



DRAFT PROGRAMME

First day

8.30 a.m. Registration of participants and connection testing

9.30–9.40 a.m. Welcome address:
❖ **George Gerapetritis**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hellenic Republic (tbc)

9.40–11.15 a.m. Inaugural session: The state of democracy in South East Europe: civil society "health test" on the road to EU enlargement

Moderator: **Apostolos Mangiriadis**, Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (ERT)

- ❖ **Oliver Röpke**, President of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- ❖ **Margaritis Schinas**, Vice-President of the European Commission for Promoting our European Way of Life
- ❖ **Dubravka Šuica**, Vice-President of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography (tbc)
- ❖ **Majlinda Bregu**, Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)
- ❖ **Michela Matuella**, acting Director for the Western Balkans, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, European Commission
- ❖ **Biljana Spasovska**, Executive Director, Balkan Civil Society Development Network (BCSDN)
- ❖ **Krisela Hackaj**, Executive Director, Cooperation & Development Institute (CDI)

Keynote speaker:

Ioannis Armakolas, Head of the South-East Europe Programme at the Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)

DISCUSSION

11.15–11.45 a.m. Coffee break and press conference (tbc)

11.45 a.m.–1 p.m.

Second session: 2023 European Year of Skills – Part 1
Lifelong skills development in South-East Europe, through initial and Continuing Vocational Education and Training (IVET and CVET)

Chair: **Prof. Iakovos D. Michailidis**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

- ❖ **Pilvi Torsti**, Director of the European Training Foundation (ETF) (tbc)
- ❖ **Mara Brugia**, Deputy Director of European Centre for the development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)
- ❖ **Tatjana Babrauskienė**, EESC member
- ❖ **Saša Ačić**, Director of Employers of Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ❖ **Čedanka Andrić**, President, Trade Union „Nezavisnost“, Serbia
- ❖ **Trajce Velkovski**, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje / Head of the Centre of Vocational Excellence in Green Innovation, North Macedonia
- ❖ **Tina Šarić**, Director of Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe – ERI SEE

DISCUSSION

1–2.30 p.m.

Lunch hosted by the EESC

2.30–4.00 p.m.

Second session continued: 2023 European Year of Skills – Part 2A
Education, Skills and the Youth Guarantee in the Western Balkans

Chair: **Neža Repanšek**, member of the EESC

- ❖ **Dafina Peci**, Executive Director, National Youth Congress of Albania
- ❖ **Dren Puka**, Research, Advocacy and Capacity Building Manager of the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF)
- ❖ **Jelena Fuštić**, Executive Director of Forum MNE (Youth and Informal Education), Montenegro
- ❖ **Marija Stojadinović**, Director of the Kragujevac Business Development Center, Serbia
- ❖ **Duško Cvjetinović**, Manager of project "Youth Retention Program in BiH – General Mobilisation", Citizens Association "Nešto Više / Something More"
- ❖ **Margareta Nikolovska**, Senior Human Capital Development Expert, Governance and Quality Assurance, European Training Foundation (ETF)

DISCUSSION

4.00–4.15 p.m.

Coffee break

4.15–5.30 p.m.

**Second session continued: 2023 European Year of Skills – Part 2B:
Continuing training, up-skilling and re-skilling in the Western Balkans**

Chair: **Lidia Salvatore**, Cedefop

- ❖ **Siria Taurelli**, Senior Human Capital Development Expert, Coordinator of Governance and Quality Assurance, European Training Foundation (ETF)
- ❖ **Brikena Xhomaqi**, co-chair of the EESC's Liaison Group with European CSOs and networks, Lifelong Learning Platform - European Civil Society for Education
- ❖ **Srđa Keković**, Secretary General, Union of Free Trade Unions of Montenegro
- ❖ **Boško Savković**, Secretary General, Serbian Association of Employers – SAE, and co-chair of the EU-Serbia Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)
- ❖ **Florian Kadletz**, Human Capital Development and Career Guidance Expert, European Training Foundation (ETF)

DISCUSSION

5.30 p.m.

Cocktail reception offered by the Regional Cooperation Council

Second day

Third session: Civil society's contribution to the implementation of the Green Agenda and sustainable development of the South-East Europe

9.30–11.30 a.m.

Chair: **Dragica Martinović**, member of the EESC

- ❖ **Matej Zakonjšek**, Director, Transport Community Secretariat
- ❖ **Adam Cwetsch**, Head of European Green Deal Unit, Energy Community Secretariat
- ❖ **Viktor Berishaj**, Southeast Europe Climate and Energy Policy Coordinator, CAN Europe
- ❖ **Marika Djolai**, Department of Peace Studies and International Development, University of Bradford, Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (BiEPAG) member
- ❖ **Pavle D. Radovanović**, Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro and co-chair of the EU-Montenegro Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)
- ❖ **Atdhe Hykolli**, Confederation of Independent Trade Unions of Kosovo, trade unions' representative in the Economic and Social Council (ESC)
- ❖ **Nataša Kalauz**, Executive Director of World Wide Fund (WWF) Adria
- ❖ **Petrica Dulgheru**, Executive Director of the Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative

DISCUSSION

11.30–12.00 a.m.

Coffee break

12.00 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

Discussion and adoption of the Forum conclusions

Chair: **Andrej Zorko**, President of the EESC's Western Balkans Follow-up Committee

Useful information:

Meeting venue: **Hotel Holiday Inn, Thessaloniki, Greece**

Interpreting: MK, EL, EN, BS-HR-SR-MN and SQ into MK, EL, EN, BS-HR-SR-MN and SQ

X (formerly Twitter): **@EESC_REX #EESC_WB**