
European business elite meets in Sofia

On the 17th and 18th of May in Sofia, Intercontinental Hotel (Narodno Sabranie Sq.), will be held the Council of Presidents of [BusinessEurope](#) – the largest and most influential business organization in Europe, whose members is BIA. The event is a part of the [program of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU](#) and is hosted by BIA.

Delegations of national business organizations, [members of BusinessEurope](#), from 28 European countries will be participating in the forum, incl. Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Iceland, Spain, Lithuania, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of San Marino, Slovakia, Turkey, Hungary, Finland, France, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Switzerland.

The **program** also includes meetings of the [participants](#) with representatives of the Bulgarian institutions, incl. with the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Rumen Radev, and the Minister for the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU Lilyana Pavlova.

The Council of Presidents of BusinessEurope consists of the heads of member federation and its meetings are held twice a year at the host of the federation whose country holds the Presidency of the Council of the EU. In this case, the meeting is hosted by the Bulgarian Industrial Association, whose Executive President [Bojidar Danev is also Vice President of BusinessEurope](#).

BusinessEurope is the leading advocate of growth and competitiveness at European level, representing the interests of 20 million small, medium and large businesses across the continent. BusinessEurope is an officially recognized social partner at European level and brings together 39 business organizations from 34 European countries (including non-EU members). The organization is based in Brussels and actively interacts with the European Parliament, the European Commission and the EU Council as well as other stakeholders in the political community.

In 2018, BusinessEurope celebrated its [60th anniversary](#). It is the oldest and most respected business organization in Europe, founded on February 8, 1958, under the name "Union of Industries of the European Communities – UNICE", in order to accompany the political process initiated by the Treaties of Rome.

President of BusinessEurope since 2013 is [Emma Marcegaglia](#) (president of the Italian business organization Confindustria). During the meeting in Sofia, **a new chairman of the organization will be elected** for the next two-year term of office.

As a part of the program surrounding the event, some of the delegates will take part in the [ceremony](#) of awarding BIA's annual **"IN-5"** awards for contribution to the development of Bulgarian economy (17 May, 11:00, BIA Conference Hall). BusinessEurope's Director General Markus Beyrer will award some of the prizes.

EVENT WORKING PROGRAMME

<i>Time</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Event</i>
17 May 2018, Thursday		
11.00-12.00	BIA Conference Hall, 16-20 Alabin Str.	Ceremony for awarding BIA's "IN-5" awards for contribution to the development of economy
14.00-15.00	President of the Republic of Bulgaria, 2 Dondukov Blvd.	Meeting of heads of delegations and the President of the Republic of Bulgaria <i>Note: The meeting is closed for media. Photo reporters and operators will be allowed at the beginning for protocol pictures.</i>
18 May 2018, Friday		
9.00-13.00	Intercontinental Hotel, Ballroom hall	Meeting of Council of Presidents of BusinessEurope. Topics for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report by the President and Director General of BusinessEurope for the organization's activity in the last half year; - Political and economic outlook in Member States (exchange of information on topical national developments); - BusinessEurope priorities for the EP election (key milestones in the EU election processes, main issues expected in the public debate, strategic discussion on the priorities to be promoted by business); - Brexit (update on negotiations and report by CBI on the situation in the UK); - Update on international trade relations with focus on EU-US dialogue; - Election of new President of BusinessEurope; - Election of Vice Presidents and updated list of Executive Bureau and Executive Committee/Board of Directors of BusinessEurope. <i>Note: The meeting is closed for media. A summary of the results of the discussions will be disseminated after the end of the forum.</i>
• 11.00	Intercontinental Hotel, Ballroom hall	Welcome speech by Lilyana Pavlova – Minister of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU <i>Note: Open for media</i>
• 11.15	Intercontinental Hotel, foyer	Coffee break for delegates and media briefing with Emma Marcegaglia – President of BusinessEurope
13.00	Intercontinental Hotel	Family photo