



THE BALKAN YOUTH FORUM SUMMER PROGRAM

The Balkan Youth Forum is a summer program that brings together 24 young people between the ages of 16 and 18 from the countries of Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey. This project is planned to take place from July 14th to July 21st of 2018 (including travel days) in Bulgaria.

The project's main objective is to inspire the idea of uniting the Balkans together through cooperation between the countries and to empower the youth in the Balkan region. By the end, every participant is intended to have formed a clearer opinion on why these countries would benefit from cooperation and to present a project that will be implemented in the future to spread the importance of balanced relationships in the Balkans.

Every participant will take part in different activities that will be in the forms of lectures, discussions, debates, simulations, workshops and local engagement. The purpose of these activities is to help each participant come up with arguments and reasons for a more united Balkans, and to develop the main idea of his or her project.

ACTIVITIES

LECTURES and DISCUSSION CLASSES

With a main focus on the history and current relations between the Balkan states, participants will learn more about their neighboring countries and gain a more in-depth understanding of the current geopolitical situation in the region.

DEBATE and SIMULATION

Participants will take part in carefully designed simulations that teach them about the governments and political leadership in the Balkan countries. Through debates and simulations where they will take on the roles of leaders and decision makers, the students will develop their critical thinking, negotiation and problem-solving skills while emulating different political situations and designing optimal solutions.

WORKSHOPS

At the end of the program, students will be asked to present their own project proposals for strengthening cooperation between their countries. For the duration of the program, the participants will get a chance to participate in selected workshops that would give them the necessary skills to help them develop and implement their project proposals. Each of the workshops is designed to inspire new ideas, to discover and foster the strengths of the participants and to teach them how to achieve their goals and make a difference.



LOCAL ENGAGEMENT

Participants will get the chance to engage and interact with the country they are staying in, as well as meet professionals working on governmental international relations and in international organizations and commissions, learn about different positions, perspectives, opportunities and challenges that the Balkan region is facing today.

APPLICATIONS

To apply to this program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- be between 16 and 18 years old at the start of the program,
- be permanent residents of a Balkan country,
- available to travel on the indicated dates.

The applications are available on www.balkanyouthforum.com; the deadline to apply is April 15th 2018.

For more information about the program visit our website www.balkanyouthforum.com, or write to us at info@balkanyouthforum.com.

Crystal Mele, Yana Voynova and Jan Strajnar
Organizers of Balkan Youth Forum