

10TH RECTORS' FORUM OF SOUTHEAST EUROPE AND WESTERN BALKANS & ULYSSEUS INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING CONFERENCE

April 7 and 8, 2025

We cordially invite you to the **10th Rectors' Forum of Southeast Europe and Western Balkans and ULYSSEUS International Networking Conference**, which will take place on **April 7 and 8, 2025** at the University of Montenegro.

During the Rectors' Forum, we will discuss the importance of quality assurance at European and national level, the European degree and the role of universities in the enlargement process and beyond, as well as the activities of the working groups and the challenges and benefits of the European alliances.

The Ulysseus International Networking Conference will set the ground for discussions on cooperation between universities from the EU and the Western Balkans within the initiative of the European University Alliances, highlighting the good practices and challenges of this cooperation, while acknowledging the different contexts and governance capacities of cooperating institutions. A high political level exchange on the role of universities in the EU accession process of the Western Balkan countries will wrap up the conference.

We look forward to meeting you.



Venue:
University of Montenegro
2 Cetinjski Put
Podgorica, Montenegro

April 7, 2025

10th Rectors' Forum of Southeast Europe and Western Balkans

9.00 – 9.30: REGISTRATION

9.30 – 9.50: WELCOME SPEECH

- Prof. Dr. Vladimir Božović, Rector of the University of Montenegro
- Prof. Dr. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, President of the Rectors' Forum, Rector of the University of Rijeka

9.50 – 10.00: INTRODUCTION TO THE EVENT

- Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum

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10.00 – 11:00: KEYNOTE SPEECH (20 min: presentation, 10 min: Q & A)

- **Chair:** Dr. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, President of the Rectors' Forum, Rector of the University of Rijeka
- **10.00 – 10:30: European degree**, Ms. Kinga Szuly, Head of Sector at the Higher Education Policy at Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission (*online*)
- **10.30 - 11.00: The importance of quality assurance at European and national level**, Mr. Aleksandar Šušnjar, Director of EQAR

11.00 - 11.30: COFFEE BREAK

11.30 – 13.00: ROUND TABLE: The importance of quality assurance at European and national level and the challenges of the European degree

Chair: Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum

1. Prof. Dr. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, President of the Rectors' Forum, Rector of the University of Rijeka
2. Prof. Dr. Dijana Vučković, Vice-Dean for Education at the University of Montenegro
3. Prof. Dr. Gregor Majdič, Rector of the University of Ljubljana
4. Dr. Gazela Pudar Draško, University of Belgrade, member of the Rectors' Forum Secretariat and Chair of the WG on Education and Science Policies Advancement in SEE
5. Representatives of the quality assurance agencies from the Western Balkan region:
 - Dr. Benjamin Muhamedbegović, Agency for Development of Higher Education and Quality Assurance Bosnia and Herzegovina, Assistant Director
 - Ms. Tatjana Čalasan, Agency for Control and Quality Assurance of Higher Education, Montenegro, Director
 - Dr. Erjon Xhako, Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (ASCAL), Albania, Head of Department

13.00 – 13.30: General concluding discussion

13.30 – 13.40: GROUP PHOTO

13.40 – 15.00: LUNCH BREAK (1. floor)

15.00 – 17.00: MATCHMAKING

- Report on the Berlin Process, Dr. Gazela Pudar Draško, University of Belgrade, member of the Rectors' Forum Secretariat and Chair of the WG on Education and Science Policies Advancement in SEE
- Toolkit for Knowledge Transfer at Public Universities in the Western Balkans Six, Mr. Siniša Marčić, Regional Cooperation Council
- Enhancing Research Collaboration: Opportunities with Italy, Dr. Francesca Tolve, Head of Sector for Science Diplomacy and International Cooperation, National Research Council of Italy
- Meetings of the working groups

April 8, 2025



ULYSSEUS INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING CONFERENCE:

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCES AS ACTORS IN CREATING SUSTAINABLE AND LONG-TERM COLLABORATIONS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS (hybrid)

9.00 – 9.15: WELCOME AND OPENING ADDRESS

- Prof. Dr. Vladimir Božović, Rector of the University of Montenegro
- Prof. Dr. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, President of the Rectors' Forum, Rector of the University of Rijeka
- Prof. Dr. Jeanick Brisswalter, President of the University Cote d'Azur (*online*)

9.15 – 10.45: Session 1: Perspectives on European University Alliances for Modernizing Education

Chair: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rosario López Ruiz, University of Seville, Director of International Relations

- Prof. Dr. Srđan Redžepagić, University Cote d'Azur, Director of Balkan Institute for Science and Innovation, University Cote d'Azur (Alliance: ULYSSEUS)
- Prof. Dr. Dejan Mirakovski, Rector of the Goce Delcev University (Alliance: ACE2EU)
- Dr. Gazela Pudar Draško, University of Belgrade, member of the Rectors' Forum Secretariat and Chair of the WG on Education and Science Policies Advancement in SEE (Alliance: Circle-U)
- Prof. Dr. Marta Žuvić, Vice-Rector of the University of Rijeka for Studies, Students and Quality Assurance, member of the Rectors' Forum Secretariat and Chair of the WG on Advancement of Higher Education Programmes in SEE (Alliance: YUFE)
- Assist. Prof. Dr. Milica Balaban, Vice-Rector of the University of Banja Luka for Teaching, Student Affairs and Quality (Alliance: ACROSS)

10.45 – 11.15: COFFEE BREAK

11.15 – 12.45: Session 2: The role of European University Alliances in capacity building for sustainable governance of WB universities

Chair: Prof. Dr. Siegfried Walch, Head of Ulysseus at MCI | The Entrepreneurial School

- Prof. Dr. Sanja Peković, Vice-Rector of the University of Montenegro for Internationalization (Alliance: ULYSSEUS)
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eglantina Gishti, University of Tirana (Alliance: UNINOVIS)
- Prof. Dr. Emina Junuz, University of Dzemal Bijedic in Mostar (Alliance: SUNRISE)
- Prof. Dr. Sanja Bijakšić, Vice-Rector of the University of Mostar for International Relations, member of the Rectors' Forum Secretariat (Alliance: EUPeace; *online*)
- Mrs. Anila Troshani, Head of Sector Erasmus+, EACEA - European Commission (*online*)

12.45 – 13.00: BREAK

13.00 – 14.00: Debate: THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

- Introduction: Western Balkans higher education and research and innovation policy options, Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum
- Dr. Filip Ivanovic, Deputy-Prime Minister of the Government of Montenegro
- Mr. Johann Sattler, the Ambassador of the European Union to Montenegro

14.00 – 15.15: LUNCH BREAK (1. floor)

April 8, 2025

10th Rectors' Forum of Southeast Europe and Western Balkans

15.15 – 16.45: RECTORS' FORUM GENERAL ASSEMBLY - *for the official full members*

Chair: Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum

- Report on the activities of the Rectors' Forum, Prof. Dr. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija, President of the Rectors' Forum, Rector of the University of Rijeka
- Financial report, Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum
- Request for the membership, Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum
- Rules of organization, Prof. Dr. Ivan Svetlik, University of Ljubljana, Secretary General of the Rectors' Forum
- Election of the new Rectors' Forum President

16.45 – 17.15: Planting and touring olive trees (Campus of the University of Montenegro)

April 8, 2025

**Exhibition of Dado Đurić at the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts
Rista Stijovica n.5, Podgorica
*Optional***

18.45: Organized bus transport departs in front of the Rectorate of the University of Montenegro

19.00: Exhibition guided visit

19.30 – 20.30: Networking cocktail

20.30: Return to the Rectorate

For further information, please contact office@rectorsforum.eu or the Ulysseus Office at the University of Montenegro: ulysseus@ucg.ac.me.