

RESEARCH POLICY 2020-2024

The Research Center for Western Balkans Security Issues

(A modified and abbreviated version of the original research policy document, written in Serbian and approved by the Executive Board of the Research Center for Western Balkans Security Issues, January 24, 2020.)

The Research Center is a non-profit, non-political and non-governmental center of research and expertise concerning to the Western Balkans. The Center is dedicated to conducting high-quality, cutting edge research and providing higher education based on research, mostly in the fields of security and defense. By conducting applied research, cooperating with various actors in society and providing information services, the Center seeks practical, societally relevant applications for research results.

The Research Center aims to increase understanding of the developments in the Western Balkans through research. High-quality academic research forms the basis and core for all the Center's activities. The Center looks for new, relevant directions for research and for interaction between the societies.

The Research Center quests for truth and knowledge, edification, creativity, well-being and autonomy. The Center additionally relies on the principles of:

- 1) multi- and interdisciplinarity approach,
- 2) dialogue with,
- 3) knowledge of the languages and
- 4) understanding of the cultures of the countries within its research scope.

The goals of the Research Center are:

- 1) scientific and professional research focusing on security challenges, risks and threats,
- 2) education of citizens, especially of the youth about the importance of security,
- 3) training security managers and
- 4) raising awareness about the importance of monitoring the security challenges, risks and threats.

The Center's vision is that in 2024 the Center will have established its position as a major actor in the Western Balkans research studies both on the European and broader international level.

Focus points of research

The Research Center has determined four focus areas for research for the upcoming few years. These have been selected on the basis of an analysis of fields of investigation needing further research and of the future challenges of those countries that fall within the Center's research scope. They are partially based on a consideration of the expertise currently available within the Center, with the intention of developing stronger expertise in each of the areas mentioned below. These themes have been approved by the Executive Board of the Research Center, and they constitute the areas that will be favored when it comes to allocating resources for research. Each research focus is approached through wider, multidisciplinary research programmes consisting of one or more research projects.

- 1) Security policies
 - Albania
 - Bosnia and Hercegovina

- Croatia
 - Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
 - Montenegro
 - Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija)
- 2) Security sector reform in the Western Balkans
- Challenges
 - Developments
- 3) Regional security in the Western Balkans
- EU and NATO integration process
 - NATO as a regional actor
 - Ethnic conflicts
 - Cross-border crime
 - Civil protection and crisis management (UN, OSCE and EU)
 - Migrations
- 4) Energy security in the Western Balkans
- Security policy and energy issues
 - Getting energy from Russia to Europe
 - Russian energy policy

The Center coordinates and partners in joint research projects with an extensive network of researchers in Serbia and abroad. One of the starting points for the Center's research is a dialogue with the "object" of research. Consequently, a significant part of the research is carried out in cooperation with scholars from Serbia and southeast Europe.

Institutional resources

The Center receives funding from external sources. The European Union is the main source, while Serbian public administration organizations such as ministries also fund applied research.

The Center's research central resource lays in its international cooperation with institutes and individual researchers in the EU member states.

The Center's staff involved in administration represents an additional resource in the Center's research process.

Societal interaction

The Research Center's impact on the Serbian society at large is based on strong academic research and the wide-ranging expertise that this creates. The main partners in the effort include decision-makers, the public sector, economic life and civil society both in Serbia and abroad.

The Center actively endeavors to influence public debate and political decisions connected to its field. The Center constantly develops its cooperation with ministries, political decision-makers, companies and non-governmental organizations. It also conducts commissioned research projects and analyses and gives policy recommendations. The Center encourages its staff to participate in social debates and in other forms of social activities.

Applied Research

The Center participates in implementing development projects and commissioned research especially in the Center's focus areas. The Center pays attention to the potential of synergies between suggested projects and the Center's research already under going at the early planning

stage. This requires coordination in the project preparation phase as well as proper allocation of human and other resources. This also requires project skills from the researchers and other staff members—advancing of which will be further supported by the Institute.

The Center will continue making reports, analyses, policy recommendations and development suggestions for expert organizations in public administration, including Parliament and the ministries.

Applied research conducted at the Center follows the same guiding principles and values as does the Center's basic research.

Research and Information services

The Center's information service and publication activities make the results of Serbian research on Western Balkans available for the public. The information service is being developed in cooperation with the research personnel both as a research resource and as a channel for disseminating the research-based knowledge to the general public.

The information service maintains and develops the Center's web pages.

The Center's publishing activities are developed as a central channel of publishing research on Western Balkans.

Conferences and other events

The Research Center actively organizes scientific seminars and public events. This provides the Center with the latest information available including the expertise of the Serbian and international research network.

The Center reacts quickly to the changes in the societies and current issues in Western Balkans by organizing expert information events responding to the currently relevant information requirements. In order to enable the accumulation of the information collected in scientific and other events and to respond to the needs of the general public. The Center will organize the archives and make information available to the public. Furthermore, the Center's information service will publicly advertise all events.