



Civil Society Forum Tirana

of the Western Balkans Summit Series

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Youth Cooperation

Recommendations on youth cooperation are covering issues such as mobility, education and employment, research, and Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO). The forum recommends promoting the mobility within the WB6 region and with the EU28. To achieve this, the visa regime between Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina should be abolished, reciprocity in visa regime between the UK/Ireland and WB6 should be introduced, and mutual recognition of diplomas in the region pursued.

On education and employment participants of the Civil Society Forum recommend that WB6 and EU member states that are taking part in the Berlin process should adopt a declaration committing themselves, as an important part of their regional cooperation, to increase, encourage and promote knowledge about other countries in the region (intercultural learning) to kindergarten, primary and high schools children. They should also make their education more transparent and more outcome-oriented through taking part in OECD's PISA and TIMMS studies, and finally they should implement the 2015 "Roadmap to a sustainable apprentice system" and focus on improvement of vocational training and skills.

There are two recommendations on research in the region: first, it is needed to develop the network of youth research institutions in order to increase a region-wide research of the youth population including economic, social, cultural, public health and migration (brain drain) issues, and the second is to ensure that in 2018 the RCC (in cooperation with RYCO) conducts a regional public opinion survey about the situation of the youth.

The recommendations for further development of RYCO suggest that contracting parties of the RYCO agreement should provide RYCO with adequate means to develop intercultural competences and skills and develop a content of exchange programs, as well as to include disadvantaged youth groups and reach out towards young people in the EU originating from the region. They should select the Regional Youth Capital in 2020 inspired by the experience of Novi Sad as the European Youth Capital in 2019.

2. Rule of Law

Civil Society Organizations' representatives and participants of CSF in Tirana recommended that the EU should intensify communication with CSOs within the new reporting cycle and prior to preparation of the country reports and improve two-way communication and that simulation of reforms on the ground should be highlighted in the EU's country reports. In this way, CSOs can help shape the content of the country reports, improve the benchmarking system, enhance CSOs participation in the monitoring and evaluation of the rule law.

It is recommended that governments should gather and publicize information using accurate, reliable and accessible data. The participants consider that this will lead towards greater citizens' participation and



Civil Society Forum Tirana

of the Western Balkans Summit Series

transparency of the process. They proposed that an alternative regional benchmarking system on specific issues should be developed and conducted by the civil society organizations in the Western Balkans including tracking of the specific corruption cases at the regional level. Upon this template, countries should report to the next summit.

Regional cooperation on data exchange in specific segments of anticorruption such as assets disclosure and conflict of interest should be strengthened is one of the recommendations in this field. The CSF Tirana's participants encourage governments to adopt the regional instrument on data exchange which will be prepared by the Regional Anticorruption Initiative (RAI) with the support of the ANAC and civil society.

3. Business Environment and Innovation

In the field of business environment and innovation, the CSOs recommend the establishment of the Social Economy Agenda for the countries of the Western Balkans which should be modelled after the Social Business Initiative in the EU.

They also recommend fostering of associations of professionals and SMEs and giving them a voice in policy-making, as well as to promote the role of venture capital and ethic banking for innovative forms of businesses to acknowledge their special purpose and mission.

Other recommendations are proposing making Western Balkans six's target countries in applications for relevant framework programmes to encourage the participation of the WB region, and to promote success stories and networking of entrepreneurs in the region.

4. Bilateral issues

At the end of the presentation of the recommendation, Bieber said that the participants agreed that the Western Balkan countries should reaffirm their commitment to continue to work together in the spirit of the Vienna Declaration and to abstain from misusing outstanding bilateral issues in the EU accession process, as well as to reiterate their invitation to neighboring EU member states to join this commitment at the Trieste Summit.

The Western Balkan countries should intensify their efforts to resolving bilateral issues and the work of the respective Inter-State Diplomatic Commissions dealing with border demarcation, as well as to regularly follow up on their commitment to deliver annual reports on progress made, with a view to maintain the momentum created in Vienna.

The participants also call upon the EEAS and the EU Member States, in particular those participating in the Berlin Process, to increase their pragmatic involvement in tackling outstanding bilateral issues between countries in the region, on a permanent and continuous basis. The last recommendation in this field is to call upon the donor community to support and encourage cross-country collaboration of civil society organizations and think tanks focused on particular bilateral issues, and facilitate dissemination in respective local communities, as well as to build alliances and cooperation with European SCO and think tank community in this field.