



9 - 12 OCTOBER

9th

CONGRESS OF YOUNG EUROPEANS

TIRANA 2025

THE
ENDS
OF
EUROPE

Congress of
Young Europeans,
Gdansk 2017



WELCOME TO THE 9TH CONGRESS OF YOUNG EUROPEANS

From 9–12 October 2025, Tirana will host the 9th edition of the **Congress of Young Europeans**, bringing together young people from across the continent for four days of reflection, debate, and exchange. Under the theme “**The Ends of Europe**”, this year’s congress invites participants to think critically about Europe’s purpose, direction, and future transformation, both as a political project and as a lived, contested reality.

Congress of
Young Europeans,
Marseille 2019



Why “The Ends of Europe”?

The phrase evokes many meanings. It can describe geographical edges and shifting borders, but also political aspirations, the cultural fault lines, the values Europe stands for, and even the potential endings of its current form. In a time marked by war, the climate crisis, democratic backsliding, migration struggles, social inequality, and contested cultural identities, the congress offers space to ask what Europe means today, and what it could become tomorrow.



L. Grekos,
Congress of
Young Europeans,
Thessaloniki 2023



L. Grekos,
Congress of
Young Europeans,
Thessaloniki 2023

A Program for Dialogue and Action

Over four days, participants will take part in a rich mix of panel discussions, workshops, walking tours, and cultural events. Together, we will address five thematic areas:

| | |
|--|---|
| Geopolitical ends | Borders, peripheries, migration, and freedom of movement |
| Moral and political ends | Europe's values in the face of authoritarianism, shrinking civic space, and anti-gender movements |
| Crisis-driven ends | War, climate collapse, democratic backsliding, and the politics of fear |
| Cultural and identity fault lines | Religion, nation, gender, and race as forces of division and connection |
| Transformative ends | Imagining post-national futures, solidarities, sustainable ecologies, and reimagined democracy |

The program combines analytical depth with creative practice, giving space not only to hear from influential figures in politics, civil society, and culture but also to highlight the perspectives and initiatives of participants themselves. At the same time, the congress serves as a meeting point: an opportunity to explore Tirana's dynamic urban landscape, connect with local activists, and share experiences across borders.



L. Grekos, Congress
of Young Europeans,
Thessaloniki 2023

A Space for Young Voices

The Congress of Young Europeans began as a one-day pilot meeting in Berlin and soon grew into a multi-day gathering, bringing together up to 100 participants, aged 18–30 from across Europe. After a pandemic pause, it returned in 2023 on a biennial basis, resuming its mission to amplify youth voices and foster cross-border exchange. The 2025 edition carries this legacy forward by creating space for bold reflection, critical dialogue, and new solidarities, not as a traditional policy forum, but as a platform where young people can question, challenge, and reinvent.

Organizers

This event is organized by Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Tirana office in collaboration with Green European Foundation and the Federation of Young European Greens, and with financial support from the European Parliament to the Green European Foundation. *The European Parliament is not responsible for the content of this event.*

Program

Congress of Young Europeans 2025:

“The Ends of Europe”

Tirana, Albania

Dates: 9 – 12 October

09
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All Day Arrival & Check-in at Hotels

15:00
18:00

Registration & Guided Tour: Jutta Benzenberg: Don't Look Back at the Burning House

Lost Archive: Revisiting the '90s in Albania

Tours will be organized in small groups, scheduled according to participants' arrival times once their participation is confirmed. Participants who finish their tour early will have free time to explore the Temporary Pavilion until 18:00.

Tour slots: 15:00–16:00, 16:00–17:00, 17:00–18:00

⌚ The hbs Gallery

18:00
19:00

Welcoming

Followed by Joint Dinner

⌚ The hbs Space

19:30
22:00

Film Screening: Petra Kelly – ACT NOW!

A film by Doris Metz | Winner of the 2025 German Film Award

This powerful new documentary sheds light on the life and legacy of Petra Kelly, peace activist, environmentalist, feminist, and co-founder of the German Green Party. With rare archival footage and commentary from her contemporaries, the film reintroduces Petra Kelly as a radical political figure whose values are deeply relevant today.

Followed by Post-Screening Discussion: Petra Kelly's Legacy for Today

A discussion on Petra Kelly's vision of activism and conscience-driven politics. How can her example guide us today in the fight for peace, justice, and climate action, both inside and outside political institutions?

⌚ Tirana Puppet Theatre

09:30 **Panel session 1 - Mapping the Ends of Europe**

Including video message by Jan Philip Albrecht, Co-President of Heinrich Böll Stiftung (hbs)

This opening conversation will set the tone for the Congress by introducing its central theme: "The Ends of Europe." Speakers will reflect on Europe's shifting purpose, contested borders, and foundational values at a time of overlapping crises and transformations. Drawing on diverse perspectives from politics, civil society, and culture, the panel will explore what Europe stands for today, and what it could become in the future.

Guest speakers

- Ciaran Cuffe, Co-chair of the European Green Party
- Luca Guidi, Executive Committee Member of the Federation of Young Europeans Greens
- Alice Hubbard, Head of Strategic Relations of the Green European Foundation
- Dr. M. Gökhan Tuncer, Director of hbs Tirana

Moderated by: Evi Veliu, hbs Tirana

⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

10:45 **Coffee Break**

11:15 **Panel Session 2 – Nature at the Edge: Biodiversity, Borders and the Future of Life**
12:30

Europe stands at a crossroads—not only politically and socially, but ecologically. Biodiversity loss, habitat fragmentation, and the climate crisis are reshaping the continent's landscapes, from its bustling cities to its vulnerable border regions. Nowhere is this more visible than in the Balkans, a biodiversity hotspot facing urgent conservation challenges. Through voices from political leadership, civil society advocacy, legal frameworks, and local conservation efforts, we will discuss the political ambitions and realities behind Europe's biodiversity policies, the opportunities and limitations of the EU Nature Restoration Law, the critical importance of the Balkans for Europe's ecological future and ground-level experiences from Albania's frontline conservation efforts

Guest Speakers:

- Vedran Horvat, Director of the Institute for Political Ecology, Croatia
- Dr. Sofie Ruysschaert, Senior Nature Restoration Policy Officer, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, Brussels
- Jovana Janjušević, Executive Director, Center for Protection and Research of Birds, BirdLife Montenegro
- PhD (c) Diana Malaj, Activist, ATA group, Kamza

Moderated by: Tea Zeqaj, hbs Tirana

⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

12:30 **Group Photo**

13:00 **Lunch Break**

14:00 **Walking Tours: Same S.H.I.T Everywhere! (Struggles, Housing, Inequality, Transformation)**

18:00

These walking tours explore the layered realities of Tirana's urban transformation, where rapid development, shrinking public spaces, and ecological disruption intersect. Moving through lesser-seen parts of the city, participants will encounter contested sites of construction, informal settlements, and disappearing green areas. Led by local activists and researchers, the tours offer a critical look at how visions of progress reshape the city, often at the expense of access, memory, and nature.

- ⌚ Tours will take place across various locations in Tirana. Guidance will be provided, and transportation will be organized for all necessary locations.

Tour 1: Shrinking Spaces and Ghost Institutions

with PhD (c) Pavjo Gjini and Çelik Rruplli

This walking tour traces the disappearance of Tirana's cultural landmarks, spaces once central to public life, now closed, demolished, or left in bureaucratic limbo. Participants will visit the sites of the former National Theatre, the shuttered National Museum, the silent National Gallery, and the slowly vanishing public library system, exploring how cultural infrastructure is being hollowed out amid urban transformation and political neglect.

Tour 2: Urban Biodiversity and Birdwatching

with Mikaela Mahilaj and Melitjan Nezaj

This walking tour invites participants to experience Tirana's Artificial Lake not only as a place of leisure, but also as a living case study of urban biodiversity and environmental challenges. Moving along its shores, participants will observe how green spaces shift between recreational use and natural habitats, and reflect on the crucial role of urban "stepping stones" that connect fragmented ecosystems across the city. At the same time, they will encounter the biodiversity that persists here, from plants to birds. Framed within a broader European perspective, the tour highlights questions of governance, maintenance, and planning, inviting participants to consider how rapidly growing cities can balance construction pressures with the need for green, healthy, and biodiverse urban spaces.

Tour 3: Reading the Peripheries

with PhD (c) Diana Malaj

Passing through key neighborhoods of Kamza, the fifth largest city in Albania by population and the most densely populated, this tour introduces participants to the city as a living archive of resistance. Kamza was one of the first places where co-organized protests took root, shaping its identity and public space. As participants walk through selected areas, they will hear stories of protests and grassroots movements that began there. These narratives will shed light on the city's evolution within the broader context of post-socialist transformation. By combining on-site exploration with retrospective storytelling, the tour traces the layers of Kamza's social and political history, reading the city as a text of resistance, change, and collective action.

Tour 4: Migration and Exodus

with Dr. Ervin Kaçiu and Assoc. Prof. Olsi Lelaj

Migration has been one of the most defining phenomena in Albania, reflecting both the legacies of dictatorship and the challenges of post-socialist transitions. From the symbolic act of entering foreign embassies at the fall of communism, to successive waves of departure driven by poverty, misgovernance, and the pursuit of dignity, Albanian migration reveals the interplay of freedom, necessity, and global inequality. This discussion explores why people leave, where they go, and what they leave behind, while examining the broader consequences for both sending and receiving societies. By tracing these trajectories, the analysis sheds light on the enduring quest for freedom and democracy in a world where these values remain contested.

Tour 5: Between Adobe Bricks & Cranes – Exploring Housing Affordability in Tirana

with Dr. Kejt Dhrami

This tour is a street-level exploration of housing affordability in Tirana, tracing the city's transformation from old courtyards to new towers. As housing costs rise alongside rapid urban development, the walk investigates rent burdens, insecure tenures, energy-inefficient homes, and the widening social housing gap. Participants will connect evidence with lived experience through on-site observations, micro-data, and simple affordability tools, while reflecting on how public policies—and their absence—shape everyday housing realities. Linking Tirana's dynamics to European patterns of financialization, touristification, and energy poverty, the workshop concludes with a collective design sprint to sketch practical steps toward fairer, greener, and more inclusive housing policies.

Tour 6: Urban Mobility and Public Transport

with Sadmira Malaj

This walking tour focuses on mobility and sustainable transport in Tirana, exploring how rapid urban development has reshaped the ways people move through the city. Over the past decades, Tirana has experienced fast growth, new roads, construction projects, and changing transport priorities. Moving through key sites across the city, the tour highlights both the impacts of car-centered planning and emerging examples of more people-friendly approaches, inviting participants to reflect on how Tirana might build a future of accessible, sustainable movement for all.

18:30 Dinner

⌚ The hbs Space

20:00 Free Evening

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09:30
11:00

Panel Session 3 – Gender in the Margins

This session brings together diverse yet interrelated perspectives to examine how gender operates as both a structuring force and a site of contestation at the social, political, and cultural margins. Moving beyond binary frameworks, the panel investigates how gendered power relations are shaped and intensified in peripheral contexts, geographically, historically, and institutionally, focusing on the Balkans as a case study. Finally, the panel engages with critical feminist and queer theory to ask: What does it mean to speak of gender at the margins, and whose margins are we naming? How do structural violences intersect with symbolic erasures? And what ethical responsibilities arise when centering voices and bodies often rendered invisible?

Guest Speakers:

- Dr. Suzana Milevska, Art Historian and Theorist of Visual Culture, North Macedonia
- Assoc. Prof. Linda Gusia, University of Prishtina, Kosova
- Assoc. Prof. Ermira Danaj, American Graduate School Paris, France

Moderated by: Edona Bylykbashi, hbs Tirana

⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30
13:00

Panel Session 4 - Outsourcing Migration at the Ends of Europe

The session explores the ethical and theoretical implications of externalized border regimes, using the 2023 Rama-Meloni agreement as a case study.

This deal, which relocates the responsibility of processing asylum seekers intercepted by Italy to detention centers on Albanian territory, exemplifies a growing tendency within European migration governance: the displacement of legal and moral obligations beyond EU borders. The panel critically engages with this strategy of externalization not merely as a political maneuver, but as a fundamental reconfiguration of sovereignty, responsibility, and human rights. Drawing from political theory, migration ethics, and critical border studies, participants interrogate the normative frameworks that underpin such agreements: Who is responsible for protection when borders are outsourced? What becomes of asylum when the space of legal adjudication is no longer bound to national territory? And how are notions of inclusion, citizenship, and dignity redefined when human mobility is systematically managed through containment and deterrence?

Guest Speakers:

- Tineke Strik, Member of European Parliament, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Netherlands
- Giorgia Jana Pintus, Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana, Italy
- PhD (c) Kristina Millona, Researcher, Europe Other, Albania

Moderated by: Chryssiis Katsea, Coordinator of the European Migration Policy Programme, hbs Thessaloniki

⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

13:00 Lunch Break

14:00 Workshops

18:00

Workshop 1: Reading the Peripheries

with Diana Malaj, ATA Group

In Albania, the terms informal and informality are widely used by architects, researchers, and policymakers to describe post-1990s buildings constructed outside formal planning, often without architects and through ambiguous legal processes. Frequently paired with illegal, the term has served to deny the plurality of urban forms emerging in peri-urban and city spaces. This workshop critiques such uses, arguing that they obscure rather than explain urban realities. Using Kamza as a case study, supported by archival photographs and film, it will examine how “informality” has been framed, then broaden the perspective with regional and international examples from Belgrade, Skopje, Pristina, Sarajevo, Berlin, and Istanbul. The workshop will argue that informality should not be seen as an anomaly but as a constitutive paradigm for understanding contemporary urban culture.

⌚ “ATA Group”, Kamza

Workshop 2: Understanding the Anti-Gender Movement

with Xheni Karaj and Livia Zotrija, Alliance against discrimination of LGBTI

This workshop, led by a queer feminist activist, offers a critical reading and discussion on the rise of the anti-gender movement. Through analysis of local political, social, and religious dynamics, participants will explore how anti-gender rhetoric shapes public discourse, policy, and activism. The session will unpack the movement's strategies, impact on LGBTQ+ and feminist communities, and broader implications for human rights. By fostering dialogue and reflection, the workshop aims to strengthen collective responses and envision inclusive frameworks that resist exclusionary and conservative agendas in Albania and beyond.

⌚ Alliance LGBT office

*Address withheld for privacy; participants will be guided to the location.

Workshop 3: Nature Protection and the Importance of Protected Areas and Ecological Connectivity in the Western Balkans

with Klaudja Koçi, Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment (PPNEA)

This workshop addresses the urgent challenges facing biodiversity in the Western Balkans, from habitat loss and mass tourism to climate change and illegal hunting. Linking international frameworks such as the Bern Convention, CBD, and the EU Biodiversity Strategy with on-the-ground action, it highlights conservation efforts in Albania and Montenegro—two EU accession countries aligning national policies with regional goals. Case studies on wetlands like Narta Lagoon and Ulcinj Salina, as well as threatened forest ecosystems, illustrate the importance of ecological corridors for species such as the Balkan lynx and brown bear. Through interactive activities and dialogue, participants will explore solutions and reflect on the critical role of transboundary cooperation in safeguarding nature and strengthening ecological connectivity for the benefit of both wildlife and local communities.

⌚ PPNEA office

Workshop 4: Creative Activism and Non-formal Education

with Migen Qiraxhi, Civic Resistance and Vita Davydova, Federation of Young European Greens

Civic Resistance is among the most active civic organizations in Albania, known for transforming pressing social concerns into impactful public actions through creative approaches. In this session, Migen Qiraxhi, one of its leaders, will explore the role of creativity and art in civic engagement, presenting three emblematic initiatives – University of Corruption, Gallery of University Expenses, and Venetian Shkodra – as distinct models of creative intervention. He will also reverse-map these actions, moving from the final outcome back to the planning stage, to offer participants a clear understanding of how a creative civic action is conceived and brought to life.

⌚ Civic Resistance office

Workshop 5: Energy Communities in Post-Socialist Countries

with Beata Cymerman, hbs Warsaw and Djego Abedinaj, Researcher

This workshop examines energy communities as a potential response to the intertwined crises of climate, energy, and democracy. Energy communities, local groups that produce, share, or manage renewable energy for social benefit, are widespread in Western Europe but remain rare in Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Could this disparity be linked to post-socialist legacies, low trust in institutions, and weaker traditions of citizen participation? Drawing on the report “Energy Communities and the Legacy of Postsocialism”, the session will explore contrasting approaches to energy democracy across Europe, unpack structural and cultural barriers, and discuss pathways for building just, participatory, and sustainable energy futures.

⌚ Valentini Library

Workshop 6: Youth, Peace & Security in a Warming Europe

with Kristel Hasani, United Nations Association Albania (UNAA)

Grounded in the latest regional and European climate-risk evidence, this workshop examines how droughts, wildfires, floods, and heatwaves exacerbate social tensions and security risks, and where youth leadership can foster prevention and resilience. Within the framework of the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda, participants will analyze concrete cases of climate-related insecurity, identify conflict pathways, and explore entry points for youth-led mediation and advocacy. Through collaborative exercises, the workshop aims to translate climate-risk data into conflict-sensitive, community-level strategies; discuss how YPS principles can inform youth policy in the face of climate crises; and draft actionable recommendations for engaging young people as mediators, peacebuilders, and advocates for climate security at both local and international levels.

⌚ UNAA office

18:30 Dinner

⌚ To be announced

20:00 Evening Party

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09:30 Workshop Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

11:30 Coffee Break

11:45 Feedback Session & Official Closing

12:30 ⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

12:30 Farewell Lunch

13:30 ⌚ Pyramid of Tirana

Short Biographies

Most of the following contributions have been sent to the conference organizers by the international guests themselves, just to give an impression on their CV or their working focus. In some cases the Tirana Office team of the Heinrich Böll Foundation has added information or assisted with unauthorized translation into English. The overview is not meant to be complete, but to ease networking among the conference guests. Thanks in advance for your tolerant reception!

Chryssiis Katsea

Coordinator of the European Migration Policy, hbs Thessaloniki

Chryssiis Katsea studied Politics and International Relations and holds a MSc in International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies. She has previously worked with the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), and she also has extensive experience working and volunteering with human rights NGOs and student societies. She joined the Thessaloniki office of the Heinrich Böll Stiftung in February 2023, where she currently coordinates the European Migration Policy program. Her work focuses on the criminalization of migration, externalization, migrant detention, the use of technology and AI in migration management, border violence, and access to asylum.

Ciaran Cuffe

Co-chair of the European Green Party

Ciarán Cuffe is the Co-Chair of the European Green Party since December 2024. He served as a Member of the European Parliament from 2019-2024, and was the Parliament's lead negotiator for the recast Energy Performance of Buildings Directive. He sits on the board of Building Performance Institute Europe. Prior to his election to the European Parliament in 2019, he held various roles in Irish politics, including serving as a Dublin City Councillor, Teachta Dála (TD) for Dún Laoghaire, and Minister of State with responsibility for sustainable transport and climate change. He holds degrees in architecture and urban planning from University College Dublin and an MSc in Cities from the London School of Economics.

Alice Hubbard

Head of Strategic Relations of the Green European Foundation

Alice has been active in Green politics across Europe and beyond, serving as Secretary General of the Global Young Greens, on the Executive Committee of the Green Party of England and Wales, and as co-convenor for global Green politicians organizing around COP26. Beyond party politics, Alice has worked on protecting civic space with the European Civic Forum, held a Policy Leader Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence, and worked for the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office in Spain.

PhD(c) Diana Malaj

Activist, ATA Group, Kamza, Albania

Diana Malaj is a cultural activist, writer, and researcher based in Albania. She holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Law from the University of Tirana and is currently a PhD candidate in Law & Politics at the University of Graz, Austria. She is one of the founders of the activist collective ATA (Them) in Kamza and serves as the editor of their local newspaper, *Nyje.al*.

Her interdisciplinary work spans law, ethnography, activism, journalism, and artistic performance, addressing cultural, political, environmental, and human rights issues. Diana focuses on marginalized and peripheral communities of Kamza, as well as local communities fighting to protect rivers, urban forests, and national parks, such as Zall Gjoçaj, where residents have been resisting hydropower projects for more than six years.

Assoc. Prof. Ermira Danaj

American Graduate School Paris, France

Assoc. Prof. Ermira Danaj is a scholar and gender expert with extensive experience in research, policy analysis, and capacity building. She holds a PhD in Human and Social Sciences from the University of Neuchâtel, specializing in gender, migration, and transnational studies. A Fulbright Visiting Scholar and recipient of the 2022 Stavro Skendi Book Prize, she has over 20 years of research expertise in gender-based violence, migration, and intersectionality. She has worked with the UN, EU, and other international organizations, providing policy recommendations and training on gender mainstreaming.

Currently an Associate Professor at the American Graduate School in Paris, she teaches gender and human rights. She has contributed to key EU and UN reports on women's rights and gender policies. Fluent in six languages, she has extensive experience in public speaking and international conferences. Her work spans post-socialist contexts, integrating a human rights-based approach in policy development.

Giorgia Jana Pintus

Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana, Italy

Giorgia Jana Pintus is a migration and asylum researcher and advocate with ARCI's national immigration office in Italy. Her work focuses on border externalization, accountability, and human rights protections across the Central Mediterranean. She co-authored the widely cited report "Beyond Borders, Beyond Boundaries," a critical analysis of EU financial support for border control in Tunisia and Libya, referenced by European parliamentary groups, NGOs, and policy studies. Pintus regularly contributes expertise to workshops and public discussions on pushbacks, access to protection, and civil society responses, collaborating with European networks and foundations. Trained in political and social sciences, she combines field research, data analysis, and strategic advocacy to inform evidence-based policy and amplify migrant voices in national and EU debates.

Dr. M. Gökhan Tuncer

Director of hbs Tirana, Albania

Dr. M. Gökhan Tuncer is a political scientist specializing in European integration, sustainable development, and political transformation in Southeast Europe and the Middle East. Since 2020, he has been leading the Tirana office of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, where he develops and implements programs on democracy, ecological sustainability, gender justice, and political education. Prior to this, he spent more than a decade as a research associate and lecturer at Humboldt University in Berlin, contributing to international master's programs and leading seminars on current political issues.

Jovana Janjušević

Executive Director, Center for Protection and Research of Birds (CZIP), BirdLife Montenegro

By education, she is a law graduate; by profession, a nature conservationist. She has been working at the Center for the Protection and Research of Birds for a decade, and since 2017 she has served as its Executive Director. The organization is both an IUCN member and BirdLife partner for Montenegro.

She led the campaign for the protection of the Ulcinj Salina, which in 2019 became a closing benchmark for Montenegro's EU accession, bringing birds and nature conservation to the negotiating table. She has a particular interest in wetland restoration and nature-based solutions and is implementing the first large-scale census of Europe's largest owl species, launching citizen science projects now followed by Albania and Serbia. Currently, she leads the large carnivore and bear research programs, guiding a dedicated team working to protect nature.

PhD(c) Kristina Millona

Researcher, Europe Other, Albania

Kristina Millona is an investigative journalist and independent researcher based in Vienna, Austria, working on migration, border violence, and the externalization of border control. She is a PhD candidate at Central European University, where she researches the criminalization of Albanian migration in the UK, with a focus on the securitization of Albanian male asylum seekers. Her work has been published in *Kosovo 2.0*, *Balkan Insight*, *Melting Pot*, *Jacobin*, *Altreconomia*, and *IrpiMedia*.

Assoc. Prof. Linda Gusia

University of Prishtina, Kosova

Linda Gusia is a sociologist, feminist scholar, and activist based in Kosovo. She teaches at the Department of Sociology and heads the Institute of Sociology at the University of Prishtina. Her work focuses on feminist theory, social movements, post-conflict societies, and the politics of resistance.

She has received numerous research grants, including from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and has held fellowships such as a visiting scholar position at Dartmouth College. She is a co-founder of the University Program for Gender Studies and Research at the University of Prishtina. Her current research also engages with environmental activism, examining the intersections of gender, resistance, and state sovereignty.

Luca Guidi

Executive Committee Member of the Federation of Young Europeans Greens

With a background in Science of Politics and International Relations, Luca is committed to bring Young Green voices inside the Institutions to bring ourselves the system change our generation has been demanding for years in the streets. Luca's idea of system change in a nutshell being a society which cares for people before profit, in which we can thrive as communities while keeping our economy within planetary boundaries, in which our mental health, our natural rhythms and needs come first. Luca is vegan and in love with trains!

Dr. Sofie Ruysschaert

Senior Nature Restoration Policy Officer, BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, Brussels

Sofie Ruysschaert obtained a PhD in Applied Biological Sciences at Ghent University, Belgium. She has over 20 years of experience in research, conservation, and policy projects at the interface of nature and people in Europe and beyond. Since 2021, she has been working at the Brussels office of BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, focusing mainly on the European Nature Restoration Regulation.

Dr. Suzana Milevska

Art Historian and Theorist of Visual Culture, North Macedonia

Dr. Suzana Milevska is a theorist and independent curator based in Skopje. Her research interests range from postcolonial critique of hegemonic power regimes of representation and gender difference in visual culture, to feminist, participatory, and collaborative art practices. In 2013, she was appointed the first Endowed Professor for Central and South-Eastern European Art Histories at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. From 2016 to 2019, she was Principal Investigator of the Horizon 2020 project *Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages through the Arts: From Intervention to Co-Production (TRACES)*.

Milevska holds a PhD in Visual Cultures from Goldsmiths College, University of London. She was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar in 2004, and in 2012 she received the Igor Zabel Award for Culture and Theory. Her publications include *Gender Difference in the Balkans* (2010); *The Renaming Machine: The Book* (2010); *On Productive Shame*,

Reconciliation, and Agency (2016); and *Participatory Art: A Paradigm Shift from Objects to Subjects* (2024).

Tineke Strik

Member of European Parliament, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Netherlands

Tineke Strik (b. 1961) is a Dutch Member of the European Parliament with the Greens/EFA, focused on humane, lawful EU migration governance. Elected in 2019 and re-elected in 2024, she coordinates her group's work in the LIBE committee on asylum, rule of law, and border oversight. Strik initiated and served as rapporteur for the Parliament's Frontex Scrutiny Working Group, leading a months-long inquiry that produced July 2021 recommendations on fundamental-rights compliance and institutional accountability. She is also Vice-Chair of the Delegation for relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, engaging EU-Western Balkans dialogues on migration systems and the rule of law. An academic by background, she has taught and published on migration and citizenship law at Radboud University's Centre for Migration Law.

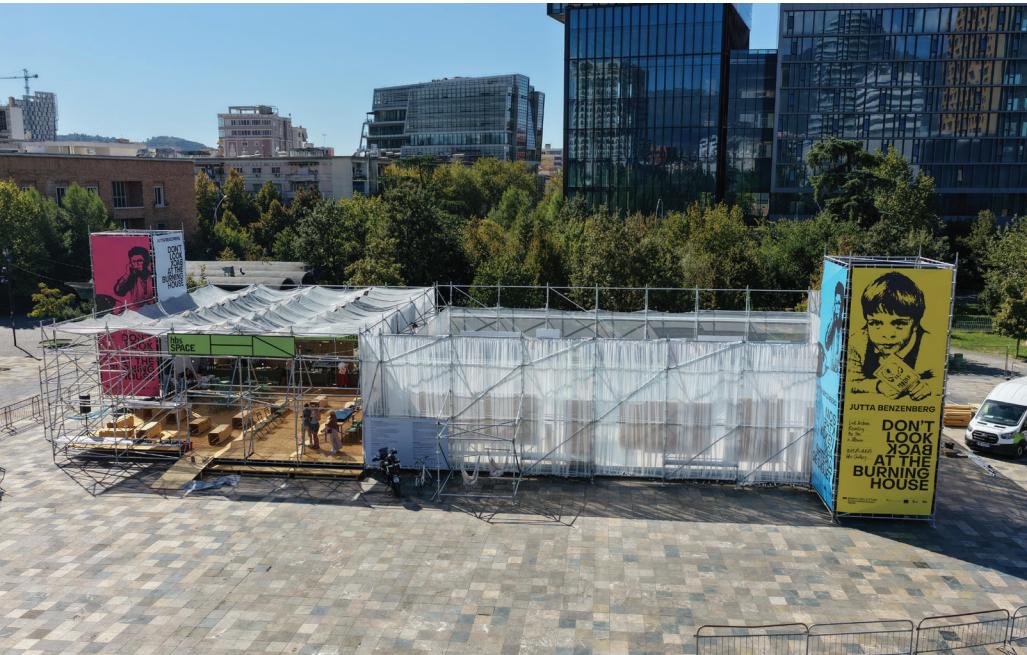
Vedran Horvat

Director, Institute for Political Ecology, Croatia

Vedran Horvat is a sociologist, researcher, activist, and former journalist who has been at the forefront of many progressive initiatives. Since 2015, he has been head of the Institute for Political Ecology, based in Zagreb. From 2005 to 2015, he headed the Heinrich Böll Foundation office in Croatia. Additionally, he has contributed to the Brussels-based Green European Foundation as a member of the Board of Directors since 2019. He is also an associate of the Amsterdam-based Transnational Institute. Together with the Heinrich Böll Foundation, he published the book *Here at Last: Green Politics in the Western Balkans*.

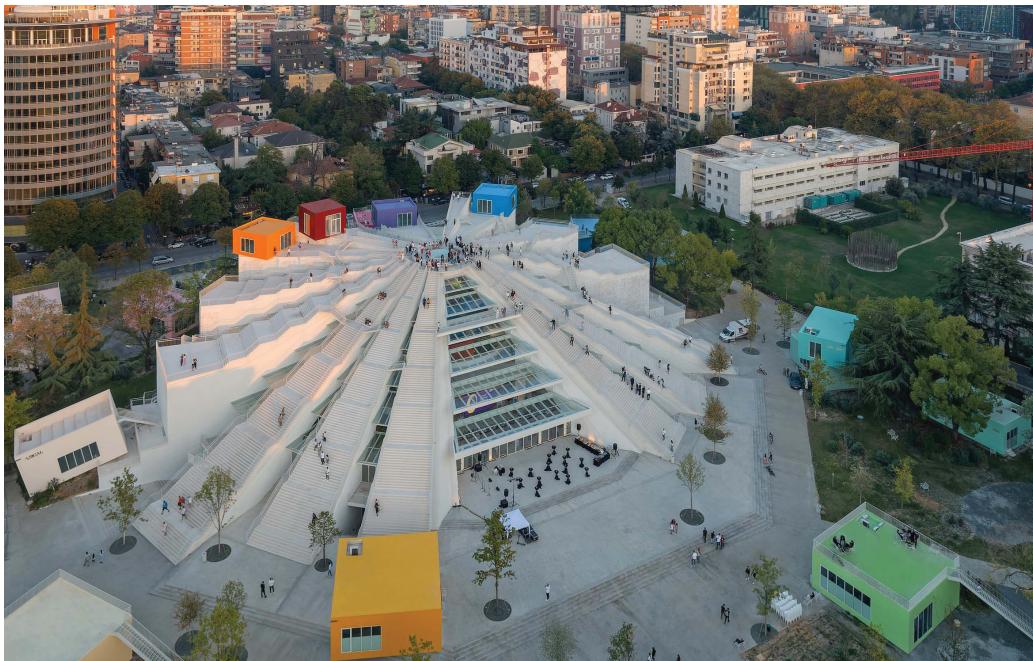
Venues

The Congress of Young Europeans 2025 will take place across several key venues in Tirana, each chosen for its symbolic value and ability to connect participants with the city's dynamic cultural and civic landscape.



Temporary Pavilion – hbs Space & hbs Gallery

Located on Skanderbeg Square, the Temporary Pavilion houses both the hbs Space and the hbs Gallery. Currently on view at the gallery is the “Jutta Benzenberg: Don’t Look Back at the Burning House” exhibition, a body of work both deeply personal to the photographer and symbolic of Albania in the 1990s. Parallel to the exhibition, the hbs Space hosts a rich program of events offering new perspectives on this transformative decade. Together, these spaces create a setting for dialogue, culture, and political reflection. The Pavilion is also where participants gather for registration, smaller sessions, and exhibition visits, anchoring the program in a space dedicated to green political education.



Pyramid of Tirana

Once a controversial monument originally built to serve as a museum for Albania's former dictator, the Pyramid of Tirana has recently undergone a major transformation, with the aim to turn it into a center for innovation and youth engagement. Its status within the city remains contested, as many still see it as a symbol of the communist past. Yet despite these debates, the Pyramid today serves as a powerful example of how spaces can be reimagined from symbols of the past into platforms for future-oriented learning and collaboration.

Partner Locations

Workshops will be hosted in the offices of local partner organizations, many of which also parallelly serve as community centers. These are progressive spaces within the city where youth initiatives and civic projects are already active. Moving beyond the main venues into these grassroots spaces, we hope that participants will directly experience Tirana's civic energy and connect with the networks that drive social change locally.

Practical Information

Getting Around Tirana

Most central locations in the city are accessible on foot or connected by public buses. A ticket costs 40 ALL and can only be paid in cash and local currency. These areas are also well-served by public buses, with itineraries, both clearly mapped at the stations and available on **Google Maps**. Taxis are widely available and if you must use one, we recommend using one of the official electric taxi companies below:

Sky Taxi Mob & WhatsApp +355 68 800 0075
Tirana Taxi Mob & WhatsApp +355 69 622 6666

Finally, congress venues and meeting points are clearly indicated in the program above. For guidance, you can use the contacts provided in the following sections.





L. Grekos, Congress
of Young Europeans,
Thessaloniki 2023

Meals

Breakfast will be served daily at your hotel, while lunch and dinner are included in the congress program. Meals will feature locally sourced and predominantly vegetarian dishes, combining sustainable practices with the rich culinary traditions of Albania. Coffee breaks and light refreshments will also be available throughout each congress day. To ensure everyone feels comfortable and well cared for, please let us know in advance about any dietary requirements or allergies so we can make the necessary arrangements.





Stay in Touch

Who We Are

We are the **Heinrich Böll Foundation, Tirana Office (hbs Tirana)**, an organization for green political education. We explore alternative ways of living and organizing society, share green policy options, and support paths toward social and ecological change.

In practice, this means:

- Creating spaces for dialogue
- Connecting local and international voices
- Sharing knowledge and tools for action
- Strengthening platforms for progressive ideas

Contact

Get a glimpse of our work in green political education:

-  al.boell.org
-  [Instagram: hbs_tirana](https://www.instagram.com/hbs_tirana)
-  [Facebook: Heinrich Böll Foundation Tirana](https://www.facebook.com/HeinrichBöllFoundationTirana)

How to reach out to our collaborators:

Federation of Young Europeans Greens

-  fyeg.org
-  [Instagram: fyeg](https://www.instagram.com/fyeg)
-  [Facebook: Young European Greens](https://www.facebook.com/YoungEuropeanGreens)

Green European Foundation

-  gef.eu
-  [Instagram: gef_europe](https://www.instagram.com/gef_europe)
-  [Facebook: GEF - Green European Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/GEF-Green-European-Foundation)

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**CONGRESS
OF
YOUNG
EUROPEANS**
TIRANA 2025

THE
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OF
EUROPE

HEINRICH
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STIFTUNG
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