



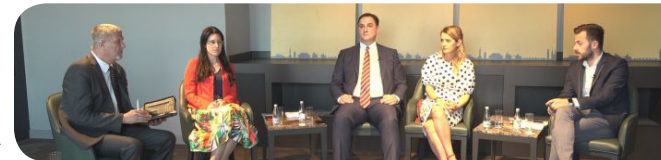
## ADVANCING A REGIONAL AGENDA

**Promoting successful models and positive messages.** The Balkan Forum (The BF) continued recording video-interviews, over 150 since 2017, with government officials, business, media, civil society, academia, young people, and other actors from the countries of our geographic focus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and disseminating inspiring messages that emphasize the significance of regional dialogue and collaboration; promote successful projects, models, initiatives, and funding instruments that enable the achievement of sustainable progress; and impacts that these are having at grassroots, national and regional levels. Such messages are crucial to challenge the ethno-nationalist narratives/rhetoric, and build a new vision for the Balkans that is based on common values/aspirations of the peoples of the region. Latest interviews include Robert Pszczel, [NATO HQ](#); Zsolt Bauer, [The Climate Reality Project in Hungary](#); Drita Lolla, [NGO iACT](#) in Montenegro; Damon M. Wilson, [Atlantic Council](#) in the US; Isidora Sekulić Šoć, [Radio Television of Montenegro](#); Selmo Cikotić, [Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#); Ana Vuković, [University of Belgrade](#), Serbia.



### Better infrastructure enables tourism development in the Balkans

In May 2018, we facilitated a debate in Podgorica focusing on opportunities and challenges to regional cooperation on tourism. Aleksandar Dedović, [ALFA Centar](#), moderated the discussion with participants from Montenegro, Macedonia and Kosovo: Damir Davidović, [Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism](#), Montenegro; Ana Nives Radović, [Tourism Agency in Kotor](#); Sanja Golubović, [Caffe Montenegro](#); Milo Radonjić, [Centre Ville](#) in Podgorica; Vlado Srbinovski, [NGO Balkania](#), Macedonia; and, Virtyt Gacaferri, [Balkan Natural Adventure](#), Kosovo. A key conclusion was that the economic power can be expanded through regional tourism initiatives that celebrate the cultural heritage and diversity of the Balkans and through improving the infrastructure in the region that provide financial profits in rural and urban areas throughout the region and strengthen ties among people.



## BUILDING PARTNERSHIP AND COOPERATION IN THE REGION

### OUR RESOURCE BANK

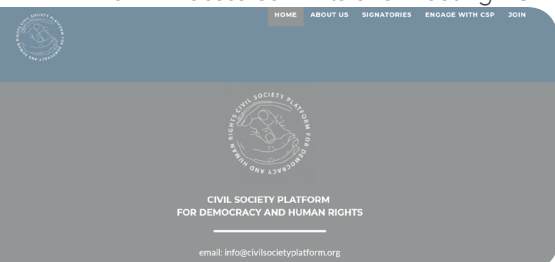


We continue to showcase the work of our partners and other actors in the region through our digital platform that is further being developed as a resource that aims to provide up-to-date information on our thematic pillars: education, energy, tourism, labor market/human capital, which will provide links to key legislation, policies, research/analysis, actors, donors, funding opportunities, media articles, statistics, and latest developments on these thematic areas in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia.

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### CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

In the lead up to the London Summit held on 9 and 10 July 2018, The BF and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from the Western Balkans (WB), Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, put together and shared with actors participating at the Summit, [a platform for a regional civil society organization](#) that will assume greater responsibility for monitoring Berlin Process agendas and holding our governments accountable for implementing recommendations from the Berlin Process Summits and meeting EU integration criteria. In the coming months, civil society will self-organize meetings to advance our organizational structure and strategically plan for 2019 and beyond, and develop plans that will guide a process that ensures maximum transparency, welcomes input/contribution by all interested parties, it is inclusive and interactive. The platform is open and welcomes CSOs/actors from the region who wish to [join](#) and/or [contribute](#) to further build/shape the platform as equals, as partners, and as owners of this joint platform.



### REACT PROJECT

The project „REACT!“, supported by [RYCO](#) and implemented by The BF in partnership with ALFA Centar from Montenegro, and other CSOs from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia, aims to: 1) foster active citizenship and participation in decision-making processes by young people, and 2) promoting social inclusion of young people through mobility, cooperation and shared projects. Key activities include [Essay Competition](#) (NEC), exchange visits and [Summer Camp REACT](#) scheduled for 3 – 8 September 2018.



# CONTRIBUTING TO REGIONAL EVENTS AND TOPICS

## To Be Secure (2BS) Conference in Budva, Montenegro

In May 2018, The BF team participated at the [2BS](#) annual high-level forum dealing with issues of global, Euro-Atlantic and security in South- Eastern Europe. This was an opportunity for us to exchange



views and vision with NATO and government representatives, parliamentarians, politicians, diplomats, CSOs, and other participants on: i) reform efforts in the Balkan region, ii) building closer ties between key stakeholders and partners with the aim of making our region a safer and more prosperous place, and iii) contribution of Western Balkans actors to regional and global challenges in the future.

## Kosovo Sustainable Development Week (KSDW) 2018, in Kosovo

In June 2018, The BF participated at the [Kosovo Sustainable](#)



[Development Week](#) (KSDW) event, a week-long high-level international conference in Kosovo, organized for the first time in the region, which examined Kosovo's and regions main challenges with the main focus on energy, solid waste, water, environment, and climate change. In addition, The BF partnering with the [Kosovo Civil Society Consortium for Sustainable Development](#) (KOSID) helped transmit live through social media channels the discussion focusing on "Energy Transition" held on June 4th, 2019.

## Youth work fight back the Violent Extremism conference, Montenegro

In February 2018, The BF staff contributed to this conference both as panelist and facilitator in different sessions focusing on an in-depth analyses of violent extremism (VE) in the region - its drivers, examples of positive practices in building resilience - aimed at capturing the regional strength and creating a cornerstone for regional cooperation in preventing and combating VE. The conference is part of a regional project implemented by [Forum MNE](#) from Montenegro, in cooperation with [DamaD](#), Serbia; [PRONI](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina; [Institute for Democracy and Mediation](#) (IDM), Albania; [Forum for Civic Initiatives](#) (FIQ), Kosovo; [SEGA Coalition of Youth Organizations](#), Macedonia. A key recommendation was that there is a need for more in-depth research on the roots of the problem, pull and push factors; that we need to involve more young people in decision making and political discussions/life; and that we need to shape positive narrative and promote positive examples and role models among youth.



## London Summit

The BF contributed to the London Summit both as member of the Civil Society Platform for Democracy and Human Rights that involved meeting with [Mr. Angus Lapsley](#), Director for Defence, International Security and South East Europe at the [Foreign & Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#), to introduce the platform, and as panelist in the Spotlight event on "Discrimination in the Western Balkans" with Civil Society and Youth Groups held on 9 July 2018.



## Philanthropy for Green Ideas

The Balkan Forum contribution at the [Balkan Green Foundation](#) (BGF) event Philanthropy for Green Ideas held in Mavrovo, Macedonia. This is an annual regional competition which gathers representatives from countries of the Western Balkans, providing them with the opportunity to present their green and innovative ideas. The BF records such events and helps BGF to show case important projects and ideas of the CSOs and other actors in the region that have transformative potential and to have large scale impact that benefit individual countries, WB region, and beyond.



## Join/work with The Balkan Forum

The BF is seeking dynamic and detail-oriented interns interested in gaining experience in the field of Media Production and IT. [Deadline for applications 27 August 2018](#). We are also seeking for persons who wish to contribute to The Balkan Forum's thematic pillars: education, energy, tourism, labor market/human capital through writing blogs on these themes. [Contact us](#) to explore this opportunity.

## Future activities

Consultation with CSOs/actors in the WB region to further shape/develop the Civil Society Platform. Dialogue events with the diaspora and journalists/media professionals from the Balkans that aim to strengthen the role of diaspora in the socio-economic development of the region, and ensure media coverage of successful projects, initiatives and models that have the potential to have a larger impact that goes beyond a community, city or country, including in strengthening cross-border and cross-sector cooperation and partnership.

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