

## Young Political Leaders Programme for the Western Balkans Call for Expressions of Interest

### I. Background information

In the current post-pandemic and geo-political context, the European Union is committed to remain strongly engaged in the Western Balkans. Youth issues are at the top of the agenda and efforts are made to get youth more involved in politics. In this context, the European Commission and the European Parliament are co-organising the first post-pandemic *Bridging the Gap* conference on **24-27 April 2023 in Brussels, Belgium**.

### II. Key objectives

- **Enable space for dialogue** - continue the process of promoting dialogue between young MPs and youth activists and have a discussion on youth policy and engagement.
- **Connect with the EU** - build cooperation between future leaders of the region, the European Parliament, the European Commission the European External Action Service and the European civil society.
- **Promote EU enlargement** - contribute to the overall EU approach to youth policy in the Western Balkans and the EU-related reform process.
- **Empower young policy-makers** – reinforce regional cooperation and encourage the creation of cross-party youth caucuses in the Parliaments.
- **Envisage a common future** – foster confidence and reconciliation at all levels by working together on common regional objectives.

### III. Key topics

Topics of the Programme are:

- Role of youth in the EU enlargement process;
- Disinformation;
- Green and digital transition;
- Regional cooperation.

Participants interested are invited to share their views and standpoints of their organisations within each specific topic.

### IV. Venue

- European Parliament, Brussels

## V. Who can apply?

National Youth Councils from the Western Balkans and their members' local youth organizations can apply and submit application of their representative(s) interested in taking part in the programme.

**Each organisation can submit applications for up to two representatives.**

*We strongly encourage and promote gender equality and ensure inclusive space for all young people, especially those with fewer opportunities such as young women, youth from the rural areas, young people with disabilities and other.*

## VI. Costs

Accommodation and flight tickets will be covered by RCC's Western Balkan Youth Lab funded by European Union. Traveling days are Monday, 24 April and Thursday, 27 April. Local transportation to/from airport to be covered by participants, while food will be covered by organizers during the entire programme.

## VII. Deadline

If interested to take part in the *Bridging the Gap* conference from 24-27 April 2023 to be held in Brussels, please submit your applications by **17 March 2023 at 17:00 (CET)**.

## VIII. How to apply?

National Youth Councils from the Western Balkans and their members' local youth organizations should apply by sending:

- One pager about the youth organization or Youth Council.
- CV(s) of youth representative(s) in English (including information on level of English which should be at least B2 level/upper-intermediate (speaking, listening and writing)).

Required documentation must be submitted electronically at the following email address [wbyl@rcc.int](mailto:wbyl@rcc.int)  
Please note that the organizers can support participation of a maximum of 24 youth representatives from the region.