



**National Endowment  
for Democracy**  
*Supporting freedom around the world*

# Strengthening societal resilience and countering foreign perpetrated disinformation in 6 Western Balkans countries

## About the project

The project aims to enhance resilience and boost regional cooperation against disinformation. This 18 months long project will bring together representatives of government, civil society and media from all six Western Balkan countries and enable them to work together when encountering cases of foreign disinformation. All too often these groups are working separately from each other, yet all striving towards the same goal, which is to protect democratic institutions and diminish the space for disinformation.

### Countries involved:

- Albania 🇦🇱
- BiH 🇧🇦
- Kosovo 🇰🇲
- Montenegro 🇲🇳
- North Macedonia 🇲🇰
- Serbia 🇷🇸

## Background

Western Balkan countries were identified as the European countries that are, according to the 2019 Media Literacy Index, the most susceptible to disinformation. Eroding trust, associated with the growing polarization in society, stimulates lingering regional tensions and weakens the credibility of Euro-Atlantic integrations among the region's nations. We believe that the following challenges need to be addressed:

- The need for governments to have functioning national systems, which deals with countering disinformation.
- Networks (civil society, media, and government) should be more connected on a national level in order to have a functioning system.
- There is a need to share information, know-how and best practices across the region, as narratives of disinformation are often similar and get replicated across those six countries.



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## Activities

### *ACTIVITY I: Capacity buildings*

- capacity building trainings (with the representatives of governments, media and civil society)
- input from experts, sharing good practices, role plays, simulations
- the first training will happen in the first half of 2021

### *ACTIVITY II: Closed-session workshops*

- closed-session workshops (1 in each WB6 country) and expert consultancy supporting the governments in building their national system of countering disinformation
- follow-up

### *ACTIVITY III: Bled Strategic Forum 2021*

- creation of a hub, through which we will aggregate and share trends related to foreign perpetrated disinformation
- participation at our annual Bled Strategic Forum in September 2021
- writing a policy paper related to disinformation in the WB6 that will be published in Bled Strategic Times

## About us

Centre for European Perspective (CEP) is Slovenian governmental organization operating from 2006 at the initiative of the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The mission of the Centre is enhancing European perspective by various activities in the field of democratization, security and youth. CEP is also among organizers of the largest strategic conference in the region – Bled Strategic Forum. Slovenia will hold the EU presidency in 2021 and CEP has already placed the fight against disinformation on the agenda of the Slovenian EU presidency.