

Network Conference of spa-ce.net
21st year of 21st century -
Western Balkans' Challenge of Common Future
21st-22nd September 2021, Belgrade, Serbia
(field trip on 21th September 2021)

Two decades into the 21st century, the Western Balkan countries still face a challenge of building sustainable functional networks and cooperation among each other. The objective of stronger cooperation for better common future is rational but it is one asking for confidence, common vision of joint competitiveness, social cohesion, and a proper mode of governance. This requires a productive debate not only in the political circles (for example, the political idea of Little Schengen) but also in the broad and interdisciplinary scientific discourse. *spa-ce.net* is an appropriate platform of planning science representatives from CESEE countries, with a number of institutions from the Western Balkans. The initial discussion at this platform should start with searching for a coherent method, i.e. paving the pathway to voluntary functional networking among Western Balkan countries for their sustainable future. In addition, contributions building upon other cases of cross-border cooperation in Europe could prove helpful.

Thematic scope of the conference:

1. A Pathway to Functional Networking

- Technical connecting and networking: infrastructure and new technology
- Natural and cultural connecting, potentials and risks: protected areas, grand cultural paths and objects, UNESCO etc.
- Economic connecting: tourism, energy, science, CEFTA

2. Western Balkans as a crossroad of various mobilities in the XXI century

- Internal migration challenges
- External mobility threats
- Social outcomes of neo-liberal development model

3. Challenges of transnational/transregional governance

- Building administrative capacities for large (capital) cities networking
- Benchmarking of European experiences (Visegrad countries, CENTROPE etc.)
- Functional mode of transnational governing

4. Post pandemic waking up

- Coordinated policy making
- Joint strategic planning
- Post pandemic urban resilience

5. Memory, place and identity in transition

- Shifting memory landscapes
- Urban and rural identity in transition

Alongside representatives of the member institutions of the spa-ce.net network and other interested researchers, PhD candidates undertaking research on one of the named topics are also invited to submit papers. The authors attending the Conference will also have an opportunity to prepare a manuscript to be submitted for publication to the Collection of Papers edited by the Faculty of Geography, University of Belgrade (or Book of Proceedings).

The authors should send a **500-words abstract**, indicating which of the five mentioned topics their paper most closely addresses.

The application form must be sent to us by **July, 25th 2021**. Please send your application form by email to wb2121@gef.bg.ac.rs and indicate which thematic scope (1-5) it is fitting best. The selection and notification of participants is expected by the beginning of August 2021.

Due to uncertain pandemic situation, the event is planned as hybrid (online and in Belgrade). The details will be communicated well in advance of the event.

Small conference fee (50€) will be collected by organizers from the participants coming to Belgrade, in order to cover the costs for the excursion etc.

Organised by

spa-ce.net – Network of Spatial Planning and Research Institutes in Central and Eastern Europe

University of Belgrade – Faculty of Geography, Department of Spatial Planning, Belgrade (Serbia)

Western Balkan Network on Territorial Governance (TG-WeB)

For more information, feel free to contact the Spa-ce.net conference coordinators:

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