

THE BALKAN FORUM

MONTHLY UPDATE

September 2024



Introducing the “Towards 2030” Initiative: Uniting the Western Balkans in Global Conversations

We are proud to announce “Towards 2030”, a new initiative that brings together voices from across the Western Balkans, highlighting the power of regional cooperation. This effort connects Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia to the global conversations shaping our collective future.

With writers from across the region, “Towards 2030” will dive into critical global themes such as security, sustainability, democracy, human rights, innovation, climate change, and social progress—all through the lens of our unique regional experiences. It’s an opportunity to showcase how the Western Balkans can contribute meaningfully to global discussions.

This initiative is grounded in the strength of regional collaboration, thanks to our dedicated partners:

- Albania: Build Green Group
- Bosnia & Herzegovina: Centar Za Odruzenje Jajce (COD)
- North Macedonia: CIVIL – Center for Freedom
- Serbia: Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR Serbia)

Together, these organizations represent the best of the Western Balkans, proving that when we work together, our voices carry further. “Towards 2030” is not just about sharing stories—it’s about building a regional dialogue that resonates globally.

Yours,
Gazmend Bërlajolli
Executive Director
The Balkan Forum



The hollow promise of global peace: How power politics and inaction fuel conflict

Xhabir Deralla takes a look at the UN's 'Culture of Peace' declaration, 25 years on. Despite all the hopeful words, peace has remained elusive, with conflicts around the world still raging. From Ukraine to the Middle East, authoritarian regimes like Russia continue to manipulate international systems, leaving ordinary people to suffer. This article questions why global peace efforts have fallen short and what it will really take to make peace a reality.



Information is the power and oxygen of democracy: Public information is public, not secret!

In this article, Dehran Muratov highlights the critical role of access to information in fostering true democracy. He explains how public information should be easily accessible to all, ensuring transparency and accountability. Muratov also points out the barriers to information, from bureaucratic delays to the misuse of personal data protections, and reminds us why access to information is a fundamental human right. This piece is a call to action for greater openness and transparency in our societies.

Towards 2030



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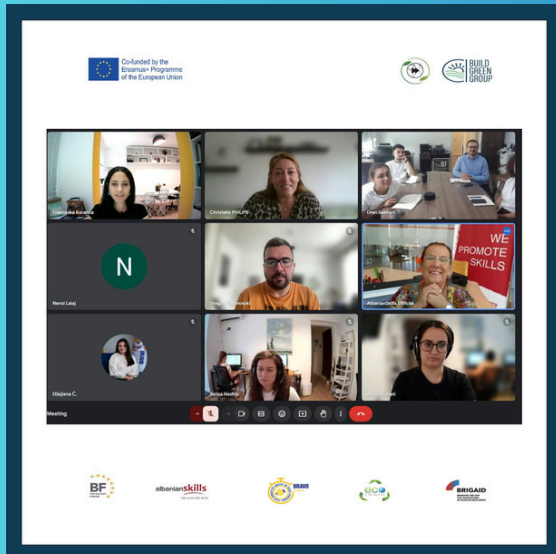
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Projects

Ongoing Projects:

Fast Forward



As part of “Engage, Connect, and Empower Youth for a Sustainable Green Future – Fast Forward,” co-funded by the European Commission, a monitoring meeting was held by Project Officer Christelle Philips of EACEA. The session focused on reviewing key milestones, timelines, and work packages, allowing the project partners to assess both strengths and areas for improvement. This meeting confirmed the successful progress of the project, made possible through the joint efforts of our partners.

Preparations are currently underway for the first Youth Exchange, set to take place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This initiative involves six organizations: AlbanianSkills, BRAVO, Eco-Logic, The Balkan Forum, and Brigaid EU Project, co-funded by the European Union. However, the views expressed are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the EU or EACEA.



ToKeQark

Youth of Fushë Kosova Featured on Public Television

As part of the ToKeQark project, a group of young people from the Municipality of Fushë Kosova presented their work on Kosovo's public television. The activity aimed to raise awareness about environmental protection and educate residents on the importance of recycling and reusing materials.



 Norway



 Norway



Creative Environmental Awareness Campaign in Fushë Kosova

In the Municipality of Fushë Kosova, youth involved in the ToKeQark project carried out an awareness campaign by creating a sculpture using recyclable materials. This project blended art and environmental activism, highlighting the importance of environmental protection. The campaign followed a three-day training on innovative solutions to environmental challenges and climate change.



 Norway



Ferizaj Youth Group Discusses ToKeQark Project on Tema TV

The youth group from the Municipality of Ferizaj participated in a debate on Tema TV, where they discussed their activities within the ToKeQark project and the benefits they gained from their involvement. Local coordinator Dashurije Ahmeti and group leaders Dijane Maliqi and Lorik Hashani participated in the discussion.

“Countering False Information in Kosovo: Experience-Sharing between V4 and Prishtina”

EU’s Digital Regulation Model as an Example for the World to Follow

An important global discussion today revolves around combating disinformation and misinformation in the public information space, particularly in the fast-evolving online domain. Addressing this challenge is essential to prevent the spread of false narratives that can cause panic and manipulation. The article written by Pavel Havlicek, Research Fellow at the Association for International Affairs (AMO), explores how the EU’s digital regulation model can serve as a guiding example for the world. This piece is part of the project “Countering False Information in Kosovo: Experience-Sharing between V4 and Prishtina,” supported by The Visegrad Fund.



New Projects:

Greenbridge and Ecochampions

We are excited to announce the launch of two new projects: Greenbridge and Ecochampions. Greenbridge aims to foster regional collaboration in environmental sustainability by connecting youth from the Western Balkans through a series of workshops and exchanges focused on green innovation. Ecochampions focuses on empowering young leaders to become advocates for climate action and environmental protection within their communities, encouraging creative solutions to local environmental challenges. Both projects are part of our ongoing efforts to build a more sustainable and eco-conscious future in the region.