



The Balkan Debate and Public Policy Challenge Overview

The Balkan Debate and Public Policy Challenge (BDPPC or The Challenge) is a regional competition and educational initiative that offers undergraduate students of all academic disciplines from Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia an opportunity to explore the opportunities for reconciliation and a joint future of the Western Balkans in the European Union.

Aims of the Challenge

The Challenge aims to attract a wide range of university students into the realm of policy advocacy by enabling participants to develop their capacity to critically engage with issues of public policy that affect them and their communities. The programme aims to help participants recognise shared responsibilities and to also develop, support and advocate for policies which benefit not only themselves but the wider society as well. BDPPC challenges participants to critically consider their locality from a regional perspective and reflect on policy questions that present serious regional challenges. By bringing together undergraduates of all academic disciplines from the region, the programme endeavours to make a serious contribution to public policy discourse, and identify and further support future policy champions from among its alumni. Furthermore, it aims to enhance understanding of university students from Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia on opportunities and challenges of reconciliation in the Western Balkans through dialogue and interaction, and strengthens their capacity to actively advocate for improved policy and practise related to reconciliation in the Western Balkans.

Eligibility and tasks

Any undergraduate or recent graduate studying any subject anywhere in Kosovo, Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia can participate in the Balkan Debate and Public Policy Challenge by submitting a policy brief. The 30 participants with the best briefs will then participate in the local forum. The best 3 of each local forum will then participate in the final forum in Skopje. The cost of travel and accommodation for the Forum will be paid for by the Organisers.

There is no age limit for participation but all participants must be at least 18 years of age on 15 April 2019.

Local and Final Forum

In the local forums participants will present their policy briefs to a panel of experts, which will then engage in a panel discussion. 3 local participants with the highest combined score (policy brief and presentation score) will be selected to participate in the Final Forum. During the Final Forum, the finalists will present their policy briefs to a panel of experts. These will form the base for a discussion with experts and representatives of public institutions, which will take place after the presentations.

The 9 finalists will compete for the internship opportunities at the Foundation for Debate and Education IDEA Southeast Europe, the Balkan Forum, and Južne Vesti. The 3 winners will have their policy brief published on the website and receive symbolic prizes.

Task	Announcement	Submission deadline or Date of event	Participants
Policy Brief	March 15 th ,2019	April 15 th 2019	Open to all undergraduates
Local Forum in Skopje, Pristina, and Niš	April 30 th 2019	May 2019 (Date TBA)	10 participants per location, 3 finalists selected per location
Final Forum in Skopje	April 30 th 2019	May 2019 (Date TBA)	9 participants, 3 winners