

INVITATION**BÖLL LUNCH DEBATE****What Do We Commemorate When We Commemorate WWI? The Impact of the First World War on Europe Today**

On 28 July 2014 it is hundred years ago that the First World War broke out. It lasted four devastating years, caused the death of over 15 million people and left 20 million injured and maimed. It was a European catastrophe, which brought disaster upon the rest of the world. Peace lasted only 30 years. It took another even more devastating war before European leaders realised that things had to change. When Europeans commemorate the beginning of WWI this summer they should therefore be reflecting not only on the political causes of the war and the human tragedy it caused but also on the start of a new era for Europe, the birth of the European project that began with the Schuman declaration in May 1950. The European project has been considered a success story for many years; certainly when in 2004 with the "Eastern enlargement" the East/West divide seemed to be finally overcome. However, at least since the outbreak of the financial crisis, the European Union has come under pressure by the rise of Euroscepticist, populist and nationalist forces. Are the EU-institutions and the Member States ready to continue and strengthen the integration process, will they try harder to reach out to citizens and re-involve them in the project, which has given them more than 60 years of peace and relative prosperity? Or will European countries return to their nationalist end egoistic past with all the consequences? And, what about Germany? Embedded in the European Union, the reunited country has become the most powerful, stable and wealthy European state. It owes the European project its success, but is it ready to play a leading role in the further integration process?

Date **Wednesday, 25 June 2014, 13.00 – 14.30**
(sandwich lunch 12.30-13.00)

Venue **Leopold Hotel Brussels EU**
Rue du Luxembourg 35
B-1050 Brussels

Welcome **Bastian Hermisson**, Director Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung European Union
Speakers **Dr Maarten van Alstein**, Researcher, Flemish Peace Institute
 Dr Fraser Cameron, Director EU-Russia Centre, Brussels
 Susanne Spröer, head of Culture Background, Deutsche Welle,
 Bonn, Germany

Moderator **Dr Ilana Bet-El**, historian, writer and political analyst

No admittance without confirmed registration. E-Mail registration only. Please send the attached reply form to: Daniel.Luechow@eu.boell.org.

The conference language is English – no translation.