

22. August 2021

Future of Europe – Youth at the Centre

ANNOUNCEMENT: Young Bled Strategic Forum 2021

A challenging year of the COVID-19 pandemic (still underway), has tested the multidimensional resilience of countries, societies, and individuals in an unprecedented chain of events, exposing threats and weaknesses that could be surpassed; as well as strengths and opportunities, that may be seized only through transnational, cross-sectoral cooperation, solidarity and common understanding. An additional opportunity that mustn't be missed is the Conference on the Future of Europe, a yearlong consultation process, that sets out to develop a vision of the European future where ideas of all stakeholders are included, needs of all active citizens are considered, and the voice of no European is unheard. The Young Bled Strategic Forum 2021 will be organised with high consideration of the mentioned opportunities and challenges, taking place at Bled (Slovenia) between Sunday August 29th and Tuesday August 31st, and continue within the Bled Strategic Forum, taking place on September 1st and 2nd.

The Bled Strategic Forum and Young Bled Strategic Forum, organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Centre for European Perspective, recognise the importance of cooperation and continue to guarantee a platform for various stakeholders including decision-makers, members of academia, the private sector, young representatives and young leaders, members of media, think tank and NGO representatives, to participate as partners in an open discussion on some of the most pressing challenges.

Young Bled Strategic Forum takes one step forward in the inclusion of Young leaders, by giving a central role to their voices, ideas and creativity, a notion that is no different in this edition of the event organised under the title Future of Europe – Youth at the Centre. For the past decade, the Young Bled Strategic Forum has been bringing together young leaders aged between 18 and 35 years from all over the world to engage in lively discussions and develop innovative solutions to some of the most pressing global issues.

This edition of Young BSF will focus on the participation of young people in European affairs: it will offer an introduction to the opportunities for their engagement (on the EU level), listing the opportunities for their engagement, and describe the problems they face and the tools they lack for effective participation in society, ranging from education, access to the labour market, social affairs and the possibility to influence the decision-makers. Most importantly, the discussions taking place within the Young BSF will focus on how to address identified challenges and the solutions needed

to guarantee that young Europeans truly are the future of Europe. Participants will take part in workshops, capacity building, discussions, training and other activities organised in cooperation with experienced partner organisations. The final cooperation of young leaders will lead to the creation of an agreed-upon declaration on the Future of Europe they desire, deserve and wish to help create.

The program activities would not be possible without the support of the Central European Initiative, financial and programme contributors, who are supporting the Young Bled Strategic Forum on its mission, to create opportunities for young leaders to broaden their knowledge, experience and professional capacities, as well as to contribute its piece of the puzzle to the creation of a more

- open, democratic and tolerant society.

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