

Civil Society Academy for the Western Balkans

Active Youth in the Electoral Process

Workshop Outline

Following a political compromise leading to changes to the Constitution and the electoral code, Albanian stakeholders are currently undertaking an electoral reform process which is at least implicitly tied to the process of European integration. At the same time, civic space has been shrinking in Albania, and young voters are not sufficiently aware of the ongoing debates – neither with regards to European integration nor domestic electoral reforms – and not of their opportunities to contribute to these processes in a constructive and innovative manner. These factors combined indicate a need for enhanced civic education and young voter motivation.

This workshop aims to sensitise young men and women from across Albania who usually do not get such opportunities on questions regarding citizen participation in the electoral process. The seminar will cover the following issues: European electoral values, European elections, and European integration; international obligations and regional commitments for democratic elections; electoral cycle and electoral stakeholders; issues and themes in the ongoing electoral reform process; experiences with citizen election observation in Albania and the Western Balkans; the roles and perspectives of international stakeholders in Albania, such as the OSCE Presence in Albania, the Council of Europe, or the European Union; youth electoral participation in the Western Balkans; the electoral campaign and social media monitoring; an election day simulation; as well as follow-up and electoral reform advocacy. Participants will have the opportunity to develop ideas for follow-up activities, which will be supported with micro grants, ahead of the next parliamentary elections scheduled for 25 April 2021.

The seminar aims to address the participants' attitudes regarding electoral participation and point to the potential development of skills as citizen election observers, in particular with a view to social media activism. The information generated during the training can be used as civic and voter education material, will be further disseminated on social media, and followed-up with activities by the participants within their networks. These measures should not only make a young generation better aware of their potential role as active citizens, but also strengthen their identity as European citizens and contribute to the processes of electoral reforms and European integration.

The seminar will be facilitated by international and national resource persons in English language and will be externally evaluated in partnership with the University of Roehampton (UK) to measure its impact on citizenship education. This activity is jointly developed by the Austrian civil society group wahlbeobachtung.org (Election-Watch.EU) and the Albanian Young Professional Network (YPN), and is made possible with financial support from the Robert Bosch Foundation.

Dates: 1-5 December 2020

Venue: Durrës, Albania

Application Deadline: 30 October 2020

Contact Local Project Coordinator: mucofranceska@gmail.com