

CRES SUMMER SCHOOL

“Next Generation Europe”

Cres, 17 – 22 September 2023

Regaining new European and democratic momentum

The **“CRES Summer School”**, organised on the island of Cres (Croatia), will focus on the topic *“The future of Europe: EU enlargement and neighbourhood strategy in search for new political answers”*.

Context:

The debate on the EU’s future has to involve a simultaneous discussion about enlargement, neighbourhood and reform. Russia’s war in Ukraine has fundamentally changed the context of EU enlargement policy as well as the functioning of the Union, recalling geopolitics. Russia’s exercise of neo-imperial control brings all governments – particularly the EU’s Eastern neighbourhood and Western Balkans – in a vulnerable position by calling into question basic principles of a rules-based international order and challenging essential EU values. It also affects the question of dependencies on geopolitical powers such as China, Russia, Turkey, and the West. The EU is at a crossroad. While putting considerable emphasis on conditionality, it will likely have to move away from an enlargement policy focusing overwhelmingly on incremental reform to one that is about the survival of independent, self-determined states. Meanwhile, Ukraine and Moldova joined the group of official EU candidate countries in June 2022, which also includes Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, North Macedonia and Albania. Bosnia and Herzegovina applied for EU membership in 2016 and Georgia in 2022, but so far remain potential candidates. Visibly, the European Union – absorbed by other crises and the impact of the war – is struggling to respond.

For a long time, enlargement was considered one of the EU’s most successful foreign policy instruments. But today the EU’s enlargement and neighbourhood strategy require a major re-set and new political answers.

Aims of the “Cres Summer School”:

The aim is to support a new generation of young European experts, scholars, activists and engaged citizens in their work for a new Europe and new European togetherness. The interaction will provide - especially the young researchers and activists - with knowledge, experience and skills relevant for their professional futures and for the future of Europe. Researchers and activists, starting from those that participated in the first edition of the Summer School in Cres in September 2022, organised in the framework of the “WB2EU project”, will form a vibrant new network of enthusiastic young people and leaders able to meet political challenges, deepen the dialogue with decision-makers and thus to contribute to regaining a new European and democratic momentum.

The “Cres Summer School” will lead to

1. an increased understanding of Europeanisation and democratic developments among young researchers and activists,
2. new ties and networks between researchers, civic activists and politicians,
3. new ways of influencing public debates through qualified and evidence based and yet politically engaged activities.

Target group:

- Max. 20 young researchers, active young civic activists and engaged citizens

The participants (age max. 28 years) will be nominated by partner institutions (1 participant from each partner). Furthermore, decision-makers and stakeholders will be invited and engaged in dialogue with the young participants on the topic of Europeanisation and democratisation.

Working methods and approaches:

- Lectures, workshops with presentations and discussions of research projects and forms of civic activism
- Developing scenarios and action plans regarding the future of Europe
- A specific dialogue format dedicated to the meetings with stakeholders
- Preparation of a joint op-ed and a series of YouTube videos

Senior external experts/politicians/researchers engaged with the "Cres Summer School" will include: Rector of the University of Rijeka, Snježana Prijic-Samaržija, Executive Director, of the Center of Advanced Studies Southeastern Europe (CAS SEE) at the University of Rijeka, Sanja Bojanić, professor of political sciences at the University of Zagreb, Dejan Jović, professor of Southeast European Studies at the University in Graz, Florian Bieber, Member of the European Parliament, Karlo Ressler, Senior Adviser to the Royal Elcano Institute Ignacio Molina, professor at the Sciences Po Center for European Studies, Virginie Guiraudon. We hope to include a speaker from the European Commission, an ambassador of an EU member state and other relevant speakers.

The organising team, of the "CRES Summer School", in charge of coordination, providing leadership, moderation and workshop guidance for the "Cres Summer School", consists of Senior Research Associate at the Institute for Development and International Relations (IMRO), Senada Šelo Šabić, Secretary General of the Austrian Society for European Politics (ÖGfE), Paul Schmidt, Senior Researcher at the Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip), Co-Director of CAS SEE, Vedran Džihic, and Research Associate and Project Manager at ÖGfE, Susan Milford-Faber.

Working language: English

Programme:

Sunday, 17 September: Arrival

Monday, 18 September: Opening Session – Welcome, Keynote Addresses, Introduction to the working methods and programme, Lunch, Creative Workshop 1, Dinner

Tuesday, 19 September: Plenary Inputs and Workshops, Lunch, Creative Workshop 2, Videos, Dinner

Wednesday, 20 September: Plenary Inputs, Lunch, Videos, Exploring the Island, Dinner

Thursday, 21 September: Future of EU – Drafting and creating a joint op-ed of the "Next Generation Europe", Videos, Social Programme, Farewell Dinner

Friday, 22 September: Departure

Workshop topics:

Rule of law and justice | Social dimension | New geopolitical moment – war in Ukraine and its consequences | Democratisation from below – to be discussed

Venue: Center for Advanced Studies - South East Europe (CAS SEE), Moise Palace, Zagrad 6, HR- 51557 Cres, <https://cas.uniri.hr/o-centru/about/>

Accommodation: Hotel Kimen, Melin I br. 16, HR-51557 Cres / <https://www.hotel-kimen.com/>
Apartmani Zora, Melin III 6 / HR-51557 Cres & Guesthouse Villa Marija, Melin II / HR-51557 Cres

Contact & information: Susan Milford-Faber, susan.milford-faber@oegfe.at

About the Network:

The network consists of 18 renowned think-tanks, do-tanks, higher education institutes and policy centres from the countries that will be most decisive for the enlargement process in the upcoming years.

Project initiators	
Austria	Austrian Society for European Politics (ÖGfE), Vienna
Austria	Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip), Vienna
Croatia	Institute for Development and International Relations (IRMO), Zagreb
Spain	Royal Institute Elcano
Western Balkan countries & neighbourhood	
Albania	Cooperation and Development Institute (CDI), Tirana
BiH	University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Political Sciences
Kosovo	Change Experts Group, Pristina
Montenegro	Politikon Network (PIN), Podgorica
North Macedonia	EUROTHINK - Center for European Strategies, Skopje
Serbia	Foundation BFPE for a Responsible Society (BFPE), Belgrade
EU member countries	
Bulgaria	New Bulgarian University, Centre for European Refugees, Migration and Ethnic Studies (CERMES), Sofia
France	EuropaNova, Paris
Germany	Institut für Europäische Politik (IEP), Berlin
Greece	Department of Political Science & International Relations, University of the Peloponnese, Corinth
Hungary	Andrássy University, Budapest
Italy	International Affairs Institute (IAI), Rome
Romania	GlobalFocus Center, Bucharest
Slovenia	Centre of International Relations (CIR) – University of Ljubljana

This network is an extended network of the “WB2EU Network” that was established in October 2020 in the framework of the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Networks Project “**Europeanisation meets democracy from below: The Western Balkans on the search for new European and democratic Momentum (WB2EU)**”, co-funded by the European Commission under its Erasmus+ Jean Monnet programme (project duration: 29.10.2020 – 28.10.2023).



In the framework of the project the “WB2EU network” organised several events such as six “Ideas go public Labs” in different partner countries, a Summer School in Cres, published many publications (policy briefs, op-eds, e.g. a joint op-ed of the NextGeneration) and YouTube videos. Further information: www.wb2eu.eu

The “WB2EU network” is set to continue working together and supporting the process of EU reform, enlargement and democratisation not only after the end of the project but also with a wider network and additional partners.

Cooperation partners:

Center for Advanced Studies - South East Europe (CAS SEE), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung / Dialogue Southeast Europe, Embassy of France in Croatia, Embassy of Spain in Croatia, European Parliament / Liaison Office in Croatia