

# SKOPJE YOUTH SUMMIT DECLARATION AGAINST NATIONALISM

We, the young people of the Western Balkans, **We the young Europeans**, gathered in **Skopje** around the notion that democratic societies can only be based on peace, freedom, justice and respect for human rights,

Confirming the conclusions and values of the **Belgrade Youth Summit (2009)**, **Pristina Youth Summit (2012)**, **Sarajevo Youth Summit (2015)**, **Zagreb Youth Summit (2017)**;

Fully supporting the European aspirations and efforts of the Western Balkans countries;

Disappointed by the short-sightedness and inconsistency of the EU policy towards the Western Balkans;

**Aware of strong anti-democratic, nationalistic and populist winds** blowing both in the EU and in the WB seeking to distort European and democratic development of our countries,

## **As a part of the pro-European cores of our societies, We:**

**Support** the reform of the **EU integration process** if it will contribute to deeper democratic reforms of our societies and faster accession of the WB countries. However, we need to reiterate that the mistakes of the past which led to this dead-end must not be repeated. **We must have a voice on the reform of the EU integration process.** Civil society organizations being advocates of the European integrations for the last 30 years must be genuinely included in the reform processes.

**Highlight** that the reform process must **stop ignoring this fact that we live in a post-conflict region**,

**Understand** that democratization of **post-authoritarian societies is far more difficult** in the present day than it was in the 1990s, as modern-day global undemocratic tendencies have grown in strength;

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**Hope** that our European future will not be a collateral damage of individual EU member states' troubles and caprices;

**Demand** to exercise our right to actively shape our future and therefore to take part in the Conference on the Future of Europe.

### We **COMMIT** ourselves to:

**Continue** to promote relentlessly **the European idea** among our fellow citizens of the WB6 countries in order to foster a sustainable support for the EU integration process;

**Join** the European social and political debates not as mere objects but as **active participants and contributors to the decision making** and reform processes.

**Seek** support and **build partnerships with the EU citizens and civil society** as well as with leaders of EU Member States and EU institutions.

**Solidarize** with pro-European movements in fight against **undemocratic forces** across the continent,

**Engage** in building democracies, the rule of law and respect for human rights in our countries, **establishing regional cooperation** and an intensive and **comprehensive process of dealing with the past** as a precondition of reconciliation.

### We **URGE** regional political leaders to:

**Cooperate** on a regional level more intensively, **promote youth mobility** and further commit to reconciliation and the resolving of the most serious legacy of the conflicts: locating and identifying missing persons.

**Resolve** open bilateral disputes in good faith and with more transparency, engage different actors in the official process, including civil society; **end the visa regime between Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina**;

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**Advocate** to the EU to enable the **freedom of movement for citizens of Kosovo**, and to Croatia and Slovenia to **join RYCO**;

**Overcome** divisions within societies and pledge to **maximize support to EU integration and regional cooperation**; stop with exclusivist policies of building national identities on the idea of ethnic purity;

**End** the practice of public rhetoric that incites hatred and mistrust in the region; stop the promotion and **glorification of war criminals** in public and political space;

**Support** the leaders and societies of **Serbia and Kosovo in peacebuilding efforts**, support citizens of **Bosnia and Herzegovina in building a functional and peaceful state**, support and help each other on the path towards the EU membership.

**In Skopje, North Macedonia**  
05.12.2019.

**Skopje Youth Summit**  
[summit.yihr.org](http://summit.yihr.org)