Balkan Wiki Research Summit 2026

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What is the event or activity you want to organize?

The **Balkan Wiki Research Summit 2025** will be a two-day in-person event hosted in Belgrade, Serbia, bringing together academic researchers from the Balkan region (Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Romania) who study Wikimedia projects. The aim is to create the first-ever regional academic space which will serve as a platform focused on Wikimedia research, enabling interdisciplinary exchange, collaboration, and capacity-building.

Despite the growth of academic interest in Wikimedia-related research across the Balkans, no formal channel exists for these scholars to share their work, identify mutual challenges, or build future partnerships. This event addresses that gap by providing a structured and supportive environment for presentations, panel discussions, networking, and strategy-building sessions. It will culminate in the drafting of a regional action plan for Wikimedia research collaboration.

This convening is essential for fostering a sustainable and impactful academic community in a region where language, socio-political context, and educational systems significantly influence the understanding and use of Wikimedia projects.

What do you want to achieve by doing this community building activity?

The key goals are:

- To establish a regional network of researchers focused on Wikimedia projects and enforce collaboration between them.
- To map ongoing and planned research projects in the region.
- To identify shared methodological, technical, and ethical challenges.
- To develop collaborative research plans and joint publication opportunities.
- To raise awareness about Wikimedia research within academic institutions.
- To use and implement the research findings within the Balkan community in order to create a healthier atmosphere and increase retention and the attraction of new people.

This impact is crucial for supporting evidence-based contributions to Wikimedia projects, particularly in underrepresented linguistic and cultural contexts. By strengthening ties between academia and the Wikimedia ecosystem in Southeastern Europe, we aim to empower local communities to better inform global Wikimedia strategy and knowledge equity goals.

When do you plan to host the event/activity? What is influencing the timing of the event?

We plan to host the event in **March 2026**, with the entire project running from **July 2025 to April 2026**, spanning a 10-month period. This schedule allows for ample time to prepare all aspects of the event, including outreach, program development, and logistics, while aligning with academic calendars and avoiding peak conference seasons.

Preparatory activities will include:

- Project planning and coordination kick-off (July–August 2025)
- Establishing the organizing committee and outreach to stakeholders (August–September 2025)
- Launching call for presentations and confirming speakers (October–November 2025)
- Finalizing program, venue, and logistics (December 2025–January 2026)
- Participant outreach and travel arrangements (December–February 2026)
- Event execution (March 2026)
- Post-event evaluation and reporting (March–April 2026)

External factors influencing the timing include academic schedules, national holidays, availability of venues, and alignment with regional Wikimedia activities.

Who will participate in your event/activity?

The target participants are:

- Researchers from the Balkan region currently conducting or planning Wikimedia-related studies (including Wikipedia, Wikidata, Wikibooks, Commons, etc.).
- Representatives from Wikimedia affiliates and user groups.
- PhD students and postdocs exploring open knowledge and digital literacy.

We aim to host around **60 participants**, with **40 from Serbia** and **20 from other Balkan countries**. This group of people will serve as a starting point for collaboration among researchers, as they possess knowledge and expertise related to research on Wiki projects. Of these, approximately 10-12 will be involved in shaping the program. Outreach will prioritize gender and linguistic diversity, and at least 30% of attendees will be early-career researchers.

Existing contacts from Wikimedia CEE community events, Wiki Workshop, and academic conferences (e.g. Digital Humanities, Information Science) will be invited. The summit will especially support participants from underrepresented communities (e.g. Romanian and Bulgarian Wikimedia researchers).

Where will the event/activity take place?

The summit will be held **in-person in Belgrade, Serbia**, a central and accessible location for regional participants. The event will be fully

synchronous, with all sessions recorded and shared online for later access.

Experience organizing similar events or activities

Wikimedia Serbia has over a decade of experience organizing research and education-related events, including:

- EduWiki Conference (local and international)
- CEE Conference 2019
- Wikimedia Education Seminars
- GLAM and outreach events
- WikiLive (annual national Wikimedia conference)
- Hosting international guests and academic panels

Specific outputs

Expected outputs:

- Summit proceedings (abstracts and summaries of presented work)
- A regional research action plan (drafted collaboratively at the event)
- A mailing list and/or communication channel for ongoing collaboration
- One or more joint research proposals for Wikimedia Research Fund or Erasmus+ projects

Organizers and selected participants will follow up on the action plan, with coordination support from Wikimedia Serbia and other regional affiliates.

Evaluation

Success will be assessed by:

- Number and diversity of participants
- Post-event survey measuring satisfaction and perceived usefulness
- Number of new collaborations initiated (tracked over 12 months)
- Progress on action plan goals (e.g. grant submissions, publications)
- Continued engagement via mailing list or follow-up meetings

A one-year follow-up report will summarize key outcomes and long-term effects.

Budget

Link to the budget.