



Call for Participants: RYCO Research Mentorship Program

Are you ready to explore why young people are leaving the Western Balkans and how we can change that? Do you want to better understand youth unemployment and propose **evidence-based solutions**?

Project Overview

The **Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)**, supported by the **Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs**, is launching a new project to address two of the most common youth issues in the Western Balkans: **brain drain** and **youth unemployment**.

We are looking for **young researchers** who are passionate about making a difference and ready to take part in an **evidence-based journey** to help shape the future of young people in the region.

What's in it for You?

- ✓ **Capacity building** through training and **mentorship by Western Balkan researchers living and working in Austria**
- ✓ **Study visit to Graz, Austria** – explore research institutions and connect with experts
- ✓ **Collaborate** with fellow young researchers from across the Western Balkans to develop **evidence-based solutions**
- ✓ **Present your research and ideas** at a final conference in the Western Balkans, attended by **policymakers, academics, and civil society representatives**
- ✓ Become part of the **RYCO Pool of Young Researchers** after the project



What do we expect from you?

- Active participation in the Study visit (planned in Early May)
- Active participation at the biweekly online meetings after the study visit (May – September)
- Active participation at the final Conference of the project (early November)
- Able to work online with the team on the research topic
- Become part of the **RYCO Pool of Young Researchers** after the project
- Cooperation with RYCO, teammates and mentors

Who Can Apply?

If you are:

- A **young researcher aged 18–29** from *Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo**, *North Macedonia, Montenegro, or Serbia*
- Currently studying in the field of **Social Sciences (BA, MA, or PhD)**
- Interested in becoming part of the **RYCO Pool of Young Researchers** after the project
- Able to **work and communicate proficiently in English**
- A **passport holder of at least one of the WB6 Contracting Parties (CPs)**

How to Apply?

Choose one topic:

- **Youth unemployment**
- **Brain Drain**

¹ *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.



Send us:

1. Your **CV**
2. A **paper** (any piece of research or academic writing you have done in English – published or unpublished)
3. Proof that you are an **active student** at one of the WB6 universities
4. **Motivation Statement** (max. 1 page, answering the following two questions):
 - **Why do you want to be part of this program, and what do you hope to gain or contribute?**
 - **What draws you to the topic you selected, and how do you connect with it personally, academically, or professionally?**

☐ **Deadline for applications: April 1st, 23:59 (CET)**

☐ **Send all documents to Rel@rycowb.org with the Subject: Application for the RYCO Research Mentorship Program**

***Please note:** Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview as part of the final selection process. In addition, we reserve the right to suggest a change topic based on the participant's background and the diversity of groups.*