

Europeanisation meets democracy from below: The Western Balkans on the search for new European and democratic Momentum



The next few years will be decisive for the democratic and European future of the Western Balkans. In addition to a credible enlargement perspective and a positive enlargement narrative, which needs to be reinvented and reinvigorated, it is vital to support rule of law, civil dialogue, pluralism and the fight against corruption as well as the social dimension. It is crucial to invest more in social inclusion, to support the broad vision of just and democratic societies, which needs to include various bottom-up initiatives and actors.

Our "WB2EU network" will *activate / connect / research / disseminate and create* joint output on the defined topics by bringing together academia, civil society and relevant stakeholders on national, regional and EU level.

Key points:

- reform, consolidate and reenergise EU Enlargement until 2025 and beyond
- mobilise, support and engage with progressive and emancipatory forces from below (movements, citizens, local initiatives) that are truly European and pro-democratic
- enhance youth and alternative voices and forces in the society
- strengthen social dimension, rule of law and justice in the region
- connect young and senior researchers, scholars, representatives of civil society, national and EU institutions, stakeholders, policy-makers, and citizens engaged in pro-democratic initiatives (local/regional/national)

The proposed activities shall be implemented in 3 phases (29.10.2020-28.10.2023):

I Rule of law and justice / II Social dimension / III Democratisation from below

- 1 policy brief by each partner per phase (overall 45 editions)
- 1 kick-off event (Vienna)
- 1 closing event (Brussels)
- 6 "Ideas go public Labs" (Sarajevo, Ljubljana, Prishtina, Paris, Belgrade, Berlin)
- 1 "Summer School" (Cres)
- new online platform <http://www.wb2eu.eu/>
- intense social media and dissemination activities
- a series of op-eds
- a final report
- a book publication

WB2EU network:

The network consists of 17 renowned think-tanks, do-tanks, higher education institutes and policy centres from the countries that will be most decisive for the enlargement process in the upcoming years.

Project initiators	
Austria	Austrian Society for European Politics (ÖGfE), Vienna (Coordinator)
Austria	Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip), Vienna
Western Balkan countries	
Albania	Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI), Tirana
BiH	University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Political Sciences
Kosovo	Change Experts Group, Prishtina
Montenegro	Politikon Network (PIN), Podgorica
North Macedonia	EUROTHINK - Center for European Strategies, Skopje
Serbia	Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE)
EU member countries	
Bulgaria	New Bulgarian University, Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies (CERMES)
Croatia	Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO), Zagreb
France	EuropaNova, Paris
Germany	Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP), Berlin
Greece	Department of Political Science & International Relations, University of the Peloponnese
Hungary	Andrássy University, Budapest
Italy	International Affairs Institute (IAI), Rome
Romania	GlobalFocus Center, Bucharest
Slovenia	Centre of International Relations (CIR) – University of Ljubljana