

Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy

Empowering youth to impact the future of Sustainable Development in the Balkans

Regional event on Sustainable Development Goals, Youth and action/2015

The global sustainable development agenda and climate change within the Balkans is not a visible governments' priority. This has led to the low level of engagement of the Balkans civil society, especially youth, in shaping this important global agenda, which will be also translated into regional, national and local realities through the adoption of the regional and national targets. In addition, it has created several civil society multipliers that have the capacity to raise the overall engagement of this region into the global agenda. The Balkan action/2015 is a part of the action/2015 movement that gathers more than 1900 organisations from 145 countries, and it is an independent and civil society initiated campaign for raising awareness in the Balkans on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which are to be adopted this September on the United Nations General Assembly. Balkan action/2015 will result in a mass mobilization of the citizens and civil society organizations which would otherwise stay at the margins of information and participation opportunities. As such, this opportunity represents a unique space to make the SDGs and the post-2015 agenda relevant for the local and national contexts and issues in the region. In addition, it will help building the ownership over the SDGs, and it has a potential to build the capacities of the broad public to engage in the SDGs' implementation, but also monitoring and accountability initiatives.

Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy is a training and networking event for young people in the Balkans that will be held in Struga, Macedonia from 1-4 August 2015. 30 young leaders, influential social media activists and young journalists from the participating countries will be offered a special opportunity to take part in the youth action/2015 SDGs training academy. The role of the academy is to build capacities on SDGs, to motivate and engage the young multipliers from Balkans in the action/2015 and the further mobilisation of the communities in SDGs and related processes such as COP21. In addition, during the Academy, the mobilization strategy, both for the national and regional level, for the International Youth Day and United Nations General Assembly will be developed, as well as the Draft on the Action/2015 Western Balkans Youth Declaration on SDGs, including advocacy strategy for adoption of the Declaration by the National Youth Councils in the region.

Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy is jointly organized by the [Centre for Human Rights and Development Studies \(CHRDS\)](#), [Centre for Intercultural Dialogue](#) and [Beyond Barriers](#) and it is within the project [Balkan action/2015](#) and part of the [action/2015 campaign](#).

Aims and objectives of the Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy

The overall aim of the Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy (#BA2015YA) is to empower, engage and mobilize youth from the Balkans on the action/2015 campaign, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and related processes such as 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21). Within this, there are three areas of focus:

- 1) To build capacities amongst young people to engage, influence and report on the events, trends, and issues related to the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, in order to advance public understanding of the new goals, action/2015 mobilization, and increased

ambition and accountability for the new goals at the local, national, regional and international level;

- 2) To strategize for the youth engagement and participation in the Sustainable Development Goals process and related processes at the local, national, regional and international level;
- 3) To provide a space for knowledge, experience and ideas sharing, networking and partnerships building.

In addition to these areas of focus, the #BA2015YA will encourage youth to share experiences and solutions related to sustainable development, especially climate change, poverty and inequality, and forms of participation in decision making at the regional, nation and local level. Specifically, the Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy will foster an environment that contributes to:

- Building partnerships among young people by providing a space for networking, ideas and experience exchange both offline and online (through the Balkan action/2015 Platform);
- Broad mobilization and awareness raising of the action/2015;
- Strengthen Balkan youth movement on sustainable development.

Participants

The Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy is aimed at young journalists, social media activists and youth leaders from the Balkans. The academy will host 30 youth from Serbia, Macedonia and Albania. We will also provide an opportunity for youth from other countries in the region to take part in the #BA2015YA as e-participants. Profile of participants:

- Representatives of youth organizations which can multiply the information to other organizations (youth networks, youth training providers, information points etc);
- Representatives of national level youth organizations engaged in advocacy for youth such as the National Youth Councils;
- Young journalists or people engaged as social media activists which can engage and inform wide groups of youngsters as well as well as broad public.

In addition to these 3 profiles, all applicants should fulfil the following criteria:

- Aged below 30;
- to be active youth workers/leaders/journalists/social media activist and are willing to apply and multiply the knowledge received on #BA2015YA;
- willing to take action for promoting and advocating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- able to assist and engage in the mobilization activities (presentations, workshops, flash-mobs etc.);
- able to work in English;
- able to attend the entire duration of the #BA2015YA.

Programme and the Format

The #BA2015YA lasts for 4 days and it consists of the combination of: plenary sessions, core sessions, and elective working groups, structured knowledge sharing opportunities, visits and social events. The Programme is designed in a way that it will enables participants to build their capacities, strategize, network and coordinate their respective activities, both nationally and regionally. Some of the themes covered by the #BA2015YA are:

- Action/2015 campaign;
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Climate Change;
- Poverty;
- Inequality;
- Youth Civic Space.

Information about the venue and accommodation

The #BA2015YA will take place in Hotel Solferino, Struga, Macedonia. The hotel is situated right on the beach of Ohrid Lake.

Accommodation

We will be accommodated in Hotel Solferino Struga, Macedonia. Participants will be accommodated in the shared rooms and each room will have up to 3 participants.

All participants are encouraged to bring food and drinks from their countries for cultural evening events. We also encourage participants to bring publications, flyers, photos, videos and other materials that demonstrate their work.

Language requirements

The working language of the #BA2015YA is English, and no translations will be provided.

How to apply

To apply for the Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy, please fill in an online application [here](#).

For more information about the Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy, please contact us at info@balkanaction2015.org

Deadline for application is 17th of July, 2015 by 23:59.

All successful applicants will be informed about the outcome of their application by 20th of July. People on reserve list will be also informed about their status.

Costs

All costs of the Balkan action/2015 Youth Academy are covered by the organizers, and they include:

- *Travel costs* to and from the #BA2015YA venue. Please note we will reimburse only the travel cost for the cheapest means of transportation, and that the costs will be reimbursed upon the receipt of the full travel documentation by the participants.
- *Accommodation, meals and refreshments* for the whole duration of the #BA2015YA.