



ERMA
Alumni
Network

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

by ERMA ALUMNI NETWORK TEAM
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The official alumni network of the **European Regional Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe (ERMA)**, part of the Global Campus Alumni, official alumni association of the European Union's Global Campus of Human Rights.

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ABOUT THE ERMA ALUMNI NETWORK (EAN)

In October 2017, the International Academic Council (IAC) of the ERMA Programme adopted an ambitious revitalization strategy, aimed at responding to the need of development that the master faced. Together with a set of provisions related to the widening of the institutional partnership, the updates of the teaching curriculum and the restructuring of the management, the IAC paved the ground to launch the ERMA Alumni Network (EAN), and alumni relation office as part of the Academic and Development Unit (A&D Unit).

Following the initial phase of development, in 2017 EAN managed to re-establish the trust and communication with its programmes' graduates, develop solid relations and collaboration with the **Global Campus Alumni (GCA)**, create the visual identity of the network, promote the Programme and increase the visibility of its graduates on a global level. In October 2017, the first-ever ERMA Alumni Census was conducted to gather information about the professional expertise and whereabouts of its graduates. The Census served as a basis to map the potential of the network, to increase the level of cooperation among the graduates and set the priority actions in 2018.

Today, as the official action of the ERMA Programme, EAN links more than 500 graduates (as per a. y. 2017/18) to its *alma mater* and *vice versa*. It represents the point of reference for the communication with the former students and a tool through which the Programme can foster a web of professional, academic and public relations with its alumni in a systematic and organized manner. EAN is funded by the ERMA Programme and is a full member of the GCA, the largest global network of human rights professionals created by the **Global Campus of Human Rights (GC)**, to gather the alumni associations and networks of the regional Master Programmes all over the world.

The EAN work is focused on the areas of **networking, promotion, and employability**, which represent the main pillars of the network. Through networking, the graduates will become more interconnected and form a web of skilled human capital and human rights defenders. The promotional activities are focused at boosting the visibility of the graduates and of the ERMA programme in order to strengthen the intrinsic value of the academic title they own, as well as to raise awareness over the existence of generations of quality human rights experts. The EAN also involves the alumni in activities which offer the opportunities to contribute to advancing their professional expertise, acquiring a higher degree of employability and self-employability. Finally, EAN contributes to the academic **development of the ERMA programme**, through the know-how sharing of its successful alumni and incorporates the most updated academic, administrative and managerial practices in its educational processes.

The results of the Census and the alumni willingness to take part in the EAN's activities, inspired further work and development of the network in 2018 in line with the mid-term goals and actions of the **EAN Vision and Strategy**. The year 2018 put into the spotlight the qualities of the alumni and provided them space and chance to rejoin the EAN and ERMA activities, in same time increasing the quality of the Programme, boosting their skills and broadening their network. In addition, via GC and GCA, EAN heavily focused on connecting the alumni globally, thus offering them educational, employment, cooperation, and networking opportunities. Finally, various promotional and awareness raising activities were held to appreciate the graduates' professional achievements and their remarkable HR related work. This annual report will present EAN's main activities and projects undertaken in 2018.

ACTIVITIES, PROJECTS AND RESULTS FOR 2018

1. ERMA CAREER DAY

On 18th of April, at the premises of the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Sarajevo (CIS), ERMA together with EAN organized the "ERMA Career Day" event. This event represented the *first of this kind* for the Programme and was shaped primarily to bring to the ERMA students and wider audience the success stories of its alumni, and therefore to share suggestions and advise on how to pursue a career in the field of human rights in B&H



and SEE region. The session welcomed graduates from different areas of expertise and generations and showcased the employment potential of ERMA alumni, namely: Ms. Una Bejtovic (2002/2003 alumna), Ms. Nina Sheremet (2008/2009 alumna), Mr. Ivan Barbalic (2000/2001 alumnus) and Mr. Goran Miletic (2006/2007 alumnus). They all shared their inspiring stories and experiences related to the impact ERMA had on their personal and professional life since graduation. The event gathered a number of accomplished ERMA alumni, current students and representatives of stakeholders and donors. Check the full report at: <https://bit.ly/2LAISSDd>.

2. GC POLICY OBSERVATORY



The new GC Policy Observatory project initiated by ERMA, aims to provide guidance and expert opinion in response to urgent human rights issues to a broad audience such as decision-makers, local governments, parties, foundations, international and regional organizations, such as the EC, EU Delegations and the UN agencies, NGO, think-tanks, research centers, individual researchers, independent researchers and so

on. It foresees the creation of a virtual hub comprised of a team of researchers to make each regional programme a solid focal point for policy expert advisory in human rights issues. Under the supervision of the ERMA A&D Unit, the overall coordination of the pilot project was done by the 2014/15 alumnus Mr. Tomáš Jungwirth. The policy brief from the SEE region analyzing the sustainable funding for civil society and community media in Serbia and the Western Balkan was courtesy of Mr. Davor Marko, 2005/06 alumnus and research fellow at the Center for Social Research Analitika, B&H. Read the GC policy briefs and find out more about the project at: [Global Campus Policy Observatory](#).

3. ALUMNI CURRICULA & ERMA OPEN LECTURES – Welcome back on the other side of the desk!

Working intensively to make the connection between the ERMA programme and its alumni deeper and more meaningful, as well as to capitalize on the expertise and research interest of its graduates, ERMA reserves a large part of its academic offer to its alumni. Giving the opportunity to the alumni to come back to its *alma mater* and present their work, career achievements and share their knowledge is a valuable practice which both, raises the quality of the Programme and inspires the students and alumni to nurture human rights and democratic values. In the academic year 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 alumni who are involved in the official curricula of the Programme are:



Ms. Alina Trkulja, University of Sarajevo (2010/2011); Mr. Federico Giulio Sicurella, University of Milan (2006/2007); Mr. Mario Hibert (2004/2005), University of Sarajevo; Mr. Nenad Markovic (2002/2003), Ss. Cyril and Methodius University; Mr. Dennis Gratz (2001/2002), Member of Parliament of the Federation of B&H; Mr. Afrim Hoti (2001/2002), University of Prishtina; and Ms. Amila Madzak (2016/2017), University of Sarajevo. Nevertheless, inspired by the ERMA Alumni Census results which showed that 41.3 % of our alumni continued with another academic programme after the graduation (36.2 % master studies, 3.4 % post-grad studies, 8.6 % academic fellowships and 67.2 % Ph.D. studies) and the variety of fields and expertise among the alumni, EAN launched a pilot project for the a.y. 2018/2019, the ERMA OPEN LECTURES and included several more alumni in the teaching program which will enrich the academic offer with their four hours lecture on current topics of their expertise. The 2018/2019 Curriculum is available [here](#).

4. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT EVENT– Why Human Rights Education Matters?



On the 7th of November 2018, the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC) and GC in cooperation with the Swedish NGO Civil Rights Defenders in the premises of the European Parliament in Brussels organized an event focusing on the question “Why Human Rights education matters?”. The event presented the role and impact of the GC, a network of almost one hundred universities as a key

actor in the higher Human Rights education sector, and the potential of the human capital as a contemporary agent of change to the members of the European Parliament, the European Institutions and stakeholders at large. The debate was centered on notable alumni of the Regional Master’s Programmes, who introduced their success stories as human rights advocates and highlighted the impact that specialized human rights education has had on their work. Mr. Davor Marko was a representative and panelist from EAN, 2005/06 alumnus, who shared his personal experience and insights on the importance of the human rights education in the SEE region. The overall organization of the event was supported by the ERMA A&D Unit and EAN. More about the event at: <https://bit.ly/2Q1AOaI>; video available at: <https://bit.ly/2RgdLNS>.

5. ERMA ALUMNI DAY – Celebrating the month of human rights

Celebrating alumni success and greater engagement in the activities of the Programme, in December, the month of human rights, right after the beginning of the new academic year 2018/2019, EAN for *the first time* organized the Alumni Day dedicated to the lectures of former graduates. The pleasure to share her knowledge and inspiration to the new cohort of students had Ms. Ena Bavčić (2012/2013 alumna), from Civil Rights Defenders, an ERMA's longstanding partner. She brought the expert experience to the students and talked about the practical implications of the Human Right tackled through the work of the Civil Rights Defenders. In addition, Lamija Tiro (2017/2018 alumna) who was awarded with an alumni lecture by the International Academic Council of ERMA, based on the quality of her MA Thesis and defense, presented the findings of their MA thesis entitled "Anti-discrimination mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia". Read more about the event at: <https://bit.ly/2AeSdr6>.



6. NEW INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN SEE – Alumni supported initiatives!



As part of the ERMA revitalization and outreach strategy, the IAC strongly supported the A&D Unit initiative to (re)establish institutional partnerships with Universities from the SEE region and to enrich the GC network. Under leadership and coordination of the A&D Unit, the EAN network assisted in the facilitation of the process of signing cooperation agreements with the *University of Prishtina (Kosovo)*, *Ss.*

Cyril and Methodius University (Skopje) and *University of Banja Luka (B&H)*. For the a.y. 2018/2019 ERMA is proud to announce the renewal of the academic cooperation with the Law Faculties of the University of Prishtina and the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University and to warmly welcome one of the most notable EAN members and respected professors, Mr. Afrim Hoti (2001/2002 alumnus) and Mr. Nenad Markovic (2002/2003 alumnus) as representatives in the IAC and lecturers at the Programme. Moreover, in May 2018 ERMA announced the last of its cooperation agreements concluded with the University of Banja Luka, allowing for its Faculties of Law and Political Sciences to join the ERMA regional university consortium and become members of the GC. This remarkable achievement for the *development of human rights higher education* in B&H as well as for the whole SEE region was warmly welcomed by the donors, the EU and the Italian Government. The occasion of signing the new cooperation agreement was complemented with a panel discussion about the importance of human rights education in B&H and the SEE region and forsook the participation of the EAN members, Mr. Ivan Barbalić (2000/2001 alumnus) and Ms. Bojana Mikanović (2015/2016 alumna). More details about the event at: <https://bit.ly/2rYPFJ8>.

7. WESTERN BALKANS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION KICK-OFF – A recognition by the EU

The ERMA Alumni Network received an official invitation by the DG Education and Culture of the European Commission to participate to the kick-off meeting of the Western Balkans Alumni Association (WBAA) on 15th March in Ohrid, Macedonia. As a new tool to support regional education policy in the region and part of the Western Balkans Platforms on Education & Training and Research & Innovation, WBAA aims to embrace mobility of youth and exchange of good practices on the university level. With joined forces and support of MAiA, the international alumni association of the Master of Arts MIREES, an initiative that operates under the same academic network lead since the 90s by the Università di Bologna, Mr. Marjan Icoski 2014/2015 alumnus and EAN Alumni Relations Manager shared the experiences and good alumni practices, and gave insights about EAN's work at the working groups and plenary sessions. The invitation was a great opportunity to set the path for further collaboration and to form a new partnership with the new regional alumni association, as well as to enlarge the network through the international relations offices of more than 30 universities across SEE. See more at: <https://bit.ly/2RWOAjM>.



8. ALUMNI TESTIMONIALS – Your voice to the world



Proud of the amazing work and contribution of the EAN graduates in every corner of the world, as part of the promotional strategy, EAN decided to share the alumni stories with the world in order to reach out, inspire and engage as many young people as possible, and motivate them to pursue quality human rights education in order to become advocates for human rights and

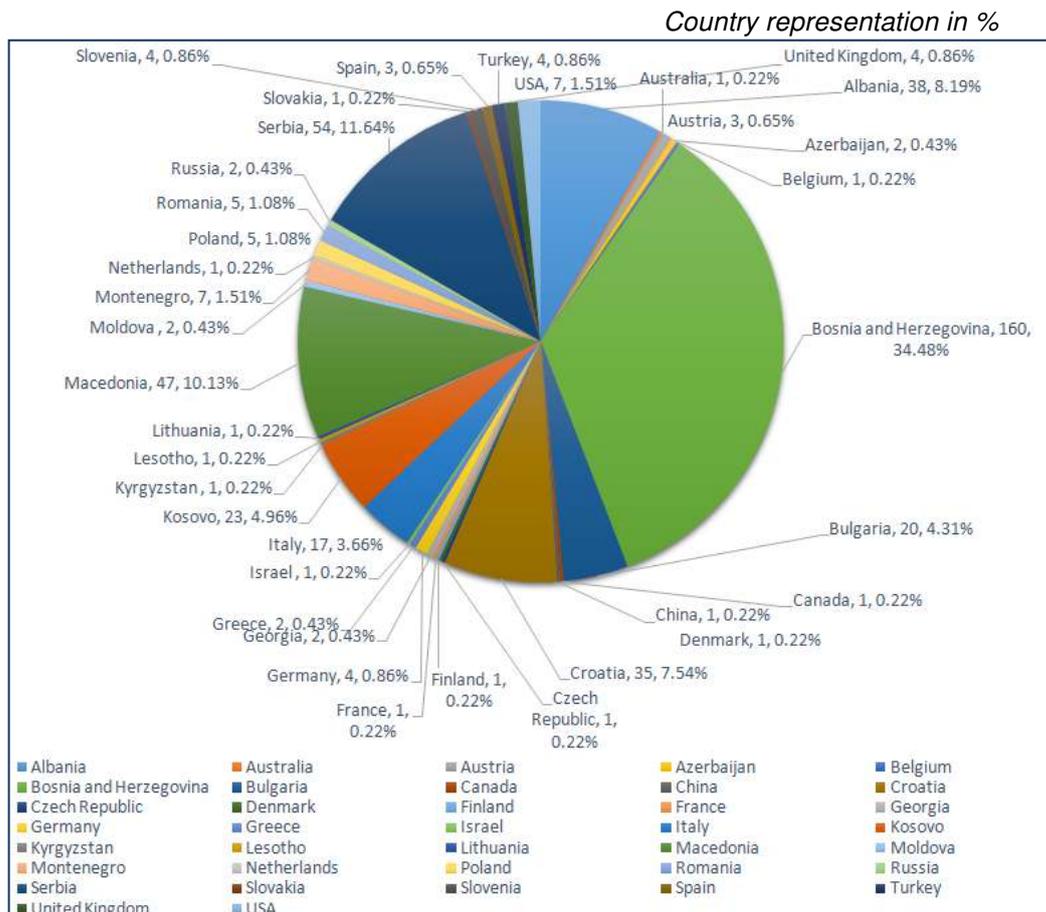
democracy. The promotion of the personal and professional alumni stories to the wider public is helping the Programme to attract more prospective students, disseminate the results of its longstanding successful work and spread the alumni voice to the world. According to the ERMA Census, more than 90 % of the alumni stated that the Programme had a very high impact on their personal, professional and educational profile and helped them in pursuing their career goals. Check some of the testimonials at: <https://bit.ly/2BI1wjI>. Let's join voices and forces and spread the good word out-there that human rights education really matters!

9. GLOBAL CAMPUS ALUMNI - The largest global network of human rights professionals

The Global Campus Alumni (GCA) is an international organization (AISBL) registered in Brussels, Belgium. It is a network of seven alumni association of human rights master programmes gathering more than 3,000 experts, activists, and professionals spread throughout the world. The master programmes the alumni that graduated from are all part of the Global Campus of Regional Human Rights Master Programmes (GC) funded by the European Commission and led by the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and

the network counting more than 500 members since 2000 has been shown with the results of the already mentioned Census. Just for the illustration, the ERMA Alumni (data up to 2015) have expertise in more than 19 disciplinary fields and cover various professional sectors. Probably the most remarkable numbers are those one showing the academic quality of the alumni and their employment. Respectively, 41.26 % of the respondents continued their education after graduation, the majority of them on Ph.D. level studies and 85.9 % of the respondents were employed at the time of conducting the research. The full Census Report can be accessed [here](#).

Besides the Census as independent research of the Programme, EAN is actively involved in data-gathering at GC and GCA level, as well as fully cooperates with the EU Commission as the main donor in this regard. Last but not least, the international, global and multicultural dimension of the Programme is shown by the number of countries represented since 2000. EAN has representatives in more than 37 countries in the world (up to 2016). Students from B&H are most numerous with 34.48 % of the total number, followed by students from Serbia with 11.64 %. The third cohort are students from Macedonia with 10.13%, fourth students from Albania with 8.19 % and so on.





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