

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY

On September 15th, the Southeast European Leadership for Development and Integrity (SELDI) proudly joins the global community in commemorating the International Day of Democracy. This year's theme, "Empowering Youth for Democratic Engagement," highlights the critical importance of involving young people in democratic processes to ensure their voices are heard and their perspectives valued.

Democracy lies at the heart of modern society, and SELDI remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing democratic values and transparency throughout the Southeast Europe region. As we reflect on this year's theme, SELDI recognizes that the active participation of young people is vital for the vibrancy and sustainability of democracy.

Young people bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and boundless energy to the democratic process. Their active engagement not only enriches the quality of decision-making but also ensures that policies and actions reflect the diverse needs and aspirations of society. SELDI believes that by empowering youth to become active participants in democracy, we can foster a more inclusive, responsive, and accountable political landscape.

SELDI calls for a concerted effort to engage and empower young people by:

Civic Education: Promoting civic education programs that equip young people with the knowledge and skills needed to participate effectively in democratic processes.

Youth Representation: Encouraging the inclusion of young people in decision-making bodies, political parties, and governance structures.

Youth Initiatives: Supporting and amplifying youth-led initiatives that address pressing societal issues and advocate for positive change.

Joint future building and economic development. In West Balkan societies, the youth play a key role in joint future building and economic development. They are the future entrepreneurs and the ones who will shape the future of the region. To achieve this, the government and private sector organizations need to create more opportunities for the youth to undertake business activities and to contribute to economic development.

Digital Engagement: Leveraging technology and social media to facilitate youth engagement and amplify their voices.

Mentorship and Leadership Development: Providing mentorship and leadership development opportunities for young leaders to emerge and thrive.

As we celebrate the International Day of Democracy, SELDI reiterates its commitment to nurturing a new generation of active and engaged citizens. By empowering young people and involving them in democratic processes, we can build a stronger and more resilient democracy that truly represents the aspirations of all citizens.

SELDI invites governments, civil society organizations, and citizens to join hands in empowering youth for democratic engagement. Together, we can ensure that the voices of young people are not only heard but also shape the future of our democratic societies.

About SELDI:

[SELDI \(Southeast Europe Leadership for Development and Integrity\)](https://www.seldi.net) is a network of think tanks and civil society organizations working to promote good governance and combat corruption in Southeast Europe. Since 2001, SELDI has been a leading voice in the fight against corruption, working to strengthen transparency and accountability in public institutions and support citizen engagement and grassroots activism. For more information, visit www.seldi.net.