



# young cities

## North Macedonia

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Empowering Youth.  
Strengthening Communities.



# young cities

Young Cities is a global, pioneering capacity-building programme that connects young people to local governments, enabling the development of shared solutions to the challenges of hate, polarisation, and extremism around the world. Our work builds mutual trust and creates opportunities to address the most pressing issues facing the communities in which we work.

As the youth pillar of the **The Strong Cities Network (SCN)**, Young Cities is furthering the role that young people play in building city and community resilience to hate and polarisation at local level. It is leveraging the insights and experience of SCN's collaboration with municipalities around the world to drive impactful, locally-led policy that includes and represents the needs of all young people.

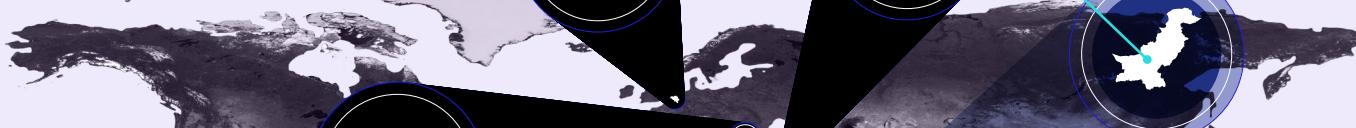
With the generous support of our donors and our partners, including local organisations and municipal officials, we have empowered young people in ten cities across Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, North Macedonia and Senegal to thrive as peacebuilders in their communities. In 2022, Young Cities launched in the cities of Antwerp and Liège with the support of the United States Embassy in Belgium.

**14.5 MILLION+**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE**  
**IMPACTED GLOBALLY**

## BELGIUM

### Antwerp, Liège

- 14 Young activists trained
- 3 Youth-led projects
- 2 City Initiatives



## NORTH MACEDONIA

### Čair, Gostivar

- 76 Young activists trained
- 24 Youth-led projects
- 2 City Initiatives

## SENEGAL

### Dakar

- 28 Young activists trained
- 4 Youth-led projects
- 1 City Initiative

## KENYA

### Mombasa, Kwale, Nakuru

- 127 Young activists trained
- 25 Youth-led projects
- 3 City Initiatives

## LEBANON

### Saida, Tripoli, Majdal Anjar

- 76 Young activists trained
- 14 Youth-led projects
- 1 City Initiative

## PAKISTAN

### Lahore, Islamabad

- 70 Young activists trained
- 11 Youth-led projects

## JORDAN

### Zarqa

- 21 Young activists trained
- 3 Youth-led projects
- 3 City Initiatives



## Scoping & Research

Our work is evidence-led. Before launching in a new city, we spend six months scoping to understand the local context and challenges facing different communities. We conduct original research, identify key stakeholders and map existing programmes and policy so we can tailor our delivery to meet real needs.

## Workshops

**Youth Innovation Labs** combine learning and doing to guide young activists through a process of planning social impact projects and provide an opportunity to transform ideas into actionable plans. Simultaneously, our city workshops help build best practice at the municipal level.



## Collaboration & Partnerships

Social challenges require a multi-faceted response. We therefore connect key actors in civil society, municipal governance, and youth activism - creating opportunities to exchange ideas and build trust. We partner with civil society organisations for our own delivery and connect young people with relevant organisations. We also facilitate ongoing collaboration between youth and cities.



## Youth-Led Projects

Youth groups can apply for up to £5,000 in funding – with ongoing training and support – to deliver their projects to their community. By enabling young people to lead their own projects, we are offering them the chance to gain experience and deepen their understanding of project management. It also harnesses youth insight, contributing original projects that have real impact and fostering meaningful cooperation between youth and other stakeholders.



## City Initiatives

**City Grants** support new municipal initiatives to engage with young people in their city. Young Cities offers funding and ongoing support to help our city partners conduct research and deliver activities that enhance their youth engagement strategies and policy. The programme gives them the opportunity to engage with youth directly to enhance youth inclusion and build trust.



## Sustainability

We provide our young activists ongoing support year-on-year with additional funding (**Ambassador Grants**), peer mentoring, networking, and opportunities for local and international representation.

**Showcase Events** help to demonstrate the impact young people and municipalities have had, while **City Exchanges** enable the sharing of best practice.



# Young Cities in North Macedonia

The SCN expanded its membership to the Western Balkans in 2016. It welcomed nine municipalities from North Macedonia which have joined SCN activities over the years. In 2020, Young Cities built upon their success by leveraging these municipal relationships to enhance collaboration with young people in addressing local challenges that contribute to extremism, hate and polarisation.

To date, Young Cities has delivered programmes in Gostivar and Skopje where we provided direct support to empower 76 young peacebuilders and trained 12 municipal officials to develop sustainable solutions to these challenges. It has resulted in 24 youth-led projects that directly impacted 3,011 young people and reached 1,127,194 more, as well as two city-led projects that improved municipal-level programming.

## In Numbers



Youth Innovation  
Labs Held:

**4**



Young Peacebuilders  
Trained:

**76**



City Officials  
Trained:

**12**



Youth-Led Projects Launched:

**24**



City Initiatives Supported:

**2**



Young People Directly Impacted:

**3,011**



Young People Reached Digitally:

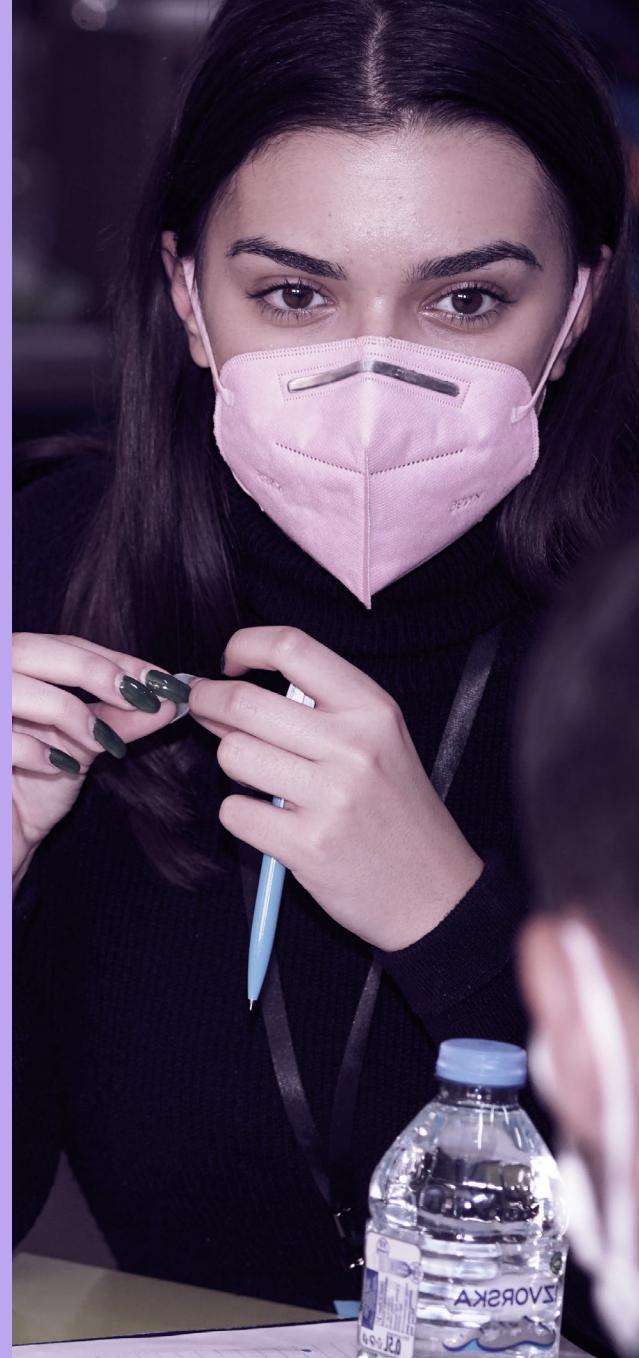
**1,127,194**

# Understanding and Building Resilience

To help inform our work in North Macedonia, Young Cities' research team spoke with municipal representatives, youth and civil society actors in Gostivar and Skopje. This included: 20 interviews, two youth focus groups discussions and two statistically representative youth resilience studies. The methodology for these studies was designed specifically to build our evidence base for work in Gostivar and the municipality of Čair in Skopje. Our research found that young people in both municipalities faced a diverse set of challenges, which have driven many to political apathy, polarisation, emigration, discrimination, self-segregation, or recruitment into fringe extremist groups.

Critically, our research showed that there is a disconnect in understanding and perception between young people and municipal authorities, especially in how the municipality is working to meet the needs of young people. Furthermore, young people have low levels of trust in local authorities, which can make it difficult to begin repairing these relationships.

On the whole, young people expressed a willingness to be engaged and involved in civic processes that could improve their communities, but they could not identify enough structured community-level programmes to do so. This presents a missed opportunity by the local governments to involve youth as partners in solving social issues.



**Young people in Čair and Gostivar had low confidence in their local governments.**



**Demographics by themselves are weak predictors for levels of resilience in Čair and Gostivar.**



**Young people from both cities showed little resilience to the notion that violence is an acceptable tool for conflict resolution.**

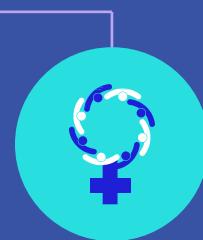


**Young people from both cities showed little resilience to the notion that violence is an acceptable tool for conflict resolution.**

**Young people want to make a positive difference in their community but feel there are not enough community-level programmes to do so.**



**Over two thirds of respondents reported that they have either personally experienced or witnessed discrimination or hate based on gender and ethnicity.**





## Shared Challenges, Shared Solutions

Hate and polarisation are community-wide problems, and as such they require a collaborative, community-wide solution. Our approach engages a variety of sectors at all levels of decision-making, complementing the existing peacebuilding ecosystem, while forging new connections between local government, young people, and civil society actors.



### A Whole-of-Community Approach

Starting at our Youth Innovation Labs, we introduce young people to government officials, creative communities, local CSOs and other youth, to expand their networks and knowledge of the peacebuilding landscape of North Macedonia. The research and youth-led initiatives Young Cities supports are also informed by, and engage, all levels of society to help ensure diverse perspectives feed directly into locally-led solutions to hate and polarisation.



### Youth-Municipal Cooperation

We connect young peacebuilders with Municipal Officials so that both groups can advance their mutual interests. While young peacebuilders launch initiatives to drive local change, local government can amplify those initiatives and provide support. At the same time, Young Cities creates a space for youth to inform government policies and practices through webinars, public forums, and closed-door policy events.

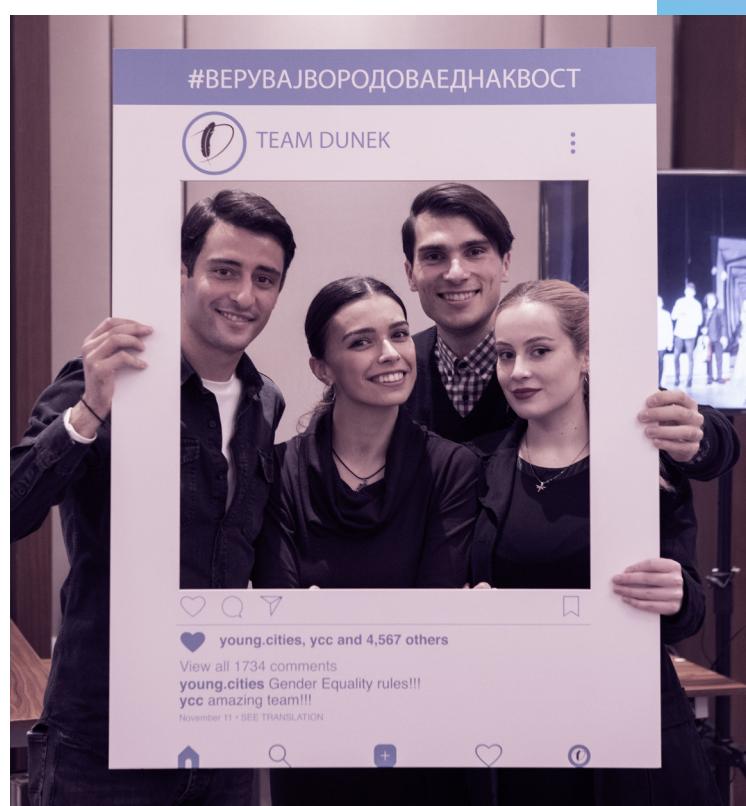


## Cross-County Cooperation

Social issues are not restricted by municipal borders. Young people in Skopje and Gostivar often face similar challenges to one another, but which do not always manifest in the same way. Our initiatives for cross-municipal exchange provide an opportunity for youth and local government officials from different cities to discuss pressing challenges, draw insights, exchange relevant good practices, policies and processes and collaborate toward shared solutions that help advance peace and cohesion across North Macedonia.

## Expanding Youth Involvement

Young Cities works with a wide range of young people, going well beyond self-identified activists to encourage young people from all backgrounds and skill sets to find their own voice. We have worked with a wide range of creatives to spotlight critical issues in new, more engaging ways that create platforms for youth engagement and leadership outside of traditional politics.





## Youth Initiatives

Youth-led initiatives can offer authentic outlets to address different challenges and galvanise youth participation. However, funding is a critical barrier for young peacebuilders globally and most funding opportunities do not allow for projects that are truly youth-led.



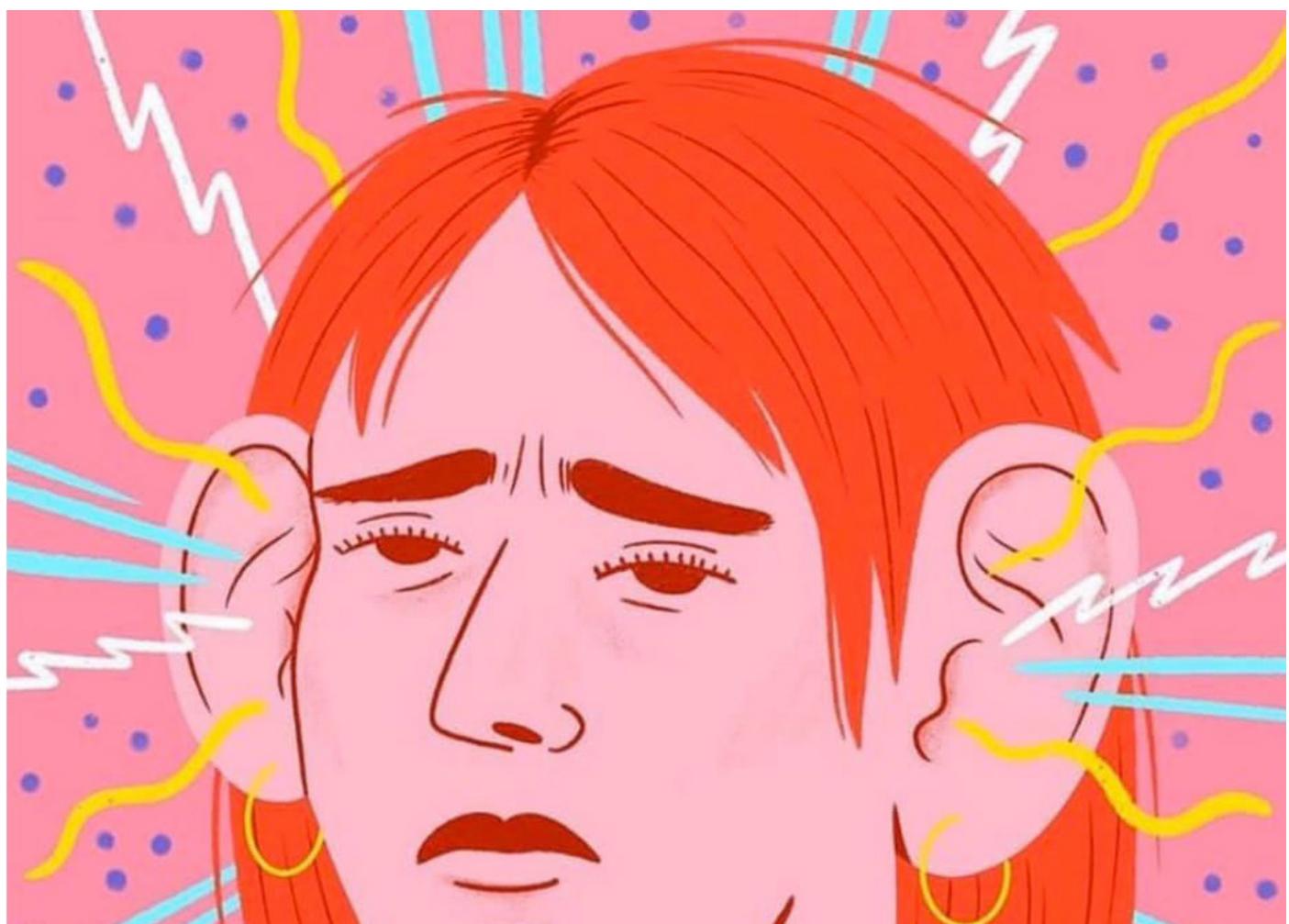
Young Cities is working to address this on a local scale through seed funding that is specially tailored for young people, many of whom have limited experience managing grants and are not yet registered as a formal organisation. Our funding scheme is paired with ongoing support and capacity building to reduce financial risk and help young people gain critical experience and establish networks that can help them grow their work sustainably. We also help them evaluate their initiatives to develop scalable models that they can expand beyond the scope of our programme. Simultaneously, we work with municipal leaders as well as local and international donors to identify funding streams that can better support youth-led efforts to build social cohesion.



While Young Cities provides guidance and support to make their projects more impactful, our youth teams define their focus, plot their strategies, create their own outputs, and manage every element of their project's delivery. Between 2020 and 2022, Young Cities trained 76 young people in Gostivar and Skopje and enabled the development and delivery of 15 youth-led initiatives. Nine of these initiatives have received a second round of funding through our Ambassador Grants programme. So far, these youth-led initiatives have directly impacted more than 3,000 young people through community-based activities and reached 1,127,194 more through online campaigns.

# Advocacy and Activism to Address Gender-Based Violence

Despite progress towards gender equality in recent years, women and girls in North Macedonia still face rigid gender roles and suffer discrimination and abuse, both online and offline. Challenging gender roles often means challenging deeply rooted cultural norms, where women are often discouraged from speaking out when their experiences are dismissed or blamed on them for ‘inviting’ inappropriate behaviour. Youth groups in Skopje and Gostivar challenged this status quo by confronting their communities about the issue, empowering both women and men to speak out, and providing safe spaces for female leadership and expression.



## Fishkellima

📍 Skopje | 📅 2020-2021

Fishkellima leveraged art and digital media to combat gender-based harassment and discrimination. The campaign empowers young men as allies, encouraging them to stand up to abusive language and behaviour. Their social media campaign included 40 highly stylised posters and a series of original comics produced in partnership with a local illustrator. They also led three workshops for young men and women to discuss their experiences and impart skills for how to respond when faced with harassment and sexist behaviour.



## Dunek

📍 Gostivar | 📅 2020 - 2021

Dunek used theatre to address gender discrimination and violence in Gostivar. The team wrote and staged an original play in March 2021 that left the audience in tears. The team concluded the performance with a discussion of the important themes and encouraged viewers to speak out against gendered discrimination. Dunek proved the power of the performative arts as a medium for engaging serious topics, and they successfully applied for an Ambassador Grant to share this compelling approach with other young people.



In the Autumn of 2021, Dunek organised workshops with 28 high school students in Gostivar to introduce them to different creative mediums – poetry, film, music and theatre – to teach them about gender discrimination and how they can become part of the solution. The project concluded with an exhibition in Gostivar in November 2021.

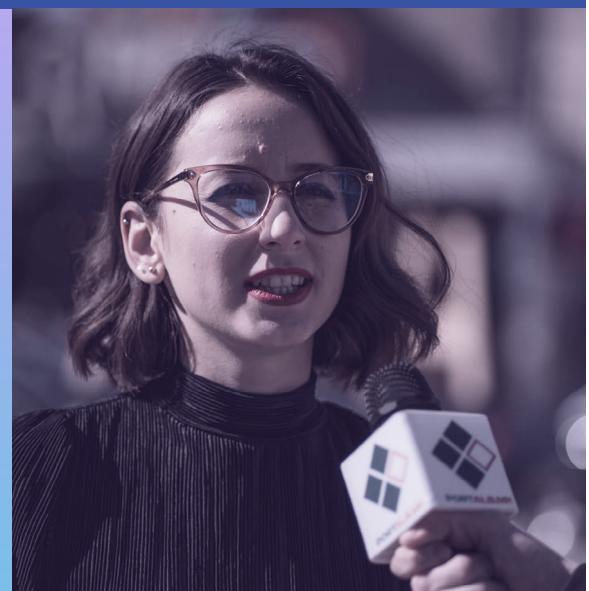


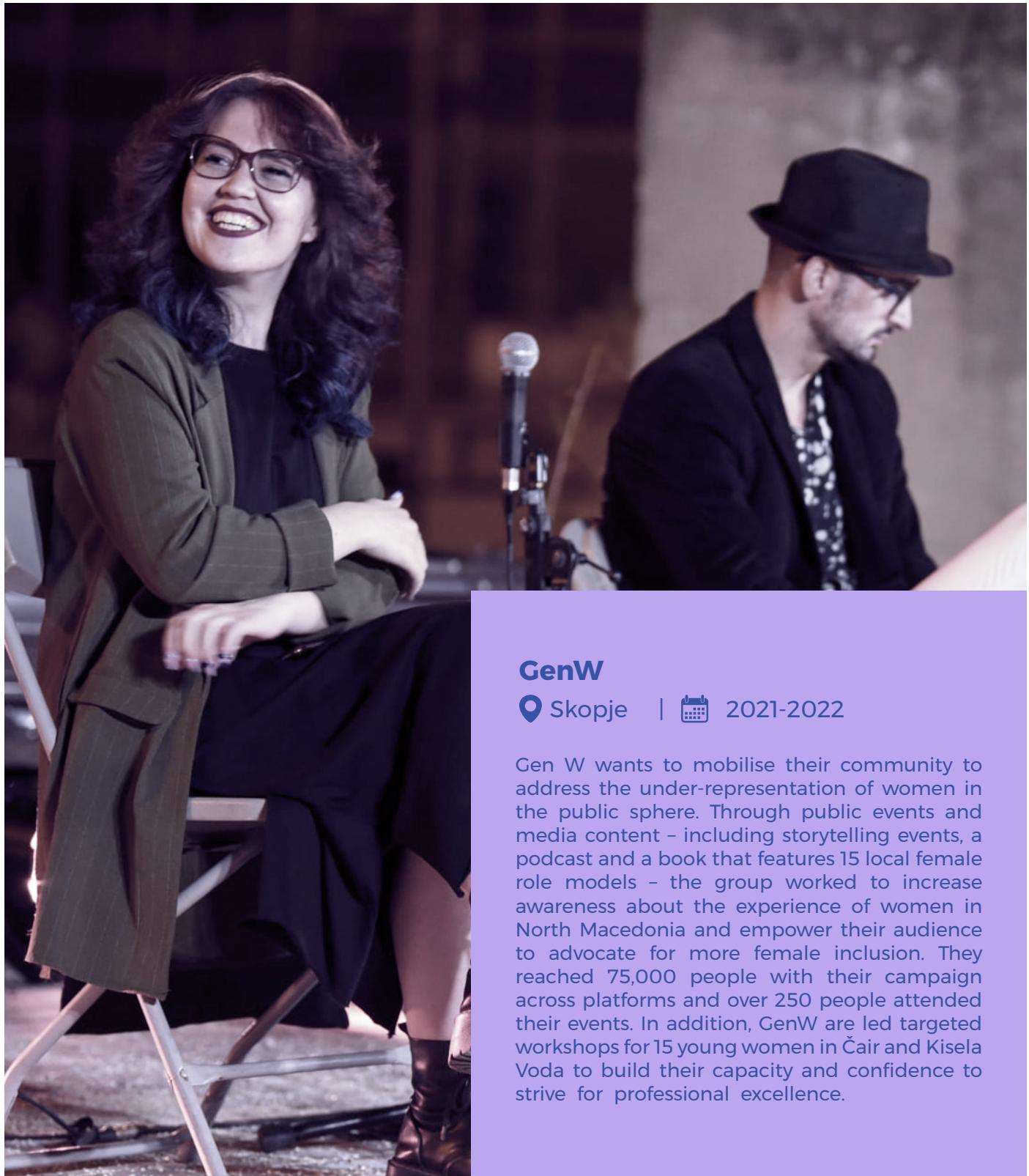
## Ladybug

📍 Gostivar | 📅 2021-2022

Lady Bug is standing up to online harassment by empowering young women to break the silence and confront the abuse they experience online. The team surveyed 208 young women in North Macedonia about their experience with hate speech and harassment online. The results informed a series of workshops organised with professionals – including a psychologist, police officer and lawyer – to help young women understand online harassment and what they can do about it. Recognizing that information alone cannot reverse this trend, Lady Bug also created an online platform that serves as a safe space for young people to share their experiences, as well as a series of digital content to empower victims and raise awareness among the wider population.

Over the course of the project the platform published 14 articles on the topic of the harassment of women and girls, as well as a video which challenges people's perceptions of harassment, in total reaching over 238,000 people on social media. As Ambassadors, the team are building on their success, expanding their audience to include men from their community. They will hold joint workshops with women and men to improve their abilities to respond to online harassment, and will launch a male-targeted social media campaign to raise awareness among the wider community. They further plan to publish eight opinion pieces and eight articles in national newspapers which will run alongside the online campaign.





## GenW

📍 Skopje | 📅 2021-2022

Gen W wants to mobilise their community to address the under-representation of women in the public sphere. Through public events and media content – including storytelling events, a podcast and a book that features 15 local female role models – the group worked to increase awareness about the experience of women in North Macedonia and empower their audience to advocate for more female inclusion. They reached 75,000 people with their campaign across platforms and over 250 people attended their events. In addition, GenW are led targeted workshops for 15 young women in Čair and Kisela Voda to build their capacity and confidence to strive for professional excellence.

Gen-W is building upon their successful project with an Ambassador Grant in 2022. They will include more Peach Preach events – public talks which promote female leadership and which have become much anticipated in Skopje since their original launch – as well as podcasts and vidcasts dedicated to women in North Macedonia. They hope to leverage their credibility and success to find community-driven solutions, in cooperation with local institutions. This year, they are working to establish a Gender Equality Council in the Municipality of Čair.



# Reconnecting Young People to the Public Space

Gostivar, like many cities, struggles with vandalism. Young people deface public property and render shared spaces unusable. One group in Gostivar worried that youth don't see public spaces as a common good; rather many see them as targets for expression of revolt, and as such, show little respect for their peers or their community. This hostility exacerbates divisions among young people and between youth and the community, furthering an enabling environment for other criminality and the spread of hateful narratives.

## Use It

📍 Gostivar | 📅 2021 - 2022

Use It wanted young people in Gostivar to take ownership of their community. Their initiative put a spotlight on vandalism as a symbol of derision that young people feel towards their community, that not only renders a space unusable, but also contributes to a sense of insecurity. They sought to empower young people to care for their community by beautifying a local park and public basketball court. 20 young people took part in a civic responsibility workshop which was combined with a painting course, ending with the renovation of the court, which they unveiled by hosting a community basketball tournament attended by 200 local youth.



Use It has been awarded an Ambassador Grant to employ this successful model to transform another shared space and engender a sense of community and commonality to address peer-to-peer violence. Springboarding from its success in addressing vandalism in Gostivar, Use It will tackle violence among youth by holding workshops on peer-peer violence across Gostivar. The team will leverage the trust earned in the local community from their previous project, and once again lead the renovation of another public space – a multipurpose sports court in the heart of the city – followed by a sports tournament to raise awareness of youth-on-youth violence.

# Empowering Future Leaders and Decision-Makers

North Macedonia's political scene is heavily polarized along party and ethnic lines. This polarization and tense public discourse drives young people away from political engagement altogether, leaving their interests unrepresented. Moreover, political engagement in North Macedonia is usually viewed through the prism of party-political activism, while non-partisan issue-based advocacy is not prominent.

Four teams in Gostivar and Skopje set out to provide an alternative in their respective communities by engaging youth to understand local challenges, conducting research, building capacities among their peers for issue-based advocacy and activism, campaigning for the inclusion of young people in policy-making, and engaging the youth wings of political parties to campaign for more constructive discourse within and between parties.



## Shout Up

📍 Skopje | 📅 2020-2022

Shout Up is an experienced group of journalists who came together to advocate for the role of young people in policy-making so that young people can begin to advocate for themselves. They worked with 10 influential young leaders in Čair to share their experiences through inspirational interviews. These interviews, along with a social media campaign and dialogue sessions, highlighted young people's potential to drive change in local politics and exemplified roles that they could play in public life. The campaign reached over 110,000 people online across social media platforms.



## DemLoc

📍 Skopje | 📅 2021-2022

DemLoc conducted research to enhance opportunities for collaboration between the local government and its young citizens. Beginning with a qualitative research paper, the group led an evidence-based endeavour to build the capacities of youth and local government alike, identify opportunities for meaningful cooperation, and pave a path for more inclusive policy in the future. They promoted the research by hosting a panel in cooperation with the Municipality of Centar, inviting relevant academics, experts and youth activists to speak, and which was attended by 24 prominent young people from the community who were given the opportunity to share their experiences of barriers to youth inclusion in decision-making. The online promotion of their findings and research reached 33,000 people.

## We Can

📍 Gostivar 📅 2020-2022

Our youngest and most diverse group, We Can wanted to activate their peers in Gostivar to become more civically engaged. Having conducted a survey of 437 youth in Gostivar, they organised a four-day summer camp in April 2021 that used informal learning to connect and educate high school students from diverse backgrounds. During the camp, participants learned about polarization, discrimination, violent extremism, peacebuilding, leadership, youth activism and human rights. To follow up, We Can planned a march to raise awareness of environmental justice. In 2021, the team secured an Ambassador Grant to organise another camp to help 21 young activists in Gostivar to understand discrimination, polarisation and violent extremism and empower them to mobilise for peace. The targeted content they disseminated online in the aftermath of the workshops reached 11,000 youth from Gostivar.



## Unity

📍 Skopje | 📅 2021 - 2022

Unity is working to counteract political polarisation by strengthening cooperation between political parties in Gostivar driven by the local party youth organizations. The group set out to understand the root causes of polarization among youth and their stances by conducting research on political polarization. Following their research, Unity organized a series of meetings, culminating in the development of a Memorandum of Understanding for common youth priorities in Gostivar which was signed by all political parties. Five videos posted to their social media page follows their progress from start to finish.



As Ambassadors, the team coordinated the painting of a mural in Gostivar which symbolizes unity of youth in their community, and they partnered with fellow Young Cities alumni, WeCan, to form the team WeUnity to tackle polarisation and discrimination in Gostivar highschools. They are currently conducting research in selected high schools in Gostivar to gather the perspectives of their peers on different polarising issues, which will go on to inform a four-day training for 10-15 local youth, who will act as messengers in their community to start countering narratives which lie at the root of discrimination and polarisation in Gostivar.

# Tackling Bullying, Empowering Victims

Bullying is a common form of youth violence. It can be motivated by many things and is often exacerbated by societal divisions present in a community. Whether it is physical or verbal, the results can be devastating and have knock-on effects for the community as it empowers perpetrators as abusers and disempowers victims. Two of our youth teams in Gostivar sought to address this challenge and provide practical support to the victims of bullying in very different ways.

## Impact YPC

📍 Gostivar | 📅 2020-2021

Impact YPC sought to reduce bullying in Gostivar's high schools by working with schools and students. They met with counsellors from Gostivar's four high schools to understand how bullying manifested in each school, and brainstorm solutions and support mechanisms for students who had been targeted. The first was a series of counselling sessions and workshops for students who had experienced bullying. The team partnered with a psychologist to offer ongoing support, both through in-person workshops and monthly Zoom sessions. The second was an in-school app where developed in collaboration with the schools where students could report instances of bullying and seek support more easily. The app was launched in June 2021.



## **Breakfree**

📍 Gostivar | 📅 2021-2022

Breakfree sought to speak to both the perpetrators of bullying and its victims, focusing on the forms of bullying that are not always totally apparent. Their initiative emphasized that not all bullying is intentional; however, it has serious consequences for victims and to society at large as children are denied the opportunity to meet their full potential. In their original project, Breakfree created a 15-minute original film that demonstrated the harm that bullying causes. They showed the film as part of an in-school workshop and exhibition. They are building upon the success of their original project with an Ambassador Grant, where they are producing a docuseries on first-hand experiences of peer-to-peer violence faced by young people in Gostivar, coupled with an online campaign aimed at raising awareness in the community about the ramifications of this issue.



# Leveraging Art for Activism

Art can sometimes be regarded as purely aesthetic, overlooking its power as an engine to drive social change. This can impact the way artists see their own potential as activists. Young Cities has seen the incredible potential that art has to unpack difficult social challenges and move people to change. Our creative groups in North Macedonia have carried on this tradition with incredible skill, leveraging different mediums to spotlight critical issues through a fresh take and drive action.



## Stoned

📍 Skopje | 📅 2020-2021

Self-Made are an experience group of young filmmakers from Čair. Although they were new to activism, they knew the power that film had to move people and wanted to use their art form to speak to the vulnerable youth in their community and confront the sense of alienation that drives many to move abroad. In a 20-minute original film entitled Stoned, Self-Made addressed many of the challenges facing young people in Čair through the fictionalized experiences of three young men. The film ultimately seeks to instil the importance of community and inspire young viewers to become an active part of Čair's future. The film was showcased in the Youth and Children's Theatre in Skopje on two occasions, each in front of audiences of between 90 and 120 people.



## Skopje Through My Eyes

📍 Skopje | 📅 2021-2022

Skopje Through my Eyes is connecting with youth who are not interested in politics to spotlight ways they can contribute to their community and boost civic participation. The project was centred on a photography training programme that used the medium as an avenue to engage apathetic young people about active citizenship. Through photography, 19 young people learned to see – and capture – their city in a new way and find their own place within it. The outputs were shared through a social media campaign and culminated with an exhibition in October 2021 which was attended by over 200 people, while their targeted online campaign reached 177,660 young people.





## Skala

📍 Skopje | 📅 2021 - 2022

Skala magazine is a place for young artists in Skopje to come together and advocate for local creators. In this project, they used their magazine to provide a platform for artists to speak on social topics. This helped raise awareness about pressing issues, but also challenged the role of art in activism, encouraging artists to become part of the wider conversation and pushing viewers to see art as medium for social expression.

Over the course of their project, Skala has taken on different social issues – engaging in civic action, countering stereotypes, and improving political awareness – through their magazine, as well as podcasts, videos, and open meetings to marry creative expression with social advocacy. Each of the topics of the magazine concludes with an exhibition containing topical art produced by youth.

Skala Magazine will use an Ambassador grant to continue leveraging their wide network of artists and channel the artists' creativity into issue-based, provocative art, addressing sensitive topics like polarization and discrimination. Skala will also convert their previous written content into video format and organize exhibitions that will showcase the contributions from artists on three themes.





## Takat

📍 Skopje | 📅 2021-2022

Takat, a team of experienced filmmakers, turned their lens toward the Roma community in Skopje to capture their struggles with social and systemic inequality, and celebrate the community's cultural accomplishments. Their 16-minute, single-take original film, entitled 'Dance in this Chaos', was produced in cooperation with the Roma community in the Skopje neighbourhood of Topana. The film showcases the lived reality of Romani people in North Macedonia, challenging negative perceptions in the hope of reducing discrimination. The film was screened in Skopje in October 2021 at a premiere in a Skopje cinema, and once more in December, in front of an audience of 170 people. This was accompanied by an online campaign that reached 114,000 people on Instagram alone. The film has since won the Gran Prix at the Golden Wheel festival in Skopje and has been nominated for an award at the Youth Film Festival in Sarajevo.



As Ambassadors, the team is now producing a docuseries featuring successful individuals from the Roma community, who will reflect on their experiences as members of the Romani community, and the struggles they have endured on the path to success. This will be coupled with an online campaign which will contextualize their stories with existing research and insights into the systemic nature of the challenges the team have chosen to spotlight.

# City Initiatives in North Macedonia

Young Cities supported the municipalities in Gostivar and Čair to develop new programmes for youth engagement. The projects were developed and delivered in collaboration with the Community Action Teams - municipal multi-agency networks leading local prevention efforts - in each city and incorporated input from youth in both their development and implementation.

Simultaneously, we worked with the local municipalities of Čair and Gostivar to help affect youth-related policy. We presented key recommendations from our research and collaborated to identify solutions. We also trained 12 municipal representatives on best practice with regards to youth and supported the development of two city-grants to enhance digital literacy and youth resilience.



## Sports and Youth Development

📍 Gostivar | 📅 2020-2022

Strengthening youth resilience to radicalisation is a core priority of Gostivar's 2020 policy for preventing and countering extremism. Part of this strategy is exploring ways that sports can engage young people and strengthen social cohesion in this culturally diverse municipality.

Young Cities supported this approach by helping Gostivar develop a programme for youth engagement through sports. The programme aims to strengthen leadership, interpersonal and communication skills among youth to help them build relationships with peers from different backgrounds.

12 Physical Education teachers and coaches from schools across the municipality were trained and given the chance to employ their new skills in a three-day summer camp, which included mentoring sessions with 31 youth from diverse backgrounds. As part of the initiative, the municipality consulted with experts to develop a guide and Training-of-Trainers programme that will be used to train more teachers and coaches.



## Digital citizenship education to strengthen youth resilience to online harms

📍 Čair | 📅 2020-2021

The most densely populated municipality in Europe, Čair is home to a large youth population that has been affected by radicalisation and extremism in the last decade. As part of its wider strategy to counter violent extremism, the municipality has prioritised building youth resilience, with a focus on implementing educational reforms to build critical-thinking skills among students.

Young Cities helped Čair develop a digital citizenship programme based on the Institute for Strategic Dialogue's successful Be Internet Citizens model. It includes tailored resources for training teachers and parents to help them understand online harms and work with youth to create a safer virtual environment. The municipality trained a total of 12 teachers and hosted training sessions for parents based on a bespoke Parent Guide on online harms.

In conjunction with the educational material, Čair's Community Action Team and Young Cities conducted a series of 'Inspirational Talks' in nine elementary schools where more than 300 elementary students were engaged by alumni from their schools who are making a positive impact on society. Furthermore, the elementary schools, in cooperation with Young Cities, launched a literary contest, asking students to reflect on their understanding of what it means to be a digital citizen. The submissions were gathered and published in a book which was disseminated across the municipality.



# Partners

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Local partner organizations are integral to the implementation of the Young Cities programme in the countries in which it works. They ensure that youth participants receive the continuous support and guidance they need to build their projects from the ground up, tackling real issues in relevant and impactful ways. Local partners help further tailor the programme to their context, connect it to key community actors, and play a vital role in fostering creative talent among young people.

## DEMOCRACY LAB



Democracy Lab is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization devoted to preserving democratic values, moving the needle on key institutional reforms, and building bridges for cooperation in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans. It has a diverse portfolio of impactful projects in security, media literacy, countering disinformation, civic engagement, and youth empowerment. Democracy Lab strives to build networks and partnerships geared towards a stronger, and more sustainable democracy. The organisation tackles the most pressing challenges of modern developing democracies with innovative solutions, while engaging the brightest local talent.

CENTRE FOR COMMON GROUND



The Centre for Common Ground (CCG), as affiliation to the global peacebuilding organization Search for Common Ground ([www.sfcg.org](http://www.sfcg.org)), has been working toward reconciliation, interethnic relations and stability in the Western Balkans since 2008. CCG mission is to transform the way people and communities deal with conflict – away from adversarial approaches and towards cooperative solutions. It works with local partners to find culturally appropriate means to strengthen societies' capacity to deal with conflicts constructively: to understand the differences and act on the commonalities. Using innovative tools such as education, media production-TV and radio series, training, music, theatre and working at different levels of society, CCG engages in pragmatic long-term processes of conflict transformation.



MUNICIPALITY OF GOSTIVAR



MUNICIPALITY OF ČAIR







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