

## Shaping and debating the future of EU Foreign Policy Initiative BH, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Partners: Jaan Tõnisson Institute Estonia, Genista research foundation Malta, European educational forum, Croatia

Preliminarni dates for activities: May, June, July, August, September, October, November and December 2015

Estimated number of participants: 450

1. Younger than 30 years: 100
2. Between 30-65 years: 300
3. Older than 65: 50

Target groups: youth (students), NGO representatives, media, civil servants local, entity and state level, party representatives local, entity and state level, citizens

1. Youth: Student associations at the Universities of Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Mostar; Student associations at faculties (political science, economics, sociology, law etc.) in Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar. Various Youth forums of major political parties (HDZ, SDP, DF, SNSD, SDS, HDZ 1990, etc.), Youth NGOs.
2. Between 30-65: local level (Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Mostar), NGO's, citizens, civil servants, parliamentarians.
3. Older than 65: NGOs, local community committees.

### ACTIVITIES: an overview

The FPI BH plans to carry out two types of activities. Firstly, acknowledging that there is very little public debate on issues concerning the EU integration and its impact on BiH, we would like to mobilize youth groups, students, and especially young members of political parties to take part in three forums/public discussions that we will organize in three major cities in BiH.

The main aim of these forums is to spur the discussion on the perception of the EU held by BiH citizens and to help citizens better understand the changes that BiH will likely face internally as it advances on its EU path. To do that, we will organize each of these three discussions around three common themes that reflect on peculiarities of BiH: *political challenges* to a more successful EU integration, *economic effects* of the EU integration, and *educational and cultural opportunities* for BiH citizens arising from BiH's current status with regards to the EU membership. We are deliberately going to use the same structure for each of the three discussions because we would also like to document the reactions from the participants to these three important areas both during the conference and through a survey which we intend to distribute.

One of the main deliverables of the project will be the analysis of views on the challenges and opportunities that arise from the EU integration process for BiH. Prior to starting the planning process of discussions, we will carefully design a questionnaire that will be used to gauge the views of our target groups on issues that are at present of biggest interest to BiH society at large. The data thus gathered will be analysed by the VPI project manager who will then produce a report on the findings from this exploratory exercise. The report that will not only summarize the findings gathered through survey of participants but will also contain short overviews of

each of the three discussions together with policy recommendations will be presented at the concluding conference in Sarajevo.

#### Activity type 1: „FORUM/DISCUSSIONS“

Main theme: What kind of BiH in what kind of EU? Political and economic challenges; Educational and cultural opportunities.

Timeframe: May, June/July, September/ and October 2015

Locations: Universities Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar

Implementing partners: Student Associations faculty of political science Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar, EU Delegation in BiH, Directorate of EU integration of the BiH government.

Experts: Local

Topics Description: As stated earlier, BiH is a very peculiar country in terms of its internal institutional structure and the way it approaches its integration process. Many of the integration challenges are unique precisely because of its political structure and decision-making processes. We would like to address both political and economic challenges that characterize the process of EU integration in BiH and in doing that, would like to understand and document the perception of citizens of the process as a whole as well as their expectations from the process of EU integration as such.

Target groups: covering all three age groups

Implementation:

- Each forum will be organized in collaboration with local universities and will be held in university buildings;
- Each forum will target all of the target groups;
- Each forum will be followed by local media and reported on by local TV stations;

Expected results: We expect to instigate the debate on some of the most acute challenges BiH faces on its EU path. Furthermore, general public and youth in particular are often ill informed or lack proper understanding of the problems BiH faces throughout its integration process. We expect to close the gap between what is already known and what needs to be known about the European integration of BiH.

Activity Type 2: CONCLUDING CONFERENCE: The future of BiH in the EU: what needs to be done and what needs to be done better?

Time and place: November, 2015, Sarajevo

Partners: European Union Delegation in BiH, Directorate for EU integrations (DEI), Council of Ministers BiH, Parliament of BiH; European Education Forum Zagreb.

Experts/speakers: Representatives from the EU Delegation in BiH; representatives from the DEI, representatives from the Parliament; representative from the EEF Croatia to speak of Croatian integration process and challenges.

Topics: New approach of the EU in treating BiH integration; Compact for Growth and Jobs initiative of the European Commission; German-British Initiative for reformative processes in BiH; Coordination mechanism and facilitation of internal institutional communication in BiH on issues pertaining to the EU integration.

Target groups: Covering all three target groups but here with special emphasis on the participation of political party representatives, representatives of BiH institutions, international community representatives, academia and media representatives.

Implementation: The concluding conference will be organized so that the findings and conclusions from the three discussion events could be presented to the main decision-makers in BiH. In that sense, above and beyond including again the original target groups, we would like to have the political figures present at the conference so that we can reinvigorate the debate on BiH challenges in its integration process. The conference will be held in November and in the Parliament building, subject to availability. Panel participants at the conference will be representatives of international community, local institutions as well as representatives of the European Education Forum from Croatia who will share their own experiences with the integration process.

We have already negotiated with the local TV channel to cover the concluding conference and make a short video to showcase its main conclusions. The TV channel FACE TV took particular interest in the EU integration of BiH and the work of the Foreign Policy Initiative in that regard and wishes to make a series of short episodes on the three themes that will be covered in our discussions. Partnering with the local news channel will ensure us the necessary dissemination and a new outlet to broadcast the main ideas of the project and conference to much wider audiences.

Expected results: We expect to have the representatives of political elite and BiH institutions as well as international community understand the main concerns and views of the citizens on issues pertaining to political and economic challenges that arise from the integration process. Also, we would like to enhance everybody's understanding about the opportunities that are to be found in areas of education and culture for the creative industry of BiH.