



CHALLENGE HISTORY- REACT FOR THE FUTURE

Mokrin, Serbia



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Overview

Education in the Western Balkans (WB) has been manipulated for decades with an aim to promote nationalism and negative ethnic stereotypes as well as to construct ethnic myths used to define one nation or ethnic group superior to another. Despite the progress made in the last years, history textbooks in the region are mainly focused on disparities between ethnic groups, deepening the already existing “us” versus “them” narratives, and contributing to populist techniques and of scapegoating and self-victimization fostered by politicians. This “othering” of the different ethnic groups and the dangerous war narratives over the years has led to a drastic increase in prejudices among the youth. The widespread presence of the nationalist propaganda, inability to reconcile with the past and the ongoing ethnic segregation among the youth in the region of Western Balkans results in low level of civic activism and fewer successful efforts to better neighboring relationships and foster cooperation between the youth of the WB societies.

"Challenge History - React for the Future" project aims to address these issues by providing young people from the WB with informal education on the topic of Yugoslav history, human rights violations, historical revisionism and the importance of reconciliation with the past, as well as the opportunity to work together, exchange knowledge, and create platform for future cooperation. The project seeks to positively affect youngsters' attitudes, enhance knowledge and equip the youth with the right skills-set to achieve sustainable peace-building among the WB societies. By providing a safe space and a supportive setting for dialogue, knowledge exchange and learning, the project also aims

to promote inclusiveness and intercultural understanding in order to help create genuinely pluralist societies in the WB. The project encourages already active and open-minded youth, as well as the inactive and disadvantaged, to challenge history and work together towards a peaceful European future. Secondly, by providing supportive environment for constructive dialogue, learning and sharing information on regional history, the project aims to contribute to redefining regional cooperation and building up regional identity.

After a successful pilot phase in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the subsequent editions of the project in Prizren, Kosovo*¹, and Ohrid, North Macedonia (NMK), the fourth edition of the project is implemented in Serbia. The project combines a 7-day Summer School “Challenge History - REACT for the Future” (REACT: Reflection, Education, Action, Commitment, Together) for high school students from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo and follow-up activities within each of the communities. Due to the circumstances induced by the global pandemic, Summer School is organized in a hybrid format, 2 days implemented online via Zoom platform, and 5 days implemented in-person in modern co-working complex of houses Mokrin House, Mokrin, Serbia, with the possibility of joining in-person sessions online as well. The hybrid format allowed for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach, opening all Summer School sessions for broader audience, regardless of COVID-19 measures and restrictions specific to each of the locations. The goal of the Summer School is to strengthen participants’ intercultural and analytical skills, build up their knowledge about the regional history and raise awareness about the subjective narratives presented in school textbooks, and to equip them with

¹ *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.

competences to bring positive changes including peace-building efforts, in their communities and in the region as a whole. The content of the Summer School is intended to prompt critical thinking and evoke constructive debates on the legacies of the past in the region among high school students from BiH, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, in cooperation with its regional partners, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in North Macedonia, High School Gymnasium "Slobodan Skerovic" in Podgorica, Montenegro, and Center for Peace and Tolerance in Kosovo. organized the Summer School of "Challenge History 4 - REACT for the Future", which was held from 26th of July to 3rd of August 2021 in Mokrin, Serbia with the participation of 30 high school students from North Macedonia, Kosovo, BiH, Montenegro and Serbia.

This location was deliberately chosen: Mokrin is situated in the north of Serbia, a secluded village with no city distractions, and idyllic natural sceneries. The location allowed for a site-visit to Kovacica, a town representative of multiethnic and multicultural community, and the joint effort in overcoming past divisions. Moreover, Mokrin House is particularly suitable for implementation of such activities, since it offers a co-working atmosphere adequate for workshop sessions, dorm-style accommodation, wide range of activities for leisure time, including sports games and natural swimming pool, and large premises outdoors and indoors allowing for adherence to all COVID-19 measure.

The Summer School, as the kick-off event of a long-term educational approach and commitment toward constructive dealing with the past, reconciliation and peace-building, enabled participants to:

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1. enhance knowledge, deepen understanding and develop critical thinking about the past and therefore reflect actively on historical narratives, particularly the ethnocentric discourse related to the recent wars/conflicts in the Western Balkans, in order to create an open dialogue among youth and ensure a more inclusive approach for dealing with past for the future;
 2. create a safe environment for the selected young individuals for constructive dialogues and further collaboration on the future of the WB;
 3. build a network of alumni working on promoting values such as peace, collaboration and good neighboring relations among the societies of the Western Balkans;
 4. understand the concepts of intersectionality, multiculturalism, interculturalism and anti-discrimination as basis for countering development of stereotypes and prejudices;
 5. develop a set of skills for continuous civic engagement through community projects, social campaigns and creative activism supporting lasting peace-building and sustainable cooperation among the youth of the region.

The present Toolkit “Challenge History - React for the Future” consists of comprehensive summaries for the educational workshops for challenging history, its goals, participants remarks and potentials for future collaboration and activism, as a result of the expertise engaged, as well as joint effort and thought-

exchange during the Summer School, and it is intended to support and inspire follow-up activities for young peer educators, teachers and facilitators across the region.

The Challenge History Summer School was based on four modules consisting 12 sessions, two sets of workshops, and site and virtual visits to locations of importance for boosting interculturalism and sense of solidarity with neighbours. In addition, follow-up activities conducting in each of the partners' societies are formatted in line with the Summer School's topic and agenda, and serve as additional opportunity to educate participants and encourage them to take on a responsibility of educating their peers themselves.

The aforementioned modules are:

1. Legacies of the Yugoslav Wars
2. Contrasting/shared historical narratives
3. Culture of remembrance
4. Common heritage of the post-Yugoslav societies

Workshops aimed at promoting youth's activism and developing critical thought are:

1. Theatre performance workshops
2. Social media challenge workshops

Trainers and mentors from different areas of expertise, including history, sociology and human rights led the sessions in an interactive way, using a variety of formats and techniques, and focusing on participations and inclusion on the Summer School

attendees. During the final sessions, the participants, volunteers, project team members together with mentors and trainers had the chance to brainstorm and develop follow-up ideas and activities. Due to the pandemic situation in the region, follow-up activities were reduced to separate sessions for each group within their societies. However, participants displayed readiness and enthusiasm to work together in the future for the same cause and shared interesting ideas for potential activities and projects.

This toolkit will provide an insight in the content and the dynamics of the Challenge History - React for the Future Summer School, as well as serve as a material for participants, activists, or any individual or group willing to use it for workshops, classrooms or other activities. It will be available in electronic and printed versions.

The project is implemented by Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, in cooperation with regional partners, and it is financially supported by Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) within the fourth open call for project proposal co-financed by the European Union.

Modul I

Legacies of the Yugoslav Wars

First module served as an introduction into the Summer School topics, as well as the history of the region. In order to contextualize thematics of the School and the importance of reconciling with the past, participants need to be acquainted with the remnants of the Yugoslav Wars, as well as the causes and factors involved.

	Session I <i>Yugoslavia for Beginners</i> <i>online</i>
Lecturer	Olga Manojlovic Pintar
Lesson overview	Presenting the famous sentence of Susan Sontag "...the past is the biggest country of all..." the lecture opened the most important questions concerning the short history of Yugoslavia (both Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the socialist Yugoslav federation). It dealt with the social and cultural continuities, but also pointed to the political disputes and conflicts, including the wars, that marked 20 th century. The lecture presented Yugoslavia as an emancipatory project which, nevertheless, faced numerous obstacles - both internal and external. The students reacted actively and presented their own views and interpretations. The discussion lasted longer than expected, as the students critically and analytically evaluated problems of historical revisionism in the textbooks and political intolerance in the Balkans.
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion

	Session I <i>Yugoslavia for Beginners</i> <i>online</i>
Goals	<p>The main goal of the lecture is to provide the most important information on the historical processes of the Yugoslav history to the students.</p> <p>Besides that, as the lecture was the first meeting of the Summer School students, and hence also used as the introductory session during which they will present themselves to the other participants.</p>
Number of participants	28 (online via Zoom)
Keywords	Yugoslavia, wars, revisionism
Quotes	"It is weird to think about how we know so little about the country which only ceased to exist a decade before we were born." - Participant (17, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. On the left is a presentation slide with the following text:

Olga Manojlović Pintar

Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije

Yugoslavia for Beginners

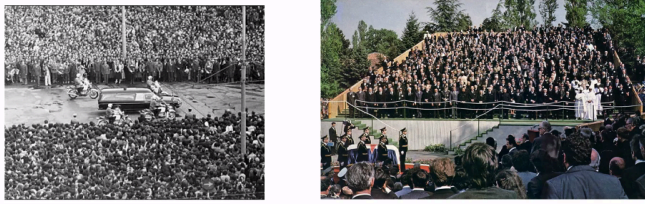
Summer School 'Challenge History - React for the Future'

28 July - 1 August 2021. Mokrin

 On the right side of the Zoom window, there are three video thumbnails. The top one shows a woman speaking. The middle one shows a slide with a map of Yugoslavia. The bottom one shows a woman with glasses. Below the thumbnails, the name 'Igor Radulovic' is visible.

First Summer School day was conducted completely online, two days preceding the commencement of in-person Summer School sessions in Mokrin. First two sessions of Module I were implemented on the first day, ie. online.

Funeral of Josip Broz Tito, 1980.



Balša Tomović

Olga Manojlović

Blendi Hodai

Mina Grebović

Andela Burzanović

Igor Radulović

	<p>Session II <i>Never again: Culture of Remembrance and Human Rights</i> <i>Mokrin</i></p>
Lecturer:	Olga Manojlović Pintar
Lesson overview:	<p>The lecture „Never again: Culture of Remembrance and Human Rights“ was presented through the specific topic: „Monuments and Collective Identities“.</p> <p>The lecture dealt with the role of the public space, and more specifically, with the role of the monuments, in the formation of the collective and individual identities in Europe from the 1870s until today.</p> <p>It presented the process of “spatialization” of the main 20th century ideologies – liberalism, socialism, fascism/Nazism.</p> <p>The main focus was on the role which monuments had on the development of the critical culture of remembrance and on the human rights concept in the Europe after 1945 and after 1989.</p>
Goals:	The main goal of the presentation is to provide the most important information on the role which the monuments had and still have on the political discourses in Europe. The intention is to enable students to position the Balkan histories in the wider European framework.
Duration:	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	28 (online via Zoom)
Keywords:	human rights, war crimes, remembrance, reconciliation
Quotes:	/

Modul II

Contrasting/shared historical narratives

First module served as an introduction into the Summer School topics, as well as the history of the region. In order to contextualize thematics of the School and the project in general, participants have to provided with comprehensive background of Yugoslav Wars, the consequences still present today, and the possible future developments in the direction of reconciliation with the past and among post-conflict societies.



Session I Human rights and Transitional Justice <i>Mokrin</i>	
Lecturer:	Miroslav Samadzic
Lesson overview:	<p>The lecture „Human Rights and Transitional justice“ discusses the complex concepts of transitional justice, conflict resolution and human rights in the context of the aforementioned.</p> <p>As the participants can be young to grasp the essential meaning of the terms, the lesson provided them with simplified explanations of the terms through examples on the global level, to ensure both detachment and objectivity required in order to further discuss the failure of transitional justice in the regional of the Western Balkans.</p> <p>In line with subsequent lecture and discussions about the monument culture, this lesson further discussed the potential and the importance of immovable culture for transitional justice.</p>
Goals:	The first goal of the session is to present the concept of transitional justice to the participants, the lack of its implementation in the Western Balkans, and the importance of transitional justice in preventing similar crimes occurring in the future.
Duration:	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	28 (online via Zoom)
Keywords	transitional justice, justice, war crime, reconciliation
Quotes:	“I am very thankful to be here, get new friends and learn from great mentors.” – Participant (16, Montenegro)

	Session II The causes of Yugoslavia's dissolution and the future of post-conflict reconciliation <i>Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Miroslav Samadzic
Lesson overview	<p>The lecture "The causes of Yugoslavia's dissolution and the future of post-conflict Reconciliation "presented a more in-depth picture of Yugoslavia as a country, its evolution, phases and dissolution.</p> <p>As the students are merely informed about the specificities of living in Yugoslavia in comparison to contemporary societies of the Western Balkans, this session was dedicated to discuss ethnic, religious and linguistic complexities, as well as how are they reflected today.</p>
Goals:	The first goal of the presentation was to provide participants with factual and objective information about Yugoslavia and its fall, emphasising the causes and breaking the widely adopted belief that the dissolution was "inevitable".
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	28 (25 in person, 3 online via Zoom)
Keywords	dissolution, Yugoslavia, reconciliation
Quotes	"it has always been interesting to me to hear my parents and my grandparents talking about Yugo-nostalgia, since in school we learn nothing good about it, so what are they nostalgic about? Now I realize there are more sides to the story." - Participant (17, Serbia)

	Session III Us vs Them: Polarities and populism in present societies of WB <i>Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Srdjan Milosevic
Lesson overview	<p>The lecture "Us vs Them: Polarities and populism in present societies of WB " discusses what happened after Yugoslavia's dissolution, and whether the "us versus them" narratives existed even before the fall of the country, what makes them so persistent today and how does political populism affect this divide.</p> <p>Considering the rising populism in the global political arena, as well as local, that is, regional, it is of essential for young people to understand the mechanisms and the mediums of this phenomena, in order to develop skill set and resistance to it.</p>
Goals:	The goal of this lecture is to discuss what is, either avoided in formal education discussion, or presented in a highly biased and nationalistic way, with an aim of decreasing polarities existent within each community.
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	28 (25 in person, 3 online via Zoom)
Keywords	populism, narratives, hate speech, polarities
Quotes	"We grow up thinking someone else is to blame for everything happening in our city, our country and to ourselves, because that's the picture we are given in the schools and in the media." (Participant (18, North Macedonia)

Modul III

Culture of remembrance

Third module reflects on the previous modules with a focus on culture of remembrance and its opposite, historical revisionism. The region's inability to make peace with the past present a hindrance in progressing on societal, economic and democratic levels. Therefore, it is essential for young individuals to understand the significance of culture of remembrance.



Session I <i>The Role of Immovable Cultural Heritage in Serbia</i> <i>Mokrin</i>	
Lecturer	Olga Manojlovic Pintar
Lesson overview	<p>The lecture „The Role of Immovable Cultural Heritage in Serbia“ will present the role of cultural heritage, and more specifically the role of monuments in the process of the collective identities making in the Yugoslav region. This is the reason why the subtitle of the lecture will be “Culture of Remembrance in Yugoslavia (through monuments)”.</p> <p>As the students were informed about the European monumental practices in the process of the identities’ formation in the first lecture, the second lecture was focused on the public space in the ex-Yugoslav region as the framework which defined historical narratives and crucially influenced the political discourse in the region.</p> <p>The numerous examples (dealing with the monuments from the two World Wars and from the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s) were compared and contrasted. The students were given the possibility to reflect on the complex historical processes in their own countries.</p>
Goals:	<p>The first goal of the presentation is to provide information on the monuments erected, vandalized, and destroyed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.</p> <p>The second goal is to present the ex-Yugoslav examples as the important segments of the European history.</p>
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	27 (25 in person, 2 online via Zoom)
Keywords	culture, heritage, remembrance
Quotes	“We are not taught in schools to respect and protect monuments for these reasons, and we should be.” -- Participant (17, Serbia)



Lectures were generally structured as interactive training or workshops rather than teaching ex cathedra.

	Session II Historical revisionism and nationalist narratives: Overview of Yugoslav history <i>Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Srdjan Milosevic
Lesson overview	<p>The lecture „Historical revisionism and nationalist narratives: Overview of Yugoslav history“ provided students with an overview of political, societal and media manipulations throughout the history of the region.</p> <p>In the context of post-Yugoslav societies, contaminated by nationalist narratives, polarized media and revisioned history, it is vital for students to understand the phenomena in question.</p> <p>Historical revisionism, populism and creeping nationalism are intertwined phenomena, embedded in everyday lives of the citizens, education, as well as individual’s identities. Young people are provided with explanation of the concepts, their causes and possible antidotes.</p>

	Session II Historical revisionism and nationalist narratives: Overview of Yugoslav history <i>Mokrin</i>
Goals:	The first goal of the presentation is to help young people understand the origin and the the causes of dangerous phenomena of historical revisionism, nationalism and populism in Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.The second goal is to provide them with an opportunity to discuss how these concepts reflect today and how to mitigate them .
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	28 (25 in person, 3 online via Zoom)
Keywords	culture, heritage, remembrance
Quotes	"We are the generation hat can't afford to be out of politics, so we should know how to bring changes." – Participant (17, Serbia)



Session III History: Social Science or Humanistic Discipline? <i>Mokrin</i>	
Lecturer	Aleksandar R. Miletic
Lesson overview	<p>The lecture „History: Social Science or Humanistic Discipline?“ discusses the concept of history, its role in education, as well as social movements.</p> <p>The lecture was organized as discussion panel concentrated on issues of accountability of value-oriented historiography and of a social role played by engaged historians in Balkan’s fragile societies. Among the problems faced or (often) created by historians a particular stress was dedicated to nationalistic agenda caused by ethnocentric approach, self-victimization naratives and lack of cirritical reflection.</p>
Goals:	<p>The first goal of the lecturee was to openly discuss the issue of history as a discipline in a highly polarized society, the challenges faced by truth-tellers, and the limitations of education in this aspect due to the lack of accountability on national levels.</p> <p>The second goal was to inform the participants of the value of historiography through concrete examples, and demonstrate the power of past over their future, encouraging them to research, learn and react to dangerous naratives around them.</p>
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Keywords	history, revisionism, education
Quotes	<i>“I have always wanted to study history, because I feel like it is such a distorted concept in our society and I want to be able to change that.” - Participant (18, Serbia)</i>

Modul IV

Common heritage of the post-Yugoslav societies

The final module focused on the common heritage of the post-Yugoslav societies both through discussing the ethnocentric biases and dividing narratives, reflecting on the topics from the previous sessions about the importance of remembrance and reconciliation, and emphasizing the unity and the unique multultural character of the region. With the additional value of having in-person participants have a one-day visit to Banatian intercultural village Kovacica, this module sought to define next steps in cultivating peace, justice and tolerant society.

	Session I Ethnocentric Bias and Tools to Cope with it <i>Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Aleksandar R. Miletic
Lesson overview	<p>The lecture „Ethnocentric Bias and Tools to Cope with it “ continues the discussion of historical revisionism, nationalism and furthers the topic of divisions among ethnic identities.</p> <p>The lecture provided examples from the recent Yugoslav history, as well as contemporary examples of ethnic biases demonstrated among political elite, educational institutions, religious leaders and media. The discussion moved into direction of looking for solutions, alternatives and ways to cope with ethnocentric biases and its consequences.</p>

Session I Ethnocentric Bias and Tools to Cope with it <i>Mokrin</i>	
Goals:	<p>The first goal of the lecture was to provide students with the insight into what bias is, how it manifests, and how it works in combination with ethnic pride. Does it turn into nationalism? Can it be controlled in a post-conflict context?</p> <p>The second goal was to encourage the participants to think of the ways to cope with this occurrence, this mindset present in their communities.</p>
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	27 (25 in person, 2 online via Zoom)
Keywords	history, revisionism, education
Quotes	<i>"It is devastating to think how many times all of us might have exposed ethnic bias, but we were not aware of it, because it is normalized in our societies."</i> - Participant (18, Bosnia and Herzegovina)



	Session II Site Visit and Site Visit Reflection - Living Together <i>Kovacica/Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Project coordinator Azra Hasanbegovic Lecturers Aleksandar R. Miletic and Srdjan Milosevic
Lesson overview	<p>This session is planned as a focus group format, to encourage students to share the experience from the site visit, ask questions, exchange opinions and make connection to the topic of the Summer School, and the goals of the project as it is.</p> <p>As Kovacica is the choice of the site-visit for the reasons of its unique, multi-ethnic cohabitation, participants had the chance to experience the atmosphere of the community through visiting naive art gallery, according to which Kovacica is known for, and talk to representatives from different ethnic and religious communities, including visit to the Evangelical church. A particular aspect of the Banatian intercultural village of Kovačica was pointed out as an affirmative example of a diverse, tolerant and inclusive community.</p> <p>Project coordinator moderated the session by sharing her own experience and reflections and encouraging participants to do the same. Consequently, the lecturers followed by providing more in-depth information about the historical side of the location, its diverse culture and cohabitation.</p>
Goals:	<p>The primary goal of this session was to create a safe space for participants to discuss similarities and differences between ethnicities and religions of the region, and to allow them to learn more about each other's backgrounds in this context, bearing in mind communities such Kovacica.</p> <p>The second goal was to inform the participants of the value of cohabitation, intercultural understanding and cultural diversity, especially in post-conflict societies.</p>
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	27 (25 in person, 2 online via Zoom)
Keywords	intercultural, multicultural, war crime, religion

	Session II Site Visit and Site Visit Reflection - Living Together <i>Kovacica/Mokrin</i>
Quotes	<i>"I am very delighted to have learned that there are so many sub-communities within one small town like Kovacica, and especially to learn from religious representative about Evangelical Christianity, of what I heard nothing before."</i> - Participant (17, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

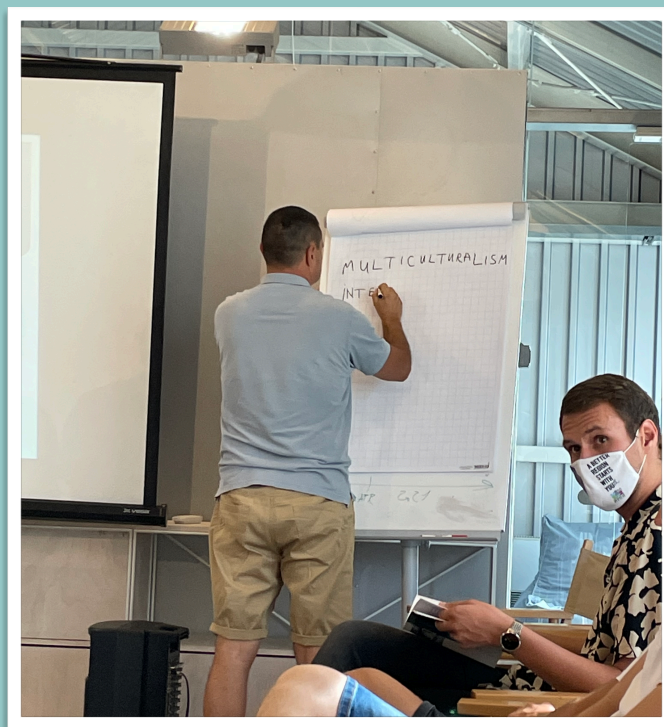


Participants had the opportunity to hear about the village's specificities from a tourist guide, as well as to meet and talk to the locals from different spheres, including art, education and religion.



	Session III History and Memory in the Balkans <i>Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Aleksandar R. Miletic
Lesson overview	<p>This lecture is final and as such, it repeats and reflects on all the important concepts, topics and ideas discussed previously, while underlining the main goal of the Summer School, which is to inform the participants of the importance of learning about the past, understanding its own community, society, accepting collective responsibility to do better and turning it into a joint strength.</p> <p>The lecture allowed for more discussion throughout the presentation as well, since it highly relied on participants' input, understanding of what had been discussed in the previous days, and their understanding of the history and memory in the Balkans.</p>

Session III History and Memory in the Balkans <i>Mokrin</i>	
Goals:	<p>The primary goal of this session was to move way from strictly defined ideas and concepts, and to discuss the region of Balkans in a broad sense of societal analysis, allowing students to perceive it from a different angle.</p> <p>The second goal was to stress the importance of memory in Balkans as a mechanism for both dealing with the past, and maintaining good neighbourly relations vital for sustainability of the region .</p>
Duration	45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion
Number of participants:	27 (25 in person, 2 online via Zoom)
Keywords	intercultural, multicultural, war crime, religion
Quotes	<i>"I have always lived in a multicultural community, but never in an intercultural one."</i> - Participant (18, Serbia)



Workshops

Theatre of the Oppressed

As a part of the Summer School “Challenge History- React for the Future”, seven forum theatre workshops were implemented which were attended by 27 participants. As the major part of the program was implemented offline, in Mokrin, these were mostly in-person and interactive physically and verbally, with the exception of the additional online sessions before and after, that served like an introduction and closing of the process. The methodology used in the workshops is mostly Theatre of the Oppressed, and more specifically, its techniques — Forum theatre and Image theatre. These techniques are important tools for empowering communities to fight the oppression and advocate for human rights, equality and social justice. The array of exercises and drama games is used in order for the participants to explore the external oppression and internalized oppression, to name it and to transform it, by using theatre language. Besides theatre language, there is room for various discussions as part of the process, thanks to which participants find out different solutions to tackle the issues surrounding them.

	Theatre of the Oppressed <i>Mokrin</i>
Lecturer	Demir Mekic



	Theatre of the Oppressed <i>Mokrin</i>
Lesson overview	<p>During the first workshop participants were introduced with the main concepts of Theatre of the Oppressed methodology and Forum theatre, as its most used technique. Energizers, icebreakers and drama exercises were used in order for participants to relax, get to know each other and warm up for the following activities.</p> <p>Image theatre technique was used to explore different issues that youth find important for their community. One of those exercises was the exercise "Image of the World". A trainer invited participants to make a frozen image/ a statue with their body as a response to the topics like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My town/ city • My country • The region that I live in <p>Interesting thing is that images that represents region were those that mostly represented the situation of people being oppressed by those in power. That can be a sign that young people are feeling insecure and oppressed in socio- political context of Western Balkans.</p> <p>Further on, young people were invited to make a joint image of the region, as they see it, by presenting a character, individual or a member of the group and showing it through a moving image (an statue that has a sound and movement). Some of the actors that youth had presented were: a politician, a female politician, a voter, a student, a peace activist, media, a police officer, young person that does not care for the politics, a young basketball player, etc. They put focus on politician and those in power, while the other social groups were rarely presented. Discussion that followed opened many questions connected to the life of young person in the region. Youth discussed about the manipulation of media, politics, about the feeling of being powerless, etc.</p>



	Theatre of the Oppressed <i>Mokrin</i>
Lesson overview	<p>Many topics were listed and participants were divided into groups by the topic that they were interested in exploring more. 4 main topics were chosen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media manipulation • Violence • Corruption and political manipulation of voters • Stereotypes- acceptance and diversity <p>Within the groups, participants shared concrete examples, situations related to these topics, and then used theatre language to present it. First step was making images of the story and then develop it into the scenes. Participants were encouraged to use the whole venue, so they had chosen the place for their performance/ scenes.</p>

	Theatre of the Oppressed <i>Mokrin</i>
	<p>During this creative process, new tasks were introduced to the participants. They developed characters that they were playing, through exploration of their motives and relations with other characters in the scene.</p> <p>The media manipulations scene presented two political leaders manipulating media and citizens, with some trivial topics, instead of tackling the important issues.</p> <p>Scene that dealt with violence presented various forms of violence, such as peer violence, domestic violence and sexual violence.</p> <p>The group that dealt with the corruption and political manipulation of voters, presented how politicians corrupt and manipulate their voters by offering them some benefits, but also by using the media.</p> <p>The participants that were dealing with the topic of stereotypes developed the scene based on the experience of one of the participants. The story follows two children of different religions and ethnic groups, playing football together. By the end of the story, one of them says to another: „You are the only Serbian girl that my mom lets me play with.“</p> <p>Final performance was presented on the last workshop. After the performance was presented and shot, the participants reflected on their experiences during theatre workshops. Some of the interesting reflections were:</p>
Goals:	<p>The aim of the workshops was to empower youth to deal with the social issues of post-Yugoslav societies, to equip them with the competences to be advocates in their communities for the peace-building and reconciliation, and to build stronger bonds in the region. They had an opportunity to explore their realities by using theatre language, which also was the best way for participants to connect and get to know each other in more informal way.</p>
Duration	1h 30min

	Theatre of the Oppressed <i>Mokrin</i>
Number of participants:	27 (25 in person, 2 online via Zoom)
Keywords	
Quotes	<p>„ Its great how we got ownership on the performance, it was something that we created...” – Participant (18, Serbia)</p> <p>“We feel empowered with the product, we didn’t believe that we can make this.” – Participant (17, Montenegro)</p> <p>“I wasn’t into theatre, but I enjoyed it.” – Participant (16, Kosovo)</p> <p>“The most powerful thing was the exercise where we presented our region through images” – Participant (17, Serbia)</p> <p>“ We had freedom to express the things that we deal with in our realities.” - Participant (16, Montenegro)</p> <p>“Team work and togetherness.” – Participant (18, Serbia)</p>

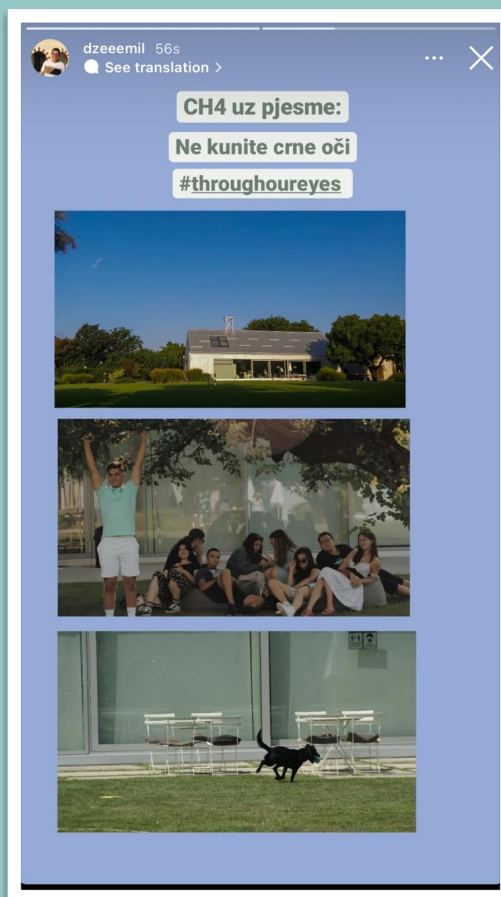


Workshops

Social Media Challenge "Through Our Eyes"

Creative workshops were planned as an addition to the core structure of the Summer School to incite creativity, team work and change agency within participants. The idea is to create groups which will work together to brainstorm a topic, find ways to depict it through different media forms and share it on social media platforms for a broader community outreach. Each group consists of students coming from different societies and background, age and gender taken into consideration as well. Creative workshops were led by the project coordinator, in an informal format and through different workshop techniques, including icebreakers, discussions, games and presentations.

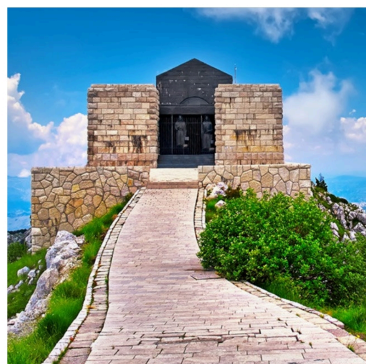
	Through our Eyes <i>Mokrin/online</i>
Moderators	Project coordinator Azra Hasanbegovic
Workshop overview	Workshops are implemented in an informal format, without strict agenda and timeline, so as to students have the freedom to work at their own pace, explore their creativity and communication skills, and get to know each other better. The project coordinator kept check-ins on regular level, assisted the teams in creating material and supervised their work.



	Through our Eyes <i>Mokrin/online</i>
Goals:	<p>The primary goal of this session was to create a sense of unity and team work among Summer School participants. Considering the polarities between the societies they come from, it is vital to provide them with practical experience in which they can join forces for a greater good, particularly in regard to the case of promoting good neighbourly relations, reconciliation and justice in the region.</p> <p>The second goal is to reach broader audience, more specifically more young individuals who will be encouraged to take place in similar activities in the future, work with each other and promote values of inclusiveness, democracy and human rights.</p>
Duration	1h
Number of participants:	25

	Through our Eyes <i>Mokrin/online</i>
Keywords	social media, inclusiveness, challenge, through our eyes, Instagram, photography, teamworkd
Quotes	<i>"This challenge got us closer, and helped us understand each other's culture in ways we never did before. I had no idea about the characteristics of other religions for instance, because I never had the change to be around people who are not the same culture, religion and ethnicity as I am."</i> - Participant (17, Montenegro)

Participants worked in groups and shared their media content on the topic of their choice through their social media accounts with hashtags #CH and #throughoureyes.



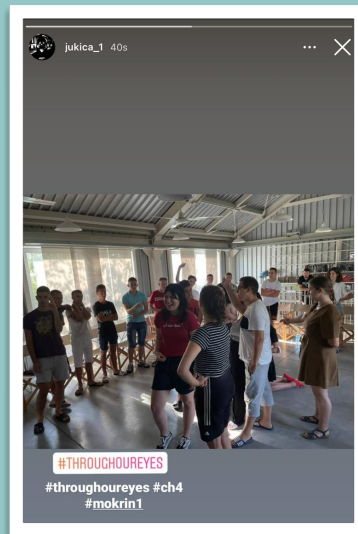
Lovćen is a mountain and national park in southwestern Montenegro. It is the inspiration behind the name of Montenegro: Crna Gora (Black Mountain)

Some groups focused on cultural heritages, the diversity and the unity between different communities, while the other groups discusses specific concepts such as superstitions, music and other.

**MONUMENT TO
A THESSALONIAN**



**A VOLUNTEER FROM
THE THESSALONIKI
FRONT FROM THE
FIRST WORLD WAR**



Participants continued to share the social media content even after the completion of Summer School.



The most prominent medium used by young individuals is Instagram, hence, it was used for the challenge.

Follow-up sessions

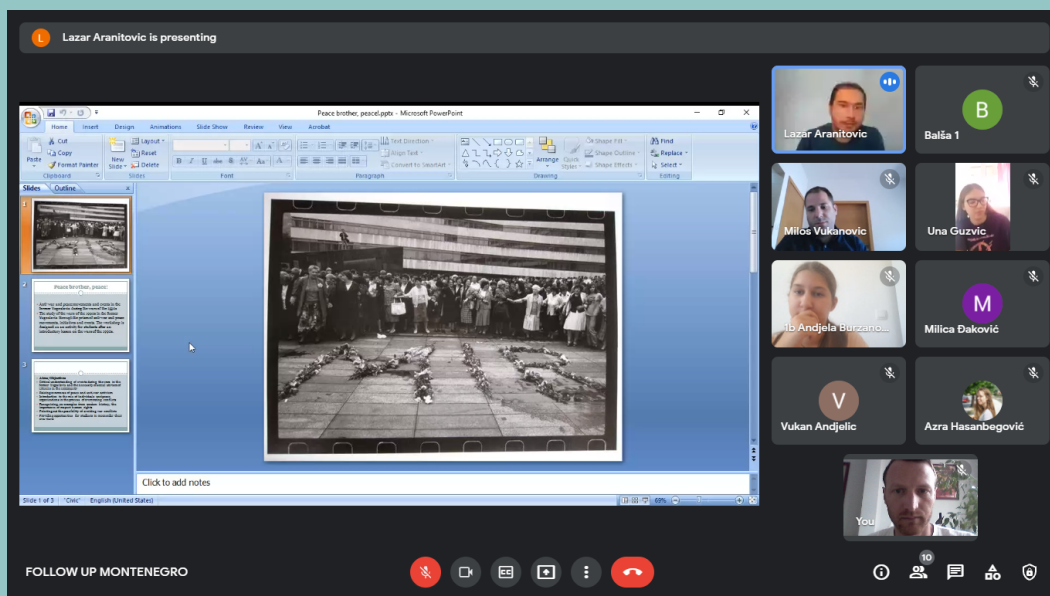
As epidemiological situation in the region continued to be worrying, implementing in-person activities would pose health risks, particularly to young individuals who are not vaccinated. Therefore, the decision was made to have follow-up activities in a format of follow-up Summer School sessions intended to deepen the knowledge, understanding and skills participants acquired during the Summer School, through researching concrete examples of human rights violations in their own communities. Participants were assisted by experts in history, sociology, humanitarian law and human rights, but were also encouraged to discuss the topics with their families, friends and professors. These sessions were open for broader audience, ie., high school students that were not part of the core Summer School. The final joint session comprised presentations of each of the group on the topics they tackled, followed by discussion and final reflections.

Montenegro: Follow-up session



	Montenegro: Follow-up session <i>online</i>
Lecturers	Miloš Vukanović Lazar Aranitović.
Lesson overview	In the first part of the sessions, the students learned more about the places of suffering in Montenegro during the recent conflicts. They also discovered more about the memorialization and commemoration of these events. In the second part, through the workshop of Professor Aranitović, they were introduced to the anti-war activists, individuals, and groups who tried to resist negative phenomena and preserve peace and unity during these troubled times.
Goals:	The goal of this session was to present an unbiased perspective on the war crime history of the community students live in, without glorification, self-victimization and narrative-distortion.
Duration	2 sessions, each 45min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 15min discussion

	Montenegro: Follow-up session <i>online</i>
Number of participants:	10 (25 in person, 2 online via Zoom)
Keywords	war crime, memory, past, civilians, human rights
Quotes	<i>"I am very delighted to have learned that there are so many sub-communities within one small town like Kovacica, and especially to learn from religious representative about Evangelical Christianity, of what I heard nothing before."</i> - Participant (17, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

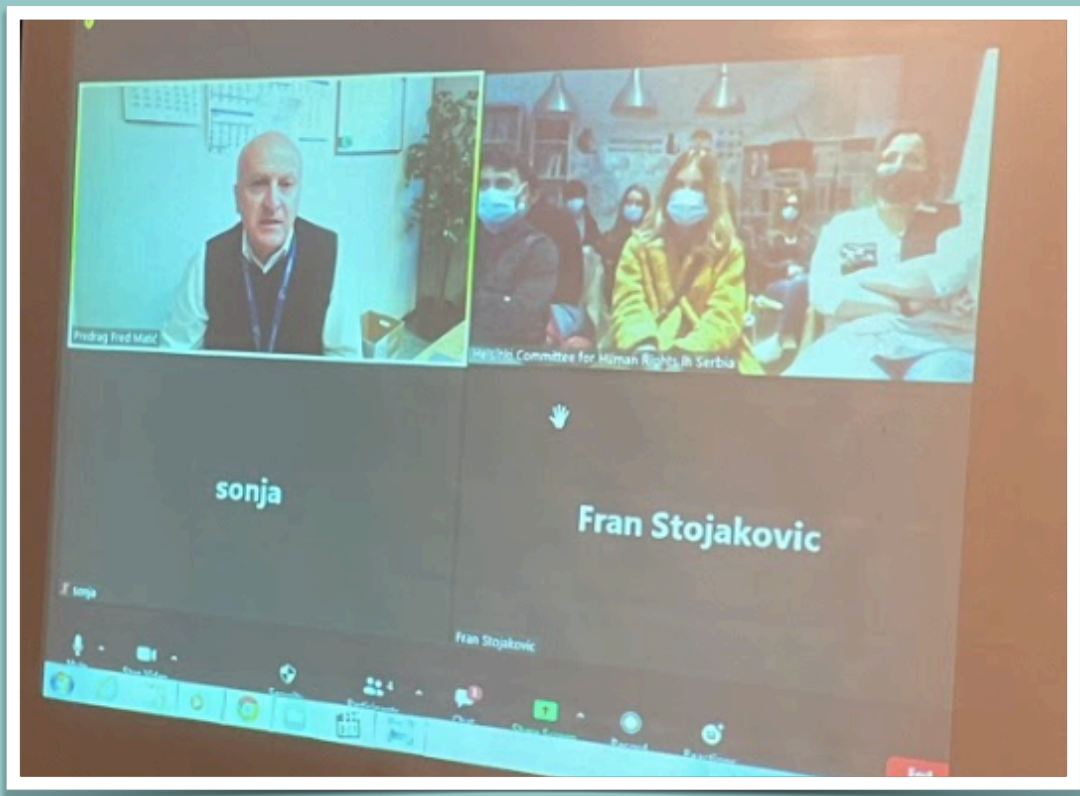


Serbia: Follow-up session



The session was implemented in the House of Human Rights in Belgrade, where are also the premises of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights.

	Serbia: Follow-up session "Virtual visit to concentration camp Stajicevo" <i>Belgrade</i>
Mentor/Speaker	Jovana Kolarić Predrag Fred Matic

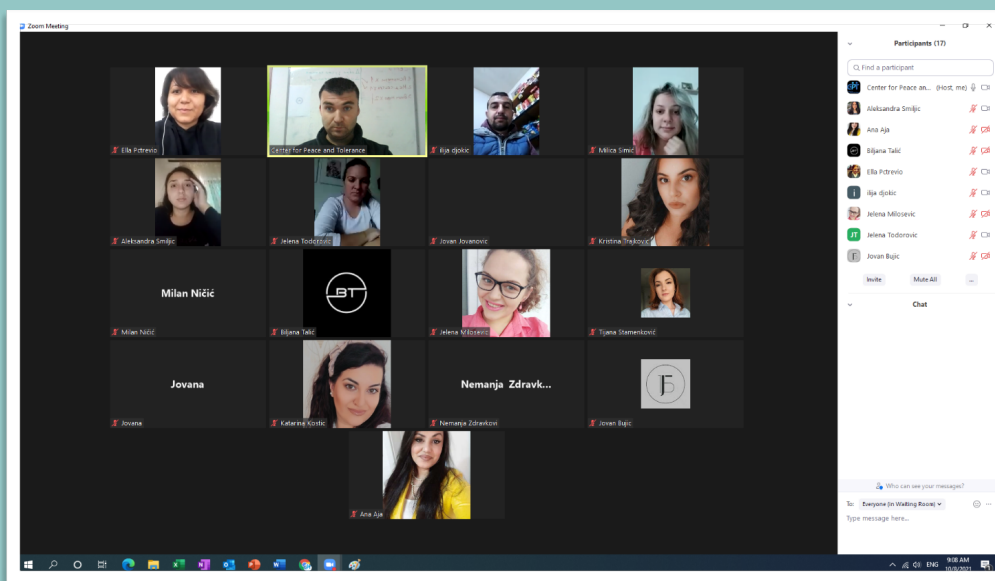


	Serbia: Follow-up session “Virtual visit to concentration camp Stajicevo” <i>Belgrade</i>
Lesson overview	<p>The session is implemented in a hybrid format, ie. having one of the speakers Predrag Fred Matic join online, and the researcher for Humanitarian Law Fond, Jovana Kolaric, in-person.</p> <p>The first part was dedicated to an overview of the concentration camps in the wars across Serbia, the crimes committed then and the consequences still present today. The examples were followed by brief explanation of humanitarian law and culture of remembrance, and an introduction of the story of concentration camp of Stajicevo, situated near the village Kovacica, which was a s Summer School site-visit.</p> <p>Predrag Fred Matic is a former captive of the concentration camp Stajicevo, and representative in European Parliament. He shared his experiences in this camp, and the two others in Nis and Mitrovica, as well as his life after having survived the horrors of such war crimes, and encouraged the participants to ask questions and share their opinion.</p> <p>The sessions was intense, dynamic and informative for the young individuals who come from different parts of Serbia, of different background and ethnic identities.</p>
Goals:	The goal of this session was to present an unbiased perspective on the war crime history of the community students live in, without glorification, self-victimization and narrative-distortion.
Duration	1 panel sessions, 45 min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 45min discussion
Number of participants:	23
Keywords	war crime, memory, concentration camp, civilians, human rights
Quotes	<i>“We need to discuss more about these events, and we need to commemorate them in various ways, so the future generations know to do better. I think we as the youth have the responsibility to do something, for instance, exposing the location of the concentration camp through a commemorating.” - Participant (17, Serbia)</i>

Kosovo: Follow-up session

	Kosovo: Follow-up session <i>Online</i>
Mentor	Stefan Filipovic
Lesson overview	<p>The topic of the follow-up session in Kosovo is Peacebuilding between different ethnic groups living in Kosovo, the challenges that need to be overcome as a consequence of various crimes that occurred in the recent history of the region.</p> <p>As the session was structured in an interactive format, participants were invited to share their experience with ethnic groups different from theirs, personal stories, anecdotes and opinions.</p> <p>The expert followed this discussion by providing participants with basic terms of peace-building and reconciliation, as well as conflict transformation and hate crimes.</p> <p>The sessions discussed examples of hate crimes, and hate speech, both present and past situations and connecting these incidents to the consequence of recent wars in former Yugoslavia.</p> <p>The moderator introduced a game called "How would you feel?" in order to encourage participants to step out of their shoes and their perspective and emotions towards different groups of people, and see a wider angle. Some of the statements include: "How would you feel if Albanian lived in your building?" or "How would you feel if you are going in the same class with person of different ethnicity?". This helped to detect discrimination on basic levels like such, and identify what they as young people can do to try to minimize such cases.</p> <p>The sessions concluded with examples of good multi-ethnic relations, including positive stories of Albanians saving Serbians, and vice versa, during the times of war.</p>
Goals:	The goal of this session was to present an unbiased perspective on the war crime history of the community students live in, without glorification, self-victimization and narrative-distortion.

	Kosovo: Follow-up session <i>Online</i>
Duration	1h 30min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 30min discussion
Number of participants:	17
Keywords	peacebuilding, reconciliation, conflict transformation
Quotes	<i>"I heard many new things that I wasn't familiar with, and the game with explaining our emotions when we are close to different groups of people was really interesting because we usually don't think about it."</i> - Participant (16, Kosovo)

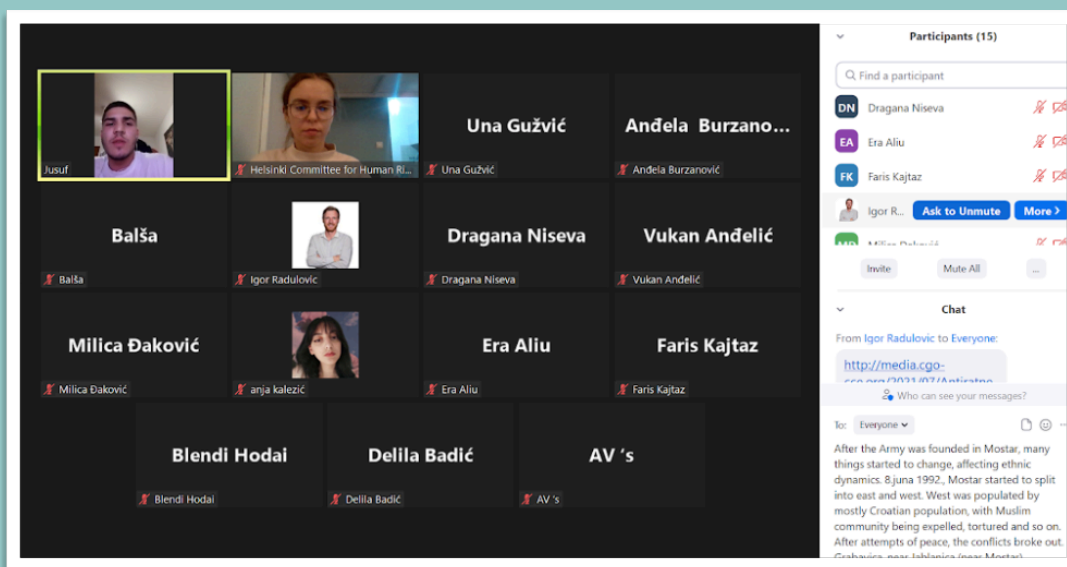


Follow-up session was open for all young individuals in Kosovo, expanding the reach of the project beyond the Summer School participants.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Follow-up session

	Bosnia and Herzegovina: Follow-up session <i>Online</i>
Mentor	Volunteer/participant Jusuf Micijevic
Lesson overview	<p>The topic of the follow-up session in Bosnia and Herzegovina was exclusively focused on events occurring in and around the city of Mostar, as the participants are from Mostar.</p> <p>The project team assisted the session to the extent of giving guidelines for the research, but participants conducted the full research and presentation independently.</p> <p>The idea of the session was to present three different sides of the war crimes which occurred in Mostar, all concerning different ethnic communities, and to emphasize that each crime is grave in itself, regardless of the number, background and the ethnicity of the victims.</p> <p>The three cases included Grabavica crime, Crime at Uborak and "Cleansing of Mostar" operation. Through providing the facts about the events, the session made a point of great importance for the region – that each community needs to be accountable for the crimes of the past, and that until that happens, the region cannot move forward.</p>
Goals:	The goal of this session was to present an unbiased perspective on the war crime history of the community students live in, without glorification, self-victimization and narrative-distortion.
Duration	1h 30min lecture 30min discussion
Number of participants:	3 (later presented to all Summer School participants in final session - 25)
Keywords	war crimes, peacebuilding, accountability, conflict resolution

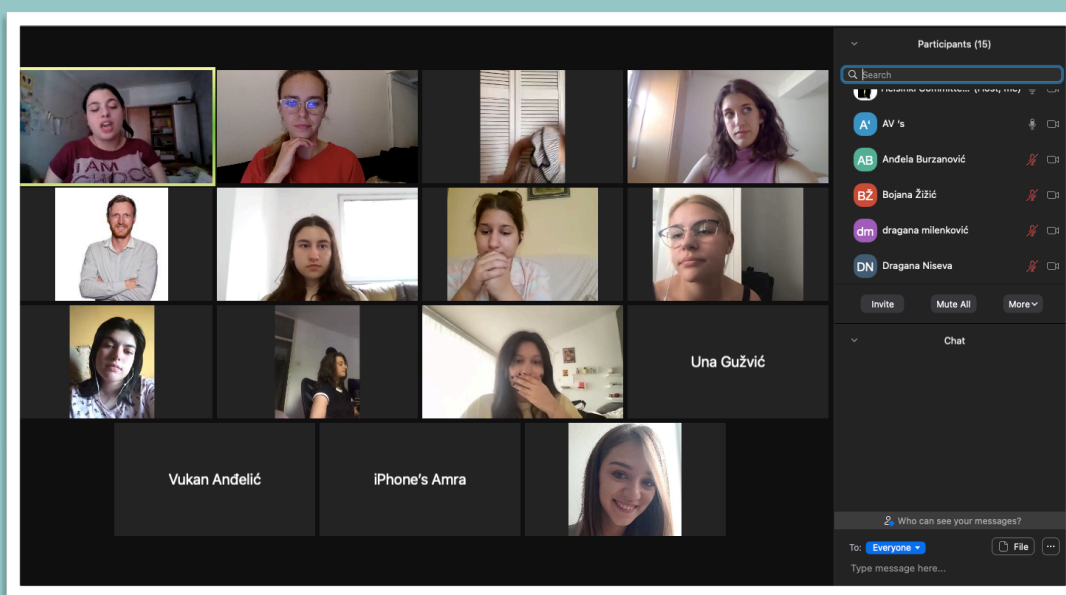
	Bosnia and Herzegovina: Follow-up session <i>Online</i>
Quotes	<i>" Researching, talking and sharing is the way forward in this very complex community as a whole. We need to speak up for all the victims there so there are none to come." - Participant who led the session (18, Bosnia and Herzegovina)</i>



North Macedonia: Follow-up session

	North Macedonia: Follow-up session <i>Online</i>
Lecturers	Petar Todorov
Lesson overview	<p>In the Balkans' national system of education, notably in the history education, the history of wars, including the First World War is interpreted and used or abused by selective interpretations of ethno-national perspectives. The interpretations and the dominant historical narratives mainly serves as narratives of victimhood. Few are the examples where historical museums and history textbooks relies on the approaches and principles of peace education.</p> <p>In this context, the participants coming from different ethnic background and nations have the opportunity to discover different perceptions of the war, which can make possible for them to understand other nation's perspectives of the history of WWI. At the same time, they have the opportunity to see the changes of the ethno-national narratives throughout time in different socio-political contexts. The main aim is to develop Multiperspectivity in teaching history, empathy for other perspectives, but also to develop critical thinking and understanding of the war and its consequences.</p>
Goals:	<p>The goal of this session was to help participants understand that history can have more different interpretation based on ethnic or national background, i.e. more complex than it is usually presented in schools, media or public discourse in their respective communities.</p> <p>The second goal was to teach participants about the multi-perspectivity as an approach in studying history, and raise their awareness about the differences between the academic, personal and political use and abuse of the history.</p>
Duration	1h 30min lecture (PowerPoint presentation) 30min discussion
Number of participants:	4

	North Macedonia: Follow-up session <i>Online</i>
Keywords	history, narratives, education, interpretation, war
Quotes	<i>"This session helped me reflect upon my own views on particular historical event, and question its veracity."</i> – Participant (17, North Macedonia)



Final Follow-up session

Summer School: Final Follow-up session <i>Online</i>	
Moderators	Project coordinator and partner organizations' representatives
Lesson overview	<p>The sessions was moderated by the project coordinator, and it was divided into five sections, each reserved for one group, and their presentation on the topic of their follow-up sessions within their respective community.</p> <p>After each presentation, a discussion followed, during which participants discussed further cases in questions, topic discussed, dilemmas and questions they were not certain about. Moreover, this session served as another opportunity for students to share their overall impressions of their participation in the project, the effect it had on them and the ways they will use the skills, knowledge and contact acquired in the future.</p>
Goals:	<p>The goal of the final session was to enable participants to share their knowledge, skills and energy to and among each other and further.</p> <p>This session served as a final touch to the values of the Summer School, the idea of unity in remembering the past and doing better for the future of the region.</p>
Duration	1h 40min presentation (20 min each presentation) 1h discussion
Number of participants:	24
Keywords	history, memory, education, activism
Quotes	<i>"Despite the fact that I only had the chance to experience Summer School online, i feel like a part of movement, a positive change"</i> – Participant (16, North Macedonia)

Conclusions

Summer School was implemented successfully, with high level of participation, engagement and community outreach. Student who attended Summer School, and its follow-up session, not only acquired the skill-set needed for promoting intercultural, inclusive and positive changes in their communities and the region as a whole, but they also demonstrated willingness to proactively contribute to causes connected to justice, peace-building, and promotion and protection of human rights.

The project team, as well as the project partners and experts engaged, were satisfied with the level of attendees' critical stance, engagement and exchange of thoughts. Most of them are aware of the vital role they can play to support a more responsible and inclusive history curriculum and culture of memory, remembrance and collective accountability. Some of the participants have already been engaged in grassroots activism aiming at improvement of interethnic relations in their own local communities, which brought an additional value to the overall dynamics of the group, as those for whom this activity was a pilot in civic activism these individuals serve as role models.

In final discussions, participants proposed both scholarly and grassroots activism solutions for the problems discussed, ways to cope with negative synergy of nationalistic political elites, historical revisionism, irresponsible media and ethnocentric historiographies in the region. They demonstrated readiness to



take part in similar activities, initiate projects themselves, and also the future Summer Schools “Challenge History - react for the future” as volunteers.

Working together provided the youth of the region with the best way to connect on a deeper level, join the strengths and demonstrate the power of unity, particularly in region of deeply polarized societies. intercultural competencies, and set the ground for the acceptance and solidarity.



This publication is produced with the support of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) and the European Union (EU). Its content is the sole responsibility of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia and its partners and does not necessarily reflect the views of RYCO and/or the EU.