



About WEASA

The Warsaw Euro-Atlantic Summer Academy (WEASA) is an annual summer school for mid-career professionals from the Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Poland. Each year, around 50 policy analysts, experts, advisers, civil servants, NGO professionals, and journalists, take part in the academy.



WEASA was established in 2013 to present and debate the political, social and economic foundations of modern democracies in the European Union and the transatlantic community and to further promote the values of freedom, pluralism and peace in its neighbourhood.

Thematic scope - Focus on digital affairs

Starting in 2017, WEASA has put a specific focus on digital affairs, including the role of social media, regulation of big tech companies, matters related to cybersecurity, fake news surveillance, and data.

The target audience for WEASA is mid-level (5-10 years' experience) professionals who work as policy analysts, experts, advisers, civil servants, journalists, private sector specialists and in NGOs and are interested in WEASA-related topics.

Leading experts

Each year, we invite a group of leading academics, practitioners and analysts to lead the WEASA sessions. They frequently come from leading European and US-based think tanks and institutions and often include high-level public officials. Our speakers in past years have included prominent figures such as Madeleine Albright and Leszek Balcerowicz, former president of Estonia Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who will deliver his key note address during this year academy. We also collaborate with prominent organisations and experts specialised in digital security and media

literacy matters, such as the Bellingcat, Defend Democracy and her founder, a digital strategist Alice Stollmeyer, etc.



WEASA at IGF

In 2021, WEASA, in partnership with the Polish American Freedom Foundation, the Leaders of Change Foundation and Study Tours to Poland, offered a special study tour to Poland for alumni from the WEASA 2020 and 2021 editions. This visit allowed WEASA alumni to attend the United Nations Internet Governance Forum which was organized in Katowice in December 2021. The alumni were so impressed that it was decided to apply this year for running sessions ourselves as we have enough expertise to do so.



WEASA networking

In addition to summer academy WEASA has a dedicated Coordinator for Alumni affairs, whose function is to strengthen and deepen alumni networking by organising online and offline meetings with alumni members and stimulating joint project together.

WEASA has national groups based in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Albania, Serbia, and North Macedonia, who meet regularly and discuss potential cooperation between each other.

Several examples of fruitful cooperation have already been tested:

- Panel discussion: **Lies and consequences: Current trends in understanding disinformation in Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans**
- Research presentation: **Cyberbullying in North Macedonia and Serbia**
- Research presentation: **The role of NGOs in Belarus** (digital tools used by NGOs to function from abroad)

In all the above mentioned initiatives WEASA alumni members play a leading role being either speakers, researchers or organisers.

Partners

WEASA was founded in partnership by:

- The College of Europe, Natolin Campus
- The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF)
- The Polish-American Freedom Foundation

For more information visit www.weasa.org

POLSKO-AMERYKAŃSKA
FUNDACJA WOLNOŚCI



POLISH-AMERICAN
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To whom it may concern,

In this letter, I would like to confirm that the Polish-American Freedom Foundation (PAFF) is a proud co-founder of the Warsaw Euro Atlantic Academy (WEASA). Since the inception of WEASA in 2013, we support the Academy together with our partners: the College of Europe in Natolin and the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

The Polish-American Freedom Foundation (PAFF) was established in 2000 (by the Polish-American Enterprise Fund to advance the purposes of the Support for East European Democracy Act of 1989) to support democracy, civil society, economic development, and equal opportunity in Poland and, ultimately, in other Central and Eastern European countries. In Poland, the Foundation's programs focus on rural areas and small towns. Two issues dominate: education and supporting local communities. So far, PAFF has spent over \$240 million on its program activities.

WEASA is an important part of PAFF's programs addressed mainly to representatives of the EU Eastern Partnership countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine as well as the Western Balkans. Its core aim is to bring together mid-careers experts interested in European integration and transatlantic cooperation. Since 2017, WEASA has been focusing on cybersecurity, fighting disinformation, the role of social media, and other challenges stemming from the rapid development of new technologies and the growing importance of the digital sphere.

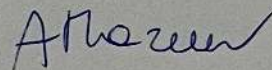
We are proud that over the last ten years, WEASA has become more than an annual two-week educational event. Today, we can state that the alumni policy and expert networking are equally important parts of WEASA. Having a group of over four hundred alumni gives a unique opportunity to push cooperation between experts from the region forward. We support WEASA

alumni by organizing for them follow-up activities such as workshops and seminars, offering micro-grants on projects developed by small groups of alumni, and involving alumni in the agenda of the next editions of WEASA. In addition, in 2022 we launched a pilot of the WEASA Fellowship Program available exclusively for the alumni.

Even in the digital era, nothing is more important for effective cooperation than the networking opportunities during in-person meetings. Therefore we also put effort into organizing alumni reunions on different occasions. In 2021, the most prominent activity of this kind was an alumni study tour to Poland, in which the main goal was participation in United Nations Internet Governance Forum in Katowice. A group of WEASA alumni took part in the entire event and assessed IGF highly.

As PAFF, we do see a purpose to include WEASA alumni participation in IGF as a part of our alumni policy. We strongly believe that such a diverse and well-skilled group of experts will bring an added value to IGF by including perspectives of countries of the EU Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans. We can confirm that WEASA alumni are high-quality experts working with passion in their respective fields of interest.

PAFF continues its long-standing support of WEASA and developing an alumni-oriented Program component.



Agnieszka Mazur
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Polish-American Freedom
Foundation