



## **YOUTH AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: KOSOVAR STUDENTS IN THESSALONIKI**

**TUESDAY 28 MAY 2019, 18.00**

### **VENUE:**

**The International Faculty of the University of Sheffield,  
City College  
(AUDITORIUM)**

**ADDRESS: LEONTOS SOFOU 3, THESSALONIKI**

### **Background**

Today, there are dozens of young people from Kosovo studying in Greece, the majority of which are in Thessaloniki, due to its geographic proximity to Prishtina. The presence of young students who study in international educational institutions has been made possible thanks to scholarships granted by private colleges operating in Greece, in cooperation with the Ministry of Science and Education of Kosovo and state or private universities in Kosovo.

Kosovar students in Greece provide an interesting diplomatic link between the two countries and a potentially vibrant source of information about bilateral issues relating to culture, identity and attitudes. Despite their geographic proximity and shared cultural values, Greece and Kosovo remain a stranger to each other, maintaining thus, minimal relations.

Research, however, suggests that young Kosovars students carry a positive image of Greece back home and that their studies and lived experience in a cosmopolitan city like Thessaloniki equip them with skills, ideas and values which are indispensable for their future. This thematic event aims at highlighting the role that Kosovar students can play in the city diplomacy of Thessaloniki and Prishtina; how their lived experience in Greece can lead to the eradication of reciprocal stereotypes and the promotion of a more fruitful cooperation.

The event will feature good practices between Greece and Kosovo in the field of youth, academia and culture, as well as research findings on the profile of Kosovar students in Greece. Success stories but also recommendations from current students, alumni, academics, youth-workers and local authorities will contribute to the discussion of what needs to be done to enhance the bilateral relations between Kosovars and Greeks and how the private education sector in Thessaloniki can promote progress, innovation and youth initiative in the wider Region.

### FREE ENTRANCE

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The Event is organized by  
the International Faculty of the University of Sheffield/ City College  
and the EuroBalkan Youth Forum,  
with the kind support of local and regional partners:



## PROGRAMME

### 18.00 OPENING **City Diplomacy: Thessaloniki-Prishtina**

**Gregory Dikaïos**, Director of Recruitment, International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, City College.

**Spiros Pengas**, Deputy Mayor for Tourism & International Relations.

**Babis Papaioannou**, General Secretariat for Youth. Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.

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### 18.20-18.50 **Kosovars in Greece: Challenging Stereotypes**

\*Moderator: **Ioannis Armakolas**, Assistant Professor; Department of Balkan, Slavic & Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia/Senior Research Fellow at the Hellenic Foundation for European & Foreign Policy.

**Mary Drosopulos**, Researcher/Trainer in the Field of Youth, Education and Conflict Transformation/PhD (c) Intercultural and Translation Studies.

‘Kosovar Students in Thessaloniki: hybrid identity and country rebranding’.

**Panagiotis Paschalidis**, Research Fellow at the South-East Europe Programme of ELIAMEP.

‘Greece and the Western Balkans: Media representations and the potential role of the civil society in changing the narrative’.

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### 18.50-19.10 **Connecting Greece and Kosovo via Arts & Culture**

**Eleana Ziakou**, Cultural Manager/Translator.

‘One Flew Over the Kosovo Theatre’, by Jeton Neziraj: the first theatrical play after Kosovo’s declaration of independence to be translated into Greek.

**Literatus Editions** (speaker TBC).

The ‘Enigma’ of Cultural Diplomacy between Thessaloniki and Prishtina: Importing and Exporting Translated Literature.

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### 19.10-19.30 **People’s Stories: Experiencing History in the Making**

**Valerie Plesch**, Journalist/ Documentary Photographer.

‘Reporting from Kosovo to the World- Visual Storytelling.’

**Nikos Papadopoulos**, Human rights lawyer/ Phd Candidate in Psychology.

'Making history is a toothbrush next to mine: living inside the first Greek-Kosovar marriage after the Declaration of Independence'.

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**19.30-20.00 Visiting Each Other's Reality: Education, Participation & Youth Work** *Round Table with Students, Alumni and Youthworkers from Greece and Kosovo*

Moderator\* **Besianë Loxha**, Consultant/Human Capital Advisor. Alumni, International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, City College.

'Recommendations on the role of youth as arbitrators of positive change for Greece and Kosovo'.

**Rina Basholli**, City's Students' Union (CSU) Vice-President, Teaching Assistant at the Computer Science Department, International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, City College.

'So, why study in Thessaloniki anyway? Challenging stereotypes and myths between Greece and Kosovo through the lived experience'.

**Ena Cekic**, City's Students' Union (CSU) Sports and Activities officer. International Faculty of the University of Sheffield, City College.

'From Mitrovica to Thessaloniki and the World: the role of education and personal initiative in changing one's story'.

**Vivian Lada**, Vice-Chair of the UNESCO Committee at the 2017 Kosovo International Model United Nations Conference (KIMUN by ICHAT)/Mentee at the Youth Academy of the Radicalization Awareness Network (RAN)/European Commission.

'Preventing youth extremism in the Balkans by building bridges of cooperation and trust. Connecting Thessaloniki with Prishtina'.

**20:00-20:10 Special Input: Opportunities for Greek and Kosovar Youth**

**Leon Gojani**, Project and Fundraising Manager, TOKA NGO. (Skype)

'The Program of Scholarships for Greek Youth at the Summer Camps in Prishtina'.

**Yannis Kourtis**, youthworker/project coordinator. United Societies of Balkans.

'Youth exchanges, voluntarism and vocational training in Thessaloniki'.

**20.10-20.30 Questions/Comments/ Networking**

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For any inquiries and additional information, please contact:

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