



## Civil Society Forum Prishtina

of the Western Balkan Summit Series

### Follow-up report to the Forum on Dec. 7-8 2017

The Civil Society Forum in Prishtina brought together participants from all Western Balkan countries as well as other stakeholders from Southeast Europe and the European Union. For two days, a variety of issues has been discussed in agora discussions, panels and working groups. The Civil Society Forum was particularly focused on reflecting on the gatherings of civil society so far. The goal was to evaluate and critically review the process itself and in the next step, the topics, that have been tackled through it. Below you can find the key results of the debates, as well as abstracts of the work in the five working groups.

#### Key demands for a more inclusive and effective collaboration of civil society in the region:

- **Communication of the results of the summits to stakeholders** needs to be improved. Key stakeholders often learn months later or not at all about decisions from the summits, that will affect their work. The participating governments should make sure, that important decisions are communicated to stakeholders from civil society in the respective countries. Furthermore, a system for documentation is needed, so that organizations can get informed and involved, even if they have not been part of the process so far.
- Civil society meetings should not just stick to the topics that are foreseen in the summits anyways, but are an opportunity for **agenda setting** themselves. As the Berlin Process does not address social welfare state issues, it is crucial for civil society to draw attention to important social issues in the countries as well, both by bringing it to the attention of political leaders, but also by creating an awareness among the citizens of the region, that their voices and struggles matter.
- **Transparency, inclusiveness and accountability** should be the guiding principles for any further civil society consultation process. This process cannot just be guided by umbrella organizations and international organizations and foundations, providing a platform, but each national civil society network needs to ensure its accountability to the citizens and the flow of relevant information within and between the organizations and stakeholders through a **structured dialogue**.
- The **inclusiveness also needs to be reflected in the budget** for bringing together civil society actors nationally and regionally. As long as it is up to a small number of



# Civil Society Forum Prishtina

of the Western Balkan Summit Series

organizations to host fora and to invite participants, the consultations risk becoming dependent on these actors. The goal should be to **create a process with its own dynamic, not stemming from donors or international initiatives, but rather fueled by the civil society of the region itself.**

- The **continuity** of the Berlin Process is important, as it has been and can remain an important tool for pressing on important regional issues, but proper **tools for monitoring the implementations of reforms and decisions**, need to be set in place, both on a regional and on a national level.
- **The process needs to be evaluated and adapted before it can continue and change appropriately.** The same goes for the meetings of civil society, which cannot remain a mere submission of recommendations: If the consultations of civil society are not structured more effectively and coordinated regionally, then they are in danger of becoming part of a corrupted system of fig leaves.
- The crucial role and impact of civil society lies in coming up with national strategies that can **push the key issues on the national level** and can in turn influence policies and governments in their behavior in regional meetings.
- **Education is a key element in the role of civil society.** Only educated and critically thinking citizens can form a structured dialogue, that will serve the people. The issue of “literacy” needs to be focused on **democratic literacy** as well as **digital literacy**. The goal is to enable the society to lobby on their behalf.
- The role of civil society and the inclusiveness of the process needs to be reflected in the way it is communicated to the broader public as well. That includes **a language, that is understandable for non-academics** as well. Part of being involved in the Berlin Process means, enabling citizens to understand its general meaning.
- **Competition is counterproductive.** The participation in gatherings of civil society and their organization needs to be carefully planned and coordinated. Only a process in which organizers and participants put the agenda and the issues of civil society from the region before individual influence and power, can be sustainable and have an impact. In order to do that, the fundamental problem of trust between the countries in the region needs to be addressed, through reconciliation and through finding common goals.

This documentation should provide a summary of the Civil Society Forum Prishtina. Now it also lies in the hands of the participants and the organizations involved in the process so far, to improve the involvement of civil society in the future. That not only involves finding additional regional stakeholders, to coordinate the future dialogue but also a structured dialogue that needs to grow out of each national civil society.



## Documentation of the working groups:

*The working groups were designed to enable discussions in formulate concrete demands and recommendations, that can target both the topic with its connected policies as well as the process of civil society inclusion in the political process itself.*

1. *Youth and democratic participation*
2. *Rule of law & anti-corruption*
3. *Social welfare state and social justice*
4. *Energy and environment*
5. *Digitization and innovation*

## Working group: Youth and democratic participation

**Host:** Besa Luci

**Rapporteur:** Blerina Ramaj

### Inputs:

In national and in regional level it is important to understand the importance of youth and their influence in decision making processes. Youth in the Western Balkans play a crucial role in building the future of the region. Especially giving the reason of them living in the time where information has a crucial role on building their opinions about each other, it is important to give them exchange opportunities on breaking down stereotypes.

Countries in the region of Western Balkans have been exposed to the conflict/war during the '90s therefore they still suffer the consequences of the past. Now in the 21st century they again face the difficulties on cooperating with each other. But the same goal remains which is integrating into the European Union. Countries such as Germany, France, Austria, Italy etc., took into consideration on creating an initiative on helping them their path on European integration process. This was based on the youth cooperation which took place between France and Germany after the Second World War.

In 2014 the Berlin Process already came up with the proposition of the joint declaration of the establishment with the foundation of Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO). RYCO will be a regional initiative which will promote youth exchange and the needs of the youth. In the latest summit in Trieste resulted with four main recommendations which includes:

- RYCO – needs to establish projects of exchange
- Freedom of movement – (here includes the problems of Visas between Kosovo and Bosnia and Kosovo with EU)



- Teaching of history in schools – reviewing the history books on excluding the prejudice sentences and teaching both sides of history
- Research institutes of all region coming together on proposing recommendation of main problems on the regional level

## **Discussion:**

These four main problems had to be addressed in this summit. The first one in regarding to the topic itself became the main discussion point of the whole group for youth participation. Firstly, for almost three years RYCO couldn't open call for projects because of the lack of political will. This was the first problem RYCO faced in regard on being established and starting functioning as an initiative.

As starting establishment of RYCO first problems were faced on the structure. Firstly, on representatives of states (youth and government representatives) as boarding members and as well the secretariat where it will operate. With many difficulties on the way it was decided that the secretariat will be operating in Tirana. Main argument why the office is located in Tirana is that it was played in safe side and it was a good move that Tirana is chosen because it is not involved in the whole problem with former Yugoslavia. But other argue that choosing Tirana is as a result on trying to avoid the main triangle of problem which is Sarajevo-Beograd-Prishtina. Because these three states have the most problems between each other which have to be solved in the near future. Secondly for RYCO to be fully functioning for exchange there should have been means of connectivity. There are not good connection between all of 6 capitals which will help youth mobility. But this issue is being addressed with a project of World Bank which with the approves of the governments will soon be functional.

RYCO as its main duty has to work towards reconciliation and peace building especially among youth in the region. To achieve reconciliation and cooperate you need to have freedom of movement, which is a problem especially between Bosnia and Kosovo. If this issue is not being solved in the near future, there will be a problem for the youth organization especially which will be grantees of the projects of RYCO.

RYCO as an initiative is not any different from any past initiatives in the region such as Youth Initiative for Human Rights, which works in all of these states except Macedonia. RYCO as an initiative for youth exchange is different from these NGOs just as a result that is governmentally recognized and has the support of the government in the regional level and is reviewed by some European states. People who are working there need to understand that this does not only require knowledge of the process of reconciliation but as well as managerial skills which will be needed in order to have successful projects. Also the government representatives in the board need to be fully aware that they are not there to push forward inner agendas but for general good of the region.



RYCO as a project as a whole has been created for a good cause. The idea behind it helps the region to build a better future for the youth and youth to come. It needs not only the idea to be a good one but also its work to have a good impact in the national level. The people chosen to be there to lead this process should be adequate and know the reason and why they are working there. The discussion mainly surrounded the process of recruiting, discussing differences using the examples from the Kosovar and Macedonian side. The Kosovo process was opened to anyone to apply without any criteria on who is eligible to apply. The civil society should however have some say in this, possibly voting the representatives directly or at least determining the criteria on choosing the representatives. A lesson to be learned from Macedonia: They decided that only those people can be candidates, who have been working directly in the field of regional cooperation for a minimum of two years. Secondly the civil society organizations who were able to vote, had to be registered as an NGO for a minimum two years and working directly with youth and regional cooperation and as well as demonstrating that they have been managing projects. This was decided in order for this process to be transparent and to prevent for NGOs to be registered just to participate in the vote.

## **Recommendations / next steps:**

RYCO as a new initiative is still fragile and the way the process of the proposals is proceeding will determine the future of RYCO and its actual impact. If the projects, which are given do not meet the requirements and the activities are not implemented as planned, the initiative as a whole is at risk of failing, despite the fact that it is meant to last at least five years. Main recommendations which should also be addressed in the board of RYCO are:

- Civil society organization who are monitoring and part of RYCO should play the role of a “watchdog” on reporting any kind of irregularities which may occur during the process of reviewing the project proposals
- Civil society organization and any interested individual should observe the work of the members of the board and report about their work
- Government representatives should have less influence regarding RYCO. Because when it comes to taking decisions, government institutions because of political interest can block crucial process in youth policies. Furthermore, there is a risk of youngsters involved in the process to be influenced, if governments keep the role they have now.
- A transparent outside mechanism needs to be established in order to observe the work of RYCO. This mechanism needs to recommend, report, support the work of RYCO and the CSOs, that are involved on implementing the projects.
- RYCO should become more visible and a good campaign should take place in order to reach more youngsters.



- RYCO should give chances to young people who have not been part of any type of exchange programs in the past. Especially to young people who live in rural areas who did not have opportunities in the past to be part of any trainings/programs.
- RYCO needs to expand in other countries in the region as Croatia, Greece and Bulgaria since they play a crucial role in the region and they can help the initiative.
- During the implementation of the RYCO projects, the issue of reconciliation should also play a major role in the process. Historical awareness is a crucial part of education and youngsters need to be informed about the past, in order to move ahead and shape the future.

## Working Group: Rule of law and anti-corruption

**Host:** Cristian Barbieri

**Rapporteur:** Rea Kryeziu

### Inputs and Discussion:

The presentation started with rule of law being introduced as the panacea for all issues, in that whilst ensuring rule of law a country can solve all its other problems. On a formal format, rule of law was stated to provide for generality, predictability and applicability to our daily lives, whereas in the substantial format, it allows for respect of dignity, freedom, human rights etc.

The 'need for accountability' was unanimously agreed to be a main focus of the topic. On that note, the floor was opened and embraced a question/answer set-up. When asked to give a brief summary on Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption in their respective countries and the role the media and civil society has in this fight, the response generated was oddly similar. In general, participants shared that:

- *Western Balkan countries in general face a lot of issues in ensuring rule of law;*
- *There is public knowledge of corruption and corrupt practice in government;*
- *Civil society is not correctly positioned in the political arena in order to make a change;*
- *Political decision-making is left to organized crime and interest-based-enterprises;*
- *There are enduring issues with access to justice and a lack of trust in state institutions;*
- *Freedom of media is at risk; media owned by political parties (not independent);*
- *Not much media coverage about the Berlin Process, its focus and its outcomes;*
- *Rule of Law is a benchmark for development, when that lacks everything else does too;*



- *Disappointed in national leaders' capacity to cooperate (always need external facilitators);*
- *Need to institutionalize formal ways of cooperation once Berlin Process comes to an end.*

On the topic of 'bilateral issues that hinder rule of law' participants shared that:

- *Transitional Justice has hindered cooperation in the Balkans;*
- *Inability of freedom fighters to negotiation on behalf of a country they fought for;*
- *Civil society must be a watchdog, but they have failed to do so properly.*

On the topic of 'polarization of civil society and institutions' participants share that:

- *Tendency of civil society to become members of political parties they used to fight;*
- *Politicians equal institutions; institutions should be greater than an individual politician;*
- *Focus on corrupt officials damages reputation and vision of institutions;*
- *Corruption is the systematic destruction of institutions.*

On the topic of 'EU, government, regional cooperation and civil society connection' participants share that:

- *Need for internal not external push to improve our countries - fight for ourselves;*
- *There is a lack of ownership of our countries, who do our countries belong to?;*
- *Need for transparency and strong institutions to allow for decentralization and development;*
- *Centralized politics enables corruption without control;*
- *Practices that might work for one country not necessarily work for another;*
- *Need for tailored solutions to tackle our issues, despite similarity in our issues.*

On the topic of 'EU Progress Report' the participants shared that:

- *National institutions lack a mechanism of self-grading, the report fills that gap for us;*
- *The report needs broader indicators to measure i.e. healthcare, media etc.;*
- *Need to better define the indicators and provide for validity in measurement mechanism;*

On the topic of 'transparency of government' the participants shared that:

- *A lot of arrests have been made lately and there is a change in government;*
- *New governments cooperate with NGOs better;*
- *Founding of official website to denounce crime and corruption is helping;*
- *Large number of whistleblowers from society;*



- *Big impact form society through social media.*

### **Recommendations / Next steps:**

Participants of this working group – for the most part – shared similar viewpoints and opinions on prevailing issues in their countries and mechanisms through which change can happen. The need to understand the outcomes of the Berlin Process was evident, with a focus on how to maintain cooperation after the process comes to an end. The idea to institutionalize a mechanism of cooperation with the region was an idea that gained momentum throughout the discussion: as a means to ensure a more stable region.

There was unmistakable desire for increased cooperation in the region, and a common emphasis on internal national improvement and development.

As per next tasks, there was a shared belief that civil society in the Balkans must find its voice again and position itself strategically in order to make concrete change. Cooperation of civil society in the Balkans was also brought up as a starting point for tackling regional concerns.

### **Working Group: Social Welfare State and Social Justice**

**Host:** *Ljupco Petkovski*

**Rapporteur:** *Rudinë Jakupi*

#### **Inputs:**

The working group on social welfare state and social justice consisted of civil society activists from the region and Germany. The working group discussed a range of issues related to the social welfare state and social justice. The moderator 'kicked off' the discussion with presenting two key words related to the social welfare state: Populism and 'de-politicization'. The moderator stressed that the rise of populism is greatly related with the decline of the social welfare state, as this creates a lot of uncertainty and fear among the general population.

With the concept of de-politicization, the moderator meant a kind of normalization of the decay of the welfare state. For example, in Kosovo the state barely provides basic health care and this to some extent has become normalized in society and there is hardly any grave public reaction to that.

The discussion started with a question on conditionality; whether the European Union is able to impose the rise of welfare state and social justice as a condition to the countries



in the region of the Western Balkans for further integration in the EU. However, it was agreed among the participants of the working group that this is not the case as even among the EU member states there are significant differences regarding the laws and policies on the welfare state. It was agreed that the request for a better and improved welfare state among the Western Balkans countries should come from the bottom.

Many issues arose during the discussion, including the legacy of the former welfare state in ex-Yugoslavia and its influence on the current attitude of Kosovo citizens towards the welfare state. The participants from the region believe that people living in the former Yugoslavia have not fought for their welfare state, as this was very much a top - down policy. Therefore, today people living in Kosovo, Macedonia and other countries in the region believe that it is the state's responsibility and obligation to create better living conditions without them having to really 'fight' for it.

Another issue that was discussed thoroughly is workers' rights, equal participation in the labor market of women and whether the workers are organized in unions, and to what degree these trade unions are organized. Successful examples of trade unions were mentioned in Bulgaria, Germany and the rising of a so called third wave of unionists in Macedonia. In Kosovo, however, the unions are very closely connected to the political parties in power and rarely stand up for workers' rights. It was stressed that without a request from the workers themselves, unions will remain disorganized. Further on, in the private sector there are virtually no unions.

Moreover, ways on how to get women in the labor market were discussed as well. Some participants of the working group mentioned different instruments used in Scandinavian countries like child care. It was noted that in Kosovo more than 70% of women are out of work, however the percentage of women working in the black market is currently not known. Moreover, the law on maternity leave for Kosovo was also discussed, as this is a very controversial law which obligates the employee to pay 70% of the salary during the first 6 months of the maternity leave. This has created a lot of problems, as many women are fired before taking maternity leave or not even employed.

### **Disagreements:**

In the beginning of the discussion, some of the participants disagreed with the moderator and his thesis of the link between the rise of populism (mainly focusing on the far right) and the decay of the social welfare state, as the member from Germany stressed that this is not the case in her home country given that Germany has a well-established and working welfare state, low unemployment rate on one hand, and the rise of right wing populism on the other. She proposed to rather focus the discussion on working conditions and equal pay.



Another disagreement seemed to be on the question, if the Berlin Process itself should focus also on issues of social welfare and social justice. The participants also disagreed on whether there are instruments offered by the EU to tackle issues of social welfare and social justice.

**Results:**

The participants agreed that civil society has an important role to play in terms of promoting social justice and social welfare. The working group members agreed that their role should be to not only advocate on creating laws and policies but also monitoring the implementation of such laws.

The participants agreed that an interdisciplinary approach is needed, and coalitions which include a range of CSOs and work cross-thematically should be pushed, as this would ensure more negotiations throughout the topics of the Berlin Process with the state.

**Recommendations / Next steps:**

The working group members agreed that they should focus on a national level, to work more on advocating issues of social justice and also develop instruments that would monitor the implementation of laws and regulations. Moreover, participants agreed that a regional cooperation between CSOs would be necessary, as it activists would learn from another, exchange ideas and experiences and improve negotiations with the states.

**Working Group: Energy and Environment**

**Host:** *Srdjan Susic*

**Rapporteur:** *Avdyl Gashi*

**Inputs:**

It became clear that in the different countries the topic energy and environment, also connected to climate change, until recently was a complete taboo and that there is lack of awareness about the topic itself. Additionally, there is lack of knowledge about the Berlin Process in general. In contrary, people are more focused on the price of fuel, rather than environment protection, due to lack of raising awareness activities as well as educational programs, be it through formal or non-formal education. In addition to the implementation of such programs, it was said that people would be more concerned about the problems that surround them, hence they would tackle them by undertaking self-initiative activities, and this would empower the topic itself, pressing government officials to propose action as well as initiate general public interest. Apart from raising awareness



generally to the public, the need for educational programs regarding the topic of this group, was stressed out. Such educational programs should include all education levels, not only high school or university students, but it should start from the very elementary base.

Energy loss was discussed as a problem that characterizes the energy sector in the region, thus the decentralization of the energy production was seen as solution. Equipping people through access to technological solutions for clean energy should be to focus of future actions. Positive examples can be found in Africa. The need for broader public discussions about economic and policy decisions regarding energy and environment was stressed, as well as the need to add the topic of climate change specifically to any discussion about energy and environment.

Another problem is the lobby around actors representing powerful interests, who benefit out of projects that cause damage in the nature. Stronger civil society cooperation on a regional level could prevent these special interest groups from implementing their projects and thus protecting the environment in the long run.

In regard to the Berlin Process and regional meetings, CSOs as well as international organizations should be cautious and differentiate in their approach on how create impactful strategies for clean energy and a protected environment. Different countries have different problems, while some of them might be solved through a regional approach, some others might need a local-national strategy.

## **Achievements:**

Taking the problems Albania is facing as an example, it became clear that little was achieved in regard to the Berlin Process. Deals made by the governments are of questionable nature in regard to contracted companies. The activities of some of these companies not only cause air pollution, but they also make it impossible for recycling companies to function. Regardless of actions CSOs in Albania have undertaken to oppose the contracting of problematic companies, government officials have not responded, raising the doubt among the CSOs if they are actually listened to or just superficially part of international processes, without being taken seriously.

On a more positive note, it was said that the Berlin Process has been successful in some other areas such making environment and energy part of the discussion.

It is crucial that political leaders become aware that the civil society is not just a nice to have, but should be considered as decision makers and important allies in pushing for reforms.



### **Discussion of strategies:**

While discussing different methods and strategies, the group generally agreed that CSO actions should be organized in a more cooperative way toward the government, rather than merely attacking government positions, as that leads to polarization of the actors, rather than solving problems. In question of what language should CSOs use, it was proposed that CSOs should try and speak with the language of politicians, in order to generate a better understanding. This could also include developing marketing strategies, to take on sensitive topics and point out the critical importance of energy and environment to politicians.

While past Civil Society Fora and meetings at summits have positively influenced communication in the region, the lack of cooperation from the government officials with civil society remains a crucial problem. The only way to draw attention to important issues then remains to be organizing protests and petitions. For future consultations a structured dialogue is needed, that has enabled going into depth, rather than remaining on a superficial level.

The economic benefit that the sector of environment and energy has, was highlighted as a crucial aspect for government officials and societies. The group was divided whether the CSOs should take on long term objectives, or focus on finding more efficient ways and short term objectives, in order to establish the foundation for longer term goals. While some members of the group argued that shorter term objectives would give faster results and would influence more people to join the cause, some other members said that the region needs to fasten its commitment and expand on more tasks in order to reach the implementation of Paris Climate Change Agreement and other relevant international agreements.

### **Results / Recommendations:**

1. Make them hear us more and better and in a more formalized way. Concrete and measurable indicators to be used. Options to be investigated.
2. Open-ended and solution-seeking processes as unconstrained as possible by prior narratives are needed: Policy developers/governments must keep in mind the immense need for true public participation in all phases when developing infrastructure projects (air quality, water quality, biodiversity protection), must ensure common understanding of the process and must take into account economic and poverty-related effects of these projects. Infrastructure projects must not compromise the wellbeing and health of citizens, nature and future generations and not create social conflict among citizens.
3. Implementation and monitoring by CSOs of the regional and EU commitments of WB6 countries (interconnectivity infrastructure and regional electricity transmission lines) and relevant international commitments of WB6 countries (Paris Agreement, 3rd Energy Package) is strongly demanded.



## **Working Group: Digitization and Innovation**

**Host:** *Uranik Bregu*

**Rapporteur:** *Liza Gashi*

### **Inputs**

The group focused its discussion primarily on digitalization and innovations being different topics, and the need to better explain these “buzz” words to ordinary citizens. What does it mean to digitalize public services? What does it mean to lead a strategy that makes a county more digital? What is our cooperative advantage in the digital world? What are the pros and cons of a digitized world?

As we live in a technological age, we cannot be blind to its positive and negative effects. While the group in general agreed that technological tools have made life much easier, some argued that such tools have also caused imbalance when it comes to jobs in production for example. Despite the fact that majority agreed that technology has made life easier, the major disagreement was in regard to its usage in what way technology can help to foster social progress. Thus, it was stated that knowing how to usage these tools could provide more input into policymaking; flight corruption; require more accountability from institutions etc.

A crucial point is to understand the difference between digitalization and innovation. While digitalization is very much linked to common market and market forces, innovation can be anything; they are two different things and not necessary linked to one another. Thus, we have to be very careful when we mix these two and point this out in public policies as well.

IT became clear, that the proceedings of the Berlin Process in regard to digitalization and innovation were barely communicated, neither to specific stakeholders in the countries, nor to the broader public. As such the group suggested a better flow of information and the need to monitor any agreement of implementation. Moreover, the need to engage others in process is crucial for local and regional matters.

It was commonly agreed that both topics, even though present in debates for a while, remain new for the citizens of the region as well as its political leaders. There is a need for digital literacy workshops for all and this can only be implemented successfully developing national and sub-national level strategies. This is where civil society can make a difference, to help understand how municipalities can use technological tools to make life easier for ordinary citizens and how people can be educated on the responsible and effective way of using these tools. Moreover, the group talked about the strategies being national and the need for cooperation on a regional level. But the monitoring and



implementation of such strategies will depend on individual countries and the way, they pursue these topics independently.

### **Disagreements**

There was a heated discussion about whether or not technological tools and digitalization have improved people's lives. Is it just about making people realize the need to understand technology or should the increasing digitalization be questioned in general, considering its problematic effect on the labor world. At the same time it was argued, that the Western Balkan region is far away from the economic relevance of production of the EU countries, changing the role of digitalization in the labor world in comparison to the effects in the EU.

Additionally, there was a discussion about the need for regional cooperation; how can we work together to support one another in this process, taking into consideration that the topics are fairly new for all the countries in the region?

But some argue that when it comes to digitalization and innovation there is a need for national and sub-national strategies: We will need some local strategies, national strategies – some of the countries might demonstrate their competitive advantages in how they place themselves in the market.

On another note, another disagreement was about private vs. public. Some group members argued that this should be public and not privatized by few rich people. Others argued that if we leave it in the hands of public institutions, it would not be as creative and innovation processes might be slowed down.

### **Results**

Even though these issues are not connected directly to the Berlin Process, they are a key factor in the common market and governments and societies should prepare to adapt to that sooner than later. Taken into consideration that the topics are relatively new for the region, there is a need for understanding best practices (e.g. Estonia). The need of building capacities within the civil society was highlighted strongly, mainly pushing for digital education. How do we engage ordinary citizens to improve their community by using these tools to report corruption, to demand accountability from policymakers?

Some municipalities have been keen on e-governmental tools, but public servants are not trained to keep up to date with these tools. There is a high potential in implementing digitalized processes in public services, but it needs to be accompanied by education initiatives in schools as well as work places. The countries that succeed in this, can become best practice examples for the entire region.



The group suggests a better flow of information regarding Berlin Process, and the need for more inclusive representations both regionally and in consultations with civil society nationally.

## **Next steps**

- Live with it! Integrate it in your System!
- A need for a national and sub-national strategies; always keeping into consideration the region and our comparative advantage.
- Need for Digital Literacy: Advocacy and mentoring workshops.
- Another kind of education: Every education system must include tech components.
- The need to humanize technological tools; understand the positives and negatives of technology.