



The Summer Seminar “Exploring Post-COVID Scenarios for Eastern Europe & Bulgaria” is an ad hoc international forum that is to take place in the period **September 7-11th, 2020 in Albena Resort** (near the city of Varna).

It is an initiative of the **Economic Policy Institute (EPI)**, organized in partnership with the **Bulgarian Diplomatic Institute (BDI)** to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria with the kind financial support of the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the European Commission Representation in Bulgaria and the Austrian Embassy in Sofia.

The Summer Seminar Concept

The special edition of the Summer Seminar aims to serve as a platform for expert discussion and exchange of views on the most pressing issues concerning Eastern Europe and Bulgaria. Domestic and foreign stakeholders are invited to leverage their diverse vantage points and collective wisdom to derive a strategic outlook for the post-COVID development perspectives ahead of the economies and societies in the region.

The 5-day event capitalizes on a wide range of formats for achieving its intended impact: lectures, key notes, interactive group activities and informal networking opportunities. The Summer Seminar agenda features three thematic panels and a specially designed series of scenario-building foresight sessions:

- Panel I: Shifting Global Planes. Regional Resonance Waves;
- Panel II: The EU Agenda & COVID-19 Recovery;
- Panel III: Bulgarian Diplomacy, Foreign Policy Priorities and Regional Cooperation Modalities;
- Foresight Sessions: Eastern Europe & Bulgaria Navigating Uncertainty.

Target Groups of Prospective Participants

The Summer Seminar is expected to gather up to 30 early and mid-career diplomats, public servants, policy-oriented researchers, think tank professionals and members of the academia.

It is open for participation to a variety of stakeholders identified in three respective groups as specified below.

Group A stakeholders: Representatives of foreign diplomatic missions in Bulgaria from the EU member states, the EU Candidate and Potential Candidates as well as the Eastern Partnership countries. The event would be most beneficial to participants matching one of the following profiles:

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7-11 SEPTEMBER 2020
ALBENA RESORT



- Junior/mid-career diplomats, especially those who have arrived in Bulgaria in the past 12 – 18 months;
- Local non-diplomatic staff of foreign embassies in Bulgaria such as experts in Political and Economic Departments with less than 2 years of experience on their current position.

Group B stakeholders: Representatives of Bulgarian institutions who match one of the following profiles:

- Junior diplomats from relevant directorates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Junior and senior experts (public servants without management functions) from relevant directorates of the Council of Ministers, Ministries of Economy and Finance with less than 3 years of experience on their current position.

Group C stakeholders: Policy-oriented researchers from think tanks and academic institutions:

- Emerging experts and research fellows from relevant non-governmental think tanks;
- Current PhD students and postdoc fellows from Bulgarian academic institutions in the fields of International Relations, European Studies, Political Science, Political Economy, International Economics, Public Administration, Sociology and other related disciplines.

Participation Costs

Due to the kind financial support of the seminar donors, organizers are able to cover for all participants:

- 5 nights in the 5-star Flamingo Grand Hotel (single room)
- full board (meals and coffee breaks);
- seminar materials;
- half-day field trip to Kaliakra and Balchik (group transport and entry fees at sightseeing venues).

The sending party or the individual participant is responsible for the transportation costs to Albena.



COVID-19 Prevention Measures

Due to concerns regarding the spread of COVID-19 and in consideration for the safety of all attendees, participants are kindly advised to refrain from international travel to destinations with infection rates higher than those in Bulgaria **two weeks prior to the event.**

The seminar sessions will be held in venues that allow for 1.5-meter distance between participants and no more than 50% of the hall's capacity.

The Albena resort staff adheres to a strict protocol regarding hygiene and regular disinfection of all hotel, conference and recreational facilities.

Disinfectant stations will be readily available at the seminar venue, with all attendees required to wear masks indoors.

In order to minimize contact with non-seminar attendees, EPI has arranged all meals to be served separately from the other hotel guests and tourists.

The event organizers shall distribute in advance special COVID-19 prevention guidelines to be observed by all attendees.