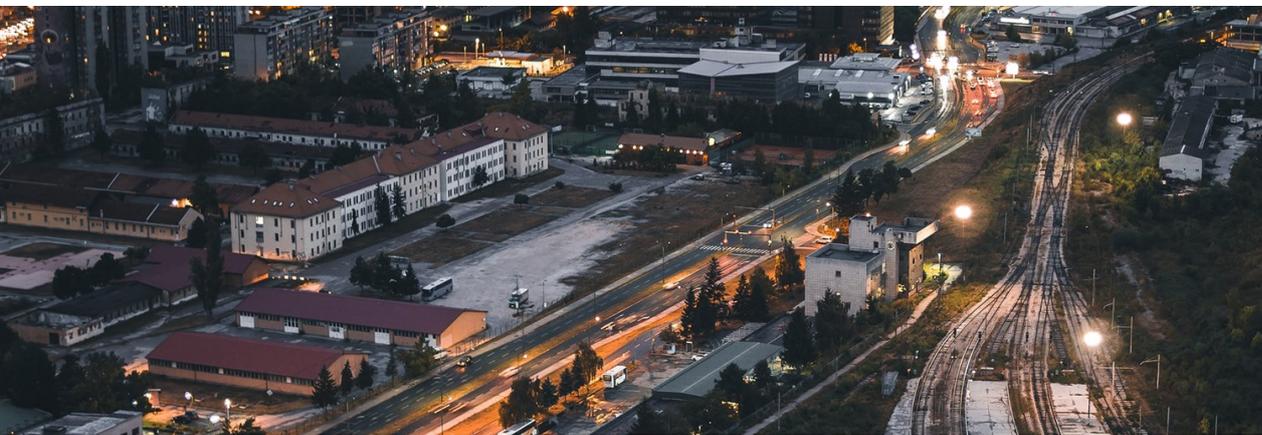


Shifting the narrative — a revitalised approach to the Western Balkans

EU-Western Balkans Summit

POLICY SUMMIT, ONLINE

PROGRAMME



07
Dec
2021



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This Summit is part of our Peace, Security & Defence programme. Our work aims to make sense of the emerging new geopolitical environment by analysing ongoing transnational challenges. To do so, we cover topics including the state of the EU's security and defence evolution; the transatlantic security partnership; peace and stability in the EU's neighbouring regions; the link between space, defence and security; the impact of increased digitization and emerging technologies on resilience; the integration of women into peace and security practices; the impact of conflict; and the value of peacebuilding initiatives.

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Concept Note

For this year's summit, we are moving from a problem-solving dynamic to an asset-based approach focused on the positive dynamics of the Balkans by creating a year-long journey of engagement with the region.

Friends of Europe's Balkans Journey seeks to circumvent stagnant debates on enlargement in order to focus on moving the region forward in practical terms through political imagination and forward-looking solutions. Reframing the narrative to focus on people-centred priorities rather than political objectives can bring a fresh policy perspective to overwrought discussions on how to strengthen and develop the Balkan region and close the gap to the EU.

The prospect of EU accession often frames the Balkans narrative. Democratic and economic growth are intertwined with the enlargement protocol, tying the Balkan region's advancement to its EU aspirations. But as the process drags on, frustration grows and steps forward falter – perhaps the time has come for both sides to revitalise this approach.

Development prospects need to go beyond the end goal of EU membership. The benefits of a robust democracy, stable economy and social evolution should be goals in themselves, forging a foundation for a thriving region with its roots in durable peace, reconciliation and resilience.

The goals for a resilient region and EU accession are the same. But it is time to recalibrate the talking points. A greater focus on inclusion and amplifying the voices of women and youth is one clear path forward. Other priorities include digital transition, green transformation, increased regional cooperation and the strengthening of democracy and rule of law. Our journey will engage with these overlapping and interlinking themes, promote new and progressive voices, and foster pathways to regional cooperation, resilience and inclusion.

Through an article series and conversations with key stakeholders, culminating in our annual summit, this Balkans Journey will compile ideas, concerns and suggestions from across all sectors of society, the EU and international organisations, informing debate and concrete policy recommendations for a region with infinite untapped potential.

Organisers and supporters

Friends of Europe

WEBSITE

friendsofeurope.org

Friends of Europe is a leading think tank that connects people, stimulates debate and triggers change to create a more inclusive, sustainable and forward-looking Europe.

FACEBOOK

[/FriendsofEurope](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofEurope)

We believe an EU of partnership and solidarity matters, and we believe globalisation needs global rules to make it work for everyone. We think it's time for a new 21st-century social contract based on peace, prosperity and sustainability. We support a multilateral world with cities, regions, states, supranational institutions, companies and citizens cooperating to solve common challenges, and we embrace European values and freedoms.

TWITTER

[@FriendsofEurope](https://twitter.com/FriendsofEurope)

“Connect – Debate – Change” is our DNA and central to the way we work. Friends of Europe is passionate about good policy making and a driving force for debate. Our work adopts a whole of society, whole of economy approach, engaging critical thinkers, unusual voices and those that are ready to challenge the status quo. We believe in social justice and equality. We work with stakeholders across Europe and the world to craft bold and innovative recommendations to revitalise the European Project.

We believe that good ideas and good policies come from breaking down silos and building communities of trust between policy makers, business leaders, civil society representatives and citizens. This is how to catalyse change.

FRIENDS OF EUROPE IN FIGURES

- 5000+ senior participants and speakers
- 65+ events
- 50 publications and over 200 op-eds published
- A growing 5.4 million strong online community on our online discussion platform Debating Europe
- 1.1m+ unique visitors to its websites

Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)

WEBSITE

<https://www.rcc.int/>

FACEBOOK

/Regional Cooperation
Council - RCC

TWITTER

@rccint

INSTAGRAM

@regionalcooperationcouncil_
rcc

The Regional Cooperation Council serves regional cooperation and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of South East Europe (SEE) in order to spark development in the region to the benefit of its people.

RCC HISTORY

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was officially launched at the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC) in Sofia, on 27 February 2008, under which auspices it continues to operate.

RCC has worked very closely with all the governments in the region and relevant regional cooperation mechanisms. Its activities are guided by the Statute, triennial strategy and work programmes, and the SEE 2020 Strategy, addressing the needs of SEE in economic and social development, energy and infrastructure, justice and home affairs, security cooperation, and building institutional and human capital.

RCC TODAY

The RCC has evolved into a leading mechanism and a vehicle for sustainable regional cooperation that is required from the South East Europe's economies in the process of their EU integration.

The overarching goal in the next period is to step up the transformational efforts and enhance human capital development and the socio-economic and digital transformation of the SEE, with the focus on the key priorities:

- Creating Common Regional Market : enabling free flow of people, goods, services, and capital aiming at deepening economic integration in the region and with the EU Single market in order to put the region on the map for global investors, create more jobs, offer greater choices at lower prices for its consumers, enable people to travel and work throughout the region, thus accelerating its convergence with the EU;
- Political cooperation, good governance and improved security, as key prerequisites for functioning societies and economies and thus the cornerstone of the EU accession process;
- Communicating the processes and initiatives leading to the overarching goal of EU integration, as one of the key activities aiming to deliver results to the citizens and maintain the EU narrative in the region.

The RCC has 46 participants. The organization, currently headed by Secretary General Majlinda Bregu, is financed by the European Union and its SEE and other Board participants. It has a Secretariat based in Sarajevo, and a Liaison Office in Brussels.

RCC VISION

RCC helps prosperity and growth through regional action in SEE, while supporting European and Euro-Atlantic integration. We see our region as a prosperous place of dialogue, freedom and mobility, rich in cultural heritage, where each person feels safe and protected by the rule of law.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

WEBSITE

eurasia.undp.org

FACEBOOK

/UNDPEurasia

TWITTER

@UNDPEurasia

A WORLD OF DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustices of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with its broad network of experts and partners in 170 offices around the world, UNDP helps nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. UNDP supports efforts to achieve the SDGs, which will guide global development priorities through 2030.

In the Western Balkans, UNDP supports economies and societies to advance on social inclusion, job creation and social protection; foster local development and decentralization; develop digitalization and e-governance; enhance peacebuilding and reconciliation and inter-community dialogue; promote sustainable land and water management and circular and green economy; and advocate for economic and political participation of women. Migration and population management and innovative approach to development are embedded in all UNDP interventions.

UNDP and the European Union work closely together in the Western Balkans

- A local democracy initiative – RELOAD - helps boosting civic and youth participation in decision-making and improved services across Western Balkans. Over 100,000 people, including the most vulnerable, have access to better public services.
- In Albania, EU4Schools supports the rebuilding of education facilities damaged by the devastating earthquake in 2019. 17 education facilities have opened their doors to children and teachers who benefit from modern facilities.
- In Kosovo*, cultural heritage helps to bring communities together, in particular women and youth, to rediscover their rich past, bridge divisions and restore a sense of common identity and through it, a sense of peace and trust.
- Serbia is better prepared to respond to disasters and protect citizens. 18 municipalities in West Morava basin are better equipped to support stronger coordination and prevention in areas prone to floods, earthquakes and landslides.

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Schedule

*All times according to Brussels time (CET)

13.00-14.00

PRE-SUMMIT YOUTH VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE

Young Balkan voices

Listening to the next generation

Today's policies will define the future of the Western Balkans, so it only makes sense that the next generation has its say on the issues important to youth. High levels of youth unemployment and disillusionment with stagnant social, political and economic development contribute to youth discontent and brain drain. Policymakers need to engage with and listen to the upcoming generation to transform the narrative around the Western Balkans and make the region an attractive prospect for their futures.

This virtual roundtable will bring together a group of young people from Western Balkan countries to present, debate and disseminate their views. They will have the chance to discuss their opinions with Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for People and Demography Dubravka Šuica, who will offer some introductory remarks and also exchange perspectives with the youth delegates. The conversation will focus on young people's priorities for the future, opinions on EU accession, social policy, and education, as well as considering how economic strategies can take the career pathways and opportunities desirable to youth into account.

Taking place just prior to our high-level summit sessions, the conclusions and questions coming out of this roundtable will be put forward to Western Balkan and EU policymakers participating in the subsequent debates, challenging their perceptions of the status quo and whether their policy initiatives align with youth priorities.

- How do young people view the opportunities for their future in the Western Balkans?
- What do young people think about the possibility of EU membership?
- Do young people feel that politicians and policies represent their priorities?

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Dubravka Šuica, Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Democracy and Demography

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director, Asia, Peace, Security & Defence, Digital & Chief Spokesperson at Friends of Europe

14.20-14.30

Log on to online conference platform

14.30-15.30

OPENING SESSION

Trade and investment

A question of geopolitics?

The Western Balkans' geopolitical positioning has a distinct impact on its own socio-economic affairs. While the EU acts as the Balkans' predominant partner, it has also attracted interest from the United States and Turkey, while China and Russia have also become heavily involved in the region. Experts have highlighted how the Western Balkans can leverage the competing interests in its market to its advantage. The region has proven to be a competitive and attractive partner on the international scene, rivalling India on the global business process and technology outsourcing (BPTO) market, for instance, and increasingly engaging Eastern investors. Recent analyses have highlighted that the upward post-pandemic recovery trends represent an opportunity for the region to boost its attractiveness to foreign investors. However, where there are opportunities, there are also risks. Balancing foreign investment with stronger regional economic ties can help build economic resilience and sustainable practices. The region can thereby avoid over-reliance on external actors while making the most of increased financial capacities.

This session will explore the dynamics and interests of external actors in the Western Balkans and how best to tap into the region's capacities, bringing together key stakeholders and senior experts to debate the geopolitical dynamics of trade and investment.

- What are the opportunities and risks associated with foreign investment in the Western Balkans?
- How can the Western Balkans region best utilise these external interests to build trade and diplomatic links and grow its economies?
- Which sectors are most affected by foreign investment and which external actors are investing where? What effect is this having on the region's economies?

SPEAKERS

Maja Handjiska-Trendafilova, Head of the Programme Department of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)

Igor Lukšić, former prime minister, former minister of finance and former foreign minister of Montenegro

Ardita Seknaj, Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Albania

MODERATOR

Jamie Shea, Senior Fellow for Peace, Security and Defence at Friends of Europe and former Deputy Assistant Secretary General for emerging security challenges at NATO

A sustainable recovery

Looking towards the future

The Western Balkans has already made significant steps forward in its recovery from the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The next steps in the process should continue to focus on using recovery funds for sustainable initiatives and economic cooperation. Friends of Europe's 2020 EU-Western Balkans Summit highlighted the importance of regional cooperation, engaging all sectors of society, and promoting the digital and green transitions to encourage competitiveness and innovation. Increased investment in transforming the energy industry and developing digital infrastructure can offer new ways to create jobs and shape the future of the region, while stemming brain drain and closing the gap to the EU. Building on last year's findings, this session aims to evaluate what progress has been made in the region, the impact of the EU's Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans and the value of the green and digital transitions.

- How can increased investment in economic sectors such as energy and digital help create opportunities in the regional labour market?
- What role can and should the private sector play in creating new opportunities?
- How can the EU help develop Western Balkan economies beyond the recovery process and what progress has been made since the introduction of the Economic and Investment Plan?

SPEAKERS

Uranik Begu, Executive Director of Innovation Center Kosovo* (ICK)

Lilyana Pavlova, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB)

Maciej Popowski, Acting Director-General of the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

Mirjana Spoljaric Egger, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Assistant Administrator of UNDP, and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director, Asia, Peace, Security & Defence, Digital & Chief Spokesperson

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Talking from the inside out

New routes to bridging the gap

Achieving social advances and resilient economies in Western Balkan countries requires broadening the development lens beyond the accession process. Local initiatives, community leaders and private sector actors can be the driving forces behind a shift from a perpetual ruling elite to revitalised leadership in the Balkans, moving from stagnating regional tensions to dialogue around tackling common issues. The Western Balkans can be a resilient and thriving region. Solutions to the region's socio-economic and political problems can and should be internally led and defined, with the support and partnership of the EU. Engaging women and youth, civil society, local actors and the private sector can further encourage this process. This session aims to foster a discussion around building on the existing capacities of the Western Balkans, bridging the gap with the EU, and developing the region based on its own needs and interests.

- How can the EU and Balkan governments support local and grassroots initiatives fostering social and economic development in the region?
- What kind of impact can local and regional governments make on the development of the Western Balkans?
- How can the private sector and civil society foster opportunities for a stronger region and promote alternative political leadership?

SPEAKERS

Mila Carovska, Minister of Education and Science of North Macedonia and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Gordana Čomić, Serbian Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue

Biljana Spasovska, Executive Director at Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN)

Olivér Várhelyi, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement

Erion Veliaj, Mayor of Tirana, Albania

MODERATOR

Dharmendra Kanani, Director, Asia, Peace, Security & Defence, Digital & Chief Spokesperson at Friends of Europe

Speakers



Uranik Begu - @uranikbegu

Executive Director of the Innovation Center Kosovo* (ICK)

Uranik Begu leads the work of ICK, the leading integrator of innovative business and economic development in Kosovo*. The centre was founded with the mission to support entrepreneurship, innovation and commercially-based business development, with a focus on Kosovo*'s ICT and green energy sectors. Prior to joining ICK, Begu served as the head of marketing at Post Telecom Kosovo*. Begu is a renowned lecturer in the field of management and has taught at the University of Prizren, amongst others. He is also an active Member of the Economic Development Council of Prishtina and a Board Member of the Zurich CMO Conference, also known as 'the Davos of Marketing'.



Mila Carovska - @mila_carovska

Minister of Education and Science of North Macedonia and 2020-2021 European Young Leader (EYL40)

Prior to her current position, Mila Carovska served as Minister of Labour and Social Welfare of North Macedonia as well as Deputy Prime Minister responsible for economic affairs during the transition Government in 2020. She was elected to government in 2017. Mila Carovska is an avid proponent of human rights whose professional career to date has been marked by a commitment to social work on behalf of the most vulnerable and threatened citizens, whether it be Roma, disadvantaged youth, drug addicts or victims of domestic violence. Projects she has managed over the years include organising drama workshops with children housed in institutions, hosting educational workshops, offering consultations for drug users and their families, and conducting field research. Mila Carovska has used her platform as Minister to advocate for gender equality, the elimination of violence against women, and anti-discrimination.



Dharmendra Kanani - @FriendsofEurope

Director, Asia, Peace, Security & Defence, Digital & Chief Spokesperson at Friends of Europe

Prior to joining Friends of Europe, Dharmendra Kanani was director of policy at the European Foundation Centre (EFC). He was the England director at the Big Lottery Fund, the largest independent funder in the UK and fourth largest in the world. Dharmendra has held senior positions in the public and voluntary sector and advisor to numerous ministerial policy initiatives across the UK.

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Gordana Čomić

Serbian Minister for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue

Gordana Čomić was appointed to the cabinet of Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabić's in October 2020. Formerly a member of the Serbian parliament, she served as deputy speaker of the Serbian National Assembly and acted as the chair of the Foreign Policy Committee. Čomić was also a member of the National Assembly delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, where she was elected rapporteur of the Committee on Human Rights, Democracy and Humanitarian Affairs. Having founded the Women's Parliamentary Network of the Serbian National Assembly, Čomić has actively advocated for gender equality and the equal participation of women in all decision-making positions in Serbia.



Maja Handjiska-Trendafilova - @rccint

Head of the Programme Department of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)

Maja Handjiska-Trendafilova leads the RCC's work in coordinating the Common Regional Market and Green Agenda, as endorsed by the Prime Ministers of Western Balkan countries. Before this, she had been the Regional Economic Area Coordinator of RCC's South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy, working on various regional cooperation, consensus, confidence and capacity building initiatives across a range of policy areas. Her professional career of over 15 years has been dedicated to furthering the progress of EU integration and regional cooperation processes of SEE. Prior to joining RCC, Handjiska-Trendafilova served in North Macedonia's national administration for more than ten years and additionally worked at the North Macedonian Mission to the EU in Brussels.



Igor Lukšić - @I_Luksic

Former prime minister, former minister of finance and former foreign minister of Montenegro

Igor Lukšić is an Associate Professor at the University of Donja Gorica in Montenegro and currently works on sustainable development initiatives in Southeast Europe related to the United Nations SDGs and 2030 Agenda. Having served in several governmental positions, Lukšić has demonstrated his commitment to political and economic freedoms and reforms throughout his 18 years working in the public sector. Lukšić has long advocated for transparency, with an emphasis on dialogue and proactivity when it comes to both internal and foreign relations, as well as the need for enhanced regional cooperation in the Western Balkans.



Lilyana Pavlova - @LilyanaPavlova

Vice-President of the European Investment Bank (EIB)

Lilyana Pavlova is a former Member of the Bulgarian National Assembly who has many years of experience in managing European funds and projects. She served as Minister for the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Prior to that, she served as Deputy Minister and Minister of Regional Development and Public Works in Bulgaria. She also held various senior positions as Head of Department and Senior Expert at the National Fund Directorate at the Ministry of Finance in Bulgaria. In her current position, Pavlova is responsible for oversight over the EU cohesion policy, transport financing, IT and data governance, as well as financing operations in the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), in Eastern European countries and in Turkey.



Maciej Popowski - @eu_near

Acting Director-General of the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

Maciej Popowski is a Polish diplomat, who previously served as deputy director-general of DG NEAR before assuming his current role. He is the former deputy secretary-general of the European External Action Service (EEAS). Popowski has also previously served as the head of Jerzy Buzek's cabinet, Poland's permanent representative in the EU's Political and Security Committee, and deputy head of the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the European Union. At the time of Poland's EU accession negotiations, he was the director for EU affairs at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Ardita Seknaj - @ICCAAlbania

Secretary General of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Albania

Ardita Seknaj leads the work of the National Committee of the ICC Albania and lectures on EU institutions and structures at the university level. Her areas of interest also include sustainable development, international trade and finance, as well as EU integration processes. Seknaj serves as consultant on various regional projects and currently sits on the temporary Advisory Board of the United States-Albania Transparency Academy. Previously, Seknaj worked in the banking sector across various fields, including trade finance, project management and insurance.



Jamie Shea - @FriendsofEurope

Senior Fellow for Peace, Security and Defence at Friends of Europe and former Deputy Assistant Secretary General for emerging security challenges at NATO

Retiring from NATO in September 2018 after 38 years at the organisation, Jamie Shea has occupied a number of senior positions at NATO across a wide range of areas, including external relations, press and media, and policy planning. As NATO's spokesperson, he was the face of the Alliance during the Bosnia and Kosovo* conflicts. He later worked as the Director of Policy Planning in the private office of former Secretary General Rasmussen during the preparation of NATO's 2010 Strategic Concept. Shea is also a regular lecturer and conference speaker on NATO and European security affairs.



Biljana Spasovska - @BiljanaSpasovs3

Executive Director at Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN)

Biljana Spasovska is an expert in democracy and civil society development, EU integration, good governance and accountability. Prior to her position as Executive Director at BCSDN, she was responsible for the network's policy and advocacy activities. Spasovska has more than seven years of experience in project development and coordination of international projects with civil society organisations, think tanks and academia, and she has worked in the government sector. She is also a Fellow at Stanford University's Leadership Academy for Development.

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Mirjana Spoljaric Egger - @SpoljaricM

Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Assistant Administrator of UNDP, and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS

In her current position, Mirjana Spoljaric Egger leads UNDP's work in supporting countries across the Western Balkans in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, amongst other responsibilities. Spoljaric Egger previously served as Head of United Nations and International Organisations Division of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, where she was instrumental in shaping Switzerland's position to the UN. She combines a strong policy background with field experience and has had several assignments in the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.



Dubravka Šuica - @dubravkasuica

Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Democracy and Demography

Dubravka Šuica leads the Commission's work on deliberative democracy and the Conference on the Future of Europe, giving people a say in how the Union is run and what it does. She is in charge of ensuring that Europe's social protection systems adequately address the needs of an ageing population, as well as coordinating a long-term vision for rural areas and better reconciliation between work and family life. Šuica is a former member of the European and Croatian parliaments. She served as the vice-president of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe for 10 years and was the first female to serve as mayor of the city of Dubrovnik.



Erion Veliaj - @erionveliaj

Mayor of Tirana, Albania

Prior to his tenure as mayor, Erion Veliaj served as a member of the Albanian parliament and minister of social welfare and youth. At the time, he introduced influential reforms on pensions, welfare payments, employment opportunities and professional education. His leadership in Tirana has been most notably marked by the city's focus on creating a greener, more humane and more sustainable city. For the first time in the country's history, Veliaj structured the Socialist Party's branches in countries where the Albanian diaspora resides and successfully contributed to the organisation of the voting process for Albanian immigrants in the 2013 elections.



Olivér Várhelyi - @OliverVarhelyi

European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement

Olivér Várhelyi is an experienced diplomat who has spent the past 25 years dealing with EU politics in various roles. Prior to his current position, he served as Ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU and worked as the Head of Unit responsible for Industrial Property Rights at the European Commission. He also held the positions of Head of the Legal Service at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Hungary to the European Union and Legal counsellor at the Mission of the Republic of Hungary to the European Union.

Youth delegates

Young people are the present and the future of the Western Balkans. To secure a more prosperous future for their citizens and improve their chances of EU accession, one of the key issues countries in the region need to address is the challenges facing their youth. More and more young people from the Western Balkans are working, however the overall unemployment rate stands at around a third of the young population. Many are emigrating because of a lack of employment opportunities. Given the brain drain challenge that the region faces, creating a dynamic economy where young innovators can flourish is of vital importance. Listening to the perspectives of young people on these questions and actively including their voices in discussions is therefore crucial. Furthermore, creating opportunities for young people from the EU and from the Western Balkans to network and to advocate together to secure a European future for the Western Balkans is also of primary importance.

In the context of this annual EU-Western Balkans Summit, Friends of Europe and its partners have brought together a delegation of youth representatives from the Western Balkan region and from the EU, to mainstream the issues which are important to them throughout the discussions of all sessions and to facilitate dialogue between youth from both regions. Facilitated by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and by the network of partners of Debating Europe, these delegates will actively intervene in sessions and provide recommendations to promote the youth agenda across the Western Balkans and the EU.

Our youth delegates are:



Alesia
ALLDERVISHI

LLM International and European Law at Europa institut, Saarland University in Germany



Besnik
AVDIAJ

OBOTI Institute, University of Prishtina in Kosovo*



Sara
BORANČIĆ

Secretary General of the Youth Network of Montenegro



Elena
BOZINOVSKA

Youth activist and worker for people with disabilities and gender equality



Olga
DEVIC

Representative of the European Youth Parliament (EYP) Serbia



Arijan
DURADBEGOVIĆ

Student and part of the cultural UPSHIFT program in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Nikolina
GARAČA

Activist focused on mental health and community development across Bosnia and Herzegovina



Blendi
HODAI

Student and leading activist in the fields of social and environmental justice in North Macedonia



Matilda
KARCANAJ

Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator at the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in Albania



Klajdi
KAZIU

Secretary General of the United Nations Association (UNA) in Albania

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Diogjen

KOLICI

Youth advocate and member of the Kurbin Municipal Council in Albania



Andrea

LESKUR

Youth Member of Omladina JAZAS Novi Sad in Serbia



Ognjen

MARKOVIC

RCC's Western Balkan Youth Lab Team Leader



Ema

MEÇAJ

Young journalist and activist, co-founder of the website for youth empowerment www.kreativ.al



Jona

OLLONI

Member of UNICEF Kosovo's Youth Reference Group and qualified peer trainer



Magdalena

OSTOJIC

Medicine student and social activist focused on science and research



Milica

OTOVIC

Member of UNICEF Serbia's Youth Board



Andrijana

PALJUŠEVIĆ

UNICEF Youth Representative of Montenegro



Luka

PAVIKJEVIKJ

President of the Union of High-School students of North Macedonia



Nikola

SAMARDZIC

Member of UNICEF Serbia's Youth Board



Ania

SAUKU

Youth Delegate at the United Nations Association in Albania



Jules

STRIFFLER

Research Officer at The Balkan Forum



Jovana

VASIC

Member of UNICEF Serbia's Youth Board and of the Mental Health Advisory Board



Lyra

YMERAGA

Member of UNICEF's Youth Reference Group and of Kosovo's National Youth Congress



Antonija

CVERDELJ

European Youth Capital for 2019 Novi Sad – OPENS



Ditjon

FETAHU

Director of the Kosovar* Youth Council



Jelena

KARAC

Member of the Program Team of European Youth Capital for 2019 Novi Sad – OPENS



Bojana

KRGOVIC

Program Member of European Youth Capital for 2019 Novi Sad – OPENS



Dafina

PECI

Secretary General of the Albanian National Youth Congress

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List of participants

Pauline Adès-Mével

Spokesperson and Editor in Chief,
Reporters Without Borders (RSF),
International Secretariat, France

Mimoza Ahmetaj

Ambassador, Kosovo* Consulate General
in France, France

Aida Ailarova

UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and
Central Asia, Adolescent Development and
Participation, Switzerland

Arjola Alika

Head of International Department, Union of
the Independent Trade Unions of Albania,
Albania

Sadri Aliu

President, Youth Trails, Serbia

Mehmet Alkanalka

Head of Foreign Relations Department,
Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Turkey

Alesia Alldervishi

Youth representative, United Nations
Albania, Albania

Noureddine Amrani

Journalist, Mediterranean Press Europe,
The Netherlands

Othon Anastasakis

Director, South East European Studies &
Former Director European Studies Centre,
University of Oxford, St Antony's College,
United Kingdom

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