DCAF Young Faces 2025

Learning together about Cybersecurity Governance in the Western Balkans: November 2025 – March 2026

Are you passionate about cybersecurity and policymaking? Are you eager to deepen your understanding through real-world case studies, best practices, and applied theory? Do you want to engage with leading experts and researchers in the field?

If so, join us for the Young Faces 2025 educational programme! This unique opportunity will allow you to explore the link between cybersecurity governance and cyber diplomacy, focusing on practical examples, international relations in information security and how cyber diplomacy is shaped in the international settings today.

The programme includes a series of interactive webinars, mentored policy paper writing, and a live event in the spring. You can choose to participate in the webinars only, or you can enrol in the full program.

Applications are open until October 10, 2025. Don't miss your chance to be part of this exciting initiative organised in the context of the DCAF project, ' Good Governance in Cybersecurity in the Western Balkans (2025-2026)', sponsored by the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Programme and timeline

Webinars:

17 – 19 November 2025 – From Policy to Practice: Building Effective Cybersecurity Governance

24 - 26 November 2025 - Bridging Borders in Cyberspace: Governance and Diplomacy in International Security

1 - 3 December 2025 - Case studies: International Processes, Venues and Strategic Cooperation

December 2025 – March 2026 – Policy papers: Participants will write a policy paper with the on-going mentorship of experts.

March 2026 – Three spotlighted policy papers will be published and promoted through DCAF's website. An online session on policy-paper writing will be organized at the beginning of the programme.

In-person event – Live training seminars with renowned experts on cybersecurity governance.

Further details

November 2025 – Online Webinars
A webinar will consist of three interactive sessions of 90 minutes each. Each session will be held by a different expert and facilitator. This will also include a cyber incident response simulation exercise.

Participants who choose to write policy papers will have an additional session on research methodologies and policy paper writing.

December 2025 – Choosing a topic and starting to write policy papers (limited to 16 participants)
Participants will have one mentorship session in early January during which they will decide the topic they will be writing on, and methods used for writing.

March 2026 – First draft and a Capstone in-person event with renowned experts
Participants will be expected to submit a first draft of their policy paper in March, followed by individual and group mentorship sessions.

The Capstone in-person event will also aim to increase networking and advocacy activities of the participants. It will take place in an attractive location with renowned experts from the field providing trainings and mentorship.

March 2026 – Final policy papers and publication

Sending final drafts and finalizing policy papers. Spotlighted papers will be published by the end of the process.

FAQ

Who should apply? Young leaders and interested scholars from the Western Balkans, preferably with some experience working in or researching security, cybersecurity, rights and governance.

How do I apply? Please apply via email: cybersecurityeca@dcaf.ch by the 10 October 2025.

You can apply for webinars only or for the full programme. To apply for webinars, you need to send only your CV and email with subject "Application to the Young Faces online webinars".

Should you wish to participate in the entire programme, we look forward to receiving your CV and a short motivation letter (350-450 words) in an email with a subject "Application to the Young Faces programme".

Which parts of the programme and how many webinars may I attend? You are welcome to participate just in webinars or in the entire programme. If you wish to participate and are selected for the entire programme, please note that we will expect you to attend all webinars.

How much time will I need to invest? Webinars - Participants are expected to read the webinar reading materials prior to each webinar (reading time: approx. 6h in total across all nine webinars) and take part in all three sessions of each webinar (3 x 90 minutes), for all three series of webinars.

Policy paper and live event – policy paper writing will take part over the course of four months, with two consultation processes. Each policy paper should consist of 3-7 pages. The Capstone live event will last for 1,5 days, travel excluded.

How will the Webinars be held? The webinars will take place online via Zoom. All sessions will be held in English.

What are the fees? Both the Webinar series and entire programme are free of charge to participants. It is sponsored by DCAF - Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and the United Kingdom`s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

Can I receive a certificate of participation? A certificate will be sent to you upon request, after successful completion of the full programme (three webinar sessions, policy paper and live event).