



Të Rinjtë dhe Studentët për Paqen Ballkan
Mladi i studenti za mir Balkan
Youth and Students for Peace Balkan



Komuna e Mitrovicës së Jugut
Opština Južna Mitrovica
Municipality of South Mitrovica



Grupi Kryesor për Fëmijët dhe të Rinjtë
UGlavna grupa za decu i mlade
Major Group for Children and Youth



Global Youth Caucus
ON SDG 16



Federata e Paqes Universale
Univerzalna Mirovna Federacija
Universal Peace Federation

BALKAN

International Youth Summit for Peace 2026

YOUTH AS PEACE PRACTITIONERS, FROM DIALOGUE TO ACTION

01 - 04 OCTOBER 2026

PEACE



YOUTH AS PEACE PRACTITIONERS, FROM DIALOGUE TO ACTION



WORLD MEETS IN MITROVICA | KOSOVA

“Peace was described as physical, structural and psychological – touching upon belonging, dignity, hope and the absence of fear.”

— The Missing Peace: 1st UN Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security (2018)

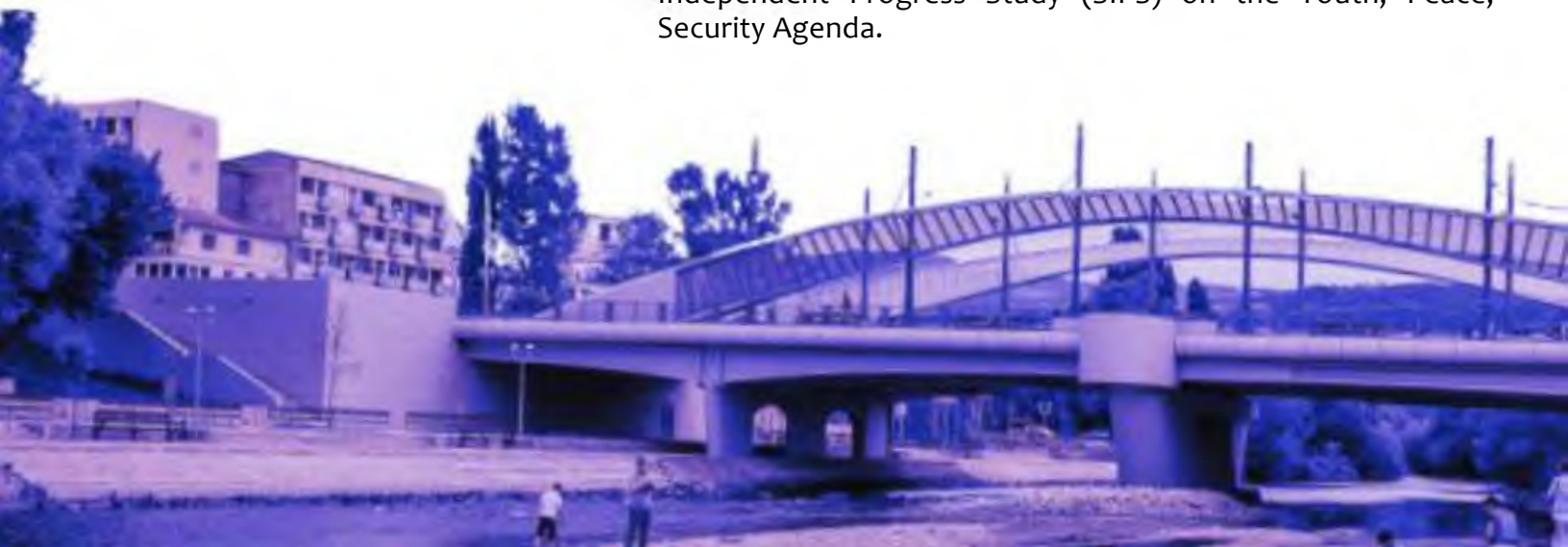


mitrovica, kosova
01 - 04 october 2026

In 2025, the first Balkan International Youth Summit for Peace brought together more than 120 young leaders from over 33 countries, alongside institutional representatives, presidents, mayors, civil society actors, and international experts in Mitrovica, Kosova. Through dialogue, intercultural exchange, Action Labs, and youth-led initiatives, the Summit strengthened cooperation, mutual understanding, and peacebuilding among young people from diverse backgrounds.

Building on the success of the first edition, the 2026 Summit will further strengthen youth participation in peacebuilding, democratic engagement, and regional cooperation. At a time when young people across the region continue to face challenges related to political polarization, disinformation, limited civic participation, and declining trust in institutions, the Summit aims to create constructive spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and youth-led solutions.

This year's Summit moves us from the sidelines to the field. Moving from dialogue to action, we aren't just listening to speeches about peace—we are actively designing, facilitating, and building it alongside the leaders who can make it reality. The Summit lands following the release of the UN's Second Independent Progress Study (SIPS) on the Youth, Peace, Security Agenda.



In a city long divided, youth continues to lead the way forward

Young people in the Western Balkans continue to face political and social divisions that affect trust and cooperation between communities. Mitrovica shaped by divisions between its northern and southern parts, represents both the challenges and opportunities of dialogue and reconciliation. In this context, the Summit brings together youth from different communities and countries to promote cooperation, intercultural understanding, and peacebuilding through dialogue and shared experiences.

A THREE-LEVEL APPROACH

1

Local — Bridging North and South Mitrovica

40 young people from both sides of the city are at the heart of the Summit — co-designing reconciliation activities and seeing their cultures embraced across every initiative.

2

Regional — A Western Balkans Network

Youth from across Kosova, North Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia and Hercegovina, connect through cross-border collaboration, building the relationships that sustain peace.

3

Global — The World Meets in Mitrovica

80 young leaders from Europe, the Middle East, the Americas, Asia, and Africa join in — bringing global perspectives and connecting Kosova's youth to a worldwide network.

WHAT YOU'LL EXPERIENCE

01 Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Connect with peers from 40+ countries. Share traditions on Cultural Night. Build relationships that outlast the Summit.

02 High-Level Panels

Hear from regional and international experts on governance, integrity, mental health, and disinformation, then engage them directly.

03 Youth-Led Solutions

In hands-on labs, co-design real responses to corruption, post-conflict trauma, and online disinformation. The best ideas earn mentoring.

04 The Peace Road and Street Basketball for Peace

Cross the Mitrovica Bridge by bicycle as a symbol of reconciliation and join a friendly Basketball for Peace activity, using sport to promote unity, dialogue, and lasting friendships.

DAY

1

THURSDAY • 01 OCTOBER 2026

Youth-Led Innovation & Cultural Exchange**15:00- 15:30 Welcoming and Opening Remarks**

High Level Representatives of the Republic of Kosova, Organizing Committee and Partner Organizations

15:30 - 15:40 Solo Violin Performance**16:00 S!NERGY Assembly**

A global platform where youth from IAYSP chapters worldwide present projects-ideas developed through the Peace Designer Training. The Assembly showcases youth-led solutions for peacebuilding and sustainable development, promoting peer learning, cross-border collaboration, and the exchange of innovative ideas.

17:00 Best Practices Showcase

A presentation-based session where organizations showcase their successful initiatives, approaches, and lessons learned in peacebuilding, youth engagement, and sustainable development.

- Sophia Yunwha, Executive Director of YSP UK
- Helsinki YMCA
- Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) – Global Youth Caucus on SDG 16
- Local Youth Organizations from Mitrovica (North and South)

17:45 Appointment of “Youth Ambassadors for Peace”

A recognition moment where young leaders from the Balkans, Europe, and beyond will be appointed as Youth Ambassadors for Peace in acknowledgment of their commitment and contributions to peacebuilding, youth engagement, and community development

18:00–19:00 Dinner & Networking**19:00 Cultural Night — “Peace Through my Culture”**

An interactive evening of cultural celebration with traditional music, dances and other performances from participating delegations.

Organized in partnership with International Association of Culture for Peace (IACP).

DAY

2

FRIDAY • 02 OCTOBER 2026

Capacity Building — Learning How the System Works, With Those Inside It**9:00 - 9:15 Framing: The Global Landscape**

Fifteen minutes on YPS and YSP's three levels and previewing the arc of the day and of the Summit.

9:15 - 10:15 SESSION I - Youth Peacebuilding and YPS

This panel explores the role of young people as active peacebuilders and key partners in advancing the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda. It will examine how governments, international organizations, and civil society can strengthen meaningful youth participation, foster cross-sector partnerships, and support youth-led peace initiatives. Drawing on regional and global experiences, the discussion will highlight practical approaches to building trust, promoting cooperation, and creating lasting peace through youth engagement.

10:15-10:45 Coffee Break & Networking**10:45-11:45 SESSION II - The Making of a Peacebuilder: Resilience, Hope and Education**

This panel begins where peace itself begins: inside the person. Before young people can support others or improve systems, they need a strong inner foundation, and this session looks at what that means in practice. Across the region, young people are already helping their communities, often while facing disinformation, hate speech, stress and burnout, with little support. What keeps them steady comes from within: clear values, self-awareness, hope instead of cynicism, good mental health, education and the resilience to keep going. This youth-led panel asks where that inner strength comes from, and how young people can protect and grow it.

11:45 -12:45 SPOTLIGHT - Stories from the Field

This session provides a platform for organizations actively engaged in peacebuilding to share their experiences, initiatives, and lessons learned from the field. Panelists will present practical examples of their work, reflect on the challenges they have faced, and discuss what has proven effective in fostering dialogue, trust, and cooperation among communities. The session aims to inspire participants by highlighting local approaches that contribute to sustainable peace and social cohesion.

- OSCE / Dialog Academy for Young Women
- Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO)
- United Nations Mission in Kosova (UNMIK)
- Debate for Peace

12:45–14:30 **Lunch & Networking | Free Time**

14:30–15:30 **SESSION III - Intergenerational Dialogue**

This panel brings the generation that held power and lived the conflicts together with the one inheriting their outcome. What has worked well, what can be done better, and what steps come next. Together they focus on one shared question: what would help young people feel valued, want to stay, and take an active role in shaping their future? It looks honestly at why many young people are leaving, and what could help change that.

15:30–16:00 **Coffee Break | Transition**

16:00 - 18:00 **World Café**

An interactive dialogue format that brings together youth, panelists, partner organizations, and stakeholders to exchange experiences, identify challenges, and co-create practical solutions related to peacebuilding. Participants will rotate between thematic tables, each focused on a specific topic and facilitated by a partner representative and a youth facilitator. At each table, participants, specialists, and facilitators will collaboratively develop key ideas and recommendations based on the discussions.

Thematic Tables:

- Democratic Governance, Civic Space, Human Rights, Elections and Youth Integrity
- Migration, Human Mobility, Brain Drain and Youth Retention
- Climate Crisis and Environmental Peacebuilding
- Digital Transformation, AI, Media Literacy and Disinformation
- Interfaith, Cultural and Identity-Based Peacebuilding
- Mental Health, Trauma, Education and Community Healing
- Gender and the WPS–YPS Intersection

DAY

3

SATURDAY • 03 OCTOBER 2026

Innovating Solutions — Within, With Others, With the World**9:00–9:15 Orientation**

This opening session will introduce the focus and flow of Day 3 by connecting it with the discussions and commitments established during Day 2. The facilitator will briefly reflect on the key themes, partnerships, and shared goals identified so far, while setting the direction for the day ahead.

09:15–10:15 Inner Transformation Lab

This session explores the personal foundations of peacebuilding, focusing on self-awareness, emotional resilience, integrity, and the role of personal narratives in shaping how we engage with others. Through guided reflection and dialogue, participants will examine the internal capacities needed to become more effective peacebuilders.

Output: Participants will develop personal reflections and insights that will contribute to understanding the role of inner transformation in youth peacebuilding.

10:15–10:45 Coffee Break & Networking**10:45–12:30 Peacebuilding Skills Workshop**

This practical workshop focuses on the skills needed to build relationships, manage differences, and transform dialogue into cooperation. Participants will engage in exercises on active listening, cross-cultural communication, negotiation, and collaboration in challenging environments.

Output: Participants will identify key practices and recommendations for strengthening youth-led dialogue, cooperation, and conflict transformation.

12:30–14:00 Lunch & Networking | Free Time**14:00–15:20 Multi-Track Diplomacy Simulation: Peacebuilding Under Pressure**

This simulation places participants in a realistic multi-stakeholder scenario where they must respond to complex challenges involving governance, misinformation, social tensions, and competing interests. Working in assigned roles, participants will practice negotiation, decision-making, and collaborative problem-solving.

15:00–15:20 Simulation Debrief

The debrief will transform the simulation experience into structured learning and evidence.

Participants will reflect on:

1. Peace Within: How did personal attitudes, emotions, and biases influence decisions?
2. Peace With Others: Which communication and negotiation approaches helped or failed?
3. Peace in Systems: What institutional or structural factors enabled or prevented cooperation?

The reflections and observations will be documented as key findings for the Summit's final outputs.

15:20–15:40 Coffee Break & Networking**15:40–17:00 Regional Breakouts & Solution Design Lab**

This session brings participants together in regional groups to collaboratively develop practical peacebuilding solutions based on their regional realities, experiences, and priorities. Each group will reflect on key challenges affecting their region, identify opportunities for cooperation, and design concrete actions that can be advanced beyond the Summit.

17:00 - 18:00 Reflection and Closing**18:00 Dinner | Free Time**

DAY

4

SUNDAY • 04 OCTOBER 2026

Peace Road & Closing on the Bridge**10:00 - 12:00 Peace Road & Street Basketball for Peace**

A symbolic public action combining movement and sport to promote dialogue, unity, and cooperation. Participants will walk from South Mitrovica across the Main Bridge to North Mitrovica, transforming a historically divided space into a shared message of peace. The activity will continue with Street Basketball for Peace, using sport as a tool to connect young people, build trust, and strengthen social cohesion.

The “Peace Road” Initiative is organized in partnership with Cycling Federation of Kosova.
The “Basketball for Peace” Initiative is organized in partnership with Helsinki YMCA | Finland.

12:00 Closing Ceremony — “Harmony in Diversity”

On the Mitrovica Bridge, transformed into a public venue: multicultural concert, keynote messages, and formal recognition of the youth who contributed to the Summit's success.

What the Summit makes happen.

120

Participants with $\frac{1}{3}$ being local and $\frac{2}{3}$ being international

40+

Countries represented across delegations

40

Local Kosovar-Serbian and Kosovar-Albanian youth from both sides of Mitrovica

3,000+

Viewers over its duration with social media amplification to reach 20,000+

10

Young journalists covering and amplifying

05

Kosova-based NGOs in Mitrovica

Expected impact numbers

JOIN US | Three ways to be part of it.

Participate

Apply as a youth delegate or practitioner

Open to young leaders 18–35 and practitioners from different backgrounds.

Partner

Co-create as an institutional partner

Universities, civil society, government, and international organizations are invited to co-design sessions and contribute expertise.

Support

Sponsor a delegation or moment

Sponsor international travel, the Peace Road action, or the youth-led pilots that continue after the Summit.





ABOUT YSP BALKAN

YSP Balkan is a Kosova-based non-governmental organization operating across Balkan countries to promote peace and drive sustainable development. We work in collaboration with universities, local governments and civil society organizations in Kosova, North Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro and beyond, fostering partnerships that inspire positive change. Part of the regional chapter of the International Association of Youth and Students for Peace Europe and the Middle East (IAYSP EUME) and the international network holding UN ECOSOC-status, it collaborates with local governments, universities, and civil society organizations. IAYSP supports youth-led projects, S!NERGY events, and cross-border partnerships that foster a peaceful and inclusive future for the region.

THE 2026 INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT FOR PEACE

Young people in the Western Balkans often face significant barriers to civic engagement due to a divisive political climate that breeds mistrust, stereotypes, and social divides among different ethnic groups. To address this, YSP Balkan developed the International Youth Summit for Peace through extensive stakeholder consultations to engage young leaders and promote regional peacebuilding. The 2026 Summit will take place in Mitrovica, a city long marked by ethnic divisions between the North and South and symbolically separated by the Ibër River, creating a meaningful setting to bring youth together through dialogue, cooperation, and shared experiences.

Global Context and Expected Impact

The summit showcases local and international initiatives aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing democratic values, tolerance, and mutual respect. To underscore the universal relevance of these peace efforts, the event draws parallels with other conflict-affected regions, including Palestine, Israel, Ukraine, and Russia. Ultimately, the project aims to foster long-term regional stability by raising global awareness through media campaigns, building robust institutional partnerships, and providing mentorship for winning youth-led projects to ensure sustainable community solutions.



YSP Balkan Achievements during the Past Two Years

204

Students have completed the Peace Designer Training in Kosova, North Macedonia, Albania and Serbia

58

Peace Designer Training sessions

12

Local peace projects successfully implemented

28

Consulting sessions provided, with ongoing mentoring throughout the training period

15

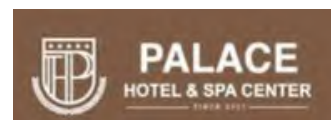
Partner and institutions collaborated in these initiatives

23

23 young leaders participated in the annual flagship event, EUME S!NERGY, hosted by IAYSP EUME | UN HQ Visit



WOMEN'S FEDERATION
FOR WORLD PEACE INTERNATIONAL





BALKAN

International Youth Summit for Peace 2026

WORLD MEETS IN MITROVICA | KOSOVA



YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE BALKAN

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YSP Balkan is part of the IAYSP network, which holds Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC).

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YSP Balkan

YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE - BALKAN

Empowering Youth for Peace, Leadership & Sustainable Development

Youth and Students for Peace Balkan (YSP Balkan) is a Kosova-based organization operating throughout the Balkan region. It empowers young people aged 15-30 to become catalysts for positive change by engaging them in impactful initiatives that tackle pressing societal challenges. At the core of our programs is a commitment to raising awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fostering active citizenship. Through education and collaboration with other institutions, YSP Balkan creates platforms that enable young people to actively contribute to addressing these critical issues and shaping a better future for their communities.

Our Focus Areas

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda
- Peacebuilding & Reconciliation
- Youth Leadership
- Intercultural Dialogue
- Innovation & Community Engagement
- Active Citizenship & Human Rights
- Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda

OUR IMPACT OVER THE YEARS

204+

Young People Trained

58+

Peace Designer Training Sessions
Delivered across the Balkans

12

Community Peace Projects
Implemented

28

Consulting Sessions provided, with
ongoing mentoring throughout the
trainings periods

15+

Partner Institutions, UN Agencies,
Governmental Bodies, Universities,
Local and International NGOs

23

Young People from the Balkans
participated in UN Offices Visits, Side
Events, Human Rights Council Sessions





Designing Peace in the Balkan Region

What We Do for Peace?



Our Partners in Peace



Government of the
Republic of Kosova



Municipality of
South Mitrovica



Municipality of
North Mitrovica



Municipality of
Pogradec



Municipality of
Tetova



Municipality of
Presheva



Youth Office
Municipality of
Pogradec



YOUTH OFFICE
ZYRA PËR TË RINJ
KANCELARIJA ZA MLADE

Municipality of
Presheva

YSP Balkan Supports



Youth,
Peace &
Security



WOMEN,
PEACE AND
SECURITY



YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE BALKAN

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Partners

YSP Balkan collaborates with a diverse network of institutions, organizations, international bodies, municipalities, educational institutions, and private sector partners that support youth empowerment, peacebuilding, and community development across the Balkans and beyond.

These partnerships strengthen our mission and expand the impact of our initiatives at local, regional, and international level.

Our Partners in Peace

Governmental and Municipal Bodies



Government of the
Republic of Kosova



Municipality of
South Mitrovica



Municipality of
North Mitrovica



Municipality of
Pogradec



Municipality of
Tetova



Municipality of
Presheva



Youth Office
Municipality of
Pogradec



YOUTH OFFICE
ZYRA PËR TË RINJ
KANCELARIJA ZA MLADE

Municipality of
Presheva

International Organizations



Universal Peace Federation (UPF)



HELSINKI
YMCA

Helsinki YMCA



Women's Federation
for World Peace
International (WFPI)



NGO Committee on
Status of Women -
Geneva



Family Federation for
World Peace and
Unification (FFWPU)



CARP



Women Center for Culture
and Development - Albania

Local Organizations



INKLUZIONI
CENTER FOR SOCIAL
INCLUSION AND
INNOVATION

INKLUZIONI



MEDELA CENTER
Psychological Care and Innovation

Medela Center

Aademic Institutions



UBT University

University of
Tetova



UBT International
Smart Schools



"Naim Frashëri"
Middle School



"Zenun Çoçaj"
Middle School

Privet Sector - Institutions



"Economic Bank"
- Kosova



ROSE HEATERS
UK INFRARED HEATER COMPANY

ROSE HEATERS
UK Infrared Heater
Company



Hotel Palace &
Spa

EU-Supported Programmes



Erasmus+

YSP Balkan Supports



WOMEN,
PEACE AND
SECURITY

YSP Balkan welcomes collaboration proposals from organizations, institutions, and individuals interested in working with us in the fields of youth empowerment, peacebuilding, education, innovation, and regional cooperation. Whether you are interested in developing joint projects, organizing trainings, conferences, summits, or participating in EU-funded programs such as Erasmus+, we are open to exploring meaningful and impactful partnerships.

All proposals are carefully reviewed by our team. If your initiative aligns with our mission and strategic priorities, we will reach out to discuss potential collaboration opportunities.

If you would like to collaborate with YSP Balkan, please complete the partnership form below. Our team will review your submission and contact you if there is potential for cooperation.

[Start Collaboration](#)



YOUTH AND STUDENTS FOR PEACE BALKAN

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