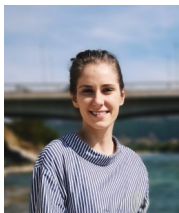


YOUTH DELEGATION

To improve their chances of EU accession and secure their citizens a more prosperous future, one of the key priorities the Western Balkans need to address are the problems facing their youth, who hold the key to such a future. Persistently high levels of youth unemployment are seen as a direct consequence of the region's difficult economic context, but equally so of its outdated educational systems that fail to deliver to the needs of the labour market. Deeply entrenched regional stereotypes, a lack of awareness of other cultures, demographic changes and a youth 'brain drain' are some of the pieces that make up this complex regional puzzle. Raising awareness about these challenges and including youth in the discussions to help find timely solutions is therefore crucial.

In the context of this annual Balkan Summit, Friends of Europe and its partners have gathered a delegation of Youth representatives from the Western Balkan region, to provide insight and mainstream the issue of Youth throughout the discussions of all three sessions. These delegates will actively intervene in sessions and provide recommendations to help push the youth agenda across the Western Balkans and the EU forward. Our youth delegates are:



BOBANA RADOVIC • @bobitz4

Business Manager for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Youth Innovation Lab, Montenegro

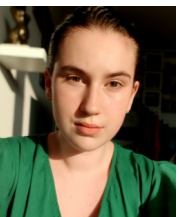
Alongside her studies as a Master's student, Bobana is the business manager of the UNICEF Youth Innovation Lab in Montenegro. Through the Lab, she has worked on programmes such as UPSHIFT, the Hackathon for Social Change, Financial Literacy skills, U-Report, alongside various skills workshops. The main focus of these programmes is skills-building - equipping adolescents and youth with 21st century skills, which they do not get in schools, and preparing them for their future careers and improving their employability.



DEA RROZHANI • @DRrozhani

Co-founder of D3c0ders and Co-creator of GjejZâ, Albania

Dea is a 16-year-old programmer and designer who helped found D3c0ders, a team of young female coders, and GjejZâ, an app developed to combat gender-based violence by connecting government institutions, NGOs and experts with girls in Albania. The D3c0ders team was awarded the 1st Place Prize at the Technovation Girls world finals in San Francisco, California, and were invited to Washington D.C. by the Secretary's Office of Global Women Issues to give a presentation about GjejZa at the US Department of State. Dea was also nominated as a Technovation Student Ambassador.



ESMA KURTAGIĆ • @ITGirlsBiH

IT Girls representative at the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Bosnia and Herzegovina

As an IT Girls representative, 14-year-old Esma has advocated for the status of young people in education processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She represents the IT GIRLS initiative at UNICEF, which tackles the constraints that girls and women face in the ICT sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina by increasing their professional development, promoting informal and lifelong ICT learning and enhancing confidence for girls. The IT Girls Initiative is currently transforming how computer science is taught in 10 schools and 200 girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



OLGA DEVIĆ • @08devicolga

Steering Committee Member of U-Report Serbia, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Serbia

Olga is an 18-year-old Serbian youth and child rights activist and peer educator. Having been active in youth engagement topics since primary school, she advocates for youth and child participation in decision-making processes. Olga has been a member of several youth organisations on the local, national and international levels and has led many youth projects in Serbia and abroad. Olga also serves as Steering Committee member of UNICEF's U-Report Serbia led by UNICEF. She was previously a youth delegate at the Congress of local and regional authorities of Council of Europe and the youngest-ever member of the Governing Board of National Youth Council, as well as a part of European Youth Parliament Serbia.



IVANA BALABANOVA

Owner and Cultural Director of Beatrix Cultural Center and Beatrix Dance League, North Macedonia

A 27-time international champion in urban dance, Ivana is the owner and cultural director of Beatrix Cultural Center in Skopje, North Macedonia. She is also the creator of the dance camp and festival "Beatrix Dance League" which was created as a platform to encourage young artists, dancers and choreographers. In 2018, she created her most successful piece called "Silence" on domestic violence and its impact on children's lives. Following the great success of this performance, Ivana and the Beatrix Cultural Center teamed up with UNICEF to present segments of "Silence" across several cities throughout North Macedonia.



TRINA HOTI • @trinahoti

Facilitator of the Youth Reference Group of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Kosovo*

Trina is an 18-year-old advocate for the rights and inclusion of children and young people in political decision-making. Trina has supported UNICEF's efforts in Kosovo* to include young people's perspectives in development programmes, as well as serving as facilitator of its Youth Reference Group. She has chaired two parliamentary sessions during the International Day of the Child in 2016 and Universal Children's Day in 2017. Last year, Trina represented the interests of children in high-level meetings between children from Kosovo* and the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament, the Ministers and MPs of Kosovo*.

* For the United Nations Development Programme, references to Kosovo in this document accordingly shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999);

For the European Union, this designation used is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UN Security Council resolution 1244/99 and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.