular tumor profiling; and in 2021, the first computational AI solution for precision oncology. He has authored over 200 scientific papers. He has received the Breakthrough Innovations in Oncology Award of the American Society of Clinical Oncology and the Future Unicorn Award of Europe. He has experience and training in innovation (MIT) and health technology management (Tel Aviv University). He serves on the Executive Healthcare Committee of DIGITALEUROPE.

### **Ferenc Petruska (Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

Lieutenant Colonel and Associate Professor at the Department of Defense Law and Administration. His work bridges the fields of artificial intelligence, military law, and defense ethics. He explores how new technologies reshape operational law and decision-making in national defense. His recent research examines AI's implications for humanitarian law and autonomous systems in armed conflict. He contributes to NATO and EU working groups on technological innovation and legal regulation, promoting ethical responsibility and resilience in digital defense ecosystems. His teaching combines legal expertise with a practical understanding of emerging technologies in military contexts.

### **Pier Paolo Pigozzi (Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

Pier Paolo Pigozzi is an international law and human rights scholar with more than 20 years of experience in 10 countries. He is an associate professor at the School of Public Governance and International Studies, and the Vice-Rector for International Affairs, both at the Ludovika University of Public Service (Budapest, Hungary). As an attorney, legal scholar and consultant, Pigozzi has held senior roles within non-governmental and academic institutions and provided technical advice to agencies and funds of the United Nations. His work focuses on the implementation of international obligations into national policies that are consistent with local values and cultures.

### **Feyrouz Ahlam Saidi (iASK, Hungary)**

Feyrouz Ahlam Saidi is a researcher specializing in urban and social studies, regional planning, and sustainable development. She earned her Ph.D. in Social Geography and Regional Development from the University of Debrecen in April 2025. She continued as a short-term researcher contributing to projects on small towns. Her work focuses on urban transformation, the role of small and medium-sized cities, global production networks, and sustainable spatial planning. She has published widely and presented at international conferences on emerging urban trends, regional development, and sustainability. She is currently a research fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies (iASK) in Kőszeg, focusing on urban development and regional innovation.

### **Anni Dasho Sharko (Luarasi University, Albania)**

Anni Dasho Sharko is a senior ICT executive and consultant with over 25 years of experience in information systems, digital transformation, and large-scale project management. She served for 12 years at the Ministry of Finance as General ICT Director and as General Project Director of the World Bank-funded Treasury System project. She later worked as ICT Director at CEZ Albania, leading major data, billing, and systems integration projects. Since 2017, she has been Executive Director of the FAB Center for Research, Projects, and Innovation. She has published several scientific articles in national and international journals.

### **Emma Slažanská (Global Peace Offensive Center, Czech Republic)**

Emma Slažanská is a researcher with the Global Peace Offensive Initiative, launched by the World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS) in collaboration with the European Academy of Sciences and Arts (EASA). She holds a Master's degree in International Relations and Diplomacy and has developed professional experience across civil society organisations, policy research institutions, and international dialogue processes. Her work examines how trust, social cohesion, and locally grounded initiatives can reduce tensions and support human wellbeing in periods of instability. She contributes to the Peace Offensive's diagnostic tool by analysing concrete contexts and identifying pragmatic pathways for dialogue and cooperation.

### **Ivana Stepanović (iASK, Hungary)**

Dr. Stepanović is a permanent research fellow at iASK and lecturer at the University of Pannonia, Kőszeg Campus. She is the Academic Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair for Culture Heritage Management and Sustainability in Hungary. She holds a PhD in Anthropology from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, an MA in Human Rights South-East Europe from University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and University of Bologna. Her teaching and research activities focus on social media research, reconciliation in former Yugoslavia, online activism, and the impact of artificial intelligence on societies.

### **Igor Stipić (iASK, Hungary)**

Igor Stipić is a social anthropologist specializing in educational politics and youth. Currently writing *Abandoning States: Class, Violence, and Emotions at a Working-Class School* in Santiago de Chile, his research examines how young people navigate state institutions and political engagement in conditions of marginalization and inequality. A former high school teacher in Bosnia-Herzegovina and researcher at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Kőszeg, Hungary, where he taught in the MA International Studies program, Igor has conducted extensive fieldwork on youth politics in Southeast Europe and Latin America. His work explores how educational institutions and lived experiences shape political subjectivities and young people's relationships to democracy and the state.

### **János Székely (Bishop of Szombathely, Hungary)**

Hungarian Roman Catholic theologian and bishop. He currently serves as the Bishop of Szombathely and is the President of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference. Previously, he was an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Esztergom-Budapest. He studied theology in Esztergom, Budapest, and Bethlehem, and pursued advanced biblical studies in Rome at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, earning a licentiate degree. Ordained a priest in 1991, he has served in various pastoral, academic, and leadership roles, including parish priest, rector of the Esztergom Theological College, and associate professor of New Testament studies at Pázmány Péter Catholic University. Appointed diocesan bishop of Szombathely by Pope Francis in 2017, he is also known for his commitment to social issues, interfaith dialogue, and pastoral outreach.

### **András Szöllősi-Nagy (iASK; Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

SZÖLLŐSI-NAGY, András, CE, Hydrologist, PhD, Dr. Habil., Doctor of Science of the HAS, Prof. Dr. HC mult., Professor at the Faculty of Water Sciences, Ludovika National University of Public Service, Budapest, scientific advisor of iASK. President of the Sustainable Water Futures Programme /Future Earth. Previously Secretary General of the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) for 20 years, later President of its Council. Served as the Rector of the UNESCO-IHE Institute of Water Education, Delft. Currently UNESCO Chair on Water Conflict Management at the Ludovika University. He is a member and currently Vice-President of the Hungarian Academy of Engineering and Vice-President of the Hungarian Society of Natural Sciences.

### **István Tarrósy (University of Pécs, Hungary)**

István Tarrósy is Professor of Political Science and African Studies at the University of Pécs, Visiting Professor at CISAD, Jagiellonian University, and Research Fellow at the Centre for International and Comparative Politics, Stellenbosch University. He directs both the Africa Research Center and the International Center at the University of Pécs, and is the founding editor-in-chief of the Hungarian Journal of African Studies (Afrika Tanulmányok). A former Fulbright Scholar and Japan Foundation Fellow, his recent books include *Trust and Trust-Making in Africa's Global Connections* (BRILL) and *Selected African Studies in Memory of Zsuzsánna Biedermann* (Cambridge Scholars).

### **Luka Martin Tomažič (Alma Mater Europaea University, Slovenia)**

Luka Martin Tomažič is an Associate Professor and Vice-Rector for Research at Alma Mater Europaea University, a Full Member and Vice-President of the Slovenian Academy of Legal Sciences, an Expert/Case Writer for Columbia University Global Freedom of Expression and a Lead Researcher at the Global Peace Offensive Center of the World Academy of Art and Science. In 2023 and 2024, the JusInfo portal named him among Slovenia's top ten most influential lawyers.

### **Blerta Tuci (EU Policy HUB Center, Albania)**

Blerta Tuci is the Executive Director of the EU Policy HUB Center, where she leads initiatives empowering young professionals to monitor, analyse, and shape Albania's path toward EU membership. She is also a member of Albania's National Council of Civil Society. With extensive experience in EU-funded project development and policy drafting, she has contributed to EU programme implementation, and civil society strengthening across the Western Balkans. Her professional background includes heading the EU Integration Unit at the Municipality of Tirana, conducting research in Hungary, managing diverse projects, and providing high-level consultancy to public institutions and international bodies such as UNDP, UN Women, COWI, GFA, and the Puglia Region.

### **Kıvanç Ulusoy (Istanbul University, Turkey)**

Prof. Dr. Kıvanç Ulusoy is currently a Professor of Political Science at the Istanbul University. He was previously a Fulbright Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School (2012-2013), a Jean Monnet Fellow at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Florence (2003-2004) and a fellow at the Madrid Diplomatic School (1996-1997). His areas of research include regime change and democratization, Turkish politics and foreign policy, Spanish politics, American foreign policy and foreign policy of Israel. Dr. Ulusoy has conducted studies at the Departments of Political Science and International Relations in various universities such as the Middle East Technical University, Bogazici University and Sabanci University in Turkey; Granada University in Spain; Stockholm University in Sweden; Tsukuba University in Japan; and Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. Some of his recent publications include "Special Issue: Geopolitics of Conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean", *The*

Journal of Balkans and the Near East, Vol. 18, No. 4, (2016); “Turkey and Israel: Changing Patterns of Alliances in the Eastern Mediterranean”, Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies, (2020); “Testing Turkey’s state capacity: The Syrian Migration Crisis as Catalyst”, European Journal of Law and Migration, (2021); “The Montreux Convention: A key for Understanding the Geopolitics of the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea”, (2024), Southeast European and Black Sea Studies.

**Réka Varga (Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

Dean of the Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies and Head of Department and Associate Professor at the Department of International Law, as well as a Justice at the Constitutional Court of Hungary. Her research and expertise primarily cover international humanitarian law, international criminal law, and the regulation of armed conflict. Drawing on a decade of experience as a legal adviser with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Hungarian Red Cross, her academic and professional work bridges law and policy. She advocates for stronger humanitarian frameworks, the practical application of international law in military operations, and victim-centered legal and operational approaches. Through her leadership and teaching, she promotes practical legal problem-solving, and a strong ethical foundation for future public administration and diplomatic professionals.

**Charles Vörösmarty (City University of New York, USA)**

Charles J. Vörösmarty is a professor at the City University of New York. His research focuses on developing computer models and geospatial datasets to study the interactions between the water cycle, climate, biogeochemistry, and anthropogenic activities. He has made significant contributions to raising global awareness about water issues.

**Rubin Zemon (iASK; Center for Advanced Researches, North Macedonia)**

Dr. Zemon is an ethnologist and social-cultural anthropologist, and the Director of the Center for Advanced Research. He was a research associate at the Institute for Social and Humanistic Research "Euro-Balkan" in Skopje, a university professor at the University "St. Apostle Paul" in Ohrid. He was appointed Director of the Institute for Social and Humanistic Research at the Euro-Balkan University in Skopje. He is an expert for the Council of Europe and OSCE / ODIHR for various missions and projects related to national minorities and multiculturalism, in European countries, especially in South-Eastern Europe.

**Zsolt Zódi (Ludovika University of Public Service, Hungary)**

Zsolt Zódi is a research professor at University of Public Service. He graduated as a lawyer, and spent a few years at his alma mater in Miskolc as a lecturer. In 1996 he left the academia and worked in the professional publishing industry for 20 years. In 2011 he returned to the academia and worked at Corvinus University and now at Ludovika University as a professor. His fields of research are the regulatory issues of the information society, modern technologies (including

artificial intelligence), and internet platforms. He is an author of three books and more than 130 articles and book chapters.