

How the Central Forum is organized

The WEB.DEF Central Forum hosts discussions in the English language on Themes that are of common interest for all Western Balkans countries.

The main page “**Forum Home**” lists all active discussions on the various Themes sorted by date.

The page “**Themes**” lists all discussions categorized by thematic area. The discussion Themes covered are:

- ❖ Art & Culture
- ❖ Economy & Business
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Environment
- ❖ Human Rights
- ❖ Labour
- ❖ Life Style
- ❖ Regional Development
- ❖ Science & Technology
- ❖ Social Issues

The page “**Results**” hosts all closed (past) discussions.

Finally, the last two menus “**WEB.DEF Forums**” and “**WEB.DEF Portals**” lead to the rest of the WEB.DEF news portals and forums.

How discussions are structured

The discussions are initiated by an authorized **Journalist-Coordinator** of the WEB.DEF News Agencies in cooperation with the Forum Administrator. He/she is responsible for collecting and updating the relevant info accompanying the discussion, for monitoring the discussion, for closing and summarizing a discussion and for getting feedback on the results from relevant decision and policy-makers. Each discussion is structured as follows:

- ❖ It has a **Topic** covering the general context, which belongs to one of the aforementioned **Themes** (e.g. Alternative Sources of Energy which falls under the Environment Theme)
- ❖ Each Topic consists of at least one discussion **Thread**, which covers in detail a more specific issue within the Topic general concept (e.g. Alternative sources of Energy in Albania). Each Thread consists of a detailed description of the issue, provided by the journalist – coordinator, all relevant documents and links and is followed by all opinions expressed in a blog format.
- ❖ If all Threads within a Topic are closed (i.e. not available for comments) the Topic is moved automatically to the “Results” page.

How you can participate in the forum

By entering into the Forum you are able to perform the following actions:

Action 1: Navigate

You can navigate through the pages of the Forum and read running or closed discussions (Topics – Threads) in various categories (Themes), and e-Polls. General information such as Contact Us,

Mission, Terms and Conditions, Privacy Statement, Legal Disclaimer can be found at the bottom. You can also find links to the other WEB.DEF portals and Forums.

Action 2: Register

To participate in a discussion you must register. In order to register for the Forum you have to press the relevant button on the right. After viewing the Terms & Conditions, you have to fill-in a form containing various fields.

The Username and Password, the e-mail and the CAPTCHA (Number at the end) are mandatory fields. Please use a real e-mail, because the registration uses E-Mail verification for the account activation and password reminders. Only the Username is visible to the other Forum Users. The rest are optional fields. In case of errors or abnormal situations, please follow the messages that will appear at the bottom of the registration page. Please note that the Username and Password must be at least 6 characters long.

After a successful registration, you will receive an e-mail for account verification. Please follow the instructions given and your account will be activated.

Action 3: Login

For logging into the Forum, please enter your Username and Password in the specified fields on the right. The question mark “?” besides the Password field is used for password reminder. If you have forgotten your password, you have to write your username and press the “?”. Your password will be sent by e-mail to your specified address.

Action 4: Post a comment

To post a comment: Press the “Post” button after the last published comment. A text box will appear at the end, where you can type your message. After its completion you have to press the button “post” under the box. Please note that your message will not appear directly in the Forum, because it has to be approved by the Journalist-Coordinator, according to the Terms & Conditions. A relevant message will appear let you know this is happening.

Action 5: Complain

If a published message upsets you for any reason (e.g. racism), you can press the “Complain” button besides it. This will open a form where you can specify the reasons for this complaint. This form will be sent to the Journalist-Coordinator who will take appropriate actions. The form layout is the same as the contact form (see action 7) for further details.

Action 6: Vote

In order to vote in an e-Poll, select your preferred choice and press “Vote Now!”. Afterwards you will see the current results. If you have already voted for this Poll, you will see a relevant message.

Action 7: Contact the journalist – coordinator

By pressing the button “Contact E-Mail”, on the right side of a Thread description, you will see a form in order to send an e-mail from your registered e-mail to the Journalist-Coordinator, expressing anything related to that discussion or for proposing a new topic / thread. Similar form appears also when pressing the “Complain” button besides any post.

Action 8: Fill-in Questionnaires

By clicking the “Feedback Questionnaires” on the right side you can access the WEB.DEF online questionnaire. By filling in the requested fields / answers you provide feedback which is important in helping us to evaluate and improve these forums.