

# **ENCOURAGING DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AMONG YOUTH**

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2012-2016

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) for their generous support of this project throughout the four years of its implementation; the School of Economics and Business of the University of Sarajevo for graciously hosting us and recognizing the great value this program brings to youth of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Anesa Vilić for her kindness and excellent cooperation; all of our lecturers, trainers and others who made this possible; and finally, our participants, for their dedication and hard work.

Jasmin Hasić and Maida Omerćehajić  
Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina  
September 2016

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UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO



School of Economics  
and Business

## **Encouraging Democratic Values and Active Citizenship among Youth, 2012-2016**

Proofread by  
Sarah Freeman-Woolpert  
Design by  
Dupovac Emir

Humanity in Action  
[www.humanityinaction.org](http://www.humanityinaction.org)

# INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present this study that comes as a result of a four-year long engagement and dedication of Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina to the enhancement of quality of non-formal education in the country. Encouraging Democratic Values and Active Citizenship among Youth (EDVACAY) has given 58 young individuals the opportunity to be trained by top level lecturers and trainers coming from various fields – government, civil society, media and academia.

Since 2012, HIA BiH, generously supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) USA and the School of Economics and Business of the University of Sarajevo, has also enabled these young people to become involved in civic activism in their local communities, where they could have genuine and measurable impact on how others see the problems they face.

Their work, their great enthusiasm, and involvement with HIA BiH, have made the EDVACAY alumni group an invaluable segment of the HIA BiH educational programs, with some of them joining the HIA BiH Senior Fellow network.

This study features 15 profiles of alumni coming from all years of the program's implementation and from all across Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as some of their most successful projects. They shared their experiences and impressions from the program and how it has affected their education or career path.

This year marks the fifth year of the program, and we truly hope this tradition will carry on to new generations and continue inspiring others to be active and aware of the challenges in their local communities.

**4** years

**53** lecturers

**17** reoccurring

**58** alumni

**24** hometowns

**9** universities

**9** research mentors

**13** civic campaigns



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Encouraging Democratic Values and Active Citizenship among Youth (EDVACAY) is a project Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina has been implementing since 2012, with the generous support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) USA. The goal of the project is to encourage active citizenship among youth and enable young leaders to play a more significant role in promoting democratic values, human rights, and diversity among their peers. Each year, 15 young aspiring activists from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina gather to work together for seven months.

The program consists of several interconnected phases:

It begins with a NINE-DAY EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING aimed at fostering democratic values, critical thinking, and dialogue among participants. This phase introduces participants to different models of democracy, basic postulates of active citizenship and democratic political culture, and various important human rights concepts. Throughout this phase, participants discuss sensitive issues such as nationalism and identity, particularly in the local context. They participate in various interactive workshops, lectures and simulation games aimed at encouraging communication skills, dialogue and tolerance. This phase of the program also contains a practical aspect, with public speaking and social networking workshops. The last three days of the training are dedicated to a debate workshop to encourage critical thinking and discussion about current challenges in the domain of human rights. This phase prepares participants for the following one, with workshops on research techniques and the development of participants' research project ideas.

After returning to their hometowns, the participants start conducting INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH about issues and challenges they identify in their local communities, working with assigned research mentors.

Finally, the group meets again for a TRAINING ON PROJECT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, where they work in smaller groups to develop their own ideas, mostly addressing the issues they analyzed in the previous phase of the program. This phase results in four CIVIC CAMPAIGNS conducted by the participants over a three-month period.

## WRITING THE STUDY

The study was conducted throughout the period from July until September 2016. The interviewing process was carried out through semi-structured questionnaires with 15 alumni from all years of the project's implementation and coming from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The questionnaire addressed five main focus areas:

- the participants' civic engagement before and after their participation in EDVACAY (including work in NGOs and independent projects);
- continued participation in non-formal education programs and seminars;
- the potential benefits of participation in EDVACAY to their further education, activism and work;
- interaction with members of the EDVACAY network and the HIA BiH Senior Fellow network – either through projects, education or in different non-formal settings, and
- further involvement with HIA BiH through different projects.

The goal of the study was to research how participation in EDVACAY affected the alumni's activism and social engagement in their local communities and outside their work with Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina, how many of them are in touch with their colleagues from the program and whether they collaborated on other projects, as well as the impact their participation has had in their career development, in the fields of education and work.

We reached out to former coordinators of the program, as well as several lecturers and research mentors, and gathered their reflections and impressions about working on the program.

# HUMANITY IN ACTION

Poticanje  
demokratskih  
vrijednosti i aktivnog  
građanstva  
među mladima



UNIVERZITET U SARAJEVU



Ekonomski fakultet  
u Sarajevu













## JOVANA KLJAJIĆ

EDVACAY 2012/13

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Before participating in EDVACAY, Jovana had already been very active. She was the regional coordinator and PR of the Youth Council of Republika Srpska, a volunteer and assistant at the youth organization “Center” in her hometown of Mrkonjić Grad, the student representative of the 2nd year of studies at the Journalism and Communicology department of the University of Banja Luka Faculty of Political Science, as well as one of the founders and journalists for the enovosti.info online platform.

Jovana says her participation in EDVACAY was beneficial in more ways than one. The research aspect of EDVACAY proved to be very useful during her studies, since she conducted follow-up research at her university on the same topic, and consequently got an invitation from her professor to present her work at the StES (Students Encountering Science) international conference in 2013. Not long after completing the EDVACAY program, Jovana got a job at the Center for Investigative Reporting (CIN) in Sarajevo, where she stayed for six months and won two international awards for her work on a story about the mistreatment of children in foster families. She says her participation in EDVACAY was very useful when applying for this position, since CIN puts great emphasis on experience in writing research papers.

After working for the Youth Information Agency in Sarajevo, Jovana currently works as the PR Coordinator of the Coalition for Free and Fair Elections “Pod lupom” (“Under the Lens”), a coalition consisting of six NGOs from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, founded with the aim of implementing the project of civic, non-partisan observation of the General elections in 2014.

The group civic campaign Jovana worked on during her participation in the EDVACAY program was called “Mentor za bolju budućnost” (“A Mentor for a Better Future”). She and her colleagues organized a mentorship program for students at the University of Tuzla, in which they put students in touch with professionals who helped guide them in their desired career path. Jovana takes great pride in the fact that she herself can now mentor others – she worked on





*I am glad I was a part of this story.  
I think young people in Bosnia and  
Herzegovina would be at a great loss  
if this program ended.*

the “Putokazi novinarstva” (“Guideposts of Journalism”) project organized by the ONAuBiH (Youth Journalism Association in Bosnia and Herzegovina) local team in Banja Luka, after which she mentored participants who later turned to careers in journalism and PR. “I consider the fact I was there to point them in the right direction at the right moment a personal success”, says Jovana.

Jovana was both a lecturer and a research mentor in EDVACAY 2014/15, where she shared her experiences from investigative journalism in the first phase of the program, and later worked with five of the participants to help them complete their research papers. She has stayed in touch with both her own and the new generations of EDVACAY participants. In 2016, Jovana held a lecture on motivation, youth activism and her experiences for AIESEC at Aldin Bukvić’s (EDVACAY 2014/15) invitation. Today, Aldin also works as a long-term election observer for the Coalition “Pod lupom”, where Jovana also collaborated with Ilma Aljović, a fellow colleague from the first EDVACAY program.



## MINEL ABAZ

EDVACAY 2012/13

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Minel graduated from University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science, and is currently completing his MA studies at the CREOLE (Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes) program in Ljubljana and Vienna. Before starting EDVACAY in 2012, Minel had worked with the Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Sarajevo and was a part of the student evaluation team at his faculty. After completing the program, Minel has stayed an active member of the community. He was involved with the ID protests in 2013, and has helped organize the plenary assemblies of citizens that followed the February 2014 protests in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He was part of an ad hoc action of cleaning the Vraca Memorial Park in Sarajevo in May 2015, which sparked an organized effort of the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and AIESEC in August 2016. He has been an activist of the “Jer me se tiče” (“Because I Care”) initiative since 2013. He stated that, throughout many of his activities, he has had the opportunity to work and meet with members of the EDVACAY alumni network and several HIA Senior Fellows. Minel has written many texts for local web portals addressing numerous issues in Bosnian society, such as the BUKA magazine and the Mostar-based AbrašMEDIA web portal. He has also authored a text on civil disobedience for a Civitas BiH publication. “I think my participation in EDVACAY is useful as part of my education, as a reference and especially as a network of people”, says Minel. He emphasized that he has stayed in touch with many of the lecturers from the program, especially ones from the NGO sector, and he put great value on the personal network created among his fellow colleagues from the program.

After EDVACAY, Minel has continued his participation in various programs of non-formal education, such as the Zoran Đinđić Regional School of Political Philosophy in 2013 held in Belgrade, the British Council Active Citizens program, and the School of Political Studies organized by the Council of Europe. Minel is a Humanity in Action Senior Fellow from the 2014 program in Amsterdam. During his Fellowship, Minel co-authored an article about the commemoration of the Srebrenica genocide in the Netherlands.







## BERINA VERLAŠEVIĆ

EDVACAY 2013/14

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EDVACAY was the first time Berina decided to be active on her own. “I am an IB graduate, where we had the opportunity to volunteer as part of our curriculum, but I never did anything outside school”, says Berina. She attributes her current involvement in activism to her participation in the EDVACAY program.

Berina has stayed involved with Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina. After successful completion of EDVACAY in 2013, she participated in the five-day HIA Project on Peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina held in Prijedor in June 2014, and she became a Fellow of the inaugural HIA Summer Fellowship program in Sarajevo in June 2016.

After completing the EDVACAY training, Berina has also continued to participate in a series of other non-formal education programs, such as the Young Women’s Peace Academy organized by Kvinna till Kvinna from Sweden, or participating in the Youth Exchange Program held in Croatia, focusing on religion and learning about other cultures. She also dedicates a large portion of her time to volunteer work: she has volunteered at the local office of Cultural Heritage without Borders, as well as their camp on regional restoration, which finally led to a year-long

internship at the organization. She participated in the European Voluntary Service program in Croatia for two weeks. Her NGO affiliation is currently mostly with Youth Power in Mostar, where she recently worked on the creation of the Creative Wall in Mostar in September 2016.

*"I will always remeber EDVACAV as a very successful program. I always compare it to all the other programs I attend, and it is just not the same."*

*"It was through HIA that I found out how to continue being active. I learned about new options, I built friendships and created valuable contacts."*











## MAHIR SIJAMIJA

EDVACAY 2013/14


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Mahir had no activism track record before starting EDVACAY in 2013, but this started changing with his participation in the program. After successful completion of EDVACAY, he became involved with Forum lijeve inicijative (Forum of the Left Initiative), Youth Initiative for Human Rights, the Student Association at the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science, and he initiated the founding of the CD Club at the same faculty. Through his work in the CD Club, Mahir has worked on many projects. One of the most notable ones was the CDMUN, a Model UN simulation on climate changes held at his faculty. As the organizer of the simulation, Mahir also worked with Daniel Lazarević (EDVACAY 2014/15 participant) and Haris Drljević (EDVACAY 2015/16 participant), who were involved as project assistants. Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina was also one of the supporters of this event, showing the commitment to the alumni's continuing involvement in the local community after the end of the project.

“Through participation in EDVACAY, I learned a lot about project management, I overcame the fear of public speaking and

used the acquired debating skills to start a debate club at my own faculty”, says Mahir. Besides starting a debate club, he has remained involved in many other activities at the faculty through the CD Club, and took part in several research projects.

He has also continued his non-formal education: he participated in several programs on social justice organized by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, as well as took part in the regional Model International Criminal Court for Western Balkans simulation for university students organized by Humanity in Action BiH with partner organizations from Serbia and Croatia.



*"I met many new people who I can turn to for advice, and I can utilize the network to work on future initiatives with other young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina."*



## MATEA JEVRIĆ

EDVACAY 2013/14

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After participation in EDVACAY, Matea has continued to be an active member of her community. Her activism is largely dedicated to working with children. She takes great pride in the fact she even started her own business “Lola klaunovi” (Lola Clowns), and secured jobs for several young people, with whom she also participates in different humanitarian actions and events, including work with the Egyptian Village Orphanage in Mostar. She is also a part of a non-formal group of young people in Mostar which organizes regular visits to the hospital for children. Matea holds a stipend from the Bosana Foundation, which requires its recipients to organize initiatives in their communities. She organized a workshop for children from the Egyptian Village Orphanage and students from an elementary school from the other side of the divided city of Mostar, bringing them together in order to break prejudice through getting to know each other better.

Matea was a panelist at the Adriatic Youth Forum held in Sarajevo in September 2016. She said the organizers contacted her after reading the research paper she wrote for EDVACAY, which is still available online. Her colleague from the program, Lana Bećiragić, was also one of the panelists at the event.

Continuing to advance her non-formal education experience, Matea is this year’s participant of the SHL (Schüler Helfen Leben ) Academy, a non-formal education program for 20 young activists from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of several educational trainings and a two-month long practice.

*“Besides skills development,  
EDVACAY helped me broaden  
my horizons and form close  
friendships.”*





## ALDIN VRŠKIĆ

EDVACAY 2013/14

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Aldin Vrškić promoting the 'Ja bih drugačije u BiH' civic campaign in 2014

EDVACAY had a life-changing impact on Aldin, influencing him to change his career focus. "I was studying business and economics, and now I am a student of political science. Through discussions with my colleagues from the program and the lecturers, I realized another vocation would be better for me".

The civic campaign group project Aldin was working on was called "Ja bih drugačije u BiH" ("Wishing For a Different B&H") and it focused on creating a collection of stories of representatives from different minorities about overcoming obstacles in our society. "I worked on a similar project afterwards as well, but it was not focused on only the positive examples", says Aldin. Besides staying in touch with his colleagues, Aldin had the opportunity to continue working within the EDVACAY network. At the invitation of Miloš Macura, fellow alumnus from the program, Aldin traveled to Banja Luka to work as a trainer on a program Miloš was coordinating. "I truly believe in the cooperation of youth – in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the entire region as well", says Aldin.

He now works in the NGO "Naša djeca" ("Our Children") in his hometown of Zenica, where he mostly focuses on working with children and youth. Five years ago, his organization started the first community radio in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and he focuses on working with young people who show interest in radio and media in general. He was involved in the organization of many local workshops and has worked on several international projects.

*"I still talk regularly to most of my colleagues from the program, even though it ended in 2013. We meet whenever I visit the cities they live in."*

*"The most useful part of the program was the networking. We would spend time together even outside the scheduled program activities"*









## ARNES ŽABIĆ

EDVACAY 2013/14

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After participating in EDVACAY, Arnes has continued to be a part of the Youth Association in his local community of Poljice which he founded with his friends. He has also remained active as a volunteer at a local humanitarian organization and also collaborates with them through a partnership with the Youth Association. Through his engagement with the association, Arnes was involved in building a beach volleyball court at Modrac lake, which has been fully functional for the past two years. His association has even organized tournaments at the court, gathering 21 teams this year. He was a participant of a student exchange summer program focused on exploring human rights and dealing with the past, organized at the American University in Kosovo in 2014.

Along with Aldin Vrškić and Berina Verlašević, Arnes worked on the “Ja bih drugačije u BiH” (“Wishing for a Different BiH”) campaign, focusing on collecting stories about the position of minorities living in different micro-societies of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Arnes has emphasized the role EDVACAY has played as a reference in his CV, especially because it showed his commitment to many different components of a longer program. He still keeps in touch with his colleagues from the program, especially with Lana Bečiragić, with whom he currently collaborates as part of the Erasmus Student Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while working on his efforts to form a section of the organization in Tuzla.



Aldin Bukvić at the Student Cookbook event (EDVACAY 2015/16)

## ALDIN BUKVIĆ

EDVACAY 2014/15

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When talking about the benefits of participating in EDVACAY, Aldin mostly focused on the skills he acquired while preparing the civic campaign he worked on. The “Moja aplikacija je prihvaćena” (“My Application Has Been Accepted”) project consisted of organizing workshops in several high schools across the country, about writing CVs, motivational letters and completing applications for universities and scholarships. “Thanks to EDVACAY and the civic campaign we implemented, I myself learned how to write a CV and a motivational letter, which has been very useful when preparing different applications and volunteering at different organizations”, says Aldin.

Aldin has been an active member of AIESEC Sarajevo even before his participation in EDVACAY, working on different initiatives and projects. Through his involvement with the local branch of AIESEC, Aldin has collaborated with Olivera Šebić, fellow EDVACAY alumna. He has stayed involved with Humanity in Action through working with the 2015/16 “Student Cookbook” civic campaign which dealt with the low living standard of University of Sarajevo students.

He has also worked as a long-term observer of Coalition “Pod lupom” (“Under the Lens”) at the 2016 local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where he professionally connected with Jovana Kljajić, 2012/13 EDVACAY alumna and PR Coordinator of the Coalition.

*“The program is great, especially for people who are just starting to become active. You can learn about teamwork and organization skills, and – most importantly – connect with people from the HIA network.”*



The logo for 'Community in Action' is displayed on a white banner. The word 'COMMUNITY' is in black, with a red triangle above the 'A'. 'IN' is in a smaller black font. 'ACTION' is in black, with a red triangle above the 'A'.

COMMUNITY IN  
ACTION

A white name tag with a subtle geometric pattern is placed on the table. It features the name 'SINIŠA' in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

SINIŠA







## DANIEL LAZAREVIĆ


EDVACAY 2014/15

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Daniel came to the EDVACAY program as a young and inexperienced activist. After completing several phases of the program, he takes great pride in having worked on the group civic campaign “Jesi li za kino?” (“Interested in Cinema?”) in Goražde in 2015. “The goal was to attract the citizens of Goražde, especially young people, and raise awareness about the lack of cinemas in their town. We organized a movie screening, followed by a small concert and a barbecue. We were even joined by five activists from Goražde who helped us organize everything. After our screening, several additional ones were organized as part of a travelling cinema. Unfortunately, the project was not supported by the local authorities, and it proved difficult to organize further screenings on a regular basis”, says Daniel. Yet this did not discourage him from pursuing other interests in promoting human rights and democracy among youth.

Along with Haris Drljević (EDVACAY 2015/16), Daniel joined the team organizing the Model UN (CDMUN) team as a project assistant, organized at the faculty by Mahir Sijamija, 2013/14 EDVACAY alumnus. Daniel is an active member of the Association of Students of the University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science. In 2015, Daniel reached out to the Humanity in Action Sarajevo office and expressed his willingness to participate in the program again, this time as an intern. He actively contributed to the development and implementation of the 2015/16 program, as well as volunteered on other HIA BiH projects. Recognizing his contribution and potential, Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina offered





him a position as Project Assistant, where he has been working since February 2016. Besides working on EDVACAY, Daniel was part of the organizational team of the inaugural HIA Summer Fellowship program in Sarajevo in June 2016, and participated in the HIA International Conference in Athens which followed the program.

*"The project helped me broaden my horizons. I could also use many things I had learned in my formal education, as well as in preparing projects outside HIA."*



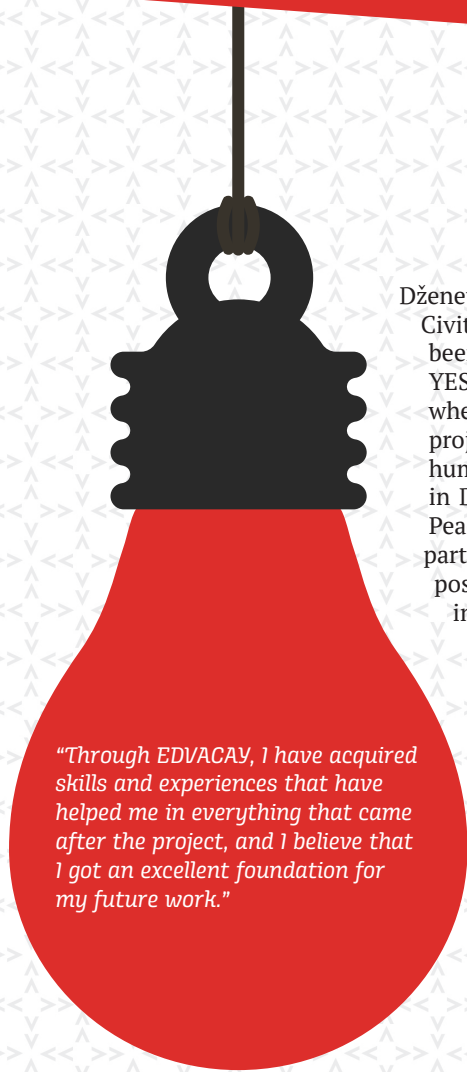
## DŽENETA BEGIĆ

EDVACAY 2014/15

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Dženeta joined the EDVACAY program in 2014. When discussing the impact of the program, she emphasized the importance of its individual research phase. “Writing a paper for EDVACAY was the first time I wrote something with an assigned mentor, and I realized it is not an easy task, and that you have to go through several phases in order to create something worth presenting. Having a mentor was of great value, and I learned through my mistakes how to avoid them in the future”, says Dženeta. Along with the group of four other colleagues, she travelled to several cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to educate high school students about the dangers of using the internet irresponsibly and without supervision. After speaking at the organized sessions, Dženeta received excellent feedback from the students she worked with.

Inspired by her participation in EDVACAY, Dženeta applied and became a Humanity in Action Fellow in the 2016 Copenhagen program. During her Fellowship, she actively participated in various activities related to LGBTQI rights and interned at a local NGO. She has also participated in the HIA International Conference in Athens, where she shared her impressions and experience with colleagues from other HIA Summer Fellowship programs.



Dženeta's activism experience started with Civitas BiH in 2009. Since 2012, she has been a member of the Kennedy-Lugar YES Exchange Alumni Association, where she has worked on a number of projects related to youth activism and human rights. As an exchange student in Dayton and a recipient of the Dayton Peace Accords scholarship in 2015/16, she participated in a training which led to a position as a facilitator for interracial and interethnic dialogue at the university.

*"Through EDVACAY, I have acquired skills and experiences that have helped me in everything that came after the project, and I believe that I got an excellent foundation for my future work."*











## MILAN TODOROVIĆ

Daniel, Milan and Mirza (2014/15 participants)  
at the EDVACAY 2015/16 closing ceremony

EDVACAY 2014/15

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Milan came to the EDVACAY program having had extensive experience in youth activism, which he gained as a member of the Youth Association “Nautilus” in Sarajevo. Though he was experienced in working with youth in the field of human rights, the program gave Milan more opportunities to advance his knowledge and connect with other young people focused on the same goals. He says he regularly uses what he learned through the program in his work.

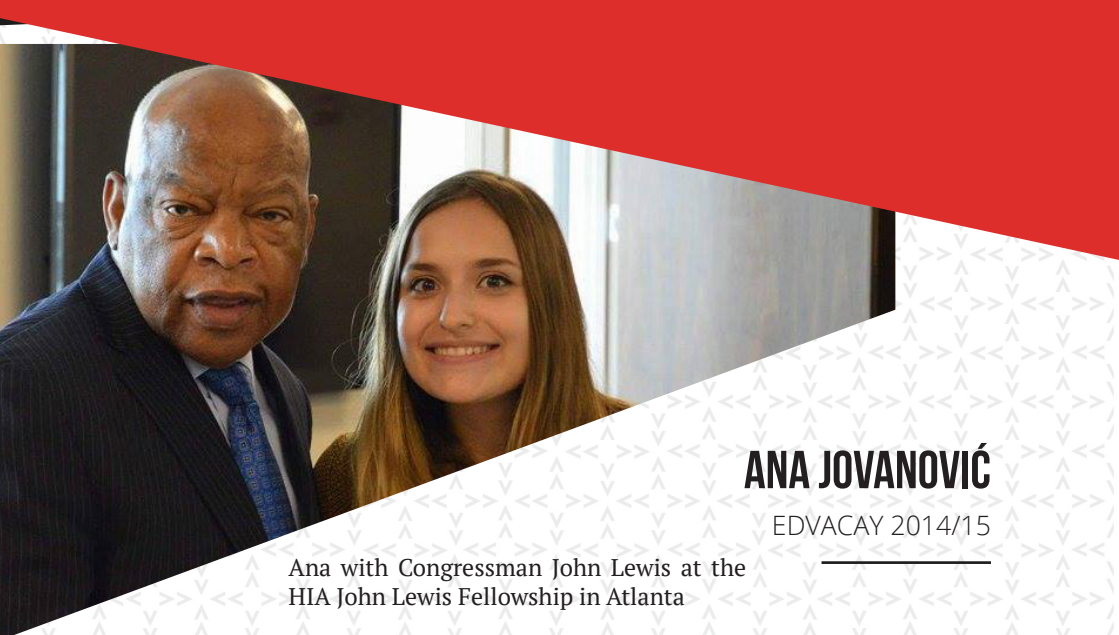
After completing EDVACAY, Milan has continued attending other non-formal education programs dealing with human rights, e.g. at the Institute for Youth Development KULT in Sarajevo, PRONI Center for Youth Development in Brčko, the Novo Sarajevo Youth Council, and the Youth Organization “Carpe Diem”.

He stated he had initiated many other projects after the completion of EDVACAY, such as “Prijatelj i prijateljica bez granica” (“Friends Without Borders”), the promotion of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, “Uči, misli, djeluj” (“Learn, Think, Act”) and “Demokracija uživo!” (“Democracy Live!”).

His experience of participating in the HIA program also inspired his colleagues from the association where he works, such as Amina Pirić (EDVACAY 2015/16), to apply.

*“My participation in the project benefits me through the people I had the opportunity I meet and the interesting topics we analyzed.”*





## ANA JOVANOVIĆ

EDVACAY 2014/15

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Ana with Congressman John Lewis at the  
HIA John Lewis Fellowship in Atlanta

A young student of French language and literature from Sarajevo, Ana said her participation in EDVACAY has helped her as a reference in her CV, especially because of her involvement in the implementation of a group civic campaign as part of the project, and that it was of great value when she applied for and subsequently received a scholarship for an Erasmus exchange program in Warsaw. Ana says she has plans to restart the implementation of the civic campaign she worked on with Aldin Bukvić in EDVACAY in cooperation with other colleagues from the program, and that they have been in contact with different organizations. In the year following her participation in EDVACAY, Ana became a Humanity in Action Fellow and attended the John Lewis Fellowship program held in Atlanta, hosted by the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, where she had the opportunity to learn about the civil rights movement as part of a group of 30 American and European university students. The fellowship revolved around visiting historical sites around Atlanta and engaging in discussions on a range of political and social issues. Key areas of inquiry included race and racism, immigration, national identity, Native American issues and the relationship between civil rights and human rights.

After completing EDVACAY, Ana has been an active member of AIESEC Sarajevo, Erasmus Student Network Bosnia and Herzegovina, and she completed an internship at Minority Rights Group International. Ana has also continued her non-formal education through a series of round tables held in the region which focused on dealing with the past organized by the Swiss Helsinki Committee. She is in the process of planning a project with a non-formal group of participants of these sessions which would gather youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia and provide a platform for dialogue on the past.





## LAMIJA JAMAK

EDVACAY 2015/16

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Lamija came to EDVACAY the year after she received a scholarship of the YES Program of the Embassy of the United States of America. She says the system of volunteering she had the opportunity to observe during her 10-month exchange in the United States changed her views and inspired her to become an active volunteer at the American Council and the YES Alumni Association, where she started working on her own projects, ranging from fundraising for a safe house for women in Sarajevo, to awareness raising campaigns. The most recent project she worked on was organizing a screening of five movies about women who break stereotypes by working jobs usually associated with men, under the slogan “A što ne bi mogle?” (“And Why Couldn’t They?”). Lamija was also involved with the AFS high school exchange program, where she worked with young people from different countries.

“During the first phase of the program, we talked about problems we face every day and the ones we could face when trying to change something. I liked the fact that we could talk to people who have already changed something, and they haven’t left the country”, states Lamija.

Later on, Lamija joined a group of four in initiating a civic campaign which produced a “Student Cookbook”, a collection of improvised low-cost recipes of local students and started a petition for opening the first student-friendly restaurant in Sarajevo. Now, as an exchange

student of the Mevlana program at an university in Antalya, Lamija maintains: "After everything, I think this was definitely time well spent – I have acquired many skills that I can keep using, and I have met many people with whom I can collaborate later and visit them in their cities all across the country. This is amazing. I am trying to keep these friendships, because we spent so much time together".

*"I know that many young people say "we don't have enough opportunities, the state is ruining us", but I also know that there are NGOs like Humanity in Action who can educate youth to become better individuals within the society."*

*"I really like the fact that the program includes people from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that we can break stereotypes and borders that the society imposes on us. It is really important to work together on these projects and focus on what is important: making our community a better place."*

*"I like how all the program activities made us stay active. I had the opportunity to send two letters to my municipality administration and ask for explanations. The program helped me explore and research what goes on around me."*



## AMINA PIRIĆ

EDVACAY 2015/16

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"Before starting EDVACAY, I was a member of the Youth Association Nautilus, where I have been working in finances. I was not active. I was scared to do something, because I didn't know what I could or couldn't do", says Amina.

Amina says she has focused on one particular problem in her local community starting from her application for the program: the inadequate garbage disposal system in her neighborhood. "People say this subject is not important, but I think it is really worth the effort. Humanity in Action is where I started taking steps to change something. I had the opportunity to send a letter to my Municipality, and to get a response from them. I realized I can do something myself, and not only wait for somebody else to make a change." This is why Amina decided to run for the Municipality Council of Novi Grad in Sarajevo in the local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2016, and has proposed the formation of a local committee of her party in her neighborhood. She plans to present the possible solutions for the issue backed up by the research she conducted for her policy brief during the second phase of EDVACAY 2015/16, and to make it an important part of her political activism.

After EDVACAY, Amina participated in a non-formal education program in Trento, where she discussed various issues with youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy and Spain. As for the education she got through EDVACAY, she talked about the impact of the first phase of the program, how it inspired her to take initiative in the organization where she works, and to take the opportunity to create and conduct a workshop for others herself. Amina stated she would have liked the project to have designated more time for working on the civic campaign and making a greater impact. "I wish there was another segment of the program through which we could continue working on the campaign. It really helped me a lot to start something myself, but it is always easier when someone has your back. However, I know I can always count on the support of Humanity in Action whenever I may need it in my future work."





## EMELA FAZLIĆ

EDVACAY 2015/16

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Emela came to the program as an active member of AIESEC Sarajevo. She considers her participation in EDVACAY fruitful for her career development, especially because the program was focused on educating youth about democracy. During the program, she applied for an internship in the project development department of a local youth organization, and she believes her participation in a project that contained an educational component on project management was very useful


Emela, together with her colleagues from Mostar and Donji Vakuf, worked on an awareness-raising campaign as part of EDVACAY, focusing on animal rights and the need to ban testing cosmetics on animals. They attracted huge support during their organized presentation in the main pedestrian street in Sarajevo. The group is still in contact with local drugstores and is trying to introduce a labelling system for cruelty-free products.

After EDVACAY, Emela was a part of a project team that brought students from local countries to participate in the marketing campaign for the promotion of the Sarajevo War Tunnel, Vraca Memorial Park and the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Emela also attended various student exchange programs and conferences in Germany, Poland and Turkey, where she collaborated with a local university at a summer camp for learning English.

*"This was a truly wonderful and interesting experience. I felt like I could change the world."*



## REFLECTIONS BY FORMER COORDINATORS

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and a watch, is sitting in a black armchair. She has her hands clasped in her lap and is looking towards the camera. Behind her is a large banner with a red and white geometric design. The banner contains text in both English and Croatian. In the foreground, a wooden table holds a white cup and a white napkin.

Poticanje  
demokratskih  
vrijednosti i aktivnog  
građanstva  
među mladima





## DAJANA DŽINDO

EDVACAY 2012/13 Project Coordinator

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“It was a great pleasure to coordinate the first edition of the EDVACAY program, where I worked with 15 young people from all across Bosnia and Herzegovina. The participants showed great interest for studying and working from the very first program activities. I believe that this was the first opportunity for many of the participants to spend a lot of time with their peers from other parts of the country and, as they had witnessed themselves, to break many prejudice that they had. I consider this the greatest success of the program. Furthermore, I am happy to say that the contact among the participants, as well as with some of the lecturers, remained even after the program, and that I could see young people from the first generation of the program taking active roles in their communities through government, non-government and international organizations and projects.”



## AIDA SALČIĆ

EDVACAY 2013/14 Project Coordinator

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“From the outset of the EDVACAY project, I knew it was going to be a transformative experience, both for me as a project coordinator and for the students participating in the project. Namely, on the first day of the Education and Skills Development Training, we discussed the participants’ reasons for taking part in the project and it was then that I saw first-hand what a bright, motivated group of young people it was, eager to learn and become more active, but just didn’t have the know-how to do so. Working with these young people over the course of 10 months and watching them become active citizens and critical thinkers equipped with useful transferable skills (e.g., debating and constructing an argument, or doing research) was an extremely rewarding experience, both personally and professionally. Even though it was the participants who wrote evaluations at the end of the project, saying how empowering and inspiring it was, it was they who inspired me as a project coordinator, solely with their enthusiasm and willingness to learn and take action and now I can truly say that I am proud to have been part of such a positive and constructive initiative. Naturally, during the project, I bonded with the participants and I still check up on them from time to time to see what kind of activities they are conducting and to share the opportunities (e.g., trainings, calls for project funding, etc.) that are available in B&H and abroad. I also encouraged them to keep in touch with Humanity in Action BiH if they have any project ideas or initiatives they’d like to implement or simply to stay close to the HIA community whenever they need assistance and inspiration from other active young people in the country.”



## INGA KOTLO


EDVACAY 2014/15 Project Coordinator

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“Having been a Project Coordinator for EDVACAY meant that I had the opportunity to interact with 14 aspiring and competent students from different towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Supporting their development over the course of seven months, focusing particularly on assisting them in acquiring knowledge about democracy, human rights and youth activism, supervising them while conducting social research and identifying obstacles for youth participation in local communities, as well as equipping them with the know-how in project development and management resulted in creation of 14 individual research papers and implementation of three group projects. The can-do and will-do spirit that was triggered during the EDVACAY program seems to have remained: on numerous occasions after the project, the participants happily reported that they cooperate in different networks, organizations and youth initiatives. These include: Erasmus Student Network, AIESEC, Sarajevski Otvoreni Centar, Mreža omladinskih banaka MOBA (Fondacija Mozaik), Udruženje mladih Nautilus, “Sposobnim, a ne podobnim” initiative, different debate clubs and competitions, as well as the “host” organization Humanity in Action BiH where two 2014/15 participants have volunteered. Furthermore, I was happy to learn that our participants contribute to the level of student mobility in BiH - three participants informed me about their study exchange programs - to Poland, Czech Republic and USA.

The communication between the participants and myself continues to occur





periodically, chiefly in moments when participants wish to share great news about their achievements, or seek assistance, advice and letters of recommendations, as well as when either myself or the participants have information about interesting and useful professional opportunities. Such a lasting productive and sharing environment and the fact that our participants are notably active in different fields and locations brings optimism and faith in youth and their ability to create a better society for themselves and future generations. In addition, it brings the feeling of joy and accomplishment to the project's personnel because, for many of our participants, EDVACAY was the first project they ever participated in, or in other words, it was the very first stop in their journey to active citizenship.”

# REFLECTIONS BY LECTURERS AND RESEARCH MENTORS



## NEVERBALNA KOMUNIKACIJA

kožnjaj tijela, kontakt očima, gestikulacija, govor, ton  
mo li tumačiti neverbalne znakove?  
mo li kontrolirati svoj jezik tijela?

šivanje govornika  
erancija  
vuljanje za reč  
kasni - peval  
le space - svako iwa  
sug stali  
mentovana rasprava  
stikulacija misli  
ktivnost

Dijana ĐUVNIAK





## SORAĐA ZAGIĆ

EDVACAY Lecturer and former  
EDVACAY Program Intern

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“The EDVACAY program represents a unique opportunity for students from all across Bosnia and Herzegovina to go through an entire project cycle and gain their first experiences in the implementation of their own projects. For many of them, this program is the first opportunity to participate in an educational program, and to meet leading experts from different fields in a friendly atmosphere. This is also an excellent platform for the exchange of thought and ideas about the political and social challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with an entirely new approach to the study of these issues. An especially important part of the program is that it gives young people an opportunity to implement a real project, and to contribute to their local community. The most important part of the program is meeting youth from different cities who are all going through similar things, which helps them learn from each other and to inspire and motivate one another. Through my experience as one of the organizers, and later a lecturer at the program, I witnessed the young participants reach new levels of maturity and empowerment. This program has definitely shown that young people are motivated, innovative, that they can employ critical thinking and they can tackle all problems when they are given the opportunity to do so.”

# HUMANITY IN ACTION



## DIJANA DUVNJAK

EDVACAY Lecturer

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“Working on the program always involved working with good groups, which later showed through their engagement in various fields of work. It seems that everything in the program works just right, and we know it’s not easy to take care of all the details. It would be good to keep making sure that the program has a certain chronology, so that the participants can use the acquired knowledge and experience from previous phases of the program as they proceed with its course. Good luck with future programs!”



## MARIJANA MARKOTIĆ

EDVACAY Lecturer and Research Mentor

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“I have participated as a lecturer and as a research mentor during the 2015/16 implementation of the EDVACAY program. Youth, university level-students I worked with all exhibited great skill in grasping some of the complex themes discussed during the lectures, as well as during the process of preparing their policy briefs. Although our recommendation was to focus on small scale initiatives that could potentially have a positive effect in their local communities, some of the participants showed more interest in dealing with more complex and abstract issues. This was an indicator that, although they generally are more prone to defining general outcomes, they need to be guided to define their work at the output level in more detail. Generally, the project team did a fantastic job, and the students showed great motivation in dealing with a variety of issues. My recommendation would be to continue working with the group and further their capacities, in order to ensure that we have a new generation of active young citizens who are capable and willing to deal with local level challenges that lie ahead.”





## MAID KONJHODŽIĆ

EDVACAY Lecturer

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“As a three-time lecturer at the EDVACAY program, I had an immense honor and pleasure to participate in such an inspiring and diverse program that focuses on youth development and engagement. Thanks to EDVACAY, the youth receives a theoretical background followed by discussions and debates; but the ultimate goal is to inspire them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in order to implement their current or future ideas that benefit their local communities. As a part of my lectures, I had a chance to discuss the importance and the impact of social networks on global political events with the participants. We used this platform as a foundation for discussing potential usage of social networks for youth empowerment, in order for the participants to properly understand the (dis)advantages of using social networks. The discussion, and the subsequent communication I had with several participants, was underlined by creative examples that were used to promote their activities and create a larger impact, especially when it comes to their own projects conducted within EDVACAY. Through the organizational support of the HIA Staff and the follow-up mini-project the attendees implement at the end of EDVACAY, they are becoming more active and directly involved in creation of solutions that tackle local issues, thus supporting and improving their local communities and learning how to contribute to the society in a direct and efficient manner. Considering that such programs are not that common in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the true value of EDVACAY shines through the fact that it targets youth that is either on the verge of getting involved in the civil society organizations, but also the youth who wants to share their ideas and enthusiasm in order to inspire a willingness to change something in their immediate surroundings. Therefore, participation in the EDVACAY is a strong bet on the future – a future where youth is not as static, uninspired and powerless as it seems to be, but more empowered, effective and invested into the life of local community and the society in general.”

## CIVIC CAMPAIGNS

Throughout the four years of the program, there have been a total of 13 civic campaigns initiated by the participants, ranging from awareness raising campaigns to street actions. Here are some of the most successful examples.

### **“Ja bih drugačije u BiH” (“Wishing for a Different BiH”)**

**Lana Bečiragić, Jasmina Karahasanović, Berina Verlašević, Aldin Vrškić and Arnes Žabić, EDVACAY 2013/14**

The project revolved around a collection of short stories by representatives of different minority groups and their daily struggles, including stories by a young Roma woman and her experiences during her university studies and a transgender man living in Sarajevo. The group organized three promotional events in Sarajevo, Tuzla, and Zenica, accompanied by photo exhibitions.

“I only recognized the importance of this collaboration when some time had passed after the completion of the project. We worked great together, and nobody would get upset at the others, or try to avoid completing their assignments. The fact we were not in the same cities at the time did not matter at all. I am deeply convinced I could implement another project with the members of my group today. All of us have remained active.” – Berina Verlašević

### **“Jesi li za kino?” (“Interested in Cinema?”)**

**Tarik Alić, Adi Bebanić, Daniel Lazarević, Arnela Maglić and Olivera Šebić EDVACAY 2014/15**

The goal of the project was to attract the young citizens of Goražde and raise awareness about the lack of cinema in their town. The group organized a movie screening, followed by a small concert, and a barbecue. Additionally, they had the support of five activists from Goražde who helped with the organization. After the initial screening, several other were organized as part of a travelling cinema.

### **“Studentska kuharica” (“Student Cookbook”)**

**Lamija Jamak, Iman Krnjić, Amina Pirić and Nikola Xaviereff**  
**EDVACAY 2015/16**

The group created a collection of recipes for improvised and inexpensive dishes University of Sarajevo students resort to, as well as their personal testimonies, aiming to illustrate the easy and affordable ways students live in dorms. They recreated the dishes and took photographs for the booklet, featuring the price of necessary ingredients and the time required to prepare each dish. The group started an online petition addressed to the competent local authorities, aimed at opening a student cafeteria or restaurant in Sarajevo, which would offer student-friendly meal prices. The group worked closely with Aldin Bukvić, EDVACAY 2014/15 participant and Samir Beharić, member of the Humanity in Action Senior Fellow network.





# LIST OF EDVACAY ALUMNI

2012/13

Minel Abaz  
Mubera Ademović  
Ilma Aljović  
Denis Bartulović  
Snježana Čeho  
Nađa Huković  
Jovana Kljajić  
Merima Mahmić  
Milana Marinović  
Tin Marković  
Esma Osmanbegović  
Zlatko Sofović  
Salem Suljić  
Matej Vrebac

2013/14

Lana Bečiragić  
Eldin Begić  
Nina Dosenović  
Jasmina Karahasanović  
Matea Jevrić  
Ammar Liđan  
Miloš Macura  
Đorđe Ostić  
Srđan Pavić  
Mahir Sijamija  
Sanel Tufekčić  
Berina Verlašević  
Aldin Vrškić  
Arneta Zečević  
Arnes Žabić

2014/15

Šejla Agić  
Tarik Alić  
Adi Bebanić  
Dženeta Begić  
Aldin Bukvić  
Mirza Halilčević  
Ana Jovanović  
Daniel Lazarević  
Arneta Maglić  
Sabahudin Mujkić  
Lejla Mušanović  
Petar Rajković  
Olivera Šebić  
Milan Todorović

2015/16

Nevena Brkić  
Samira Čirić  
Haris Drljević  
Emela Fazlić  
Lamija Jamak  
Meliha Kovačević  
Muhamed Kozlica  
Iman Krnjić  
Naila Malkić  
Amra Mešić  
Barbara Mijatović  
Siniša Pećanac  
Amina Pirić  
Tamara Tešnjak  
Nikola Xaviereff

# LIST OF LECTURERS AND PARTICIPANTS OF PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Professor Dino Abazović, Ph.D., University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science  
Professor Jasna Bakšić-Muftić, Ph.D., University of Sarajevo Faculty of Law  
Professor Sabina Čehajić-Clancy, Ph.D., Sarajevo School of Science and Technology  
Dennis Gratz, Ph.D., Attorney-at-Law, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology  
Professor Dženana Husremović, Ph.D., University of Sarajevo Faculty of Philosophy  
Professor Midhat Izmirlija, Ph.D., University of Sarajevo Faculty of Law  
Professor Asim Mujkić, Ph.D., University of Sarajevo Faculty of Political Science  
Professor Enes Osmančević, Ph.D., University of Tuzla Faculty of Philosophy  
Professor Lamija Tanović, Ph.D., Sarajevo School of Science and Technology  
Elijas Tauber, Ph.D., Jewish Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Damir Banović, University of Sarajevo Faculty of Law  
Samir Beharić\*, University of Sarajevo student and activist  
Tijana Bjeljac\*, University of Banja Luka student  
Stela Braje, HERMES Croatia  
Darko Brkan, “Zašto ne?”  
Sabina Ćudić, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology  
Dijana Duvnjak, Foundation 787  
Dajana Džindo\*, Foundation 787  
Semra Forić, University of Sarajevo student  
Malik Garibija, University of Sarajevo student  
Jasmin Hasić\*, Humanity in Action BiH  
Dino Ibišbegović, Open Communication Belgrade  
Nedim Jahić, Youth Initiative for Human Rights BiH  
Ana Jugo\*, University of Graz and University of Mostar student  
Ivana Kešić, CIVITAS BiH  
Jovana Kljajić, Coalition “Pod lupom”  
Maid Konjhodžić\*, MICC  
Inga Kotlo\*, American Corner Mostar  
Jan Zlatan Kulenović, Social Innovation Incubator “Munja”  
Lamija Landžo\*, HIA Alumni  
Saša Madacki, University of Sarajevo Human Rights Center  
Elma Mahmutović\*, United World College Mostar  
Marijana Markotić\*, HIA Alumni  
Marko Matović\*, N1 Television  
Maida Omerćehajić\*, Humanity in Action BiH  
Valdet Peštalić, trainer and consultant

Armela Ramić, Law Office of Dr. Nedim Ademović  
Ljubiša Rokić, trainer  
Ivan Rozić, Association Plus  
Denis Rudonja, debate trainer  
Aida Salčić\*, University of Groningen MA student  
Kenan Salihbegović, Community Management Consultant  
Aida Salketić, Cultural Heritage without Borders BiH  
Marija Simić, Open Communication Belgrade  
Kerim Somun\*, Youth Initiative for Human Rights BiH  
Nina Šeremet, Youth Initiative for Human Rights BiH  
Mladen Šuleić, Open Communication Belgrade  
Aiša Telalović, Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH  
Milan Vignjević, Open Communication Belgrade  
Soraja Zagić\*, forumZFD BiH  
Ilda Zornić Halilović, International University of Sarajevo  
Neda Živanović, University of Belgrade

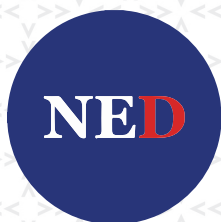
\* marks a member of the Humanity in Action Senior Fellow network



## OUR PARTICIPANTS CAME FROM...



# HUMANITY IN ACTION



UNIVERSITY OF SARAJEVO



School of Economics  
and Business