

## INVITATION

The International Institute for Peace (IIP), in collaboration with the Austrian Institute for International Affairs, Karl Renner Institute, cordially invite you to an online discussion on the topic:

# Post-Covid or Post-Democracy Balkans?

## Political turmoil in Albania, Kosovo and Serbia

**Date:** Tuesday, 2 June 2020  
**Time:** 5:00 pm  
**Venue:** Zoom link will be sent to registered participants  
**Registration:** <https://www.iipvienna.com/registration/>



### Panelists:

- GENTIOLA MAHDI, associated researcher at the European Movement Albania
- DONIKA EMINI, Executive Director at CiviKos, Prishtina and PhD candidate at the University of Westminster
- DJORDJE BOJOVIC, European Commission/LSE

### Moderation:

- ADNAN CERIMAGIC, Analyst at European Stability Initiative, Berlin; member of the IIP Advisory Board

### Content:

As the world slowly starts to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, new challenges have begun to surface. In the Western Balkans, aside from direct consequences for the health and economic sectors, concerns are rising over political turmoil in the region, the further weakening of democratic institutions, the suppression of protests and political opposition, and restrictions and violations of civil and political rights. Will the period after the pandemic trigger a democratic rollback in the region? What will it mean for regional cooperation in the Western Balkans and EU integration? What might its impact be on human rights, civil society, the media, and young people across the region?

To answer these and other pressing questions, we have launched a series of online discussions titled *Post-COVID or Post-Democracy Balkans?* taking place over the coming weeks. Each discussion will feature a panel of young experts from the region who will cover issues such as political instability, human rights and media freedom, challenges for civil society, prospects for education, and more. The discussions will take place within the framework of our initiative 'Young Generations for the Western Balkans 2030,' jointly run with the Karl-Renner Institut and the Austrian Institute for International Affairs.

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The first discussion in the series on June 2<sup>nd</sup> will primarily focus on recent political turbulence in the region and the accompanying protests and opposition. The conversation will address the collapse of Albin Kurti's government in Kosovo at the beginning of the crisis, the escalating protests in Albania following the shock demolition of the National Theater in Tirana, and the rising dissent in Serbia following the government's harsh lockdown. The panel will explore the following questions: What are the root causes for the ongoing unrest in the region? How have the region's governments responded to the pandemic and possibly taken advantage of it? What are the governments' most significant challenges moving forward? And what means of redress are available to support democracy and stability across the region?

The next planned discussions in the series *Post-Covid or Post-Democracy Balkans?* include:

**9 June 2020:** State of human rights, media freedoms and civil liberties during the pandemic

**16 June 2020:** Solidarity during the corona crisis within the region and beyond.

**23 June 2020:** Discussion with Goran Svilanovic, former Foreign Minister of Serbia

*The Discussion will be held in English.*

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[www.iipvienna.com/events](http://www.iipvienna.com/events)

as well as on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/IIPVIENNA](https://www.facebook.com/IIPVIENNA)

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