

# Annual Report 2021

YOUTH WORK ON „GREEN AGENDA“



# EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE

I can say that 2021 began as a year of **UNCERTAINTY**, a second pandemic year in which we did not know what else it could bring, how long the "new normal" will last, when can we have activities with physical presence again and work on empowering young people in the well-known dynamic rhythm.

We are an organization that has always worked on the ground, directly with young people. Seen from that aspect the pandemic has seriously affected our organization setting us back in organizational development processes and shifting our focus from well-established youth-related activities. It also affected the delay of the strategic planning process. From a financial point of view the past two years we have reduced all expenses and optimized the budget to sustain the crisis.

In 2021 we participated in more virtual **EVENTS** and finally, events with a physical presence in the second part of the year. We worked on international activities within the framework of the Erasmus+ and ESC programs, we continued to contribute on the national key processes regarding the recognition of youth work and the establishment of the first youth centers in the country in accordance with the law on youth participation and policies, also we worked in the field on the "green agenda" encouraging changes towards sustainable development through eco-activism, we collaborated with key actors and networks in the field of youth in the country and we took part in the most important international events in the YMCA network with our collaborators and partners.

The end of 2021 marked the overcoming of challenges and the perception of **CLEARER PERSPECTIVES** for the course of action. I believe that 2022 will be the year in which we will continue with new **ENTHUSIASM** important processes for us, such as the strategic plan, improving the governance of the organization and renewing quality youth program for the benefit of young people and the community.

**THANK YOU** for the cooperation and support of all partners, collaborators and donors.



**Viktor Iliev**  
/Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V. Iliev', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

# VALUES



**CARING**

...for yourself, community and others.



**HONESTY**

...to be truthful in what you say and do.



**RESPECT**

...treat all people with dignity and acceptance.



**RESPONSIBILITY**

...to be accountable for your promises and actions.



**COURAGE**

...to face challenges and lead.



**CREATIVITY**

...to find new solutions to challenges.



**PASSION**

...to find your inspiration and create change.



# ANNUAL PROGRAM

# CALENDAR

## Program Activities

## Organizational Activities

January

Program for Youth Workers

Nat. General Secretaries Forum, YMCA Europe

February

Program for Youth Workers  
Youth Centers

Work on project grant applications

March

Program for Youth Workers  
Youth Centers

Work on project grant applications

April

Send ESC volunteers in Netherlands  
Youth Centers

Annual Reports  
Fundraising Conference, YMCA Europe

May

NA training for European Solidarity Corpus

General Assembly, YMCA Europe

June

Send young people to Youth Exchanges

General Assembly, Youth Coalition SEGA  
General Assembly, Union for Youth Work

July

Summer Hiking Excursions

Work on European Solidarity Corps Accredit.

August

Local Volunteer Service – Mural

Work on European Solidarity Corps Accredit.

September

European Mobility Week  
“Bitola – cycling city in one mandate”

October

Work on Erasmus+ Accreditation

November

Work on Erasmus+ Accreditation

December

Project Reports

### Youth Workers



The long-term efforts of the Union for Youth Work to establish a program for the education of staff with the title "youth worker", the first of its kind in our country, have succeeded. Due to the pandemic conditions, it took place online and lasted for 4 months. The first 14 candidates were selected from different profiles according to the guidelines in the National Portfolio of Youth Workers. All registered candidates for education have shown their willingness to help the development of young people in different situations and in different ways in their parent youth organizations where they work. The YMCA had its own representatives for this education making our organization one of the first to have youth workers in its structures in accordance with the regulations of the State Bureau for Education Development. You can see more details about this process [here](#).

### Youth Centers



According to the Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies adopted in 2020, municipalities have an obligation to open youth centers. The procedure for their opening and the quality standards were determined this year. With the support of the Agency for Youth and Sports and in cooperation with the Union for Youth Work, four municipalities piloted the process of opening youth centers. Given that one of these pilot cities is Bitola, YMCA is actively involved in the field for the realization of this goal. In cooperation with three other youth organizations from Bitola, we started a series of activities towards the Municipality in this direction. You can read more about the situation with this at the end of 2021 [here](#).

### Green Agenda on the ground



The "Green Agenda" is not only about the strategies and policies of the bodies of the United Nations and the European Union. Several years of environmental activism, and in this case before the local elections for mayors with specific requests for investment in safe and comfortable bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The expectations from the new mayors are to offer a new traffic concept with a vision for a more humane and friendlier city with a focus on people, and not exclusively on motor vehicles as it is now. For this purpose, 10 articulated requirements were published that are important for our cities to become more sustainable which we spent time during the public discussion with the candidates for Mayor.

### "Bitola cycling city in one mandate"



Within the framework of the "European Mobility Week", a public discussion was held with the candidates for Mayor of Bitola. The purpose of the event was to discuss the current challenges that have led Bitola to not be able to implement bicycle infrastructure after so many years, as well as possible solutions for them. The candidates for Mayor had the opportunity to explain the plans and strategies for the construction of bicycle infrastructure and cross-examine their arguments with their colleagues. We consider investing in sustainable alternative infrastructure to be a key prerequisite in the direction of building a more humane and safer city with a focus on vulnerable categories of road users.



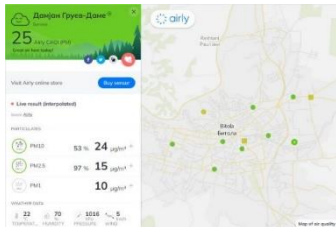
## Encouraging local volunteer service

As part of our commitment to support local initiatives, activism and volunteering, we conducted a volunteer activity – drawing a mural in a highly frequented public space as a tool to raise public awareness of the bicycle as a means of transportation for ecological city transportation. We worked together with some of our local volunteers, alumni of the GLOW and YMLP leadership summer camps. Volunteer actions are in cooperation with the Local Volunteer Council.



## Informal initiative Bitola on Bike

We enforce and support the informal initiative Bitola on Bike since the very beginning. The aim of the initiative is to promote the bicycle as an ecological means for urban transport. The activities mainly refer to raising public awareness and institutions of action through digital activism, sharing positive practices from more developed countries, but also offline, directly through submissions of requests, initiatives, participation in public discussions and commissions in the field of urban transport and infrastructure.



## Zemi Zdiv (Take a Breath) Platform

Third year since the establishment of the local platform for improving the ambient air in Bitola, which offers the citizens an independent hyper-local network of measuring stations that provided the citizens and institutions of Bitola with high-quality data on air pollution in real-time. In 2021, we collaborated with Zemi Zdiv (Take a breath) on several activities related to the implementation of the green agenda on the ground.

## European Solidarity Corps and Erasmus+



We also participated in the annual event of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility for accredited organizations for volunteer activities from the European Solidarity Corps program and the Quality Label. The overall EU youth program is entering a new seven-year phase of planning program activities for youth organizations across Europe. In addition to working on the creation of the accreditation, we followed the new instructions and guidelines for work in the new online software of the EU programs. This event, which took place in May 2021 in Mavrovo and in which many youth organizations from the country participated, was experienced as an important event to announce the next period in which the exchange of experiences, ideas and good practices will follow.



Considering the pandemic period of a reduced international movement and this year the trend of sending our young people on exchanges and volunteering in the EU was reduced, i.e. at the level of the previous year. We have collaborated on several Erasmus+ projects where we have sent several young people to learn and develop on a topic related to developing the skills of youth workers and several young people on long-term volunteering with our long-term partners in the Netherlands, the Olde Vehte Foundation as part of the program of the European Solidarity Corps. At the same time, we were considering opportunities for cooperation with other organizations in the Netherlands within the framework of this program with whom we expect to send volunteers to them as early as next year.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

## **Annual event of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility N.Macedonia, May**

The YMCA attended the annual event for accredited organizations for volunteering activities from the Erasmus+ program and the European Solidarity Corps Quality Label to update itself on the latest regulations and rules for the next 7-year period from this European institution.

## **European Volunteer Corps Long-term volunteers, The Netherlands**

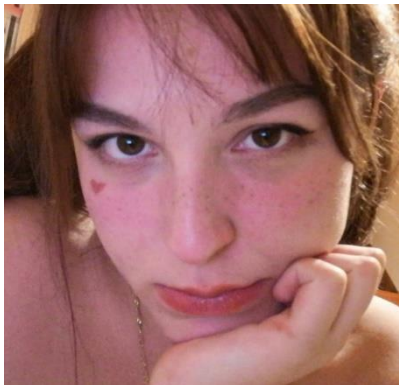
Within the scope of the European Volunteer Corps we sent three young people on long-term volunteering to our long-term partners in the Netherlands, Olde Vehte. There they learned the Dutch culture, to work together as a team, as a group and to share back responsibilities.

## **Erasmus+ Training Course "Play the way" Chotebar, Czech Republic**

Three young people from N.Macedonia participated in a training in the Czech Republic focused on gamification and its importance in education. Participants discovered how to make learning fun and enjoyable for themselves and others.

## Marija Stojanovska, Skopje

Activity : Erasmus + Training Course "Play the way"



From day one the whole group felt connected on a deep level and it felt like no one had any hesitation in participating in discussions, jokes, games and storytelling. All the games were very creative and challenging. This training was primarily intended for youth workers and served us to learn and renew knowledge related to gamification methods or the process of turning the learning into a game. In this way, the very subject being studied becomes more fun both for ourselves and for those for whom it is intended. The training was filled with useful exercises and the opportunity to share experiences, and we also gained a lot of new international friendships.



The event took place 3-9.12.2021 in a beautiful house called Chata Dubravka 3 km from Chotebor, Czech Republic. The host of the project was the organization INspire , zs . from the Czech Republic. In addition to the YMCA Youth Association, there were 8 other partner organizations from the Czech Republic, N.Macedonia, Greece, Romania, Poland, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain and Bulgaria, and the age of the participants was 18-30 years.

# STORIES

## Erasmus+

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

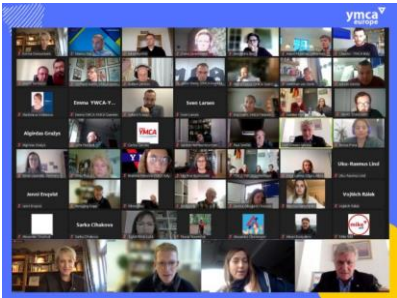
## The National General Secretaries Forum

Attended virtually by 33 participants from YMCAs across Europe from more than 25 national YMCAs represented by their NGSs. As YMCA Europe shapes its Strategic Direction, the meeting was a highlight in the process to adopt a new Strategy for the next period with the key directions as stated: Relevance, Representation, Relationship and Resilience” and important so say, aligned with World YMCA..



## General Assembly of YMCA Europe

The assembly was a hybrid event with physical and opportunities for virtual presence from over 70 delegates representing 32 National Movements. YMCA Europe’s new Strategic Plan (2021-2026) was formally adopted. President Emma Osmundsen in her message to the delegates reflected on the past six months and the tasks developed by the Executive Committee. YMCA Europe continued to adapt their procedures and tools in order to achieve the goals set at the past General Assembly. More details about the strategy you can find [here](#).



## Income Generation Conference

YMCA Europe organized a conference with a focus on income generation methods and opportunities. Over 50 participants from different local and national YMCA realities registered and followed the inputs from 7 speakers and presenters who shared their vision and best practices. The main objectives of the Conference were to develop income-generating and fundraising capacity in the actual social-economic context, to learn about Income generating strategies for YMCAs at local, national and international levels, sharing of best practices, and to create a network of experts in this field. More details about this event [here](#).

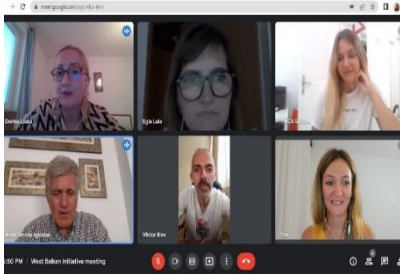


## YMCA Western Balkans initiative

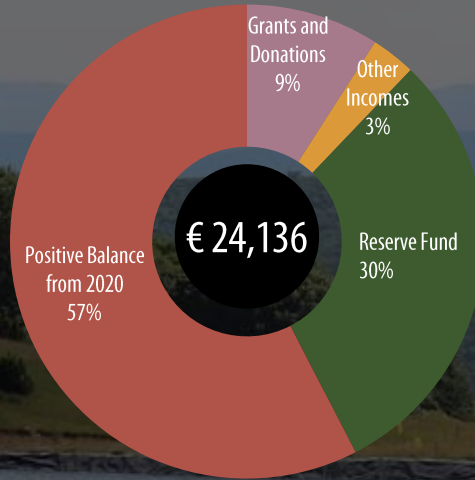
In the last decade the YMCA organizations in the Western Balkans have developed with undiminished capacity and reached the level of offering quality program activities for the young people in the region. But the last 2 years with the Covid-19 pandemic have shown us a different reality and more or less brought out certain anomalies and shortcomings in the functioning of organizations.

Although to some extent in similar or different levels of organizational development and context of action, the YMCA organizations from Albania, Kosovo, N.Macedonia and Serbia started joint online meetings in the spring of 2021 with the aim of discussing the new normality that has been imposed on us and discussed in terms of organizational problems we are facing right now. So, key areas in which we need to strengthen in the next period are the areas of good governance, management structures, work on project-based activities, dependence on grants, weak sustainability of projects, weak coordination at the regional level and readiness to act with joint EU projects on larger project applications.

In the several joint meetings we held, in addition to realizing the challenges and the fields in which we need to act, we also worked on the preparation of joint project applications and we submitted two. The initiative continues with unabated dynamics in 2022, in which we hope that with the reduction of the pressure from the pandemic, we will finally be able to have meetings with the physical presence



# Annual Incomes



## Grants and Donations

Bitola Municipality, Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Projects, Foundation Olde Vechte

## Other incomes

M2 Workplace Subsidy Program

## Reserve Fund

Cumulative annual reserves

## Positive Balance from 2020

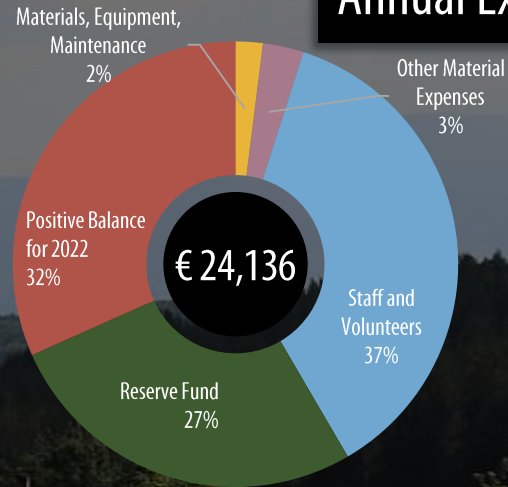
Funds for program activities

# YMCA ANNUAL BUDGET

# YMCA

# ANNUAL BUDGET

## Annual Expenses



### Materials, Equipment, Maintenance

Office space, utilities, maintenance

### Other Material Expenses

Bank provisions, memberships, intellectual services (accountant, lawyer...)

### Staff and Volunteers

Staff Salaries and Volunteers fees

### Reserve Fund

Cumulative annual reserves

### Positive Balance for 2022

Funds for program activities

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

*Only by giving are you able  
to receive more than you  
already have*

- Jim Rohn

## *Why YMCA Needs Support*

The youth development programs and activities offers a truly unique and powerful growth experience to hundreds of youth of N.Macedonia every year at small cost to the individual. Providing this wonderful service requires a viable financial foundation and to make this opportunity available, YMCA cooperate with foundations, agencies, companies and individuals to join us in empowering youth of N.Macedonia by making monetary contributions.

## *How Support Benefits You*

Financial support for the YMCA youth development program is good for you as institutions, as company or as individual! Giving is a great way to demonstrate you corporate social responsibility while increasing your company's exposure, build allegiance among current customers, reach new customers, and provide more opportunities for the Macedonian youth.

## *Past Supports Have Included:*

**Institutions** (YMCA Europe, Peace Corps, USA Embassy, National Agency for European Educational Programs and Motilities, European Endowment for Democracy, FOOM, Municipalities, Horus, etc.); **Companies** (Alkaloid, BiMilk, Eurofarm, EVN, Kromberg and Schubert, Mermern Kombinat, OKTA, Pekabesko, SASA Mine, TAV Airports, Tinex, TTK Banka, Vitaminka, Zdravje Radovo, Zikol, etc.) and many individuals as well.

## About us:

**Established:** May, 2002

### **Management Board:**

Monika Angeloska-Dichovska - President

Blagojche Kolichoski - Member

Aleksandar Georgiev - Member

### **Executive Office:**

Viktor Iliev, Executive Director

Jovche Krsteski, Program Coordinator



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