



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISE  
KRYEMINISTRIA  
MINISTËR I SHTETIT PËR RININË DHE FËMIJËT



## Regional Ministerial Meeting on Youth and Education How to keep Youth in Focus in the Western Balkans?

Tirana, Wednesday, 8 December 2021

### CHAIR'S CONCLUSIONS

1. Seven years after the Berlin Process begun, with Tirana being the European Youth Capital 2022 and Novi Sad being the European Capital of Culture 2022, high-level policy makers in the areas of youth and education gathered in Tirana on 8 December 2021, the Youth Day of Albania, to discuss a common goal: How to keep youth in focus and strengthen youth cooperation amongst the Western Balkans.
2. Being a joint initiative of the Minister of State for Youth and Children of Albania, the Ministry of Education and Sports of Albania and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), Participants appreciated the opportunity to attend the Regional Ministerial Meeting on Youth and Education in Tirana and further discuss common challenges in the areas of youth and education and work towards finding joint solutions based on the already achieved results within the Berlin Process in these areas.
3. Reiterating the fact that the region shares many similarities and has a clear interest in cooperating and creating stable societies that build trust amongst peoples, Participants reconfirmed their support to RYCO and the Agreement on its establishment signed by the six prime ministers of the Western Balkans in Paris on 4 July 2016 and later ratified in the six Western Balkan parliaments.
4. Participants underlined the understanding that only through joint actions we can progress as the region by respecting the values of peace, trust based on mutual understanding, respect for human rights, diversity, dignity, solidarity, cooperation, tolerance and respect.
5. Furthermore, Participants acknowledged that youth is central in building sustainable peaceful societies in the Western Balkans and that they share many commonalities while their hopes and values across the region are closely aligned.
6. Participants welcomed RYCO's efforts to establish innovative youth exchange programs and to support the youth sector across the region with the aim of enhancing cooperation among young citizens in the region as key drivers of good neighbourly relations, cooperation, reconciliation and peacebuilding.
7. Taking into account that education and employment are factors that tie closely to a society's growth and development and through that to strengthening social cohesion and





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active citizenship, Participants commended RYCO's efforts in working with secondary education institutions and pointed out the need for further investments in this field.

8. Participants recognised the results of Berlin Process's Western Balkans Youth Forum 2021 and the Regional Youth Agenda developed by young people from the Western Balkans and are willing to take these conclusions into account when developing their actions directed towards young people's education, skills, participation, and wellbeing.
9. Participants noted the results of the Shared Futures study and reiterated the importance of these findings for the future of the Western Balkans and concrete actions to be designed and implemented for creating a more prosperous, stable, and sustainable future of the region.
10. Participants noted that volunteering activities promote social cohesion, social inclusion and integration and that further actions are needed in this field for enhancing the legislative framework's effectiveness and for contributing to mainstreaming of volunteering practices and increasing the number of volunteers and volunteer programs across the region.
11. Participants reaffirmed the key role of regional initiatives as drivers of regional cooperation in the Western Balkans within the wider context of the EU integration process. They highlighted the role of regional meetings as platforms for enhancing cooperation in the region aimed at fostering reconciliation, security, growth, employment, education, and prosperity.
12. Participants emphasized the need for the continuation of meeting regularly on the regional level in order to enable discussion and synchronization of regional youth and educational policies as well as sharing of common practices especially in the light of overcoming negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic caused to the youth of the region whose education, wellbeing and future were affected the most in these times.

