

## 1<sup>st</sup> WeBER Regional Conference

### CITIZENS FIRST:

## Civil Society Demands for Better Administration in the Western Balkans

25-26 September 2018

Belgrade, Hotel Hilton

Western Balkan (WB) countries have been implementing public administration reforms (PAR) as one of the fundamental reform areas on the path to EU membership, while their progress has been regularly monitored and assessed by the European Commission. However, mechanisms to ensure post-accession reform sustainability remain limited and backslide potential is high, as previous enlargements have demonstrated. To that end, strengthening participation of civil society and media in PAR is crucial – by educating and enabling them to monitor its progress, assess its quality and propose new solutions based on evidence and analysis. [WeBER](#) project, implemented by six WB think tanks gathered in the [Think for Europe Network – TEN](#), aims to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of these two groups of stakeholders to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR in the Western Balkans. WeBER was created against the rationale that only by empowering local non-governmental actors and strengthening participatory democracy at the national and local levels, can the same pressure on the governments to continue implementing the often painful and inconvenient administrative reforms be maintained post-accession.

The **“Citizens First” Conference** is the first in what we intend to become a series of biennial regional conferences focusing on civil society’s role in monitoring and supporting PAR in the context of the region’s EU path. Its aim is to enhance and broaden the dialogue on creating and implementing inclusive and transparent policies that take into account citizens’ needs. In the long term, the Conference aims to increase the bottom-up demand for better administration in the region, while complying with the top-down requirements of the EU accession process in the PAR area, hence contributing to sustainability of administrative reforms to the benefit of the Region’s citizens.

To this end, the event will gather CSO representatives from across the region, including at the local level, researchers, representatives of academia, the media, distinguished international PAR experts, high-level officials from the European Commission and SIGMA/OECD, government officials from the Western Balkans, as well as representatives of relevant regional organisations. Given the complexity of PAR in the Western Balkan countries, involvement of a broad range of stakeholders

will substantially contribute to inspiring a regional approach to better governance and achieving accountable and efficient administration tailored to citizens' needs.

The WeBER research team will present the findings of the *First Regional PAR Monitor Report* – one of the key results of comparative research on monitoring PAR within the WeBER project. Those research findings and recommendations will be discussed during a panel of Western Balkan ministers in charge of PAR, which will instigate reflexion on how to overcome reform challenges in the region and grasp the benefits of a citizen-friendly approach to reform.

Through interactive sessions with prominent moderators, the conference will dig deep into the current state within key PAR areas, while a special segment will feature stories from cities and municipalities – presenting the most significant local-level findings created through the WeBER Small Grants Facility. Combined with the academic perspective and views of the expert public, discussing PAR from a CSO perspective will set the stage for future initiatives, activities, projects, and policies within the wider PAR area.

## Draft Agenda

### DAY 1, 25 September

8.30 – 9.15	<i>Welcome Coffee &amp; Registration</i>
09.15 – 10.00	<p>Brief welcome note by <b>Srđan Majstorović</b>, Chairman of the Governing Board of European Policy Centre (CEP), Belgrade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keynote address and discussion with <b>Myriam Ferran</b>, Director for Strategy and Turkey, DG NEAR, European Commission</li> </ul> <p><i>"Public Administration Reform and Civil Society on the Western Balkans' EU Path"</i></p> <p>Discussion moderated by <b>Milena Lazarević</b>, Programme Director, CEP, Belgrade</p>
10.00 – 10.05	<i>Logistical break (change of panel)</i>
10.05 – 11.30	<p><b>Comparing Progress: Regional PAR Monitor Report Presentation</b></p> <p><i>Moderated by <b>Simonida Kacarska</b>, Director, European Policy Institute, Skopje</i></p> <p><i>Main presenters:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Milena Lazarević</b>, Programme Director, CEP</li> <li>- <b>Miloš Đinđić</b>, Programme Manager and Senior Researcher, CEP</li> </ul> <p><i>Discussants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Branko Ružić</b>, Minister of Public Administration &amp; Local Self-Government, Serbia</li> <li>- <b>Senida Mesli</b>, Deputy Prime Minister, Albania</li> <li>- <b>Gregor Virant</b>, Former Minister of Public Administration of Slovenia, WeBER Advisory Council Member</li> </ul>

11.30 – 12.00	<i>Coffee and networking break</i>					
12.00 – 13.30	<p>Panel discussion “Effectiveness of the Regional Approach to Improving Governance &amp; Administration”  <i>moderated by Corina Stratulat, Senior Policy Analyst, European Policy Centre (EPC), Brussels</i></p> <p>Impulse speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Jan-Hinrik Meyer-Sahling</b>, Professor of Political Science at University of Nottingham, and WeBER Advisory Council</li> <li>- <b>Tiina Randma-Liiv</b>, Professor of Public Management Policy at Tallinn University of Technology, and WeBER Advisory Council Member</li> </ul> <p>Reactions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ritva Heikkinen</b>, Team Leader, Centre of Thematic Expertise on PAR, DG NEAR, European Commission</li> <li>- <b>Annika Uudelepp</b>, Senior Adviser, SIGMA, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)</li> <li>- <b>Zorana Gajic</b>, Programme Manager, Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA)</li> <li>- <b>Dren Doli</b>, Advisory Board, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS)</li> </ul> <p>Discussion (with support of sli.do)</p>					
13.30 – 14.30	<i>Lunch</i>					
14.30 – 15.45	<p><b>Breakout sessions: Digging deep: WeBER PAR Monitor Discussions in Six PAR Areas</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="354 1240 1439 1935"> <tr> <td data-bbox="354 1240 699 1935"> <p><b>A: “PAR Strategic Framework – To include or not to include, that is the question...”</b>  <i>Moderator: Mona Xhexhaj, European Movement, Tirana</i>  Impulse: <b>Anida Šabanović</b>, Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ljiljana Uzelac</b>, MPALSG</li> <li>- <b>Nedžib Delić</b>, PARCO</li> <li>- <b>Danijela Nedeljković-Vukčević</b>, Ministry of Public Administration</li> <li>- <b>Vanja Dolapčev</b>, Belgrade Open School</li> </ul> </td> <td data-bbox="705 1240 1062 1935"> <p><b>B: “Policy Development and Coordination – The never-ending quest for evidence”</b>  <i>Moderator: Zorana Marković, CRNVO, Podgorica</i>  Impulse: <b>Arberesha Loxha</b>, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Bojana Selaković</b>, Civic Initiatives, Belgrade</li> <li>- <b>Gordana Dimitrovska</b>, Ministry of Information Society and Administration</li> <li>- <b>Martins Krievins</b>, PAR and Policy Development Expert</li> </ul> </td> <td data-bbox="1069 1240 1439 1935"> <p><b>C: Professional civil service – a goal within reach?”</b>  <i>Moderator: Elvin Gjevori, Agenda Institute, Tirana</i>  Impulse: <b>Dragana Bajić</b>, CEP</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ivana Joković</b>, MPALSG</li> <li>- <b>Elvira Mujkić</b>, Transparency International, Sarajevo</li> <li>- <b>Jan Hinrik Meyer Sahling</b>, Professor, University of Nottingham</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>			<p><b>A: “PAR Strategic Framework – To include or not to include, that is the question...”</b>  <i>Moderator: Mona Xhexhaj, European Movement, Tirana</i>  Impulse: <b>Anida Šabanović</b>, Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ljiljana Uzelac</b>, MPALSG</li> <li>- <b>Nedžib Delić</b>, PARCO</li> <li>- <b>Danijela Nedeljković-Vukčević</b>, Ministry of Public Administration</li> <li>- <b>Vanja Dolapčev</b>, Belgrade Open School</li> </ul>	<p><b>B: “Policy Development and Coordination – The never-ending quest for evidence”</b>  <i>Moderator: Zorana Marković, CRNVO, Podgorica</i>  Impulse: <b>Arberesha Loxha</b>, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Bojana Selaković</b>, Civic Initiatives, Belgrade</li> <li>- <b>Gordana Dimitrovska</b>, Ministry of Information Society and Administration</li> <li>- <b>Martins Krievins</b>, PAR and Policy Development Expert</li> </ul>	<p><b>C: Professional civil service – a goal within reach?”</b>  <i>Moderator: Elvin Gjevori, Agenda Institute, Tirana</i>  Impulse: <b>Dragana Bajić</b>, CEP</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ivana Joković</b>, MPALSG</li> <li>- <b>Elvira Mujkić</b>, Transparency International, Sarajevo</li> <li>- <b>Jan Hinrik Meyer Sahling</b>, Professor, University of Nottingham</li> </ul>
<p><b>A: “PAR Strategic Framework – To include or not to include, that is the question...”</b>  <i>Moderator: Mona Xhexhaj, European Movement, Tirana</i>  Impulse: <b>Anida Šabanović</b>, Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ljiljana Uzelac</b>, MPALSG</li> <li>- <b>Nedžib Delić</b>, PARCO</li> <li>- <b>Danijela Nedeljković-Vukčević</b>, Ministry of Public Administration</li> <li>- <b>Vanja Dolapčev</b>, Belgrade Open School</li> </ul>	<p><b>B: “Policy Development and Coordination – The never-ending quest for evidence”</b>  <i>Moderator: Zorana Marković, CRNVO, Podgorica</i>  Impulse: <b>Arberesha Loxha</b>, Group for Legal and Political Studies (GLPS)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Bojana Selaković</b>, Civic Initiatives, Belgrade</li> <li>- <b>Gordana Dimitrovska</b>, Ministry of Information Society and Administration</li> <li>- <b>Martins Krievins</b>, PAR and Policy Development Expert</li> </ul>	<p><b>C: Professional civil service – a goal within reach?”</b>  <i>Moderator: Elvin Gjevori, Agenda Institute, Tirana</i>  Impulse: <b>Dragana Bajić</b>, CEP</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ivana Joković</b>, MPALSG</li> <li>- <b>Elvira Mujkić</b>, Transparency International, Sarajevo</li> <li>- <b>Jan Hinrik Meyer Sahling</b>, Professor, University of Nottingham</li> </ul>				
15.45 – 16.00	<b>Short coffee break</b>					

16.00 – 17.15	<p><b>D: "Accountability – To the people or...?"</b>  <i>Moderator: Visar Rushiti, Democracy Plus, Pristina</i>          Impulse: <b>Aleksandra Ivanovska</b>, European Policy Institute (EPI)</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Naser Shamolli</b>, Ministry of Public Administration</li> <li>- <b>Leila Bičakčić</b>, CIN, Sarajevo</li> <li>- <b>Aranita Brahaj</b>, AIS, Tirana</li> <li>- <b>Tamara Skrozza</b>, Journalist</li> </ul>	<p><b>E: "Service Delivery – Where are the users?"</b>  <i>Moderator: Neda Maleska, Centre for Change Management, Skopje</i>          Impulse: <b>Aleka Papa</b>, IDM</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Dardan Abazi</b>, INDEP, Pristina</li> <li>- <b>Lorin Ymeri</b>, ADISA (<i>tbc</i>)</li> <li>- <b>Anđela Radovanović</b>, UMHCG, Podgorica</li> <li>- <b>Thomas Prorok</b>, KDZ and WeBER Advisory Council</li> </ul>	<p><b>F: "Public Finance Management – Whose money is it?"</b>  <i>Moderator: Ivan Knežević, European Movement, Belgrade</i>          Impulse: <b>Ana Đurnić</b>, Institute Alternative</p> <p>Inputs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Aleksandar Nikolov</b>, ZENITH, Skopje</li> <li>- <b>Brian Finn</b>, SIGMA/OECD</li> <li>- <b>Vasko Popetrevski</b>, Journalist, Skopje</li> <li>- <b>Alexander Gerganov</b>, Center for the Study of Democracy, Sofia</li> </ul>
20.00*	<p><i>Formal reception with dinner ("Karbon", 6a Severni bulevar)</i>  <i>*Gathering at the hotel reception for bus transfer at 19:30</i></p>		

## DAY 2, 26 September

08.30 – 09.00	<i>Welcome Coffee &amp; Registration</i>		
09:00 – 10:30	<p><b>PAR Monitoring by Civil Society at the Local Level:          Stories from Cities and Municipalities across the Western Balkans</b></p>		
	<p><b>A: Projects on citizen participation and human resource management</b>          Moderator: <b>Anida Šabanović</b>, FPI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Biljana Pejović</b>, CDT, Podgorica</li> <li>- <b>Vanesa Belkić</b>, CENTRIR, Belgrade</li> <li>- <b>Dardan Abazi</b>, INDEP, Pristina</li> <li>- <b>Marija Dražović</b>, NGO Praxis, Belgrade</li> </ul>	<p><b>B: Projects on accountability and service delivery</b>          Moderator: <b>Ana Đurnić</b>, IA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Aleksandr Nikolov</b>, ZENITH, Skopje</li> <li>- <b>Daliborka Uljarevic</b>, CCE, Podgorica</li> <li>- <b>Irma Efendić Adžajlić</b>, Motivator, Sarajevo</li> <li>- <b>Nora Jusufi</b>, GAP, Pristina</li> <li>- <b>Elma Tërshana</b>, Observatory for Children's Rights, Tirana</li> <li>- <b>Aurora Koçi</b>, Institute of Romani Culture, Tirana</li> </ul>	<p><b>C: Public Finance Management</b>          Moderator: <b>Miloš Đindić</b>, CEP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ivan Vckov</b>, Finance Think, Skopje</li> <li>- <b>Anđela Radovanović</b>, UMHCG, Podgorica</li> <li>- <b>Bojan Kovačević</b>, EDA, Banja Luka</li> <li>- <b>Jovana Strahinić</b>, NKD, Nis</li> </ul>
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>		

<p>11:00 – 12:30</p>	<p>Panel discussion: <b>Structured Approach Towards Involvement of Civil Society in External PAR Monitoring and Advocacy – Threat or Benefit?</b> <i>moderated by Gjergji Vurmo, Programme Director, Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM)</i> Impulse: <b>Milena Lazarević</b>, WeBER Project Manager, CEP Programme Director Reactions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Dražen Maravić</b>, Director, National Academy for Public Administration, Belgrade</li> <li>- <b>Nicolas Bizel</b>, Head of Operations Section I, EU Delegation to Serbia</li> <li>- <b>Dicky Methorst</b>, First Secretary, Regional Rule of Law Coordinator, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Belgrade</li> <li>- <b>Idro Seferi</b>, Chair of Journalists Association</li> <li>- <b>Milena Muk</b>, Programme Director, Institute Alternative (IA)</li> <li>- <b>Lejla Ramić Mesihović</b>, Executive Director, Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI)</li> </ul> <p>Discussion (assisted by sli.do)</p>
<p>12:30 – 13:30</p>	<p><b>Accountable and Efficient Administration – Not a Contradiction in Terms?</b> <i>Discussion led by Milka Tadić Mijović, Journalist, Podgorica</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Heiki Loot</b>, Secretary of State, Government Office of Estonia</li> <li>- <b>Majlinda Bregu</b>, prominent Albanian politician, next Secretary General of the Regional Cooperation Council – RCC</li> </ul>
<p>13:30 – 13:45</p>	<p>Stand-up conference conclusions and final messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Simonida Kacarska</b>, Director, European Policy Institute (EPI)</li> <li>- <b>Milos Đinđić</b>, Programme Manager (CEP)</li> </ul> <p>Playing of the Final WeBER video (5 minutes)</p>
<p>13:45 – 15:00</p>	<p><i>Farewell lunch and drinks</i></p>

