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# How to better respond to European aspirations of the young generation in the Western Balkans?

Athénée Palace Hilton  
Bucharest, 28-29 May 2019

Partners:



Regional Cooperation Council



Școala Națională de Studii Politice și Administrative



Digital Citizens  
ROMANIA



## Conference Objectives

- Explore creative ways to inspire and empower young people in finding/improving their professional prospects in their own countries while restating the support for the European perspective of Western Balkans.
- Facilitate the establishment of a long-lasting dialogue among young professionals from the local administration and civil society, entrepreneurs, academics, youth organizations from WB and EU, thus contributing to a better mutual understanding and attachment to the European values.
- Enable the transfer of best practices and sharing of expertise among young professionals in the process of economic reforms, democratization and civic participation.
- Raise awareness on the need of building trust and resilience, while contributing to the reconciliation efforts.
- Support the implementation of the Enlargement Strategy (Commission's Communication from 6 February 2018) and its flagship initiatives, as well as of the Sofia Priority Agenda (EU-Western Balkans Summit, Sofia, 17 May 2018).
- Take stock of the European and regional strategic development framework for youth and offer models of cooperation and good practices to be promoted and further scaled up.

### Day 1

*Venue: "Le Diplomate" Hall*

**09.30 – 10.00**      **Registration**

**10.00 – 10.05**      **Welcoming remarks**

**10.05 – 10.15**      **Keynote address by the EU Council Presidency representative**

**10.15 – 11.15**      **Opening session: You(th) in EU/EU perspective for you(th):**

- Carina Autengruber, President of the European Youth Forum
- Colin Wolfe, Head of Western Balkans Regional Cooperation Unit, DG NEAR
- Majlinda Bregu, RCC Secretary General
- Đuro Blanuša, Secretary General, Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)
- Haakon Blankenborg, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

*Moderator: Dan Cărbunaru, director, media platform "Calea Europeană"*

**11.15 – 11.30**      **Coffee break**

**11.30 – 11.50**      **Press statements**

*Venue: "Regina Maria Hall"*

**11.50 – 12.10**      **Inauguration of the multi-media exhibition of common European cultural heritage of the Western Balkans**

*Venue: "Regina Maria" Hall*

*Note: the event organized by the RCC Secretariat builds on the EU funded project "Tourism Development and Promotion", which aims to promote cultural and adventure tourism in the WB, and to contribute to economic growth and employment in the region.*

**12.10 - 13.30**

**Panel 1: Investing in today's youth for tomorrow's development: Youth Employment in the WB and the EU; Unemployment and NEET- a growing phenomenon; Solutions for social & economic inclusion: examples of good practices**

- Ion Gabriel Bratu, President of National Authority for Dual Learning of Romania
- Nand Shani, team leader, RCC
- Alexandros Pamnani, European Investment Bank
- Marko Stermsek, EBRD
- Katarina Vuckovic, Institute for Youth Development KULT, Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Q&A*

*Moderator: Corina Pîrvulescu, European Coalition for the rights of young NEETs/Social Doers*

**13.30 – 15.00**

**Lunch**

*Venue: "Roberto's" Restaurant*

**15.00 – 17.00**

**Panel 2: Supporting the next generation of young innovators. Entrepreneurship and startups, Technology/ICT, Science: examples and best practices in EU & the WB (including funding and policies focusing on new technologies)**

- Maria-Manuela Catrina, Executive director, "Ovidiu Șincai" Institute
- Ambassador Wieslaw Tarka, WB Summit Coordinator, MFA Poland
- Hendrik Bosshammer, Project Manager, OECD
- Success stories from EU and WB:  
Vlad Măcelaru, ClarK/Romania; Sanja Gardasevic, Digitalizuj.me/Montenegro; Dragan Vujovic, Innovation Fund of Serbia; Marko Gregovic, BRODOTO CEO & Founder/Croatia; Darko Sokovic, Managing partner of strategy and development, Propulsion/Serbia; Dorin Boerescu, 2 Performant.com/Romania; Vedrana Ajanovic, Business Innovation and Technology Park/ Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*Q&A*

*Moderator: Veronica Stefan, Digital Citizens Romania*

**17.00 – 18.30**

**Panel 3: Re-imagining the Balkans in Europe. Building trust and consolidating resilience for a common future.**

- Simonida Kacarska, European Policy Institute, Skopje

- Marija Filipović Ožegović, Tempus Foundation, Serbia
- Dimitrije Jovicević, RYCO Governing Board member
- Brian Williams, Resident Coordinator, UN Albania

*Q&A*

*Moderator:* Miruna Butnaru-Troncota, SNSPA

**19.00**

**Buffet Dinner**

*Venue: "Roberto's" Restaurant*

<b>Day 2</b>
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**10.00 – 11.30**

**Panel 4: From traditional participation mechanisms to e-participation. Challenges and opportunities of the online world: cyber resilience, countering hate speech and fake news.**

- Alina Bârgăoanu, Dean, SNSPA, Romania
- Alba Cako-Muller, Strategic Communication/Western Balkans Task Force, EEAS
- Jovana Majstorovic, European Youth Forum
- Gabriel Brezoiu, General Manager GEYC – Group of the European Youth for Change

*Q&A*

*Moderator:* Tobias Flessenkemper, Head of Office, Council of Europe, Belgrade

**11.30 – 12.00**

**Coffee break**

**12.00 – 12.30**

**Concluding session: presentation of the main conclusions and recommendations; follow-up**

- Antoaneta Barta, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania

**13.00**

**Lunch**