

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

**REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

Budva, Montenegro  
December 8-9, 2022

## Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 sub-goals adopted by the United Nations (UN) in September 2015, is the world's roadmap for achieving sustainable development in this decade. The 2030 Agenda, has become the main reference for development policies and programmes throughout the world. It is a plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity, and will be implemented by all countries and all stakeholders, acting through a partnership based on cooperation. The Sustainable Development Goals represent a transformative plan to create a better and sustainable future for the entire world. They address the global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

The European Union (EU) is fully committed to delivering on the 2030 Agenda, and the SDGs form an intrinsic part of the European Commission's programme. Monitoring is an essential component in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda's vision, both globally, in the EU and in the Western Balkans, by assessing and visualizing the progress made towards the 17 SDGs. While regular monitoring reports on progress towards the SDGs are prepared in EU since 2017, such monitoring reports are not yet a common place in Western Balkans.

Administrations of the Western Balkans can advance the use of all available policymaking tools to achieve sustainable economic development. In parallel, they are expected to meet benchmarks in several complex fields and achieving good progress related mostly to the rule of law, quality public administration and economic governance, as prerequisites to joining the EU. The complex agenda involving EU accession, infrastructure and SDG requires innovation in the SDG financing.

In this regard, the Government of Montenegro, the United Nations and the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), organize the Regional Conference on "Sustainable Development in the Western Balkans". The Conference will build on the good results of the previous Regional Conference on SDG Implementation in the WBs held last year in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and will seek to encourage high-level political dialogue on shared challenges and opportunities related to SDG implementation as well as enhance the cooperation and exchange of expertise among public administrations dealing with this topic. The Conference will be an important platform also in the context of the forthcoming SDG mid-term review and deliberations on how to fast-track progress. Some of the topics to be covered are: SDG mainstreaming in policy integration and policy coordination, SDG Financing, EU Accession and 2030 Agenda, Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, SDG localization, etc.

The event will bring together Ministers and/or State Secretaries in charge for SDG coordination and good governance in the Western Balkans, senior public servants, European Commission, renowned experts, regional organizations and CSOs.

# PROGRAMME

## DAY I: Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

<b>08.30 – 10.00</b>	<i>Session of the Council for Sustainable Development of the Government of Montenegro (internal)</i>
<b>09.30</b>	<i>Welcome coffee and registration of participants</i>
<b>10.00 – 10.20</b>	<p>Introductory Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dritan Abazovic, Prime Minister of Montenegro</b></li> <li>• <b>Peter Lundberg, UN Resident Coordinator in Montenegro</b></li> <li>• <b>Maja Handjiska Trendafilova, ReSPA Director</b></li> <li>• <b>Oana-Cristina Popa, Ambassador of the European Union to Montenegro (tbc)</b></li> </ul>
<b>10.20 – 10.30</b>	<p>Welcome note</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations (video message) (tbc)</b></li> </ul>
<b>10.30 – 10.45</b>	<p><b>Keynote speech</b></p> <p><i>Interlinks between the Agenda 2030 and EU policies</i></p> <p><b>Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission (tbc)</b></p>
<b>10.45 – 12.00</b>	<p><b>High Level policy dialogue – Moderated Panel Discussion</b></p> <p><i>Improving SDG coordination – institutional setup, implementation and monitoring of sustainable development policies in the Western Balkans (WB)</i></p> <p>Participants: Ministers and/or State Secretaries from tWB, key focal points</p>
<b>12.00 – 12.30</b>	<p><b>Ministerial Family photo</b></p> <p><i>Coffee break</i></p>
<b>12.30 – 14.00</b>	<p><b>Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) process in the Western Balkans</b></p> <p><i>Opening remarks and moderator: Aneta Kankaraš, Head of the Office for Sustainable Development, Government of Montenegro</i></p> <p><i>Participants: representatives from the Western Balkans designated to coordinate the VNR process, representative of UN DESA</i></p>
<b>14.00 – 15.00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>

<b>15.00 – 16.30</b>	<b>SDG Financing – where do we stand and where shall we aim?</b> <i>Opening remarks and moderator: North Macedonia (tbc)</i> <i>Participants: representatives from the Western Balkans with experience in financing for sustainable development, representative of UN DESA</i>
<b>16.30 – 16.45</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<b>16.45 – 18.00</b>	<b>Localizing SDGs – how to make sustainable development closer to the people, and broaden partnerships</b> <i>Opening remarks and moderation: Council for Sustainable Development, Bosnia and Herzegovina (tbc)</i> <i>Participants: representatives from the Western Balkans with experience in localising the SDGs and creating partnerships for the goals</i>
<b>19.30</b>	<i>Social and networking dinner</i>

## DAY II: Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022

<b>09.00</b>	<i>Welcome coffee and registration of participants</i>
<b>09.15 – 10.30</b>	<b>Monitoring progress – enhancing data for sustainable development</b> <i>Opening remarks and moderation: Serbia (tbc)</i> <i>Participants: representatives from the Western Balkans in charge of monitoring the progress of 2030 Agenda</i>
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	<b>SDGs mid-term review: what have we learned from implementation to date and how can we fast-track progress?</b> UN DESA representative
<b>11.00 – 11.15</b>	<i>Coffee break</i>
<b>11.15 – 12.30</b>	<b>Closing remarks and the way ahead – enhancing policy cooperation and exchange in the Western Balkans</b> <i>Remarks and moderation: Albania (tbc)</i> <i>Followed by moderated discussion, closing remarks and conclusions.</i>
<b>12.30 – 14:00</b>	<i>Lunch</i>
	<i>Departure</i>