

INVITATION

Albania and Greece relations – What do citizens think

Tuesday, June 29, 2021 @ ZOOM

15.00-16.30 (Tirana CEST TIME)

16.00-17.30 (Athens EEST TIME)

Register for this event by clicking [here](#)

[Open Society Foundation for Albania](#) (OSFA) and the [Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy](#) (ELIAMEP) have the pleasure to invite you to the presentation of the **Survey Report Albania – Greece, Citizens' perceptions on cooperation between the two countries**. The event will be organized **on Tuesday, June 29, 2021 @ ZOOM**.

Relations between Albania and Greece remain a complicated riddle. The two neighboring countries have extensive historical, economic, and social bonds. They participate in the same geopolitical sphere, and largely agree about the broader agenda for the region, focusing on democratization, economic development and strengthening the rule of law, with the underlying aim of integrating the Balkans in the European Union.

With the intensified collaboration between the two countries in the early 1990s, the visibility vis-à-vis each other also increased, bringing to the fore old fears and stereotypes, as well as new sources of disagreement. As a result, Albania and Greece find themselves in a paradoxical situation: the two societies and economies are highly interconnected, but diplomatic and political relations remain testing and in a near permanent state of volatility. Combined with the hostile rhetoric expressed occasionally on social media, there is a risk for the identities of the two countries evolving in opposition to one another. Thus, in order to understand what drives these misconceptions, OSFA and ELIAMEP conducted a joint study on public perceptions and attitudes that the Albanian and Greek citizens hold about each other. The joint research project, involved two joint parallel opinion polls conducted in Albania and Greece and implemented by the Tirana-based [Data Centrum Research Institute](#) polling agency and the Thessaloniki-based [Public Opinion Research Unit](#) of the University of Macedonia. More information about the study can be found by clicking [here](#).

This event will serve to discuss the findings of the study and their implications, particularly with the perspective of increasing the level of trust between the two societies and solidifying the basis of a future partnership. The first session of the event is dedicated to the welcoming remarks and the presentation of the most important highlights from the representatives of ELIAMEP, OSFA, Albanian Ministry for European and Foreign Affairs, Embassy of Greece. In the second session, a panel of experts will discuss in detail the results of the study and how these perceptions and attitudes shape the bilateral relations and the domestic policy discourse in each country. Additionally, panelists will explore the implications of Greek attitudes for the EU enlargement process, not only for Albania, but the Western Balkans region.

AGENDA

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Opening Session: Welcoming remarks	
15.00-15.30	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mr. Andi Dobrushi, Regional Coordinator for Western Balkans Foundations & Executive Director for Open Society Foundation Albania (OSFA)2. Professor George Pagoulatos, General Director, Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP)3. Mr. Maklen Misha, Adviser, Ministry for European and Foreign Affairs of Albania (TBC)4. Mr. Alexandros Bouzis, Head of Public Diplomacy Office, Embassy of Greece
Second Session: Presentation of Findings from Albania and Greece	
15.30-16:10	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ms. Alketa Berzani, former Executive Director, Data Centrum Research Institute – presentation of findings from Albania2. Mr. Ioannis Armakolas, Senior Research Fellow, Head, South-East Europe Programme, ELIAMEP – presentation of findings from Greece3. Mr. Blendi Kajsiu, Assistant Professor at Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia4. Mr. Angelos Athanasopoulos, Editor-in-Chief, Politics, To Vima newspaper
16:10-16:30	Questions and answers session Moderator: Ms. Alexandra Voudouri , Correspondent of diplomatic affairs at Athina 9,84fm; Editor at MacroPolis