



RYCOgnizing YPS: Meaningful Youth Participation in the Western Balkans

Second Batch of Organizations Awarded Grants from the Reserve List

Ref. No.	Full Name of Applicant	Title of the Project	Contracting Party	No. of Partners	Project Summary	Thematic Area
Preliminary List (7 projects)						
00202535	Nisma per Ndryshim Shoqeror ARSIS	Youth Voices for Peace and Inclusion		1	<p>This project aims to empower youth from Albania and Montenegro to become active leaders in promoting peace, inclusion, and the prevention of violence, hate speech, and disinformation through a series of interconnected activities. It begins with a hybrid kick-off meeting to foster cross-border dialogue and collaboration on peace and security. A youth leadership boot camp in Tirana will equip 35 young people with skills in advocacy, conflict resolution, and democratic engagement. Building on this, youth in Albania will co-develop a policy brief with actionable recommendations for local authorities on promoting peace and inclusion. The project will also support three youth-led community initiatives in both Contracting Parties, addressing local challenges through dialogue, workshops, and inclusive events. Finally, a digital campaign will be designed and launched by 30–40 youth to combat hate speech and disinformation online, using creative content and outreach strategies to reach over 500 young people. Together, these activities create a comprehensive approach to empowering youth participation in decision-making and building more resilient, inclusive communities across the Western Balkans.</p> <p>This action addresses this problem by creating inclusive blogs for youth engagement in local peace and security initiatives. Through a series of activities, such as youth leadership boot camps, policy development workshops, and community-led actions, we empower young people with the skills and knowledge to actively participate in decision-making processes. The project also includes a digital campaign to raise awareness about peace, security, and youth inclusion. Fostering collaboration between youth, local authorities, and stakeholders, the project ensures sustainable change, promoting continuous youth involvement in shaping policies and strengthening local peacebuilding efforts.</p>	<p>Participation – Empowering young people to have a voice in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives, ensuring they are active contributors to democratic processes.</p> <p>Prevention – Addressing key drivers of instability in the region, such as extremism, corruption, and socio-economic inequalities, by supporting youth-led initiatives that promote resilience and positive change.</p>
00202574	Obrazovni centar za demokratiju i ljudska prava CIVITAS	Democracy Bus: Building Trust and Collaboration of Youth and Local Governments	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	<p>Democracy Bus is a youth-led initiative designed to promote meaningful youth participation in public policy and decision-making processes at the local level in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project directly contributes to the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda by empowering young people to engage in democratic governance and advocate for concrete policy solutions. At the core of the initiative is a mobile outreach tour — a symbolic and practical tool for civic engagement — in which youth teams travel to six municipalities to engage in structured dialogue with local authorities. They will present public policy proposals co-created during a preceding hybrid Youth Policy Lab, where participants will receive training in public policy development, intercultural</p>	<p>Participation – Empowering young people to have a voice in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives, ensuring they are active contributors to democratic processes.</p> <p>Prevention – Addressing key drivers of instability in the region, such as</p>



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					<p>communication, peacebuilding, and nonviolent dialogue. These proposals will address locally identified issues such as youth participation, participatory budgeting, gender equality, interethnic cooperation, prevention of discrimination and extremism, and improved transparency in local self-governance. If adopted, these solutions could help address key challenges youth face, improve their status in society, and reduce their motivation to migrate. The Democracy Bus will act as a traveling civic space, enabling young people to connect with local public officials, institutions, and communities through youth-led forums, awareness events, and public presentations. One of the municipalities will host a regional mobility exchange, enabling participants from another WB6 Contracting Party to take part, share experiences, and foster intercultural cooperation. We have already established contact with Club Alpbach Montenegro, who have agreed to act as our partner for youth selection and coordination from Montenegro. By building institutional partnerships and producing concrete policy outputs, the project aims to strengthen youth influence in local governance while promoting peacebuilding, democratic values, and interethnic cooperation. It prioritizes the inclusion of marginalized groups and will ensure that at least 60% of all participants are female. The initiative will conclude with the submission of formal policy recommendations to local governments and the production of a digital publication and video documentary, serving as a replicable model for institutionalizing youth participation and enhancing local democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond.</p>	<p>extremism, corruption, and socio-economic inequalities, by supporting youth-led initiatives that promote resilience and positive change.</p> <p>Partnerships – Building stronger connections between young people, local and/or state institutions, and international organizations to create sustainable, long-term solutions for regional challenges.</p>
00202512	Foundation for Information, Media, Dialogue & Education KosovaLive (KosovaLive/KIMDE)	SafeLine Prishtina - Sarajevo: Digital Safety and Mental Health for Youth	Kosovo*	1	<p>The project "SafeLine Prishtina - Sarajevo: Digital Safety and Mental Health for Youth" is a regional initiative led by KosovaLive (Kosovo) in partnership with UDT BiH (Bosnia and Herzegovina). It aims to enhance digital safety skills and mental health awareness among youth in Prishtina and Sarajevo. Through a series of interactive workshops, a youth-designed digital safety toolkit, an online exchange session, and a youth-led awareness campaign, the project will empower young people to navigate digital spaces safely and advocate for mental well-being. The project will also produce youthdriven policy recommendations to promote safe and inclusive online environments, which will be presented to local authorities in both cities.</p> <p>The six-month initiative aligns with the RYCO thematic pillars of Participation and Protection, ensuring young people actively engage in shaping safer, more inclusive digital communities. Project addresses the problem in a meaningful and sustainable way by providing youth in Prishtina and Sarajevo with practical skills, tools, and support systems to protect themselves online and maintain mental well-being. Through peer-led workshops, youth will gain digital safety knowledge and learn coping strategies for mental health. The digital safety toolkit, co-created by youth, will serve as a longterm resource for safe online behavior. Regional exchange activities foster mutual understanding and collaboration, promoting lasting relationships. Additionally, the project's youth-driven policy recommendations will advocate for institutional support, ensuring that local authorities continue to prioritize youth safety and well-being</p>	<p>Participation – Empowering young people to have a voice in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives, ensuring they are active contributors to democratic processes.</p> <p>Protection – Strengthening mechanisms to safeguard youth from violence, discrimination, and human rights violations, fostering safer and more inclusive communities</p>



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00202564	H.E.R.A.	Youth Connect: Building Inclusive Participation through Local Partnerships	North Macedonia	1	<p>This 8-month project aims to institutionalize youth participation in local governance and strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships for peacebuilding in North Macedonia. Implemented by HERA in partnership with the Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth, the project will establish or revitalize youth councils in three municipalities, equip marginalized youth with skills in policy-making and advocacy, and create formal cooperation mechanisms between youth, civil society, and public institutions. Through training, consultations, joint action planning, and a regional youth exchange, the initiative promotes inclusive governance, reconciliation, and the Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) agenda.</p>	<p>Protection – Enhancing mechanisms to protect young people from violence, discrimination, and human rights violations, promoting safer, inclusive communities.</p>
00202540	Youth Initiative for Human Rights	From Insight to Impact	Montenegro	1	<p>This project aims to contribute to the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda by empowering youth in Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina to become active agents in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and inclusive governance. It strengthens youth capacities through regional training, peer education, and mentorship, enabling them to design local initiatives, engage with municipalities, and influence local action plans (LAPs). Young participants will lead workshops in high schools, co-create grassroots proposals with their communities, and conduct training sessions for local authorities. The project also includes comprehensive mixed-method research on youth discrimination, informing 20 policy recommendations. The final youth-led conference will showcase all outcomes, foster regional dialogue, and promote actionable policies. Through this multi-level approach, the project supports the YPS pillars of Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Partnership, while encouraging long-term collaboration between youth, civil society, and local institutions. Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina (YIHR BiH):</p>	<p>Participation – Empowering young people to have a voice in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives, ensuring they are active contributors to democratic processes.</p> <p>Prevention – Addressing key drivers of instability in the region, such as extremism, corruption, and socio-economic inequalities, by supporting youth-led initiatives that promote resilience and positive change.</p>
00202566	Civic Initiatives	NextGen Balkans: Dealing with the Future	Serbia	2	<p>As the key regional partner, YIHR BiH brings extensive experience in peacebuilding, reconciliation, and interethnic youth dialogue. The organization will support the recruitment and preparation of BiH youth participants, co-facilitate the regional training, and contribute to the implementation of youth-led initiatives and policy dialogue. Their involvement ensures cross-border exchange, regional relevance, and the integration of comparative approaches from the BiH context.</p>	<p>Partnerships – Building stronger connections between young people, local and/or state institutions, and international organizations to create sustainable, long-term solutions for regional challenges.</p>
					<p>The Next GenBalkan project aims to empower youth from minority communities in Serbia and Kosovo to become active participants in democratic processes, promote social integration, and contribute to sustainable peacebuilding. By fostering inclusive, cross-sectoral cooperation, the project will enhance the role of youth in shaping local policies and defending human rights. The initiative will achieve this through two interconnected</p>	<p>Participation – Empowering young people to have a voice in shaping policies and decisions that affect their lives, ensuring they are active</p>



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outcomes: Enhanced cooperation between youth, local authorities, and civil society organizations, leading to the creation of a joint working body that facilitates regular dialogue on youth-related issues and ensures meaningful youth participation in local policymaking. Establishment of a regional youth platform that connects around 100 young people and organizations from both Serbia and Kosovo* to monitor human rights violations and implement an alert mechanism to advocate for the protection of youth, especially from marginalized communities.

Together, these efforts will strengthen democratic participation, build trust across communities, and ensure that young people are both heard and protected in local and regional governance processes and actively participating in peacebuilding.

contributors to democratic processes.

Protection – Strengthening mechanisms to safeguard youth from violence, discrimination, and human rights violations, fostering safer and more inclusive communities.

Partnerships – Building stronger connections between young people, local and/or state institutions, and international organizations to create sustainable, long-term solutions for regional challenges.

*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.