

## SIDE EVENT CONCEPT NOTE

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### Event title

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Empowering Youth for Sustainable Futures: Green Policies, Political Development, and Youth activism

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### Background and Rationale

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Due to the multiple crises the humanity faces, the importance of building the capacities of the youth to engage in politics, whether through citizen actions, political parties, or as professionals in policy debates, nowadays is more important than ever. Unfortunately, young people are often disengaged from politics, starting with their participation in elections. In the EU, only 29% of young people aged 15 to 24 voted in their country's last parliamentary elections, according to a 2020 Eurobarometer survey. This number is lower than other age groups and even lower in South-Eastern European countries, such as Croatia, where the voter turnout for young people was only 16%. However, in the past decade, we have seen a rise in various youth-led environmental organizations and climate actions, such as Fridays for Future, which demonstrates how green policies and environmental issues have the potential to bring young people back into the political arena. Furthermore, these issues can transcend physical, cultural, and even ideological borders and demonstrate how common problems caused by climate change require cooperation and mutual action. Climate-related disasters, pollution, environment degradation are negative environmental effects caused by poor policy development and implementation, which strongly affect the implementation of 2030 Agenda. Therefore, we must equip young leaders with the knowledge and skills to become advocates for green public policies in their communities and promote active citizenship and political participation

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### Session objectives and expected outcomes

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**The primary objective** of the side event is to emphasize the importance of youth activism and youth participation in creation of sustainable policies for climate action.

The founders of the newly established Regional School for Political Development, APD, BFPE and CRPM, will present the mission and school's key thematic areas: 1) Green policies in EU and in Western Balkan Countries; 2) Policy Development and 3) Youth Activism, as three main postulates of building resilient and sustainable future. The ultimate goal of the school is to enable and motivate future young leaders to actively participate in the democratic/political life and to actively contribute to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). RSPD will provide a platform for learning, practical work, and cooperation among young leaders from Croatia, Serbia and North Macedonia, thus motivating and enabling them for long-term active political involvement and a European approach to common environmental and other public-



policy related challenges. Students at the school will also gain insights into the complex interplay between political development, climate change policies and youth activism.

**Our expected outcomes** of the side event are that the participants will understand: the need of synchronised mutual action when creating and implementing environmental policies, because the environment recognises no boundaries; the urgency of greater youth participation in the policy cycle; that investing in the education of young leaders in green politics will contribute in achievement of Agenda 2030.

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#### Organizers

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**Lead organizers:** Center for Research and Policy making (CRPM)

**Contributors:** Academy for Political Development (APD) and Foundation BFPE for Responsible society (BFPE)

**Focal points:** Biljana Matevska; Kristijan Trajkovski

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#### Agenda and Structure

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13th March 2024, Wednesday

13:15-13:20 **Introduction and objectives**

- Biljana Matevska, Moderator/CRPM

13:20 – 14:05 **The role of youth in green policies, political development and activism - introductory remarks**

- Ivana Novoselec - RSPD- Background Mission and Aim of the School
- Zhidas Daskalovski - Youth participation in policy making and youth activism – a case study
- Svetlana Stefanović - Advocacy and lobbying as powerful tools for implementation of Agenda 2030
- Youth representative from Croatia
- Youth representative from Macedonia
- Youth representative from Serbia

14:05 – 14:35 **Q&A Conversation Circle**

14:35 - 14:45 **Concluding remarks**

- Kristijan Trajkovski, Moderator/CRPM



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#### List of Panellists

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Ivana Novoselec, APD

Zhidas Daskalovski, CRPM

Svetlana Stefanovic, BFPE

Biljana Matevska, CRPM

Kristijan Trajkovski, CRPM

Youth representative from Macedonia

Youth representative from Croatia

Youth representative from Serbia

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#### Sign-up / Registration Link

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYtc-utrzMuE9FSnEc1LSKhJUOSXf3G7Aww>

*The zoom link has registration for requiring the following data: first and last name; email address; country; city; organization and job title.*