RE-2 Employee Post Travel Disclosure of Travel Expenses

Date/Time Stamp
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Post Travel Filing Instructions: Complete this form within **30 days** of returning from travel. Submit all forms to the Office of Public Records in 144 Hart Building.**This form is a public disclosure. The form and all attachments will be made publicly available.**

Certification:*In compliance with the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel, Senate Rule 35, and the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, I certify that I accepted the following gift of privately sponsored travel:*

Private Sponsor(s):
Atlantic Council of the United States

Travel Dates:
09/06/2026 to 09/12/2026

Name of accompanying family member (if any):

Relationship to Traveler:

Expenses

Transportation Expenses	Lodging Expenses	Meals Expenses	Other Expenses (Amount & Description)
$1,938.00	$781.00	$459.00	$0.00

I also certify that attached to this form are all required documents for post travel disclosure, including:

- **The final Employee Pre-Travel Authorization** (Form RE-1)
- The final **Private Sponsor Travel Certification Form** with all attachments
- The final invitation
- The final approved itinerary

Finally, I certify that all trip information reflected in the attachments above accurately reflects the travel that I accepted. If there were any changes to the trip after I received approval from the Committee, the changes are described in ATTACHMENT 1.

9/22/2026
Date

LAURA RICHARDS
Printed Name of Traveler

Signature of Traveler

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER

I have made a determination that the expenses set out above in connections with travel described in the Employee Pre-Travel Authorization form, are necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses as defined in Rule 35.

9/22/26
Date

Chuck Grassley
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

ATTACHMENT 1 – CHANGES FROM APPROVED PRE-TRAVEL

Note: Material changes to a trip that occur after the Committee has issued an approval letter may invalidate the Committee's approval. Please contact the Committee with any questions regarding changes to an approved trip.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved travel expenses? (Transportation, Meals, Lodging, Other)?

● Yes ○ No

Expense Change	Revised Amount	Explanation
Transportation	$1,938.00	We were able to reduce costs by relying on chartered busses for regional transfers rather than regional flights.
Lodging	$781.00	We were able to slightly reduce costs for one night of hotels, but this expense item remained largely on budget.
Meals	$459.00	Our meal expenses remained on budget.

Were there any changes to the pre-approved itinerary?

● Yes ○ No

Explanation: Jonathan Misk returned from Tirana on Monday, September 14 (instead of Saturday, September 12 with the other travelers). This did not affect his total transportation costs. His return flight was: September 14 TIA - MUC on United 9548, 11:50 a.m. - 1:40 p.m. MUC - IAD on United 8785, 4:20 p.m. - 7:25 p.m. For all travelers, hours of programming per day were the same or longer, however a few meeting participants or meeting orders changed from the indicative itinerary. Final itinerary here: Sunday, September 6 – Departure 5:45 p.m. – 8:10 a.m. +1 Delegation flies Washington IAD – Vienna VIE on Austrian airlines OS 42 Monday, September 7 – Belgrade 9:20 a.m. – 10:25 a.m. Delegation flies Vienna VIE – Belgrade BEG on Austrian airlines OS 721 10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Transfer to Belgrade city center and check in to hotel Location: Belgrade Hilton Hotel Address: Kralja Milana 35, Belgrade, 11000, Serbia 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Lunch with Belgrade political scientists Location: Belgrade Hilton Hotel Address: Kralja Milana 35, Belgrade, 11000, Serbia This meeting will pair a leading Serbian political sociologist with a veteran former Serbian government foreign policy advisor and transatlantic think tank leader, giving staffers both a grounded academic read on civil society and public opinion and a seasoned, long-view perspective on Serbia's democratic trajectory and its place in the broader European order. - Dr. Gazela Pudar Draško, Director at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade - Stefan Jovanović, Student representative, Faculty of Political Science, Studenti u blokadi - Ivan Vejvoda, Senior Researcher, Austrian Institute for International Affairs 3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Private meeting Branko Milutinović, CEO, Nordeus Branko Milutinović co-founded Nordeus in 2010, growing it from a small Belgrade startup into a globally recognized mobile gaming company. As a leading voice in Serbia's tech ecosystem and a board member of the Digital Serbia Initiative, Milutinović offers staffers a firsthand look at Serbia's homegrown tech and innovation economy, an important counterpoint to the region's usual security- and geopolitics-heavy narrative. His experience building a globally competitive company out of Belgrade and now operating as part of a major US-based parent company, speaks directly to opportunities and challenges facing Serbia's next generation of digital talent. 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Private meeting H.E. Andreas von Beckerath, Ambassador of the European Union to Serbia Andreas von Beckerath, a career diplomat who previously served as Ambassador to Ukraine, took up his post as EU Ambassador to Serbia in August 2025. He offers staffers a candid, on-the-ground read of where Serbia's political crisis and reform pressures stand relative to Brussels' benchmarks. 5:15 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. Private meeting Alex Kostic, President, MKGroup Alex Kostić leads MK Group, Serbia's largest privately-owned conglomerate, spanning agriculture, banking, energy, and real estate, and also chairs the board of AIK Bank following its regional expansion into Slovenia and Croatia. He offers staffers a window into Serbian big business's perspective on the investment climate, EU market integration, and the private sector's stake in the country's political and economic trajectory. 6:30 p.m. – 8:45 p.m. Welcome dinner and trip orientation with civil society briefing Location: Madera Address: Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 43, Beograd 11000, Serbia Meeting with representatives from Civil Society in Serbia will offer the staffers a unique, on-the-ground perspective of the realities of living in Serbia's political landscape, particularly given the significant recent protests across the country. Srđan Majstorović, Chairman of the Governing Board, European Policy Centre Igor Novaković, Senior

Associate, International and Security Affairs Centre – ISAC Fund¯ Dr Marko Savković, Senior Advisor, International and Security Affairs Centre – ISAC Fund¯ Bojana Selaković, Coordinator, National Convention on the European Union¯ Ivan Vujacic, President of the Forum for International Relations, European Movement in Serbia¯ Dimitrije Milic, Program Director and Founder, Novi Treci Put Overnight Belgrade, Serbia Location: Belgrade Hilton Hotel Address: Kralja Milana 35, Belgrade, 11000, Serbia Tuesday, September 8 – Belgrade, Skopje 7:45 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Breakfast with CRTA experts Location: Madera Address: Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 43, Beograd 11000, Serbia The Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), is a Serbian non-partisan civil society organization focused on pushing for the development of a robust democratic culture through civic activism. Notably the CRTA has observed elections in Serbia on both the local and national level. Meeting with representative with the CRTA would give staffers insights into efforts to create civic engagement in Serbia as well as allow staffers to better understand the conduct of elections in the country.¯ Raša Nedeljkov, Program Director, CRTA¯ Vukosava Crnjanski, Founder and Director, CRTA 9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Private meeting - H.E. Marko Đurić, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Marko Đurić is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. This is his second time serving in this position. As foreign minister, Đurić has an important perspective on the state of Serbia's foreign policy. He will help convey this perspective to staffers and help them understand where the policy priorities of Serbia and United States overlap. This meeting will be particularly interesting given the understanding the Minister has of the Washington landscape given his previous role as Ambassador of Serbia to the United States. 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Private meeting - H.E. Ana Brnabić, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia Ana Brnabić is the President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, a position she has held since March 2024, having previously served as Prime Minister of Serbia from 2017 to 2024. As the head of Serbia's parliament and a former head of government, Brnabić offers staffers a unique perspective spanning both the executive and legislative dimensions of Serbian politics, including how the country's ongoing political crisis and protest movement are shaping the parliamentary agenda and EU accession reforms. 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Hotel check out and drive Belgrade - Skopje 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. North Macedonia expert briefing This briefing will provide the fellows with a better understanding of the current political dynamics shaping North Macedonia, preparing them for upcoming meetings. Local experts can provide insights on North Macedonia's civil society landscape, public perceptions of key issues, and foreign policy priorities.¯ Jörn Fleck, Senior Director, Europe Center, Atlantic Council 5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Check-in to Skopje hotel Location: Skopje Marriott Hotel Address: Plostad Makedonija 7, 1000 Skopje, North Macedonia 5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Private meeting¯ Jelena Arsovska, Executive Director, AmCham North Macedonia Jelena Arsovska is the Executive Director of the AmCham North Macedonia. Meeting with Ms. Arsovska will provide an opportunity to discuss North Macedonia's economic growth prospects and challenges and the economic relationship with the United States. 6:45 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. Skopje briefing dinner with think tank and local experts Location: Restaurant Vodenica Mulino Address: Mitropolit Teodosij Gologanov 69, Skopje 1000, North Macedonia As a first scene-setting meeting in North Macedonia we will organize an expert briefing for the Staff Delegation so they have a broad overview of relevant historical and political developments in North Macedonia as they head into the rest of the Skopje itinerary.¯ Simonida Kacarska, Director, European Policy Institute¯ Bujar Osmani, Former Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration of North Macedonia¯ Nikola Dimitrov, President and Co-founder of the Balkan Center for Constructive Policies 8:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Expert briefing on Skopje Independence Day September 8th marks the anniversary of North Macedonia's 1991 referendum on independence from the former Yugoslavia, a peaceful transition that stands in stark contrast to the violent breakups experienced elsewhere in the region. For a young democracy whose statehood and national identity have been repeatedly contested by its neighbors, Independence Day functions as a barometer of the country's resilience and its citizens' continued commitment to the Euro-Atlantic integration process. Direct engagement with Macedonian officials and civil society on the ground offers the Staff Delegation first-hand insight of this significant for this Western Balkan country and NATO Ally.¯ Nikola Dimitrov, President and Co-founder of the Balkan Center for Constructive Policies Overnight Skopje, North Macedonia Location: Skopje Marriott Hotel Address: Plostad Makedonija 7, 1000 Skopje, North Macedonia Wednesday, September 9 – Skopje, Pristina 8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Breakfast meeting - Nicole Varnes, Charge d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy North Macedonia Nicole Varnes is currently serving as the Chargés d'affaires at the US Embassy in Skopje, North Macedonia. She is currently the highest-ranking US official at US Embassy Skopje, having previously served as the Deputy Chief of Mission since August 2024. Meeting with Ms. Varnes will provide high-level perspective into the U.S.'s current policy priorities and engagement in North Macedonia. 9:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Private meeting - Admir Shabani, Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of North Macedonia Vlado Misajlovski has served as North Macedonia's Minister of Defense since June 2024, overseeing the country's contributions to NATO's eastern flank deterrence efforts and its participation in Alliance and EU peacekeeping missions. As a senior defense official from one of the region's newest NATO members, he offers staffers a firsthand view of North Macedonia's security priorities, its role in regional stability, and the practical challenges and opportunities of Alliance burden-sharing on the Balkans' front line. 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Private meeting - H.E. Timčo Mucunski, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of the Republic of North Macedonia Timčo Mucunski is the Minister of Foreign Affairs and

Foreign Trade of the Republic of North Macedonia. Mucunski has a valuable perspective on North Macedonia's foreign policy goals, specifically about strategic and economic cooperation with the United States and North Macedonia's 2026 bilateral trade agreement with Washington. This meeting can also provide insights into North Macedonia's role as a security partner to the US in the Western Balkans. 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Private meeting - H.E. Michalis Rokas, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of North Macedonia A career EU diplomat with prior postings in Malaysia and New Zealand, Rokas gives staffers a candid read on where North Macedonia's constitutional reform standoff and accession negotiations actually stand. 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Hotel check-out and drive Skopje – Pristina 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Briefing over lunch with Civil Society Representatives Location: Hotel Sirius Address: Agim Ramadani, Pristina 10000 This lunch brings together a cross-section of Kosovo's civil society, including Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb voices alongside other independent experts, giving staffers a multi-perspective view of on-the-ground dynamics, media freedom, and inter-ethnic relations rather than a single-sided account. With this range of viewpoints at the table, staffers can pressure-test assumptions and come away with a fuller, more balanced picture of Kosovo's political and social landscape than any one meeting could provide. - Agon Maliqi, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Europe Center, Atlantic Council - Lura Limani, Team leader – EU integration and regional cooperation program, Open Society Foundations - Tatjana Lazarević, Editor-in-Chief, KoSSev - Adriatik Kelmendi, Research Fellow, Klan Kosova - Milica Radovanović, Project Manager, New Social Initiative 3:00 p.m. – 3:40 p.m. Private meeting˜ Ramush Haradinaj, Founder, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) Ramush Haradinaj is the founder of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo and served twice as Kosovo's Prime Minister, most recently from 2017 to 2020. Though he stepped down as AAK leader in May 2026, Haradinaj remains an influential political figure and possible presidential contender, and his perspective on Kosovo's political landscape and party dynamics offers staffers a useful complement to the other political positions shared in the day's meetings. 4:00 p.m. – 4:40 p.m. Private meeting˜ Lumir Abdixhiku, Leader, Democratic League Lumir Abdixhiku is the leader of the Democratic League, which is a prominent opposition political party in Kosovo. As an important political figure, Abdixhiku has a unique and important perspective on the political dynamics in the country and can share with staffers more about the Democratic League's priorities and offer a useful alternative perspective to the other political positions shared in the day's meetings. 5:00 pm. – 6:00 p.m. Private meeting - H.E. Albin Kurti, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo Albin Kurti is serving as the current Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo. Kurti has an invaluable perspective to impart to staffers, as the leader of the largest political party in the nation and the prominent figurehead in the ongoing Belgrade – Pristina Dialogue. Meeting with PM Kurti will complement the Belgrade meeting with President Vucic and offer a necessary second perspective. 6:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. Private meeting - Valon Kurhasani, Senior Deputy Country Director, NDI Kosovo - Arber Gorani, Senior Program Manager, IRI Kosovo Valon Kurhasani and Arber Gorani lead democracy and governance programming in Kosovo for NDI and IRI, respectively, the two flagship US party institutes running political party development, youth and women's political participation, and disinformation-resilience work on the ground. Together they can walk staffers through the practical state of Kosovo's democratic institutions and political culture, and how US-funded programming is helping shape the country's next generation of political leadership. 7:20 p.m. – 9:45 p.m. Pristina briefing dinner with Arian Zeka Location: SALT Prishtina Address: Rruga, nr 2 Fehmi Agani, Prishtina 10000 - Arian Zeka, Executive Director, AmCham Kosovo Arian Zeka has led AmCham Kosovo since 2012, growing it into one of the most active American Chambers in Europe and a key liaison between US companies, Kosovo's business community, and the government. He can give staffers a business-community perspective on Kosovo's investment climate, US-Kosovo commercial ties, and the private sector's stake in the country's economic and political trajectory. Overnight Pristina, Kosovo Location: Hotel Sirius Address: Agim Ramadani, Pristina 10000 Thursday, September 10 – Pristina, Tirana 7:45 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Private meeting - Patrick Gan, Economic Unit Chief, US Embassy in Pristina - Amy Reichert, Political and Economic Counselor, US Embassy in Pristina - Becky Satterfield, Acting Public Affairs Officer, US Embassy in Pristina - Bridget Trazoff, Political Unit Chief, US Embassy in Pristina This meeting will bring together representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Pristina.. These individuals can provide perspective on American engagement in Kosovo and through this meeting staffers will better understand U.S policy in Kosovo, and US priorities spanning politics, economics, and public affairs. 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Private briefing in Mitrovica on the political dynamics in the north of Kosovo This meeting will give staffers an opportunity to engage with representatives from international institutions, civil society, and local authorities to understand the perspectives shaping one of the most significant regions within the Western Balkans.˜ Nikolaos Kavallaris-Ladis, OSCE Mission in Kosovo˜ Caleb Arboit Waugh, OSCE Mission in Kosovo˜ Maid Konjhodzic, OSCE Mission in Kosovo˜ Tatjana Lazarevic, KosSev News Service˜ Milica Radovanovic, New Social Initiative˜ Milan Radojevic, Mayor of North Mitrovica 12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Private briefing on KFOR followed by meeting at Camp Film City - Brigadier General Chad Daniels, , Chief of Staff, Kosovo Force (KFOR) - Thuruban Thuchchathanan, Special Advisor, Office of the Political Advisor, Kosovo Force (KFOR) Brigadier General Chad Daniels is the Chief of Staff of the Kosovo Force (KFOR), which is a NATO-led international peacekeeping force in Kosovo. KFOR has been deployed in the region since 1999, and it plays an important role in maintaining security in the area. This meeting will allow staffers to learn more about the realities of the security

situation in Kosovo and the importance of the EU presence there. 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Drive Pristina – Tirana 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Expert briefing on Albania As a first scene-setting ahead of Tirana meetings, we will organize an expert briefing for the Staff Delegation so they have a broad overview of relevant historical and political developments in Albania as they head into the rest of the Tirana itinerary. Having not been a member of the Former Yugoslavia, Albania has a unique history within the region which will be explained in this setting. - Ilva Tare, Resident Senior Fellow, Europe Center, Atlantic Council - Dr. Valbona Zeneli, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Europe Center, Atlantic Council 6:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Hotel check-in Location: Plaza Hotel Address: Rruga Abdi Toptani 18, Tirana, Albania 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Private meeting - Nancy Van Horn, Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy Tirana Ms. Van Horn is a career diplomat, serving since 2007 and with deep experience representing the United States and its interests abroad. Meeting with Ms. Van Horn, the top-ranking US diplomat in Albania, will give staffers key insights into how Washington assesses the state of Albanian politics, the view from Washington on US-Albanian and EU-Albanian relations, especially considering Albania's role as a frontrunner in the EU accession process and a model for the rest of the region. 7:15 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Tirana briefing dinner with think tank community Location: Pireu Address: Rruga Qemal Guranjaku 12, Tiranë 1000, Albania This dinner brings together leading figures from Albania's university, think tank, and academic research institutions — spanning the University of Tirana, the Atlas Institute, SCiDEV, the Albanian Academy of Sciences' Institute of History, the Institute for Political Studies, and the Cooperation & Development Institute. Together they offer staffers a substantive, cross-disciplinary read on Albania's political and historical trajectory, EU integration prospects, and the state of independent research and policy analysis shaping the country's reform debates. - Blendi Çeka,Lecturer, University of Tirana, Governing Board of Atlas Institute - Blerjana Bino, Co-founder and Executive Director, SCiDEV - Adri Nurellari, Analyst, Institute of History, Albanian Academy of Sciences Overnight Tirana, Albania Location: Plaza Hotel Address: Rruga Abdi Toptani 18, Tirana, Albania Friday, September 11 – Tirana 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Private meeting over breakfast - Jorida Tabaku MP, Member, Parliament of Albania Jorida Tabaku is a senior Democratic Party MP and Deputy Chair of the party who previously served as Deputy Minister of European Integration and Deputy Mayor of Tirana. As one of the opposition's most vocal and visible voices on Albania's economy, emigration crisis, and stalled EU accession progress, she offers staffers a sharp counterpoint to the ruling Socialist Party's narrative and a window into the political dynamics shaping Albania's reform trajectory. 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Private meeting - H.E. Ferit Hoxha, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania Ferit Hoxha is the Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Prior to this role, he had a decades long career in Albania's foreign service. The meeting will give staffers a better understanding of Albania's foreign policy priorities and how they compare to those of the other countries visited on this trip. 12:10 p.m. – 12:50 p.m. Meeting with American Chamber of Commerce in Albania Team - Neritan Mullaj, Executive Director, American Chamber of Commerce in Albania As the Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce in Albania, meeting with Mr. Mullaj will highlight for the staffers the relevance of the region for American business and provide an economic perspective to understanding Albania and the broader region. 1:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Working lunch with media experts Location: LIFT Restaurant Address: St 1010, ABA Business Center, 4th Floor This meeting brings together leaders from the Albania Media Institute and Transparency International Albania, two of the country's most established voices on press freedom, media literacy, and anti-corruption efforts. They can give staffers a candid, independent read on the state of media freedom, disinformation, and government accountability in Albania. - Remzi Lani, Director, Albania Media Institute - Lutfi Dervishi, Transparency International Albania 3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Private meeting - Klodian Braho, Head, Albanian Special Anti-corruption Body (SPAK) Mr. Braho is the new head of SPAK, the independent Albanian agency focusing on anti-corruption and anti-organized crime efforts in the country. Mr. Braho is recognized as one of the most important figures in the Albanian political landscape for his efforts to combat corruption. Meeting with Mr. Braho will give staffers unparalleled access to one of the most significant figures playing a role in fighting the organized crime and corruption that is necessary for Albania to advance on its path to join the EU. 4:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. Private meeting - H.E. Ermal Nufi, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Albania Ermal Nufi has served as Albania's Minister of Defence since March 2026, leading the country's preparations for what he has called NATO's "3.0" era, including raising defense spending to 2.6% of GDP and hosting the next NATO Summit in Tirana. As the steward of Albania's growing NATO role and deepening defense partnership with the United States, he can give staffers a firsthand view of Albania's defense modernization priorities and its strategic value as an Alliance member on NATO's southeastern flank. 6:15 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. Farewell dinner and debrief Location: Tribe Address: Rr. Murat Toptani, Pedonale Tirana AL, 1001, Albania Atlantic Council experts will participate in a conversation with the Staff Delegation to debrief takeaways from the trip, answer lingering questions, and help highlight the relevance and common themes from the meetings of the days' prior. Ilva Tare, Resident Senior Fellow, Europe Center, Atlantic Council Dr. Valbona Zeneli, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Europe Center, Atlantic Council Amanda Thorpe, Nonresident Senior Fellow, Europe Center, Atlantic Council Overnight Tirana, Albania Location: Arte Boutique Hotel Address: Rruga Ibrahim Rugova 32, Tiranë, Albania Saturday, September 12 – Return to Washington 6:00 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. Delegation flies Tirana TIA – Rome FCO on United flight UA 7776 10:50 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Delegation flies Rome FCO – Washington IAD on United flight UA 885

Were there any additional changes to the pre-approved trip?

○ Yes ● No

Explanation: There were no additional changes to the pre-approved trip.

Atlantic Council

Laura Richards
Legislative Assistant
Office of Senator Chuck Grassley

July 16, 2026

Dear Laura,

On behalf of the Atlantic Council, it is my pleasure to invite you to join a staff delegation to Serbia, North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania led by the Council's Europe Center. The study tour will take place from **September 6 – 12, 2026.**

The Atlantic Council's Europe Center is home to the Balkans Forward Initiative, which is a unique, coordinated effort to foster a democratic, secure, and prosperous Western Balkans firmly integrated into the transatlantic community. Our work seeks to sustain US engagement in the region, promote effective US-European cooperation on issues related to the Western Balkans, foster dialogue among key regional actors, and cultivate the next generation of policy makers and subject matter experts familiar with the region and its issues.

This congressional staff delegation will travel to the Western Balkans where they will meet with senior government officials, legislators and staff, civil society, and private sector leaders. Meetings will focus on US policy, regional security, economic development, crime and corruption, and the reform agenda in the region. The trip's mission is to build greater awareness of the opportunities and challenges facing the Western Balkans and support informed US policy deliberation about the region.

We hope that you can join this study tour. Should you have any questions or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me, or Associate Director of the Europe Center, Lisa Homel (lhomel@atlanticcouncil.org).

Best,

Jörn Fleck
Senior Director, Europe Center
Atlantic Council

RE-1 Employee Pre-Travel Authorization

Date/Time Stamp

Pre-Travel Filing Instructions: Complete and submit this form at least 30 days prior to the travel departure date to the **Select Committee on Ethics in SH-220.** Incomplete and late travel submissions will **not** be considered or approved.

Name of Traveler:
Laura Richards

Employing Office/Committee:
Senator Chuck Grassley

Private Sponsor(s):
Atlantic Council of the United States

Destination(s):
Serbia, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania

Travel Dates:

September 6, 2026 - September 12, 2026

NOTE: If you plan to extend the trip for any reason you **must** notify the Committee.

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties.

Meetings will focus on US policy, regional security, economic development, judicial reform, and law enforcement issues in the Western Balkans. The mission of this trip is to build awareness and understanding in policymakers of the challenges and opportunities facing the Balkans to support informed US policy toward the region. Sen. Grassley regularly engages on these issues, and being from Iowa, which is sister states with Kosovo, it is critical we remain informed of on the ground realities.

Do you have an accompanying family member or spouse on this trip? **Name and Relationship to Traveler:**

☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

I certify that the information contained in this form is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge.

7/22/26
Date

Laura Richards
Signature of Employee

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISING MEMBER/OFFICER
(President of the Senate, Secretary of the Senate, Sergeant at Arms, Secretary for the Majority, Secretary for the Minority, and Chaplain)

I Chuck Grassley hereby authorize Laura Richards
(Print Senator's/Officer's Name) (Print Traveler's Name)

an employee under my direct supervision, to accept payment or reimbursement for necessary transportation, lodging, and related expenses for travel to the event described above. I have determined that this travel is in connection with his or her duties as a Senate employee or an officeholder, and will not create the appearance that he or she is using public office for private gain.

I have also determined that the attendance of the employee's spouse or child is appropriate to assist in the representation of the Senate.

☐ (signify "yes" by checking box)

7-22-26
Date

Chuck Grassley
Signature of Supervising Senator/Officer

Atlantic Council of the United States: Atlantic Council Europe Center Congressional Fellows trip

LAURA RICHARDS

Title:
None

Employing Office/Committee:
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

Duty Station:
WASHINGTON,DC

Destination(s):

Belgrade, Serbia
Skopje, North Macedonia
Pristina, Kosovo
Tirana, Albania

Explain how this trip is specifically connected to the traveler's official or representational duties:

Meetings will focus on US policy, regional security, economic development, judicial reform, and law enforcement issues in the Western Balkans. The mission of this trip is to build awareness and understanding in policymakers of the challenges and opportunities facing the Balkans to support informed US policy toward the region. Sen. Grassley regularly engages on these issues including Russian influence in Serbia; spillover effects of Milorad Dodik in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the special Sister state partnership with Iowa National Guard deploying to Kosovo. As such, it is critical we remain informed of on the ground realities in the region.

Name of accompanying family member (if any):
Not Entered

Name and Relationship to Traveler:
None

Organization Information

Organization Name
Atlantic Council of the United States

§501(c)(3) Organization Type
Public Charity

Address 2 (Optional)
11th Floor

Phone Number
(202) 778-4952

Is your organization classified as a §501(c)(3)?

☑ Yes ○ No

Address
1400 L Street NW

City, State Zip
Washington, District Of Columbia 20005 United States

Organization URL
https://atlanticcouncil.org/

History of Congressional Travel

The Atlantic Council has previously sponsored several congressional trips. The Atlantic Council's Europe Center specifically sponsored a similar congressional trip to the Western Balkans in 2019 and 2025.

Educational Activities

The Atlantic Council regularly hosts events for attendance by the general public and publishes reports that are freely available to the public. The Atlantic Council's Europe Center hosts events for the general public and publishes reports for the general public specifically on the Europe region, including a separate workstream focused entirely on the Western Balkans and its Euro-Atlantic path towards integration into NATO and the EU.

Lobbyist and Foreign Agent Registration Information

Lobbyist Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not a federally registered lobbyist and does not retain or employ a federally registered lobbyists.*

Foreign Agent Registration Status: *I certify that the sponsor is not an agent of a foreign principal and do not retain or employ an agent of a foreign principal.*

Foreign Government Involvement

Foreign Agent Registration Status:

- ✓ I certify that the sponsor is not a foreign government.
- ✓ I certify that the sponsor is not an entity that is owned or operated by a foreign government.
- ✓ I certify that the sponsor does not receive funding from a foreign government.

Comments

Signature Page

The signature page is below.

Purpose and Details

Provide a brief description of the trip.

The Atlantic Council's Europe Center planned a trip for staffers based on the Center's focus on the Western Balkans. The locations of Serbia, North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania were picked to educate staffers on the different dynamics across a large swath of the Western Balkans region. Visiting these locations will provide opportunities to understand each country's relationship with the United States and the priorities and dynamics of each country within the region, in the transatlantic relationship, and vis-à-vis their efforts to join the European Union.

Explain how the purpose of the trip relates to your organization's mission.

The Atlantic Council promotes leadership and engagement in international affairs. The Atlantic Council's Europe Center aims to enhance transatlantic cooperation and generate awareness about Europe, including the Western Balkans. This staff delegation will take congressional staffers to the Western Balkans where they will meet with senior government officials, civil society, and private sector leaders. Meetings will focus on US policy, regional security, economic development, crime and corruption, judicial reform, and law enforcement issues in the region. The mission of this trip is to build greater awareness and understanding among congressional policymakers of the challenges and opportunities facing the Western Balkans and support informed US policy toward the region.

Is your organization the only sponsor for this trip?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

Grantmaking Organizations (Optional)

There are no grantmaking organizations.

With or Without Regard for Congressional Participation

The trip is arranged or organized specifically with regard to congressional participation.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Involvement in Planning, Organizing, Requesting or Arranging

- [x] The trip will not in any part be planned, organized, requested, or arranged by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal, other than de minimis involvement.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Financing

- [x] The trip will not be financed in any part by a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal.
- [x] No funds or in-kind contributions were earmarked directly or indirectly for the purpose of financing this specific trip from a registered lobbyist or agent of a foreign principal or from a private entity that retains or employs one or more registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal.

Lobbyist/Foreign Agent Accompaniment

Complete if all sponsors are §501(c)(3) organizations

- [x] The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Complete if any of the sponsors is not a §501(c)(3) organizations.

- [ ] The trip is limited to three days (for trips inside the continental United States) or seven days (for trips outside the continental United States), and no lobbyist or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee at any point throughout the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **one** overnight stay) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip
- [ ] The trip is limited to a one-day event (exclusive of travel time and **two** overnight stays) and no registered lobbyists or agents of a foreign principal will accompany the Member, officer, or employee on any segment of the trip

Certification of No Recreational Activity and No Alcohol

- Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for recreational activities.
- Travel expenses paid for will not include expenditures for alcohol, except as permitted by the Regulations Governing Privately Sponsored Travel.

Invitees

- Members and staff from the House of Representatives **will** receive invitations.

The list of invitees is below.

Travel Details

Trip Start Date/Time:
09/06/2026 @ 05:45 PM

Trip End Date/Time:
09/12/2026 @ 02:00 PM

Will the traveler be accompanied by a family member for whom the sponsor will pay travel expenses?

○ Yes ● No

Itinerary

The itinerary is below.

Transportation (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $2,450.00 | Accompanying Family Member: $0.00)

Transportation Type	Class	Amount
Airfare	Coach	$2,150.00
Note Roundtrip transatlantic airfare and one one-way regional airfare		
Ground Transportation	Coach	$300.00
Note Shared private coach for ground transportation within countries and between countries.		

Lodging (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $788.00)

Check-In	Check-Out	Facility	City	State	Country	Nights	Cost/Night	Cost Exceed Per Diem
09/07/2026	09/08/2026	Moxy Belgrade	Belgrade		Serbia	1	$149.00	No
09/08/2026	09/09/2026	Skopje Marriott Hotel	Skopje		North Macedonia	1	$152.00	No
09/09/2026	09/10/2026	Hotel Sirius Pristina	Pristina		Kosovo	1	$95.00	No
09/10/2026	09/12/2026	Arte Boutique Hotel Tirana	Tirana		Albania	2	$196.00	No

Meals (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $461.00)

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total	City	State	Country	Cost Exceeds Per Diem
09/07/2026	$0.00	$30.00	$70.00	$0.00	**$100.00**	Belgrade		Serbia	No
09/08/2026	$0.00	$30.00	$65.00	$0.00	**$95.00**	Skopje		North Macedonia	No
09/09/2026	$0.00	$30.00	$50.00	$0.00	**$80.00**	Skopje		North Macedonia	No
09/10/2026	$0.00	$22.00	$42.00	$0.00	**$64.00**	Pristina		Kosovo	No

Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidentals	Total	City	State	Country	Cost Exceeds Per Diem
09/11/2026	$0.00	$40.00	$82.00	$0.00	**$122.00**	Tirana		Albania	No
09/12/2026	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	**$0.00**	Tirana		Albania	No

Reasonable Miscellaneous Expenses (Per Member/Officer/Employee: $0.00)

Expense Type	Amount	Notes

There are no miscellaneous expenses.

Additional Attachments

Document Name

There are no additional attachments.

PRIVATELY SPONSORED TRAVEL

SPONSOR SIGNATURE PAGE

I hereby certify that the information submitted in connection with the trip listed below is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Trip Name: Atlantic Council Europe Center Congressional Fellows Trip

Travel Date(s): September 6-12, 2026

Travel Destination(s): Belgrade, Serbia; Skopje, North Macedonia; Pristina, Kosovo; Tirana, Albania

Sponsor: Atlantic Council

Julie Varghese — *(printed name of sponsor representative)*

Chief Operating Officer — *(title)*

DocuSigned by: Julie Varghese 97BADA8C38194F8... — *(signature of sponsor representative)*

7/13/2026 — *(date)*

US Senate

Committee on Ethics

Atlantic Council of the US, Inc.

Europe Center Study Tour to the Western Balkans

September 6 – 12, 2026

Primary Trip Sponsor Form supplemental documentation

Senate employees invited:

1. **Gottfried, Daniel**
    a. *Professional Staff Member,* Senate Foreign Relations Committee
    b. Reason for inviting: The Western Balkans is a region of strategic importance to the United States and Europe which are both committed to keeping the region aligned on a Euro-Atlantic trajectory. These individual countries and the Western Balkans region as a whole are relevant to Mr. Gottfried's official professional portfolio in the Senate given his portfolios on Europe and Eurasia within the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
2. **Misk, Jonathan**
    a. *Chief Oversight/ Investigations Counsel,* Committee on Environment and Public Works
    b. Reason for inviting: The Western Balkans is a region of strategic importance to the United States and Europe which are both committed to keeping the region aligned on a Euro-Atlantic trajectory. These individual countries and the Western Balkans region as a whole are relevant to Mr. Misk's official professional portfolio in the Senate given his role supporting the Committee on Environment and Public Works, and his portfolio on energy.
3. **Richards, Laura**
    a. *Legislative Assistant*, Office of Sen. Chuck Grassley (IA)
    b. Reason for inviting: The Western Balkans is a region of strategic importance to the United States and Europe which are both committed to keeping the region aligned on a Euro-Atlantic trajectory. These individual countries and the Western Balkans region as a whole are relevant to Ms. Richards's official professional portfolio in the Senate given her Senator's role on the Senate Finance Committee and the Congressional Caucus on Bosnia.
4. **Lee, Simon A.**
    a. *Legislative Aide,* Office of Sen. Angus King (I-ME)
    b. Reason for inviting: The Western Balkans is a region of strategic importance to the United States and Europe which are both committed to keeping the region aligned on a Euro-Atlantic trajectory. These individual countries and the Western Balkans region as a whole are relevant to Mr. Lee's official professional portfolio in the Senate given his Member's role

on the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services and U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

(INDICATIVE) ITINERARY

Balkans Forward Congressional Fellowship Study Tour

September 6 -12, 2026

(INDICATIVE) ITINERARY

Sunday, September 6 – Departure

5:45 p.m. – 8:10 a.m. +1 — **Delegation flies Washington IAD – Vienna VIE on Austrian airlines OS 42**

Monday, September 7 – Belgrade

9:20 a.m. – 10:25 a.m. — **Delegation flies Vienna VIE – Belgrade BEG on Austrian airlines OS 721**

10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. — **Transfer to Belgrade city center and check in to hotel**
Location: Moxy Belgrade
Address: Njegoševa 2, Beograd 11000, Serbia

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. — **Trip itinerary briefing lunch with Atlantic Council team**
Location: Iva New Balkan Cuisine
Address: Kneginje Ljubice 11, Beograd 11000, Serbia

2:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. — **Private briefings (TBC)**

- **Belgrade briefing with local experts**

  As a first scene-setting meeting in Serbia we will organize an expert briefing for the Staff Delegation, so they have a broad overview of relevant historical and political developments in Serbia as they head into the rest of the Belgrade itinerary.

- **Alexander Titolo**, *Chargés d'affaires a.i.*, US Embassy Belgrade

  Alexander Titolo is currently serving as the Chargés d'affaires at the US Embassy in Belgrade, Serbia. As the highest-ranking US official at US Embassy Belgrade, he will help staffers form a better understanding of US policy perspectives in the region.

- **Representatives of Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA)**

  The Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), is a Serbian non-partisan civil society organization focused on pushing for the development of a robust democratic culture through civic activism. Notably the CRTA has observed elections in Serbia on both the local and national level. Meeting with representative with the CRTA would give staffers insights into efforts to create civic engagement in Serbia as well as allow staffers to better understand the conduct of elections in the country.

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **Welcome dinner and trip orientation with civil society briefing**
Location: Klub Književnika
Address: Francuska 7, Beograd 11000, Serbia

Meeting with representatives from Civil Society in Serbia will offer the staffers a unique, on-the-ground perspective of the realities of living in Serbia's political landscape, particularly given the significant recent protests across the country.

- **Ivanka Popovic**, *Founder*, ProGlas movement

  Professor Ivanka Popovic is a professor at, and the former rector of, University of Belgrade as well as the founder of the ProGlas movement. The ProGlas movement advocates for increased civic engagement and democratic reforms to government in Serbia. Meeting with Professor Popovic would allow staffers on the ground insight into efforts to implement democratic reform to Serbia's institutions and better understand the role that civil society can play in that process.

Tuesday, September 8 – Belgrade, Skopje

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **H.E. Aleksandar Vučić**, *President of the Republic of Serbia*

Aleksandar Vučić has served as the President of the Republic of Serbia since 2017 and is highly significant to the Serbian political landscape. He can provide an invaluable insight into Serbia's domestic and foreign political priorities. Meeting with him will give staffers an important perspective into the Western Balkans' largest economy and one of the region's most influential leaders before he steps down from the Presidency in the coming weeks.

- **H.E. Marko Đurić**, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia*

Marko Đurić is the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. This is his second time serving in this position. As foreign minister, Đurić has an important perspective on the state of Serbia's foreign policy. He will help convey this perspective to staffers and help them understand where the policy priorities of Serbia and United States overlap. This meeting will be particularly interesting given the understanding the Minister has of the Washington landscape given his previous role as Ambassador of Serbia to the United States.

- **Ana Draskovic**, *President*, AmCham Board of Governors

Ms. Draskovic is the President of the board of Governors of AmCham Serbia as well as the VP and Regional General Manager for Southern and Eastern Europe at Visa, giving her an unparalleled perspective on private

sector operations and market conditions in Serbia. This meeting will provide staffers with a deep understanding of both the broad business environment for US investment in Serbia, as well as allow them to benefit from her direct experience operating in Serbia.

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Hotel check out and transfer to airport**

1:20 p.m. – 2:35 p.m. **Delegation flies Belgrade BEG – Skopje SKP on Air Serbia flight JU 792**

2:45 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. **Transfer to Skopje city center and check-in to Skopje hotel**
Location: Skopje Marriott Hotel
Address: Plostad Makedonija 7, 1000 Skopje, North Macedonia

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. **Skopje briefing dinner with think tank and local experts**
Location: Restaurant Skopski Merak
Address: Debarca St 51, 1000, Skopje 1000, North Macedonia

As a first scene-setting meeting in North Macedonia we will organize an expert briefing for the Staff Delegation so they have a broad overview of relevant historical and political developments in North Macedonia as they head into the rest of the Skopje itinerary.

6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. **Cultural activity – Skopje Independence Day**
September 8th marks the anniversary of North Macedonia's 1991 referendum on independence from the former Yugoslavia, a peaceful transition that stands in stark contrast to the violent breakups experienced elsewhere in the region. For a young democracy whose statehood and national identity have been repeatedly contested by its neighbors, Independence Day functions as a barometer of the country's resilience and its citizens' continued commitment to the Euro-Atlantic integration process. Direct engagement with Macedonian officials and civil society on the ground offers the Staff Delegation first-hand insight of this significant for this Western Balkan country and NATO Ally.

Wednesday, September 9 – Skopje, Pristina

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **H.E. Hristijan Mickoski,** *Prime Minister of North Macedonia*

Hristijan Mickoski has served as the Prime Minister of North Macedonia since 2024 and leads North Macedonia's ruling party. This meeting can provide staffers with important insights into both the domestic and foreign policy priorities of North Macedonia, as well as provide a better understanding of the overall political landscape in the country.

- **H.E. Timčo Mucunski**, *Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of the Republic of North Macedonia*

  Timčo Mucunski is the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of the Republic of North Macedonia. Mucunski has a valuable perspective on North Macedonia's foreign policy goals, specifically about strategic and economic cooperation with the United States and North Macedonia's 2026 bilateral trade agreement with Washington. This meeting can also provide insights into North Macedonia's role as a security partner to the US in the Western Balkans.

- **Nicole Varnes**, *Charge d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy North Macedonia*

  Nicole Varnes is currently serving as the Chargés d'affaires at the US Embassy in Skopje, North Macedonia. She is currently the highest-ranking US official at US Embassy Skopje, having previously served as the Deputy Chief of Mission since August 2024. Meeting with Ms. Varnes will provide high-level perspective into the U.S.'s current policy priorities and engagement in North Macedonia.

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Hotel check-out and drive Skopje – Pristina**

1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Check-into Pristina Hotel**
Location: Hotel Sirius
Address: Agim Ramadani, Pristina 10000

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. **Briefing over lunch with Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian Civil Society Representatives (TBC)**
Location: Liburnia
Address: 10 Meto Bajraktari, Prishtinë 10000

- **Agon Maliqi**, *Nonresident Senior Fellow, Europe Center*, Atlantic Council

  Agon Maliqi is a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Europe Center. He is an important representative of the Albanian ethnic group in Kosovo and will provide the Albanian perspective in this balanced discussion on relations on-the-ground in the north of Kosovo.

- **Ramadan Ilazi**, *Head of Research*, Kosovar Centre for Security Studies

  Ramadan Ilazi is the Head of Research at the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies, which is an independent policy research group founded in Kosovo. The center focuses on promoting good governance and developing security in Kosovo. As an expert in the region and a former deputy minister for European integration in Kosovo, Ilazi will help staffers to better understand the role of groups like the Kosovar Centre for Security Studies in the region and will also highlight the Kosovo Albanian perspective in the north of Kosovo.

- **Tatjana Lazarević,** *Editor-in-Chief*, KoSSev

  Tatjana Lazarević is the Editor-in-Chief of KoSSev, one of the leading Serbian-language media outlets in Kosovo and a widely referenced source on developments in Kosovo. She has authored numerous articles focusing on political developments in Kosovo, particularly on issues affecting the Kosovo Serb community, and can help staffers better understand these issues. This meeting will can provide context for staffers about the media and civil society landscape in the region.

- **Milica Radovanović**, *Project Manager*, New Social Initiative

  Milica Radovanović is a Project Manager at the New Social Initiative, which is a civil society organization located in Kosovo. The group promotes the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. As an expert on these and other issues, Radovanović can give staffers insights into the work done by civil society organizations in the region and issues affecting the Kosovo Serb minority community.

3:00 pm. – 6:00 p.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **H.E. Albin Kurti**, *Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo*

  Albin Kurti is serving as the current Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosovo. Kurti has an invaluable perspective to impart to staffers, as the leader of the largest political party in the nation and the prominent figurehead in the ongoing Belgrade – Pristina Dialogue. Meeting with PM Kurti will complement the Belgrade meeting with President Vucic and offer a necessary second perspective.

- **Lumir Abdixhiku**, *Leader*, Democratic League

  Lumir Abdixhiku is the leader of the Democratic League, which is a prominent opposition political party in Kosovo. As an important political figure, Abdixhiku has a unique and important perspective on the political dynamics in the country and can share with staffers more about the Democratic League's priorities and offer a useful alternative perspective to the other political positions shared in the day's meetings.

- **Anu Prattipati**, *Chargé d'affaires, U.S. Embassy Pristina*

  Anu Prattipati currently serves as the Chargé d'affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Pristina, previously serving as the Deputy Chief of Mission. Ms. Prattipati is a member of the Senior Foreign Service and brings deep experience supporting U.S foreign policy abroad. She has an invaluable perspective on American engagement in Kosovo and through this meeting staffers will better understand U.S policy in Kosovo.

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **Pristina briefing dinner with think tank experts**
Location: SALT Prishtina
Address: Rruga, nr 2 Fehmi Agani, Prishtina 10000

We will organize an expert briefing for the Staff Delegation that will provide an overview of relevant historical and political developments in Kosovo. This will best prepare staffers before the rest of the Pristina programming.

Thursday, September 10 – Pristina, Tirana

8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **H.E. Albulena Haxhiu**, *Acting President of the Republic of Kosovo*

  Albulena Haxhiu is the Acting President of the Republic of Kosovo. Through this exchange, staffers will gain a more thorough understanding of the global outlook of Kosovo and understand the nuances in political opinions between the president and prime minister.

- **Major General Özkan Ulutaş**, *Commander of Kosovo Force* (KFOR)

  Major General Özkan Ulutaş is the Commander of Kosovo Force (KFOR), which is a NATO-led international peacekeeping force in Kosovo. KFOR has been deployed in the region since 1999, and it plays an important role in maintaining security in the area. This meeting will allow staffers to learn more about the realities of the security situation in Kosovo and the importance of the EU presence there.

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. **Hotel check-out and drive Pristina – Tirana**

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Hotel check-in**
Location: Arte Boutique Hotel
Address: Rruga Ibrahim Rugova 32, Tiranë, Albania

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. **Meeting over lunch with Ms. Françeska Korançe, PhD, *EIT Community Officer*, Albania**
Location: LIFT Restaurant
Address: St 1010, ABA Business Center, 4th Floor, Rruga Papa Gjon Pali II, Tiranë, Albania

Françeska Korançe is the Albania community officer of the EU-organized European Institute of Innovation and Technology Hub in Albania and will highlight for staffers the tremendous growth and economic development potential in Albania as an example of the forward-looking potential of the region.

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **H.E. Edi Rama**, *Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania*

  Edi Rama is the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania, a role he has served in since 2013. With over a decade of leadership in Albania and significant experience advancing Albania's progress towards EU membership, Meeting Prime Minister Rama will be an invaluable opportunity to hear from one of the most established leaders in the region.

- **H.E. Ferit Hoxha**, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania*

  Ferit Hoxha is the Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Prior to this role, he had a decades long career in Albania's foreign service. The meeting will give staffers a better understanding of Albania's foreign policy priorities and how they compare to those of the other countries visited on this trip.

- **H.E. Sofia Moreira de Sousa**, *Ambassador designate of the European Union to Albania*

  Amb. Moreira de Sousa is the incoming Ambassador of the European Union to Albania. She has invaluable insight into Albania's EU accession process, which is one of the frontrunners among the other five Western Balkan nations. Amb. Moreira de Sousa will provide the EU perspective on Albania's reforms and what the remaining obstacles towards accession are.

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **Tirana briefing dinner with think tank experts**
Location: Pireu
Address: Rruga Qemal Guranjaku 12, Tiranë 1000, Albania

As a first scene-setting dinner in Tirana, we will organize an expert briefing for the Staff Delegation so they have a broad overview of relevant historical and political developments in Albania as they head into the rest of the Tirana itinerary. Having not been a member of the Former Yugoslavia, Albania has a unique history within the region which will be explained in this setting.

Friday, September 11 – Tirana

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **Martin Mata and Aleksander Sarapuli**, *Co-Chief Executive Officers*, Albanian American Development Fund

  Mr. Mata and Mr. Sarapuli are Co-CEOs of the Albanian American Development Fund, an organization aiming to promoting sustainable economic investment as well as democratic governance in Albania. The AADF aims to contribute to sustainable growth in Albania through three pillars: education/leadership, entrepreneurship and cultural

heritage/eco-tourism. Meeting with Mr. Mata and Mr. Sarapuli will provide staffers with a unique insight into the potential for responsible and sustainable US investment in the region.

- **Samir Mane**, *President*, BALFIN Group

  Mr. Mane is the President of the BALFIN Group, an Albanian Private Investment group and one of the largest investment groups in the Western Balkans. The BALFIN group operates across various sectors including areas such as retail, real estate and mining. This cross-regional and cross-sectoral expertise would offer staffers unparalleled insights into the investment environment in the region, as well as giving them greater insight into potential areas for US investment in the region.

- **Klodian Braho**, *Head*, Albanian Special Anti-corruption Body (SPAK)

  Mr. Braho is the new head of SPAK, the independent Albanian agency focusing on anti-corruption and anti-organized crime efforts in the country. Mr. Braho is recognized as one of the most important figures in the Albanian political landscape for his efforts to combat corruption. Meeting with Mr. Braho will give staffers unparalleled access to one of the most significant figures playing a role in fighting the organized crime and corruption that is necessary for Albania to advance on its path to join the EU.

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Working lunch with Grant Van Cleve, *President*, American Chamber of Commerce in Albania**
Location: Noah Garden Tirane Restaurant
Address: Park Gate, Rruga Dritan Mezini, Tiranë 1001, Albania

As the President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Albania, meeting with Mr. Van Cleve will highlight for the staffers the relevance of the region for American business and provide an economic perspective to understanding Albania and the broader region.

2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. **Private meetings (TBC)**

- **Nancy Van Horn**, *Deputy Chief of Mission*, US Embassy Tirana

  Ms. Van Horn is a career diplomat, serving since 2007 and with deep experience representing the United States and its interests abroad. Meeting with Ms. Van Horn, the top-ranking US diplomat in Albania, will give staffers key insights into how Washington assesses the state of Albanian politics, the view from Washington on US-Albanian and EU-Albanian relations, especially considering Albania's role as a frontrunner in the EU accession process and a model for the rest of the region.

- **Representatives of BIRN Albania (Reporter.al)**

  BIRN Albania is the country's leading investigative journalism and media-freedom watchdog, publishing on corruption, organized crime,

and rule-of-law issues. This meeting with BIRN will give staffers the independent civil-society and press-freedom perspective on these issues which are increasingly relevant given domestic protests in Albania.

- **Representatives of the Office of the Mayor of Tirana**

  Staffers will meet with the Acting Mayor of Tirana to gain a better understanding of Tirana city priorities. Tirana is a hub for economic development in the region and home to numerous entrepreneurial and tech initiatives that highlight the forward-looking potential of the region.

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. **Farewell dinner and debrief**
Location: Tribe
Address: Rr. Murat Toptani, Pedonale Tirana AL, 1001, Albania

Atlantic Council experts will participate in a conversation with the Staff Delegation to debrief takeaways from the trip, answer lingering questions, and help highlight the relevance and common themes from the meetings of the days' prior.

Saturday, September 12 – Return to Washington

6:00 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. **Delegation flies Tirana TIA – Vienna VIE on Austrian airlines flight OS 760**

10:50 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Delegation flies Vienna VIE – Washington IAD on Austrian airlines flight OS 41**