



European  
Commission

CONFERENCE ON

# A THRIVING CIVIC SPACE FOR UPHOLDING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN THE EU: A FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE ACTION

**16 NOVEMBER 2023, BRUSSELS**

Rue de la Loi 200, BERLAYMONT building, 1st floor, room ROBERT SCHUMAN

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND SPANISH PRESIDENCY  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU**



Justice  
and Consumers



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## Programme:

**09:00 – 09:30** Welcome of participants and registration

**09:30 – 10:00** *Opening remarks*

- **Ana Gallego Torres**, Director General Justice and Consumers, European Commission
- **David Vilas Álvarez**, Director General for International Legal Cooperation and Human Rights, Spanish Ministry of Justice
- **Sergey Lagodinsky**, Member of the European Parliament
- **Małgorzata Szuleka**, Head of advocacy, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

**10:00 – 11:00** *Lessons learnt from the 2023 seminars on civic space*

- **Erik Adell Hellström**, Deputy Director, Swedish Ministry of Employment
- **Ozlem Yildirim**, Vice-President of the Group on Fundamental Rights and the Rule of Law, European Economic and Social Committee
- **Andreas Accardo**, Head of the Institutional Cooperation and Networks Unit, Fundamental Rights Agency

Q&A

**11:00 – 11:15** Coffee break

**11:15 – 12:30** *Protect and support civil society organisations and human rights defenders*

- **Niklas Wilhelmsson**, Head of Unit, Ministry of Justice Finland
- **Ionut Sibian**, Executive Director, Civil Society Development Foundation, Romania
- **Valeria Setti**, Deputy head of unit, Budget, Programmes and Financial Unit Management, Directorate General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission
- **Gabriella Civico**, President, Civil Society Europe
- **Debbie Kohner**, Secretary General, European Network National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)

Q&A



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**12:30 – 13:30**

**Networking lunch**

**13:30 – 14:30**

*The way forward: promote a thriving civic space in the EU*

Open discussion.

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**14:30 – 15:00**

**Closing remarks**

**María Pilar Llop Cuenca**, Spanish Minister of Justice (video message), and  
**Didier Reynders**, Commissioner for Justice

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Interpretation provided from FR-DE-EN-IT-ES and to FR-DE-EN-IT-ES