

DIGIPATH: YOUTH UP 4 POSSIBILITIES

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH
CONFERENCE

26-30.09.2024

KRUSEVO, NORTH MACEDONIA



Co-funded by
the European Union



DIGIPATH
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DIGIPATH - Youth Up 4 Possibilities

International Youth Conference

Report

26.09 – 30.09.2024.



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the European Union

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ABOUT THE PROJECT AND EVENT	
PROJECT:	DigiPath - Youth Up 4 Possibilities
SUPPORTED BY:	Co - funded by the Erasmus Plus Programme of the European Commission
PARTNERS:	Youth Alliance - Krusevo in partnership with AKTIV [Kosovo], National Youth Congress [Albania], Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation [Serbia], Croatian Youth Network (Croatia), PRONI (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Unija Mladih Preduzetnika Crne Gore (Montenegro) and N.K.L. INZINERING (Slovenia)
ACTIVITY TYPE:	International Youth Conference
DATE:	26.09 – 30.09.2024.
VENUE:	Krusevo, North Macedonia
THE MAIN AIM OF THE CONFERENCE	The international conference focusing on inter-sectoral youth cooperation in Krusevo fostered connectivity, promoted practical methods and increased the awareness of digital technology usage. It provided a secure environment for young people to interact with a wide range of stakeholders, strengthening their employment prosperity and boosting their well-being, while providing a secure environment for them to interact with a variety of actors from relevant fields.
PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS	The participant group was vast, consisting of 50 young participants from 8 countries (North Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Slovenia) with different cultural, political and societal backgrounds. Five representatives from each organization, including youth groups, educational institutions, businesses, and young people, especially those with fewer opportunities, were nominated and prepared by the participating organizations. The group was also gender-balanced and environmentally conscious, open to explore relevant topics and initiate open discussions.
SCOPE OF WORK AND METHODOLOGIES USED	The conference took place over five working days, with five representatives from each participating organization. It was facilitated by a team of experienced professionals skilled in international youth work, cross-sectoral cooperation, digitalization, and sustainability, and featured speakers from relevant sectors. The conference placed a spotlight on the transformative potential of the DigiPath platform, envisioned as a dynamic bridge connecting young people with opportunity providers across partner borders, fostering collaboration and unlocking cross-border potential. The event featured public sessions, presentations from guest speakers from the youth, business, academic, and government sectors, group work focused on developing ideas for intersectoral cooperation, digital tool utilization, and sustainability, as well as various panels and debates. The presentation of the process for development of the platform as a tool in combination with other methodological approaches, strengthened the connection among the young people, enabling them to share experiences, exchange ideas, and have transparent discussions about the challenges they are tackling within their countries and institutions, while exploring potential solutions on both local and regional level. The input from young people was an essential

	element in ensuring that the conference kept the needs and interests of young people in focus. Hence, the conference's transparent approach allowed an extensive range of perspectives, experiences, and insights to be included.
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OVERVIEW OF THE SESSIONS	
SESSION TITLE	OPENING CEREMONY OF THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE
DATE AND TIME	26.09.2024 18:00 - 21:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	In the opening ceremony the participants were provided with information about the importance of this international conference on inter-sectoral youth cooperation by representatives from the organizing team of the host organization, Youth Alliance - Krusevo. The president of Youth Alliance – Krusevo, Metodija Stojcheski in his opening speech focused on the importance that youth cooperation has on the region as a whole, while the program coordinator, Biljana Stojcheska, focused on the impact that this conference will have in fostering youth cooperation while operative coordinator, Anelija Mitrova, emphasized the importance of the conference's partners in making this event possible. Representatives of the partners from different countries also shared their opinions on the biggest problems that youths are facing in their respective nations, as well as ideas about how to overcome them. During the opening ceremony the partners had the opportunity to present themselves as well as to share their inspirational thoughts in regards to the main aim of the event. Hereby, Petar Vranic from Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation noted that without solidarity between people, it becomes virtually impossible to establish a cohesive community capable of enacting meaningful change and that solidarity serves as the foundation for trust and cooperation among individuals, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose that encourages collective action. Kimete Arifaj from AKTIV emphasized that as the demographic that will inherit the region, young people are increasingly aware of the systemic injustices and inequalities that hinder their development and well-being and that their passionate advocacy for human rights reflects a deep desire for change, pushing for political reforms, social justice, and economic opportunities that can uplift not just themselves but their communities as a whole. Finally, Melisa Dorda from National Youth Congress focused on active involvement of youths in all aspects of life as not only important but essential for fostering innovation, inclusivity, and progress within society.
KEY OUTCOME	The key outcome from this session was supplying the participants with all the necessary information about the importance of the International Conference on Intersectoral Youth Cooperation and the goals this conference aims to achieve. Representatives from the host organization broadened the participants' understanding about the importance of regional cooperation while representatives from the partnering organizations provided valuable insights into various social, political and economic problems that youths are faced with in their respective countries. The participants were intrigued with the possibilities that regional

	cooperation provides them with the necessary tools in overcoming the issues they face in their everyday lives.
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SESSION TITLE	GET2GETHER
DATE AND TIME	27.09.2024 09:00 - 10:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	The conference kicked off with a networking session titled 'Get2Gether,' where representatives from all partnering countries met directly for the first time. This session provided an opportunity for open connection, fostering a sense of group dynamics and setting the tone for collaboration. Through an introductory and networking activity, participants had the chance to strengthen their collaboration and get to know each other better. For this purpose, they engaged in one-on-one sessions, guided by the skilled facilitator Andrej Stojkoski from Youth Alliance Krusevo, North Macedonia. Over 45 minutes, they reflected on their careers, aspirations, and future vision, enabling a deeper understanding of each other's backgrounds, perspectives, and expectations for the conference.
KEY OUTCOME	This initial interaction created a sense of community and laid the groundwork for youth inclusion. By connecting and discussing personal priorities and values, representatives built potential for new cohesion across countries, both during and after the conference. It also eased the starting point for exchange of ideas and thoughts along the other sessions, building a stronger sense of belonging and trust. Additionally, this approach increased self-awareness and offered insights into the prospects of fellow attendees. This was evident in the final evaluation of the event, where participants expressed positive feedback for the session in relation to further interaction. Their eagerness to connect stemmed from this get-together session, serving as an ice-breaker for increased, open and curious conversations with other young representatives.

SESSION TITLE	Left, Right, or Forward: Harnessing Regional Cooperation to Shape Employment Opportunities and the Political Future of Youth in the Region
DATE AND TIME	27.09.2024 10:00 - 12:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	The speakers in this session gave the participants detailed insights into the problems faced by young citizens in the relatively similar political landscape of the countries in the region connected to their social, economic and political life. The challenges faced by youth in political participation are multifaceted, ranging from inadequate political representation and widespread apathy driven by an unsupportive political and societal system, to a severe lack of funding for youth organizations to operate effectively and achieve their goal of empowering young people. Additionally, systemic issues persist, with institutions disregarding youth opinions in decision-making processes and mainstream political parties excluding young people from meaningful roles. These barriers prevent youth from realizing their potential as

	politically active citizens in their countries. The speakers emphasized to the participants that we need to work on the democratization of our respective societies, create a society that fosters solidarity between people and work on creating a political climate that enables regional cooperation as one of the key components for regional progress and EU integration. Member of the Macedonian parliament, Mr. Sergej Popov emphasized that political engagement should not be left only to the older generations, as politics impact every aspect of the life of an individual including topics that are of utmost importance to youths like the creation of quality employment opportunities, improving the education system and combating corruption as an ever present issue etc. Thus, active youth involvement in politics is crucial for driving social change, and ensuring that the concerns of young people and the problems that they are facing enter the public sphere and are adequately resolved. Member of the national assembly in Serbia, Mr. Dobrica Veselinovic addressed the participants in depth about the need for both understanding and transforming existing political and legal frameworks with the idea being that we need to learn the rules of the political system while simultaneously advocating for their improvement, ensuring that the system does not stagnate and it meets the economical and social needs of youths. Representative from the National Youth Congress talked about how political apathy in youths is significantly influenced by the lack of inner party democracy within mainstream political parties, that often creates an environment in which young voices are marginalized or ignored in the decision making processes within the party, while a representative from PRONI noted that the cooperation between young NGO workers and young politicians is essential for achieving meaningful change and success in addressing the pressing issues faced by today's youth. A representative from the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation spoke about the requirement of systematic changes to improve the quality of life for young citizens, especially in the current situation where governments in the Balkans are often influenced and supported by powerful business lobbies who prioritize their own profit over policies that aim at improving the dire social and economical situation that citizens and especially youths find themselves in. An AKTIV representative emphasized youth cooperation, both regionally and nationally, as a vital component for addressing shared challenges and fostering a sense of solidarity among young people.
KEY OUTCOME	The key outcome from this session was the intricate knowledge that participants obtained about how politics affect every pore of an individual's life, and especially aspects that are directly related to issues that youths are facing like the lack of quality education (from the official curriculum, the ever increasing education costs, to the living conditions in student dormitories etc, lack of adequate digitalisation of institutions and services etc), the absence of employment and career opportunities that allow vertical mobility on the societal stratification pyramid, the deadly pollution and the omnipresent corruption that obstruct the functioning of the

	government institutions both on local and national levels. The participants were reminded that active political participation does not only apply to members in political parties but is a responsibility of every citizen in a democratic country and that if youths want to create a society that addresses their needs they must activate politically.
SESSION TITLE	Coded Youth Futures: Unlocking the DIGITAL VISION EUROPE 2025 for Digital Innovation, AI, and Citizen-Centered Public Solutions
DATE AND TIME	27.09.2024 12:30 - 14:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	The second session focused on how digital transformation can strengthen regional ties and empower citizens in the Balkans, supporting the goal of a more responsive public sector in Digital Vision Europe and the development of the DigiPath project. The guest speakers shared with the panthers productive case studies, innovative strategies, and highlighted the potential of technology as a tool for change, an important aspect which needs to be covered when using digital assets, with a special focus on the DigiPath project for youth empowerment and employment. Concretely, the project serves as an alternative to the poor infrastructure, improving the mobility for young people to connect across all partnering countries, both in rural and urban areas. Ms. Kristina Nikolovska, a representative from N.K.L. INZINERINING and a doctoral researcher in Robotics focusing on Human-Robot Interaction, stressed the significance of young people actively shaping the future of digitalization, shifting their perspective of its usage. Building on this, Mr. Aleksa Tesic, an Investigative Journalist at BIRN Serbia, addressed the critical issue of cybersecurity and pointed out the dangers of rapid data movement in the digital age. Ms. Violeta Bulc, former European Commissioner for Transport and curator of Eco Civilisation advocated to the young representatives of all countries to use digital assets including AI, as an extended tool. She also urged a shift in how society perceives the role of technology as a way to unlock more sustainable business models and to transit into an effective solution for the urbanistic challenges in all countries. The attendees from the partnering countries including Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation [Serbia], Youth Alliance Krusevo (North Macedonia) and Unija Mladih Preduzetnika Crne Gore (Montenegro), AKTIV [Kosovo] showed visible concern and fear of security issues and the possibility of the AI to replace people's work and creativity. They also emphasized that their countries need to build a reliable set up for digital innovation and AI, while showing certain skepticism around the technology utilization due to lack of resources and underdeveloped groundwork. However, the panelists provided thorough feedback by offering productive ways to resolve these issues through public solutions within the digital sphere, encouraging the young people to work towards realization of the Digital Vision of Europe.
KEY OUTCOME	The key outcome of the second session was a shift in the perspective of the young representatives on digital transformation. Despite initial skepticism and concern surrounding topics like data protection, AI, employment, the open dialogue with the speakers raised a deeper sense of eagerness to act upon. As encouraged by the

	panelists, the discussion intrigued the attendees from all partnering countries, to remain mindful of the human element in the digital world, fostering a sense of responsibility when shaping the future of technology, both locally and regionally. This thorough discussion with the expert guest speakers inspired each representative to think critically and creatively about how technology can be used within their role as activists, but also to tackle the spread of misinformation and narrow definitions of the digital world from the media. Additionally, instead of feeling concern for the possibility of job replacement and lack of opportunities, the session increased the sense of hope due to the DigiPath platform of the young people in the evolving digital landscape.
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SESSION TITLE	Youth Power Jam [Interactive session]
DATE AND TIME	27.09.2024 16:30 - 19:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	This session was one of the conferences' interactive outdoor sessions moderated by Uros Bulatovic, a representative from Union of Young Entrepreneurs in Montenegro that aimed at gaining a better understanding of youth's perceptions about what are the push factors that they are facing in their everyday lives that are making them migrate from the region. This was done through a Q&A method with a series of questions directed towards the participants asking for their opinions about who is responsible for the mass migration from the region, whether it is more a product of a series of systemic issues (the low economic standard and lack of job opportunities, deficiencies in the education system, high levels of corruption, extreme pollution etc.) or more about the mentality that youths in the region currently have (peer/societal pressure) as well as questions that probe the perception that participants have about what concrete actions can youths take, both as individuals and as a demographic category in solving the problems that they face and minimizing migration from the region. A participant from PRONI emphasized that one of the biggest push factors in the region is the systematic favorization of social capital over meritocracy, especially in the public sector that demotivates youth from pursuing careers that they are interested in, like teaching, social care etc. Participants from Croatian Youth Network also noted the lack of foreign investments as an issue that leads to economic challenges for youths like low salaries and limited career opportunities. A participant from AKTIV highlighted the bilateral issues and lack of official reconciliation efforts in the face of perpetual ethno-political tensions as a potential push factor that their organization is focused on mitigating.

KEY OUTCOME	The key outcome from this session was the creation of a collaborative and inclusive platform for young people from different countries, with diverse ethnic, and religious backgrounds to engage in a constructive dialogue about the complex push factors that are driving youth migration from the region. Participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences and insights, fostering an environment of empathy and understanding. Through this exchange, they identified a lot of common themes such as economic instability, lack of educational opportunities, political unrest, and environmental challenges. This exploration not only illuminated the interconnectedness of their struggles but also facilitated a deeper appreciation for the distinct socio-political climate that shapes the decisions of youths to leave their home. By learning from one another, the youths were empowered to articulate their challenges and aspirations more effectively, laying the groundwork for potential advocacy initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of migration and fostering resilience within their communities.
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SESSION TITLE	Krusevo Uncovered: Walking Adventure
DATE AND TIME	28.09.2024 08:30 - 10:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	Krusevo Uncovered: Walking Adventure session enabled participants to explore the cultural and natural heritage of Krusevo, a town enriched with historical value. For the purpose of uncovering further the crucial aspects of the project, the participants were divided into three groups in relation to relevant topics including: entrepreneurship, mobility and education. Each group consisted of representatives from every partnering organization, enabling stronger cooperation and deepening their knowledge through practical approach, boosting their critical way of thinking and implementing. As part of this active involvement within the city, the participants were encouraged to engage in conversations with the local people and explore potential opportunities at the local level that could be expanded regionally. Through this explorative journey, they were able to envision how smaller initiatives could be scaled up to benefit the broader region, embracing the concept of a two-way impact: from local to regional and from regional to local. The session aimed to foster a broader understanding of how the educational and entrepreneurial mindset can be increased through the use of local resources. It also enhanced the need to materialize important ideas and find better ways to implement the skills and knowledge within the communities of each partnering country.
KEY OUTCOME	Participants had the opportunity to establish greater awareness for the main aspects of the project, with a special focus on entrepreneurship, education and mobility. In addition, through this walking and reflective activity they were able to explore the need and interest of the local community in Krusevo, while finding adequate practices, educational tools and business models that might provide better opportunities and affect the entire region. By encouraging a sense of accountability and empowerment, they were able to reflect on implementation within their

	communities with an open and visionary mindset. This experience motivated each individual to reflect creatively about how regional and local cooperation could drive sustainable development and mobility. Concretely, the young representatives developed their practical skills and learned that change takes time and that small steps can have a significant impact on the wider community and their overall progress.
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SESSION TITLE	DigiPath for youth potential: Exploring Economic Empowerment Pathway Management for Youth
DATE AND TIME	28.09.2024 10:30 - 12:30
SESSION OVERVIEW	The aim of this session was for the participants to gain a better understanding of how our societies can use digital tools, technological advancements and platforms like the DigiPath as a key weapon to combating one of the main issues in the SEE region which is youth unemployment. Mr. Kristijan Oreskovic from the Croatian Youth Network emphasized the importance of adopting effective practices from other communities to enhance local initiatives, urging collaboration with like-minded individuals to address local priorities and needs, boost morale, and create job opportunities. Prof. Dr. Saja Kosanovic spoke about the importance of connectivity and access to information, highlighting the role of the Digi-Path platform in facilitating these needs and improving the social capital of individuals. She stated that while students must take initiative, professors also have a responsibility to continuously learn and adapt their courses to new trends by inviting guest lecturers from the NGO and industry sectors, which would ultimately enhance educational outcomes. Ms. Sanja Vukelic from the Ane and Vlade Divac Foundation emphasized the need to make initiatives more accessible to young people by engaging their interests and incorporating appealing tools and influencers to effectively promote their platform. Mr. Dejan Vanevski encouraged persistence in the face of challenges, highlighting the abundant opportunities for young entrepreneurs in the Balkans due to the region's undeveloped market and the potential for implementing successful business practices from other areas. Additionally, Mr. Ruben Vergara Meersohn noted that local entrepreneurs often limit themselves with narrow perspectives, and overcoming these limitations can enable them to think globally and expand their ambitions.
KEY OUTCOME	The key outcome from this session was the equipment of participants with comprehensive insights into how societies can leverage technological advancements and newly developed digital tools as a way to address the ever present high unemployment rates among youths, both in urban and rural areas in the region. Participants also had the chance to learn more about the inner workings and benefits from the practical implementation of the Digipath project as a complementary piece of the contemporary digital revolution, that enables individuals to connect both nationally and regionally. Additionally the session

	created an open space for discourse that enabled participants to brainstorm together with the speakers and share their experiences and ideas about the employment opportunities created by technology as well as the possibilities presented by the DigiPath project.
SESSION TITLE	Building Blocs: Forging Well-Resourced, Interconnected and Stronger Economic Alliances in the Region
DATE AND TIME	28.09.2024 13:00 - 15:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	The fourth session examined the South-East Europe (SEE) region's strong potential for cross-border cooperation. In this real-talk, the guest speakers brought attention to new investment opportunities and emerging trade agreements as key drivers of regional economic integration. However, participants pointed out ongoing challenges, such as poor connectivity and inadequate infrastructure which hinder the innovation of strong economic alliances across the region. The guest speakers also emphasized the need to strengthen cooperative structures and promote regional interconnectedness, while encouraging the young representatives on becoming advocates of change on both the local and regional level. In this context, Mr. Jordan Trajkov, executive director of Popova Kula Winery, stressed the value of connection in the Balkans, pointing to tourism as a key way to build networks between neighboring countries while keeping an open-mind for win-win negotiations. Mr. Marko Mandic, a trade specialist from the Central European Free Trade Agreement, underlined the benefits of the EU's Western Balkans strategy to strengthen cross-border collaboration, as well as the relevance of interconnectivity for the younger generation. As an extension to the real-talk session, the representatives, moderated by Ms. Biljana Stojcheska, were asked to reflect on regional economic partnership and express their vision for what lies ahead. They looked at the region's future through an economic lens, exploring potential and challenges that could contribute to long-term development and partnership. Their voices helped foster an in-depth discussion on the region's potential growth and prosperity. As they shared instances of current tactics and procedures that already improve ties between the neighboring states, the participants expressed genuine confidence and hope for greater economic cooperation across all partnering countries.
KEY OUTCOME	Participants examined a number of feasible strategies to improve their prospects of breaking into the EU market and opening the door to EU membership. There was a transparent discussion between the guest speakers and the participants, showcasing examples of successful partnerships that fueled anticipation of regional cooperation and emphasized the value of economic development. The Digipath initiative also increased the motivation amongst the young attendees, as a relevant illustration of how neighbouring states can collaborate and create employment prospects for new staff members in eight different countries. At the end of the fourth session, everyone committed to working together to put these initiatives into practice and lay the groundwork for long-term regional growth while instilling a

	fresh sense of direction and vision.
SESSION TITLE	Chit-chat with Special Guest Speaker
DATE AND TIME	28.09.2024 15:00 - 16:30
SESSION OVERVIEW	The special guest, former Minister of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media in the Government of Montenegro, Tamara Srzentic emphasized the use of digital tools and the information we get from those tools as a way to deepen our understanding of the issues citizens are dealing with, address policy challenges effectively and foster youth cooperation. The speaker explained her opinion that achieving meaningful change necessitates a broader perspective that involves collaboration between technology and policy and that this change relies on fostering a culture of caring, where youths pave the way in creating an environment that promotes purpose, co-created values, and psychological safety. This culture will celebrate diversity, encourage feedback, and prioritize teamwork, cooperation and servant leadership. Creating such a culture demands intentionality, courage, and relentless optimism primarily from young people across the SEE region.
KEY OUTCOME	Participants gained a deeper understanding and broadened their horizons when it comes to using technological advancements and tools from the contemporary digital age as tools for the improvement of their respective societies. Participants also gained a new perspective about the connection between the culture of a society, specifically the political culture of a society and the opportunities that arise from the various technological advancements. Technological advancements not only enable new forms of governance and can help shape public policy but also create a plethora of career opportunities for young people, using platforms like the DigiPath project as well as intensifying mutual cooperation between youths through various digital tools.
SESSION TITLE	Vibe Check: Dream it, Do it Interactive Vision Boarding
DATE AND TIME	28.09.2024 16:30 - 19:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	By creating vision boards that captured their individual insights and future goals, participants were encouraged to embark on their creative thinking within this interactive initiatory session. The crucial question, "How do you envision the future based on your experiences and current context?" was answered by each representative of the partnering organizations. Namely, with a variety of tools at their disposal, participants showcased their ideas onto the boards, using a combination of words, symbols, and visuals to powerfully convey their aspirations. These vision boards generated an intriguing debate throughout the presentation phase, exposing six important issues that are highly relatable to the local youth. Guided by the facilitators' direction, participants had open discussions, exchanged viewpoints and personal stories that shed light on the difficulties and possibilities they anticipated. Before dividing participants into groups for the much-anticipated hackathon the following day, the facilitators took the time to delve into these topics and explain their relevance that came out of the vision boards:

	Youth standards for housing, education, mental health Youth unemployment and job opportunities Youth activism and political participation Environmental protection Radicalization, nationalism and the need for reconciliation Building trust and networking through digital platforms and cross-border Within this context, on the vision board the young representatives shared inspirational and thought-provoking messages, focusing on their aspirations of the future outcome for the region. With interconnectedness as a central theme, they suggested certain priorities and goals such as: quality education (formal and informal), providing food assistance to low-income groups, protecting press freedom and journalists, upgrading infrastructure and transportation, celebrating regional solidarity and cultivation of our common cultural values.
KEY OUTCOME	The session's main result was the identification of six major challenges affecting youth, which were based within the visions presented on the participants' boards. Facilitators then discussed and contextualized these challenges, which served as a foundation for group divisions during the hackathon session the following day. The six topics focused on improving youth standards in housing, education, mental health, and well-being; addressing unemployment through labor-market alignment and entrepreneurship; enhancing activism via civic education and political participation; advocating for environmental protection; and combating radicalization while promoting reconciliation and cooperation. Delving in-depth within these educational and economical aspects, the interaction between the young attendees was enriched in a productive way, empowering all partnering organizations to share their insights and better understand the visionary ideas of what lies ahead for their region.
SESSION TITLE	Meditation Session
DATE AND TIME	29.09.2024 8:30 - 9:30
SESSION OVERVIEW	In the meditative session, the participants had the chance to explore different approaches to self-reflection and develop their sense of inner calm. Guided by a professional instructor, they practiced stretching exercises and breathing techniques, stress management, attention and empathy. They also were given the space to prepare themselves mentally and physically for the ongoing sessions by increasing clarity, while enhancing their potential for connection through open and transparent communication. Throughout the meditation, the representatives coming from 8 distinct countries, developed the feeling of connectivity with all the attendees regardless of their cultural and political differences. This strengthened the alignment of their shared ideas and vision for addressing regional challenges and building a common ground for resolving important issues collectively.
KEY OUTCOME	The main focus of the meditation session was fostering collective awareness and cooperation within the group. As a result, the young participants not only felt calmer

	and more confident, but also developed a sense of trust, which helped strengthen their desire for collaboration across the partnering countries. By promoting emotional well-being, this session helped reduce their stress and anxiety level, making participants more open to communicating and connecting with each other in the sessions ahead. It also encouraged them to reflect more attentively on their goals and synchronize them with the project's prospect, influenced by the stronger feeling of belonging within the group.
SESSION TITLE	SEE 2050 Innovate: Navigating Digital, Inclusive and European Youth Future - Hackathon
DATE AND TIME	29.09.2024 10:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 14:30 16:00 - 18:00

SESSION OVERVIEW	The Hackathon served as a follow-up to the previous day's "Vibe Check" session, using various engagement methods such as discussions, Q&A, brainstorming, and desk research to deepen participants' understanding of youth issues in the region and the opportunities presented by the DigiPath project. Participants were divided into three groups to collaboratively prepare a set of recommendations, an advocacy campaign, and a social media strategy. ● Group 1 focused on drafting the set of recommendations and solutions, utilizing insights and data from the earlier sessions to address critical issues. ● Group 2 worked on developing the advocacy plan and identifying key stakeholders and target audiences. ● Group 3 concentrated on creating the social media campaign and its associated content. During the second session, Groups 1 and 2 merged to refine the advocacy plan, while Group 3 established key messages and topics based on the discussions from the "Vibe Check." In the final session, each group presented their results: Group 1 showcased the set of recommendations and solutions text, Group 2 presented the advocacy plan, and Group 3 displayed multimedia content, including videos and creative materials developed during their collaboration. This collaborative effort of the participants led to the identification of six key problematic areas of everyday life that are affecting young people across the region and a discussion about how the DigiPath project can help in combating some of them. The discussions located several critical issues affecting youth: 1. Youth Standards: Conditions for affordable housing, higher-quality education, mental health, and well-being are essential for youth activism and social strength. 2. Youth Unemployment: A mismatch exists between the supply and demand for youth labor, necessitating equal job opportunities and entrepreneurial support, which represents an issue that the DigiPath project is designed to tackle. 3. Youth Activism: There is a strong call for civic education in formal education, the establishment of more platforms for youth activism, and efforts to combat political apathy in favor of greater youth participation. 4. Environmental Protection: Young people, recognizing the direct connection between environmental degradation and their well-being are advocating for a healthier lifestyle and a less polluted environment. 5. Nationalism, Radicalization and Reconciliation: Youth representatives identified radicalization and nationalism as significant challenges,
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emphasizing that reconciliation and bilateral cooperation are vital for addressing these issues.

- 6. Building Trust and Networking:** Enhancing cross-border youth interaction is crucial, with an emphasis on digital networking, which represents one of the main goals of the DigiPath project.

Based on the critical issues identified by the participants, several measures were proposed to address the region's challenges, many of which could be implemented through the DigiPath platform and future implementation in the project. These measures focus on fostering regional youth cooperation, improving the societal engagement of young citizens, upgrading youths employability and position in the labor market, addressing the outdated formal education system, and improving digital networking between youths in the region as a way of strengthening social bonds and creating social capital.

KEY OUTCOME	The key outcome of this session was the creation of a dynamic and inclusive environment where participants from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds actively collaborated, breaking down traditional barriers that often fuel division and conflict. By fostering open communication and mutual respect, participants were able to engage in constructive dialogue, allowing them to better understand each other's perspectives and concerns as well as how similar the problems that they deal with are. This led to a series of conclusions and recommendations to relevant institutions about the aforementioned critical issues that youths face. ● YOUTH LIFE STANDARD - Every country in the region should create a strategic plan for affordable housing in which the government will support youth housing independence. - Young people do not have equal opportunities to attain a high-quality education, an issue that can be addressed through the DigiPath project. - There is an urgent need for implementing sustainable practices, stronger environmental protections by relevant institutions, and adequate government action to reduce air and water pollution and mitigate the impacts of climate change for betterment of the quality of life of current and future generations. ● YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT - Governments, educational institutions and employers should collaborate and design updated curriculum programs that reflect the needs of the labor markets to battle youth unemployment. - Expanding digital infrastructure and promoting remote work opportunities using the opportunities that projects like the DigiPath offer would give better chances to the rural youth to connect with jobs without a geographical limit. - Establishing youth entrepreneurship programs that provide funding, training, mentorship and networking opportunities within the region are crucial. ● YOUTH ACTIVISM - Governments and educational institutions should integrate civic education into school curricula with a focus on democracy, human rights, activism and how youth can engage in social change. - International institutions should create accessible platforms and funds for youth activism, where young people can apply for grants to organize events and collaborate on regional campaigns. - The co-management system for meaningful youth participation in local, national and international decision-making processes should be mainstreamed. ● RADICALISATION, NATIONALISM, AND RECONCILIATION - 82% of youths support reconciliation and bilateral cooperation as an approach to overcoming the issues faced in the region. - 47% of youths believe that nationalistic politics hamper regional
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	cooperation. - Education, awareness raising activities in peacebuilding like workshops and seminars are a keyway to decrease youth susceptibility to ethnocentric policies. ● BUILDING TRUST AND NETWORKING - Community dialogues, job fairs, cultural visits and regional youth forums that focus on controversial topics will improve youth interaction in the region. - Virtual exchanges and digital skill development workshops, with the implementation of tools like the DigiPath project are key to enabling young people in the region to interact and collaborate meaningfully. - Investing in the creation of a regional platform that connects organizations with each other and with people who could support youth visions. - Giving youth the opportunity and resources to participate in cross-border emergency initiatives can serve as a bridge between divided communities.
SESSION TITLE	Final Evaluation of the Event
DATE AND TIME	30.09.2024 10:00 - 12:00
SESSION OVERVIEW	Within this session, the participants on the conference were given the opportunity to evaluate the overall view of the session's programme. Concretely, the representatives of each country were invited to reflect on various segments of the sessions including assessment on the achieved objectives, overall dynamics, engagement and the quality of the programme. Additionally, they shared whether their expectations were fulfilled and gave feedback on each key element, from methodological approaches to the working environment. This comprehensive process was followed with assessing the speakers and the moderators, with a special focus on their reflection of the conference impact in the future steps of the DigiPath project. Within the evaluation form online, the participants were also provided with the option to explore the potential activities ahead as an inspiration of this project and the possibility of building partnerships with their fellow-partners in the near future.
KEY OUTCOME	Through this evaluation process, both the representatives from the partners of 8 countries and the organizational team had the chance to discover their most valuable assets regarding logistics, dynamics and the general quality of their work. In the overall assessment, the sense of enthusiasm for connecting with the other partners served as a valuable outcome, since one of the key aspects of this conference was to strengthen the empowerment among the young representatives, coming from different cultural and political backgrounds. In addition, the conference team were provided with a thorough insight into the strengths and areas that might require improvement for enhancing the standard of the sessions ahead. This outcome helped shape events ahead to align with participants' needs and interests, ensuring they add value in the long term.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

Krusevo, North Macedonia

26.09.2024 – 30.09.2024

26.09.2024 [Thursday]	27.09.2024 [Friday]	28.09.2024 [Saturday]	29.09.2024 [Sunday]	30.09.2024 [Monday]
Arrival of the participants	Breakfast			
	Get2Gether Networking Session	Krusevo Uncovered: Walking Adventure	Meditation Session	Final Evaluation of the Event
	Left, Right or Forward: Harnessing Regional Cooperation to Shape Employment Opportunities and the Political Future of Youth in the Region	Possibilities given by technology: Exploring Economic Empowerment Pathway Management for Youth	SEE 2050 Innovate: Navigating Digital, Inclusive and European Youth Future - Hackathon	Departure of the participants
Coffee break				
	Coded Youth Futures: Unlocking the DIGITAL VISION EUROPE 2025 for Digital Innovation, AI, and Citizen-Centered Public Solutions	Building Blocs: Forging Well-Resourced, Interconnected and Stronger Economic Alliances in the Region	SEE 2050 Innovate: Navigating Digital, Inclusive and European Youth Future - Hackathon	
Lunch				
Opening ceremony of the International Youth conference	Youth Power Jam Interactive session	Chit-chat with Special Guest	Presenting of the conclusions of the Hackathon	
		Vibe Check: Dream it, Do it		
		Interactive Vision Boarding		
Dinner				
			Closing Ceremony	

DIGIPATH: YOUTH UP 4 POSSIBILITIES

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

INFO PACK

26.09.2024 - 30.09.2024

KRUSEVO, NORTH MACEDONIA



Funded by
the European Union

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

'DigiPath - Youth Up 4 Possibilities' addresses youth unemployment by enabling shared digital youth work in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. Unsustainable youth brain drain is a big risk. Trends show young people migrating from WB6 economies, to Croatia and Slovenia, there is a lack of shared data on flows and quality opportunities.

Four urgent concerns contribute to young people living in precarious conditions: unemployment, repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, sluggish transition to digital youth work, and absence of inter-sectoral collaboration. In the 24-month project, partners are collaborating to develop a digital tool that connects education, labor market and the youth sector to each other and young people. Enabling visibility about decent personal and professional development opportunities in home and destination countries.

The concrete, tangible product from this project would be a DIGITAL PLATFORM that will connect three crucial sectors for enhancing youth employment: the educational sector (universities, faculties, institutes, and other higher education institutions), the labor market and the civic youth organizations sector, all as opportunities providers.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM



DIGIPATH

YOUTH ON A ROAD TO THE FUTURE



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

Krusevo, North Macedonia
26.09.2024 – 30.09.2024

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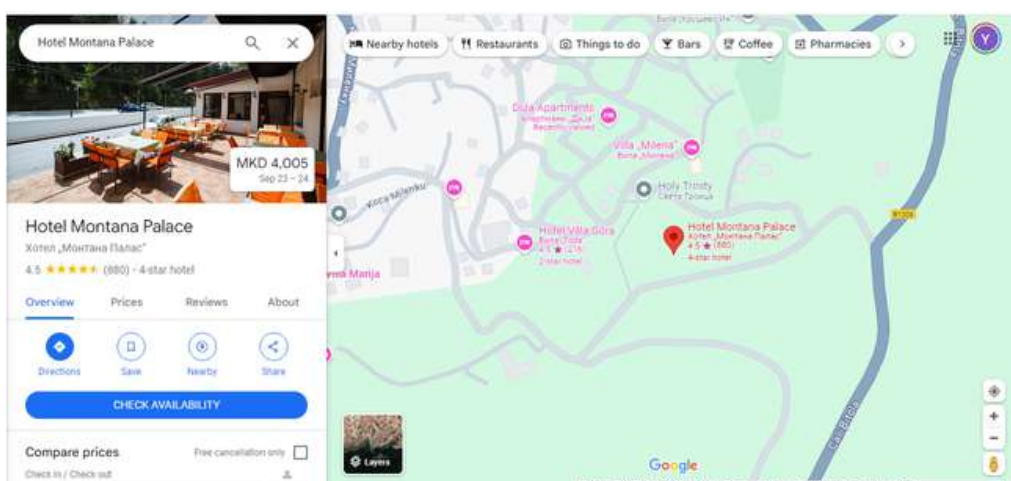
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

CONFERENCE VENUE:

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

Link to the hotel on Google Maps below:

https://www.google.com/maps/place/Hotel+Montana+Palace/@41.3646265,21.2506207,17z/data=!3m1!4b!4m9!3m8!1s0x1356cf0ec889f49f:0x56324ca99f30af59!5m2!4m1!1i2!8m2!3d41.3646225!4d21.2531956!16s%2Fg%2F1j93q6d?entry=tту&g_ep=EgoyMDI0MDkxOC4xIKXMDSOASAFQAw%3D%3D



Hotel Montana is a modern facility equipped with conference rooms, comfortable accommodations, and panoramic views of the surrounding mountainous landscape. The venue provides full board, including accommodation, meals, and meeting spaces for participants.

WEATHER:

The weather in Krusevo in this period is mostly sunny and pleasant.

However, take into consideration that Krusevo is mountain town and the mornings as well as the evenings are chilly cold. Bring with you warm clothes accordingly.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Montana Palace will host all participants.

- Room types: Participants will be accommodated in shared twin rooms.
- Check-in/Check-out:
 - Check-in: Upon arrival on 26th of September, 2024
 - Check-out: Mid-day 30th of September, 2024
- Amenities: Free Wi-Fi, access to all hotel facilities, and conference services.
- All meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) will be provided at the hotel restaurant. Vegetarian and special dietary needs will be accommodated—please inform us in advance of any requirements.

MEALS AND REFRESHMENTS

- The hotel will provide three meals daily (breakfast, lunch, and dinner).
- Coffee breaks will be available during conference sessions.

LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

For successful and smooth process of organizing the travel arrangements and reimbursement of the travel costs, you are obliged to submit all of your travelling documents:



TRAVEL BY **CAR**:

keep receipts for fuel and pay tolls



TRAVEL BY **BUS**:

keep all tickets/receipts/invoices/
booking confirmations



TRAVEL BY **PLANE**:

keep all tickets, invoices and boarding
passes



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



The local currency is **denar (MKD)** [1 EUR = 61.3 MKD].
Please note that paying with card in Krusevo is not always available, however there is an ATM in the hotel.

ABOUT KRUSEVO

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

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

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

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

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

More details on organized excursions and activities will be shared during the conference.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Contact people:

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+ 389 72 809 444

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+ 389 71 330 660

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[@youthalliance-krusevo2803](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkrusevo2803)

EVALUATION REPORT
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, Krusevo, North Macedonia

PARTICIPANTS FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION SUMMARY

The international conference in the framework of the ‘DigiPath - Youth Up 4 Possibilities’ project was focusing on inter-sectoral youth cooperation and it fostered connectivity, promoted practical methods and increased the awareness of digital technology usage. It provided a secure environment for young people to interact with a wide range of stakeholders, strengthening their employment prosperity and boosting their well-being, while providing a secure environment for them to interact with a variety of actors from relevant fields.

The participant group was vast, consisting of 50 young participants from 8 countries (North Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Slovenia) with different cultural, political and societal backgrounds. Five representatives from each organization, including youth groups, educational institutions, businesses, and young people, especially those with fewer opportunities, were nominated and prepared by the participating organizations. The group was also gender-balanced and environmentally conscious, open to explore relevant topics and initiate open discussions.

This Evaluation Report provides a comprehensive analysis of the conference's outcomes, capturing the extent to which it achieved its objectives, the satisfaction levels of participants, and the insights gained for future initiatives. The report is based on quantitative and qualitative data collected through participant feedback, session evaluations, and observations.

Objectives of the evaluation report

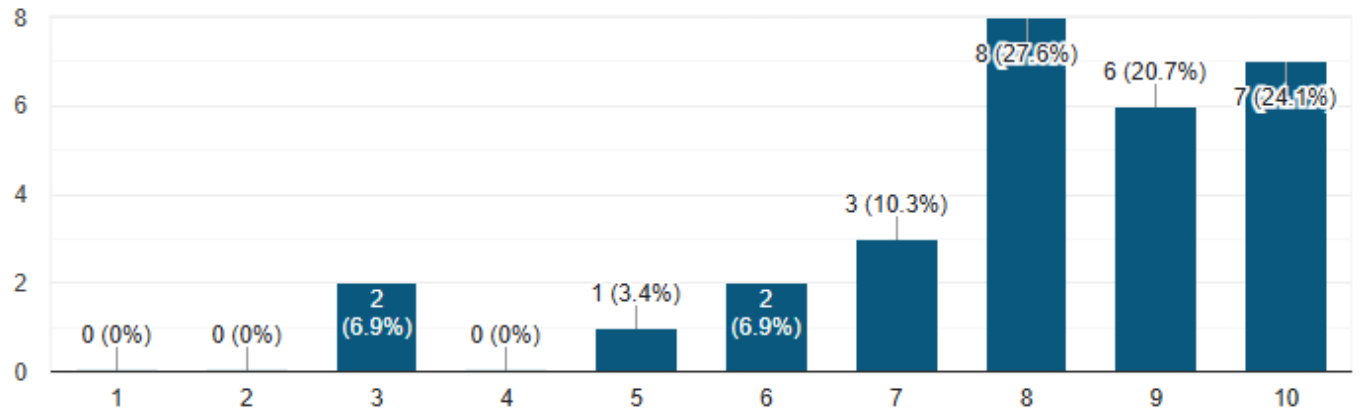
- Assess the overall success of the conference in meeting its objectives.
- Analyze participant feedback and engagement levels during sessions.
- Evaluate the relevance and impact of key sessions and workshops.
- Identify strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement for future actions.

Structure of the report

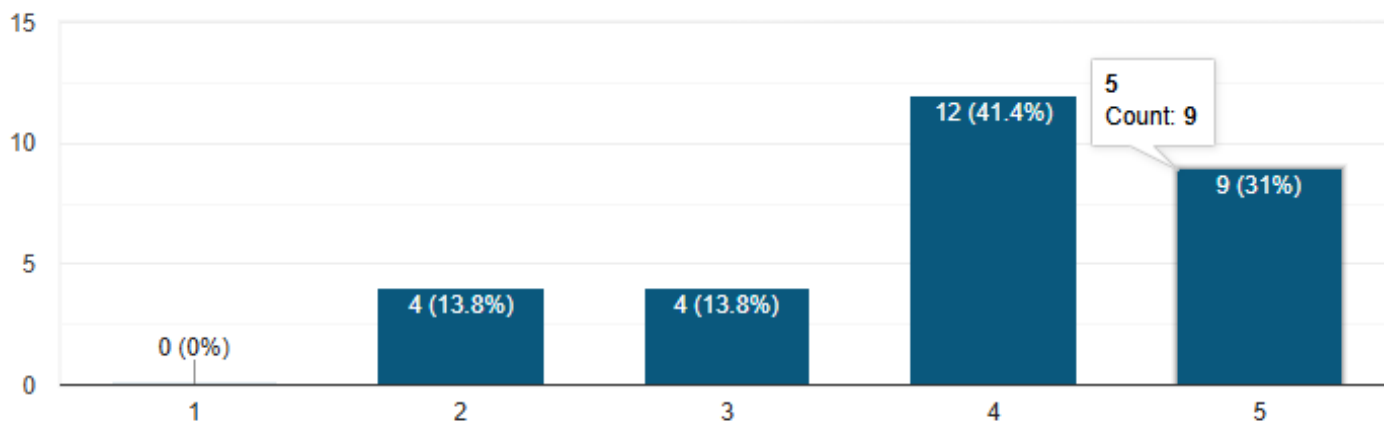
- General assessment of the conference
- Assessment of the conference program
- Assessment of the impact of the conference

GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CONFERENCE

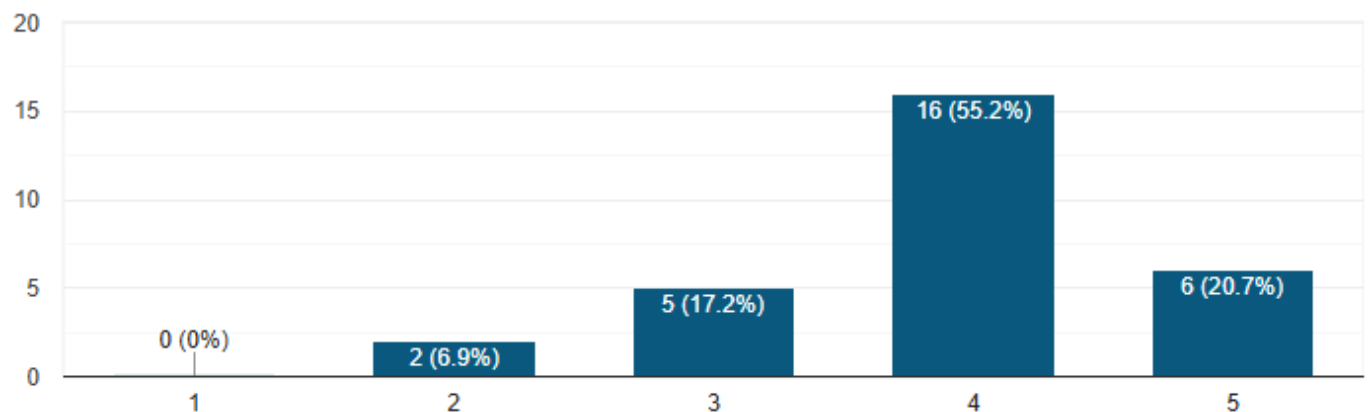
1. What is your overall grade for the international youth conference?



2. To what extent do you believe the conference achieved its objectives?

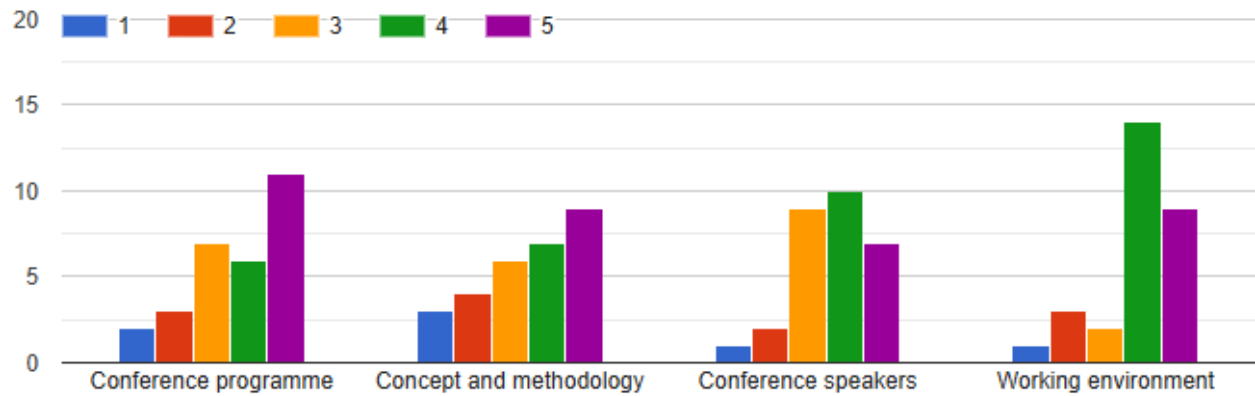


3. How would you evaluate the overall dynamics of the group of participants?

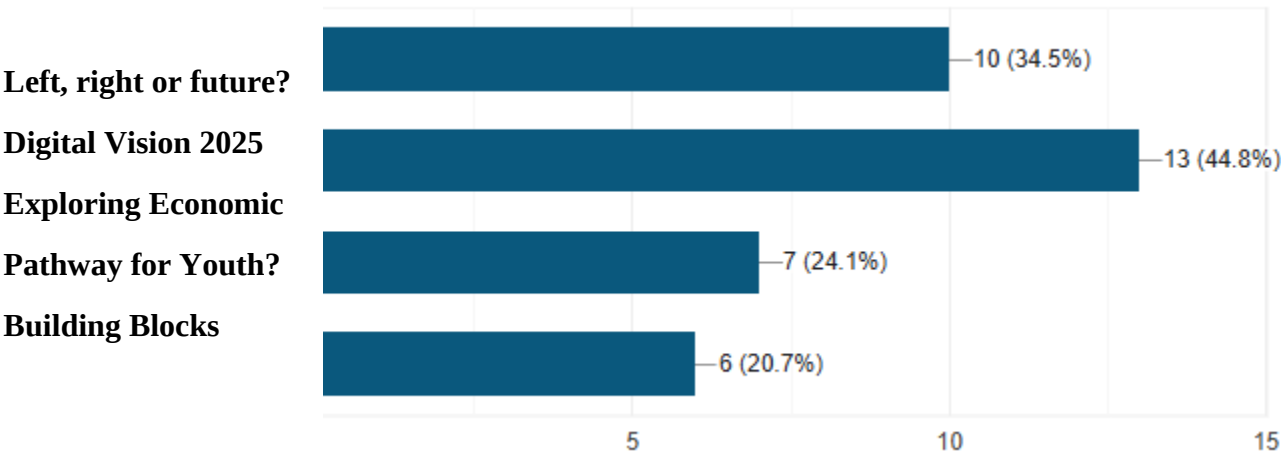


ASSESSMENT OF THE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

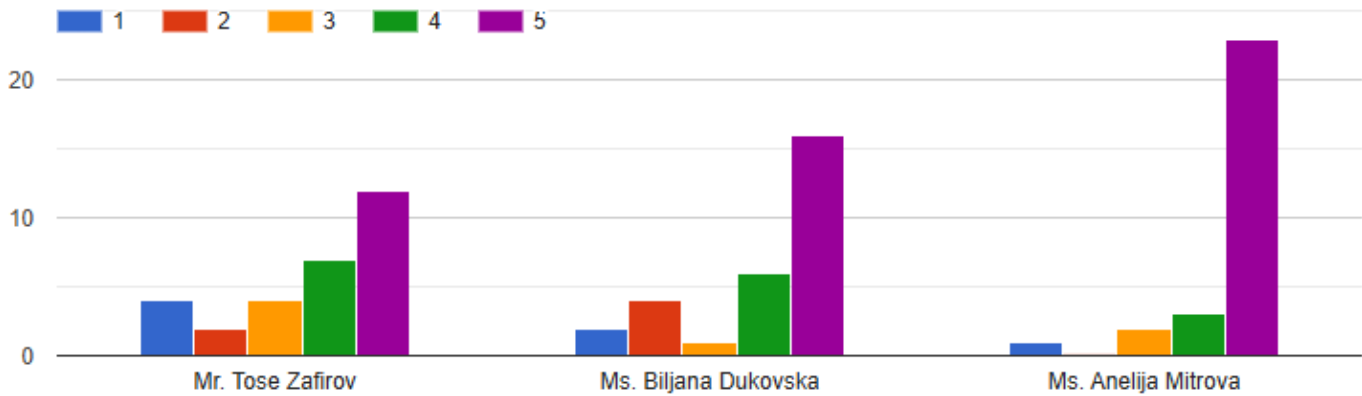
4. How would you evaluate the quality of the following key elements of the conference?



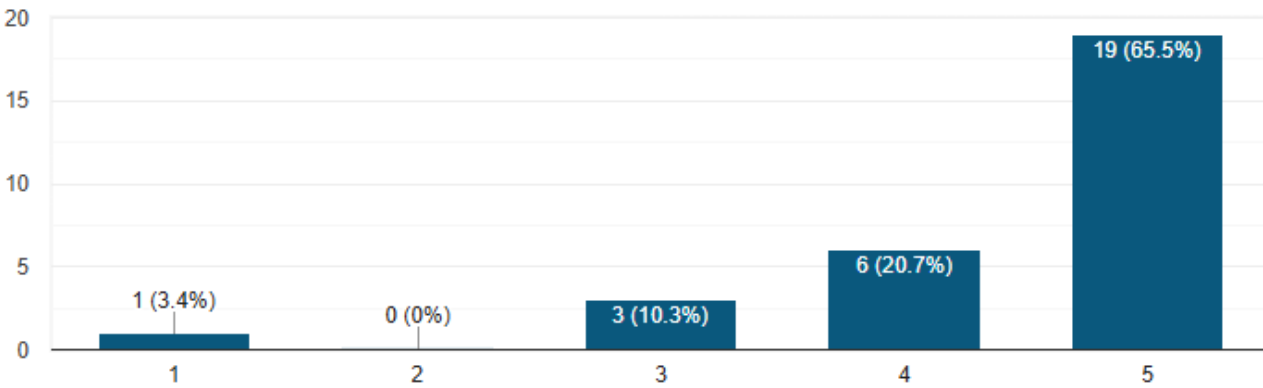
5. Which of the conference sessions did you find most engaging and valuable?



6. Please share your assessment of the facilitators on the conference:

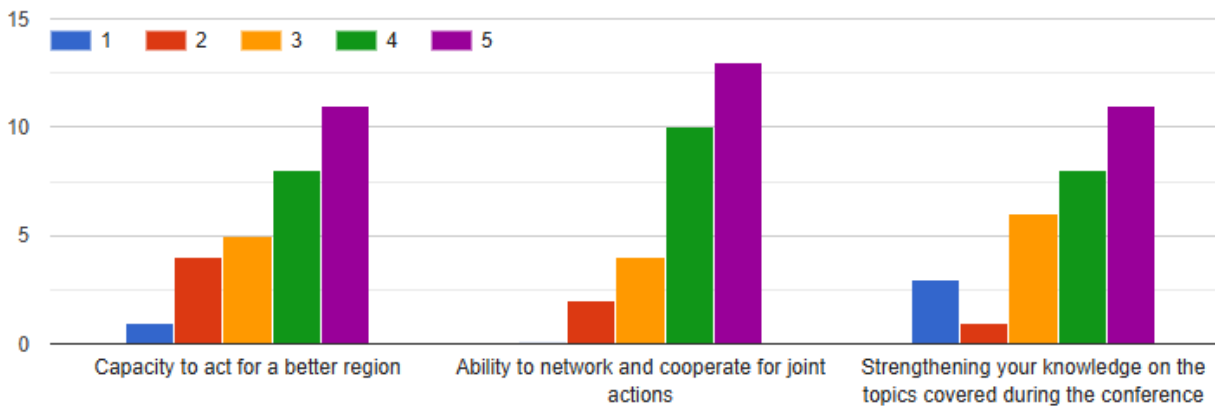


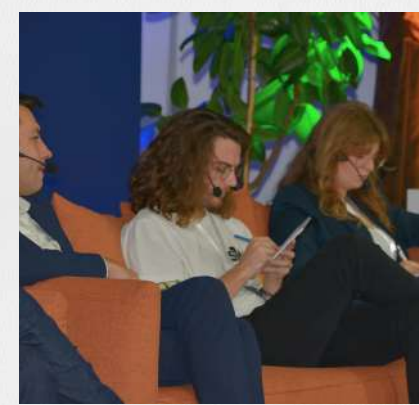
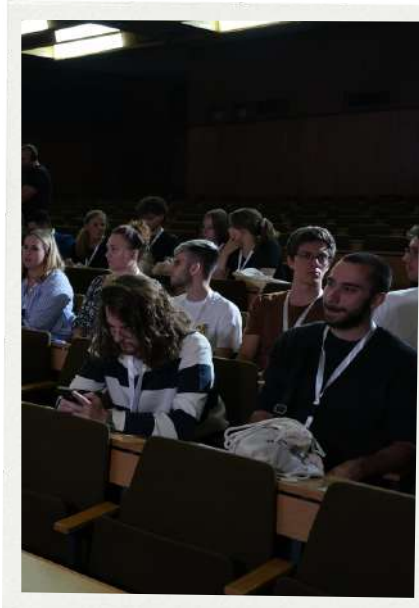
7. Please provide your evaluation of the hosting team

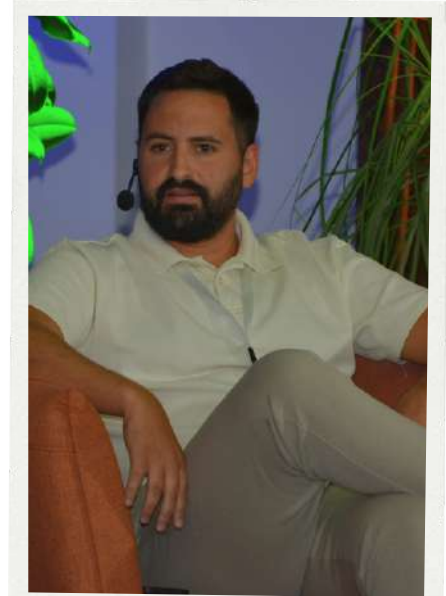
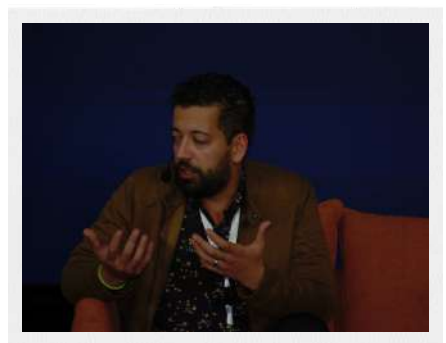
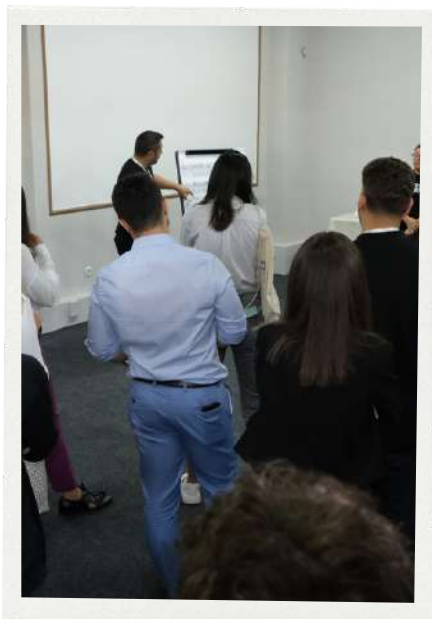


ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE CONFERENCE

8. To what extent has the conference contributed to your improvement in the specific areas?









DigiPath: Youth UP 4 Possibilities | International Conference | 26 - 30th September 2024

VIDEO MATERIAL from the conference



DigiPath: Youth UP 4 possibilities | International Conference | 26 - 30th September 2024

Youth Alliance - Krusevo
60 subscribers

Analytics

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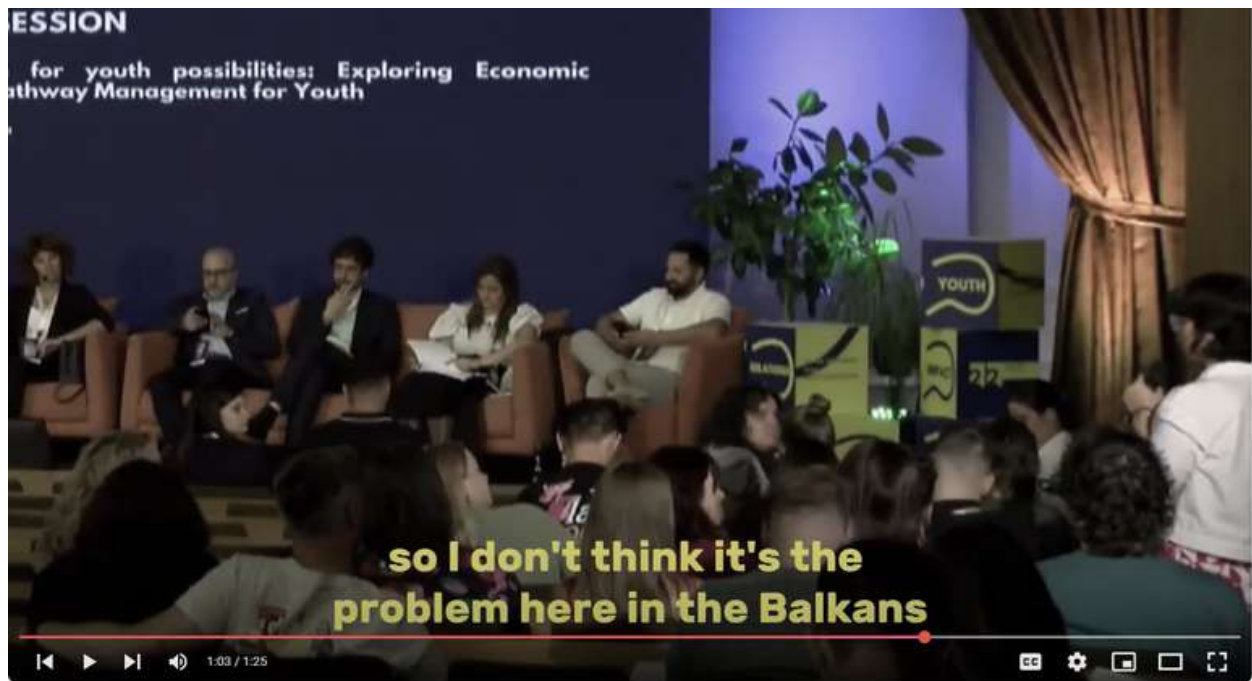
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VIDEO MATERIAL from the conference



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