

## 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 need 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 at the national, regional, and EU levels.

### 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*

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### 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 & Project Leader)
Austria	Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiiip), Vienna
Western Balkan countries	
Albania	Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI), Tirana
BiH	University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Political Sciences
Kosovo	Change Experts Group, Pristina
Montenegro	Politikon Network (PIN), Podgorica
North Macedonia	EUROTHINK - Center for European Strategies, Skopje
Serbia	Foundation BFPE for a Responsible Society (BFPE), Belgrade
EU member countries	
Bulgaria	New Bulgarian University, Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies (CERMES), Sofia
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, Corinth
Hungary	Andrássy University, Budapest
Italy	International Affairs Institute (IAI), Rome
Romania	GlobalFocus Center, Bucharest
Slovenia	Centre of International Relations (CIR) – University of Ljubljana