

# YOUTH MAINSTREAMING IN ACTION

The OSCE Mission to Serbia's Work With and For Youth:  
A Compendium of Inclusive Practices from the Field



Organization for Security and  
Co-operation in Europe  
**Mission to Serbia**

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# **YOUTH MAINSTREAMING IN ACTION**

**The OSCE Mission to Serbia's Work With and For Youth:  
A Compendium of Inclusive Practices from the Field**



## HEAD OF THE OSCE MISSION TO SERBIA

**Working in partnership with state institutions and civil society, the OSCE Mission to Serbia helps the host country build strong, independent, accountable and effective democratic institutions, with the ultimate goal of Serbia attaining full domestic ownership of its key reforms in the areas of the rule of law and human rights; security co-operation; democratization; and media development. A cornerstone of our work in Serbia is also the promotion of youth engagement, ultimately contributing to enhanced peace prospects, security and strong democracy.**

**Youth have an enormous potential to shape the way their societies function. Thus, whatever we do, the OSCE Mission to Serbia seeks to involve youth perspectives. We are led by the tagline “nothing about youth, without youth”.**

**Throughout the activities that the Mission is supporting, I have met people who made a choice to understand different perspectives, a choice to overcome prejudice and intolerance, and a choice to bring fresh solutions to long-standing issues. Together, these choices will lead to the local ownership of societal change efforts, to better opportunities and to sustainable achievements.**

**The collection of youth-inclusive practices before you is illustrative of women and men keen to learn and protect human rights and the rule of law, and of youth ready to address hate crimes, counter violent extremism and embrace diversity, and be the drivers of regional co-operation. Moreover, it shows how societal actors benefit from meaningful youth inclusion, such as national minority councils, schools, police officers, media and other institutions.**

**Enabling youth participation is crucial for young people to have a sense of belonging, to have enthusiasm about contributing to the development of their communities, to be committed to the prosperity of their environments, and to impact change in society.**

**With already three Ministerial Declarations on youth and security, the OSCE is recognizing the importance of youth involvement.**

**I invite you to explore how youth mainstreaming in action looks like.**

**Sincerely,**



**H.E. Ambassador Andrea Orizio  
Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia**



**H.E. Ambassador  
Andrea Orizio**

**Head of the  
OSCE Mission  
to Serbia**

# OSCE Slovakia CiO Special Representatives on Youth and Security

The nature and forms of youth participation have changed considerably over recent years. Increasingly, young people are choosing to involve themselves in new forms of participation, such as peer-to-peer networks, online discussion forums, online petitions, product boycotts, or through participation in new social movements, such as the recent worldwide global climate strikes. This has permitted youth to be more present in the halls of decision-making and influence the agendas within the room.

Young people must be genuinely engaged in decision-making processes, beyond tokenism. The recognition and participation of young people as agents of positive change is critical for ensuring their investment in the future of peace processes and guaranteeing the durability of peace through generations. Young people need to feel ownership over ongoing political and social processes and develop responsible leadership skills based on empathy and solidarity.

This change can only happen through the individual input of each of us, be that at the local, national, regional, or international level. From the Slovak OSCE Chairmanship perspective, we believe that efforts carried out in the participating States, the OSCE Mission to Serbia being an example, have a great impact for the most important target group of our work – the citizens. Be it security co-operation, human rights, democratization, or media, the Mission is continuously applying youth mainstreaming principles, putting into action OSCE's youth and security commitments.

We hope that this compilation will serve as a great source of inspiration for young women and men to be proactive and engage, as well as to others to harness the potential of youth.

Each action counts, and we want to thank all young people that are engaging in the youth, peace, and security agenda. Therefore, the publication before you is a thank you note as well.

Sincerely,

A stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large circle with a vertical line through it and some additional strokes.

Alba Brojka

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing as a cursive script.

Samuel Goda



**Alba  
Brojka**

**Albania**

**Samuel  
Goda**

**Slovakia**







## Youth Participation

**“We used to work for young people. Now we work with young people. But what we actually need is to let the young people lead the way and work themselves, and our role is just to moderate the process.”**

**Samedin Rovcanin**  
President of the Governing Board,  
National Youth Council of Serbia

## RESULTS

With the Albanian National Minority Council, a five-year strategy was developed. It includes recommendations on working with youth, youth participation, and mainstreaming youth perspectives into the Council's activities. Similarly, through a seminar for the Hungarian National Minority Council, a 2020 Activity Plan, which takes into account the potential of youth to contribute, especially for activities related to culture and non-formal education, was fine-tuned in The Mission also supported the drafting of a special report and analysis by the Protector of Citizens about the work of the National Minority Councils, which notes a lack of sensitization in developing youth-oriented activities.

### RECOMMENDATION

Through the Councils, national minorities are upholding their rights to self-government in culture, education, information, and official use of language and script. Involving youth perspectives in the Councils' activities is crucial for fulfilling these rights.



## National Minority Councils recognize the importance of principles of youth mainstreaming

### WHY

An assessment of the National Minority Councils in Serbia recognized a need for the Councils to improve their planning capacities towards devising projects and activities sensitive to youth perspectives, with particular attention to the needs of youth from rural areas, especially young women. It has been observed that the Councils lack a youth perspective and that only in rare cases do their activities address the needs of youth from minority communities.

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### HOW

In 2019, the Mission provided a series of capacity building opportunities for the staff of National Minority Councils so they can better plan activities targeting youth and incorporate a gender perspective.



# Co-operation between youth organizations and youth wings of political parties in the region:

## MISSION POSSIBLE

### WHY


Youth political participation, from elections to decision-making, has been a challenging question throughout Europe, often described as low and in persistent decline. Nevertheless, **there are organized young men and women who counteract the gloomy statistics and demonstrate their readiness to be active citizens and agents of change by involving themselves in political processes.** One of the rare venues where systemic co-operation between youth civil society organizations and youth wings of political parties can be found is within the work of a number of national youth councils.

### HOW

The project, "Advancing youth political participation through regional co-operation of national youth councils" was implemented in direct co-operation with the National Youth Council of Serbia. A roundtable attended by national youth councils from the region as well as international organizations active in the area of youth political participation provided an opportunity for information and good practice exchange among peers.

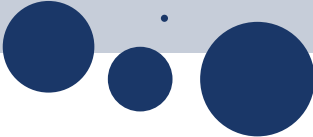
# RECOMMENDATION

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**There is a need for joint action and synergy in countering youth apathy, increasing the visibility of youth issues, placing those concerns on the political agenda, and fostering youth engagement in decision-making processes.**

**Nurturing co-operation among youth organizations and youth wings of political parties is one of the proven ways to address that need.**





## OSCE Mission to Serbia opens its doors to youth

**To increase direct communication and dialogue between the Mission's experts, senior management, including the Head of the Mission, and youth, the OSCE Mission to Serbia welcomes students and civil society organizations to its premises and organizes informative seminars and outreach presentations for participants from Serbia and abroad. The presentations focus on the OSCE values and commitments and how they are reflected through the work of the Mission.**



**Field visits and outreach presentations, with a particular focus on academic audiences and youth, will remain primary tools for promoting OSCE commitments in the future as well. In 2019 alone, the Mission welcomed some 500 students.**



## Youth Peace-building

*“Young people of the Western Balkans have the right to shape this region with their own ideas, ambitions, and competencies, despite the burden of the past and present conflicts. A better region starts with youth - through mobility, exchange and reconciliation.”*

**Marija Bulat**  
Local Branch Officer in  
Serbia, Regional Youth  
Cooperation Office

**RYCO**  
Regional Cooperation Office

A better region starts with youth



## **Making reconciliation a reality – OSCE Dialogue Academy for Young Women**

### **WHY**

**Reconciliation and trust-building is one of the most important and long haul processes in post-conflict societies.**

**As indicated by UN Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security”, it is women who are in a specific position to drive peace processes. The “Follow Us” initiative was launched in January 2012 by the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. It gathers two groups of prominent women from Belgrade and Pristina coming from different backgrounds and ethnicities and who are active in the public life of their respective societies. The Dialogue Academy represents an extension of the initiative and is established for young women from both societies.**

## HOW

Every year, a group of young women from Belgrade and Pristina, selected through an open call, attend an **intense peacebuilding, mediation, and gender equality course** in Stadtschlaining, Austria. Dialogue Academy alumnae then jointly develop and implement activities to promote dialogue and co-operation between young people in both societies with the support of the OSCE, most often in the form of outreach activities such as workshops and debates, targeting mainly youth as well as women and men living in rural areas.

## RESULTS

Over five cycles, the Dialogue Academy has brought together 115 young women from Belgrade and Pristina, devoted to embedding dialogue and a new reconciliation narrative in their respective societies. Through their ongoing work and follow-up activities, these women continue to be the voice of dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation.

# RECOMMENDATION



**It is important to support brave young women in challenging the existing barriers and prejudices with regard to the image of the “other” in both societies, as well as in carrying the message that women in the region face the same difficulties regardless of their nationality, language, or other lines of division.**

## **Young women from Albania and Serbia defy their “kismet”**

### **WHY**

**The position of women – the experiences, problems, and struggles which they face regardless of age, nationality, place of residence, education, economic status, or other characteristics – in Albania and Serbia seems to be a common problem for both societies, regardless of differences imposed by the national politics of either country through socialization and education.**

### **HOW**

**The project, “Women of Albania and Serbia: We Can Do It!” took place within a wider framework of the OSCE-led initiative, “Humans of Albania and Serbia”, as an **idea developed entirely by young women from these two countries.** It aimed to raise awareness about the importance and benefits of gender equality, to enhance youth co-operation, and to initiate dialogue about similar challenges that women in Albania and Serbia face through the production of a documentary film in which women talk about their experiences.**

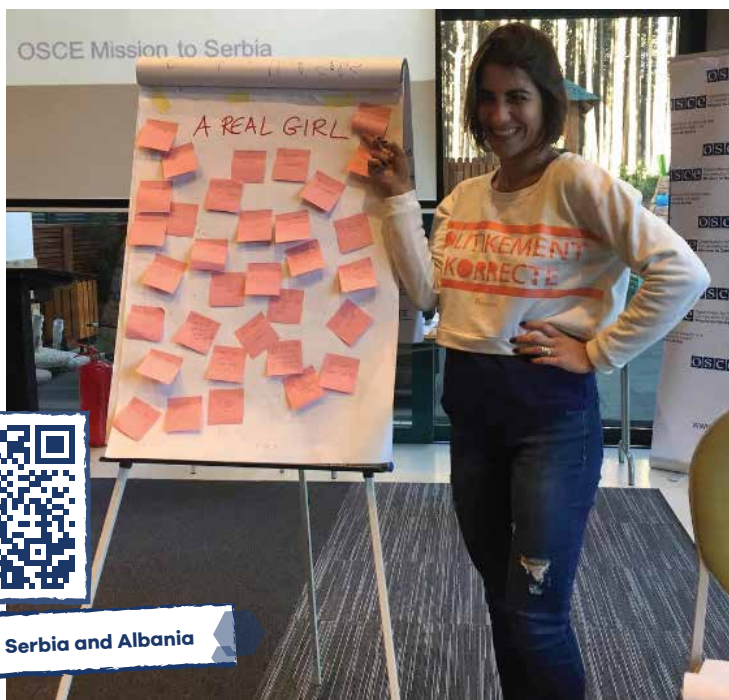
The short documentary *Kismet* dives into the lives of eight young women of different backgrounds, but all living in still predominantly patriarchal systems. The film zigzags between urban and rural areas of the two Western Balkan countries, between traditional and digital, between pressures and innovations, old narratives and new chances, asking – how similar are we in our differences? Why would a Serb want to learn Albanian? Why would an Albanian marry a Serb? Who is a 'foe', and who is a 'friend'? Can bridges between the two countries be strengthened by young women playing football together or a few enthusiasts co-operating on Wikipedia? What are the solutions for the same challenges? Should young women accept their assumed kismet (Turkish for Destiny or fate), or "can they be the strong warriors they are" and actively encouraging dialogue in the restless region?

## RESULTS

The message of the movie reached diverse audiences in Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro, with the latest screening taking place at the Sarajevo Pitchwise festival in 2019. It brought to the public discourse topics of regional co-operation, social distance, and the position of women and revealed the great energy that youth can put into societal progress.

# RECOMMENDATION

Youth, especially young women, have the potential to make changes in their societies. Co-operation between youth organizations from Albania and Serbia is in itself an important step in ensuring that young people take part in the struggle for more equal societies.



Kismet: Humans of Serbia and Albania

## **Boosting capacities of civil society organizations and high schools for quality youth exchanges in the region**

### **WHY**

**The need for youth co-operation and networking have been recognized by governments and youth organizations in the Western Balkans. In 2015, a commitment was made to establish the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), an independently functioning international mechanism, aiming to promote a spirit of reconciliation and co-operation between youth in the region. RYCO supports and empowers civil society organizations and high schools to implement activities in the areas of regional youth co-operation, mobility, and exchange.**



## HOW

Civil society organizations and high schools have an opportunity to obtain RYCO funds through calls for proposals for regional co-operation projects, encouraging partnerships between multiple regional partners. Since its establishment, the Mission has supported the RYCO Local Branch Office in organizing info sessions on the call throughout Serbia, as well as **capacity-building training on project proposal writing and intercultural learning.**

## RESULTS

Towards **high quality youth exchange programmes on the topics of youth participation, social inclusion, and intercultural dialogue,** high schools and less experienced civil society organisations as future beneficiaries of RYCO funds were offered an opportunity to develop skills and learn concepts which will help them on that path. Throughout Serbia, they were informed about the role of the mechanism which resulted from the Berlin Process and encouraged to be part of the reconciliation and co-operation efforts to which six Western Balkans governments have committed.

# RECOMMENDATION



**Requesting funds or support through issued calls for proposals can be an intimidating task for younger or less experienced organizations or institutions such as schools. Providing these stakeholders with the know-how for approaching and successfully completing an often daunting application process improves their rates of success.**

# Youth Rights



**“Even though human rights are supposed to be universal, young people are facing specific barriers. Examples include access to housing, meaningful participation, and dignified work, among others. Therefore, youth rights should get additional attention from all societal actors, so to ensure that they are guaranteed and enforced.”**

**Sever Dzigurski**  
**Youth Policy and Learning Expert**

# The Floor is Yours: Youth Rights Talks

## WHY

Human rights are guaranteed through a number of international instruments. **Although human rights apply to everyone, certain groups of people face particular barriers.** To address such barriers, countries have developed international instruments dedicated to the rights of certain groups, including women, children, and persons with disabilities. While there is yet no Convention on the rights of youth, there is a clear discrepancy between the rights young people have according to the law and the extent to which they are able to enjoy those rights in practice, which has become more and more recognized, including by the UN Human Rights Council.



## HOW

The Youth Rights Talks conference gives youth a venue for direct inputs to, and discussion with, civil society, youth actors, and national institutions. At conference, **youth views, concerns, and questions in regard to their human rights are examined in a variety of formats** such as: TED-like speeches by youth, dynamic panel discussions with relevant speakers, and conversations in small groups with representatives of various public entities and individuals from public life. In 2018, the conference focused on **70 years of the Declaration on Human Rights** and took place within the Human Rights Week in Belgrade in co-operation with the UN Human Rights Team in Serbia and the civil society organization, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights. In 2019, the second edition invited youth to reflect on peace and social inclusion, while making a reference to **UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security**. Additionally, a partnership was expanded with the Regional Youth Cooperation Office and OPENS towards hearing voices from the region in Novi Sad, the 2019 European Youth capital, sharing their views and advocating for youth co-operation.




## RESULTS

**Youth Rights Talks, as the first of its kind to open the topic on youth rights in Serbia, represents a valuable format for unaligned youth to speak up about their everyday lives in relation to the rights to which they are entitled, to propose solutions, and to meet like minded peers, as well as national institutions and international organizations.**

## RECOMMENDATION

**Giving a voice to young people means, among other things, choosing a format and modality which fits their habits and interests and sparks motivation for participation. Reinventing the traditional conference is one of the ways to bring dialogue closer to new generations.**



# Advancing monitoring and reporting on the human rights of youth in Serbia

## WHY

Following the 2017 adoption of UN Human Rights Council Resolution 35/14 on Youth and Human Rights, which “urges Member States to consider addressing, through the Universal Periodic Review and the treaty bodies, issues pertaining to the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights for youth, and to share the best practices that they have developed in dealing with the realization of human rights for young people,”, the Mission supports youth civil society actors in joining the efforts of the Serbian council for monitoring the implementation of recommendations of UN human rights mechanisms at the government level.

## HOW

Among the recommendations from The Missing Piece: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security based on UNSC Resolution 2250, is that “the engagement of human rights institutions and processes with young people” is broadened “by mainstreaming the rights and participation of young people into the work of the human rights treaty bodies, special procedures and other human rights mechanisms”. To that end, the Mission supported the civil society organization, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights and their annual report by developing an inclusive methodology for monitoring youth rights, building on existing efforts. Namely, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights regularly monitors the press, reports of local and international non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental organizations, and also analyses laws, strategies, and action plans. Each year, it highlights the most important issues which have an impact



## RESULTS

**Through desk research, analysis, and a consultative process with a number of organizations, human rights institutions in Serbia, academia, and international stakeholders and by applying participatory action research, a methodology was developed to facilitate better monitoring of youth rights. The tool is intended to be available to any interested party as an open resource.**



## RECOMMENDATION

**Youth organizations are important partners in human rights protection and promotion. Creating tools to enable them to be active in complex processes is a more sustainable form of support than only consulting them on issues.**





# Youth & Environment



**“Young legal experts are increasingly interested in environmental law, recognizing that the 21st century is an era in which a major turnaround needs to happen if we want to preserve a healthy life without compromising our prosperity and well-being. Young, educated environmental lawyers can accelerate the implementation of international environmental standards.”**

**Luka Djordjevic**  
MA Student, Environmental Law submodule,  
Faculty of Law, University of Belgrade



# Youth developing expertise in environmental law making and case-solving




**WHY** **Strengthening the skills and expertise of senior law students in the domain of environmental legislation**

**mobilizes them to form a community of legal professionals who are sensitive to and understand the importance of enforcing environmental law in light of sustainable development goals.**

**HOW**

**Since 2016, the Mission, in partnership with the University of Belgrade's Law Faculty, has implemented an extracurricular programme called the Environmental Law Clinic. To date, almost 250 law students have attended the Environmental Law Clinic and developed practical skills for handling environmental cases according to various legal instruments. In 2019, a group of 60 students were admitted to the program. Through placements in state and independent institutions, the students have gained hands-on experience in processing cases that have emerged from the breach of environmental rights.**



# RESULTS



Through a UNDP-supported project, a group of alumni from the Environmental Law Clinic were engaged to support the Ministry of Environmental Protection to develop amendments to the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment an important piece of legislation which provides for public engagement in assessing developmental plans. Through the Mission and in co-operation with the line Ministry and the Aarhus Center Network, the draft was offered for public scrutiny through a consultation process in seven towns across the country in Spring 2019.



The proposed amendments were widely approved and the draft Law is expected to be adopted in early 2020.

As agents of change, alumni from the Environmental Law Clinic can accelerate reforms by engaging in the European Union accession process related to aligning the environmental acquis with national legislation.



## RECOMMENDATION

**Accurately mapping issues youth care about and investing in their capacities strongly contributes to their successful engagement for the benefit of all communities. Empowering youth to engage in activities related to environmental law and policy development is one concrete and practical way to do this.**



A woman with blonde hair is sitting in a workshop, looking towards a whiteboard. The whiteboard features a diagram of a dandelion with multiple heads, each with lines radiating outwards, symbolizing growth or expansion. In the background, there are shelves filled with books and a poster that says "EPIC TRIP".

## Youth & Inclusive Policies

**"Any girl can be successful in areas such as science, business, or politics. But we need to inspire, empower, and support them to break antiqued gender roles which are telling them that they can't. Fostering participation and strengthening skills among girls is an investment in a better future for all."**

**Marija Stevuljevic**  
Mentor,  
"Share Your Knowledge" programme

# Working with vulnerable youth and by using non-discrimination principles

## WHY

The National Youth Strategy of Serbia (2015-2025) underlines that an **inclusive youth policy ensures respect for differences in each person** and gives all young people an equal opportunity to participate in all spheres of social life, regardless of their individual differences. According to it, three million people (42.1 per cent of the population) in the Republic of Serbia are exposed to the risks of poverty or social exclusion, with youth being a multiple vulnerable category. One of the strategic goals of the Strategy is thus **enhancing support for the social inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion**. In co-operation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and three youth policy pillars - National Youth Council, National Association of Youth Work Practitioners, and Association of Local Youth Office Co-ordinators - the OSCE Mission to Serbia has been supporting initiatives contributing to this goal for years and in numerous forms.



# HOW

Over 200 Local Youth Office Co-ordinators and activists have participated in an **educational course** on working with vulnerable groups and non-discrimination principles.

Following their needs, a **guidebook** was developed, adding to the development of competencies in this regard. For the last four years, a **consultative process** with the line Ministry and the three youth policy pillars was held, which aimed toward securing a strategic commitment to making inclusive youth policy the new norm.

Additionally, a qualitative and quantitative **assessment** on working with vulnerable youth was made; based on the findings, **recommendations** were developed for youth policy actors and an **educational package** with practical guidelines and illustrative examples was commissioned.



## RESULTS

With the expert support of the civil society organization, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, the three youth policy pillars rallied around social inclusion as a priority topic and developed their own “Inclusion Live” projects serving this cause. As another indicator of success of the consultative process and capacity building interventions, youth actors embarked upon working together on social inclusion of youth through EU pre-accession funds.



## RECOMMENDATION

Long-term investment in processes beyond one-off ‘injections’ of support guarantees more buy-in and ownership by the stakeholders involved. Working with youth sector entities dedicated to bettering the position of vulnerable youth is of particular importance for shifting the perspective of inclusion being solely a matter for social protection services.





# Women Leaders: Advancing women, advancing society

## WHY

Women throughout the world are facing, more often than men, the challenge of having few or no role in political and public life as managers, party leaders, and public officials.



# HOW

The programme “Share your knowledge” is a unique long-term programme which gives women opportunities for personal and professional development. It does so by matching and connecting young women eager to become successful and share their passion with women who are leaders in various fields of expertise.





## RESULTS

By the end of 2019, over 400 mentees, mentors, lecturers and trainers have participated in the programme, including Roma and women living in rural areas. Many mentees have demonstrated professional advancement or started their own businesses. The programme has also helped them in building their self-esteem, self-worth and self-power. Challenging prejudices and stereotypes about feminism, gender roles, and the position of women in society has been another dimension of the programme alongside incorporating gender-sensitive language into their daily private and professional lives.



## RECOMMENDATION

One of the most useful ways to support young women to excel professionally and improve their chances for societal equality is by offering them direct and customized mentorship by other women. This principle can be applied in the workplace, in local communities, or across borders between any other women who are in the same profession or face similar challenges. Promoting values related to feminism, anti-discrimination, and equality offers meaningful empowerment and strengthens their potential.

from  
2010

organized  
**9** cycles

of the programme



PARTICIPANTS:

**201**

mentorship pairs



## ORGANIZED:

- 30 workshop
- 20 round table
- 5 study visit
- 13+ mentoring walks



## EVENTS ORGANIZED IN:



# Youth & Rule of Law



**“Youth appreciate non-formal education on human rights and the rule of law, which is making a huge difference in developing active citizenship. It balances young people's social rights with their responsibilities. When given opportunities to influence actions and shape initiatives, they readily take them, contrary to the common misperception about youth apathy.”**

**Sara Dereta**  
Rule of Law Workshops Trainer, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights

## **Rule of law workshops: towards nurturing democratic citizenship and cultural diversity**

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### **WHY**

**Every third young person in Serbia believes that democracy is not the best governing model (The Alternative Report on the Position and Needs of Youth, National Youth Council of Serbia, 2019). Meaningful democratic participation is intrinsically tied to young men and women being empowered to understand democratic processes in order to be better able to contribute to societal progress.**

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**For two years now, the Mission has been organizing workshops across Serbia which aim to enable as diverse of a youth population as possible to learn about the domestic and international rule of law and human rights framework. In co-operation with the civil society organization, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, more than 150 students have been introduced to the basic concepts related to the rule of law, human rights, anti-discrimination, the rights of national minorities, and cultural diversity. For the first time, the majority of young participants gained firsthand insight into the functioning of the judiciary through a visit the court and prosecutor's office, which enabled them to link the newly-obtained knowledge to rule of law topics relevant in their community.**

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### **HOW**



## **RESULTS**

**Such hands-on experiences nurture the ability of youth to participate in democratic processes and live peacefully together with others in a culturally diverse society.**



## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Young people care about how their state functions. By opening the doors for experiential learning on rule of law and human rights issues and enabling contact with judicial representatives, the OSCE is untapping the potential of young people to be informed and active citizens, while also increasing trust in institutions and addressing problems at the community level.**

## WHY

### Young future decision-makers learn about accountability for war crimes

One of the fundamental conditions for reconciliation and stability in the region and advancement of the rule of law is raising awareness among young people about the importance of accountability for war crimes, which is often a neglected topic.








## HOW

In the past two years, the Mission has organized three seminars on transitional justice for future opinion leaders and decision makers in three cities in Serbia — Novi Pazar, Subotica, and Vrnjacka Banja. Graduate and postgraduate students from universities across the country, young journalists, and youth involved in political parties and public administration attended the three-day seminars, in which they were introduced to transitional justice mechanisms; truth commissions; reparations; national war crimes trials; facts established by courts in relation to Srebrenica; facts established by courts in relation to Operation Storm; crimes based on gender and sexual violence in armed conflict; and the International Court of Justice – BiH v. Serbia Genocide case.

In 2020, thirty participants will visit war memorials in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, meet with domestic institutions dealing with war crimes (War Crimes Prosecutor's Office and War Crimes Departments of Belgrade's Higher Court and the Court of Appeals), and attend a hearing in one of the cases before the Higher Court.

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## RESULTS

Approximately 90 young future decision-makers from all over Serbia are now better equipped to discuss and address the sensitive topic of war crimes and how societies can seek justice for the victims of those crimes and ultimately build a more peaceful future.

## RECOMMENDATION

Young people need to understand the consequences of war crimes and the importance of taking accountability by the states involved. Facilitating dialogue and building trust is better enabled among diverse groups of young people from different sectors: state, non-state, political parties, media, academia, etc.

## WHY

# Spring Law School trial simulation programme in Novi Pazar

Rule of law is the basis for building democratic communities, and citizen involvement in this process is crucial. As Serbia embarks on its European path, constant reforms and intensified implementation of the rule of law are necessary. Despite this, in south-west Serbia, the next generation of young rule of law professionals have limited opportunity to improve practical skills during university studies, which can obstruct their path to becoming competent legal professionals to implement the rule of law.





## HOW

The OSCE Mission to Serbia, supported by the US Mission to the OSCE, successfully launched the pilot *Spring Law School of criminal and civil trial simulation proceedings* programme in Novi Pazar in 2019. The project aimed at building the professional capacity of law students in Novi Pazar, better acquainting them with Serbian rule of law institutions, and providing them with practical experience, while at the same time encouraging networking among students of diverse backgrounds, practicing lawyers, judges, and prosecutors who serve as mentors to participating students. Students with the best performance visited key institutions including the Supreme Court of Cassation, Judicial Academy, National Parliament, and Anti-Corruption Agency to learn more about the role of each institution.

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## RESULTS

More than 20 law students from Novi Pazar - one of the youngest cities in Europe, with 49 per cent of residents younger than 35 years old -- became better acquainted with rules and procedures of the rule of law institutions, using an opportunity to put textbook learning into practice based on realistic cases handled by Novi Pazar courts.

## RECOMMENDATION

Young future professionals recognize the increasing importance of hands-on experience and practical learning opportunities. Providing them with the opportunity to obtain knowledge beyond textbooks, and in co-operation with educational institutions, can benefit any community by providing it with a better-equipped new generation of experts.

## WHY

# Improving treatment programmes for youth in correctional facilities

There is a need for support to increase the opportunities for former prisoners and juveniles in conflict with the law to reintegrate into society.






## HOW

**At the correctional institution in Krusevac, Serbia, the project allowed for boys and girls in conflict with the law (aged between 14 and 23 years old) to think about ways to change their perspectives through creative writing workshops, acting classes, and theatre performances. For the first time, they had the opportunity to also learn about taking responsibility and discipline by participating in an innovative programme of care and training of stray dogs. The correctional institution hosted an event marking Universal Children's Day (20 November) during which youth involved in the dog rehabilitation and training programme performed a play.**

**In Valjevo Juvenile Prison, where juveniles between 18 and 26 years of age serve their sentences, three treatment programmes were developed in co-operation with the prison staff and the civil society organization Neostart from Belgrade.**

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## RESULTS

**A wide range of programmes for youth on topics such as anger management, taking responsibility for one's actions, and preparation for reintegration have been implemented with great success in correctional institutions. They are expected to help young people improve their prospects for returning to society as productive, contributing members, rather than as a burden or a threat.**

## RECOMMENDATION

**Preparation for life after imprisonment and post-penal care are crucial for successful reintegration. Offering creative, engaging, and practical programmes for juveniles in conflict with the law greatly contributes to that goal.**



# Youth Countering Violent Extremism and Radicalization



**“Permanent work with youth is an imperative in the prevention of extremism. By engaging young people, alongside parents and teachers, proactive interventions in local communities can be developed towards countering extremist ideologies.”**

**Fahrudin Kladnicanin  
Academic Initiative Forum 10**

# High-school students prevent violent extremism by promoting interculturalism

**WHY**

Within the education system in Serbia, there is no organized systematic approach for sharing knowledge about security risks, including violent extremism and radicalization, nor on other threats to which young people are exposed. The lack of an institutionally-organized training system for developing skills, know-how, and capacity to react in the face of concrete security threats that young people might eventually face.

**HOW**

In partnership with the Mission, the civil society organization Academic Initiative Forum 10 implemented a project to support and promote inter-culturalism, equality, cultural diversity, tolerance and non-discrimination, human and minority rights, and the prevention of violent and extremist behaviour through the development of a non-formal education programme. Four workshops on preventing violent extremism through the education process and nine educational workshops, based on a UNESCO youth-led guide, were organized in support of that goal. In co-operation with another local civil society organization, Know-How Center, resources and tools for training and learning about violent extremism were developed and are now available online.

## RESULTS

More than 100 high school students were involved in workshops organized in Vojvodina and Southwest Serbia, and the 32 most active and dedicated students participated in exchange study visits between the cities of Novi Sad and Novi Pazar. They had the opportunity to learn directly about different cultures and become more interculturally sensitive. Additionally, the project provided an opportunity for students to broaden their civic education.

## RECOMMENDATION

The OSCE and civil society can work together to teach young people about values related to tolerance and non-discrimination, human and minority rights, interculturalism, etc., filling an important gap when the formal education system, due to lack of resources or political will, does not include such important topics in its curriculum.



Know How Center online tool (in Serbian)

# Circus Builds Trust

Youth in Serbia lack proper intercultural and civic education opportunities in the school system. A lack of quality activities for youth to become engaged in public life and a general feeling of a lack of prospects makes them vulnerable to potential extremist ideologies that promote violence and radicalization.

WHY



## HOW

Through the initiative "Circus" implemented by organization Cinema City, an innovative methodology using contemporary performing arts and creative industries was applied in support of tolerance, diversity and interculturalism. In eight cities in Serbia, high school students explored social and cultural dynamics in a safe and yet expressive manner through a contemporary circus performance and follow-up discussion with a sociologist.



## RESULTS

More than 600 students in 15 high schools around Vojvodina and southwest Serbia had an opportunity to learn more about art as a tool for gaining intercultural awareness and social skills to resist violent extremism.

## RECOMMENDATION

Experience shows that security topics can be tackled with youth by using unexpected methodologies and creative approaches such as art.



A woman with short brown hair is standing outdoors next to a green utility post. She is wearing a red and black coat over a floral dress and a black turtleneck. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows a building and trees.

## Youth & Media

**“Engagement of young people in a dialogue about media always brings a fresh and creative drive. They always amaze me with their phenomenal imaginations and problem-solving skills, being not only the ones that gain knowledge but also ones who bring it to the table.”**

**Tijana Blagojev**  
Media department, OSCE Mission to Serbia

# Brewing media for youth: an indispensable ingredient

## WHY

Media dedicated to youth, especially user-generated content distributed through sharing platforms and social media, often lacks basic ethical standards, promotes violent communication, and contains various forms of open and hidden advertising. *Setting, introducing, and regulating the application of professional and ethical criteria for content dedicated to youth in the digital sphere remains a challenge on many levels.* One of the main questions is: who is supposed to do it, and how? Is it up to platforms and their terms of use, advertisers, or informal self-regulatory initiatives? *Traditional media's production of content for youth is often outdated and does not address their needs and interests.* In addition, youth consume digital content much more than other generations.

## HOW

For the third time, together with Deutsche Welle, the Mission co-organized the *"Brave New Media Forum"*, the annual international conference in Belgrade dedicated to media for youth. It represents a multi-stakeholder platform for discussing current trends in media production for youth, presenting habits and needs of young media consumers, and proposing models for legacy media to adapt their production and distribution to the demands of new audiences.



## RESULTS

In 2019, more than 300 participants --young media makers, academia representatives, public broadcasters, and organized youth -- explored the topics of ethics in the online sphere, the quality of youth-related content in media, trends in digital youth production, the impact of tabloid media on young people, opportunities for youth media to make a profit producing professional and ethical content, as well as models of how traditional and credible media can draw in younger audiences. Conference discussions also shed light on the latest research in this area and promoted successful tools for media and information literacy.



## RECOMMENDATION

Enabling public platforms for open dialogue on youth media contributes to improving the quality and quantity of production dedicated to young audiences, thereby enabling young people to obtain information which aids them in understanding and positively contributing to their own communities.

# Media literacy in schools: no more comfortably numb

## WHY

The Strategy for Educational Development of Serbia recognizes the importance of media and information literacy and its introduction into the education system. In 2018, *media and information literacy* became part of an elective course offered in high schools titled "Language, Media, and Culture". Nevertheless, the teachers of this newly-introduced subject require more training, educational materials, and learning tools.

## HOW

The Mission has been engaged in the enhancement of media and information literacy since 2015 through various projects involving co-ordination and co-operation between educational institutions, the state, and civil society organizations. To that end, the Mission has been supporting media and information literacy *seminars for teachers, students and librarians as well as the creation of new learning tools, educational materials, and curriculum* for the introduction of media and literacy classes in schools as a cross-curricular course.

## **RESULTS**

**More than 400 teachers in primary and secondary schools across Serbia have incorporated media and digital literacy skills into their teaching methodology as a means to enhance the functional literacy of**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**In today's world, characterized by a cacophony of countless news sources of varying quality, being media literate has become a necessary skill; providing that literacy through the formal education system ensures**

# Mobile journalism: a production trend preferred by youth

## WHY

Young audiences are increasingly favoring video content over other types of media, the production costs of which have come down dramatically in recent years with increasing access to smartphone video technology. There is a need therefore for a content which is professional yet attractive to young consumers, who are simultaneously also media makers.



## HOW

*Mobile Journalism Training Courses have been organized for young journalists of well-established and alternative media outlets. Concluding in 2019, over 50 journalists have been trained to shoot, edit, and distribute professional television programming using only mobile phones.*

## RESULTS

**Obtaining competitive contemporary production skills greatly increases the number of media products, including those especially dedicated to youth. At the same time, mobile journalism assists smaller media in becoming more attractive by facilitation their ability to publish more video materials.**

## RECOMMENDATION

**Young media professionals are at the forefront of using new digital forms of media production. Thus, supporting their ability to produce better video content for young people can in turn improve the quality of information to which young people are exposed.**



# Awarding journalism in the service of tolerance and non-discrimination principles

## WHY

Media content in Serbia very often reflects existing societal stereotypes and prejudices and by default "if it bleeds, it leads".

## HOW

With the Mission's support, the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality in Serbia has established a journalism award in order to promote tolerance and non-discrimination principles in the media. Concluding in 2019, 51 journalists have been awarded for their print, radio, TV, or online stories featuring social injustice and barriers to equality for Serbian citizens. Awarded pieces have offered a public space to vulnerable groups to voice their challenges and break the silence on issues related to social distance, life in institutions of closed type, financial fraud against the elderly, etc. *The award has particularly motivated young journalists to apply tolerance standards and angles in their reporting.*

## RESULTS

**By promoting a national award with tolerance and non-discrimination at its focus, this initiative at the same time counters sensationalism in journalism and provides different perspectives for young journalists in their approach to topics.**



## RECOMMENDATION

**Offering incentives and opportunities for young journalists to use innovative media forms and focus on human stories and human rights is an effective way to offer more quality and meaningful media products in service of citizens and the democratic order.**

## Youth & Security



**“Societies should embrace the potential that youth can bring to strengthening security. When treated equally and given a place at the table, young men and women keep proving they are valuable partners.”**

**Snezana Zaric  
Timoc Youth Centre**



# Preventing risky behaviour through sports and education



## WHY

The number of children not involved in any organized activity outside of school in Serbia is large. Very often, these children are falling behind with school curriculum and require tutoring that they cannot afford. Poor success at school often leads to truancy in the pre-teen and teen years, which makes this group of elementary school students particularly vulnerable to anti-social behaviour such as peer violence and drugs use, which, if not tackled properly, often lead to criminal behaviour.



## HOW

In partnership with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Mission embarked upon an initiative to create an environment for schoolchildren that nurtures mutual respect and understanding, as well as awareness of the importance of learning and a healthy lifestyle. Six elementary schools across Serbia participated in the project through various sports and educational activities, thus preventing risky behaviour such as use of psychoactive substances, violence, alcoholism and various forms of anti-social behaviour.





## RESULTS

Through educational and sports activities, young people had a chance to better structure free time and to foster acceptance in the peer group, while perception of schools as a supportive and safe space was reinforced. These activities focused on learning support to those struggling with the school curriculum, as well as on enhancing the pupils' awareness and knowledge on various issues related to risks and safety, peer violence, drugs use and other forms of anti-social behaviour. Through sport sessions healthy lifestyle and fundamental sports values such as team work, fair play, as well as tolerance, communication, co-operation and conflict resolution were promoted.

# RECOMMENDATION



**Young people appreciate alternatives to how they spend constructively free time. When activities offered to them are inclusive and aligned with their interests, promoting team spirit and a healthy lifestyle, young people's safety increases and potential for destructive behaviours decreases. Partnering up with schools and institutions in providing such an environment for youth also ensures that different youth are involved and that communal values are nurtured.**





## Safer schools: School police officers stepping up

### WHY

There are 373 school police officers in Serbia patrolling approximately 681 elementary and high schools. They are engaged in the immediate surroundings of the school, including the buildings and yards, to detect and deter crime and prevent the sale and use of drugs, alcohol consumption, and anti-social behaviour. Due to a lack of resources, until 2018 there was no dedicated specialized training program for these officers. At the same time, the European School Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs data suggests that among 16 year old students, a total of 8 percent reported having consumed some illegal drug at least once in their lifetime in Serbia.



# HOW

A Mission-supported specialized training for school police officers was organized which aimed to enhance their co-operation with school representatives, explore ways to address identified safety problems in school, and assist school authorities in planning and improving security on school grounds. Drug prevention workshops and awareness-raising classes in schools were conducted by certified school police officers within national health promotion programmes, thus raising the overall quality of information transferred to students.



# RESULTS

In the first round of training, 150 school police officers attended a three-day in-service specialized training and learned more about effective prevention of drug use and other criminal activity in elementary and high schools. They also improved their social interaction skills, which are essential for effective communication with students and school staff.



# RECOMMENDATION

**In order to bridge the gap between adults and youth and be successful in really reaching their hearts and minds, especially on important but not always alluring topics, it is useful to invest in the development of social interaction skills. Working with school police officers in such a way can contribute to effective prevention of drug use and other anti-social or criminal behaviour in elementary and high schools.**





## Youth and security culture - Be free, be safe

**WHY** In co-operation with the Timoc Youth Centre from Zajecar, Serbia, research was conducted among youth to collect empirical data on youth attitudes toward safety in the city and their awareness and willingness to actively participate in decision-making at the local level. In line with the findings, a project, "Youth and security culture - Be free, be safe" was developed. The project aimed to increase the participation of citizens, primarily young people, and raise awareness in the local community about the concept of youth safety through co-operation with institutions, as well as through the participation of youth promoters in the project activities.



# HOW

Through a series of educational events across different schools, as well as the development of educational tools, the project worked toward increasing the level of youth safety through education on security risks and risk prevention in the community. At the same time, young people were given an active role as multipliers of knowledge and promoters of safety culture. The project was implemented in the framework of the OSCE Mission to Serbia extra budgetary project Consolidating the Democratization Process in the Security Sector in Serbia, funded by the Government of Sweden.



# RESULTS

The project raised the awareness of youth on safety through promotional events, development of educational tools, and the establishment of a network of "youth safety promoters". In 2020, ten teams of "youth safety promoters" will deliver 20 lecturers in four high schools.

# RECOMMENDATION

Asking young people through empirical research on what their perspectives and attitudes are is a good starting point toward engaging them in motivating ways.





## Youth & Education for Democracy

**“Democracy is worth fighting for every single day, and our faith should be put into young people – future leaders.”**

**Bojana Dzulovic**  
**Project Coordinator, Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability**

# Empowering a new generation of decision makers – leaders for democracy



## WHY

With many young people in Serbia considering leaving their communities and demonstrating skepticism towards politics and democratic processes, it is crucial to support future political leaders, journalists, and activists in learning more about democratic institutions and the political system and equipping them with skills and knowledge required to make full use of their democratic potential.

## HOW

Democracy Academy is a course in democracy – core values, political systems, functioning of state institutions, etc. – conceptualized by the civil society organization, Centre for Research, Transparency and Accountability, for young professionals such as representatives of youth branches of political parties and civil society organizations, junior journalists, and students. In addition to lectures and presentations, this vibrant course introduces public debates with public officials, study visits to institutions, and mentoring work.




# RESULTS

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Over four cycles, the Academy has provided 95 young opinion-makers with a forum to exchange views with MPs and civil servants on the functioning of state institutions, while at the same time increasing their knowledge on the political system and parliamentary work. Many of these young people are now carriers of the democratic narrative in their respective political and professional organizations.




# RECOMMENDATION

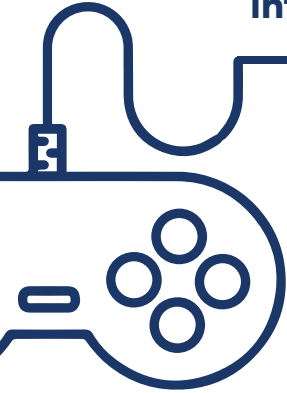
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Establishing a cross-party and cross-ideology dialogue between future decision-makers contributes to a consolidated democratic and parliamentary political culture. The first step in empowering youth to take on a more active role in shaping policies and influencing decision-making processes through their own activism in both political parties and civil society is precisely through democratic education.



## Intercultural quiz game enhances intercultural learning



# WHY

Creating inclusive and open societies is one of the important goals of every democratic system and country. In order to make this happen it is necessary to have citizens who are active and aware of different groups and identities that make up the population of their country. Every citizen is expected to develop their own democratic citizenship competences and to participate in processes that lead to the creation of an open and pluralistic society. Different circumstances have resulted in a trend that young people of different ethnic backgrounds in Serbia tend to spend most of their time within their own ethnic groups and do not have many opportunities to engage with their peers from different ethnic communities. Moreover, while formal education provides limited theoretical knowledge on Serbia's diverse ethnic groups, few opportunities to engage in intercultural learning and interactions in a way that is fun and exciting and innovative exist.

# HOW



**The OSCE Mission to Serbia, with the British Embassy in Belgrade, supported the development of an online quiz platform called “Komsimetar”. The process included interactive youth-led workshops in South and South-West Serbia, engaging secondary school students to participate in developing quiz content, discussing issues observed and perceived in multi-cultural communities, ultimately raising cultural sensitivity and awareness through entertaining and educational games and activities.**





# Intercultural quiz game enhances intercultural learning

## RESULTS



**Five intercultural workshops  
organized in four different cities**



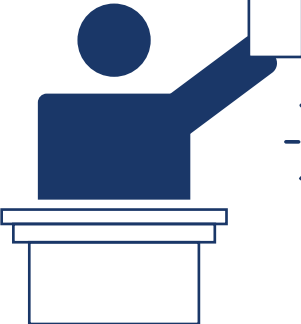
**Nearly 200 young people from four ethnic  
groups actively participated in intercultural  
learning and peer networking**



**More than 250 quiz questions produced by  
young people for use on the web platforms**



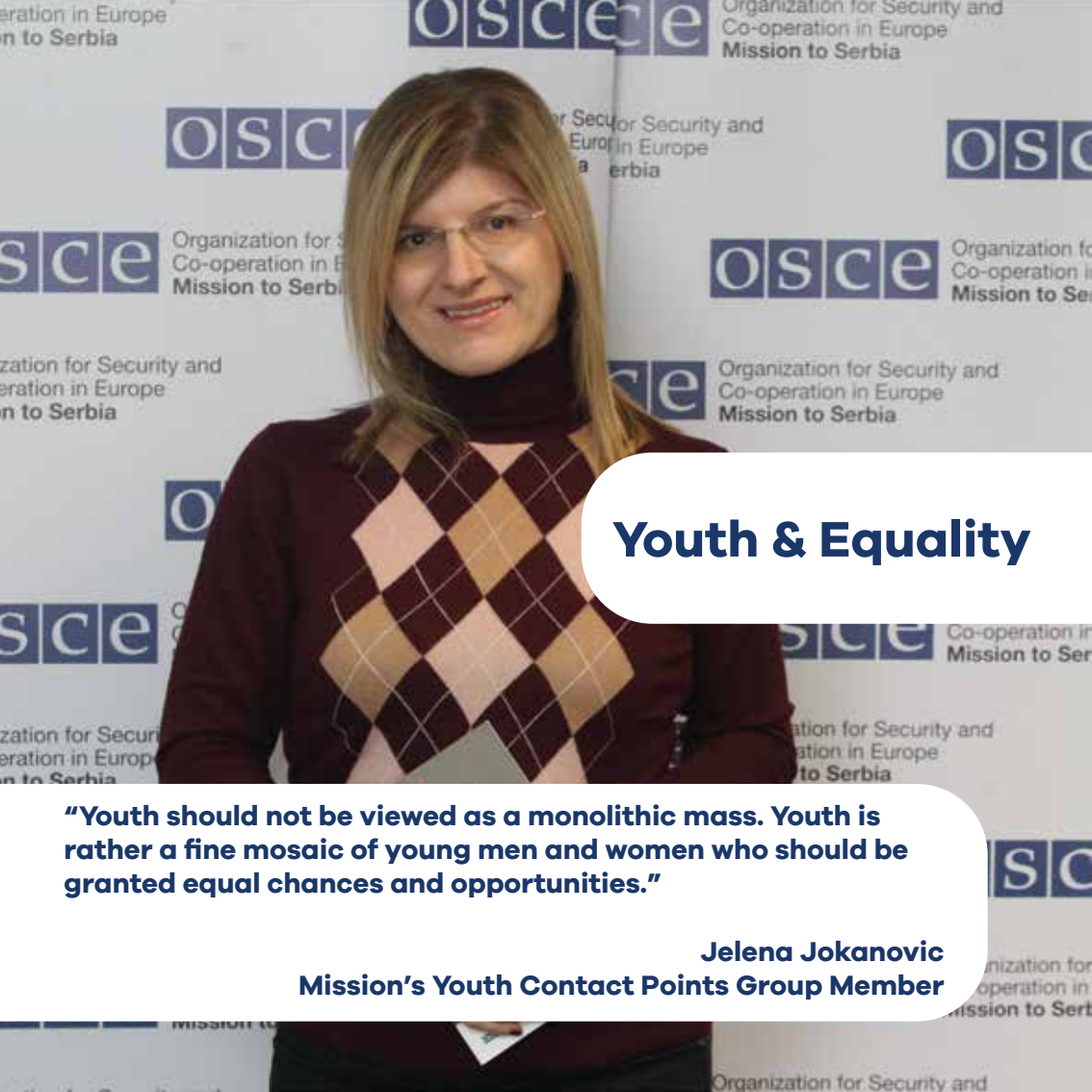
**Two Intercultural Quiz Nights convened,  
awarding "Intercultural Heroes"**



# RECOMMENDATION

**Gamification as a technique has been successfully used for years in advertising, business development, and sales across industries. Using game elements in a non-game context such as intercultural learning and education as such puts in action a motivating, innovative concept for the benefit of communities.**





## Youth & Equality

**“Youth should not be viewed as a monolithic mass. Youth is rather a fine mosaic of young men and women who should be granted equal chances and opportunities.”**

**Jelena Jokanovic**  
**Mission’s Youth Contact Points Group Member**

# Hate crime insight - the voice of youth matters



## WHY

Young people are one category of people very much affected by intolerance and violence, both as perpetrators and as victims. Actions aimed at preventing the development of prejudice and violent behaviour that can lead to hate crimes are needed, as is raising awareness on protection mechanisms. In order to develop and use methods for the prevention of and protection from hate crimes, especially among young people, understanding of the issue must be increased.

## HOW

The project “Raising awareness on hate crime” was implemented in direct co-operation with the National Youth Council of Serbia. Young people as well as activists, public figures, and scholars active in the area of combating hate crimes gathered at five separate roundtable to exchange opinions and share information. The campaign started in 2019 in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and will continue in 2020 throughout Serbia.





## RESULTS

**More than 100 young people in Serbia are now better informed about hate crimes and have contributed to creating an environment whereby intolerance and discrimination - be it actual or perceived - can be earlier identified, challenged, and addressed.**



## RECOMMENDATION

**There is a need for more engagement of youth in understanding the devastating impact of hate crimes, not only on the direct victims, but on society as a whole. Involving youth organizations as partners in such campaigns enables meaningful youth engagement at the local level to counter these forms of intolerance.**



## Young Professionals

**“Young people need practical experience in order to be competently employed. Obtaining such experience in a central governmental institution is often beyond imaginable for someone from a province. Having more such opportunities for young professionals from all societal groups gives a better chance to the unprivileged to develop competencies.”**

**Dzemil Jakupovic**  
**Professional Practice Participant with the National Assembly**  
**Committee on Human and Minority Rights**

# Professional practice programme for young professionals from Southwest Serbia




## WHY



Young people have limited opportunity to learn about the functioning of central government institutions, particularly in geographically isolated communities such as southwest Serbia, with many disillusioned by the idea of public service compounded by negative coverage in the media. Additionally, the fact that opportunities to gain practical work experience to provide young professionals with the needed experience to be competently employed in public service are limited, coupled with challenging economic conditions, make it difficult for youth to take advantage of opportunities to volunteer in Belgrade.

The Mission, together with the US Mission to the OSCE, supported five recent graduates and young professionals to be placed with central institutions in Belgrade for a three-month period, including at the National Parliament, Anti-Corruption Agency, Government's Office for Co-operation with Civil Society, Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, and Ministry of Public Administration and Local-Self Government, building on the Mission's strong partnership with these institutions. Participants receive training throughout the programme, and are integrated into the work of these institutions, contributing to their mandate while building their skills.




## HOW





## RESULTS



**Young professionals from southwest Serbia increased their understanding of and connectivity to Serbia's institutions and legal framework. Also, an alumni network of empowered young professionals from southwest Serbia was established as a support mechanism for their future endeavours.**



## RECOMMENDATION

**Youth from geographically isolated communities can be meaningfully empowered to obtain skills and experience to bolster their professional development through internship programmes in public institutions.**





In the last **5 years** alone,

the **OSCE Mission to Serbia**

has provided on average

**8 internships** per year for  
local and international

**young professionals.**



# Youth Mainstreaming

**“Youth mainstreaming is about enabling active participation of young men and women in all areas of life. It is a precondition for democracy and the foundation for peaceful and secure societies.”**

**Milena Stosic**  
**Youth Focal Point, OSCE Mission to Serbia**

## **TOWARD 2020**

### **The Mission develops its first-ever Youth Action Plan**

**Since its establishment, the OSCE Mission to Serbia has been dedicated to supporting the development and implementation of youth policy in Serbia. Youth-targeted activities for 2020 include fostering a culture of civic awareness and legal literacy among youth, CSOs, and media, and investing in education on the Serbian political system for students, young professionals and party youth across the board. Additional emphasis is placed on regional connectivity, visibility, and impact-oriented youth engagement.**

**Importantly, acknowledging that inclusive youth policies, investing in youth education, and youth participation in the decision-making process are cornerstones of progress and sustainability, the Mission has committed itself to implementing a systemic approach to mainstreaming youth across programmes.**

***The Mission's first-ever Youth Action Plan aims to implement a systemic approach to mainstreaming youth across programmes in order to enhance inclusive youth policies, youth education, and youth participation in decision-making processes in Serbia as cornerstones of progress and stability.***



**Mission's cross-departmental Youth Contact Points Group developing Youth Action Plan**

YOUTH  
PLAY A ROLE <sup>CAN</sup>  
IN  
CONTRIBUTING  
TO A  
CULTURE <sup>OF</sup>  
PEACE, DIALOGUE, JUSTICE  
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