

ANNUAL REPORT



YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
NISMA E TE RINJIVE PER TE DREJTAT E NJERIUT
INIICIJATIVA MLADIH ZA LJUDSKA PRAVA



2022



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DIRECTOR**

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ACTIVITIES
IN 2022**

Another challenging, yet active and empowering year for YIHR KS!

Activism, solidarity, and passion for change have never been stronger. More than 2,400 youngsters were direct beneficiaries of our 151 diverse activities. We are proud that 2022 has marked a milestone in our contribution to dealing with the past and peace-building processes, rule of law, and protection of human rights.

Femicide, sexual violence, and state homophobia have unfortunately been prevalent throughout the year. However, YIHR KS has joined every protest demanding the protection of women and girls and has pledged to protect and advocate for human rights in every instance. Simultaneously, we have monitored hate speech in the parliament and the media and have been consistent in our support and advocacy for the inclusion of same-sex marriages in the draft Civil Code. We believe in structural changes, which is why throughout our street actions, protests, and other advocacy activities, our key messages have been focused on asking for institutional responsibility and accountability.

Furthermore, inter-ethnic reconciliation and peace remained a priority in our work. The Children of War Museum is in its final stages before its launch in 2023. This is a remarkable effort to enhance collective memory about the recent war in Kosovo as a way of dealing with the past as well as developing a critical approach towards divisive nationalist narratives through research and documentation of wartime experiences and stories. We are proud and happy to have made a substantial contribution in advancing people-to-people dialogue, creating safe spaces for inter-ethnic cooperation between youngsters from different communities, and empowering them to be the next champions of change in dealing with the past processes in Kosovo and the Western Balkans region.

We have built new platforms for promoting and supporting activism and its vital importance in our fight for human rights. This year we launched our very own Activism Hub, a safe space for all activists to use, and for the first time ever, we awarded the Human Rights Activist of the Year Prize which serves as a platform of acknowledgement of tireless activist work, and simultaneously promotes human rights activism. Moreover, we published our 3rd joint annual Report of CSOs on Human Rights, the only publication of this nature which brings around 40 CSOs in a joint initiative to analyze the human rights situation in Kosovo and gives concrete recommendations to institutions on how to improve human rights.

This year was challenging, yet empowering. We will continue with our activism for justice, equality, peace & freedom in 2023. We hope to count on your continuous support!

Yours truly,

Marigona Shabiu
Executive Director

2022 ACHIEVEMENTS



2022 ACHIEVEMENTS

2,444

**DIRECT
BENEFICIARIES**

151

ACTIVITIES

9

**MOUS WITH
NGOS &
INSTITUTIONS**

10

**STREET
ACTIONS**

8

PROTESTS

ROGRAM-BASED ACHIEVEMENTS

DEALING WITH THE PAST PROGRAM

1

**Peace Fellowship
Program**

15 Fellows

3

World Cafes

100 participants

1

**Conference on
'Commemorations of
the 1990s wars in 2021'**

2

**Youth Exchange
Programs**

54 participants

1

**Capacity Building
Training for NGOs
Representatives**

19 participants

1

**MoU with
the National
Library**

6

Street Actions

4

**'Dealing with the
Past Principles'
Information sessions**

HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW PROGRAM

4

Memorandums of Cooperation

1

Launching event for the CSOs Report on HR

55 participants

3

Consultations meetings for CSOs Report on HR

30 participants

1

Capacity Building Workshop

56 participants

4

Mock Trials

120 participants

1

Artistic Competition

3 Winners

2

Living Libraries

89 participants

2

Street Actions

4

Justice Murals

27

Justice Lectures

450 participants

1

Open Court Day

22 participants

1

Alternative School for HR

22 participants

2

Court Monitoring Programs

96 participants

15

Reports received at My Rights Platform

2

Court Internship Programs

60 participants

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

3

Living Library

58 participants

25

Bilateral Meetings

4

Cohesion Circle Workshops

100 participants

1

Youth Peace Camp

23 participants

1

Manual of Civic Peace Education

2

Storytelling Workshops

42 participants

4

Street Actions

1

Internship Program for Non-Majority Communities

1 intern from the Roma community

4

MoUs with NGOs



WHO WE ARE / MISSION / VISION

03



WHO WE ARE

Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) was initially established as a regional non-governmental organization in 2003, which was later transformed into a regional network of YIHR in Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. For over 19 years, Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo (YIHR KS) has successfully worked in protecting and promoting human rights and democratic values not only in Kosovo, but also in the region. Specifically, YIHR KS is focused on the process of dealing with the past, protection and promotion of human rights, and empowering the role of youth at the local and regional levels.

MISSION

YIHR KS promotes, protects, and advocates for human rights, dealing with the past, rule of law, and civic values as the core foundations of a free, responsible, and progressive society.

VISION

A free, equal, and just society where all people can realize their full potential.

YIHR KS TEAM

04



YIHR KS TEAM



MARIGONA SHABIU
Executive Director



ENIS SELIMI
Finance and
Administration
Manager



RINA KADIRI
Program and
Operations Manager



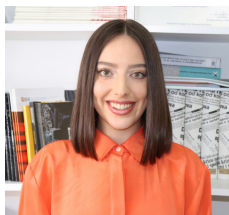
BJESHKA GURI
Program Coordinator



BLENDË PIRA
Legal Researcher
and Program
Coordinator



FJOLLA ZEJNULLAHU
Projects and
Development
Coordinator



FIONA HAXHIISLAMI
Projects and
Communications
Coordinator



ERONA HAJDARI
Administration and
Human Resources
Officer



ILIR VITIJA
Project Coordinator



ERA CINA
Program Assistant



URESA AHMETI
Program and
Communications
Assistant



RITA TËRSTENA
Junior Graphic
Designer



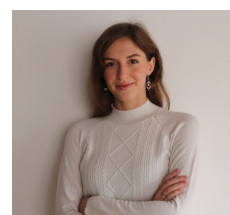
HANA BERISHA
Program Assistant



ANIDA GJURGJIALI
Program and
Monitoring
Assistant



ART VULA
Program Assistant



SUZANA MARIĆ
Program Assistant



Isabel Conforti
Fulbright Fellow



Dimitrije Obrenovic
Peace Fellow

YIHR KS & WELLBEING

05



YIHR KS & Wellbeing

A word from HR

One of the main priorities during 2022 for YIHR KS management was to promote and raise awareness on the mental health and well-being of its employees. YIHR KS is dedicated to making its employees feel valued, supported and have a culture of openness.

YIHR KS is constantly working to develop policies and practices that support staff well-being and mental health, and simultaneously supporting social activities to create a closer and friendly relationship between its staff.

2022 has been a successful year in regard to wellbeing and promoting healthy work practices. Our goal is to continue and strengthen our work in this direction even more in 2023!

Warmly,

Erona Hajdari
Administration and
Human Resources
Officer

EVENTS OF 2022

06



Accreditation

During this year, the Human Rights Program was accredited by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation for two years. The program contains practical information about human rights, legal framework, and justice institutions such as courts, prosecutors, the Ombudsperson Institution, the Free Legal Aid Agency, the Kosovo Bar Association, etc. The program is currently being used as part of the YIHR KS human rights education program with high school and university students from different parts of Kosovo.



You can read the publication here:

<https://bit.ly/3RTLJ7y>

Publication of “Shared Narratives: Fostering reconciliation by bridging differences in divided narratives”

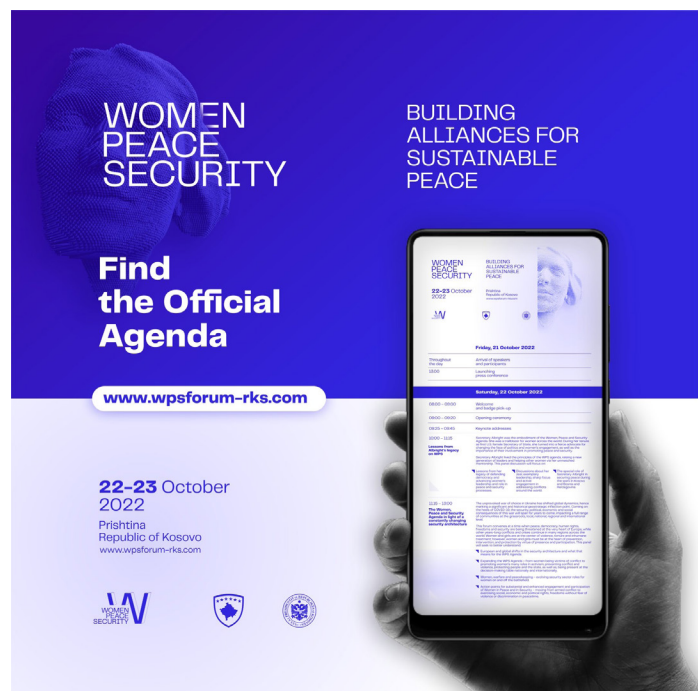
Youth Initiative for Human Rights Regional Network has published a new publication called “Shared Narratives: Fostering reconciliation by bridging differences in divided narratives”. At the press house in Zagreb, on June 9, Nikola Kandic, Viktorija Stankovic, Vuk Vujisic, Engjell Hamiti, and Maja Žilic presented ‘Shared Narratives’ on which they worked with young people from all over the region. The latest publication, which is part of the “Past Continues” program, involved young people in the process of dialogue in order to prevent the repetition of violence that occurred in the 90s in the former Yugoslavia.

Women, Peace, and Security Forum

On the 22nd of October, YIHR KS partnered with the President's Office of Kosovo to hold the 'Youth Perspectives and their Powerful Role in Peace Processes and Dealing with the Past' panel within the 'Women, Peace and Security' Forum.

The panel was moderated by YIHR KS Executive Director, Marigona Shabiu and consisted of these speakers: Albert Hani – Secretary General, RYCO; Maliha Iqbal - IKEA Scholar and Head of Partnership, Youth Opportunities; Chamithri Rambukwella – Diplomat, Sri Lanka; Daniel del Valle Blanco - Diplomat; High Representative for Youth, International Human Rights Foundation; Neha Swain - Recipient of Queen Elizabeth's Young Leaders Award & Co-founder of Rubaroo NGO.

The discussion focused on how we must be creating spaces and channels for youngsters of diverse backgrounds as the 'present and future peacebuilders' to share their vision on peace and security since it is vital to enhance their role in challenging not only physical, but also structural and cultural violence in their communities.



— Activism Hub Launch & Human Rights Activist of the Year Prize

On 7th of December, the first day of the Human Rights Week, YIHR KS launched its new Hub for Activists. The Activism Hub is an open, youth friendly space foreseen to be used by the activists and young people of all communities.

During the launching ceremony, YIHR KS, for the very first time, announced the Human Rights Activist of the Year Prize 2022. The independent jury, after reviewing all the nominations, selected Lend Mustafa as the winner for his outstanding contribution in the field of human rights, especially the rights of LGBTQIA+ persons.



— Rights Land Podcast

YIHR KS brought the Rights Land Podcast for the first time in the 9th Volume of Human Rights Week.

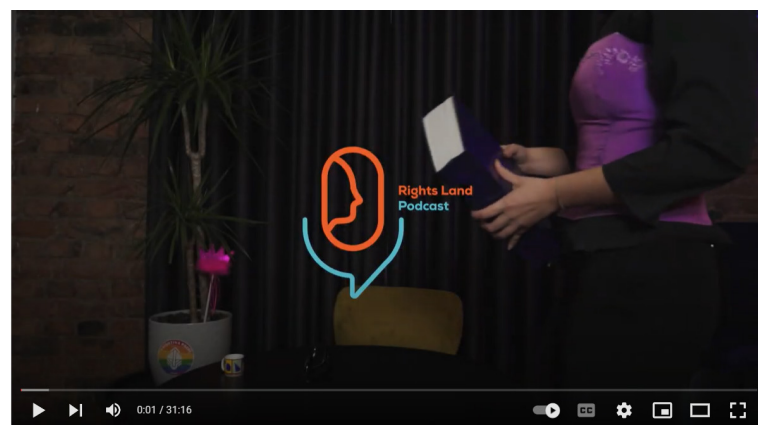
You can watch Rights Land Podcast - Episode 1 at this link:

<https://bit.ly/3Jy0VW1>

Rights Land Podcast displays and dissects power imbalances and human rights violations, while simultaneously imagining and advocating for an equal and just future! This platform centralizes youth and marginalized voices and perspectives.

Ever wondered what homophobes do in their power positions? Ever thought it's disturbing that the state speaks about ensuring human rights to all, but some humans suffer on the ground?

Watch this episode to hear Uresa Ahmeti discuss with Haveit, a feminist collective, gender-based violence, LGBTQIA+ rights, and how to prevent burn-out in order to be a sustainable human rights activist.



Rights Land Podcast - Episode 1

2 views • Dec 9, 2022

👍 0 🗨️ DISLIKE ➦ SHARE 🎧 CLIP ➦ SAVE ...



3rd Joint Annual Report of CSOs on Human Rights 2021

In May 2022, Human Rights Network published the 3rd joint annual Report of CSOs on Human Rights 2021. This report was a reflection of the human rights situation in Kosovo in 2021. Around 37 CSOs working in the human rights field contributed with their inputs and recommendations to the report. This document contains more than 100 specific recommendations which have been addressed to competent institutions.

YIHR KS has submitted a complaint before the Kosovo Bar Association

YIHR KS has submitted a complaint before the Kosovo Bar Association regarding a video circulating on social media, where attorney Tomë Gashi is seen kicking the tray of a beggar in the main square of Prishtina. The Kosovo Bar Association did not qualify YIHR KS as a party to the legal proceedings, considering that YIHR KS has no legal interest in the matter. Afterward, the case was addressed by Kosovo Bar Association, where Mr. Gashi got fined 2500 EUR for his unethical behavior.



YIHR KS has initiated legal proceedings for a civil dispute against the Kosovo Council for Written Media

On the 11th of April 2022 YIHR KS made two separate and formal requests for the removal of a video that was widely distributed through various written media outlets in Kosovo. The requests were premised on the notion that the video contained language that could reasonably be interpreted as hate speech or language that is disrespectful toward Kosovo-Serb community.

The Kosovo Council for Written Media declined both requests. Subsequently, on the 10th of May 2022 YIHR KS filed a lawsuit with the Basic Court in Pristina, within the department for Administrative Disputes. However, the court has redirected the lawsuit to the department for Civil Disputes, as the department for Administrative disputes deemed itself to be without jurisdiction in the matter.

OUR PROGRAMS

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DEALING WITH THE PAST PROGRAM

YIHR KS continues to contribute by creating and maintaining platforms for dealing with the past as well as peace-building initiatives throughout the region. This program focuses on supporting initiatives and raising awareness among people, especially youth, about the recent past in Kosovo in particular and in the Western Balkans more broadly. We aim to build up and preserve collective memory and contribute to the peace-building processes.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW PROGRAM

YIHR KS remains a leading organization in the field of human rights in Kosovo. Since 2004, YIHR KS has been working on monitoring and reporting on human rights violations and advocating for the implementation of laws and functioning of human rights protection mechanisms. Thus, YIHR KS aims to continue being an active defender and promoter of human rights in Kosovo as well as in the region.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

YIHR KS believes in the power of young people as responsible and active citizens in building a just, equal, and peaceful society. Hence, the main focus of this program is two-fold. First, it is to empower young people to become active participants in social and political life at the local, national, regional, and global level through formal and non-formal education. Second, it is to strengthen youth capacities in engaging, protecting, and advocating for human rights for all and in engaging in the processes of dealing with the past.

DEALING WITH THE PAST PROGRAM

08



DEALING WITH THE PAST PROGRAM

PROJECT

KOSOVO YOUTH DIALOGUE

Kosovo Youth Dialogue is a 72-month project. This project aims to empower young people to actively participate in dealing with the past and reconciliation processes in Kosovo by encouraging inter-ethnic communication, interaction, and cooperation, addressing common interests, building confidence, and promoting mutual understanding and positive attitudes.

Children of War Museum

We have been working on launching our Children of War Museum in 2023. It was a productive preparation phase. Meetings with stakeholders, research, curatorial concept development among other key processes marked a very successful year regarding the launch of our Children of War Museum.

Youth Exchange Program

During April and September two (2) Youth Exchange Programs were able to offer 54 youngsters the opportunity to learn more on dealing with the past, peace and conflict, hate speech, stereotypes and prejudices, and human rights in general with a professional facilitator. Through one week of interactive activities, memorial visits, and group work with our mentors on video production, photography, storytelling, and theater, it engaged the participants to develop empathy, seek the truth, and use art forms as a medium to jointly oppose the nationalist narratives that exist in our societies and at the same time promote reconciliation within the group and beyond. The team work initiated many positive relationships between the participants and gave the product of joint artistic projects which conveyed significant messages. For many of them, this was the first time they were interacting with a young person from the other ethnic community.

The good news is that for the edition of the 7th Youth Exchange Program, there were another three follow-up activities. The participants got to meet again after the 1st phase of the one week program. In the 2nd phase our Peace Champions went on a day trip to multi-ethnic cities in Kosovo such as South Mitrovica, North Mitrovica and Gracanica. In Mitrovica, we walked through the

bridge and hiked our way to the Miner's Monument. We took this time to talk about sites of inter-ethnic cooperation and sites of ethnic unity. We visited Gracanica as our next destination for that day trip. We were welcomed by Young Active Gracanica and we heard much about their grassroots initiatives and civic activism. In the 3rd phase our Peace Champions gathered for our Project Writing training to learn more on the technicalities of project writing, project implementation, and budget making. They also had a chance to brainstorm potential ideas to apply for our 1000\$ project grants, part of our 4th phase of the project, addressing themes of peace, conflict, and reconciliation. In the fourth phase of the YEP 7 participants had the opportunity to submit their project proposals to receive our small grants. This initiative was conceptualized to empower youth and their role in their communities.



‘World Café with decision makers’ in Gjilan, Ferizaj, Mitrovica

The World Café with decision makers was held in Gjilan, Ferizaj, and Mitrovica. More than 90 young people from different ethnicities had the opportunity to talk with local and national decision-makers, discuss ideas and concerns, and express their need as young people to become allies with decision-makers in further promoting capacity building for young people.

Capacity Building Training for NGOs Representatives

Nine-teen (19) representatives of non-governmental organizations in the field of transitional justice and reconciliation took part in a three-day training on capacity building and activism in these two areas. In an aim to increase the capacities of NGOs - in particular those at the local level - so they can be more active and contribute to the reconciliation process in Kosovo, YIHR KS team organized this advanced 3-day training led by Nora Ahmetaj as an expert in transitional justice. Amongst many topics covered were transitional justice, intercultural dialogue, dealing with the past process, fundraising for transitional justice, and reconciliation projects. The agenda of the training included three guests' speakers covering an hour or more of each day, and those were: Besnik Beqa from HLC, Mehmet Musaj from KRCT, and Kosovo Specialist Chambers representatives.

‘Dealing with the Past Principles’ Info sessions

Young people from high schools and universities in Istog, Peja, Shtërpçë, and Prizren are now more informed on Dealing with the Past Principles in the context of Kosovo. Through interactive info sessions held by the transitional justice expert, Nora Ahmetaj, students had the opportunity to learn and discuss more on dealing with the past process, and specifically on this civic initiative which aims to guide political and public actors, the media as well as the youth on how to treat topics related to the past. Principles for Dealing with the Past is a civic initiative, promoted by the informal coalition consisting of Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo (YIHR KS), Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo (HLCK), Integra, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), Kosovo Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims (KRCT), and Nora Ahmetaj.

Conference: ‘Commemorations of the 1990s wars during 2021’

YIHR KS, YIHR Srbija, YIHR BiH and YIHR MN presented the findings of the regional report and handbook on commemorations of war and war crimes in Serbia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Montenegro for the period of January - October 2021. These two publications are the result of the monitoring of commemorative practices dedicated to the 1990s conflicts, organized by the state institutions, victims' associations, and civil society organizations.



HUMAN RIGHTS & RULE OF LAW PROGRAM

09



HUMAN RIGHTS & RULE OF LAW PROGRAM

PROJECT

“Youth Empowerment – Enhancing Rule of Law and Human Rights Education in Schools”

This project aims to empower young people to become active participants in civic life in Kosovo, by increasing their knowledge, critical thinking, and skills to demand justice. The basis of the project is the Manual on Human Rights Education for Young People, which is created by YIHR KS and accredited by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology & Innovation and State Licensing Council for Teachers. The second objective of the project is to increase the capacities of elementary school teachers through training courses to deliver the human rights education program in their classrooms.

Memorandums of Cooperation

Throughout the project, we held a training course with Law Students on public speaking and lecturing on human rights, the justice system, and rule of law, based on the Manual for Human Rights Education for Young People. Afterward, the students will have the chance to hold lectures with elementary school students from five targeted municipalities. In order to facilitate effective coordination and cooperation, we signed Memorandums of Cooperation with the targeted Municipality's Directorates of Education, who will help us better coordinate our activities and aid with the other activity foreseen in the project, which is the training course with professors of Civic Education from the targeted municipalities on the manual. After the training course, the professors will introduce the manual to their students and integrate it into their curriculums.



Building The Capacities Of Human Rights CSOs And Enhancing Human Rights Education

Building Capacities of Human Rights CSOs and Enhancing Human Rights Education is a project designed with the aim of bringing together civil society organizations and other activists, and through strengthening their capacities, to promote and advocate for human rights for all and to contribute in increasing the transparency and accountability of state institutions.

Retreat of the Human Rights Network partners

Representatives of the Coordination Committee of the Human Rights Network attended a two-day workshop with the aim of setting the framework for the fourth joint CSOs Human Rights Report which will be published in 2023. During the retreat they discussed the most pressing issues in the field of human rights in Kosovo and talked about the advocacy and the activism as a mechanism to contribute in fostering a dialogue between state institutions and CSOs.



Capacity Building Workshops for CSOs

In order to increase the professional capacities of the grassroots and other civil society organizations, YIHR KS organized three Capacity Building Workshops in Prishtina in 2022. During the aforementioned workshops the representatives of organizations had the chance to learn more about human rights in general and justice institutions and to build their capacities about reporting methodologies. During the workshops some specific topics were tackled such as the rights of LGBTQIA+ community.



Consultation Meeting of the Organizations for the joint CSOs Report

The publication of the annual joint CSOs Report on Human Rights is an assessment which is being published yearly by Human Rights Network. In order to gather the inputs from civil society organizations, YIHR KS organized three consulta-

tion meetings in 2022 with the aim of discussing the structure and the content of the third and fourth report and to identify the most critical fields to be tackled.

Living Libraries

In 2022 YIHR KS organized two Living Libraries in Shtime and Hani i Elezit. The idea of the activity was to raise the critical thinking of high school students on important issues such as human rights in Kosovo and the rights of the most vulnerable groups in Kosovo, including women, LGBTQIA+ community, non-majority communities in Kosovo as well as people with disabilities. At our living library events we had a number of activists and young people sharing their stories and personal experiences to the audience.



Development of the methodology to assess the human rights situation in Kosovo

In 2022 YIHR KS developed the methodology with indicators to assess the human rights situation as well as the methodology to monitor the implementation of the recommendations derived from the yearly reports on human rights. The documents will serve to unify the reporting procedure for all the organizations contributors to the report as well as to build their professional reporting capacities in the human rights field.



The launching event of the third joint annual CSOs Human Rights Report for 2021

In May 2022, the launching event of the third joint annual CSOs Human Rights Report for 2021 was organized. This event gathered the representatives of civil society organizations, media, and institutions in a very fruitful discussion in Prishtina. During the event the report was presented and the recommendations were addressed to the competent state institutions.

PROJECT

Anti-Hate Speech in Western Balkans

Anti-Hate Speech in Western Balkans is a regional project that tackles hate speech in the media towards the most marginalized groups. The main idea of this project is to monitor and register hate speech in Western Balkans as well as to increase knowledge to recognize and report hate speech through public advocacy and flow of information.

Registering cases of hate speech

From January until December 2022 YIHR KS has registered the most visible cases of hate speech towards marginalized groups in Kosovo. All the hate speech cases we monitored were towards LGBTQIA+ community, women, and members of non-majority communities in Kosovo. In total 25 cases of hate speech in the media have been identified. It is very important to mention that the number might be higher due to the pluralism of media in Kosovo and the lack of authority control when it comes to online written media. This number derives from the identification of the most visible articles we searched for hate speech content in written online media and from what YIHR KS has observed throughout the year. Among the 25 cases, we had 16 cases of hate speech against the LGBTQIA+ community, 4 cases of hate speech against women, and 5 cases of hate speech on an ethnic basis. Also, there has been one case of discrimination on the ground of disability being judged in the domestic courts of Kosovo.

Publishing graphical statistical data on registered cases of hate speech

In 2022, YIHR KS produced two informative infographics on the hate speech situation in Kosovo. The infographics have reflected the statistics gathered by YIHR KS. The first infographic has been published by the end of May for the time period from January 2022 until May 2022. The highlight of the first infographic was the summary of cases of hate speech spread during the Parliament session in which the members of parliament discussed the draft Civil Code and the article that allows same-sex marriages. The second infographic was for the period of June-November 2022. In this infographic the attention was put to the hate speech against woman used frequently in social media outlets, mainly triggered by the rise of reporting of rape and domestic violence cases in Kosovo.



Regular Coordination with State Institutions

YIHR KS met the representatives of public institutions and discussed about hate speech towards marginalized groups in Kosovo, especially LGBTQIA+ community. The LGBTQIA+ community has faced a lot of hate speech during this year when the draft Civil Code and the article for same-sex marriages were being discussed. During 2022 YIHR KS met with the President of Kosovo, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, the Ombudsperson Institution, and the Director of the Office for Good Governance. During the meetings we discussed the situation of human rights in Kosovo in general as well as hate speech and discrimination towards the most marginalized groups. We called on institutions to condemn the hate speech towards these groups and to publicly react to the hate speech spread in the Parliament of Kosovo during the session when the draft Civil Code was being discussed.



Youth for Justice Project

“Youth for Justice” aims to empower youth to seek justice and become active participants in the justice sector in Kosovo.

My Right Platform

During 2022, the YIHR KS team has continued to promote the “My Right” platform. The aim of this platform is to empower young people in the justice sector, to raise awareness among young people about accountability and transparency, and to increase their knowledge about human rights and justice institutions in Kosovo.

The platform also offers a ‘Report and Ask’ section where the general public can report a case or inquire about a case in which human rights have been violated. YIHR KS will seek accountability from the relevant institutions and will monitor them for actions or omissions regarding the reported questions/cases. Throughout the year we have received **15 reports** which have been addressed by the YIHR KS team to the relevant institutions. In some cases, YIHR KS was able to establish communication between the reporting parties and the relevant institutions, while many citizens have been advised to submit their claims to the competent authorities and were informed with the legal procedures that can be taken.

Justice Lectures

YIHR KS organized 27 Justice Lectures where trained lecturers delivered lectures for high school and university students, in all regions of Kosovo. Through these sessions, participants had the opportunity to learn more about the legal system in Kosovo, and learn more about human rights and institutions.



Local Mock Trials

Four separate Mock Trials in four different cities were conducted. Local Mock Trials offer high school students the opportunity to learn about the role of the judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, and the legal system in Kosovo. On the third day of these residential training sessions, the students organized a simulated court session, where they themselves played the roles of judges, prosecutors, and lawyers.

Artistic Competition

During 2022, one artistic competition was held which invited youngsters to use their creative expression to tackle human rights issues in Kosovo. The art mediums accepted for this competition were essays and poetry. At the end, the best three essays and poems received a prize.

Court Monitoring Program

This program is a great opportunity to engage law students directly in the legal system. Students had the opportunity to attend different court sessions and partake in the sessions themselves by monitoring the sessions and writing reports on how the judicial system and the procedures in courts proceed. This year 50 monitors were placed in different Basic Courts in Kosovo.

Justice Murals

This year within the Youth for Justice project four Justice Murals were inaugurated. Four high schools in Prishtina, Shtime, Malisheva, and Pozheran were the beneficiaries of these Justice Murals. These murals not only add to the look of the school, but also raise awareness for human rights, and encourage critical thinking for the students.



Internship Program

This year two groups of interns were selected and placed in the Basic Courts of Kosovo in different regions and branches of the courts. 60 law students and law graduates worked as interns in courts where they had the opportunity to work with judges in different departments.

Open Court Day

On November 25, 22 high school students from the Gjilan region had the opportunity to visit the Basic Court of Gjilan. The students met with prosecutors and judges, asked questions, and learned about the court, the work it does, and the legal system in Kosovo.



Alternative School for Human Rights

The Alternative School for Human Rights offered students from different academic and geographical backgrounds lectures, talks, and visits during the month of July. Participants had the opportunity to attend lectures from lecturers and guest speakers, and learn about human rights, how to identify human rights violations, gender equality, and the rights of non-majority communities. Along with the lectures, the students visited the Ombudsperson's office, the Constitutional Court of Kosovo, the Assembly of Kosovo, and met with OSCE representatives.



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

10



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

PROJECT

Reconciliation and Conflict Transformation (RCT)

The purpose of the Reconciliation and Conflict Transformation (RCT) activity in Kosovo is to address current reconciliation needs between different ethnic groups in Kosovo on individual, community, and institutional levels. Reconciliation & Conflict Transformation Activity, is implemented by Community Building Mitrovica and partners from New Social Initiative and Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Kosovo.

25 Bilateral Meetings

In 2022, during the second year of the project, YIHR KS held 25 bilateral meetings. YIHR KS team had prepared a list of different stakeholders to meet for this activity that consisted of people from different fields, different backgrounds, like journalists, activists (from Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serb communities), non-governmental organizations, representatives from the government, business owners, etc. During these meetings, YIHR KS team discussed with the participants existing reconciliation needs between different ethnic groups in Kosovo at individual, community, and institutional levels.



Cohesion Circle Workshops

Workshop 1 & 2 - Prishtina

In April, the first workshop was organized with the members of the cohesion circle in Prishtina. The three-hour workshop gathered 20 participants. The aim of the workshops was for members to meet each other and define a place for community events.

The 2nd workshop was held in May, in Prishtina. The purpose of the workshop was to allow members to reflect and elaborate on the previous ideas, and propose additional topics and potential actions. The event gathered 8 participants, from the Prishtina region who discussed the planning of community events.

Workshop 3 & 4 - Gjilan

In September, YIHR KS team held the 3rd Cohesion Circle workshop in Gjilan, during which the planning of the activity was discussed in more detail.

The fourth workshop “Our traditional food” took place in the city of Gjilan in November. In this event there were 31 participants present. The planned idea behind this activity was for the participants to be first introduced with traditional food and music, then to visit the City Museum. It was incredible to see and be around different communities who live in Kosovo and have many things in common, food being one of them.



Developing and reviewing non-formal education curricula/program

YIHR KS started to develop a manual for intercultural learning on the local level, using success stories as examples in February 2022.

The Manual on Civic Peace Education is packed with a variety of activities and non-formal education methods to promote intercultural learning and address the needs of the community for dealing with the past, reconciliation, and conflict transformation.

The Civic Peace Education manual is designed as a valuable resource for educators and youth leaders to promote intercultural learning and foster a deeper understanding of dealing with the past, reconciliation, and conflict transformation. It is intended to serve as a guide for teachers, youth groups, and other community members.

‘Living Library’ - Storytelling Workshops

Storytelling workshops aim to engage and help youth in expressing their vision. Three storytelling workshops were held in three different cities: Prishtina, Mitrovica, and Gjilan. In these workshops, youth from different communities in Kosovo had the chance to learn how to use different art forms such as writing, design and music to address dealing with the past topics. Furthermore, they had the opportunity to hear from activists about their stories, which helped them understand each other’s experiences, break barriers, and discuss solutions to further improve relations between communities in Kosovo.

Youth Peace Camp

The Youth Peace Camp was held in August for 23 young people from different communities in the Gjilan region. The camp focused on topics related to peace, intercultural learning, and reconciliation, and emphasized teamwork, peaceful communication, and cooperation. The participants from various ethnic communities came up with ideas for active citizenship and responsible social activism. One of the ideas resulted in a Street Action on International Youth Day with the slogan “We Are Here, Hear Our Voice.”



Fostering New Approaches to Youth Reconciliation

The purpose of the project Fostering New Approaches to Youth Reconciliation is to enhance intercultural dialogue and cooperation among young people of different ethnic backgrounds as well as challenge the biased and ethno-nationalist public discourse regarding the past of Kosovo and enrich it with personal stories and experiences of people.

Established cooperation with grassroots organizations

This year YIHR KS has cooperated on promoting intercultural dialogue, dealing with transitional justice, and youth empowerment with 4 organizations such as Centar Manjinske Zajednice (CMZ), located in Gračanica, Lokalni Omladinski Savet, located in Shtërpçë, Social Knowledge for Real Accountability and Transparency (SOKRAT) in Parteš, and Local Peace in Leposavić.

“Youth Remembers Initiative” Storytelling Workshops

In 2022 YIHR KS organized two Storytelling Workshops. During these Workshops, 42 young people from different ethnic communities learned about the importance of documenting war experiences. They also learned about storytelling techniques and the benefits of using these creative forms of expression in dealing with the past processes.

Internship Program for the non-majority communities

This year Alisan Skenderi joined YIHR KS as an intern. This internship program was designed as an opportunity to learn more about collective memory, functioning of CSOs, to support the organization with different daily activities and in general, to increase the capacities of the intern in their fields of interest.



HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK

11



HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK

YIHR KS marked an incredible Human Rights Week Vol.9. with the slogan “United, Against Injustices!” This week we focused on the connection between human rights and peacebuilding. Through 12 diverse activities, from the most formal to the most creative, we discussed, analyzed, and critically thought about areas that require improvement in regard to peace and human rights. Simultaneously, we highlighted the ways in which peacebuilding and conflict-avoidance are directly related to the protection and promotion of human rights, with a special focus on marginalized groups.

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

10:00-12:00 Conference: State Obligations Towards Human Rights
National Library

18:00-22:00 Activism Hub Launching & Winner Announcement for the Human Rights Activist of the Year Prize
Offices of YIHR KS

7
DECEMBER

12:00 - 16:00 Activism Workshop
Human Rights Activism Hub at YIHR KS Offices

18:00 Rights Land Podcast
YouTube: YIHR KS Channel

20:00 - 22:00 Trivia Night in PJs
Offices of YIHR KS

9
DECEMBER

14:00 - 15:30 Discussion: The Ripple Effects of War
Offices of YIHR KS

18:00 - 20:00 Exhibition: Virtual Museum of Refugees
National Museum of Kosovo

20:10 TV Debate: Hate Speech & Discrimination
DESKU, KTV

8
DECEMBER

14:00 Street Action: 'Answer the Call, Don't Pass the Ball'
Skenderbeu Square
Awareness-Raising Video
YIHR KS Facebook

18:00 Theatre Play: Inside Four Walls & Drag Show
Oda Theatre

10
DECEMBER



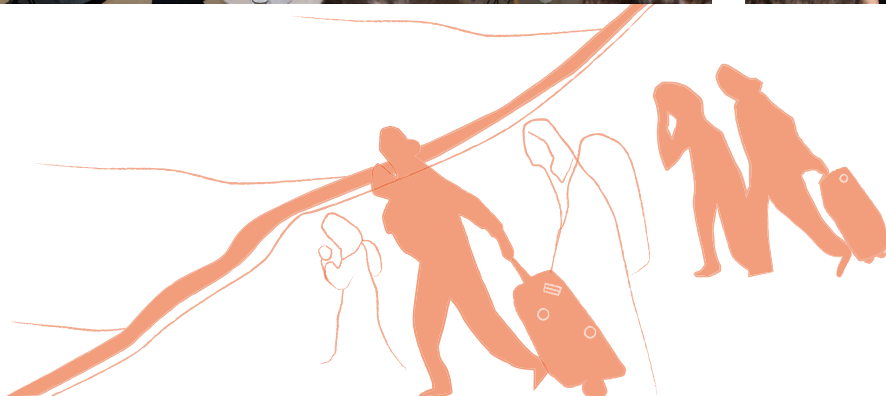
Conference: 'State Obligations Towards Human Rights'



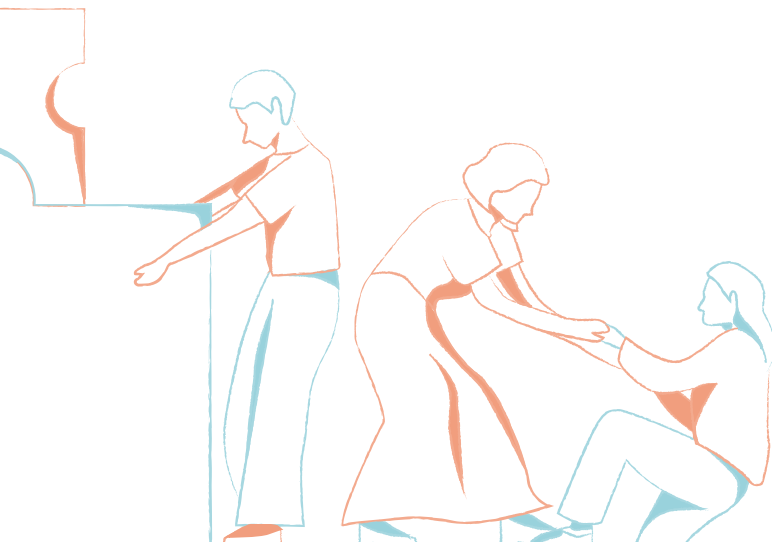
Activism Hub Launching & Winner Announcement of the Human Rights Activist of the Year Prize



Talk: The Ripple Effects of War



Exhibition: Virtual Museum of Refugees



Activism Workshop- Human Rights Activism Hub at YIHR KS Offices



TV Debate: Discrimination and Hate Speech in Kosovo



<https://bit.ly/3VXReDH>

Awareness-Raising Video: 'Answer the Call, Don't Pass the Ball!'

<https://fb.watch/j5GpcD9RnR/?mibextid=qC1gEa>



Rights Land Podcast

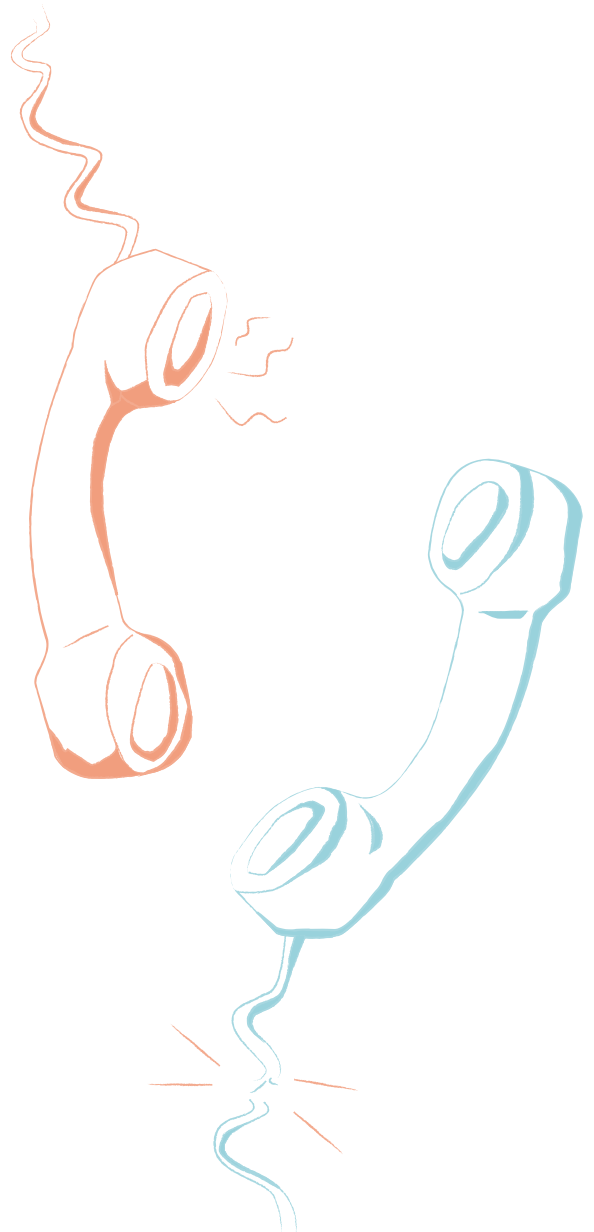


Rights Land Podcast - Episode 1

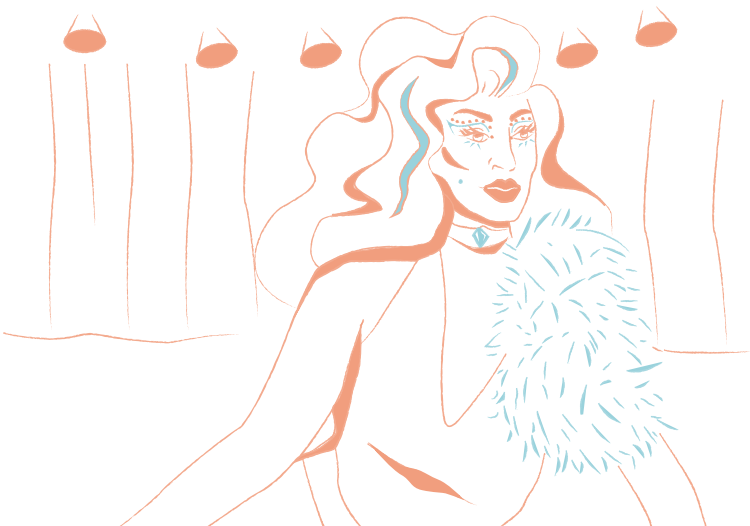
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<https://bit.ly/3Jy0VW1>



Street Actions: 'Answer the Call, Don't Pass the Ball'



Theatre Play: Inside Four Walls & Drag Show



PROTESTS

12



Protest against Homophobia in front of the Assembly on the negligence and refusal to advance human rights

YIHR KS protested in front of the Assembly to express dissatisfaction with the neglect and refusal to advance human rights, for all persons without distinction, which are guaranteed by the Constitution! With the motto 'DEPUTIES SWEAR ON THE CONSTITUTION, NOT ON RELIGIOUS BOOKS!' We protested in front of the Assembly with the message that this battle is not over yet, we will resist until social equality is achieved.

Protest against the war in Ukraine

YIHR KS, together with the citizens of Kosovo, gathered at the Russian Liaison Office in Pristina to express that our society and state stand against the occupation of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

As a society, we have experienced the devastating effects of war, the consequences of which we continue to suffer today, therefore we sympathize with the people of Ukraine for their suffering at this very difficult time.



March against the Murder of Women!

This 8th of March we didn't celebrate, we marched and demonstrated our resistance to patriarchy.

Marching from the Palace of Justice to the center of Prishtina, we shouted against men murdering women and we made our demands to the responsible institutions for bringing justice to girls and women that continue to suffer from gender-based violence.

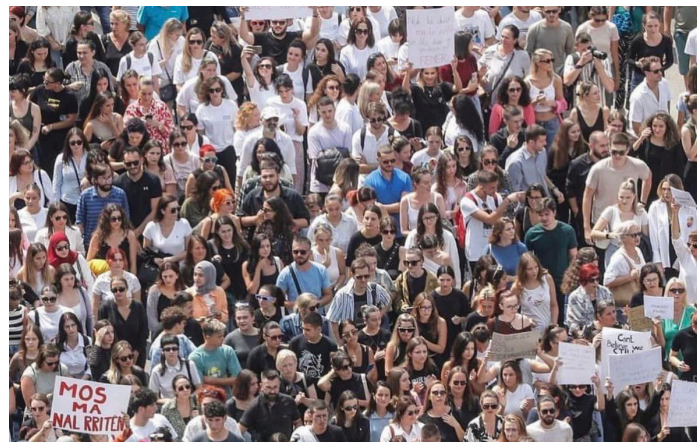
Our common struggle for liberation, gender equality and social justice must continue!

This 8th of March echoed solidarity and hope!

Protection for Women and Girls!

Following the case of the rape of the 11-year-old girl by 5 boys and men, together with other organizations and independent activist groups, we organized the protest calling for 'Protection for Women and Girls.' Together with thousands of citizens, we raised our voices and made our calls more than clear:

- 1 State protection and security for girls and women;
- 2 Fair handling of cases of violence against women and meritorious punishments for the perpetrators;
- 3 Legalization of the use and distribution of irritant gas for self-defense (pepper spray).



Protest at the Prosecutorial Council of Kosovo

Our first protest against the rape of an 11-year old girl by 5 boys and men led us to new information that doubles the state's guilt in this crime. Six more men were arrested who in June had trafficked, raped, and exploited the minor for sexual services. Despite this, we are without accountability from the State Prosecutor's Office who failed to protect the victim and prevent her rape in August. Under these conditions, our second protest did not stop at the Government. It continued to the Prosecutorial Council of Kosovo, where we demanded the dismissal of the Chief Prosecutor of the Basic Prosecution in Pristina, Kujtim Munishi.

Symbolic Protest Action at the PCK

We closed the entrance of the Prosecutorial Council of Kosovo with two ribbons demanding the PCK to dismiss the prosecutor Ruhan Salihu and the chief prosecutor of the Basic Prosecution in Pristina, Kujtim Munishi. We declared the Prosecutor's Office and the PCK as crime zones. Through these institutions, negligent, sexist and racist prosecutors are maintained and reproduced, who then become complicit in gender-based crimes.



Women, Life, Freedom! - In solidarity with women in Iran

Morality police in Tehran killed Mahsa Amini, 22, for not wearing the headscarf properly. After this event, protests spread throughout the country. Many women in Iran are removing the veil and cutting their hair in protest and resistance against the gender-based control and violence against them. More protesting girls and women have gone missing and been found dead.

For these violations of human rights, different countries and communities around the world are protesting. As a sign of solidarity with women and girls in Iran, we as the Youth Initiative for Human Rights saw it as vital to make it known that Kosovo also stands behind this cause.

We stood in solidarity with women in Iran and felt beyond heart warmed and inspired by everyone's participation both by showing up, and by cutting their hair in sign of solidarity.



STREET ACTIONS

13



Dealing with the Past Principles - Street Actions

In the streets of the city of Mitrovica, Peja, and Gjakova we organized street actions where we showed the principles of Dealing with the Past Principles Kosovo through an installation.

Being aware of the harmful and negative impact that one-sided or false statements and actions on war victims and survivors, hate speech, harmful rhetoric, glorification of people that convicted war crimes, denial of crimes and one-sided confessions by state actors, and such actions have on the process of dealing with the past in Kosovo, we call on politicians, other state actors and the general public to get informed on Dealing with the Past Principles Kosovo on how to treat victims, survivors, historical narratives, and the painful past to offer them the respect and justice they deserve.

The citizens expressed special interest in these principles by reading and researching more about them.

The street action was organized by the Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo (YIHR KS), as part of the Informal Coalition for Principles for Dealing with the Past.



Constitution Day - Street Action

On April 9, through the “Do you know they’re violating our Constitution?” (“A pe dini qe po na shkelin Kushtetuten?”) street action we demanded accountability from state institutions about the violations of our constitutional rights. This concept came as a result of the non-passing of the civil code that allows same-sex marriages in the Assembly of Kosovo.



National Day of Missing Persons - Street Action

On the 27th of April 2022, YIHR KS marked the National Day of Missing Persons through a street action in the “Skënderbeu” square in Prishtina. Together with activists and citizens, we placed flowers on the ground in the shape of the number 1620 as a symbol for 1620 missing persons. Through this street action, we stood in solidarity with the pain of all families of missing persons and simultaneously called for institutional responsibility and action to clarify the fate of all missing people.



International Refugee Day - Street Action

On the 20th of June 2022, we marked the International Refugee Day through the street action “I was a refugee.” Large numbers of citizens and activists contributed to the action by signing the installation to share that they were refugees during the recent war in Kosovo. At the same time, they expressed their solidarity and support towards all those who are forced to leave their homes because their lives, safety or freedom are threatened.



International Youth Day - Street Action

On August 12, YIHR KS through the street action “When is it going to get better?!” marked Youth Day. Day by day young people are ready to leave Kosovo, because of fundamental human rights violations. Migration of Kosovo youth is a major concern, and by displaying suitcases on the main boulevard in Prishtina we tried to capture just how real this problem is and through engaging with citizens we reflected on the situation in Kosovo.



“We are Here, Hear our Voices” - Street Action

On the 12th of August, we marked International Youth Day in Gjilan through the street action “We are here, hear our voices”. Citizens and activists joined the action by writing positive and negative messages on the “Wall of Youth” about the reality that the youth of Kosovo continue to face. The diverse experiences of young people must be heard and institutions must make a serious effort to include the wishes and needs of young people in their policy making.



‘The Waiting Door’ - Street Action

We marked the International Day of Enforced Disappearances on 30th of August by standing in solidarity with the pain and revolt of families and society for uncovering the truth and finding justice for 1621 missing persons. In this street action, a ‘Waiting Door’ was installed in the main square in Prishtina to symbolize our prolonged waiting and our concern for not resolving this issue for years. The door was covered in black to portray the agony the families feel each day they wait for the enlightenment missing people’s fate.



International Peace Day - Street Action

We marked the International Day of Peace with a street action in Zahir Pajaziti Square. This year, we dedicated Peace Day to the Peace Generation as a way to recognize the efforts, contribution and influence of young people in social change. Together we celebrated our young generation that actively and tirelessly works to undo injustices and build peace once and for all. This day served as a good opportunity to reflect on what we have done so far, and what we can do further on building peace.



ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES IN 2022

14

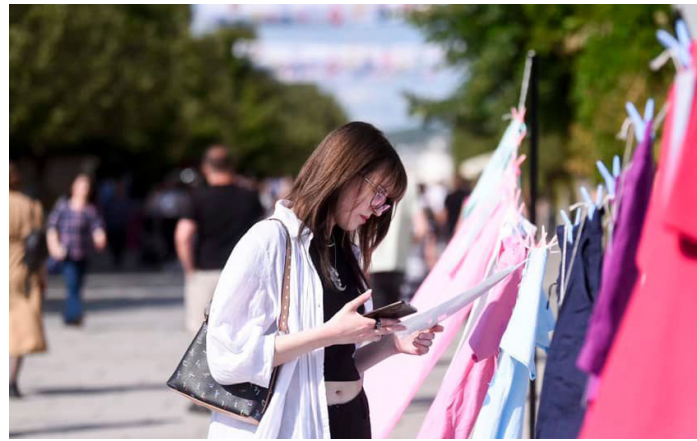


Pride Week

As part of the Pride working group, YIHR KS supported Pride Week (June 6 - June 9) this year by co-organizing numerous events together with CEL Kosovo and CSGD Kosovo. Pride Week this year aimed to bring light to the issue of the draft Civil Code and same-sex marriage. Through the slogan “We’re in the State, We’re in the Family” YIHR KS made a call for solidarity, equality, justice, and social change. On June 9th, the 6th Pride Parade was held by a march in the streets of Prishtina. YIHR KS stands in solidarity and continues to support, advocate, and resist together with our queer friends in the fight for freedom, acceptance, and equality both in the state and the family. We will celebrate queer people’s existence and the colors they bring to this world!

YIHR KS Stood up and Advocated for the Regulation of Same-Sex Marriage in the Civil Code

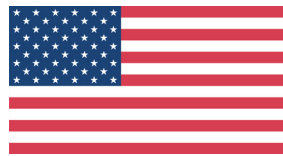
On January 20, 2022, over 60 civil society organizations, and activists joined the processes of advocacy reports for the regulation of same-sex marriage in the Draft Civil Code.



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