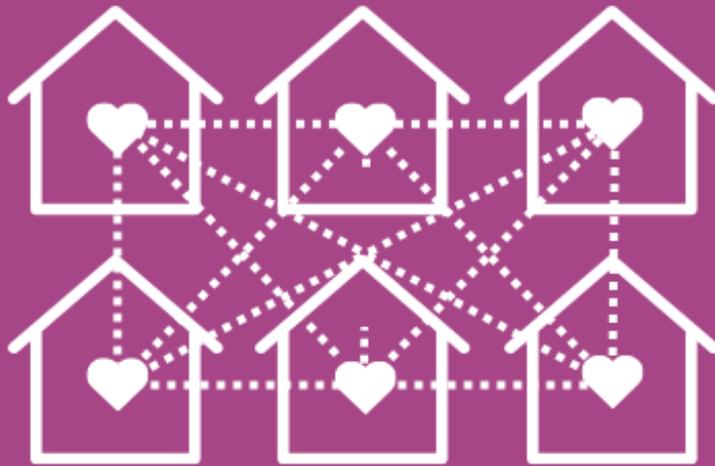


# YOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD CONNECTION:



A TRANSFORMATIVE MOMENT  
FOR COOPERATION

# Balkans 4 Sure

## INFO PACK

Krusevo, North Macedonia  
21. - 26.07.2025

SUPPORTED BY:



PROJECT PARTNERS:



# About the hosting organization

*Youth Alliance-Krusevo (YAK) is an independent, non-governmental and non-profitable organization established in Krusevo (1999) with the vision for supporting, involving and empowering young people for their active participation in the society. YAK strives to develop active community leaders, to promote youth engagement for sustainable economic development of the community and to inspire young people to be multipliers of the European values. YAK is run by young people for young people enabling a strong experience to all its stakeholders based on our values and principles: inclusiveness, democracy, solidarity, tolerance, understanding, support and cooperation.*

## About the project

The project '**Youth Neighborhood Connection: A Transformative Moment for Cooperation**' aims at people-to-people intercultural environments that facilitate regional cooperation and collaboration in various areas, including youth development, tourism, education, and sustainability in the WB6. A consortium of six WB partners, one from each contracting party, aiming at strengthening their innovative competencies on youth-inclusive cultural cooperation and regional identity, expertise such as digital literacy, non-formal education, and non-violent communication to tackle shared challenges, thus promoting democracy and active youth citizenship.

This project seeks to create safe, action-oriented spaces for inclusive dialogue and exchange among youth from the WB6 societies. **The main aim is to strengthen cross-border networks and foster regional cooperation and mutual understanding among youth from the Western Balkans Six (WB6) by addressing bilateral issues and building capacities of a new generation of youth leaders committed to peace.** By integrating reflexive, inclusive, and gender-sensitive dialogue, the project contributes to a more cohesive and peaceful Western Balkans.

The **youth exchange** will bring together **30 young people** from the Western Balkans for six transformative days [21st to 26th July 2025] in Krusevo, North Macedonia, focusing on enhanced understanding, intercultural dialogue, and resolving bilateral issues in the region.

# Project Partners and number of participants

<i>Organization</i>	<i>Contracting party</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>
<u>YOUTH ALLIANCE - KRUSEVO</u>	North Macedonia	5 (+2)
<u>INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION - IDE</u>	Albania	5
<u>CENTAR ZA RAZVOJ OMLADINSKOG AKTIVIZMA - CROA</u>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5
<u>NGO AKTIV</u>	Kosovo*	5
<u>NVO GLAS</u>	Montenegro	5
<u>BECEJSKO UDRUZENJE MLADIBUM</u>	Serbia	5

*\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence*

# Desired profile of the participants

- young people (16 to 25 years old)
- communicative level of English;
- demonstrated interest in intercultural dialogue and regional cooperation;
- strong motivation to engage and contribute actively;
- willingness to engage in an intercultural environment and show respect for different cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives;
- able to express ideas, share experiences, and contribute to the discussions;
- ability to transfer lessons learned in their communities and peers;
- willingness to take part in both individual tasks and collaborative group activities.
- readiness to actively participate in the dissemination of results and contribute to follow-up activities;

The youth exchange welcomes both newcomers (first-time participants in international youth projects) and those with previous experience in youth exchanges, training courses, or volunteering.

The deadline for selecting the participants is 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025.



# Agenda & Preparation of participants

Timetable	21.07.2025 ARRIVAL & TRUST	22.07.2025 IDENTITY & DIALOGUE	23.07.2025 CULTURE & PERSPECTIVES	24.07.2025 FUTURING & INNOVATION	25.07.2025 SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP	26.07.2025 ACTION & CLOSING	
09.30 - 11.00	Arrival of participants	Workshop: Gender Box (unpacking gender norms & power)	Interactive Cultural Lab with local artisans & cultural anthropologist	Workshop: Three Horizons (past-present-future of regional cooperation)	Systems Thinking 101: Causal loop diagrams	Final pitch practice • Action plans: What's next?	
11.30 - 13.00		COFFEE BREAK					
		Dialogue lab: Bilateral conflict narrative story circles	Role-play simulation: "Balkans 4 Sure" (youth & policymakers)	Futuring back casting: What does 2035 look like on the Western Balkan?	Mapping systems challenges with LEGO Serious Play	Evaluation + Alumni network intro	
13.00 - 15.00	LUNCH BREAK						
15.00 - 16.30	• Welcome circle, safe-space charter • Icebreakers: "Human Bingo"	Skill-lab: Negotiation & conflict-resolution simulations	Visiting Krusevo's Cultural Memory Exhibit & talk on reconciliation	Simulation exercise: Youth Cooperation	World Café: Best practices in regional youth cooperation	Closing circle & group photo	
16.30 - 17.00	COFFEE BREAK						
17.00 - 18.30	Program overview & expectations	Panel – Youth workers & decision-makers on regional cooperation	Storytelling Workshop: Narratives for empathy and impact	Youth co-creation lab: Design provocations	Panel: EU & Youth in the Region – Virtual Guest Input	Departure of the participants	
17.00 - 18.30	Social Identity Wheel exercise	DAILY REFLECTION					
19.00 - 20.30	DINNER						
21.00	Free night	Cultural night "Meet My Country" (food, music, costumes)	Balkan Movie Screening	Bonfire Talks: Stories under the stars	Intercultural party: DJ + Creative outfits night		

Once participants are selected and confirmed on a national level by each partner organization, they will be connected with the Youth Alliance team that will be responsible for communication and preparation of the participants: assisting with travel and logistical arrangements, guiding the programme activities, etc.

All participants will have access to a closed WhatsApp group, which will serve as a platform for preparation and ongoing communication. Participants can use the group to ask questions, clarify uncertainties, get to know each other before the exchange, share experiences and lessons learned after the activity, and stay connected for potential future collaboration and project development.

# About Krusevo

Krusevo is a small but historically significant town located in the mountains of North Macedonia, at an elevation of 1,350 meters, making it the highest town in the country and one of the highest in the Balkans.

Visitors are drawn to its well-preserved traditional architecture, vibrant arts and crafts scene, and rich cultural heritage. Krusevo is also a hub for outdoor activities such as hiking, paragliding, and skiing in the winter months. The town is home to several important landmarks, including the Makedonium, a monument honoring the Ilinden fighters, and the house of revolutionary Nikola Karev, which is now a museum.

The town is also significant in the Orthodox Christian tradition, with many beautiful churches and monasteries dotting the landscape. Krusevo offers a peaceful and picturesque retreat, blending natural beauty with a deep historical legacy.

During your free time, you can explore the local area, including:

- Makedonium Monument
- Nikola Martinoski Gallery
- Monastery of St. Preobrazenie
- Krusevo Lake

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## Weather

As Krusevo is the highest town on the Balkans, the weather in this period is mostly sunny and pleasant.

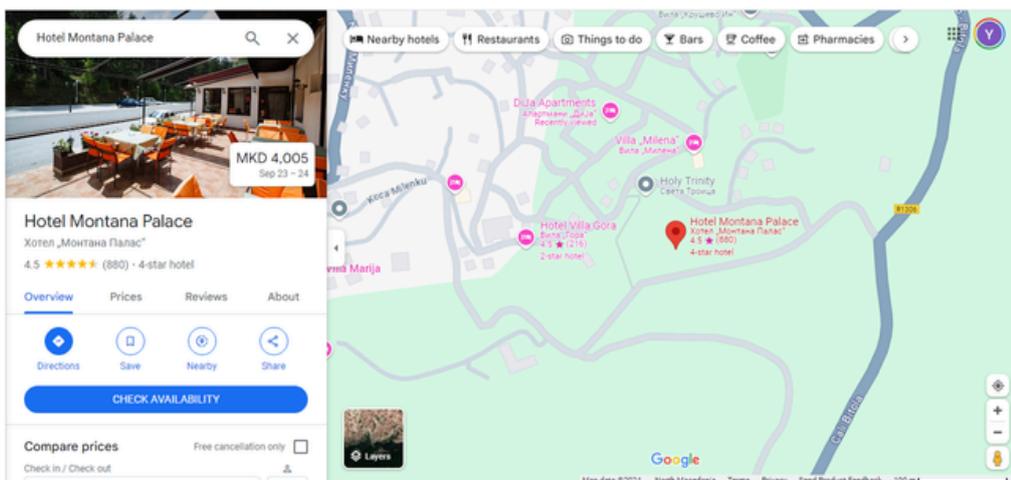
However, take into consideration that the mornings as well as the evenings are chilly. Before going, please check the weather forecast and prepare accordingly.

# About the venue

The participants will be accommodated in shared rooms at **Hotel Montana** (<https://www.montanapalace.com>). The address is Pitu Guli bb, Krushevo 7550, North Macedonia.

Link to the hotel on Google Maps:

[https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hotel+Montana+Palace/@41.3646265,21.2506207,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m9!3m8!1s0x1356cf0ec889f49f:0x56324ca99f30af59!5m2!4m1!1i2!8m2!3d41.3646225!4d21.2531956!16s%2Fg%2F1tj93q6d?entry=ttu&g\\_ep=EgoyMDI0MDkxOC4xIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hotel+Montana+Palace/@41.3646265,21.2506207,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m9!3m8!1s0x1356cf0ec889f49f:0x56324ca99f30af59!5m2!4m1!1i2!8m2!3d41.3646225!4d21.2531956!16s%2Fg%2F1tj93q6d?entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoyMDI0MDkxOC4xIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D)



Hotel Montana Palace will host all participants.

- **Room types:** Participants will be accommodated in shared twin rooms.
- **Check-in/Check-out:**  
Check-in: Upon arrival on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July, 2025  
Check-out: Midday 26<sup>th</sup> of July, 2025
- **Amenities:** Free Wi-Fi, access to all hotel facilities, and conference services.
- **Three meals daily** (breakfast, lunch, dinner) will be provided at the hotel restaurant. Vegetarian and special dietary needs will be accommodated—please inform us in advance of any requirements.

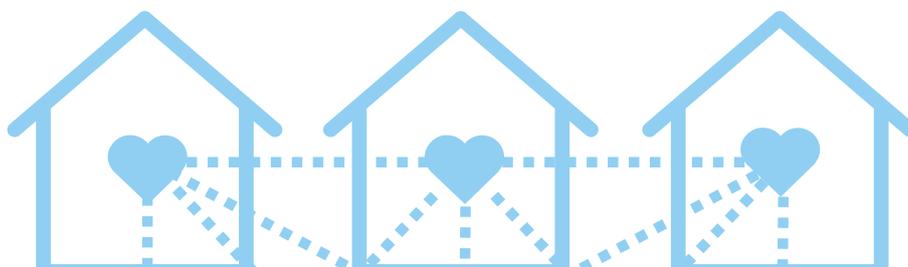
# Financial conditions and costs

Travel costs for the selected participants will be reimbursed in accordance with the official rules and procedures of the donor - the Regional Youth Cooperation Office. Once participation is confirmed, we will provide all necessary information and guidance regarding the reimbursement process, including specific conditions, required documentation, and timelines.

The participants will get their travel reimbursement after the event if they:

- Attend all the activities
- Use the most economical travel option available (taxis, first-class tickets, and rent-a-car will not be reimbursed)
- Provide all original tickets and invoices.

**Important:** Before purchasing any tickets, you must get a confirmation from the hosting organization. Any ticket purchased without confirmation will not be reimbursed. Additionally, each participant is obliged to provide all travel documents in original format for successful reimbursement!



# Logistical Information

For a successful and smooth process, you are obliged to submit all your travelling documents:



## TRAVEL BY **CAR**:

keep receipts for fuel and pay tolls



## TRAVEL BY **BUS**:

keep all tickets/receipts/invoices/  
booking confirmations



## TRAVEL BY **PLANE**:

keep all tickets, invoices and boarding  
passes



**Submitting all travelling documents during the exchange is mandatory for the refund process.** If you have lost some of the abovementioned documents and don't submit a proof for your travelling and payment, **unfortunately we would not be able to complete the refund.**



The local currency is **denar (MKD)** [1 EUR = 61.3 MKD].

***Paying with card in Krusevo is not always available, however there is an ATM in the hotel.***

**Please note that before purchasing any tickets, you must get a confirmation from the hosting organization.**

# Important information!

## HOSTING ORGANIZATION - CONTACT

### **ANELIJA MITROVA:**

anelija@youthalliance.org.mk  
+ 389 72 809 444

### **NINA JOVANOVSKA:**

nina@youthalliance.org.mk  
+ 389 71 330 660

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