

Annual Report

Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo

20

23

TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 01 FOREWORD FROM
YIHR KS DIRECTOR
- 02 WHO WE ARE
MISSION
VISION
- 03 YIHR KS
TEAM
- 04 YIHR KS &
WELLBEING
- 05 2023 KEY NUMBERS
- 06 OUR PROGRAMS
- 07 DEALING WITH
THE PAST
- 08 HUMAN RIGHTS
& RULE OF LAW
- 09 YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT
- 10 HUMAN RIGHTS
WEEK
- 11 PROTESTS
- 12 STREET ACTIONS

01



FOREWORD
FROM **YIHR KS**
DIRECTOR

FOREWORD

FROM YIHR KS

DIRECTOR

2023 - a year of relentless and uncompromised activism for justice and peace!

I am deeply proud and humbled by the unwavering activism and work of activists and the team of YIHR KS during 2023. As I reflect on the achievements, impact, and challenges we have encountered, I am filled with joy that yet again we have surpassed ourselves and managed to have another great year with over 200 different activities that benefited over 3,570 youngsters.

We launched the Generation Peace Activists Network (GPAN) in June 2023, a huge initiative that fostered collaboration between young activists from Kosovo and Serbia. GPAN provides a platform for amplified voices, cross-border initiatives, and impactful opportunities. Inter-ethnic reconciliation and peace remain a priority in our work. Especially considering the rising ethnic tensions among youth after the attack in Banjska and following political developments, we have carefully conducted activities that educate youth, raise awareness among the general public, and ask for institutional accountability.

Kosovo institutions have posed a remarkable and stagnating challenge during 2023 in regards to the Children of War Museum - a project focusing on enhancing 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. We were unable to launch the museum because of the lack of physical space due to institutional negligence! Despite this, our fight continues stronger than ever.

We have implemented hundreds of activities focusing not only on reconciliation and peace but human rights advocacy and the rule of law. The fourth Joint Annual Report of CSOs on Human Rights 2022, a collaborative effort within the Human Rights Network, stood as a testament to our commitment. With contributions from 37 CSOs, the report presented over 160 recommendations, shaping the discourse on human rights in Kosovo.

Further, we continued our Rights Land Podcast series to enlighten and engage, featuring diverse human rights issues and the voices of experts and advocates. From LGBTQIA+ rights to addressing the past processes in Kosovo, each episode contributed to a powerful dialogue that impacted our audience.

In our unwavering commitment to privacy and justice, we confronted the "Indeksonline" media portal, advocating against the violation of an individual's privacy rights. Our stance, supported by the Press Council of Kosovo, emphasized the importance of respecting personal boundaries, even for public figures.

A positive epilogue unfolded in our pursuit of accountability as Tomë Gashi, an attorney found responsible for unethical actions, faced the consequences. Our commitment to justice prevailed despite legal challenges, sending a powerful message that ethical conduct is non-negotiable.

As we reflect on 2023, let it be an inspiration and empowering moment that fuels our future struggle for justice, equality, and peace. Dedicated, informed, and passionate human rights activism remains our guiding principle until human rights are respected equally for all!

In solidarity,

Marigona Shabiu
Executive Director

02

WHO WE ARE
MISSION
VISION

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 almost 20 years, the Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo (YIHR KS) has successfully worked to protect and promote 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, protecting and promoting 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, the 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.

03

**YIHR KS
TEAM**

YIHR KS TEAM



MARIGONA SHABIU
Executive Director



RINA KADIRI
Programme Director



ENIS SELIMI
Finance and
Administration Manager



ERONA HAJDARI
Finance and
Administrative Officer



BJESHKË GURI
Program Coordinator



BLENDË PIRA
Legal Researcher and
Program Coordinator



ILIR VITIJA
Project Manager



URESA AHMETI
Communications
Coordinator



ART VULA
Projects Coordinator



HANA BERISHA
Projects Coordinator



ANIDA GJURGJIALI
Project Coordinator



RITA TËRSTENA
Graphic Designer



ERRNEsa SYLJA
Program Assistant



URIM HASHANI
Peace Fellow



ANDJELA TOMIĆ
Peace Fellow

Thank you to our former colleagues
who contributed during 2023

Fiona Haxhiislami
Program Coordinator

Era Cina
Projects Coordinator

Fjolla Zejnullahu
Projects Coordinator

Rita Zhubi
Program Assistant

Suzana Maric
Program Assistant

Agon Rexhepi
GPAN Coordinator

Olisa Çekaj
Intern

Gemb Dulauka
Intern

Anna Richter
Intern

Morea Pula
Intern

Vigan Gërdovci
Intern

Andjelija Vucinic
Intern

Betina Imeri
Intern

Isabel Conforti
Fulbright Fellow

Dimitrije Obrenovic
Peace Fellow

04

YIHR KS &
WELLBEING

YIHR KS &

WELLBEING:

A WORD

FROM HR

In the year 2023, YIHR KS continued its commitment to prioritizing the mental health and well-being of its employees, building upon the foundation laid in the previous year. Our dedication to fostering a workplace culture that values, supports, and maintains openness continues.

As part of our ongoing efforts, YIHR KS introduced two packages designed to enhance mental health and overall well-being. The first package includes free therapy sessions for all YIHR KS staff, ensuring accessible mental health support for our team members. The second package includes complimentary memberships to gyms, pilates, yoga classes, and wellness subscriptions, empowering our employees to embrace well-being practices.

YIHR KS has taken the next step towards mental health by collaborating with experts to develop a Mental Health Policy - a structured framework that addresses the diverse mental health needs of our staff and incorporates the best practices towards Mental Health in the workplace. We aim to design and implement an inclusive policy that fosters a safe and supportive environment for all our employees.

Recognizing the importance of fostering connections and teamwork among our team, the year 2023 included retreats and social gatherings. These events served as opportunities for staff to unwind, bond, and strengthen the sense of teamwork within YIHR KS.

The success of our initiatives in 2023 serves as evidence of the organization's dedication to creating a healthy and supportive work environment. Looking ahead, our goal for 2024 is to build upon these achievements, continuing to prioritize the mental health and well-being of our brilliant team members.

Warmly,
Erona Hajdari

05

2023

KEY

NUMBERS



2023

KEY NUMBERS

3570+

**DIRECT
BENEFICIARIES**

200+

ACTIVITIES

HIGHLIGHTS

OF

2023

Generation Peace Activists Network

In June 2023 we launched the biggest, one-of-its-kind network - Generation Peace Activists Network (GPAN)

GPAN is a groundbreaking initiative that aims to foster positive change and meaningful collaboration between young activists from Kosovo and Serbia. This dynamic network will serve as a structured platform for communication, amplifying the voices of young activists and promoting cross-border efforts and initiatives. Youngsters who become part of the family will benefit from opportunities, such as Youth Exchanges and Storytelling workshops, Multimedia Exhibitions, Small Grant Schemes, Networking events in Kosovo and Serbia, and Internship programs among others.

We invite everyone to share/fill out the form below to join the big GPAN family!

LINK: <https://forms.gle/r8tVUmdyaDXGaYvH8>

Rights Land Podcast

YIHR KS launched its [first Rights Land Podcast episode in 2022](#). Whereas, in 2023 we continued our podcast series with an additional 5 episodes.

These 5 podcast episodes aimed to engage and enlighten the audience on a diverse range of human rights issues, amplifying the voices of experts and advocates in their respective fields. In the first podcast, Mr. Blert Morina, the Executive Director of CEL Kosovo, took center stage, passionately discussing the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Watch here: [D Podcast - Blert Morina \(youtube.com\)](#)

The second podcast featured Mr. Korab Krasniqi, Project Manager at Forum ZFD, who discussed dealing with the past processes in Kosovo, what's lacking, and where we should be heading.

Watch here: [D Podcast - Korab Krasniqi \(youtube.com\)](#)

The third podcast showcased Ms. Rina Kika, a distinguished Human Rights Lawyer, shedding light on her research work with Amnesty International. Simultaneously Rina spoke as a recipient of the Human Rights Activist of the Year 2023 Prize, which YIHR KS awarded for the second time this year.

Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eNSNbapXqo>

Another episode featured Mr. Sejnur Veshall, Former Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports, who passionately discussed the rights of the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Communities in Kosovo.

Watch here: [D Podcast - Sejnur Veshall \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-eNSNbapXqo)

YIHR KS has submitted an official request to the Press Council of Kosovo (PCK)

YIHR KS has submitted an official request to the Press Council of Kosovo (PCK) to take the necessary measures against the "Indeksonline" media portal regarding the articles published on 22.01.2022, through which it flagrantly violated the right to privacy. The aforementioned articles stated that the person with the initials G.J.K. was diagnosed with HIV. PCK has concluded that the article in question violates Chapter VII of the Written Media Code. Further, in the response to the complaint, PCK emphasizes that this article interferes with the private life of the person even though the same person is a public figure and the tracking in his personal life and even more so in matters related to any disease or its manifestation in public, is considered a violation of personal data and invasion of privacy.

4th Joint Annual Report of CSOs on Human Rights 2022

In May 2023, as part of the Human Rights Network, we launched the fourth joint annual Report of CSOs on Human Rights 2022. This report was a reflection of the human rights situation in Kosovo in 2022. 37 CSOs working in the human rights field contributed with their inputs and recommendations to the report. This document contains more than 160 specific recommendations which were sent to the competent institutions afterwards.

Read the full report here: [Report-ENG-FINAL-5.10.2023.pdf \(yihr-ks.org\)](https://www.yihr-ks.org/Report-ENG-FINAL-5.10.2023.pdf)



POSITIVE EPILOGUE: Tomë Gashi Found Responsible for Undertaking Unethical Action, Violation of Duties and Authority of the Attorney

YIHR KS submitted a request to the Kosovo Bar Association (KBA) to initiate investigations and take legal measures against Attorney Tomë Gashi, who on February 14, 2020, can be seen in a video kicking the package and personally, a citizen while was begging for a pittance in "Mother Teresa" square in Pristina.

The KBA Complaints Committee found Attorney Tomë Gashi responsible for undertaking unethical actions and fined him a sum of 2,500 EUR.

Tomë Gashi filed a lawsuit at the Basic Court of Prishtina on the pretext that his lawsuit should be approved as a whole by annulling the decisions of the KBA Complaints Committee, the same was rejected by the court as unfounded because the KBA decision is a final administrative act against which no administrative conflict can be initiated to assess its legality. Recently, the Kosovo Court of Appeal - Department for Administrative Matters, through a decision, had finally rejected as unfounded the appeal of plaintiff Tomë Gashi.



06

OUR
PROGRAMS

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 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 the 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 levels 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.

07

DEALING
WITH
THE PAST

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

DEALING WITH THE PAST

PEACE
ACADEMY
14
PARTICIPANTS

EDUCATIONAL
SESSIONS
90
PARTICIPANTS

YOUTH
EXCHANGE
PROGRAM
31
PARTICIPANTS

PEACE
FELLOWSHIP
5
FELLOWS

SMALL
GRANTS
SCHEME
3
SUBGRANTEES

YOUTH
EXCHANGE AND
STORYTELLING
WORKSHOPS
40
PARTICIPANTS

WORKSHOP
"NATIONALISTIC
NARRATIVES AND
BURIED HISTORY"
20
PARTICIPANTS

REGIONAL
YOUTH
EXCHANGE
20
PARTICIPANTS

PUBLIC
DISCUSSION ON
THE SITUATION IN
THE NORTH
30
PARTICIPANTS

RECONCILIATION
INTERVENTION
GRANT
20
PARTICIPANTS

COMMEMORATION
OF MASSACRES
CAMPAIGN

Project

Kosovo Youth Dialogue

Kosovo Youth Dialogue is a 5 years project supported by USAID. 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.



Peace Academy

YIHR KS in partnership with Plan for Peace (UK) launched The Peace Academy, the first of its kind in Kosovo, taking its participants on a powerful educational journey to learn more deeply and theoretically about peacebuilding, reconciliation, conflict transformation, and resilience.

The first phase brought 11 lecturers and guest speakers, and more than 20 sessions of lectures, guest talks, and discussions. The Academy brought renowned scholars from prestigious world-leading universities alongside peacebuilding leading experts from Kosovo to nurture a new generation of peacemakers in Kosovo. Some of the universities include Dublin City University (Ireland), Columbia University (US), Graz University (Austria), Oxford Brookes University (UK), Nottingham University (UK), Ruhr University of Bochum (Germany), and Singidunum University (Serbia).



Children of War Museum

Building collective memory through symbolic actions is one of the most important criteria of transitional justice. Therefore, we will continue with the establishment of the Children of War Museum to present the experiences of children during the war in Kosovo through objects (toys, diaries, clothes, etc.) and video testimonies.

The museum was expected to open to the public by now, however, because of institutional negligence by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport we were unable to do so. Although we have collected, organized, and curated the entire content of the Museum, we were unable to launch it because of the lack of space for the Museum. We are continuously fighting to ensure an appropriate physical space that does justice to the importance and testimonials of the Museum, despite the constant institutional failure and sabotage!

The second phase encompassed comprehensive training led by an internationally experienced peacebuilding trainer, Weronika Knowska (Poland). The training provided tools, techniques, and pedagogical approaches for peacebuilding, conflict transformation, dealing with the past, and reconciliation.

Participants successfully concluded the academy, emerging as equipped trainers in non-formal peacebuilding education. The opportunity to learn from experienced experts marked the Peace Academy as a resounding success, empowering participants with comprehensive knowledge and experience in peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Check out this video to get a better feeling of the Peace Academy: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yih_r_ks\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)



Educational Sessions

Following the completion of the Peace Academy, we kicked off our educational sessions in schools and universities across Kosovo. A concise presentation on Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding was prepared, especially targeting students with limited prior knowledge of these topics. We already conducted two sessions in Prishtina with more than 90 students as participants.



Youth Exchange Program - 8th Edition

The 8th edition of the Youth Exchange Program brought together 31 participants from different ethnicities in Kosovo to learn about the concepts of dealing with the past and peace-building. Through interactive workshop sessions, socializing activities, and lectures, our two trainers took the group through an emotional and learning experience.

Check out the video for more: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yih_ks\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

During the program, we also visited three memorial sites from the last war in Kosovo; Poklek, Staro Gracko, and Suhareka, where we heard heartbreaking stories & received messages for unity and peace as the only way forward.

See the video for more: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yih_ks\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)

During the last two days of the program, the participants were immersed into one of the four artistic groups - storytelling, theater, video production, or photography - under the guidance of a mentor to use art mediums as a tool for dialogue and conflict transformation.

Rubije Rexhepi on her experience at the Youth Exchange Program

"It has been an amazing and most beautiful experience, but it was very hard for me when we visited a memorial site in Poklek where we met, first of all, a father named Fadil and he shared his story with us.

His story was about his family dying and while he was telling the story it was very emotional for me because of the way he said it. He was talking about how we should not spread hate even though his family was massacred by the Serbs at the time.

I had to leave the room due to being very emotional but he had a very good point which was not to spread hate. For me, it would be very hard not to hate someone who killed my family, but he stood there and told us his story and he said do not hate them, which I feel is very important nowadays, especially for us, the younger generation. To keep spreading neutrality, to keep spreading love."



Youth Exchange Program - Reconciliation Intervention Grant

An incredible group of 6 young people with Shpat Bulica as their leader won the Reconciliation Intervention Grant as part of the fourth phase of the Youth Exchange Program (YEP) - 7th Edition. YEP gathers Kosovo-Serb and Kosovo-Albanian youth to work on dealing with the past. The winning team implemented their project with 18 youngsters at the Activism Hub at the YIHR KS office spaces. Through interactive sessions full of games, discussions, and painting, young Kosovo-Serbs and Kosovo-Albanians had the chance to come together, be with one another, and connect.

The main goal of this project was to enhance unity and cooperation among youth through their shared interest and love for play and art!

Watch the video to get a better feeling of the activity:

<https://www.facebook.com/YIHRKS/videos/103185892799173/>



Peace Fellowship

This year we successfully implemented the third edition of our Peace Fellowship Program in Kosovo. Five outstanding students from the Albanian and Serb communities in Kosovo started their Peace Fellowship Programs in five different civil society organizations.

We congratulate our Peace Fellows for their incredible commitment: Andrea Todić, Eris Hasanaj, Eneda Deliu, Agon Rexhepi, and Dimitrije Obrenović

Through this Fellowship Program, they developed their professional skills and gained valuable experience during their 3-month fellowship at civil society organizations that specifically focus on reconciliation, inter-ethnic cooperation, and peacebuilding.

Research was another crucial component of the program. Each of the fellows conducted their research projects in cooperation with their hosting organization. Their work will serve as an educational resource for young people and interested stakeholders.

Small Grants Scheme

In 2023, YIHR KS launched the Small Grants Scheme activity where three partnerships were supported as SubGrantees:

ETEA & CSAY, Astronomy Club of Kosova & ECO LEPO, and NGO DUA & NVO GETO.

The SubGrantees implemented activities in the field of peacebuilding and reconciliation whose target audience was mainly youth from K-Albanian, K-Serb, K-Bosnian, K-Turk, K-Roma, and K-Egyptian communities.

ETEA & CSAY's project focused on exploring the narrative of inter-ethnic relations between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs as portrayed in schools, including the perceptions created by the portrayal of the other community in textbooks, curricula, and classroom practices. Through qualitative research conducted with high school students, teachers, and directors from Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb communities, they concluded evidence-based policy recommendations and launched the report "The Power of Narratives: Book-based or Oral History - The Role of Education in Shaping the Perceptions of the Other" which aims to raise awareness of the negative impact of biased and stereotypical information on students' attitudes and perceptions towards other communities, hence, the report calls for a promoting a more inclusive and peaceful education system.



SubGrantee Astronomy Club of Kosova & ECO LEPO is focused on inter-ethnic cooperation in the field of natural sciences and astronomy among Kosovo students of all communities. To achieve this, they have conducted outreach activities in several cities in Kosovo and organized several public astro events in the Prishtina Observatory to attract youngsters from different ethnic backgrounds to discuss astronomy and intercultural dialogue which served as a multi-ethnic science hub for youngsters coming from diverse communities.

In addition, subgrantee NGO DUA & NVO GETO focused on peacebuilding and reconciliation through theatrical plays and worked with youngsters from K-Albanian, K-Serb, K-Bosnian, K-Roma, and K-Turk ethnicities on the topic of overcoming stereotypes and bias that different ethnicities experience for each other. As a result, they produced two theatrical plays that highlight the importance of overcoming stereotypes and biases to reach reconciliation and peace.



Project

Cross-border Youth Dialogue

Cross-border Youth Dialogue is a 3-years project funded by the European Union and implemented in collaboration with YIHR Serbia. The Project's overall objective is to contribute towards improved participatory democracies and reconciliation through empowering civil society's role and enabling structured cooperation and dialogue between the people of Kosovo and Serbia to strengthen their path towards EU integration.



Workshop: "Nationalistic Narratives and Buried History"

We gathered 20 participants from Kosovo and Serbia in Belgrade for the "Nationalistic Narratives and Buried History" workshop. Participants in this week-long program focused on understanding the complex dynamics between Kosovo and Serbia, from pre-war to post-war periods. The sessions included insightful lectures on challenges faced by Albanians in Serbia, debunking myths surrounding Kosovo, addressing the lack of memorialization of war crimes, and fostering discussions on the current relations between Serbia and Kosovo.



Youth Exchange and Storytelling

The Youth Exchange and Storytelling workshop brought together 20 young participants from Kosovo and Serbia for a week in Prizren, Kosovo. The primary focus of this workshop was to not only cultivate stronger relations between the two groups but also to actively contribute to the process of reconciliation. Additionally, the workshop delved into the exploration and understanding of the complex legacies of the war and using storytelling as a technique for fostering shared and peaceful narratives.

Check out the video to hear some of the participants' insights:

https://www.instagram.com/reel/Cv7CH-POoRuG/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==

We held the Youth Exchange and Storytelling workshop in Belgrade, Serbia, as well, where we gathered 20 youngsters to further discuss complex war legacies and effective ways to move toward a reconciled future.



Project

Residential Exchange Program for Youth in Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

This one-week residential exchange program for young people from Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, intended to promote reconciliation and peacebuilding. The project is supported by the Western Balkans Fund. It is led by YIHR KS and is implemented in close cooperation with YIHR Bosnia and Herzegovina YIHR Serbia, and YIHR Montenegro.

This exchange brought over 20 participants from across the Western Balkans together to explore stereotypes, reconciliation, and peacebuilding. Through group activities, they delved into our rich cultures, shared music, and had meaningful discussions. The 5-day program was held in Prizren, where the participants had the amazing opportunity to enjoy thought-provoking films at the Dokufest Film Festival. The exchange proved a testament to the potential of togetherness and understanding in breaking stereotypes.

Listen to what Sara, a participant from Montenegro, had to say about the experience: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yihhr_ks\)](#) • [Instagram photos and videos](#)



The panel consisted of Dimitrije Obrenović - Activist; Miograd Milićević - Executive Director, NGO Aktiv; Serbeze Haxhija - Journalist; Lulzim Peci - Executive Director, KIPRED; Sofija Todorović - Programme Director, YIHR Serbia; and Marigona Shabiu - Executive Director, YIHR KS.



Public Discussion

Situation in the North of Kosovo

After the terrorist attack in Banjska, YIHR KS organized the first civil society public discussion to address the situation. Many CSO representatives, international organizations, activists, and citizens attended the discussion on the situation in the North and contributed with their insights and perspectives.

During this discussion, the need for constructive dialogue and collaboration between communities was emphasized as the only way forward. Additionally, the importance of combating nationalistic discourses and hate speech was seen as one of the key elements to de-escalate rising tensions. Furthermore, the role of youth engagement remains crucial when it comes to preventing the spread of propaganda and hateful narratives for a peaceful discourse.

The discussion was mainly focused on security issues, especially the safety of civilians, the importance of ethical and professional reporting from the media, and the role of civil society during such crises.

Campaign

THE FUTURE BEGINS BY KNOWING THE PAST

Throughout 2022 we have commemorated all civilian victims of all massacres from the last war in Kosovo. Remembering the past is the only way forward! This is one of the many efforts YIHR KS persistently works on to achieve justice for all civilian victims!

Check out the commemoration posts on the YIHR KS official Facebook or Instagram pages!

Mirëdita, Dobar Dan! Festival

This year was the tenth jubilee edition of the "Mirëdita, Dobar Dan!" Festival, is a unique cultural event that has been organized in Belgrade and Prishtina since 2014. This year the Festival was held in Prishtina during the dates of May 4 - 6. It presented the modern artistic, cultural, and social scene of Serbia and Kosovo while raising critical issues concerning both the past and the future in times that represent a great challenge for Kosovo and Serbian society.



08

**HUMAN
RIGHTS
& RULE
OF LAW**

MY RIGHT
PLATFORM
9
REPORTED
CASES

INTERNSHIP
PROGRAM
35
INTERNS

JUSTICE
LECTURES
720
PARTICIPANTS

LOCAL MOCK
TRIALS
60
PARTICIPANTS

NATIONAL
MOCK TRIALS
79
PARTICIPANTS

ARTISTIC
COMPETITION
4
WINNERS

OPEN COURT
DAYS
165
PARTICIPANTS

JUSTICE
MURALS
6
SCHOOLS

MODEL
UNITED
NATIONS
19
PARTICIPANTS

TRAINING
COURSES WITH
CIVIC EDUCATION
TEACHERS
39
PARTICIPANTS

ALTERNATIVE
SCHOOL FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS
22
PARTICIPANTS

CONFERENCE
ON
HATE SPEECH
100
PARTICIPANTS

ROUNDTABLE
DISCUSSION ON
UDHR
50
PARTICIPANTS

LAUNCHING
CONFERENCE OF
THE 4th JOINT
ANNUAL CSOS
HUMAN RIGHTS
REPORT FOR 2022

CAPACITY
BUILDING
WORKSHOP
FOR CSOS

5
PUBLIC
REACTIONS
FROM THE
HUMAN RIGHTS
NETWORK

TRAINING
COURSE WITH
LAW STUDENTS
10
PARTICIPANTS

HUMAN RIGHTS
LECTURES IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS
530
PARTICIPANTS

TRAINING
COURSE WITH
CIVIC EDUCATION
TEACHERS
15
PARTICIPANTS

HATE
SPEECH
INFOGRAPHICS

OPEN DEBATE
ON HATE
SPEECH WITH
STUDENTS
20
PARTICIPANTS

Project

Youth for Justice

"Youth for Justice", with the support of the US State Department - INL, aims to empower youth to seek justice and become active participants in the justice sector in Kosovo.

My Right Platform

During 2023, the YIHR KS team has continued to promote the "My Right" platform. This platform aims 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 seeks accountability from the relevant institutions and monitors them for actions or omissions regarding the reported questions/cases. Throughout the year we have received 9 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 state their claims to the competent authorities and informed of the legal procedures that can be taken.

Report now: [E Drejta Jem - Platforma per Raportim te Padrejtësive](#)



Internship Program

We have implemented two internship programs through which two groups of interns were selected and placed in the Basic Courts of Kosovo in different regions and branches of the courts. 35 law students and law graduates worked as interns in courts where they had the opportunity to work with judges in different departments.

Justice Lectures

YIHR KS organized 54 Justice Lectures where trained lecturers delivered lectures for high school and university students, in all regions of Kosovo. Through these sessions, 720 participants had the opportunity to learn more about the legal system in Kosovo and learn more about human rights and different institutions in Kosovo.

Local Mock Trial in Gjilan & Mitrovica

We successfully organized two Local Mock Trials, one in Gjilan and one in Mitrovica, which gathered 60 high school students in total. The Mock Trial provided an excellent opportunity for the students to gain a deeper understanding of the justice system in Kosovo and learn more about human rights through the help of the six facilitators and one professional trainer. On the third and last day of these residential training sessions, the students organized a simulated court session, where they played the roles of judges, prosecutors, and lawyers.



National Mock Trials

We organized 3 separate National Mock Trials which gathered 79 law students from all regions of Kosovo. Through their participation in this activity, the participants had the chance to deepen their knowledge in the field of human rights and how the justice system works. They also got the chance to hear a more practical aspect of the different actors and procedures of the justice system, which according to their feedback they lack a lot of in their studies, as they are used to more formal and theoretical-approach-based learning in their faculties.

Furthermore, court visits were part of the program, which for many of the students was the first time visiting.



Open Court Days in 5 Cities

We organized Open Court Days in 5 different cities: Ferizaj, Prishtina, Prizren, Gjakova, and Vushtri where 165 students had the opportunity to learn more about the roles and responsibilities of legal professionals in the Kosovo justice system. They heard and discussed with panels consisting of a judge, lawyer, and prosecutor.

The open court days were highly interactive and informative events, providing students with a firsthand understanding of the day-to-day work and challenges faced by legal professionals.



Artistic Competition

During this year we organized the second round of the Justice Artistic Competition. Our young artists applied by submitting their photographs or videos which reflected the situation regarding human rights and the rule of law in the country. It was inspiring to witness how youth address critical social issues through free creative expression. We congratulate our winners:



Justice Murals

Continuously we have used and encouraged art forms for awareness raising on social justice. Especially through our Justice Murals, we have transformed 6 schools into safe and empowering spaces. Two of these murals were made in Prishtina, and the rest in Prizren, Mitrovica, Peja, and Partesh. These murals painted beautifully by the artist NONE, serve as a reminder and message for the importance of justice and human rights.

Check out the video for a sneak peek: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yih_r_ks\)](#) • Instagram photos and videos

Training Course with Civic Education Teachers

Elementary and high-school teachers from Gjakova and Prishtina benefited from our Training Course for Civic Education Teachers. We gathered 39 teachers in total in two separate training courses. Through engaging discussions and information-sharing sessions, the educators gained valuable insights into the fundamental aspects of human rights and obtained a comprehensive overview of the justice system within the context of Kosovo.



Model United Nations

19 students from various universities in Kosovo came together in a Model United Nations simulation! They engaged in diplomatic discussions, where they showcased exceptional negotiation and problem-solving skills, demonstrating profound knowledge of global affairs.

The simulation of the United Nations, particularly the Human Rights Council, addressed the topic of the current war in Ukraine, over which the delegates did thorough research before taking the stand to debate and negotiate.

This activity left us impressed and in awe of the dedication, knowledge, and diplomacy of our participants who show immense potential as future Kosovo leaders!



Alternative School for Human Rights - 5th Edition

The 8-day residential Alternative School for Human Rights successfully gathered 22 students in its 5th Edition. The school's primary objective was to foster the knowledge and critical thinking skills of young students from social sciences backgrounds, from both public and private universities, alongside human rights activists.

The Alternative School for Human Rights explored a wide array of topics, beginning with human rights as the foundational theme. The students learned from esteemed figures, including Albert Zogaj, Alban Krasniqi, Prof. Mateusz Piatkowski, Habit Hajredini, Prof. Bekim Sejdiu, and Prof. Robert Muharremi among others.

Field visits formed a vital part of the training, allowing the participants to gain practical insights from institutions such as the Office of the Ombudsman, the Council of Europe's office in Pristina, the Assembly of Kosovo, and the poignant exhibition "Once upon a time and never again" by the Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo, commemorating the 1133 children who lost their lives during the Kosovo war.

The training also covered important specific societal issues, such as LGBTQI+ rights, women's rights, the rights of non-majority communities, and media freedom.

Discussions were enriched by the contributions of our guest speakers like Blert Morina, Adelina Rose, Flutura Kusari, and Saranda Ramaj.



Closing Conference

Successful completion of the "Youth for Justice" Project

The closing conference of the "Youth for Justice" project convened on the 6th of December, 2023, and gathered more than 100 activists, stakeholders, institutional representatives, local and international. Simultaneously, the conference marked the opening of the 10th edition of Human Rights Week. The focal points of this conference revolved around the success of the Youth for Justice project and the pervasive issue of hate speech, with a specific emphasis on fostering inter-institutional collaboration among stakeholders within the justice system to proactively prevent and combat instances of hate speech.

Ms. Elvana Shala, Kosovo Goodwill Ambassador, moderated the conference which featured enlightening keynote addresses, beginning with Ms. Marigona Shabiu, the Executive Director of YIHR KS.

Additional keynote remarks were presented by Mr. Albin Kurti, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, H.E. Jeffrey Hovenier, the U.S. Ambassador to Kosovo, and Mr. Tankut Soykan, the Deputy Head of the Council of Europe Office in Prishtina.

Further enriching the discourse, a panel discussion, moderated by Ms. Jeta Xharra, Head of BIRN, featured distinguished participants including Mr. Naim Qelaj, the Ombudsperson, Mr. Ramadan Ahmeti from Kosovo Police, Mr. Ahmet Imami from the Kosovo Judicial Council, and Ms. Rajmonda Sylbije from CSGD Kosovo.

Nol Musa, activist and beneficiary of YIHR KS, closed the conference with his speech highlighting his experience with our work and the need for more similar initiatives to promote justice and activism!

Watch the video created to celebrate the successful completion of the 5-year-long Youth for Justice Project with hundreds of activities implemented and more than 6000 beneficiaries!

[YIHR Kosovo \(@yhr_ks\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

Project

Advancing Human Rights: Empowering CSOs and Students for Positive Change in Kosovo

This project is supported by UNMIK and aims to bring 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. Furthermore, the project aims to support law students, local and international, through a Master's Programme on Human Rights, International Criminal Law, and Transitional Justice, as well as, through the Center for Clinical Studies.

Coordination Committee of Human Rights Network (HRN) meetings

During 2023, representatives of the Coordination Committee of the Human Rights Network attended two meetings to design the framework for the 5th joint CSOs Human Rights Report which will be published in 2024 and to discuss the continuation of HRN's work.



Read and learn more via the Network's official webpage: [About us - HRN \(humanrightsnetwork\)](#).

Consultation Meeting for the joint CSOs report

The publication of the annual joined CSOs Report on Human Rights is an assessment that is published yearly by the Human Rights Network. To gather inputs from civil society organizations, YIHR KS organized three consultation meetings in 2023 to discuss the structure and the content of the report for 2024 and to identify the most critical fields to be tackled.



Capacity Building Workshop for CSOs

To increase the professional capacities of grassroots and other civil society organizations, YIHR KS organized one Capacity Building Workshop in Prishtina. During the workshop, the representatives of organizations had the chance to learn more about human rights in general and simultaneously were presented with the methodology with indicators to assess the human rights situation in Kosovo.

Roundtable Discussion on Universal Declaration of Human Rights

YIHR KS marked the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with a Roundtable Discussion on UDHR, in cooperation with the Office for Good Governance. More than 50 guests from institutions, CSOs, and international organizations attended the event which took place at the Government Building.

The Roundtable Discussion highlighted the importance of UDHR. It shed light on the need for better institutional coordination and cooperation to further improve the implementation of the human rights situation in Kosovo.

Key speakers at this important event were: Ms. Caroline Ziadeh - Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the UNMIK in Kosovo; Ms. Emilija Redžepi - Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo; Ms. Marigona Shabiu - Executive Director of YIHR KS; Mr. Naim Qelaj - the Ombudsperson; Ms. Gjyljeta Mushkolaj - Law Professor; and Ms. Eranda Zekaj - representative of Kosovo Law Institute (KLI).



Launching Conference of the 4th joint annual CSOs Human Rights Report for 2022

In May 2023, the launching event of the fourth joint annual CSOs Human Rights Report for 2022 was organized. This event gathered the representatives of civil society organizations, media, and institutions in a fruitful discussion in Prishtina. During the event, the report was presented and the recommendations were addressed to the competent state institutions and authorities who were present at the event.

Read the full report here:

[Report-ENG-FINAL-5.10.2023.pdf \(yihr-ks.org\)](#)



PUBLIC REACTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK (HRN)

During 2023, Human Rights Network issued 5 public reactions for unlawful/discriminatory actions of individuals and institutions.

1 Statement: The Case of Klan Kosova

As member organizations of the Human Rights Network (HRN), we are extremely concerned by the recent decision of the Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade (MINT), respectively the Business Registration Agency of Kosovo (BRAK), to suspend the business certificate of the Trading Company "Klan Kosova" LLC, part of which it is also the Klan Kosova public television.

Read the full statement here: [Deklaratë: Rasti ndaj Klan Kosova Si... - Human Rights Network | Facebook](#)
[Si... - Human Rights Network | Facebook](#)

2 Follow-up Statement: Klan Kosova Case

As member organizations of the Human Rights Network (HRN), we strongly condemn the latest decision of the Appeal Commission of the Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Trade (MINT) to close the Trading Company "Klan Kosova" LLC, an independent media.

Read the full statement here: [Deklaratë: Rasti ndaj Klan Kosova Si... - Human Rights Network | Facebook](#)

3 Reaction to the derogatory language used by Deputy Valentina Bunjaku-Rexhepi during the session of the Assembly of Kosovo

The Human Rights Network (HRN) strongly condemns the derogatory language used yesterday, on June 22, 2023, during the session of the Assembly of Kosovo by Deputy Valentina Bunjaku-Rexhepi, who is also a member of the Committee on Rights and Interests of Communities and Returns.

Read the full reaction here: [Reagim ndaj gjuhës poshtëruese të përdorur... - Human Rights Network | Facebook](#)

4 Reaction to anti-LGBTQ+ graffiti

The Human Rights Network (HRN) member organizations call on the justice institutions to immediately investigate the case of the graffiti written in the courtyard of the University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina" calling for the murder of LGBTQ+ persons.

Read the full statement here: [REAGIM Organizatat anëtare të Rrjetit për... - Human Rights Network | Facebook](#)

5 Reaction to the insulting and inappropriate language of the Mayor of Rahovec, Mr. Smajl Latifi

Read the full reaction here: [Reagim ndaj gjuhës fyese dhe të pa... - Human Rights Network | Facebook](#)

Master's Program: "Human Rights, International Criminal Law, and Transitional Justice"

YIHR KS is supporting the Master's Program "Human Rights, International Criminal Law, and Transitional Justice" established by the Faculty of Law, University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina". This is the first master's program in Kosovo to enroll full-time international students. YIHR KS is providing scholarships to 5 international students, supporting the program with international professors who will bring their international experience to Kosovo. We have signed an MoU with the Faculty of Law to better coordinate the implementation of this component in practice.

Training Course with Law Students

Ten law students from different universities, public and private, in Kosovo, had the opportunity to build their capacities in public speaking and lecturing on human rights, the rule of law, and the justice system for elementary school students. During the training, the participants were informed about and learned how to implement the Human Rights Education Program for Young People. Furthermore, they gained knowledge and skills in public speaking and lecturing elementary school students about human rights and the Kosovo justice system.



Project

Youth Empowerment: Enhancing Rule of Law and Human Rights Education in Schools Kosovo

This project is supported by EULEX and aims to empower young people, aged 13-14, residing in Kosovo, by augmenting their knowledge, critical thinking abilities, and skills to actively demand justice. Additionally, the project aims to enhance the capabilities of elementary school teachers to effectively deliver the human rights education program within their classrooms. This program, developed by YIHR KS and accredited by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Information aims to equip students with essential human rights knowledge.

Human Rights Lectures in Elementary Schools

After the training on public speaking and lecturing on human rights, the 10 law students conducted a series of 15 lectures in targeted municipalities to provide young people with essential knowledge about their rights and access to justice. Young primary school students had the opportunity to engage with court representatives and gain practical insights into court proceedings. By fostering experiential learning and meaningful discussions, these lectures and court visits empowered young individuals to actively participate in civic life and develop a heightened awareness of justice.

Open Court Days

Following the lectures, the students had the opportunity to visit the Basic Courts in their respective regions. Around 530 students benefited from the 5 open court days. These visits provided valuable insights into the roles of judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, allowing the students to gain a better understanding of the court proceedings. Additionally, we organized discussions with court representatives during these visits, addressing various aspects such as procedures, rights, and responsibilities of the parties involved in court hearings.

The objectives of these activities were twofold. Firstly, they aimed to equip young people with knowledge about their rights and access to justice, while fostering transparency and trust in the courts among the youth. Secondly, they aimed to enhance the capacities of the courts to engage with young people and promote a better understanding of their functioning.



Project

Anti-Hate Speech in Western Balkans

Anti-Hate Speech in Western Balkans is a regional project supported by CRD 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 the flow of information.

Training Course with Civic Education Teachers

The Training Course with Civic Education teachers was a 5-day training which gathered 15 primary school teachers from the municipalities of Fushe Kosova, Shtime, Vitia, Prishtina, and Prizren designed on the themes of human rights, the justice system, and access to justice. These dedicated educators had the opportunity to dive into the practical aspects of teaching legal sections to their students and learn how to research and bring real-life cases to the classroom for discussions. The training was designed based on the "Human Rights Education Program for Young People" manual, which was created by YIHR KS.



Registering cases of hate speech

From January until November 2023 YIHR KS has registered the most visible cases of hate speech towards marginalized groups in Kosovo. All the aforementioned hate speech cases we monitored were towards the LGBTQIA+ community, women, and members of non-majority communities in Kosovo. The registered cases were taken from online media articles.

Publishing graphical statistical data on registered cases of hate speech

In 2023, 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 period from January 2023 until May 2023. The second infographic covered the period of June - November 2023 and it was published during the Human Rights Week - 10th edition.

Link of the 1st infographic:

[Situata me... - Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo \(YIHR KS\) | Facebook](#)

Link of the 2nd infographic:

[Hate... - Youth Initiative for Human Rights - Kosovo \(YIHR KS\) | Facebook](#)

Regular coordination with national protective mechanisms

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 throughout the year, especially during the Dokufest and Anibar Festivals. During 2023, YIHR KS met with 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 most marginalized groups. We called on the 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.

Open Debate on Hate Speech with Students

YIHR KS organized an open debate in front of around 20 university students to tackle hate speech and discrimination in Kosovo. This activity was organized in cooperation with the Faculty of Law, University of Prishtina. The panel discussion was composed of representatives from the Ombudsperson Institution and the D4D organization.

EMPOWERMENT

90

YOUTH

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

COHESION
CIRCLE
WORKSHOPS
31
PARTICIPANTS

COHESION
CIRCLE
INITIATIVES
207
PARTICIPANTS

YOUTH PEACE
CAMP
20
PARTICIPANTS

LIVING
LIBRARIES
58
PARTICIPANTS

STORYTELLING
WORKSHOPS
40
PARTICIPANTS

INTERNSHIP
PROGRAM
FOR NON-MAJORITY
COMMUNITIES
1
INTERN

INFORMATION
SESSION
50
PARTICIPANTS

Activism Hub

YIHR KS first launched the Activism Hub in its office spaces in 2022, during Human Rights Week. The Activism Hub is an open, youth-friendly, and free space for all activists to use.

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.



Cohesion Circle Workshops

CC workshop in Prishtina

In February, the Cohesion Circle workshop was organized in Prishtina which gathered 17 participants from Kosovo Albanian, Kosovo Serb, and Kosovo Roma communities. The workshop aimed to gather and discuss two initiatives that would foster reconciliation and bring in one place youngsters from different ethnic backgrounds to broaden the intercultural dialogue among them.

CC workshop in Peja

In November, the Cohesion Circle workshop was organized in Peja. We invited several NGO representatives, youth councils, and activists from Peja and its region to participate in the workshop. 14 participants attended from ethnic communities including the Serb, Bosniak, Egyptian, and Roma Communities in Kosovo

READ THE FULL SUCCESS STORY: [Building unity one step at a time: Peja's Cohesion Circle - RCT Kosovo](#)

Cohesion Circle Initiatives

CC initiative "Social gathering"

During March, the members of the Cohesion Circle in Prishtina carefully planned and organized their first initiative. The event was a huge success and brought together 46 participants from various ethnic communities, with 27 participants from different ethnic communities in Kosovo and from international places such as Ireland, Germany, and the UK. The initiative showcased the power of diversity and unity, with attendees free to join open discussions divided into three corners: "Share Your Story," "Poetry & Books," and "Food."

READ THE FULL SUCCESS STORY: [Cohesion Circle Initiative – Social Gathering – RCT Kosovo](#)



CC initiative "Poetry+Concert"

The second Cohesion Circle initiative took place in April at the Defy Them Music Center. The event was attended by more than 100 participants from various ethnic backgrounds. The evening commenced with mesmerizing poetry readings, translated into three languages - Albanian, Serbian, and Roma. The performance continued with the talented children from the "Music for All" center in Plemetin village, the drum students and the dynamic metal band "Nuclear Doom," part of the Defy Them school.

READ THE FULL SUCCESS STORY: [Poetry + Concert Event – CC Initiative – April 2023 – RCT Kosovo](#)



CC Initiative “Cultural visit”

The third Cohesion Circle Initiative brought together 80 youngsters from Mitrovica and Peja. The cultural visit started with a tour of the city around the center of Peja. Afterward, we went to visit the mosque in the city center and learn about its history. The cultural visit continued at the Decani Visoki Monastery. The visit was a wonderful experience for all participants as it was the first time that the majority of the participants visited a monastery or cultural sites in Peja.



READ THE FULL SUCCESS STORY: [Bridging cultures, building friendships: A cultural visit unites youth in Peja/Peć - RCT Kosovo](#)



Developing and reviewing non-formal education curricula/program

YIHR KS promoted the Manual on Civic Peace Education in September. The event aimed to promote the Manual to various stakeholders, NGOs, teachers, trainers, and activists. The manual will serve as a main tool for fostering secure steps in this important field. The launching of the manual was followed by a panel discussion by trainers who had the chance to use the manual in their training. Furthermore, the event benefited from a virtual connection with Nevena Radosavljevic, who is the editor of the Manual on Civic Peace Education.



[Unveiling the Path to Peace: Civic Peace Education Manual Promotion - RCT Kosovo](#)



Youth Peace Camp

The Youth Peace Camp gathered 20 youngsters from different ethnic backgrounds to learn about peacebuilding, reconciliation, conflict transformation, and intercultural dialogue. During these three days, participants from Albanian, Serbian, Bosnian, Turk, Roma, and Egyptian ethnic backgrounds had the opportunity to learn, socialize, and create a safe space for conflict transformation among them. The camp focused on topics related to peacebuilding and emphasized teamwork, peaceful communication, and cooperation. The participants came with various ideas tackling the challenges that the youth is facing and they decided to mark the International Youth Day by focusing on the mental health of the youth to raise awareness on this significant topic for the wellbeing of all youth.





“Living Library” - Storytelling Workshops

Storytelling workshops aim to engage and help youth in expressing their vision. Two storytelling workshops were held in Prishtina. During January, we organized the first Living Library event which successfully gathered 18 students from Prishtina High School and youngsters from Spain, Slovenia, Italy, England, and the Netherlands. The participants had the chance to hear about the experiences of two Serbian youngsters from Gračanica and their activism stories.

The second workshop was held during May which coincided with library week celebrations. This event provided an excellent platform to showcase the project as a whole and its various activities. The event featured three remarkable young activists as guest speakers, Agon Rexhepi from the Kosovo-Albanian community, Alisan Skenderi from the Roma community, and Andjelija Vucinic from the Kosovo-Serb community. Approximately 40 participants attended the activity, actively engaging with the inspiring narratives shared by the speakers. The audience had the opportunity to ask questions and reflect on their own lives, fostering meaningful exchanges that enhanced the overall experience. The Living Library activity stands as a testament to the significance of community engagement and collaboration in promoting social change and unity within Kosovo.

Bilateral meetings

YIHR KS held various meetings with different stakeholders to present and promote the Manual on Civic Peace Education. Among other stakeholders, we met with people from different fields; like journalists, activists (from Kosovo-Albanian and Kosovo-Serb communities), non-governmental organizations, representatives from the government, business owners, etc. During these meetings, the YIHR KS team discussed the existing reconciliation needs between different ethnic groups in Kosovo at individual, community, and institutional levels.



Project

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. This project is supported by the National Endowment for Democracy - NED.

Excursions

Following the Storytelling Workshop, for further learning about different ethnic communities and their living, we organized 2 field visits. We started the first excursion with a visit to the city of Prizren, and then continued to Gračanica. A great highlight of the day was meeting with different activists from the region and visiting Young Active Gračanica to learn about the work they are doing, especially on bringing communities together.

We started our second excursion in Peja, where we went to attend the Anibar Animation Festival. This year's theme of the Anibar festival was "LOVE" showing support to the queer community which further enhanced the importance of this visit. We then continued to the beautiful multi-cultural city of Prizren, and the historical Monastery of Decan. Overall these visits were a great effort at using field knowledge to inspire and open up inter-cultural dialogue!



"Youth Remembers Initiative" Workshops

In 2023, YIHR KS organized two Storytelling Workshops which gathered around 40 diverse young people to learn about storytelling techniques, interviewing, and the importance of documenting war experiences. They also delved deep into the benefits of using these creative forms of expression in dealing with the past processes.

Along with different activities, during the workshop, we also visited the memorial in Staro Gracko and Muqolli's house at the Poklek massacre site. We followed these emotional and educational visits with reflection sessions. The visits, especially demonstrated the importance of documenting personal stories and challenging dominant narratives surrounding the war.



Internship Program for non-majority communities

This year Anđelija Vučinić joined YIHR KS as an intern. This internship program was designed as an opportunity to learn more about the collective memory, and 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. During this internship, Anđelija worked closely in dealing with the past program as she is actively advocating for reconciliation and peacebuilding in Kosovo.

European Solidarity Corps (ESC)

The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) stands as a symbol of unity and collaboration for young people across Europe. Launched by the European Union, this initiative provides opportunities for individuals aged 18 to 30 to engage in volunteer activities that contribute to societal well-being. In 2023, YIHR KS demonstrated a commitment to this shared purpose by sending 11 volunteers to partner organizations in various countries, including Poland, Italy, Switzerland, and Turkey.



Outreach Activities

To promote local ownership and engagement among young people in the targeted regions, YIHR KS has planned a series of outreach activities to be conducted by our four local coordinators. These activities are shaped like information sessions whose primary aim is to introduce to the local youth the work and values that YIHR KS stands and advocates for. With this, we hope to inspire youth in different regions to engage in their local communities.

Throughout the year, 14 information sessions were conducted, where more than 50 young people from the Serbian community in Kosovo participated in the info sessions. Some of the participants from these sessions continued their attendance at different YIHR KS activities, which demonstrated the effectiveness and success of such outreach activities.

Meeting with British Member of Parliament, Alicia Kearns

We welcomed Ms. Kearns and the Ambassador of Kosovo to the United Kingdom, Mr. Ilir Kapiti, at the Activism Hub. Ms. Kearns is the Chair of the British Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and a vocal advocate for the Kosovo issue.

The Member of Parliament and the Ambassador met with young activists from various communities in Kosovo. Ms. Kearns inquired about the situation in Kosovo, and the perspectives of young people regarding human rights, women's rights, and minority communities. Among other topics, they discussed the situation in the north of Kosovo and the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue, as well as the role of young people in these processes.



10

**HUMAN
RIGHTS
WEEK**

HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK

This year we marked a decade of Human Rights Week from December 6 to December 10! The 10th-anniversary, under the slogan "My Right, Not Your Personal Opinion", focused on hate speech that targets marginalized communities. Through many activities for 5 days, we discussed and raised awareness against hate speech. We also highlighted the impact of hate speech in reinforcing stigma, discrimination, and violence among marginalized communities in Kosovo. This edition of Human Rights Week brought attention to human rights principles as a set of inalienable and universal rights. Hate speech that is promoted under the justification of personal opinions directly contradicts the principles of equality and non-discrimination for all people regardless of their identities. Therefore, this edition emphasized that our human rights are personal but never dependent on personal opinions!

Check out the wrap-up video: [\(1\) Facebook](#)

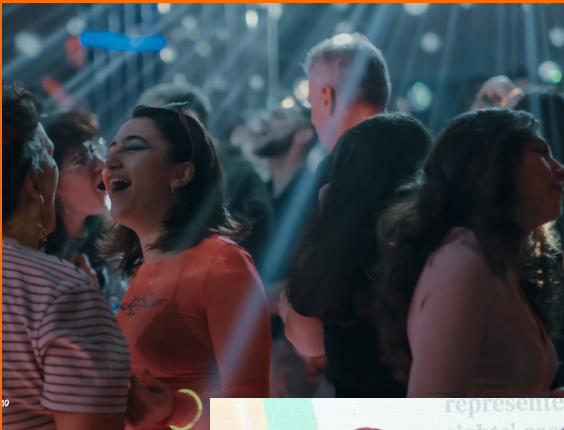
6 - 10
December

HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK VOL.10

<p>6</p> <p>10:00-13:00 Opening Conference - Combating Hate Speech: State Obligations Sirius Hotel</p> <p>16:00 - 18:00 Discussion: "From paper to practice – Kosovo must keep its commitments to domestic violence survivors" Amnesty International Report National Library</p> <p>20:00-00:00 Roma Poetry & Music Night Bubble Pub</p>	<p>7</p> <p>11:00 - 13:00 Talk: Activism in Times of Crisis - Past and Now Center for Narrative Practice</p> <p>15:00 - 17:00 Documentary Screening: "The Killing of a Journalist" + Panel Discussion Kino Armata</p> <p>17:30 - 19:00 Exhibition: Only the Rain Saved Us National Museum of Kosovo</p> <p>20:00 - 22:00 Documentary Screening: "20 Days in Mariupol" Kino Armata</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10:00 - 12:00 Roundtable Discussion "75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" Government Building</p> <p>17:00 Hate Speech Online YIHR KS social media</p> <p>22:00 - 02:00 Drag Show: Dance the Hate Away Grand Hotel Underground</p>	<p>9</p> <p>16:00 - 20:00 Workshop: Overcoming Activism Burnout Activism Hub, YIHR KS</p> <p>20:00 - 10:00 Stand Up Comedy with Vezirja Bubble Bar</p>	<p>10</p> <p>12:00 - 13:00 Street Action: Hate Speech is Not Free Speech Zahir Pajaziti Square</p> <p>20:00 - 00:00 Celebration: 10 Years of Human Rights Week Menza Ramiz Sadiku</p>
--	--	--	---	--

Donors: Partners:





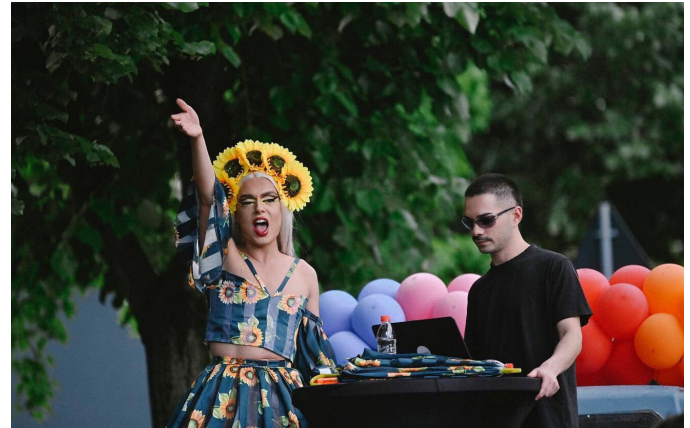
11

+

PROTESTS

We March, We Don't Celebrate - International Women's Day

As every 8th of March, we protested from the Palace of Justice to the Government building for a life without violence for all girls and women. This 8th of March, the feminist resistance echoed calls against the patriarchy that kills and against the state that remains silent! Our fight for equality and freedom for all girls and women will continue!



PRISHTINA PRIDE 2023 - Love You As You Are

YIHR KS co-organized another successful Prishtina Pride edition with CEL, CSGD & CRD during 5-10 June 2023!

Under the slogan "Love You As You Are" we conveyed supportive messages to everyone who is facing stress, anxiety, and depression which are direct consequences of systemic homophobia and transphobia from the state, society, and the family. We reminded everyone that they are not alone. Love, acceptance, and building safe spaces, in addition to professional help, are more than necessary, if not essential, for preventing and overcoming mental health challenges.

AGAINST THE STATE THAT KILLS WOMEN!

We gathered in front of the Prosecutor's Council of Kosovo to protest against the state that kills women!

On March 22, 2023, the Constitutional Court of Kosovo affirmed that the Kosovo Police and the State Prosecutor's Office violated Sebahate Morina's right to life. There was still no resignation or dismissal of responsible persons. Sebahate Morina was denied the right to life. We demanded the dismissal of those responsible!



12

**STREET
ACTIONS**

Constitution Day - Street Performance “Perfect Constitution, Perfectly Unfollowed”

For Constitution Day, we presented the street performance of Mr. Clown in Power perfectly unfollowing the perfect Constitution of Kosovo.

Who is Mr. Clown? He is the representative and embodiment of our decision-makers and politicians in power who consistently fail to uphold the Constitution and protect human rights.

This performance served as a reminder of the reasons those in power hold these positions and the responsibilities that come with said power. We demanded that compliance with the Constitution and the protection of all human rights and freedoms be of the highest priority and taken on with full seriousness by all institutions and decision-makers.



5 Minutes in the Darkness of Missing Persons

We continued marking April 27, the National Day of Missing Persons, by turning off the lights for 5 minutes in our homes to solidarize with the darkness that relatives of missing persons have been feeling for more than 23 years now.

We will not stop, and we will continue to search for and remember all the persons missing from the recent war in Kosovo until they return to their families and justice is done for them and their relatives.

Watch the video: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yih_r_ks\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

National Day of Missing Persons - Street Action

We marked the National Day of Missing Persons on the 27th of April with a street intervention. We placed a plaque next to the Memorial of the Missing Persons, written in five languages: Albanian, Serbian, Roma, Turkish, and English. The plaque is intended to mark the memorial and inform citizens what it represents. Since the memorial was put up in 2015, there has been no official marking to explain its purpose. This has resulted in years of institutional negligence toward the families of the missing persons.

The placing of the plaque served as a reminder of 1621 people who are still missing since the last war in Kosovo. Through this symbolic action, YIHR KS called for action for all our institutions to prioritize the enlightenment of the fate of the missing persons.

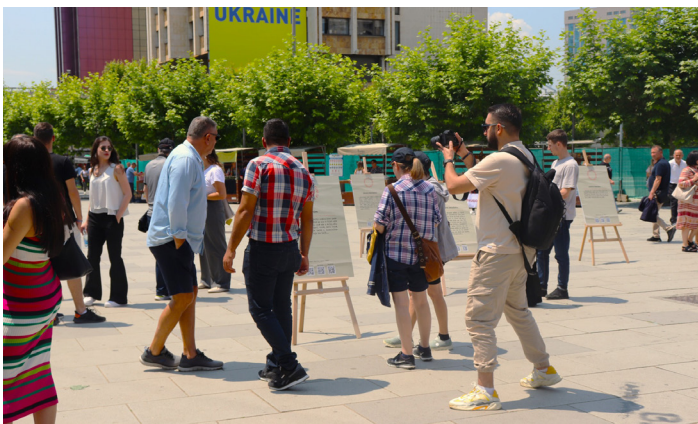


International Refugees Day - Street Action “Home Away from Home”

We marked International Refugees Day with Home Away From Home - a street action showcasing personal stories of refugees during the last war in Kosovo. We put up passages from first-hand accounts from interviews from the Virtual Museum of Refugees in an open space at the Zahir Pajaziti Boulevard.

Watch the video to get a better feeling of the action: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yihr_ks\) • Instagram photos and videos](#).

Read more stories of refugees at <https://museumofrefugees-ks.org/?lang=en>



28th Anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide

On the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the horrible Srebrenica genocide we gathered at the main square to light candles in honor of remembering all the victims of the Srebrenica genocide and to stand in solidarity with all the survivors!

We are dedicated to remembering the past and all war crimes, especially those committed during the 90s in former Yugoslavia. We demanded justice for all the victims, and demanded that the truth be accepted. Only then we will be able to move towards peaceful coexistence.



International Youth Day - Street Action "Really, How Are You?"

On the 12th of August, we marked International Youth Day in Prishtina through the street action "Really, How are You?" which highlighted the significance of mental health! Citizens and activists joined the action by writing positive encouraging messages in the book "You are not alone" about the mental health struggles that the youth in Kosovo face. The messages from youth call for the creation of safe and supportive environments where young people feel empowered to seek help and openly discuss their mental health concerns without the fear of judgment or stigma.



International Day of Enforced Disappearances - Street Action "The Waiting Door"

On the International Day of Enforced Disappearances, we organized a street action in the city square here in Prishtina titled "The Waiting Door". We did an installation of a black door and set up a dining room, with two chairs and a table symbolizing the families who still await their missing relatives from the war to come back home. This was a day of solidarity with all family members, as much as it was a day that called for criticism, accountability, and immediate action from our institutions.

The black door symbolized agony, sadness, and grief - embodying the prolonged waiting for the enlightenment of the fate of the forcibly disappeared. We also used the acoustic space by playing a ticking clock sound. We did this to instill a sense of urgency on the matter of the missing persons and also to symbolize the angst of waiting that the family members of the missing persons have to go through daily.

International Peace Day - Street Action “What Does Peace Mean to You?”

We marked International Peace Day at the city center where we orchestrated a dynamic street action that embodied the spirit of peace. Creating a visually striking display, we arranged the letters spelling “PEACE,” transforming the public space into a canvas for shared ideals and posing the question, “What Does Peace Mean to You?”

Encouraging citizens to actively participate, we invited them to write their reflections on peace directly onto these monumental letters. This collaborative effort between our organization, volunteers, and engaged citizens not only made the event a success but also cultivated a sense of community and shared purpose.

Check out the video to learn more about how the action went: [YIHR Kosovo \(@yih_r_ks\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)



International Human Rights Day - Street Action “Hate Speech is not Free Speech”

To mark Human Rights Day, which also was the 5th and last day of Human Rights Week - Volume 10, we unveiled a Mural at the tunnel near Zahir Pajaziti Square. The art piece conveyed a powerful message against hate speech while demonstrating our unwavering commitment to nurturing a society that is built on social justice and respect for all human rights.

In addition to the Mural, we also distributed pocket-sized copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and engaged in discussions with citizens.



DONORS



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



SUPPORTING FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR
DEMOCRACY



UNMIK



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER



Internews



Rockefeller
Brothers Fund
Philanthropy for an Interdependent World

**OPEN SOCIETY
FOUNDATION**
SERBIA



WBF Western
Balkans
Fund
Supporting Common Projects



Fondacioni i Kosovës për Shoqëri të Hapur
Kosovo Foundation for Open Society
Kosovska Fondacija za Otvoreno Društvo



THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe



Funded by
the European Union



EULEX
European Union Rule of Law Mission
Kosovo



CIVIL
RIGHTS
DEFENDERS



YOUTH INITIATIVE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
NISMA E TË RINJVE PËR TË DREJTAT E NJERIUT
INICIJATIVA MLADIH ZA LJUDSKA PRAVA