



RYCO

Regional Youth Cooperation Office

ANNUAL REPORT

20
22



A better region starts with **YOUth**

Foreword

The reporting time always serves as a source of inspiration, as it provides us with a comprehensive overview of our accomplishments and influence in the previous period. Acknowledging that 2022 was a challenging year, I am exceptionally proud to announce that we managed to reach our annual goals and maintain to be the leading intergovernmental organization in the Western Balkan dealing with peacebuilding, reconciliation and cooperation among youth.

We have worked tirelessly to make a positive change in the region, and the results that you can read in this document are a testament to our dedication and commitment to all six CPs. Regardless of the circumstances that we encountered during the past year, RYCO employees stayed focused and motivated to fulfill the mission of the organization. And I would like to use this opportunity to thank them for their persistent efforts.

In 2022, RYCO reached and influenced 8.000 young people across the Western Balkan region, through numerous local activities and impactful exchange programs, including Superschools, RISE, Route WB6 and EU-WB Student Integration. One of the standout achievements of 2022 was our successful organization of the EU-WB Youth Forum in Berlin.

This was possible thanks to you - our stakeholders, partners, donors and founders, who offered continued dedication, commitment, and belief in our organization, crucial to keep us on our mission.

To ensure that we continue to meet and exceed expectations, we have recognized the need to adjust and consolidate our operations and program. Your future support in reshaping RYCO is deeply valued and of utmost importance for our successful additional improvement. We are very much looking forward for the changes ahead of us, as they are necessary to achieve our goals and fulfill the mission.

Sincerely,

Albert Hani
RYCO Secretary General



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List of abbreviations

AB	Advisory Board
AFD	Agence française de développement (French Development Agency)
BMZ	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)
CB	Capacity Building
CfP	Call for Proposals
CP	Contracting Party
ALB	1. Albania
BIH	2. Bosnia and Herzegovina
KOS	3. Kosovo*
MNE	4. Montenegro
MKD	5. North Macedonia
SRB	6. Serbia
	<i>*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence</i>
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Finance and Administration Officer
Forum ZfD	Forum Civil Peace Service
GB	Governing Board
GMFA	German Ministry of Foreign Affairs
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for International Cooperation)
HR	Human Resources
HO	Head Office
HS	High School
ICLD	Intercultural Learning and Dialogue
IMFA	Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
LBO	Local Branch Office
HLBO	Head of Local Branch Office
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
OC	Open Call
OFAJ	L'Office franco-allemand pour la Jeunesse (Franco-German Youth Office)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
REL	Research, Evaluation and Learning
RISE	Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs
RYCO	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
SE	Social Entrepreneurship
SEEYN	South East European Youth Network
SFF	Sarajevo Film Festival
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SP	Strategic Plan
UN	United Nations
UNPBF	United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WB	Western Balkans
WB6	Western Balkans six
YR	Youth Representative

1. Executive Summary

The reporting year played a crucial role in shaping the organization's future systematic development. [RYCO's Governing Board adopted the new Strategy 2022-2024](#), which was backed up by its new Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. Following the objectives defined by the Strategy, RYCO implemented **four regional projects and organized numerous local activities** in 2022.

The [Superschools](#) was the flagship project of the last year, RYCO successfully closed the first cycle and opened the second one, raising the number of high schools participating in exchanges from 60 to 100. In 2022, 60 schools organized 30 exchanges, **engaging 800+ students** and close to 120 teachers across the region.

The first [Route WB6 project for regional volunteer](#) exchanges was concluded in March, by organizing Caravan with 45+ young people traveling across the region. It is agreed to have follow-up and establish volunteer exchanges as signature projects of RYCO.

[Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship \(RISE\)](#) continued its work through the support of the second cohort of young social entrepreneurs. It provided support to **12 youth social businesses**. RYCO and partners organized the Regional SE Forum in September, gathering the most relevant stakeholders from the regional social entrepreneurship ecosystem. The new phase (follow-up project) started in November 2022.

The outstanding event in 2022 was the [Western Balkans Youth Forum](#) of the Berlin Process, which gathered 70+ young people, actors, and stakeholders from the WB6 and the EU, in Berlin. The most important outcome of the Forum was the [Youth Declaration](#), which provides a youth perspective on the most important issues of today, such as resilient democracy, inclusive peace and security, and sustainable living.

Through the pilot initiative for support to regional students' organizations [EU-WB Student Integration](#), RYCO supported **6 student regional networks** throughout 2022 and cooperated with 31 organizations, reached 1500+ students, and organized 6 regional students' workshops and 50+ local activities. Besides projects, in 2022 RYCO implemented the closing events and evaluation of the **4th Open Call**, which supported **12 regional youth projects**.

In addition to the implementation of the project activities, all six Local Branch Offices successfully implemented their local activities (training, networking, mentorship, raising awareness and advocacy), creating partnerships with relevant youth, governmental and international organizations and bringing them together on our peacebuilding mission.

All mentioned activities were continuously promoted through RYCO communication channels and in media, complemented with the digital youth platform HAJDE.

On the next pages, you can read about the **main achievements of RYCO during 2022**.

RYCO'S 2022 RESULTS IN NUMBERS



350+ LOCAL
ACTIVITIES



4 REGIONAL
PROJECTS



8.000+ YOUNG
PARTICIPANTS
REACHED;
+180 VOLUNTEERS



2 GOVERNING
BOARD MEETINGS



12 SOCIAL
BUSINESSES
SUPPORTED



42 COLLEAGUES



166 MEDIA
REPORTS



67.602 WEBSITE
VISITS



COUNTLESS HOURS IN
ZOOM MEETINGS

2. RYCO's results: Program Mission during 2022

In 2022, RYCO's Governing Board adopted the **new Strategy 2022-2024**, which was backed up with its **new Monitoring & Evaluation Framework**. Building on the work of the previous years and on meeting the strategic objectives of its Strategic Plan 2022-2024, RYCO has put efforts into increasing the quality of regional youth cooperation, youth mobility and diversification of opportunities for active youth participation in activities building mutual understanding and reconciliation in the civic, social, educational, and cultural and sports domains. Furthermore, RYCO invested in the topic of dealing with the past, addressing the differences concerning the region's past and challenging inherited narratives with young people and those working with them. It also worked on increasing young people's level of awareness of the opportunities offered by European integration and intra-regional cooperation.

The year 2022 started with implementation of the **closing events and evaluation of the 4th Open Call** which supported **12 regional youth projects**. The first Route WB6 project for regional volunteer's exchanges was also concluded in March 2022, with the objective to have follow-up and establish volunteer exchanges as signature projects of RYCO. The pilot initiative for support of regional students' organizations EU-WB Student Integration project started in December 2021, and **supported 6 student regional networks** throughout 2022. During this year, it cooperated with 31 organizations from WB6, reached out to 1500+ students, and organized 6 regional students' workshops with more than 50+ local activities.

The promotion of RYCO's mission and values, through the implementation of four regional projects and the LBO's work, is constant and in 2022 consisted of different **Berlin Process related events** and conferences, high-level decision makers' dialogues and events of bringing youth in contact with decision makers through various activities, particularly through the EU-WB Youth Forum.

RYCO has had different communication and visibility activities, complemented with the digital youth platform **HAJDE**. The platform works in cooperation with 12 faculties of journalism across the region. Moreover, the power of data was used to communicate key results during 2020-2021 through a new section on RYCO's website – **REL Hub**.

The highlight of the year is the implementation of the **60 school exchanges** by 60 supported secondary schools. In order to ensure stronger institutional support to the schools engaged in the project, in July, we implemented the **Regional Training of Teachers** in February in Prishtina, followed by **Youth Summer Camp, Regional Annual School Conference**, meeting with ministerial representatives, which took place in July in Struga. Another milestone for the year was the call for the second cycle of exchanges, launched in September which was successfully evaluated in December. During the year, more than 60 teachers increased their capacities in facilitation/moderation skills, intercultural learning, dialogue, reconciliation, peacebuilding, youth participation, communication, digital tools in youth work, etc. through several trainings, while several media campaigns and a youth summer camp took place, in order to further promote the project.

Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship (RISE) continued its work through the support of the second cohort of young social entrepreneurs. It provided support to 12 youth social businesses. As part of its work plan for 2022, RISE organized the Regional SE Forum in September 2022 which gathered the most relevant stakeholders from the regional social entrepreneurship ecosystem.

In addition to implementation of the project activities, all six Local Branch Offices successfully implemented their local activities (training, networking, mentorship, raising awareness and advocacy), creating partnerships with relevant youth, governmental and international organizations and bringing them together on our peacebuilding mission.

2.1 Grant-making

Among the highlights of 2022 is the design and implementation of the 2nd OC of Superschools Exchange Program 2022. The concept of RYCO's 5OC was conceived and developed to its early stages. The budget will be financed by the RYCO core budget with the possibility to be extended with the financial support of other regional partners. However, due to other activities and structural changes, the launching of the call was postponed for 2023.

Table 1: RYCO's OC data

RYCO's CfPs	1st OC of Superschools Exchange Program 2021	2nd OC of Superschools Exchange Program 2022
Launch date	27 September 2021	17/09/2022
Contracting time/date	February 2022	January 2023
Implementation period	March 2022-June 2022	April 2023-June 2023 & September 2023-October 2023
Closure	2021	November 2023
Donor	GIZ	GIZ
Overall envelope	336,000 EUR ⁱ	715.000 EUR
Target group	High Schools	High schools

Moreover, **Superschools Exchange Program** was designed, drafted, and launched aiming at school exchanges in WB6 to support the peacebuilding and reconciliation process and intercultural learning and dialogue among schools, students, and their communities. The Program is part of a multi-donor project, "Western Balkans School Exchange Scheme," co-financed by the EU and the BMZ, and implemented by the GIZ and RYCO. The project contributes to increasing the skills and knowledge of young people in the WB by enhancing education systems and promoting cooperation in the region through establishing a regional school exchange program. The project in its second cycle will support 100 high schools from WB6 selected from a total number of 155 applications received in the dedicated online platform for applications for the Superschools call.

ⁱ The foreseen envelope is subject to change due to the flexibility of the exchange program

2.2 RYCO donor-funded projects

During 2022, RYCO continued to serve the youth of the region based on its mandate, Strategic Plan and the support of its partners. Throughout the year, RYCO HO and LBOs staff, in collaboration with the project partners, achieved to maintain good synergies in the successful implementation of the project activities.

Project teams worked closely with RYCO Communications to secure proper implementation of the organization's visibility guidelines and to promote activities of the projects through a series of news items promoted on RYCO's website and social media for the wider public and for direct engagement with the youth.

In addition to entering into new project commitments during 2022, some of the donor-funded projects were reaching their closure. Therefore, RYCO has committed to the independent external evaluation of the projects. RYCO started the process of the external evaluation for the RISE, ROUTE WB6 and EC projects. The independent evaluation reports are expected to be submitted to RYCO in 2023. The ROUTE WB6 and EC project underwent an annual financial audit.

“Enhancing Youth Cooperation and Youth Exchange in the WB6”



The goal of the project is to contribute to the process of reconciliation in the region of the Western Balkans through enhancing youth mobility, cooperation and activism. Increase opportunities for young people to engage in activities that build mutual understanding and reconciliation in the civic, social, educational, cultural and sports domains.

Timeframe	01 March 2019 – 14 February 2022
Donor and partners	European Union
Budget	759.689 EUR

Key project achievements:

- During 2022, the closing events in all six Contracting Parties were organized in order to disseminate the results of the Call for Proposals, exchange on the strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and threats observed throughout the implementation of the projects, as well as discuss upon the added value of the 4th OC.
- The closing event gathered the grantees within the 4th Open Call for the purpose of collecting feedback as part of an external evaluation of the OC.
- In 2021, the project activities featured in media 32 times, and in 2022 one [time](#).

ROUTE WB6



The goal of the project is to promote volunteering as a tool that contributes to the reduction of social and ethnic distance among young people in the region, as well as to strengthen their prosocial and European values that will lead to reconciliation, stability and prosperity of the WB6 region.

Timeframe	1 January 2019 - March 2022
Donor and partners	The project is implemented across the WB6 by a consortium led by RYCO in collaboration with Beyond Barriers Association, South East European Youth Network, Institute for Youth Development KULT, Lens, Youth Cultural Center Bitola, Association for Democratic Prosperity Zid and Young Researchers of Serbia. The project is supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Budget	9,459,173 NOK around 899,118.19 EUR ⁱⁱ .

Key project achievements:

- The ROUTE WB6 2022 Exchange Program was designed and implemented in concert with the Young European Ambassadors Program for the Western Balkans, where the Caravan of young people visited all 6 CPs supporting the establishment of ROUTE WB6 Alumni Clubs.
- During seven days, 45 young people from the whole region had the opportunity to visit Podgorica, Mostar, Sarajevo, Kopaonik, Pristina, Bitola and Tirana, spending 1540 kilometers on the road.
- The Exchange Program in total had 213 volunteers, 172 MINI participants, 27 MIDI and 14 MAXI participants.
- Three participants consisting of young journalists and participants of the RYCO Hajde program, [Aleksandar Bugarin](#) from Serbia, [Dallandyshe Xhaferi](#) from Albania and [Gabriela Leskova](#) from North Macedonia published articles on Caravan and the ROUTE WB6 project.
- In the framework of the Caravan project activity, RYCO engaged popular Serbian Youtubers to promote the Caravan and to engage in the discussion with the volunteers. The video from the discussion in Kopaonik, Serbia was included in the regular YT [show](#) and the activity was promoted in various social media publications of [Lea Stankovic](#), [Dex](#) and [Mica Asceric](#).
- In total, during 2022, there were 10 media publications on the project and its activities.

”

Route WB6 Volunteer Caravan was truly an amazing experience. I had the chance to meet great people from all around the region. We had a lot of fun, and we shared experiences, thoughts and problems that we are all facing. There are many existing stereotypes among our communities because we didn't have the chance to meet each other. But now, we are icebreakers who will share how amazing our friends from the region are, and that we need to get to know each other better and cooperate to make our region a better place to live together.

Blend Halili, Route WB6 volunteer from Pristina

ⁱⁱ Exchange rate of February 2021

Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE)



The goal of the project is to address a specific need in the region in relation to its current context and history: opening new spaces of reconciliation for the youth of the Western Balkans through social entrepreneurship. The project, due to its very regional nature, will tend to increase the number of cross-border interactions around social entrepreneurship during the 3 years and thereafter.

Timeframe	The duration of the project is 36 months starting from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2022
Duration and Partners	The donors are the French Development Agency and RYCO. The partners are GROUPE SOS Pulse, SEEYN, the Franco-German Youth Office and the Institut Français.
Budget	999,258 EUR on the first Cycle and 1.257.000 euro on the Second Cycle.

Key project achievements:

- RISE has supported 391 young entrepreneurs in the Region.
- The RISE project selected 125 young entrepreneurs gathered in 44 teams from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia to develop their social business ideas during the 3rd RISE Journey.
- The RISE project has conducted campaigns for awareness-raising of young people over 18 years of age during training sessions on design thinking in the field of social entrepreneurship;
- It has conducted a study on social entrepreneurship in the Western Balkans region;
- RISE has organized the Regional Forum #1 in Serbia on September 2021 , the Regional Forum #2 in Tirana on September 2022 , and it will organize the Regional Forum #3 in Skopje on September 2023;
- During Journey #2 RISE has provided: 33 training sessions on social business development; 20 meet-ups for community building; 182 mentoring sessions; 26 experts' consultations; 135 one-to-one coaching sessions; 6 regional peer learning business sessions; 6 Intercultural training sessions.
- 24 selected teams will be granted 2500 euro to prototype their business ideas.
- 24 selected teams will be granted with 500 euro to be used for the Regional Mobility Program (exchange program in the Region).
- RISE team created and promoted 24 inspirational videos from the winner's teams. As well the testimonies and successful stories that have been taking place during RISE activities.
- Some interviews in Media and one in the radio were organized to showcase RISE's work, social entrepreneurship in the Region, demo days, 12 selected teams, and the incubation phase.
- A press release was prepared "RISE Financially Supports Twelve Youth Social Businesses in the Western Balkans" and it was posted, published and delivered to all the media channels.
- RISE team created and promoted 24 inspirational videos from the winner's teams. As well the testimonies and successful stories that have been taking place during RISE activities.
- Some interviews in Media and one in the radio were organized to showcase RISE's work, social entrepreneurship in the Region, demo days, 12 selected teams, and the incubation phase.
- A press release was prepared "RISE Financially Supports Twelve Youth Social

“WB6 Schools Exchange Scheme (Superschools)”



The project goal of the Superschools project is to create a sustainable scheme of school exchanges in WB6 and to develop user-friendly, efficient, impact oriented and implementable concepts that will bring together several thousands of young people from WB6 through two open calls and the 80 funded school exchange projects.

Timeframe	Superschools is a three years project from 2021 to the end of 2023.
Duration and Partners	is co-financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale
Budget	5.5 mil EUR (2.75 directly managed by RYCO)

Key project achievements:

- In 2022, 30 partnerships were funded, 60 exchanges took place, whereas over 1200 young people interacted directly and indirectly, out of which 841 were the participating students and 120 teachers that took part in the exchanges.
- When the second Open Call was launched in September 2023, the number of registered schools on the platform reached 535. Out of the registrations, 161 partnerships were created and 155 applications were received. Considering the positive results of the first Open Call for Superschools, 17 applications from 155 were received from schools already funded under the first cycle.
- During the second cycle, 50 partnerships were selected, thus providing the opportunity for 100 schools from the region to participate in the exchange.
- 6 Letters of Support received from 6 ministries in charge of education in all 6 CPs
- Superschools project staff noted and collected some 140 media reports related to the project activities.

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This project has made me realize how similar our cultures are and how connecting to other people easily happens. I have been included in other activities with almost the same goal, but nonetheless was this one the best one.

Student Quote

This training provided the teachers with the necessary tools, knowledge and skills in order to make an impact in their local communities.

Expert's quote from ToT, 2022

The Western Balkans Youth Forum of the Berlin Process 2022



The goal of the project: The overall goal of the project was to contribute to the enhancement of the regional youth agenda in the Western Balkans.

The objectives were:

- To bring together young people and those working with youth from the WB6 and the EU to discuss youth-related issues from the EU and the WB perspective,
- To provide a more inclusive and in-depth understanding of the impact of the Berlin Process in its efforts to bring closer the societies of the WB6 and further discuss the role of youth within it,
- To provide opportunities for young people to voice up their needs and expectations towards WB6 and EU leaders,
- To bring forth a more strategic approach in ensuring meaningful youth inclusion in the next stage of the Berlin Process while inviting young people themselves to shape the process by direct contributions to the respective topics of the Forum,
- To advocate for more sustainable youth policies that promote regional cooperation and reconciliation in the WB.

Timeframe	October 1 – December 31, 2022
Duration and Partners	The Federal Republic of Germany, represented by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Federal Foreign Office Stability Pact funds), The European Union, through the Regional Cooperation Council's Western Balkan Youth Lab project and the Technical Assistance to Civil Society Organisations in the Western Balkans and Turkey (TACSO) funded by the European Union (EU).
Budget	80,464.00 EUR

Key project achievements:

- 75 youth actors from the Western Balkans and the EU contributed to the enhancement of the regional youth agenda,
- 10 sessions/panels/workshops were organized,
- Berlin Declaration of the Western Balkans Youth Forum 2022 developed.
- 14 Facebook posts, 45 Instagram posts, 14 Twitter and LinkedIn posts, 2 website articles, 7 articles on media portals.

One challenge overcome successfully: Uncertainty when it comes to the opportunity for young people to present the conclusions of the Forum to decision-makers, which was mitigated by close and frequent contact with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and developing alternative opportunities for the voice of young people to be heard in case the presentation of the conclusions to the leaders would not be an option.

A quote from a participant, trainer/expert, partner for the impact of the project: [quote 1](#), [quote 2](#), [quote 3](#), [quote 4](#), [quote 5](#), [quote 6](#).

EU-WB Students Integration (EU-WB-SI)



The goal of the project is to support the integration of WB6 students into the European Union student programs through the creation and development of branches of famous European students' organizations in the Western Balkan Contracting Parties.

- To support the integration of WB students into EU through the support of creation and development of branches of famous European students' organizations in the Western Balkans (at least 6 networks and 36 organizations), which will provide long-term space for students from WB6 to be integrated into European programs, to gain skills and get all kind of opportunities that exist in EU level, but also be able to organize local projects.
- To provide mentorship support and build capacities of six new regional networks of EU students organizations so they can establish long-lasting regional cooperation.

Timeframe	December 2021 – tentatively July 2023
Duration and Partners	Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and RYCO.
Budget	167,000 EUR

Key project achievements:

- Six Regional Networks of EU student organizations selected, with different thematic concentrations, AIESEC, Electrical Engineering Students' European (EESTEC), European Law Students' Association (ELSA), Erasmus Student Network (ESN), International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA), United Nations Youth Associations (UNYA)
- Organization of a successful summer Camp, consisting of 3-days of workshops and training sessions organized in Budva, Montenegro. The summer camp brought together over 25 young people representatives of student organizations, the youth Trainer, and the Deputy Ambassador of Italy in Montenegro.
- The Regional Networks organized six regional meetings focusing on different topics such as "Mental Health among aspiring physicians", "Regional Cooperation among WB", "SDG 5- Gender Equality and Best EU Practices", "Intellectual Property (IP) law", "WB Mobility" while bringing together 110 youth.
- More than 50 local activities were organized covering topics such as: mental health, regional cooperation, gender equality, mobility programs in WB etc. and contributing to the further regionalization of the networks within the WB6 region.

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We are very grateful to RYCO for this extraordinary opportunity, we met new people and learned new skills.

Participant Quote

For more quotes, please click [here](#).

2022 Western Balkans Berlin Summit logo competition (Organization and implementation of a competition for young designers from the Western Balkans to select the official logo of the Berlin Process Summit 2022)



Overall goal and objectives of the project: The project aimed to encourage and support the creativity of young designers, offering the opportunity for promotion of the work of the winners, same as the financial awards: EUR 2000 for the first prize winner, EUR 1000 for the second prize winner, and EUR 500 for the third prize winner. The project ensured that the visual identity of the Berlin Process Summit 2022 was created by young people from the Western Balkans as an initiative aiming to help the region on its European path. The competition enabled youth participation in the region through the work of the Selection Committee for the logo established for this project by giving young people the power to decide on the visual identity of one of the key political initiatives.

Timeframe	1/08/2022- 30/10/2022
Duration and Partners	The Federal Republic of Germany, represented by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Federal Foreign Office Stability Pact funds)
Budget	15.881 euros

Strategic importance of the project for RYCO:

RYCO as one of the biggest successes of the Berlin Process took over the coordination of the Berlin Process logo Competition in 2021, allowing young people to directly contribute to the visibility of the Berlin Process Summit 2021 by designing and selecting the logo, therefore directly contributing to the overall Strategy of RYCO. With the newly adopted Strategic plan in 2022, the project directly contributed to Strategic Priority area I, Providing opportunities for youth, with Strategic objective 1 To initiate, support and foster regional cooperation and intercultural learning, peacebuilding and mobility opportunities for young people in the Western Balkans.

Results on what was achieved:

- RYCO designed an open call for submission of logo designs, which was followed by a digital campaign on social media.
- 832 227 young people were reached with the call.
- RYCO received 202 designs from 202 competitors. One applicant was able to submit a maximum of 1 design entry per participant. The number of applications per Contracting Party is the following: Albania -53; BiH - 29; Kosovo* - 33; Montenegro - 14; North Macedonia - 34; Serbia - 39.
- Based on the criteria presented, 28 applications were longlisted and presented to the Evaluation Committee. The final Selection Committee composed by the Youth Representatives of the RYCO Governing board, namely the ones from Albania and North Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro and Heads of Local Branch Offices of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.
- The Selection Committee selected the three best ideas that were further validated by the German Federal Government. First prize: Nermina Hrnica from Bosnia and Herzegovina; Second prize: Eli Gjoka from Albania; Third Prize: Fatjona Bulica from Kosovo.
- The award ceremonies for the winners of the “Open Call for Young Designers: 2022 Western Balkans Berlin Summit Logo Competition” were held in the German embassy in Sarajevo, and at RYCO Head Office in Tirana.

- RYCO and the German Federal Government awarded the winners with financial prizes. The first prize winner received 2.000€, the second prize was awarded a gross sum of 1.000€, while the third prize winner received 500€.
- One challenge overcame successfully: Short deadlines were a challenge that were overcome successfully with the prompt reaction of the RYCO Team engaged in implementing the project.

Number of media coverage for the project: To enhance the visibility of the competition and its results, along with the digital campaign and social media posts, the press release was distributed to the media and published in: [Mreza mira](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina; [Mladi.bl](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina; [Business Magazine](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina; [Youth Program of BH Radio 1](#), Bosnia and Herzegovina

Additional paid media guest features were organized in ABC NEWS in Albania with Eli Gjoka, the second prize winner; TV Klan Kosova with the third prize winner Fatjona Bulica; and an article on Nermina Hrnica was published on the most popular online media in Bosnia and Herzegovina, klix.ba. RYCO Local Program Officer Djordjo Cvijovic presented the competition on TV N1 in Serbia. There were 8 media publications in total.

RYCO RISE FORUM 2022



Overall goal and objectives of the project: Regional Forum is an extension of the RISE project which is focusing on increasing the opportunities for cooperation between young social entrepreneurs and other important stakeholders in the field.

As such, the main objectives of this Forum are:

- To bring together key political and economic actors in the Western Balkans region and raise awareness of the importance of developing support mechanisms and legal framework to foster social entrepreneurship as a powerful instrument for the social and economic development in the region;
- To provide a more inclusive and in-depth understanding of social innovation and entrepreneurship;
- To motivate young entrepreneurs in the region to learn about social entrepreneurship and to be involved in a regional intercultural program;
- To promote RISE winners through testimonials and videos on their social business ideas
- To give visibility to projects and to generate a network of dynamic actors, supporting the social entrepreneurship of young people in the region
- To facilitate opportunities for networking and partnership building among project, investors, business angels, entrepreneurs and other social entrepreneurship players in the region;
- To help streamline the advocacy efforts for the development of effective mechanisms for social and economic integration of marginalized groups and intercultural exchange and mobility opportunities in the region.
- To promote new support component opportunities for enhancing skills of the Riser

Timeframe	August 1 – September 30, 2022
Duration and Partners	RISE project is developed and monitored by a consortium composed of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), PULSE (SOS Group), South East European Youth Network (SEEYN), Institut Francais, and the Franco-German Youth Office (OFAJ), and implemented by six local incubators: ARNO, Balkan Green Foundation, Nešto više, Smart Kolektiv, IEC Tehnopolis and Yunus Social Business. The RISE project is supported by the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO). The RISE Regional Forum 2022 is supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.
Budget	33,870.18 EUR

Strategic importance of the project for RYCO: RYCO's program focuses on creating opportunities for young people to engage in activities that build mutual understanding and reconciliation in the civic, social, educational, cultural and sports domains. RYCO initiates and participates in policy-making and advocates for reform. It supports the development of a political and social environment that empowers and facilitates youth exchange. In this vein, the RISE Forum provides a great cornerstone and platform to motivate young social entrepreneurs to engage in intercultural dialogue and learning, provide opportunities to enhance business skills, and support networking.

Results on what was achieved:

- The project gathered 120 young people, actors, academia members, decision makers from municipalities and stakeholders from the Social Enterprise Ecosystem from the WB6 region and Europe, including NGOs from the region which work with youth on the topic of social entrepreneurship.
- 3 days of panels/workshops/discussions were organized,

Number of media coverage for the project:



- Publication on the social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram) of RYCO and RISE
- 1 press release sent to all local medias of the CPs
- 7 medias followed the 3-days event
- Ms Ardita Bonatti, Project Manager of RISE, was invited on TVSH TV in the morning show and on Top-Channel TV in the afternoon show

2.3 Advocacy, Cooperation and Partnership

In addition to the project implementation, RYCO's main priority is to also **advocate** toward creating and promoting an enabling environment supportive of youth cooperation and reconciliation, and meaningful youth participation. RYCO has undertaken several actions related to advocacy starting from organizing big events in the margins of important forums, to bilateral meetings and participation in panels and forums of strategic partners.

WB Youth Forum

The 2022 Youth Forum in Berlin highlighted the importance of including youth in decision-making processes, especially in three thematic areas of this year's Youth Forum: resilient democracy, inclusive security and peace, and sustainable living. **Anja Jokić, Edis Paprashtica, Blazhen Maleski, Andrea Mićanović, Meris Bećović, and Franceska Muco**, Youth Representatives in the RYCO Governing Board, proudly shared the main points of the Declaration, which was drafted in a four-day joint work of over 70 young people from all over Western Balkans. The Declaration provides a youth perspective on the most important issues of today, such as resilient democracy, inclusive peace and security, and sustainable living.

 In 2022 RYCO continued several important strategic **partnerships** (explained in detail above) through the following projects: 

"Enhancing Youth Cooperation and Youth Exchange in the WB6", supported by the EC.
The "ROUTE WB6" for Regional Volunteer Exchange Program, financed by the NMFA.
"Regional Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs (RISE)", co-financed by the French Agency for Development.
"WB6 School Exchange Scheme", the strategic three-year partnership with the GIZ supported by EC and BMZ.
"EU-WB Students Integration (EU-WB-SI)" supported by the IMFA.
The Western Balkans Youth Forum of the Berlin Process 2022, supported by The Federal Republic of Germany, represented by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Union.
Projects for Support for RYCO organizational development in cooperation with the Polish MFA and SIDA.

RYCO continued its **cooperation and partnerships** in the organization of different regional activities and small-scale projects such as; RYCO and Deutsche Welle in BiH and Kosovo: young journalists events: RYCO and OSCE Mission to Serbia Participation Game Card; MIRAI Exchange Program: WB meets Japan; Regional meeting of Youth Umbrella Organizations (WB6 Youth Councils); 'Friday, Saturday, Sunday for Future' – Perspectives from the European Youth in Berlin; EU4Youth Conference etc..

RYCO **Secretary General** and **Deputy Secretary General** represented RYCO in numerous activities on the regional and European level organized by RYCO's partners, where they actively advocated for the work of RYCO but also for the interest of young people from across the region.

From all the events where RYCO was represented during 2022, the following should be considered highly important from a political point of view: Berlin Process Summit - WB Youth Forum, Prespa Youth Forum, Bled Strategic Summit, EU-WB Youth Forum in Rome, WB Summit.

2.4 Local Branch Offices (LBOs)

In the following section, you will find information on the role of RYCO's Local Branch Offices (LBOs) and their contribution to the overall processes RYCO has engaged during 2022.

Every year, the LBOs play a crucial role in **disseminating** and **promoting RYCO values and activities**. They serve as the first contact point in supporting potential applicants to RYCO programs and activities with information, capacity building activities and mentoring. They are also the first address for local and international actors interested in cooperation with RYCO, and for local media as well. They promoted RYCO's mission and values in around **53ⁱⁱⁱ media appearances**, covering the local activities or other activities organized through RYCO's regional projects. Through these, RYCO remains an active participant in all the important local and regional processes that tackle youth issues.

The major focus of the LBOs is promoting RYCO results in the presence and integration of RYCO within institutions' strategies at the CP level as well as processes in Contracting Parties related to youth. To achieve this, the LBOs took part in **numerous meetings and events**, organized by the most relevant stakeholders in their respective CPs and the region. Most of these activities were also covered through a series of news items promoted on RYCO's website and social media. In 2022, the LBOs increased capacities through participation in various internal training and workshops organized/supported by RYCO, as well as recruited new team members like Local Program Officers or Local Financial Officers. They have been also taking part in general **program** and **operational developments** of RYCO regularly (Operational Plan); supporting the implementation of the M&E system, implementing the new strategy and other planning processes (projects) and assisting in finding adequate local participants for different projects.

Challenges have been faced due to the registration status of the LBOs. Therefore, RYCO has worked during 2022 in the direction of the **LBOs registration**.

ⁱⁱⁱ As stated by the RYCO Communications team.

Table 2: RYCO's support to each CP in numbers during 2022

RYCO's support to each CP in numbers during 2022	ALB	BiH	KOS	MNE	MKD	SRB
Number of the LBO staff	5	4	3	3	4	6
Number of info sessions organized for School Exchange Program (Superschools) 2nd cycle	4	3	4	3	4	6
Number of cities where the Superschools' info sessions were organized	3	2	3	3	3	5
Number of participants that attended info sessions for Superschools	89	53	73	67	150	250
Number and percent of schools from the respective CP that applied under RYCO's Superschools Exchange Program 2nd cycle	50	62	24	18	65	109
Number and percent of awarded projects per CP under RYCO's Superschools Program 1st cycle	11	11	6	4	10	18
Number and percent of awarded projects per CP under RYCO's Superschools Program (to start implementation in 2023) = 2nd cycle	17	11	11	7	16	30
Number of mentors selected for RYCO's Superschools Program in the first cycle	2	2	2	1	/	/
Number of RISE teams during Ideation phase	10	7	7	6	8	8
Number of RISE teams during Incubation phase	2	2	2	2	2	2
Number of applications for ROUTE WB6 Volunteers					/	
Total number of ROUTE WB6 Volunteers	213 total					
Number of ROUTE WB6 MINI Volunteers	172 total					
Number of ROUTE WB6 MIDI Volunteers	27 total					
Number of ROUTE WB6 MAXI Volunteers	14 total					
Number of ROUTE WB6 MINI organizers of volunteering	N/A					
Number of ROUTE WB6 MIDI organizers of volunteering	N/A					
Number of ROUTE WB6 MAXI organizers of volunteering	N/A					
Number of mentors (journalism professors) selected for the Hajde platform	2	2	2	2	2	2
Number of young journalism students selected for the Hajde platform	2	1	1	1	20	3
Number of young people reached through the LBO local events ⁴	461	212	315		173	230
2.4.3 Number of local training of journalists on RYCO's thematic areas	/	/	1	/	/	/
2.4.4 Number of regional training of journalists on RYCO's thematic areas	/	/	/	/	/	/

LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN ALBANIA

LBO Albania had an eventful and interactive year participating, organizing and supporting numerous local and regional initiatives about youth. The activities were organized under the framework of the **Tirana European Youth Capital 2022**.

- The Youth Festival [“Y-Grow, Youth Getting Ready for Opportunities and Well-being”](#), organized for the 3d year in cooperation with World Vision Albania, focused on sports, diversity and inclusion;
- [“Youth for Youth”](#) event aiming to **consult 200 youth for the National Youth Strategy**, was organized for the first time by the Minister of State for Youth and Children of Albania, the RYCO Local Branch Office in Albania, World Vision Albania and UNICEF.
- [“Human and Minority Rights Academy”](#) consisted on trainings on human and minority rights and was followed up by a research competition organized on the National Youth Day of Albania, with the support of RYCO and UNFPA.
- [“Youth Voices for Stronger Communities” project](#) supported by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). It aimed at addressing the views of young people and offered them the knowledge they needed to further become active citizens.
- Co-organized and supported **three editions of the Youth Trail**, organized in cooperation with the OSCE Presence in Albania, the Municipality of Tirana and the National Youth Agency. [The Youth Trail: Together for Safety](#); “Youth perspectives: Reinforcing inter-generational dialogue and understanding through Cultural Heritage”; and [Youth Trail: What can Youth do on Environmental Governance?](#).
- Organized four info sessions in Vlora, Shkoder, Tirana and online to promote the second open call of Superschools.
- Through its work and activities, **LBO Albania reached more than 461 young people directly**;

LBO staff participated in more than **81 meetings and events** organized by local, regional and European partners and different stakeholders, such as the [EU4Youth Conference](#) and the Open Day, organized by the Delegation of the European Union to Albania; the selection of the [UN Youth Delegates](#) Albania; the participation at Design Workshops for the [Youth, Peace and Security Agenda Network](#), as well as many events organized in the framework of the Tirana European Youth Capital. LBO Albania participated in more than **8 events as speaker or panelist**.

LBO Albania has had regular communication with the GB members, the Ministry of Education and Sports of Albania, and the Civil Society Representatives and stakeholders related to youth. The LBO office continued and strengthened the cooperation with the French, German, and Italian Embassies in Albania, as well as agencies like the Austrian Development Agency. The LBO enlarged its team by recruiting a Financial and Administration Assistant (FAA) dedicated to local activities, Financial and Administration Officer dedicated to Superschools project and a Local Program Officer.

”

We young people in Kamez, especially girls, do not have this opportunity to go out every night in the community and hang out with our peers. How nice it is to live in a small town where you all know each other and are close to others

Artiola Lama from VET High School in Kamez

LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



The year 2022 for **RYCO LBO BiH** has started with the appointment of **Ms. Sandra Cule** as **Head of the Local Branch Office in March**. Despite being largely understaffed and in the midst of the implementation phase of the 1st cycle of RYCO's new flagship project Superschools, the Office gave impressive results in spite of a tough and challenging environment.

- 11 high schools from various parts of BiH successfully participated in the 1st cycle, of which two high schools targeted most vulnerable society groups. Another success was the implementation of two exchange projects within Superschools taking place between Kosovo and BiH, despite the administrative burden of the visa regime that the two CPs still have.
- **LBO BiH and Deutsche Welle established cooperation** through organizing a discussion in Sarajevo on Diversity in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Youth and Media in June 2022. More than 25 young people from the University of Sarajevo and the University of Mostar had an opportunity to learn more about social and personal identities and the various ways of introducing and representing different groups in media.
- Organized a second regional Peace and Advocacy Camp PAC which gathered 20 young people from the Western Balkans on Jahorina Mountain close to Sarajevo. Within PAC, the young people learned more about and enhanced their communication, activist, leadership and peace-building skills. It was organized by LBO BiH and Catholic Relief Services CRS.
- In August 2022, **the Sarajevo Film Festival (SFF)** and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) LBO BiH, in cooperation with the Forum Civil Peace Service – Forum ZFD and the USAID project PRO-Future, organized the **“Dealing with the Past - In Youth Eyes”** event. The seven-day activity gathered more than 30 young people from the Western Balkans to attend SFF.

Until the end of the year 2022, the Office was enlarged with two new Local Program Officers for the Superschools project. The LBO BiH changed premises as well and was accommodated in more spacey offices which were convenient for the LBO activity. Moreover, during 2022, LBO BiH has successfully organized capacity building trainings for the LBO staff, including the ones in the field of Peacebuilding and Reconciliation.

LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN KOSOVO

The Local Branch Office in Kosovo had an active year in promoting RYCO mission and vision at local level by implementing meaningful activities involving young people and those working with young people in Kosovo and beyond it. In 2022, **RYCO Local Branch Office in Kosovo organized 13 local activities which reached out 437 young people** and those working with young people who participated in RYCO implemented and supported activities.

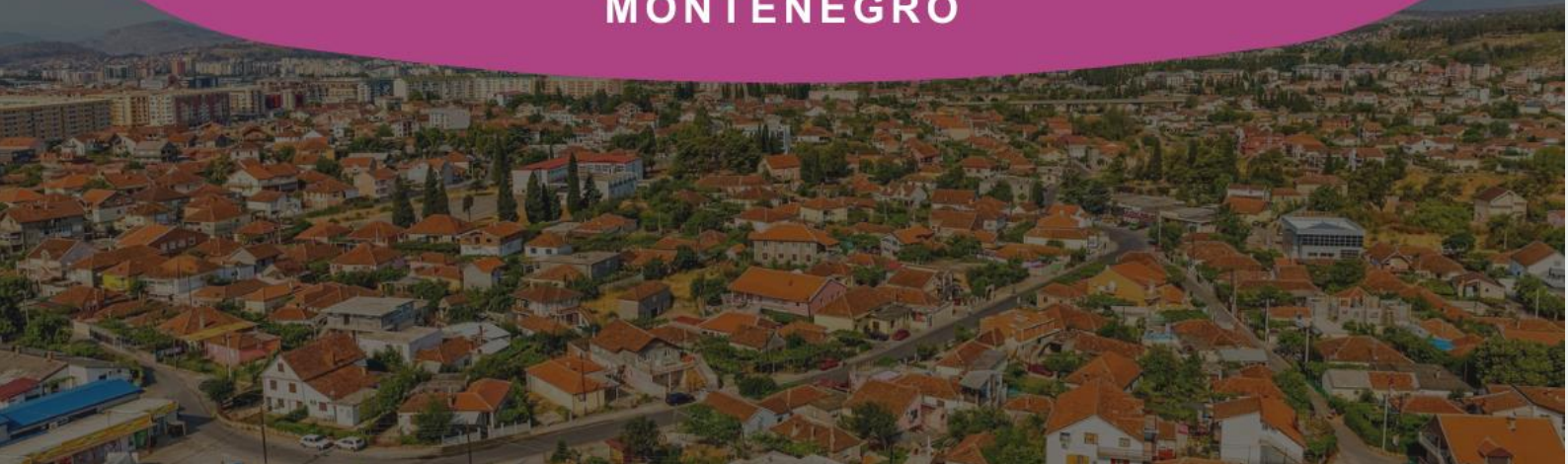
- **Closing event of the 3rd Open Call** in which participated the representatives of the leading organization which was awarded by this cycle, representatives of EU office in Kosovo and representatives of other youth organization which are actively engaged in similar topics.
- **LBO Kosovo and Superschools** activities: awarding ceremony of first cycle of Superschools; **three high level receptions** were organized with participants of first cycle of Superschools and representatives of governmental institutions of Kosovo and representative of German embassy in Kosovo; three info sessions were organized within second cycle of Superschools; **Capacity Building Training for 60 schools** within the first cycle of Superschools project; 3 receptions with local stakeholders of the Superschools exchanges with participants of 3 of the 6 exchanges.
- LBO Kosovo organized the **Demo Day within RISE project**, where Local Branch Office in Kosovo was part of selection committee.
- LBO Kosovo successfully implemented the **Peace Broadcaster Program** together with the Association of Journalists of Kosovo, DW and OSCE Mission to Kosovo with 34 participants. The program consisted of a conference on the role of journalists in promoting reconciliation among divided societies; launching the second cycle of the program; a mentorship program, awarding 3 articles from the first cycle and publishing the articles in the DW channels and other media in Kosovo. LBO Kosovo in cooperation with DW organized a **capacity building for 20 young journalists** on: transitional Journalism; Constructive journalism and Fact checking. In this activity there were young journalists from the most prominent media in Kosovo, and participants from Albanian and Serbian communities living in Kosovo and working in the media.
- RYCO Local Branch in Kosovo organized **three RYCO coffee talks** formats which reached out more than **100 participants in total in Gjilan, Prishtina and Dragash**. They tackled the topics of reconciliation, youth participation, regional cooperation and inclusiveness at local and regional level.

RYCO Local Branch Office in Kosovo contributed also in the implementation of three regional events:

- I. **Hackathon** which was implemented by NGO LENS in Kosovo and which brought 30 young people from the region actively engaged in digitalization and youth cooperation.
- II. Head of RYCO LBO in Kosovo, contributed to the organization of the Western Balkans **Youth Forum** which took place in Berlin under the framework **of Berlin Process WB6 Summit**.
- III. **GAME JAM** was a side event within Western Balkans Digital Summit which brought 48 young developers from the region who were part of a four days workshop where they prepared their prototypes. The implementation of the activity was done by IPKO foundation and LBO Kosovo (funded by Polish fund).

LBO Kosovo staff participated in more than 25 events which were organized by partners at local, regional and European level and had more than 42 meetings with governmental, non-government and international partners in order to synchronize and coordinate the work of RYCO at the local level.

LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN MONTENEGRO



- LBO Montenegro in cooperation with the OSCE Mission in Montenegro, has successfully implemented the **camp "Intercultural competencies in sports"** which gathered 15 young professionals from seven different sports associations with an aim of increasing their knowledge and understanding of intercultural competencies and fostering youth cooperation in the field of sports.
- **Capacity Building Training for CSOs** from Montenegro in cooperation with the OSCE Mission in Montenegro and brought together 22 representatives of the civil society sector. They got the opportunity to work on developing universal elements of the project application and become familiar with the concepts of intercultural learning, reconciliation, youth participation, and social inclusion, as well as the possibilities of creating regional partnerships.
- **Capacity Building Training with young journalists** in the field of intercultural dialogue and professional standards in media reporting. The first Capacity Building Training for Young Journalists from Montenegro brought together 17 representatives of the media from different parts of Montenegro.
- In cooperation with the Council of Europe, LBO Montenegro has successfully organized **"Block the hatred. Share the love"** event which gathered more than 60 people.
- The series of events entitled **"Youth Talks"** brought together over 110 young people from various parts of Montenegro to discuss about the importance intercultural dialogue, youth activism, human rights, hate speech, EU integration process of Montenegro, etc. The Youth Talks were organized in **Youth Talks in Herceg Novi, Berane and Podgorica.**
- LBO Montenegro organized a **meeting with representatives of youth wings of political parties** and gathered representatives of the youth wings of political parties, who had the opportunity to hear more about the projects implemented by RYCO, the key results achieved, as well as about the established networks and the goals of the organization itself.
- RYCO Local Branch Office in Montenegro in cooperation with the Centre international de formation européenne (CIFE Nice/Berlin), Crossborder factory (Berlin/Sarajevo) and with the support of the Franco-German Youth Office (OFAJ/DFJW) organized 2nd editions of the project **'Friday, Saturday, Sunday for Future' – Perspectives from the European Youth** in Berlin. The events brought together around 40 young activists and students from 12 different societies aiming at raising awareness of the causes and consequences of climate change in the European Union and the Western Balkans and defining concrete actions for young citizens in their direct environment.
- Through the Superschools regional project RYCO LBO MNE has successfully implemented Info sessions which gathered around **70 professors and headmasters from Montenegro.**

LBO Montenegro **organized 12 local events which gathered 462 young people** and around 70 individuals working with youth, decision-makers and representatives of the international community. LBO staff **took part in approximately 60 meetings and activities** organized by local and international partners. LBO Montenegro continued intensive work in representing RYCO in Montenegro by successfully implementing regional projects but also local activities initiated with local partners in MNE, namely, OSCE Mission to MNE, French, German embassies and Council of Europe.

LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN NORTH MACEDONIA

LBO North Macedonia implemented **15 activities** as part of the operational plan and additional regional and local activities in partnership with other organisations. 9 of them were regional and 6 on a national level (more details in the LBO MKD report page 13: <https://bit.ly/3YxTEZQ>) Over **270 youth and over 180 working with youth participated** in such activities.

LBO North Macedonia and **Superschools** activities: the exchanges engaged 140 high school students and over 20 school teachers; the 4 closing events in Struga brought 55 students, 60 school teachers and 12 representatives of ministries of education from the WB region. With **RISE** regional project around 300 youth were involved whereas 20 young journalists from 2 Universities were engaged with the **Hajde** programme, and 8 youth were engaged with the **ROUTEWB6 caravan**. Some 80 young students were involved with the 3 granted projects from the **EU-WB-SI** programme.

The LBO took an active part in:

- The preparation of the **new National Strategy for Youth**, and it was involved in 4 working groups; the evaluation of the implementation of the national strategy for one society and interculturalism and creating the new strategy;
- Establishment of the **law "Youth Standard"**;
- Discussions on drafting the new law on secondary school organization;
- Followed the implementation of the law on youth participation.
- During the French presidency, LBO North Macedonia cooperated with representatives from the French embassy and French Cultural Center in 5 activities.
- The co- management of the **Prespa Forum Dialogue** created a space for RYCO to manage the regional **panel "Western Balkans Next Generation"**. Additionally, the Secretary General of RYCO Mr. Albert Hani was a panelist in "The European Peace Project in the Western Balkans" and "The Importance of Women in Governance".
- A **memorandum of cooperation** was signed with the National Youth Council this year.
- Representatives from the LBO MKD took part in the conference organized by the FES and German Embassy, which aimed to present the political will for intensified cooperation and support of RYCO as a product of the Berlin Process, where the Youth Representative of North Macedonia in the Governing Board of RYCO Mr. Blazhen Maleski was a panelist with the President of the Republic of North Macedonia and the director of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and presented the priorities of the youth declaration created during the youth forum in Berlin.

LBO North Macedonia attended 27 events where RYCO was presented and **14 important official meetings with stakeholders** were held. The Head of LBO North Macedonia Mr. Vladimir Gjorgjevski was panelist in the "Women in Foreign Policy" conference.

LOCAL BRANCH OFFICE IN SERBIA

LBO Serbia organized **16 activities**, out of which 10 had a local and 6 had a regional character. Besides local activities related to the implementation of RYCO's projects (Superschools, Hajde, RouteWB6, RISE, EU WB Student Integration, WB Youth Forum) the most important activities were the ones organized with local partners. Around **500 young people** (270 through Superschools, 230 through other activities) and some **350 working with youth** (teachers, representatives of CSOs, institutions, sport clubs etc.) were reached in 2022 by LBO Serbia.

2022 was the year when Serbia held the Chairmanship of RYCO's Governing Board and LBO Serbia supported the organization of 2 GB meetings in Belgrade, in July and December.

- OSCE Mission to Serbia supported the organization of **3 Meetups** on the topic of Gender component in Peace Building which was held in cooperation with the Faculty of Political Sciences, and two hybrid events on the topics of Youth Peace and Security Agenda and Quality Assurance in School Exchanges. The aim of these events was to offer an informal dialogue venue on issues that truly matter to civil society organizations and secondary schools aspiring to advance regional youth cooperation.
- The OSCE supported a Capacity Building Training for 14 civil society organizations in Serbia on the topic of project writing, and the development of the "**Participation card game**", an interactive tool for the involvement of young people in project design.
- In partnership with the National Youth Council of Serbia, LBO Serbia hosted a Third regional meeting of Umbrella Youth Organizations and National Youth Councils from the WB6. Following the priorities set in the RYCO Strategy 2022-2024 where UYO/NYCs will have important role in regional and local youth policy, as well priorities set within Berlin Youth Declaration, RYCO LBOs together with UYO/NYCs set joint priorities and started operational planning for next year.
- In the framework of Europride week in Belgrade, an event called RYCO@Europride was organized, when RYCO for the first time gathered young activists from LGBTIQ organizations from the region. The first EuroPride organized in Southeast Europe opened a chance for RYCO to gather 22 young human rights activists and journalists from the Western Balkans in order to discuss possible ways of enhancing the scope of LGBTI+ activism in the region, as well as to build internal RYCO capacities and capacities of young people engaged with the community on the topic of youth work with LGBTI+ members.
- An intercultural workshop was held for the 70 young people participating in the sports camp "**I came to play**", funded by the US Embassy.
- LBO Serbia also participated in the first edition of **Reconciliation Festival** in Novi Sad, and the joint cooperation for 2023 has been negotiated.
- In 2022, the **Memorandum of Understanding** was signed with the Faculty of Political Sciences for the continuation of Hajde project, but also participation of their students in the activities that RYCO organizes.

Staff of LBO Serbia participated in various activities organized by local CSOs, governmental and international organizations, often as panelists and speakers. Several meetings were held also with the representatives of Serbian institutions - Ministry of Youth and Sport (Ministry of Tourism and Youth), Ministry of Education, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Commissioner for Protection of Equality etc. LBO Serbia hosted the German Ambassador, EU Ambassador, Head of Council of Europe, delegation from Bundestag, Visegrad Fund and UEFA in its premises, but also other meetings with relevant stakeholders and partners such as the French Embassy, US Embassy, UNFPA, UNICEF, GIZ, KAS Foundation etc.

2.5 Research, Monitoring and Evaluation/REL

RYCO's Monitoring and Evaluation was further strengthened by the M&E system and upgrade through the full **PMERL cycle**, based on the following principles of work: Participatory Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting/Research - Accountability and Learning.



The main results of 2022 count among others the following:

- Creation of the M&E framework for the Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and all accompanying data collection tools and processes.
- Creation of the possible Project Logframes to be used for future project applications during 2022-2024.
- Creation and publication of the dashboard of the M&E results 2020-2021 in collaboration with Brainster Company from North Macedonia.
- Publication of the REL HUB online RYCO, progressing thus a step closer to strengthening the REL unit.
- Coordination of 2023 Annual Reporting.
- Internal evaluation of the Superschools 1st cycle and coordination of the external e evaluation of the schools involving children with disabilities and visual impairment.
- Coordination of External Evaluations for ROUTE WB6, EC projects, as well as supporting RISE project with data.
- Enriching the Donor Narrative Reports as well as supporting fundraising through the data and review of the Project Applications.

Furthermore, in 2022, **more than 10 reports** were prepared and supported with M&E data.

Further development of the M&E Unit will enhance the strategic development and growth of RYCO and will be the basis for the establishment of RYCO's Research, Evaluation and Learning Unit, aiming at strengthening RYCO's capacity to gather, manage and interpret data.

The main challenge of the M&E unit in 2022 was being understaffed.

2.6 Communications

In 2022, RYCO Communications Unit continued scaling up its external communications efforts. This includes reporting on the majority of the supported projects through RYCO's dissemination of the success stories of RYCO's activities, as well as informing the public on RYCO's projects (EC, ROUTE WB6, RISE, Superschools, GMFA, etc.) (more can be found in the projects' section of the report). Moreover, regular communications efforts were undertaken to keep the public updated on various meetings of the RYCO leadership and its LBOs.

Media in the WB6 region published in total 166 reports mentioning RYCO, all of them in a positive tone. The decrease in the number of media reports compared to the year before can be justified by two facts: RYCO, in general, had fewer visibility activities and the organization's vacancy of the Communication and Visibility Manager. On the other hand, RYCO can report significant success on its social media platforms, where the number of followers has increased from 10 % up to 54 %, depending on the type of the network. This can be explained also by two facts: RYCO has engaged Communication Officer who was primarily dealing with online content (social media and website), and RYCO has started posting more informal and youth friendly content. When it comes to communication key highlights, we can emphasize that:

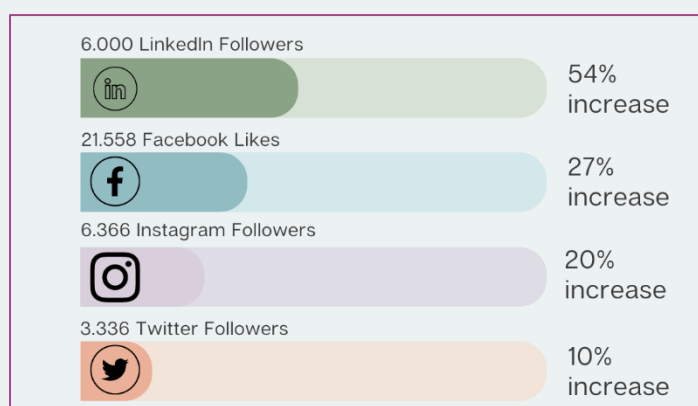
Western Balkans Youth Forum of the Berlin Process had an extensive campaign on RYCO social media platforms, where 75 posts/stories/articles were published. The content was prepared in very good quality and in a trendy, youth-friendly and creative way, including testimonials of the youth and other participants. The performance in social media of these events increased RYCO profile visits in a short period. Please, see the example [here](#).

RYCO's Superschools Exchange Program generated a significant amount of interest in 2022. Besides 140 media reports published all around the region, the program's website reached 8.3K new users who made 90K page views. Social media outreach also saw an increase in engagement. During the phase of the Open Call for the second cycle, all social media posts related to Superschools achieved a total of **3K** organic and unique reach. Superschool's second cycle gain extensive media coverage, with 140 reports in total. When it comes to social media, besides regular posts about the project, we can highlight success stories about exchanges from the first cycle, done in video format. Please, see the example [here](#).

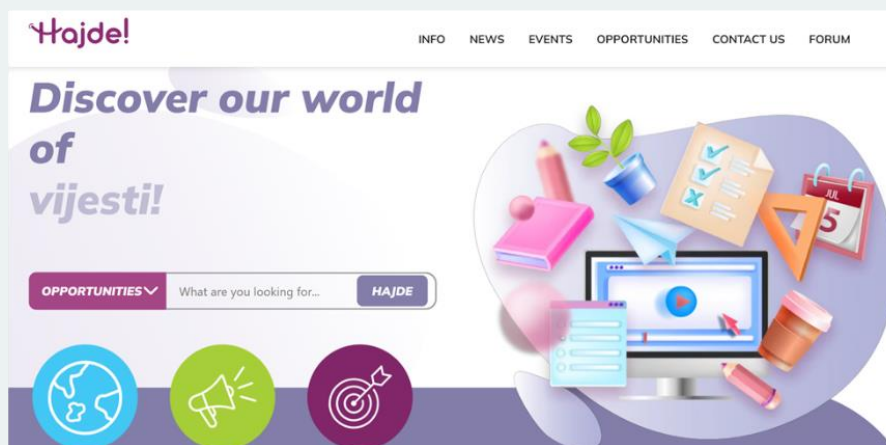
ROUTE WB6 Caravan had an innovative promotion approach that included engaging famous YouTubers and Hajde platform journalists, who reported about the activity in a creative, more informal and youth-friendly way. Examples are available in the report above.

In addition to project promotion, RYCO was promoted by the **activities that LBOs have organized for journalists**. Kosovo Peace Broadcasters - Empowering Young Journalists as peace reporters continued during 2022, through the conference, awarding ceremony, capacity building and mentorship program engaging over 50 young journalists. Capacity Building Training with young journalists in the field of intercultural dialogue and professional standards in Media reporting was organized in Montenegro, for 17 representatives of media. LBO Albania had 2 media appearances, LBO Kosovo featured in 12 written and online media, whereas LBO Montenegro in 15 media appearances.

The following publications should be considered major for RYCO communications efforts - [Shared Futures](#), [What You\(th\) Said](#), [Beginner's Manual for Project Proposal Writing 101](#), [M&E results 2021-2021](#),



2.6.1 Youth Digital Platform – HAJDE



In 2022, RYCO promoted its work and increased its visibility to young people within WB6 through the media platform, tailored by young people for young people, called Hajde. The '[Hajde! platform](#)' allows young people and young journalists to get to know each other, share their experiences and gain useful knowledge and information about professional opportunities and events in the region.

Other achievements of this project include:

- 12 Faculties of journalism in WB6 actively cooperating (writing articles) via the Hajde digital platform.
- There were 45 students of journalism involved in Hajde program.
- 53 article news were published and 110 opportunities and events.
- The platform's Facebook profile has 991 followers and its Instagram profile 839.
- Establishing relations with educational institutions in the WB6.

3. Organizational Development in 2022

In 2022 an immense help to RYCO for institutional capacity building has been the support of the GIZ. To further develop RYCO's institutional and organizational capacities to manage regional cooperation projects, the entire output of the WB6 School Exchange Scheme project has been invested in. The investment, with the support of the GIZ, will continue until the end of 2023.

A Functional Analysis of RYCO on its role, responsibilities and functions was commissioned and Deloitte contracted to determine the best organizational design that combines cohesive structures with efficient processes and systems and promotes synergy and flexibility.

As a result RYCO's GB was presented with:

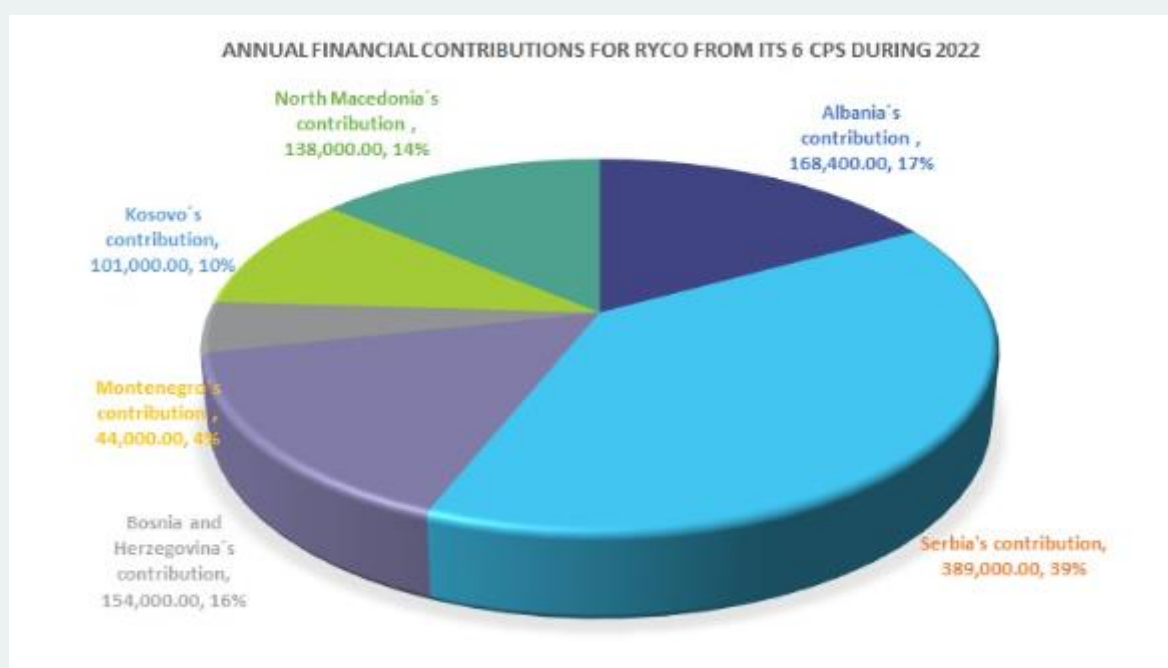
1. New high-level organizational structure
 2. Layers for salary scheme
 3. Revised HR Policy
 4. Structured Terms of References for all the core positions
-
- Capacity Building of RYCO staff was organized on the topics of RYCO thematic areas, but also on management, teamwork and communication.
 - In addition to that, in 2022 RYCO organized a staff retreat in Prizren in November for the entire staff to strengthen the team spirit. Coaching support to senior management and leadership, as well as core team members of Superschools project was provided.
 - The registration of the LBOs was one of RYCO's core organizational topics in 2022 and a functional analysis was seen as a prerequisite for its successful implementation.
 - New Rules and Operational Guidelines on Procurement Procedures of RYCO entered into force.
 - LBO Kosovo and LBO Bosnia and Herzegovina got new premises.

3.1 Financial sustainability

3.1.1 Annual financial budget execution

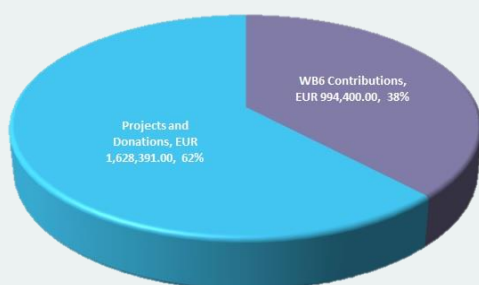
Total operating income in 2022 amounted to EUR 2,622,791, of which 994,400 EUR as a direct contribution from the six CP governments and 1,628,391 EUR from various Projects and Donations. During 2022, RYCO implemented various program activities supported by the following organizations/institutions: GIZ, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, French Embassy, Austrian Embassy, Regional Cooperation Council – Berlin Forum, TACSO Berlin Forum etc. The volume of the expenses for 2022 was EUR 844,097, from which 65% (EUR 546,169) as direct costs for activities and 35% (EUR 297,928) as operating costs. In the table below, you will find the amount in EUR and the share of the contributions from the 6 governments towards RYCO during 2022.

Table 5 - Annual Financial Contributions for RYCO from its 6 CPs during 2022



FINANCIALS' SUMMARY

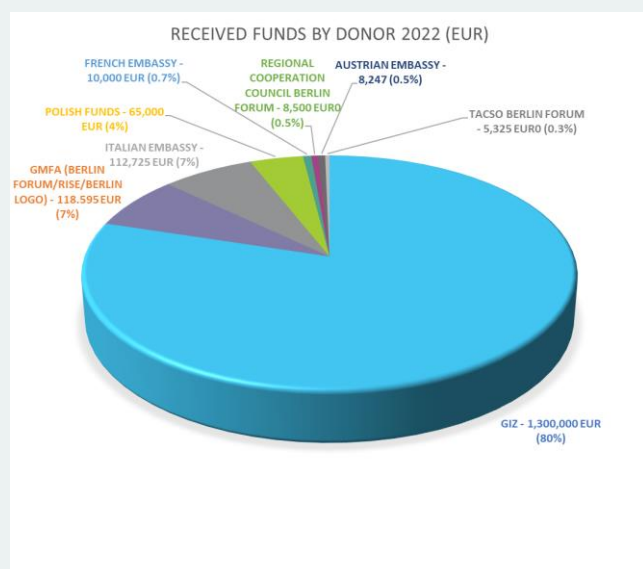
1. Revenues 2022 (EUR)



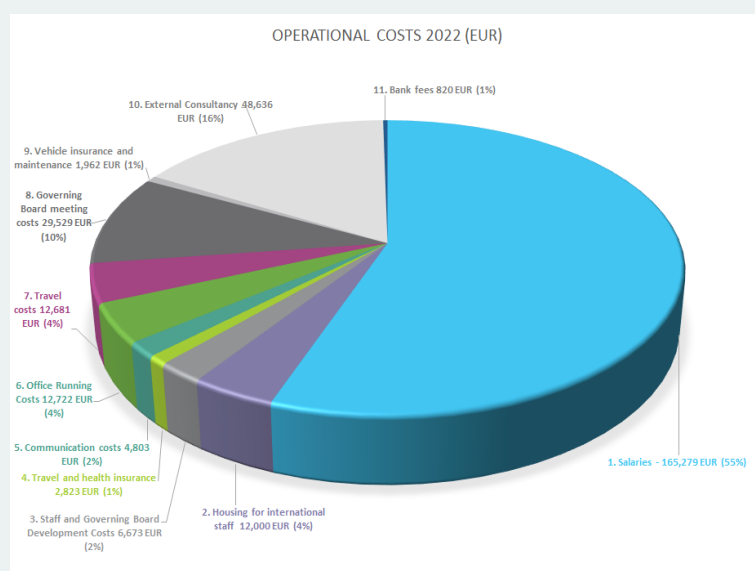
2. Expenses 2022 (EUR)



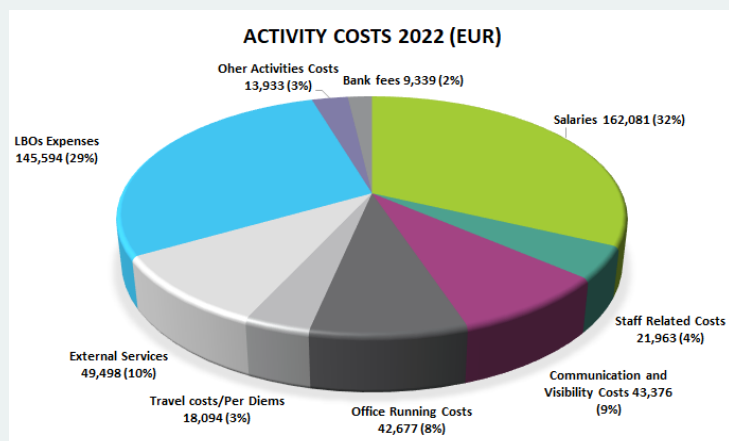
3. Received funds by donor 2022 (EUR)



4. Operational Costs 2022 (EUR)



5. Activities' Costs 2022 (EUR)



6. RYCO Local Branch Offices' Costs 2022 (EUR)



3.2 Procurement

The main achievement regarding procurement activity is the entry into force and implementation of the new Rules and Operational Guidelines on procurement procedures of RYCO, an internal manual which covers the whole procurement cycle, aimed at giving practical guidance and detailed steps to RYCO's staff involved in executing procurement procedures by harmonizing as much as possible RYCO Statute, Financial Regulations, donor's rules on procurement, and best practices.

By applying the step by step guidance this document renders RYCO the opportunity to perform efficient, economic and effective purchases, taking into consideration policy, economic, technical and commercial aspects.

The extent of the procurement activity throughout the region gives RYCO the opportunity to cooperate in the most advantageous way possible with the Economic Operators operating in the region benefiting the best value for money.

The continuity of the application of the framework agreements based on the new rules and operational Guidelines enables the identification of framework contracts that provide an efficient, cost effective and flexible means to procure services that were required continuously or repeatedly over a set period of time such as travel, accommodation etc.

• RYCO'S PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES IN 2022

Having regards to the main indicators: the source of funds, typology of contracts types of procurement procedures RYCO's procurement activity in 2022 has been performed as follows: Type of Procedure No
Open Procedure 10 Simplified Procedure 7 Direct Contracting procedure 90*

TYPE OF PROCEDURE	NO
OPEN PROCEDURE	10
SIMPLIFIED PROCEDURE	7
DIRECT CONTRACTING PROCEDURE	90 ^{iv}

^{iv} This number includes the procurement procedures and contracts concluded for the external experts engaged in the frame of Superschools Program.

3.3 Legal

RYCO Summarized Annual Legal Report for the work conducted for the period from January – December 2022.

A) Objectives and scope of work of the Legal Unit of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office during 2022:

The work of the Legal Unit during 2022 consisted mainly on:

- I. Preparing the draft contracts, be it for the core staff, the project staff, different service providers, based in RYCO's Statute, Host CP Agreement and other internal regulations and rules, while taking into account the obstacles that might appear due to the existence of 6 different legal frameworks.
- II. Increase efficiency and effectiveness in the drafting process by preparing and using templates, even though each contract is different and unique, due to the terms of reference and other terms and conditions that might appear during the negotiation process.
- III. Ensure better management of the contracts. The workload of the Legal Unit in a regional Organization is constant and challenging, as we can briefly mention the process of compiling the contracts or their amendments, as well as the preparation of other legal documents, such as Memorandum of understandings, Partnership agreements, Donation agreements, Decisions and Legal Opinions, providing legal assistance etc.
- IV. Since January 2023, RYCO has only 1 Legal Officer carrying all the works and tasks related to the legal work.

Summarized Report on Legal Documents compiled for 2022:

- 1.Donation Agreements: Total number of documents: **10**
- 2.Partnership Agreements/Agreements for Endowing of an Allocation: Total number of documents: **42**
- 3.Grant Agreements: Total number of documents: **1**
- 4.Attestations and Official Letters toward various institutions: Total Number of documents **18**
- 5.Service contracts/Service contracts amendments/Supply contracts: Total number of documents: **264**
- 6.SG awarding contracts + internal orders Decisions: Total number of Secretary General compiled decisions: **276**
- 7.GMFA project awarding contracts for Berlin Logo Process: Total number of documents: **3**
- 8.Employment contracts (RYCO funds): Total number of documents: **7**
- 9.Legal Opinions/Interpretations/Briefs compiled by the Legal Unit:
- 10.RISE WB6 Lab Project: **6** Notification Letters sent to the Local Incubators and **1** Amendment to the Partnership Agreement with GROUPE SOS Pulse.

Total number of the legal documents: **7**

Total number of documents: **11**

Conclusions: In addition to the produced legal documents, the legal work has also been provided on assisting colleagues on different legal matters, providing support towards the registration in the Immigration Office etc.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS COMPILED FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY-DECEMBER 2022 IS: **657**

4. RYCO Partners and Supporters 2022

