



The project **Regional Academy for Democracy: Shaping the European Future of the Balkans - Building a New Political Culture and Political Elite** is a unique initiative in political capacity building in the Western Balkans, supported by the European Commission and implemented by seven civil society organisations, members of the Network of Schools of Political Studies operating under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

The Regional Academy for Democracy (**RAD**) aims to contribute to regional cooperation in the Western Balkans in the fields of democracy, human rights, justice and institution building, through building the capacities of next-generation political leadership and facilitating their mutual understanding and cooperation. Dedicated to already established political actors who will in the near future form the highest-level political leadership, the RAD aspires to shape a human infrastructure that will help solidify current democratisation processes, uphold the standards of human and minority rights above political or national interests, and embrace a spirit of regional cooperation and reconciliation with neighbours.

Structured in three yearly cycles, the RAD will gather 150 political leaders from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo*, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia (7 per country per year) in a joint experience of extensive learning and exchange. Each year, we aim to organize four highly interactive seminars and one study visit for the same group of 50 participants engaged in the topic of the year: Justice and Security Cooperation (Year 1), Human and Minority Rights (Year 2), and Building Democratic Institutions (Year 3).

The participants will be selected from among leading younger politicians who already hold significant posts either on the state level or in their respective political parties - State Secretaries, Deputy and Assistant Ministers, Members of Parliaments, leading party officials, diplomats, as well as a number of the most outstanding mayors and/or county/region leaders.

Timeframe and methodology:

In the course of one yearly cycle, four seminars and one study visit will be held for the group of up to 50 participants. The first project year, starting in 2013, will be dedicated to Justice and Security Cooperation topics. The highly structured curriculum will be based on a variety of innovative cutting-edge learning methods, including interactive workshops, case studies, and introductions to the most prominent global leaders in this area. The study visit to Spain will expose participants to first-hand experience of security sector reform, among other things addressing regional and ethnic identities from the human security perspective.

In 2013, the dynamics of the activities will be as follows:

- End-February, first seminar, Subotica (Serbia)
- Mid-April, second seminar, Montenegro
- Mid-June, third seminar, Croatia
- Mid-September, study visit, Spain
- Mid-November, final seminar, Albania

* All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

YEAR 1: Justice and Security Cooperation

The curriculum of the first year will focus on an area that has been at the forefront of both citizen interest and a number of recent regional developments. Along with economic development, progress in the fields of justice and security has been the measuring rod for the success of democratisation processes across the region, and it will continue to be a core determinant of whether or not these processes can sustain popular support in each country. Corruption in particular has hurt the ratings of virtually every government in the region since the beginning of the transition, and persistence of organised crime continues to be a high priority area for the countries' EU integration as well. On the other hand, reforms undertaken in this area have already yielded considerable benefits - not least with visa liberalisation in most countries. With respect to security, the Balkans have come a long way from the recent history of violent conflicts and can today assume a partner role in global developments. The objective of the first year is to familiarise emerging political leaders in depth with the most pressing global, European, and regional issues in security and justice, and the national and supra-national responses to them. A number of these issues necessitate a regional approach, and the participants will be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for governing in a regional community striving to achieve lasting peace and justice for its citizens.

Seminar 1: Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans

Preliminary topics: EU Common Security and Defence Policy; Defence reforms - integration and relations with NATO in WB; Peacekeeping experiences in the Balkans; Participation in international missions; Police reforms; Security and Intelligence agencies in transition; Parliaments in the implementation of security sector reforms; The role of women in security sector reform and status of implementation of UNSCR 1325; Human security and cooperation in WB

Seminar 2: Combating Organised Crime and Corruption - A Regional Challenge

Preliminary topics: Human trafficking; Cybercrime; Illegal immigration flows; Accountable government - experiences of anti-corruption institutions in the region; Regional approaches to fighting organised crime networks; Global terrorism and the Balkans; Economic corruption and illegal monopolies

Seminar 3: Reforms in the Justice Systems in the Region

Preliminary topics: Achievements and faults of judiciary reforms in the region; Independence of the judiciary; The role of constitutional courts; Access to justice for all; The nexus between the judiciary and independent regulatory bodies; The growing role of the prosecution; Prosecution of war crimes; Regional cooperation of the judiciary

International Study Visit: Spain

Preliminary themes: The impact of EU integration on democratisation processes; Security sector reform; Protection of human rights in combating terrorism; Addressing regional and ethnic identities from a human security perspective

Seminar 4: International Law and Institutions

Preliminary topics: The role of international tribunals in transitional justice - lessons of the ICTY; International law in the age of global terrorism; European and international judicial mechanisms for human rights protection; The future of the United Nations and reform of the Security Council; The role of the OSCE in Balkan security processes; The role of civil society networks in transitional justice and reconciliation.

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Implementing partners: Academy for Political Studies (Tirana), School of Political Studies of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo), Academy for Political Development (Zagreb), Pristina Institute for Political Studies (Pristina), Centre for Research and Policy Making (Skopje), School of Democratic Leadership (Podgorica)