

ANNUAL REPORT



2023



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A Vision Unfolding: Letter from the Executive Director

Annual reports serve as both a benchmark for organizational transparency and a moment of reflection on the year's accomplishments.

During our team discussion of the report, it reminded us of our achievements and the objectives met throughout the year. 2023 brought challenges and growth, which we overcame through the collective efforts of our team and supporters.

We observed the positive impact and reputation of our initiatives in various ways, from the appreciation expressed by our followers to the formation of unexpected partnerships.

This year strengthened our position in youth engagement and democracy development, expanding our influence beyond the national level to a broader regional scope. We embarked on diverse projects centered on peace and security, aligning with our programs and our mission to foster regional unity. Consequently, YPN's activities spanned national, regional, and Euro-Mediterranean levels. We take pride in having reached 530 direct beneficiaries and engaged over 10,000,000 people through our official communication channels.

Additionally, the organization has focused on enhancing its internal capabilities and implementing crucial, albeit challenging, reforms. These changes have significantly influenced YPN's organizational growth and established a foundation for enduring impact and legacy.

Our progress stems from the dedication of our team, volunteers, experts, supporters, and all who believe in our mission and our achievements thus far. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of you.

We anticipate more years of success, challenges, and meaningful impact. As we say at YPN, "Cooperation is our greatest strength," so let's continue to rely on each other and spread positivity.



**Ms. Françoiska Muço,
Executive Director of YPN**

1. Our Story: An Introduction

1.1 YPN: Who We Are

At Young Professionals Network we believe that emerging forms of participation can unlock new opportunities for youth and citizens to transform their lives and communities. We support the growth of individuals who have historically lacked access to professional development resources, to deepen their capacities and help them build networks to sustain their professional success.

YPN was formally established by a group of young, motivated professionals from different working backgrounds who, after being part of several programmes supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung Foundation, decided to establish a platform to replicate what they learned in their home country, addressing some of the challenges related to youth participation, state of democracy, social rights and good neighborhood.

The Young Professionals Network portfolio falls within three interconnected working programmes that contribute to Albania's path towards the European Union, and are in compliance with Western Balkans and UN strategies, policies and values. Through many of our initiatives and based on YPN's three programmatic areas, we aim to create an environment where young professionals can thrive, contribute, and lead towards a brighter future.

The three working programmes are:

- a) **Economic Empowerment and Social Rights**
The goal of this programme is to address the transition from education to labour market by working on three important pillars: skill development, employability policies, and labour rights.
- b) **Civic Engagement and Advocacy for Democracy**
The goal of this programme is to support the development of a democratic society by promoting active citizenship, rule of law, and engagement in the local democracy.
- c) **Peace and Security**
The goal of this program is to empower youth as agents of peace capable of preventing conflict, reducing inequalities and fostering sustainable peace.

1.2 Our North Star: Mission and Vision

At YPN, we are committed to our mission of empowering and developing young professionals by strengthening their rights and enhancing their capacity and ability to participate meaningfully in the workforce, policy-making, and decision-making processes, with the ultimate goal of fostering more resilient and democratic societies.

2. Impact in Numbers: Projects and Achievements

Throughout 2023, the Young Professionals Network implemented a series of important projects that strengthened youth positions in policy-making and decision-making processes, gave young professionals a voice in international affairs, made the labor market a more decent and inclusive place for all young professionals, and equipped them with the necessary tools and resources to succeed in their chosen fields.

Consequently, YPN's activities spanned national, regional, and Euro-Mediterranean levels and reached 390 direct beneficiaries and engaged over 10,000,000 people through official communication channels.

What is seen as most important in all the projects implemented this year is the inclusion of youth in topics where traditionally they have not had a say or any kind of engagement. Furthermore, this year, YPN collaborated with a series of new partners such as the NATO Public Diplomacy Department, US Embassy in Tirana, and RISI Albania, thus expanding its pool of supporters. Below you will find some of the projects implemented throughout 2023.

2.1 Engaging Young Professionals: Strengthening NATO Transatlantic Alliance in Albania and Western Balkans



The Forum of Young Professionals Network 2023, supported by NATO PDD and the U.S Embassy, aimed to empower young professionals in the Western Balkans to understand the importance of NATO values and the Transatlantic Alliance in a changing world.

The most important event of this project was the development of the Annual Forum of Young Professionals 2023 “Cooperation, Security, Values: NATO in a changing world” This regional forum aimed to provide young professionals in the Western Balkans with the knowledge and skills required to understand the significance of the Transatlantic Alliance and NATO values in an ever-changing world.

The event, attended by over 25 young professionals from the Western Balkans, focused on transatlantic security policy, NATO's challenges, and Western Balkans and

security challenges. Topics included Euro-Atlantic matters, NATO's role in the region, Russia and China's interference, and young perspectives on regional security. The event included high-level panel discussions with the participation of important security institutions, regional actors and experts, keynote speakers, a Declaration Preparation session, networking between Western Balkans participants, and an Art Exhibition

Results:

- Regional Forum of Young Professionals “Cooperation, Security, Values: NATO in a changing world” with 25 participants
- Declaration: <https://ypn.al/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Declaracion-english.pdf>
- One open hour discussions on regional security and NATO’s role 20 participants
- One presentation of NATO’s internship schemes with 15 participants
- Two interviews published in national and regional mediums
- Op-ed highlighting the importance of young professionals’ engagement in the Western Balkans
- Article on the crucial role of NATO under the loop of young professionals

2.2 Western Balkans Youth Lab on Mental Health – Albania



The Western Balkans Youth Lab (WBYL) is a three-year initiative founded by the European Union and implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) aimed at fostering a structured dialogue between youth organizations and public authorities. The project focuses on policy development that increases young people's participation in decision-making, aiming to improve the socio-economic environment and youth flexibility in the Western Balkans.

The Young Professionals Network led the Albanian Working Group of Western Balkans Youth Lab on Mental Health which targeted a crucial point for Albania with the

involvement of the youth component for the first time in the National Action Plan for Mental Health 2023-2026.

The Need Assessment on Youth Mental Health Services was conducted through a series of focus groups, consultations, and interviews with health staff, various groups of young people, and hospital public health staff, among others, and was based on national documents and field research. These findings and recommendations led the experts to draft and conceptualize the youth component, which will be included for the first time in the National Action Plan of Mental Health 2023-2026, resulting in a series of activities for all stakeholders involved in the action plan's implementation. This was a long-term project co-chaired by YPN and the Ministry of Health in Albania with the support of RCC.

Results:

- Need assessment on Youth Mental Health in Albania
- Including the youth component in the National Action Plan of Mental Health 2023-2026 for the first time
- 1 Toolkit on mental health
- 2 videos on mental health awareness
- 45 young people participated in the Final Conference in Albania
- 6 youth workers involved in the project participating in the Regional Conference in Belgrade
- 69 direct beneficiaries from several informative meetings held

2.3 Opportunities for Decent Work: Young People Benefit from the Labour Code



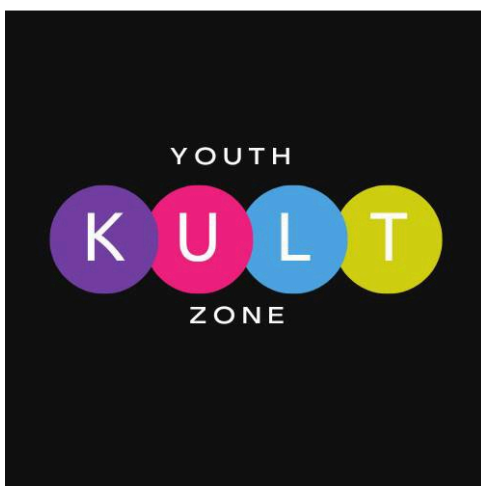
The intervention aimed to empower Albanian youth by increasing their knowledge of the Labor Code and enabling them to be agents of change for sustainable employment. It was implemented with the support of RISI Albania. The National Needs Assessment on "Young Professionals and Labor Code" was developed with the participations of 1200 interviewed from all over Albania. This need assessment served as the base of developing the Albanian Youth Labor Rights platform.

The platform called “InfoPuna” provides education, information, and guidance on labor rights, respective institutions and legislations and future employment prospects. YPN worked closely with relevant agencies and stakeholders to ensure that the platform met standards and is comprehensive. The initiative in question has had a significant impact on making the labor market a decent and inclusive place for all young people.

Results:

- National Need Assessment on Young Professionals and Labour Code
- Creating an informative and innovative online platform “InfoPuna”
<https://ypn.al/platforma/>
- 4 informative sessions of four different faculties in Tirana where 200 young professionals
- Signing of MoU between YPN and the Commissioner Against Discrimination for the sustainability of the platform
- Publication of a series of info graphics which will involve key findings from the need assessment where 30’670 young people reach out
- Meeting with 20 business representatives;
- Meeting with 10 NGOs representatives;
- 10 international organizations reach out
- Meeting with 19 Career Guidance Offices representatives.

2.4 Youth KultZone



Youth KULT Zone aimed to foster intercultural dialogue and social change in the Western Balkans region. It used digital media to create authentic, truthful, and jovial learning experiences of culture, fostering inclusive communities built on solidarity. It was implemented with the support of the Western Balkans Fund.

The project offered a series of curated online talks focused on bringing a community of change makers together through food, music, dance, art, and other cultural aspects

of society. The main goal of Youth KULT was to encourage and enable young people to plan and implement activities that promoted collaboration and good neighborhood in the region.

By understanding the perspectives of diverse youth from different communities and stepping out of hard-wired mindsets into global mindsets, Youth KULT aimed to create common visions for sustainable peace in the region. The project used digital media as a platform for social change and connection, with the aim of fostering intercultural dialogue.

Results:

- Survey on youth perceptions on intercultural elements
- 6 video podcasts around the region
- 6 E-books on cultural heritage in the Western Balkans
- 600 young people reached, especially adolescent young girls and women, and other marginalized genders and populations per cohort from the Western Balkan region and isolated from the youth support ecosystem

2.5 Boosting Social – cohesion in the Yzberisht Zone by empowering youth professionally and personally



The project aimed to break the marginalization cycle of youth in Yzberisht area by providing opportunities of skills development to participate in labour market and local community initiatives. It focuses on training young people and offering internships in Tirana institutions. It was implemented with the

The project boosted their inclusion in society and strengthen their engagement as active citizens. They were connected and socialized with peers through social activities and development opportunities. The module training also provided opportunities for young people to learn and practice citizenship, bringing positive changes to Yzberisht. The project's roots were translated into incorporating marginalized groups in society and participating in various activities.

Results:

- 2 Training Programs Modules on Soft Skills and Active Citizenship where 15 young people were direct beneficiary
- Open lectures on “MundesPlot” platform
- 2 Study Visits with stakeholders, NGO, and institutions
- Internship Opportunities after the training courses
- 3000 accounts reach out
- 5 young people developed internships at business and NGOs

2.6 Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Access to Future Skills and Jobs - Unison Journey to Europe



The project aimed to develop a multidimensional approach to the labor market's new skills and European developments, empowering young professionals and promoting networking and exchange at regional and national levels. It targets Albanian youth and the Western Balkans.

The project included the development of the 2022 Annual Forum of Young Professionals “Everything about the Labor Market”, development of the regional roundtable on “Boosting Decent Employment in Western Balkans: How youth advance their careers?” in partnership with the Western Balkan Youth Lab (WBYL) project (the roundtable discussion gathered high level stakeholders from the Western Balkans region to discuss and strengthen their cooperation on the youth economic development), implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council, meetings with representatives of universities and business on the framework of the development of a digital tool which provides young people with different opportunities of personal and professional.

Results:

- Forum of Young Professionals 2022 “Everything about the Labor Market” which gathered 62 youth and youth stakeholders
- A regional roundtable which gathered 20 stakeholders from the Western Balkans
- Establishment of the Coalition for the Economic Development of Youth (CEDY). This platform promotes youth economic development through multi-stakeholder sustainable partnerships
- 1 Policy Recommendations on youth and skills development developed
- 7000 people reached out through social media

3. Year in Action: Signature Events and Activities

Throughout the year, the Young Professionals Network team has participated in numerous events, representing youth interests, advocating for ongoing issues, and showcasing YPN's work. Additionally, beyond implemented projects, specific activities have taken place on notable days or in response to important developments. Below is an overview of our signature events and activities.

3.1 National Youth Day in Berat– Opportunity and Development for Youth Empowerment

On National Youth Day, December 8, 2023, YPN, in cooperation with our partner RISI Albania, organized "Opportunities and Development for Youth Empowerment" in the Municipality of Berat. During this discussion, young people had the opportunity to converse with the Mayor of Berat about local youth policies, youth participation in policy-making and decision-making processes, and reflect on the city's development and engagement opportunities. The participation of young professionals from various fields was an important part of the day, as they shared their professional journeys, highlighted the importance of networking and activism, and discussed multiple application opportunities.



3.2 Civil Society Week – European Year of Skills 2023

Civil Society Week, on 2023 had a particular focus on the European Year of Skills, aiming to promote social integration and skills development for a more inclusive society. YPN took part on this initiative by organizing an open hour on the 1st of June 2023 with students and groups of interest titled “Skills for Youth – The journey in employability”.



Youth employment, the Youth Guarantee, and the lack of information regarding rights and responsibilities in Albania were the main topics that Young Professionals Network encouraged participants to discuss during the activity. The event also served for promoting the development of a platform for Albanian youth labour rights “InfoPuna” and sharing insights from it, emphasizing the importance of education and involvement in creating a more inclusive society.

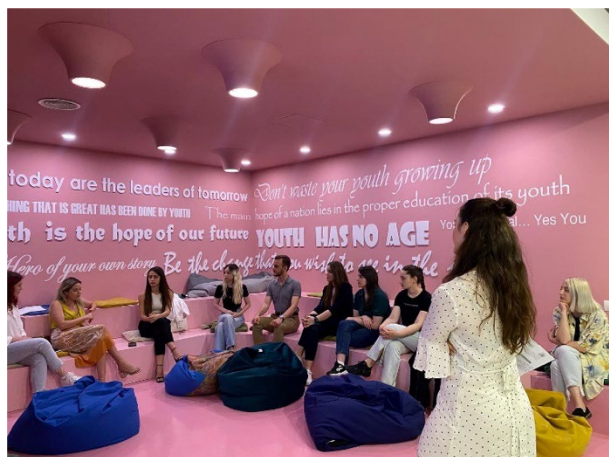
3.3 Students Guide – Fair

"The Student Guide Fair 2023" provided a great opportunity to connect with young students while also highlighting YPN's commitment to empowering youth, facilitating their employment, and encouraging civic participation. Through engaging discussions and exchanges, YPN highlighted ongoing initiatives and concrete ways of engagement provided to youth.



3.4 I am a Woman in Cyber/Space

YPN partnering with Ms. Ilvana Dedja, as Youth Ambassador for Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) organized an "Intergenerational Talk on the Experiences of Being a Girl/Woman in Cyberspace" on July 6th 2023. The discussion was very engaging and covered a range of topics, including cyber violence, legal and policy frameworks, and a practical exercise on recognizing digital violence facilitated by a panel of cybersecurity experts, research analysts, and human rights lawyers. This



meeting aimed to address the growing risks that women and girls face online, including cyberbullying, harassment, non-consensual distribution of intimate imagery, and exclusion.

3.5 Future of Finance in the WB6 at Invest Summit 2023

The Young Professionals Network and InvestFund have partnered to host the 6th edition of INNVEST Summit 2023: “Future of Finance in WB6” which is the largest innovation and Future of Finance technology Summit in the Balkan region. The summit took place on October 3, 2023.



The event, which annually attracts 200 senior investment professionals, aimed to inspire businesses, entrepreneurs, and INNVEST Members, partners, and sponsors to utilize technology in a way that benefits their industry, communities, society and the planet as a whole.

3.6 Prespa Forum Dialogue 2023

The Prespa Forum Dialogue 2023 took place on 15-16 June 2023 in Struga, at Lake of Ohrid, marking the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Prespa Agreement between North Macedonia and Greece.



The forum offered a platform for debates, gathering high-level national and international decision-makers and officials, diplomats, prominent personalities of the academic and business community, civil society, and youth organizations' representatives had the opportunity to share, in-person, their analyses, thoughts and ideas on a wide range of regional and international topics. The Young Professionals Network was represented by the member Ms. Lorenca Bejko.

3.7 Western Balkans Youth Forum – Berlin Process

The "Western Balkans Youth Forum 2023" was held in Tirana, Albania on 7 – 8 October as part of the Berlin Summit. The forum was attended by ninety young individuals, who contributed to the strengthening of the voice of youth across the Western Balkans. These young individuals were key actors who suggested and interacted for the sustainable development and integration process of the region into the European Union. Two days filled with numerous activities, such as the "Balkan Youth Express," which was a train journey from Elbasan to Durrës. The purpose of the youth forum was not only to showcase a different Albania, but also to finalise the youth declaration that would be presented at the Berlin Process Leaders' Summit. The Young Professionals Network was represented by the member Ms. Lorela Prevazi.



3.8 Aspen Institute Germany – Digitalization and Democracy

Young Professionals Network attended the high-level conference "Digitalization and Democracy" that took place in Podgorica from December 11-14, 2023.

The primary focus of the conference was digitalization's impact on crucial elements of democracy. Participants from the Western Balkans, Germany, the EU, and international organizations discussed issues like combating disinformation, promoting media diversity, and enhancing cyber resilience.

This event, which was organised in cooperation with the Federal Foreign Office of Germany and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro, functioned as an environment for comprehensive discussions among multiple Western Balkans stakeholders under Chatham House rules. The Young Professionals Network was represented by the Executive Director, Ms. Françeska Muço.



3.9 Belgrade Security Conference of Young Leaders

The Belgrade Security Conference of Young Leaders took place on 12-13 October 2023 in Serbia and gathered young leaders from the Western Balkans to explore critical topics like peace building, critical thinking, and dialogue diversity.



The objective of BSC Young Leaders 2023 was straightforward: to bring people together in the identification of both national and international threats. They explored in the workshops the issues that are prevalent among all young people in the WB6 communities. The negative consequences of limited opportunities, acceptance, critical thinking, and diverse dialogues on the motivation and sense of belonging of young individuals in the Balkans were underscored right from the outset. The Young Professionals Network was represented by the member Ms. Orjana Çekrezi.

3.10 Civic-centric Digital Transformation" Conference

In light of YPN's efforts to contribute to the digitalization processes of Albania and regional cooperation, YPN's Executive Director, Françeska Muço, on the 4th of April participated in the "Civic-centric Digital Transformation" Conference in Skopje, Macedonia to present the achievements and results of the project "Albanian Youth Fit for the digital age". The Conference was organized by Metamorphosis Foundation within the framework of the project "Increasing Civic Engagement in Digital Agenda – ICEDA", co-funded by the European Union.



The pandemic highlighted the need for increased investment in digital skills and digitalization, digital rights and cyber security infrastructure. The Annual Forum of Young Professionals 2021 "Digital Transformation, Necessity for Shaping the Future" presented policy recommendations on digital infrastructure and skills, focusing on access, education, and digital security for young people and professionals. The recommendations emphasize the need for more investment in digital skills, use of digital tools and youth capacities. 9 out of 13 policy recommendations developed were integrated into the "Youth Strategy 2022–2029."

3.11 Young Political Leaders – Bridging the Gap



Young Professionals Network joined the Bridging the Gap initiative, aiming to promote dialogue between civil society and elected representatives from the region and the European Union.

The 2023 Bridging the Gap brought together 19 Members of Parliament, 20 representatives of civil society organizations, and three YPL alumni from 5 countries of the Western Balkans for a three-day event that allowed them to exchange in a climate of dialogue, commitment, and cooperation.

They debated with Members of the European Parliament, including DEG Lead Members for the Western Balkans, staff of the European Institutions, and representatives of the European civil society. These sessions addressed matters such as the role of the youth in the EU integration process, green agenda and digital transition, and disinformation and regional cooperation. The Young Professionals Network was represented by Ms. Sara Zekaj.

3.12 Inner Development Goals – Swedish Embassy

YPN participated in the launch of the Swedish initiative "Inner Development Goals" in March, supporting the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The initiative, which included a network of collaborators from various sectors, serves as a valuable mechanism for areas



where Albania is in the early stages of progress. The initial phase aimed to create a concrete plan of activities and fields in cohesion and coordination with interested parties, marking the co-creation of a sustainable community between Albania and Sweden.

3.13 Economic Diplomacy as a Lever for regional integration in the Euro Med region

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) jointly organized a seminar on Economic Diplomacy as a lever of Regional Integration in the Euro-Mediterranean Region, on 20 and 21 July 2023, at the premises of the Policy Center for the New South (PCNS), in Rabat (Morocco).



This event brought together eminent personalities, diplomats, experts, academicians to share their perspectives and expertise with the participants in order to develop a shared vision on how economic diplomacy can bring an added value to the actions deployed by the Mediterranean countries and reach the goals of the partnership and cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean. The Young Professionals Network together with its delegation from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro contributed through sharing the positive practices that the Western Balkans has in terms of regional cooperation and regional economic cooperation.

3.14 EU-Balkan Youth Forum “Western Balkans Future: how can YOUth shape Europe?”



In the framework of the “EU-Balkan Youth Forum “Western Balkans Future: how can YOUth shape Europe?”, YPN’s Executive Director Frančeska Mučo took part in a compelling panel on human capital, which tackled critical issues like education-work transitions and gathered important stakeholders from different sectors.

The event brought together young professionals from the European continent and it was organized by the RCC Regional Cooperation Council - RCC and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

3.15 "20 YEARS since the Thessaloniki Summit - a Western Balkans youth perspective"

YPN represented by Mr. Bruklin Shima participated at the "20 YEARS since the Thessaloniki Summit - a Western Balkans youth perspective". This event was organized by the International Institute for Peace and RYCO and it aimed to explore the impact of the summit and discuss the future of EU integration for the Western Balkans from a youth standpoint.



4. Stronger Together: Partnerships and Collaborations

This chapter outlines YPN's key partnerships and collaborative efforts. It highlights our strategic alliances with various organizations, showcasing how these relationships have amplified our impact and expanded our reach in empowering young professionals.

4.1 New Partnership with RisiAlbania

YPN and RisiAlbania established a new partnership with the goal of addressing issues crucial for the professional and economic development of young people, as well as providing a youth perspective on policy interventions. Considering the missions of both entities, this cooperation is seen as complementary to existing efforts in youth employment and skills development.



4.2 Union for the Mediterranean

Throughout the past year, YPN continued the cooperation with the Union for the Mediterranean, resulting in a sequence of high-level events and contributing to a series of different youth-targeting policies. These gatherings brought together important stakeholders from the Mediterranean region to address urgent matters like empowering youth and fostering economic development. One significant occasion, which marked the first cooperation in Western Balkan was the conference held in Albania in June 2023. The combined efforts of UfM and YPN aim to empower the people of the Mediterranean region. Therefore, the YPN has become part of the UfM Youth Focal Points Network



5. Beyond Borders: Erasmus+ and International Engagements

This chapter explores YPN's global reach and international collaborations, with a focus on involvement in Erasmus+ projects and activities implemented in international level. It highlights YPN's participation in cross-border exchanges, international conferences, and multinational projects, showcasing how these engagements have broadened organization perspective and enhanced impact. The section underscores YPN's commitment to fostering global connections and providing international exposure and opportunities for young professionals.

5.1 International Engagements

5.1.1 Post-BREXIT Development Policy in Western Balkans: The Case of Albania



Young Professionals Network and the Good Enough College collaborated to host a roundtable discussion titled "Post-BREXIT Development Policy in Western Balkans: The Case of Albania." The event delved into the effects of Brexit on the development policies and strategies of Western Balkan countries, with a particular focus on Albania and youth. The event took place on 27th of June 2023, in London, United Kingdom.

Important topics for discussion covered the effects of Brexit on trade and investment opportunities, the significance of regional cooperation, the value of investing in youth, and the possibility of forming new partnerships and alliances. The roundtable assembled policymakers, experts, young professionals, and representatives from the Albanian Embassy in the UK, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and Home Office to exchange insights, share best practices, and develop strategies to navigate the post-Brexit landscape in the context of Western Balkans development policies.

5.1.2 Global Youth Economic Opportunities Summit 2023 in United States



At the Global Youth Economic Opportunities Summit in Washington, D.C. on May 18 2023, YPN presented at the session “Youth Matters: Make an Informed Career Decision Today for a Decent Job Tomorrow” alongside with Helvetas colleagues.

This prestigious event brought together global youth, donor agencies, international organisations, the private sector, and development practitioners. Initiatives and positive practices from Albania, North Macedonia, and Nepal were discussed during the session.

5.1.3 UFM “Youth Employment and the Future of Work” Conference



YPN had the pleasure of co-hosting the Union of Mediterranean conference “Youth Employment and the Future of Work” which marked first UfM event in Tirana.

This event gathered 60 participants from all over the Mediterranean and it was part of the UfM Roadmap on Employment and Labour 2022-2025. Its focus was on youth-led organizations and networks, national and regional youth support programs, entrepreneurial skills for the future and developments of the labour market in the light of AI & digitalization.

The Conference provided a great opportunity for showcasing success stories, best practices, and inspiring efforts from around the region.

5.2 Erasmus+ Project

5.2.1 Fake News Busters – Erasmus+

"Fake News Busters: in the Name of Democracy," was a 6-day training course that came as a result of a partnership between 6 countries on the Erasmus+ KA2 project and brought together 18 young people in Treviso, Italy. The training aimed to raise awareness about propaganda and misinformation on the internet and their role in influencing democratic regimes. The participants learned how to distinguish fake news from real ones and what sources they can use to verify them.



5.2.2 In & Outside European Union – Erasmus+

In & Outside EU is an Erasmus+ project that empowered young minds to shape our society. This endeavor is a collaboration between 6 countries Italy, Albania, Ukraine, Spain, Lebanon and Poland and is just a step in a long journey for young people who were willing to learn about the EU and democracy through participation in national and international mobility activities. During these youth mobilizations/exchanges, they raised awareness of and embrace EU values such as human rights and democracy. Twelve YPN members participate in various motilities of this project.



5.2.3 How does youth sustain the rural world? – Erasmus +

This youth exchange was a collaboration of youth organizations from 10 European countries: Young Professionals Network (Albania), Social and Youth workers (Armenia), Umbrella (Georgia), Helix - Social Innovation Hub (Greece), Eurosud (Italy), Donum Animus (Latvia), Centre for Intercultural Dialogue (North Macedonia), Youth for Tomorrow's Europe Association (Romania), Antalya Metropolitan Municipality (Türkiye), Resilience Earth and Service Civil International Catalunya (Spain).



The project aimed to explore the effects of depopulation on rural communities and brainstorm ways to revitalize them. Two young members of YPN were selected to participate in this Erasmus+ exchange with together other youth workers from across Europe in Ulldemolins, Catalunya. The main focus of discussions was youth empowerment in taking an active role in supporting rural life and promote participation and contribute to the vibrancy and sustainability of rural areas. As a result of this project a digital handbook was produced.

6. Amplifying Our Voice: Media Presence and Outreach



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