



Ireland and the Nordic-Baltic 8

Working together for a Secure,
Sustainable and Digital Europe

25 October 2019

DENMARK ESTONIA FINLAND ICELAND IRELAND LATVIA LITHUANIA NORWAY SWEDEN



Future of the **EU27**



An Roinn Gnóthaí
Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of
Foreign Affairs and Trade



Programme

8.30-9.00 Registration (Tea and Coffee)

9.05 Opening Remarks

Mr Richard Bruton TD, Minister of Communications,
Climate Action and Environment

Mr Sturla Sigurjónsson, Permanent Secretary of State,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Iceland

9.25-10.30 The New Reality: Unconventional
Security Challenges, Cyber
Security and Asymmetric Threats

Ms Kirsti Narinen, Director of International Relations,
European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats.
Changing Character of Peace – the Landscape of Hybrid Threats

Prof. Šarūnas Liekis, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science
and Diplomacy, Vytautas Magnus University
The Baltics as a Grey Zone in EU and Russian Systemic Narrative

Assistant Prof. Ed Burke, University of Nottingham
*Irish sovereignty, cyber-security and counter-intelligence
in the 21st century*

10.30-10.45 Tea/Coffee Break

10.45-11.55 The Digital Revolution: Fostering
Innovation, Infrastructure and Investment

Mr Tõnis Nirk, Ambassador-at-Large for Digital Affairs, Estonia
Cross-border Cooperation in Public e-services

Dr Adrienne Harrington, Chief Executive, The Ludgate Hub
Digital Innovation and the Ludgate Experience

Mr Arturs Toms Plešs, Parliamentary Secretary of the
Ministry of Environment and Regional Development, Latvia
Digital transformation – Government platform for innovation

Mr Barry Lowry, Chief Government Information Officer at
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
*The challenges to Digital Government in Ireland and the strategies to
address them*

12.00-13.05 The Right Time to Go Green:
Climate Neutrality, Sustainable
Energy and Prospects for the
Green Economy

Mr Erik Figenbaum, Chief Research Engineer at
the Norwegian Institute of Transport Economics.
*Norway's supercharged battery electric vehicle market –
Lessons learnt*

Ms Kristine van het Erve Grunnet, Managing
Director of Renewable Energy for Danish Energy
Denmark - a global frontrunner in offshore wind

Mr Alex White SC, Former Minister for Communications, Energy
and Natural Resources
*Beyond the electoral cycle: mobilising public opinion in the
transition to a green economy*

Dr Magnus Olofsson, Senior Advisor, Nordic
Energy Research
*Green transition and digitalization in the Nordic-Baltic
Energy Market*

13.05-13.15 Closing Remarks

Mr Matti Anttonen, Permanent State Secretary, Ministry of
Foreign Affairs, Finland

13.15 Sandwich/ Light Lunch Provided

Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin (Moderator)

Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin is an Assistant Professor in the School of Mathematics & Statistics at University College Dublin, where she is director of the BSc. Science, Mathematics & Education programmes in the College of Science. Following on from her extensive experience as a science communicator on TV, radio and in print, Aoibhinn is interested in research on public engagement in science. In 2017, Aoibhinn won the SFI (Science Foundation Ireland) Outstanding Contribution to STEM Communication Award. Aoibhinn has published nationally and internationally on her research and plays an active role in a number of national and international networks.



Matti Anttonen

Matti Anttonen was appointed Permanent State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland on 1 March 2018. Prior to this appointment, he served as Ambassador of Finland to Sweden. Mr Anttonen joined the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1986 and has worked at diplomatic missions in Washington DC, as Minister and Deputy Head of Mission, and at the Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN in Geneva. Between 2013 and 2016, he served as Under-Secretary of State for External Economic Affairs at the Ministry. Much of Mr Anttonen's career has been connected with Russia; 2008-12 as Finland's Ambassador to Russia, 1994-2002 as Director for Russia, and later as Deputy Director General of the Division for Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Mr Anttonen holds Masters degrees in economics and modern history.



Richard Bruton TD

Richard Bruton TD was appointed Minister of Communications, Climate Action & Environment on 16 October 2018 having previously served as Minister of Education and Skills in the current Government. Richard was Minister for Enterprise and Employment from 1994 to 1997 when 1,000 jobs a week were being created in Ireland. He served as Minister of State at the Department of Industry and Commerce, from 1986 to 1987. Richard was first elected to Dáil Éireann for Dublin North Central in 1982, having previously been a member of the Senate and a Local Authority. He has had wide experience in the Fine Gael Front Bench, holding eight different portfolios including Finance, Education and Science, Employment, Economic Planning and Public Sector Reform. He also held the post of Director of Policy. Richard is a research economist by profession, and worked as an economist before entering politics in the private sector and with the ESRI.



Assistant Professor Edward Burke

Dr Edward Burke is an Assistant Professor in International Relations and Director of the Centre for Conflict, Security and Terrorism at the University of Nottingham specialising in insurgency, terrorism and British/EU foreign and defence policy. Prior to joining the University of Nottingham in September 2017, he was a Lecturer in Strategic Studies at the University of Portsmouth, attached to the Royal Air Force College. From 2010 to 2011, Dr Burke was Deputy Head of the International Police Coordination Board in Kabul, Afghanistan, having previously served as a Strategy, Planning, Analysis and Reporting Officer at the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan. He has also worked as a Foreign Policy Fellow at FRIDE (Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior) in Madrid and at the Centre for European Reform in London.



Kristine van het Erve Grunnet

Kristine van het Erve Grunnet is Managing Director of Renewable Energy at Danish Energy, a non-commercial lobby organisation for Danish energy companies. Kristine works to secure the most favourable framework conditions in order to ensure green development, growth and well-being in Denmark. For the last 12 years, she has worked within the heavily regulated and complex areas of environmental, energy, and health policy. She strives to make an impact by leading and executing public affairs strategies within the field of renewable energy and was previously Head of Secretariat for the Danish Bioenergy Association at the Confederation of Danish Industry. She is a member of the board for the Department of Food and Resource Economics at Copenhagen University.



Erik Figenbaum

Erik Figenbaum is the Chief Research Engineer at the Norwegian Institute of Transport Economics and leads the Institute's core research area, "Environment and Technology". Erik has worked at the Institute since 2012 on a variety of projects including in the areas of electric vehicles and vehicle technologies for emission reduction, alternative fuels and energy carriers, and diffusion of technologies. Prior to joining the Institute, he was Chief Engineer in the Environmental section of the Norwegian Public Roads Authority. He is also a former advisor at the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority. He has served on a number of government advisory councils and is currently a Board member of the Energi21 initiative of the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy. He holds a MSc in Engineering from the Norwegian Institute of Technology.



Dr Adrienne Harrington

Dr Adrienne Harrington took up the post of Chief Executive of the Ludgate Hub in Skibbereen in September 2017, leaving Dublin after 25 years to move to West Cork. Prior to that, she was responsible for digital and data protection policy in the Department of the Taoiseach. As a civil servant for many years, Dr Harrington worked in a variety of Government Departments, as well as being Chief Executive of the Psychological Society of Ireland for a number of years. She also spent time in Namibia as a development worker with Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO). Dr Harrington is chair of the Irish government's South West Regional Enterprise Plan, appointed by the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation. She holds a Doctorate in Governance from Queen's University Belfast, as well as a Masters in Business Studies from the University College Dublin (UCD) Smurfit Business School.



Professor Šarūnas Liekis

Prof. Šarūnas Liekis is the Dean of the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy at Vytautas Magnus University, (VMU) a member of the faculty Council, Professor at the Department of Political Science, and a member of the VMU Senate. Prior to this, he taught at Mykolas Romeris University. Prof. Liekis earned a PhD in Social Sciences from Brandeis University (USA) in 1997. Professor Liekis is a member of a number of research consultation and working groups in Lithuania and abroad. Since 2002, he has served as an expert for the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) at the Council of Europe. He is also Chairman of the executive group for the Tauta Ir Valstybė (The Nation and the State) project under the Research Council of Lithuania.



Barry Lowry

Barry Lowry has been the Chief Information Officer for the Irish Government since April 2016 with the primary task of taking forward the Public Service ICT and eGovernment Strategies. These set out ambitions for developing the use of shared services, digital services and data to better serve the people of Ireland and to ensure that Ireland is well-placed to benefit from European initiatives such as the Digital Single Market. Barry was previously the Director for IT Shared Services and Strategy and Head of the IT Profession within the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Barry is a Fellow of the Irish and British Computer Societies and is a former winner of the BCS Northern Ireland IT Professional of the Year. He was awarded an O.B.E. for services to the Northern Ireland Government and the Northern Ireland Computer Industry in 2017.



Kristi Narinen

Kirsti Narinen is the Director of International Relations at the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. She is a former Finnish diplomat with a 34-year career in Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Kirsti was Finnish Ambassador to Estonia until 2018. She also served in the Soviet Union and Russia, and in Slovenia. At home in Finland, she has worked in a variety of policy areas including EU energy, Justice and Home Affairs coordination, arms control, and HR as a member of the founding team creating the Ministry's Occupational Well-being function. She holds a degree in Law from the University of Turku in Finland.



Tõnis Nirk

Mr Tõnis Nirk was appointed Ambassador-at-large for Digital Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Estonia in 2018. He has worked for the Ministry for over 25 years and formerly served as Estonian Ambassador to Latvia and to the UN in Geneva. Tõnis has led a number of Ministry departments including as Director General of the Department of Europe and Transatlantic Cooperation, the European Union Department, and the Foreign Economic Policy Department. He holds a Masters degree in Economics from Tartu University.



Dr Magnus Olofsson

Dr Magnus Olofsson holds a position as senior adviser at Nordic Energy Research, an intergovernmental organisation within the framework of the Nordic Council of Ministers. He is a former Director-General for the governmental authority Swedish Electrical Safety Board and has been CEO of Swedish electrical utilities' R&D company. He holds a PhD in power systems engineering from Royal Academy of Engineering Sciences. Dr Olofsson is an elected member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences and is national expert in ISGAN – International Smart Grid Action Network – which is an initiative of the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) and a Technology Collaboration Programme (TCP) of the International Energy Agency (IEA). Dr Olofsson is for the time being senior advisor to the electrical company H&MV Engineering with head office in Limerick, Ireland.



Artūrs Toms Plešs

Artūrs Toms Plešs is Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Environmental and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia. Artūrs has been a member of the Latvian parliament since 2018 and served on the Parliamentary Committee on Economic Affairs, Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Policy working on environment and climate policy. He is a member of the Development/For! parliamentary group. Prior to his election to parliament, he has worked in local government. He is also a former Communications Consultant for the “Development of Latvia” party. Artūrs holds a Masters degree in Urban and Regional Engineering Economy from Riga Technical University.



Sturla Sigujónsson

Sturla Sigujónsson is Permanent Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Iceland and has served in the Department of Defence and NATO headquarters in Brussels. In 1997, Sturla was Consul-General in New York and from 2000-2002, he was Deputy-Head of Mission, EU Mission in Brussels. In 2002, he was appointed Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has served as Ambassador of Iceland to Ecuador, Peru and Costa Rica. From 2014-2017, he was Ambassador to Canada. He holds a BA in History and English and a Masters degree in English Literature.



Alex White

Alex White SC is a former Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, serving from 2014-2016, during which time, he published an ambitious Energy White Paper which set the course for a carbon-free energy system. Previously, Alex served as Minister of State for Primary Care from 2012 to 2014. He was directed the Labour Party’s Marriage Equality Campaign in 2015. Prior to entering politics, Alex was a producer with RTÉ (Irish Television).





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