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 Babrauskiene, EESC member
❖ Saša Aćić, 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 Hykollì, 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
Interpretation: 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