THE BALKAN FORUM

MONTHLY UPDATE

October, 2026

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Who Represents Kosovo? Women, Diplomacy and Nation Branding

On 22 October 2026, The Balkan Forum, in cooperation with UN Women Kosovo, organized the panel discussion "Who Represents Kosovo? Women, Diplomacy and Nation Branding" at Hotel Sirius in Prishtina. The event brought together prominent figures from diplomacy, politics, civil society, and academia to examine women's contributions to Kosovo's state-building, international recognition, and diplomatic representation.

The event featured opening remarks highlighting the historical and contemporary roles of women in Kosovo's diplomacy, including contributions that have often remained underrepresented in the country's political and institutional narratives. Among the speakers was H.E. Danijela Barišić, Ambassador of Croatia to Kosovo, whose participation contributed an international diplomatic perspective to the discussion.

The event also attracted positive media attention, both in the lead-up to and during the discussion. As part of the promotional efforts, The Balkan Forum's Director was invited for an interview on Kosovo's public broadcaster, RTK, to discuss "Women in Diplomacy – From Representation to Recognition." The interview emphasized the importance of women's representation and leadership in diplomacy, while raising public awareness of the event and its objectives.

Moderated by Jeta Abazi-Gashi, the panel brought together Vjosa Dobruna, Liza Gashi, Adelina Hasani, Leon Malazogu, and Edita Tahiri, offering perspectives on women's involvement in Kosovo's diplomatic processes, their contributions to advancing the country's international standing, and the challenges that continue to affect their representation in decision-making spaces.

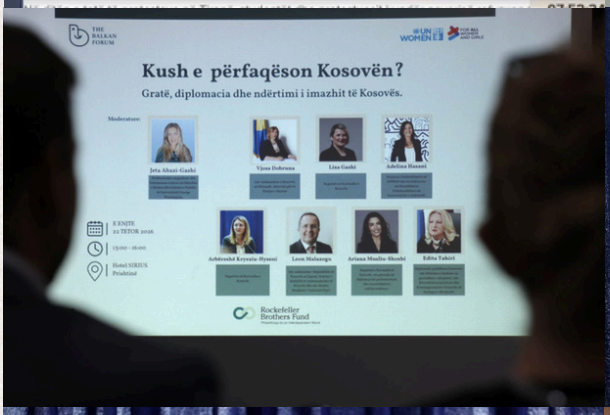
The discussion went beyond the question of women's numerical representation, examining how their contributions are documented, acknowledged, and incorporated into Kosovo's broader diplomatic identity. Particular attention was given to the relationship between gender, political representation, and nation branding, as well as the importance of ensuring that women's experiences and perspectives are part of the narratives through which Kosovo presents itself internationally.

An important component of the event was the presentation of the policy paper "Women in Kosovo's Diplomacy: From Representation to Recognition," authored by Jeta Abazi-Gashi. The publication provided an additional research-based perspective on the discussion, emphasizing the importance of moving beyond representation toward meaningful recognition of women's roles and contributions.

Through this initiative, The Balkan Forum sought to foster critical reflection on whose voices and contributions shape Kosovo's international image, while reaffirming its commitment to gender equality, inclusive dialogue, and the recognition of women as central actors in the country's diplomatic past, present, and future.


ROLI I GRAVE NË DIPLOMACI DHE NË NDËRTIMIN E IMAZHIT TË KOSOVËS
Në studio: Gazmend Berlajolli, drejtues i Ballkan Forum


Women in
Kosovo's
Diplomacy

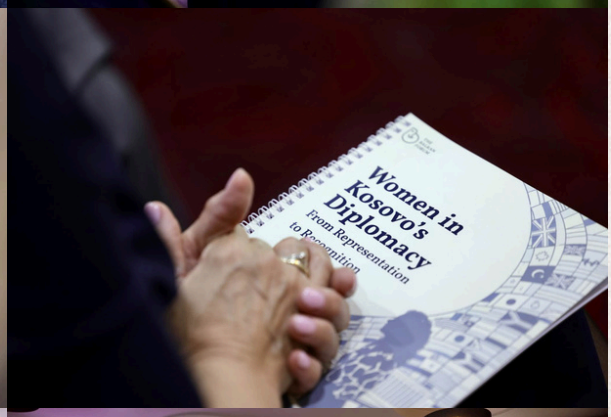

Kush e përfaqëson Kosovën?
Gratë, diplomacia dhe ndërtimi i imazhit të Kosovës.
Rockefeller Brothers Fund


Hotel SIRIUS
Conference Center


Hotel SIRIUS
Conference Center





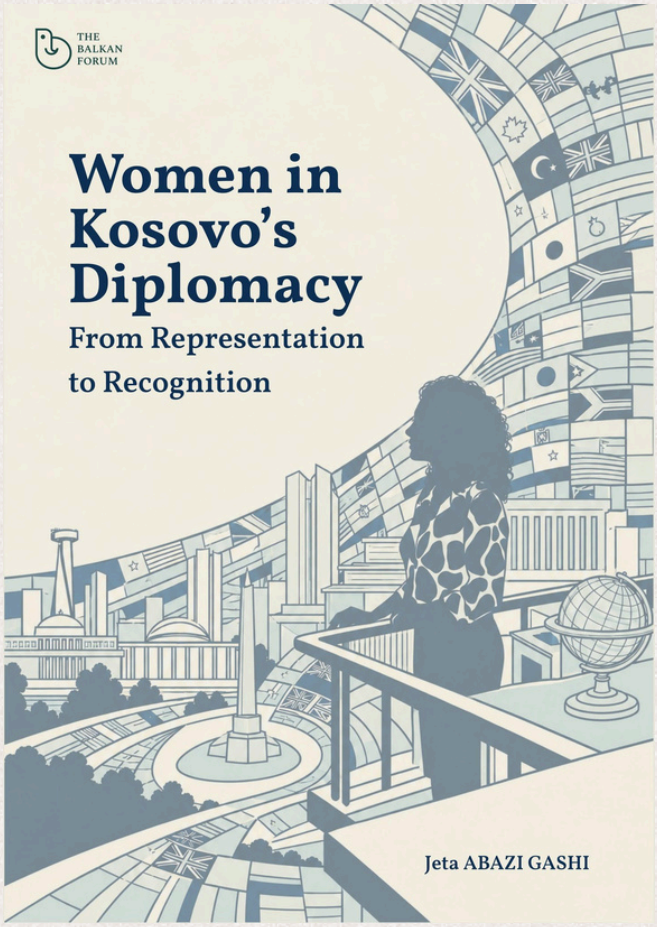

Women in
Kosovo's
Diplomacy
From Representation


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Research and Publications

The Balkan Forum published the policy paper **"Women in Kosovo's Diplomacy: From Representation to Recognition," authored by Jeta Abazi-Gashi.**



Presented during the 22 October event, the publication explores women's historical and contemporary contributions to Kosovo's diplomacy, state-building, and international representation. It draws attention to the importance of acknowledging these contributions and ensuring greater visibility and recognition of women's roles in shaping the country's diplomatic identity.

Through this publication, The Balkan Forum aims to encourage informed dialogue on gender equality, inclusive representation, and the importance of recognizing women as key contributors to Kosovo's diplomatic development and international standing.

In October, The Balkan Forum published an analysis **by Benjamin Jenkins Wise, titled "Kosovo's New President Ends the Deadlock, Not the Crisis."**



The article examines Kosovo's political developments following the election of a new president, highlighting the institutional challenges and political uncertainties that remain despite the resolution of the deadlock.

Through this analysis, The Balkan Forum continues to encourage informed public debate on democratic governance, institutional stability, and Kosovo's political future.

GreenBridge: Advancing Regional Cooperation and Sustainability

Throughout October, The Balkan Forum continued its engagement in the GreenBridge project, supporting the dissemination of project activities, updates, and publications across its communication platforms.

On 28 October, The Balkan Forum participated online in the **project's final consortium meeting**, held in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. During the meeting, The Balkan Forum's researcher presented the final draft of the Sustainability Strategy, developed by the organization to support the long-term impact and continuation of the project's results beyond its implementation period.

The meeting provided an opportunity to review project progress, exchange perspectives with consortium partners, and reaffirm the importance of regional cooperation in advancing sustainable development across the Western Balkans.



Looking Ahead

October reflected The Balkan Forum's continued commitment to fostering inclusive dialogue, advancing research, and strengthening regional cooperation.

From highlighting women's contributions to Kosovo's diplomacy to promoting sustainable development and engaging in discussions on democratic governance, the month's activities reinforced the importance of collaboration and informed public debate.

Looking ahead, The Balkan Forum remains dedicated to building on these efforts, expanding partnerships, and contributing to a more inclusive, democratic, and sustainable Western Balkans.

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