

Inclusion of FOreigners in WB – accesS To social and Economic Rights (FOSTER)

Lead applicant

MYLA – Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, North Macedonia

Partners

Group484, Serbia, Belgrade Center for Human Rights (BCHR), Serbia, Albanian Helsinki Committee (AHC), Albania, Civil rights program Kosovo (CRP/K), Kosovo, Your rights - Vasa Prava (VP), Bosnia and Hercegovina, Legal Center (LC) Montenegro, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Serbia Office

Associates

Commission for prevention and protection against discrimination North Macedonia; Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro; Protector of Citizens of the Republic of Serbia; Commissioner for Protection of Equality Serbia; Ombudsperson institution Kosovo

Implementation period

March 1, 2023 – August 31, 2026

Background and project description

The Action is developed by 7 CSOs joined to the Balkan Refugee and Migration Council (BRMC) and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) to address common migration-related challenges in the Western Balkan region, with the focus on fundamental human rights of different vulnerable groups of migrants and foreigners, particularly their access to social and economic rights.

In the EU reports, the situation in the Western Balkan countries is still marked with significant shortcomings in fulfilling the key political criteria. The region is in early stage of preparation of freedom of movement of workers and access to the labor market. With the Open Balkan initiative and the Berlin Process, it is expected that migration movements within the region will intensify. But although the institutional and legislative frameworks for the protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms and protection against discrimination are developed and mostly aligned with the EU legislation, in practice, ensuring equal opportunities, especially for foreigners and marginalized groups, remains challenging.

The action will strengthen the capacities of the CSOs and independent human rights institutions (IHRI) to contribute in policymaking, promotion and protection of human rights of foreigners and their inclusion into sustainable social and economic development of the WB region. CSOs will be empowered with knowledge and skills in developing and implementation national and regional projects and advocacy materials to improve the social and economic rights of vulnerable foreigners.

Objective of the action

To strengthen the alignment with EU human right principles through development of inclusive and non-discriminatory policies and effective inclusion practices for vulnerable foreigners as prerequisite for successful EU approximation process and sustainable development of WB region

Activities

- Identification of CSOs and assessing their capacities related to delivery of services and protection of the rights.
- Capacity building and networking of local CSOs and IHRI across WB with focus on advocating promotion and protection of social and economic rights and access to services for vulnerable foreigners
- Sub-grating of up to 24 national and 6 regional projects related to protection of fundamental rights of foreigners and mentorship to CSOs
- Advocacy activities for the harmonization of the legal, policy framework and practice in the WB region

Target groups

Local CSOs and independent human rights institutions in WB countries

Final beneficiaries

Vulnerable foreigners in Western Balkan countries (regular and irregular migrants, refugees, victims of different crimes); relevant governmental institutions and organizations in WB countries; relevant courts in WB countries; media in WB countries; academia in WB countries; citizens of Western Balkans

¹ Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA), Group 484, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR), Civil Rights Program Kosovo (CRP/K), Vaša prava Bosnia and Herzegovina (VP BiH) are the members of the network Balkan Refugee Migration Council (BRMC)