



## MIRAI PROGRAM

*“Western Balkans Meet Japan: A bridge into the future”*

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

The MIRAI Program (“Mutual understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative”), initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, aims to build bridges between youth from Europe and Japan. Since 2018, RYCO has served as the official implementing partner for the Western Balkans. The youth exchange program “Western Balkans Meet Japan: A Bridge into the Future” enables youth from the region to explore Japanese society, culture, and peacebuilding efforts through direct engagement and dialogue.

### OBJECTIVE

The MIRAI Program aims to promote mutual understanding, peacebuilding, and friendships between youth from Japan and the Western Balkans through intellectual and cultural exchange. The program empowers young people to learn from Japan’s peacebuilding experience and to become active contributors to dialogue and cooperation in their communities.

68+

YOUNG PEOPLE

5

CYCLES





## OUTCOMES

- More than 68 participants from the Western Balkans since 2018.
- Study visits to Tokyo and Hiroshima with cultural and educational activities.
- Alumni-led local action plans on reconciliation and dialogue.
- Strengthened regional cooperation among youth.

## TARGET GROUP

The program is open to undergraduate and graduate students who are at least 20 years old at the time of travel. Applicants must be residents and passport holders of one of the Western Balkans 6 Contracting Parties: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, or Serbia. Eligible candidates must have a good command of English, a strong academic background, and a demonstrated interest in peacebuilding and intercultural dialogue.

## BUDGET AND DURATION

The program is fully funded by the Government of Japan and covers international travel, accommodation, meals, insurance, and all official activities. It includes a seven-day in-person visit to Japan including activities in Tokyo and Hiroshima. The visit is preceded by a mandatory online pre-exchange session. The next edition, MIRAI 2025–2026, will be announced on RYCO's official website.

*\*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.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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