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|  | 26–28 August 2022  Ljubljana, Slovenia  29–30 August  Bled, Slovenia  www.bledstrategicforum.org |

CONTRIBUTING A PIECE OF THE PUZZLE, TO DEMOCRACIES FIT FOR THE NEW AGE

Ljubljana, 19 August 2022

From 26-27 August 2022, Ljubljana and Bled (Slovenia) will be the hub of creativity, capacity building and cooperation within the 11th edition of the Young Bled Strategic Forum. Young leaders and experts from 20 countries across and outside the Central European region, will be engaged in an intensive and dynamic programme constructed through panel discussions, workshops, training and interactive methods of work. Young BSF participants will continue their program and will be engaged in the activities of the 17th Bled Strategic Forum, taking place at Bled (Slovenia) between 29-30August 2022, organised under the title The Rule of Power or Power of Rules.

The Bled Strategic Forum, one of the leading international conferences in Central and South-East Europe is an annual event organised jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia and the Centre for European Perspective. The programme activities and events support the cooperation of decision makers, academia, private sector representatives, media, non-governmental organisations and youth. Throughout the development of the BSF platform, high importance has been devoted to youth, recognised not only as our future but active citizens, that contribute to prosperity and progress within our societies today. Our democracies require open spaces for discussion and opportunities for youth to not only receive an equal seat at the table with decision-makers, but to be listened to, and heard. The Young Bled Strategic Forum was established to shift the scale in the favour of youth, their creativity and ideas. From modest beginnings as a panel discussion within the initial Bled Strategic Forum platform, the Young BSF has grown into a three-day conference of young leaders, social activists, digital experts and (all) young professionals.

This edition of the Young BSF will be organised under the title Democracy fit for the new age, exploring the challenges and opportunities within our societies, with an outlook toward higher resilience and prosperity in the future. The programme will explore four thematical pillars, each focusing on a specific perspective:

* Media literacy and information society - with close attention to the challenges of disinformation, misinformation, the importance of free media and support for information integrity as a backbone for strong and resilient democracies.
* Prosperity through diversity - contributing to an open discussion on all aspects of diversity, on the basis of gender, ethnicity, nationality, age and other societal divisions that result in unjust polarisation and marginalisation.
* Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the fairest of them all? - holding a mirror up to our democracies, paying attention to all its features, institutional structures, democratic principles and values. How do our standards, wishes and trust change over time, but also what challenges are identified? And ultimately, is democracy still the fairest of them all?.
* Joint solutions for joint challenges - discovering democratic values in a transnational environment, through multilateralism and cross-sector cooperation on challenges that can not/should not be tackled in isolation, in order to yield evident and more prosperous common results on the local, regional and international levels.

Participants of the Young BSF will participate in panel discussions, dynamic workshops and comprehensive cross-sector exchanges of opinions in order to contribute to the critical analysis of democratic functions within our societies, define visions for democracies fit for and resilient against present and future challenges, and improve the well-being of our democracies as ambassadors within their (local, national, regional and transnational) environment.

The programme activities are supported by the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Danube Transnational Programme and Priority Area 10 ´Institutional capacity and cooperation´ within the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), the Interreg ADRION Programme and European Union Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) Facility point and the insurance company Triglav d.d. (Zavarovalnica Triglav d.d.)

