

For the past decade, the Young Bled Strategic Forum (Young BSF) has been bringing together young leaders, aged between 18 and 25 years, from all over the world to engage in lively discussion and develop innovative solutions to some of the most pressing global issues. It has become a unique meeting place for a diverse array of young leaders, entrepreneurs, influencers, thinkers and social activists, offering them a platform to share their visions, exchange ideas and connect.

The 2020 Young BSF will focus on reinventing the role of youth in society, which is indispensable in creating a resilient and sustainable global environment capable of responding to the challenges of the 21st century through the reinvention of our societies. In today's rapidly changing world, it is crucial to take the youth on board when addressing the challenges of the future. Young people play a key role in development prospects and should be included in all national development plans and programmes. However, in practice, attention to youth has been insufficient and more needs to be done considering the practical implications of shifting the perceptions of young people and their role in society.

The preamble to the Revised European Charter on Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life states that "The active participation of young people in decisions and actions at local and regional level is essential if we are to build more democratic, inclusive and prosperous societies. Participation in the democratic life of any community is about more than voting or standing for election, participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity to participate in and influence decisions and engage in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society."

The Bled Strategic Forum international conference, with the Young Bled Strategic Forum as its integral part, strives to carry on its work with youth to ensure its multidimensional and long-lasting inclusion, intergenerational dialogue and a recognition of its needs and aspirations through development programmes and policies, as well as by involving young people in international forums and conferences. A special focus of the Young BSF shall be devoted to cross-regional cooperation and macro-regional strategies. A new generation of leaders will demonstrate that such collaboration is not only necessary but also inevitable for positive next steps in democratisation, the advancement of human rights, sustainable development, women's empowerment, counter-terrorism and the fight against climate change. To achieve all this, young leaders need to learn from their peers from different regions, sharing their knowledge, ideas and know-how. Sustainable regional cooperation programmes are an intrinsic part of a comprehensive, inclusive and innovative approach that engages young people and prepares agents for change. The Young BSF 2020 will also address and evaluate United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security, the first resolution fully dedicated to the important and positive role of young women and men in maintaining and promoting international peace and security. The year 2020 will see the fifth anniversary of the Resolution, and it is essential to carry out a progress study on the positive contribution made by young people to peace processes and conflict resolution in order to recommend effective responses at the local, national, regional and international levels.

Selected Young BSF participants will also play a role as speakers at the main event. This practice has proven its worth during past editions of the BSF, bringing innovative solutions and shedding light on youth perspectives. Through active participation, young people will have the opportunity to meet

leaders from the governmental, business and non-governmental sectors and to join them in discussions on salient issues.

The Young BSF is committed to ensuring that equal opportunities to attend the Forum are made available to young leaders regardless of their ability to pay. The organisers are working closely with partners to provide all participants with accommodation, while a number of travel grants for candidates from various backgrounds and nationalities will be ensured. These grants may be awarded to selected participants on a case-by-case basis and only up to the amount assigned by the organisers, who will also ensure equal regional and expert representation.

Travel grants are available to citizens of Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Please note that the official language of the event is English. The selected participants are expected to join in the extensive preparations and pre-event online meetings, which is a prerequisite for participation in activities.

Please apply at <https://bit.ly/38FUnPw> by **5 April 2020** at the latest.

Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at young@bledstrategicforum.org.