

“Ahead of the 2021 Italy G20 Summit” Webinar Series

Introduction

The G20 is the international forum that brings together the world’s major economies. Its members account for more than 80% of world GDP, 75% of global trade and 60% of the population of the planet.¹ The impact of interfaith summits and the contribution of faith actors and civil society has been acknowledged by G8 leaders in the past and G20 leaders of today. Working in cooperation with the G20 Interfaith Forum Association² and the Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose Giovanni XXIII (Fscire—the partner Italian institution chairing this year’s G20 Interfaith Forum in Bologna),³ the webinar series is organized by⁴ the Baha’i International Community, the European Evangelical Alliance, the European Platform Against Religious Intolerance and Discrimination, the Fondazione Bruno Kessler, the G20 Interfaith Forum, the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University, the King Hamad Chair for Inter-Faith Dialogue and Peaceful Co-existence at the Sapienza University of Rome, the Study Center and Magazine Confronti, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - European Union & International Affairs Office, the University of Siena, and the World Faith Development Dialogue. Its aim is to touch on the main themes of this year’s G20 Summit that will take place in Rome, Italy. The organizers hope the presentations and the discussions will generate ideas that will inform and be further developed ahead of the upcoming summit.

The primary audience for this series is comprised of government officials, diplomats and their staff, academia, non-governmental organizations, representatives of churches or religious groups, and others who are involved in the G20 process or are otherwise engaged with multilateral and international organizations. The experience and expertise of the speakers and panelists will be geared toward these groups. The series may be advertised by the organizations of the invited speakers, as well as other entities associated with the co-sponsors of the series. While the webinars will be broadcast live, each episode will be recorded and published on the website of the G20 Interfaith Forum,⁵ the webinar series’ landing page⁶, distributed on social media and via the co-sponsors’ newsletters, thus raising awareness about these issues among the public.

It is anticipated that this series will run monthly through until July 2021, with episodes starting in May. The series will be hosted and moderated by representatives of the sponsoring institutions. The episodes will run usually from 3:00 pm—4:00 pm European CET

¹ <https://www.g20.org/about-the-g20.html>

² www.g20interfaith.org.

³ <https://www.fscire.it/index.php/en/>.

⁴ For information or media enquiries on behalf of the organizing institutions: Dr. Pasquale Annicchino, annicchino@fbk.eu or Dr. Marianna Richardson, secretariat@g20interfaith.org.

⁵ www.g20interfaith.org/webinars/

⁶ www.facebook.com/g20webinarseries



/ 9:00 am—10:00 am EDT. If Covid regulation at the time will allow, a by-invitation high-level seminar may be organized in June 2021 in Matera, Italy, as a “side event” of the concurrent Foreign Affairs Ministers’ Meeting on 29 June.

Themes & Policy Areas, and Desired Outcomes

The overall objective of the webinar series is to bring together government and religious leaders, experts and officials from multilateral organizations, civil society, and academic institutions to share knowledge and inform on current issues, trends and initiatives addressing the contribution of faith and religious organizations in achieving the priorities set by the Italian chairmanship of this year’s G20 Summit: people, planet, prosperity. Each priority will be further discussed looking at the contribution of religion as a builder of social capital, and the many ways religious communities and institutions contribute across the entire spectrum of society. A final report highlighting the main ideas and outcomes from each of the webinars will be published at the end of the series.

Format and Conferencing Platform

The international webinar will be highly interactive. Episodes will be aired twice a month, at 3:00 pm—4:00 pm European CEST / 9:00 am—10:00 am EDT. Informal Q&A presentations will trigger discussions and engage online participants. The moderators will oversee the session and facilitate the discussion. If Covid regulation at the time will allow, a by-invitation high-level seminar may be organized in June 2021 in Matera, Italy, as a “side event” of the concurrent Foreign Affairs Ministers’ Meeting on 29 June.

A global audience will be reached by livestreaming the sessions via Zoom or on social media. Language interpretation will be offered in Spanish. Additional languages can be offered upon request of the guest speakers. Short summaries or reports of the episodes, including their video recordings, will be published and circulated through the organizers’ mailing lists to facilitate opportunities for further engagement and follow ups between organizers, speakers and participants.

Editorial Outline of the Series

Please note that dates and titles are indicative. Listed speakers are confirmed, unless indicated otherwise. Confirmed episodes and dates will be published and announced on the series’ landing page and through the sponsoring institutions’ mailing lists.

- **People – (Re-)Building a Post-Covid Society pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals** | The pandemic has severely challenged countries’ finances, health sectors, business. Down to the individual level, unemployment, financial insecurity, emotional distress, social distancing, have hit hard on large segments of society. Invited experts will discuss how the Sustainable Development Goals will benefit our societies in concrete ways, and why world leaders should translate them in policy initiatives. – *6 May 2021*
- **Planet – The Gift of Our World: Faith and Environmental Stewardship** | For people of faith, our planet is a gift from God. It is our home as we travel through our own life’s journey. As





such, it deserves to be respected and cared for. Unfortunately, society has downplayed these simple truths to the advantage of other goals or priorities for too long and now the Earth is asking for our attention. This webinar will explore the religious dimension of environmental stewardship as well as existing initiatives that advocate for a more environmentally responsible economy. – 19 May 2021

- **Prosperity – G20 as a Driver to Reduce Poverty and Reignite Growth** | At the time of the Covid-19 outbreak of last year, many hoped that social and business restrictions would last a few days or weeks. A year later, the world is mourning the loss of millions of lives while still facing the economic and social effects of the pandemic. With vaccination programs now underway, it is time to implement strategies to address poverty and reignite growth. Reducing poverty has often been a core tenet of most faiths and beliefs. In recent years, studies have shown the positive correlation of freedom of religion or belief and economic growth and prosperity. Our speakers will discuss how religious communities can be a valuable resource due to their extensive experience “on the ground.” – 9 June 2021
- **People – Freedom of Religion or Belief to Promote Peace, Justice & Stronger Societies** | As Jan Figel, former European Commission’s Special Envoy for the Promotion of Freedom of religion or belief outside the EU, used to say, “Freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) is a litmus test of civil and political rights.” The correlation between FoRB, peace, and prosperity has been clearly demonstrated. Invited experts from academia, governments and multilateral organizations, churches, religious groups and civil society will discuss how FoRB can help tackle inequality, build a more inclusive global society, protect the most vulnerable, support the economy, promote women’s empowerment, ensure universal access to education. – *High-level Experts Meeting, 28-30 June 2021, Matera, Italy / Alternatively, Webinar, 30 June 2021*
- **Planet – Interfaith Initiatives to Achieve the Agenda 2030 Environmental Goals** | Most faith teach their members to be good stewards of the environment. Following up on the earlier webinar on faith and environmental stewardship, this episode will focus on concrete interfaith initiatives that have raised awareness, influenced policy and inspired to do good. – 14 July 2021
- **Prosperity – A Digital Revolution? Ethical Implications and Interreligious Engagement** | World economies are now looking to move out of the pandemic crisis. Most are deploying strategies and initiatives to reignite growth, with vaccination programs playing a major part in these efforts. As outlined by the Italian chairmanship of this year’s G20, “The digital revolution represents a fundamental tool to achieve prosperity and better quality of life.” Our concluding panel will look at current developments with a particular focus on interreligious engagement in the area of emerging digital technologies and artificial intelligence. – 28 July 2021

High-level Experts Meeting in Matera – Program Template

Day 1 – 28 June

- During the day: Arrivals, Registration
- Evening: Reception/Dinner with Keynote Address





Day 2 – 29 June

- Morning: Roundtable (closed session)
- Lunch with Keynote Address
- Afternoon: Roundtable (public, livestreamed)
- Dinner/Cultural Activity

Day 3 – 30 June

- Departures

Organizing Institutions and Contact Persons

- **Baha'i International Community** | Ms. Bani Dugal
- **European Evangelical Alliance** | Mr. Arie de Pater
- **European Platform Against Religious Intolerance and Discrimination (EPRID)**⁷ | Board of Coordinators, info@eprid.eu
- **Fondazione Bruno Kessler** | Prof. Marco Ventura, Dr. Pasquale Annicchino
- **Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose Giovanni XXIII** | Prof. Alberto Melloni
- **G20 Interfaith Forum**⁸ | Prof. W. Cole Durham Jr.
- **King Hamad Chair for Inter-Faith Dialogue and Peaceful Co-existence at the Sapienza University of Rome** | Prof. Alessandro Saggiaro
- **International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University** | Prof. Brett Scharffs
- **Study Center and Magazine Confronti** | Dr. Claudio Paravati
- **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - European Union & International Affairs Office** | Mr. Francesco Di Lillo
- **University of Siena** | Prof. Marco Ventura
- **World Faith Development Dialogue** | Prof. Katherine Marshall

Webinar Series and Media Enquiries: Dr. Pasquale Annicchino, annicchino@fbk.eu.

Webinar series' landing page: www.facebook.com/g20summitwebinarseries.

⁷ EPRID members: Association Internationale pour la Défense de la Liberté Religieuse, Bahá'í International Community, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Conference of European Churches, European Evangelical Alliance, Middle East Concern, Open Doors International, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Quê Me: Vietnam Committee on Human Rights/International Buddhist Information Bureau

⁸ List of collaborating institutions: <https://www.g20interfaith.org/historical-support/>

