

**2022-2023**  
**ANNUAL**  
**REPORT**

# rotary youth exchange



# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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## A MESSAGE FROM 2022-23 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT JENNIFER JONES

I'd like to begin this letter with a very large thank-you to each of you for your passion, your perseverance, and your dedication to Rotary Youth Exchange.

We know that young people's lives are enriched and enhanced when they are introduced to new languages, cultures, and experiences — to broaden their view of the world and help them develop.

It is a testament to your commitment and resilience that Rotary Youth Exchange survived the COVID-19 pandemic. We learned that even with obstacles and hardships, our exchanges remain a vital part of Rotary's DNA. And through virtual exchanges, we were able to grow and learn how to be adaptive.

We also became more appreciative of the fact that, if we want our youth-focused programs to continue growing, our young leaders must play an active role in crafting their own future. We have learned to listen more to what they have to say, and therefore we have crafted stronger bonds of trust.

I'm proud to say that during my term as president, we supported the formation of the Youth Advisory Council, which continues to amplify the voices of our young leaders. The council gathers program participants, alumni, and member leaders with experience in Interact, RYLA, and Rotary Youth Exchange to advise our Board of Directors on how to improve our youth programs.

It's so important that we take direction from the young people whose lives we are trying to enrich through these programs. That's why the spirit of Rotary's new approach to youth service is grounded in "youth voice." By giving the Youth Advisory Council a seat at the table to directly advise the Board of Directors, we are affirming that we take our young leaders and their contributions seriously.

The Youth Advisory Council has already made progress by updating our resources to make them more inclusive to better meet the needs of our participants.

Listening to our young people is how we create diverse and inclusive spaces that empower those who are most invested in our work to help set the direction of our youth-oriented programs. This is especially important for Rotary Youth Exchange.

Like Rotary members, our students, volunteers, and host families come from a wide variety of backgrounds. Many have their own unique cultural identities. By promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, we are helping ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

The unfortunate reality is that there are places in the world that do not readily accept people who differ from the local majority — whether by background, religion, sexual orientation, or skin color.

What Rotary Youth Exchange does best is promote understanding and break down barriers between peoples and cultures. But until we realize our vision of peace and acceptance, it's up to us to make sure all our participants receive the best experience possible, regardless of who they are or where they are.

Rotary International's work, and the work of the Youth Advisory Council, are exciting next steps on our journey toward a more welcoming and inclusive future. I can only imagine how our young leaders will continue to shape Rotary in the years ahead, but I'm convinced we got a glimpse of it with the Youth Advisory Council and through the thousands of exchanges that occurred in the 2022-23 Rotary year.

I encourage you to continue to elevate youth voice in your clubs, districts, and zones. When young people have a voice, it can help ensure that our programs for young leaders include new or underrepresented voices so we can bring these life-changing experiences to even more young people.

Thank you again for everything you have done to sustain Rotary Youth Exchange. Because of you, we can look forward to many more years of helping young people realize their full potential.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Jones", with a stylized, flowing script.

Jennifer Jones  
Rotary International President, 2022-23

# 2022-23 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



**468**

districts certified to participate  
in Rotary Youth Exchange  
356 districts actively participated

**3,741**

participating  
Rotary clubs

**127**

countries and territories certified to  
participate in Rotary Youth Exchange  
53 countries actively hosted or sent  
students on exchange



**8,738**

host families  
3,673 Rotary member host families  
5,065 nonmember host families



**5,664**

exchange  
students



**18,975**

total volunteers  
11,185 Rotary member volunteers  
7,790 nonmember volunteers



**225**

districts, or about 63% of participating  
districts, engaged hosted students in  
community service projects



# 2022-23 PROGRAM STATISTICS

## ABOUT THE DATA IN THIS REPORT

Rotary International asked district and multidistrict Rotary Youth Exchange leaders for information about their exchange programs in the 2022-23 Rotary year in July 2023. It's worth noting that this is the first Rotary Youth Exchange annual report since 2019-20 because exchanges were widely unavailable for the previous two years as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Though virtual exchanges were adopted, the participation rate was significantly decreased during this time, and no data was collected.

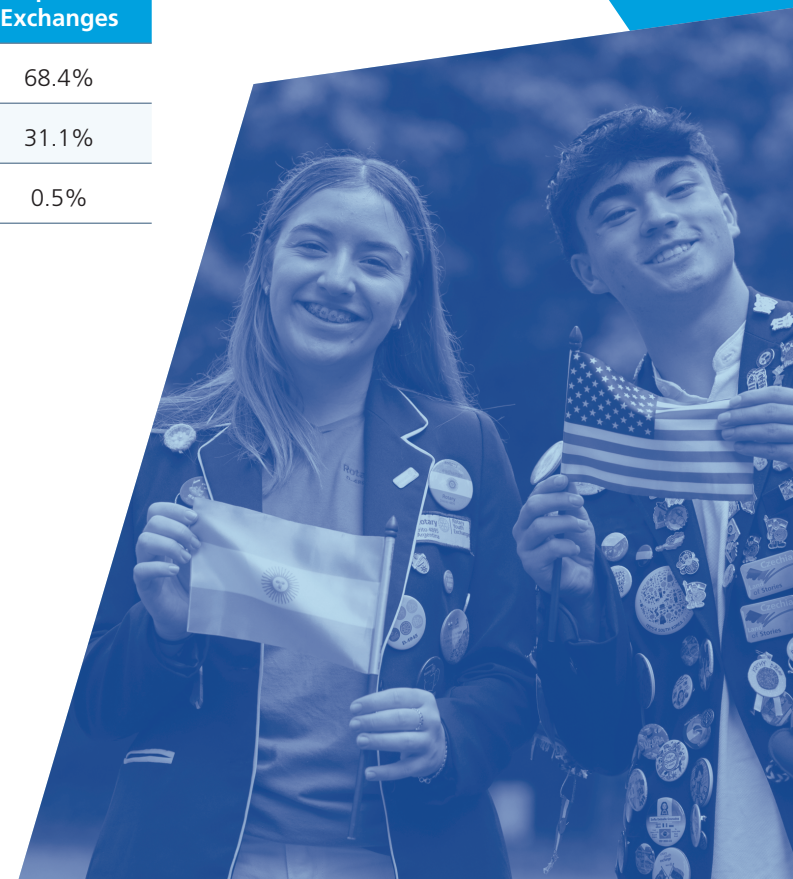
For 2022-23, we received responses from **449** of 468 districts that are certified to participate in Rotary Youth Exchange — a **96%** response rate. Of the 449 districts that responded, **356** said that they actively participated in long-term, short-term, or virtual exchanges during 2022-23. We'll call them “participating districts” throughout this report.

## PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Participating districts reported **5,664** exchanges in 2022-23.

### EXCHANGES BY TYPE

Exchange Type	Exchanges Reported	Share of Reported Exchanges
Long-term	3,875	68.4%
Short-term	1,759	31.1%
Virtual	30	0.5%

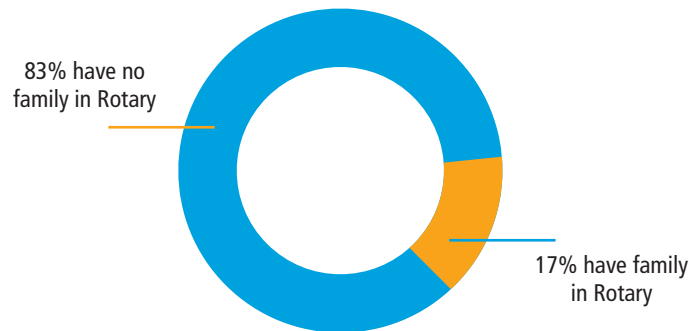


## NUMBER OF EXCHANGE STUDENTS HOSTED BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

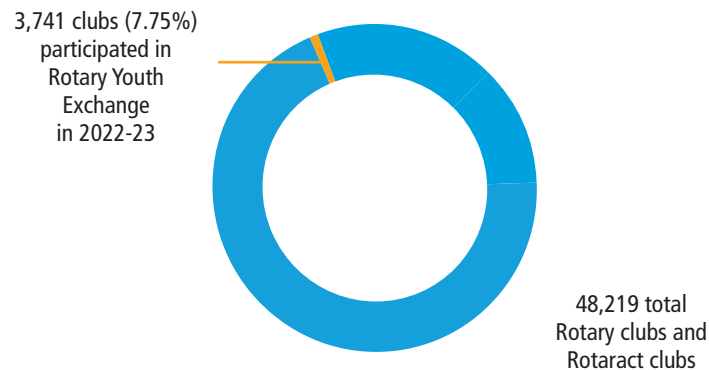
Geographic Area	2022-23		2019-20		2018-19	
	Exchanges Reported	Percentage of Exchanges	Exchanges Reported	Percentage of Exchanges	Exchanges Reported	Percentage of Exchanges
Africa	160	2.8%	184	2%	222	2%
Asia	453	8%	961	12%	1,400	15%
Europe	2,861	50.5%	3,122	38%	3,523	38%
North America	1,256	22%	2,110	26%	2,349	25%
Oceania	37	0.7%	235	3%	273	3%
South America	897	16%	1,571	19%	1,566	17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,664</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,183</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9,333</b>	<b>100%</b>

Increased participation from Rotary clubs to both host and send youth on exchanges is the single greatest factor in creating more and better exchanges through Rotary Youth Exchange. Increased club participation not only leads to more students getting involved in the program and benefiting from greater support, but it could also inspire other clubs and members to become more actively engaged with Rotary. Clubs can offer students opportunities to talk about their exchange experiences at club meetings or organize activities for students. Clubs that have Rotary Youth Exchange experience can work with clubs that are interested in hosting or sending students and help them get involved in the program — and more involved in Rotary.

## 2022-23 EXCHANGE STUDENTS WITH A FAMILY MEMBER IN ROTARY



## 2022-23 ROTARY AND ROTARACT CLUB PARTICIPATION



## Financial assistance in Rotary Youth Exchange

Although it's not required, many clubs and districts support students by paying for part or all of their exchange experience. In other cases, the students' families are expected to pay for their child's participation. Clubs and districts said that they spent a total of **US\$647,051** on financial support of exchanges in 2022-23.

**100** districts around the world provided financial assistance to students going on exchange. The total number of students who received that financial assistance was **676**. The average number of students who received financial assistance from districts that provided it was **25** students per district.

## Rotary Youth Exchange students with a family member in Rotary

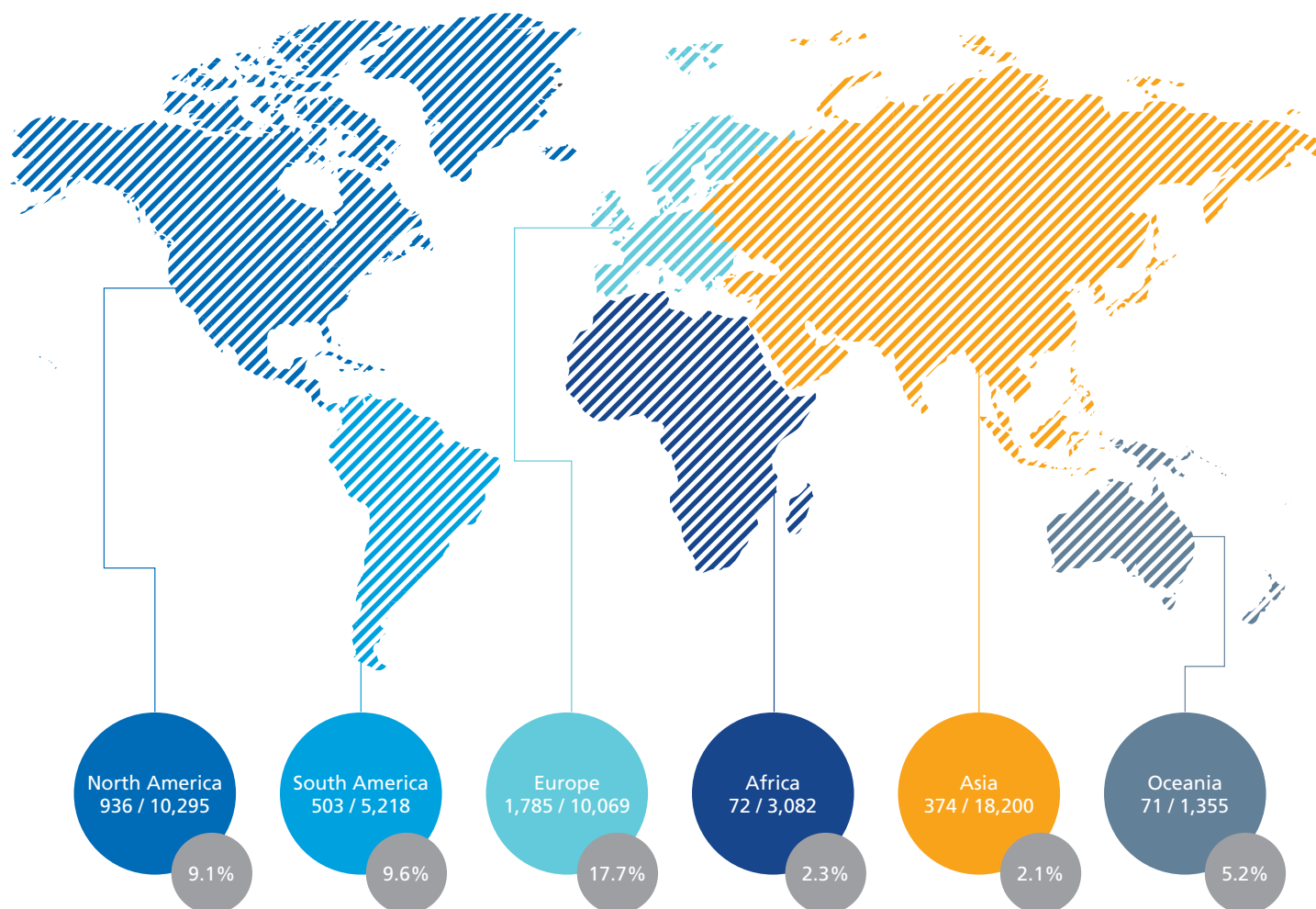
Participating districts reported that **961** Rotary Youth Exchange students, or 17%, had a family member in Rotary, while **4,741** (83%) did not. This proportion is consistent with those of previous years and proves that Rotary Youth Exchange continues to be a program that expands Rotary's reach.

The opportunity to expand our reach and build public awareness of Rotary through our student exchange program is significant. Finding new and innovative ways to engage students whose families may not be familiar with Rotary can foster new relationships with Rotary and encourage a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment in Rotary.



## 2022-23 ROTARY CLUB PARTICIPATION BY REGION

7.8% of clubs worldwide participate in Rotary Youth Exchange



The Rotary Youth Exchange program still has the opportunity to grow through club participation. Increased club participation would not only lead to more students getting involved in the program and benefiting from greater support, but it could also inspire existing clubs and members to become more actively engaged with Rotary. Inviting students to share their exchange experience at a club meeting, organizing activities for inbound students, or perhaps having a veteran club work with a club interested in hosting a student are just some of the ways more clubs can become and feel more involved in the program — and in Rotary.

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

## 2022-23 ROTARY AND ROTARACT CLUB PARTICIPATION

### District partnerships

No matter how hard local districts and clubs work to send a young person on exchange, they also need a trustworthy and reliable partner district in another country or region that can receive them. And in most cases, districts have many partner districts in various regions and countries. In 2022-23, **districts had an average of nine partner districts** they worked with to allow their students many possibilities.

In 2022-23, 297 (83%) of participating districts reported that they both hosted students and sent students abroad on exchanges. This is called reciprocal exchange.

Region	Average partnerships per district
Africa	7.6
Asia	4.4
Europe	16.3
North America	7.0
Oceania	3.4
South America	11.7
<b>Global</b>	<b>8.9</b>

## ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE IS BACK!

After a two-year hiatus, Rotary Youth Exchange, Rotary's exchange program for students age 15-19, has resumed in-person exchanges. As we came to terms with the realities of the pandemic in early 2020, new in-person exchanges were paused indefinitely. With the development and distribution of vaccines worldwide, the Rotary International Board of Directors allowed exchanges to resume in the 2022-23 Rotary year.

You might be thinking, "Rotary Youth Exchange seems to be a great opportunity for young people and students, but what can I do to assist the program?"

Learn how you can get involved on the Rotary Service blog.



[rotaryserviceblog.org/2022/08/12/in-person-rotary-youth-exchange-is-back/](https://rotaryserviceblog.org/2022/08/12/in-person-rotary-youth-exchange-is-back/)



Bhanu Gupta wrote this letter to express his thanks to the clubs and the regional Rotary Youth Exchange leaders who facilitated his son Sanskar's exchange. He has also served his own district as Youth Exchange chair for many years.

**To: North Star Rotary Youth Exchange**  
**From: Bhanu Gupta**

## **Subject: THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR GIVING SO MUCH TO SANSKAR!**

Dear Jackie and Pam,

Greetings from India!

I am writing this email to convey our THANKS and gratitude to each and every one at your Rotary club, all the host families of Sanskar, North Star Exchange, and each and every one who has given space to Sanskar in their life, homes, and hearts. As parents, we really don't have words to express our appreciation and feelings. Even as Youth Exchange chair, I have sent many students in the last 9 years to short-term exchanges and we have hosted [long-term exchange] students too, but I won't hesitate in saying, I have never seen a host club or host families doing so much and giving so much to an exchange student.

As we are proud of Sanskar to live up to the expectation of each and every one and also make a mark for himself in his own way, you all should be proud of how you all are helping young people add so much confidence to themselves and value to their exchange year.

I purposely choose to write this email after 6 weeks since Sanskar is back home because I really wanted to see how he is able to continue his exchange experience and all the bonds of love and

friendship he has made, and I am happy to share and I am very confident that he will treasure them for life. I still see him in regular touch with his host parents and brothers, he still keeps track of all his school friends and misses them often. ...

Each and every one of you are warmly invited to visit India, as you all have a home, a family, and a son in India waiting to welcome you all. ...

I just don't have words to express how I feel for Bill, Marlo, Nate, Mindy, Sharon, and Steven and all his host siblings. I can only say please allow us to show your children a little of India with their brother Sanskar and host all of you in India soon. You all were just incredible to give him a lot of freedom and did a lot for him to express and experience, talk to him to add to his wisdom, give him space to practice his passion for theatre, and invite his school friends. ...

THANK YOU, EVERYONE, A HUNDRED TIMES!!

Regards,

Bhanu and Divya

P.S. Sharing some pictures of Sanskar's very short presentation at his sponsor club back home.

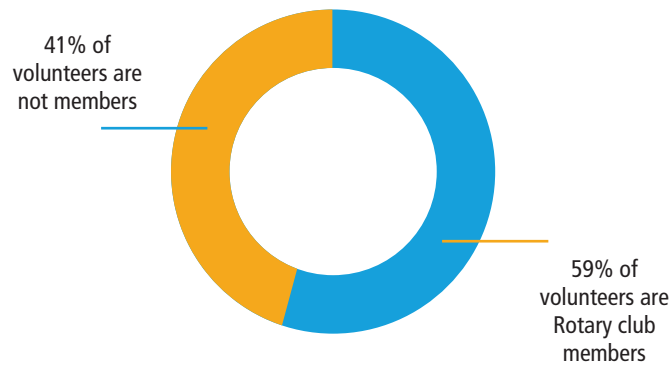
Bhanu Gupta



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## PROGRAM REACH AND IMPACT

### VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



#### Volunteer engagement

To understand how Rotary Youth Exchange expands Rotary's reach and its ability to engage communities around the world, we asked participating districts to tell us how many volunteers participated in the program in 2022-23. A total of **18,975** volunteers, both Rotary members and nonmembers, were involved in the program. Of the volunteers, **7,790**, or **41%**, were nonmembers.

### HOST FAMILY STORY WE ARE FAMILY: ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

Host families are always a vital part of a successful long-term exchange. They help students experience a new culture while also providing for their overall well-being and safety. Supporting host families as much as we support students is an important part of maintaining a healthy Rotary Youth Exchange program.

"Living with our exchange student gave my family the opportunity to get to know a new culture, traditions, and practices," says Ivone Pinheiro de Souza Silva, a host mom. "The doors of my house will always be open for exchange students."

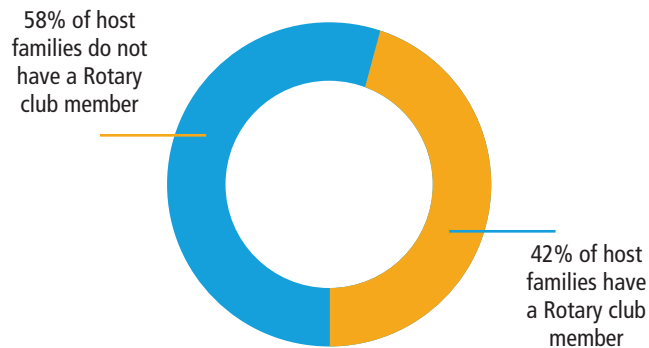
Pinheiro de Souza Silva is just one representative of the many host families around the world that volunteered their time and opened their homes to exchanges in 2022-23.



[rotary.org/en/we-are-family-rotary-youth-exchange](https://rotary.org/en/we-are-family-rotary-youth-exchange)



## HOST FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



Region	Host Families With a Rotary Member	Host Families Without a Rotary Member
Africa	29%	71%
Asia	75%	25%
Europe	34%	66%
North America	41%	59%
Oceania	59%	41%
South America	40%	60%

### Host family engagement

More than **8,700** of the reported volunteers hosted exchange students in 2022-23. Of all host families, **3,673 (42%)** included at least one Rotary member, and **5,065 (58%)** were made up of nonmembers. (Note that some short-term exchanges, such as short-term camps or short-term tours, do not include a host family experience.)

The table shows the percentage of host families by region, arranged by those who were members of Rotary and those who were not. In Asia and Oceania, the majority of host families had a parent who was a member of Rotary, while the majority of families volunteering to host students in Africa, Europe, and North and South America did not have a parent who was a member of Rotary.



## HOST SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

	Long-term Students	Percentage
Public	2,562	66
Private	1,127	29
Vocational	44	1.1
Fine arts	5	0.1
Other	12	0.3
Unreported	125	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,875</b>	<b>100</b>

### Host school involvement

Long-term exchange students attend school in their host countries. This gives them the opportunity to connect with peers and teachers while experiencing academic life in a new culture and, often, a different language. Students may be placed in various types of schools, depending on their goals. Most often, students can expect to attend a public school (usually state-funded), but in some cases they may attend a private school (often funded through tuition or other sources) or a school that focuses on the arts or vocations.



[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

## ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE: YOUR PASSPORT TO ADVENTURE

What the program offers to and asks of participants — an openness to new ideas and experiences, a willingness to adapt and to gain new perspectives, and an opportunity to make new friends and learn new ways of living — are the same values that define Rotary itself.

Click or tap to read stories that reveal how Rotary Youth Exchange continues to change lives.



[rotary.org/en/rotary-youth-exchange-your-passport-to-adventure](https://rotary.org/en/rotary-youth-exchange-your-passport-to-adventure)

## COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

Contributing to the care and development of the host community is an important part of a Rotary Youth Exchange. In 2022-23, **225** participating districts, or about **63%**, reported that they involved their inbound students in community service projects.



**Cleaned up and helped repair community parks and planted plant pollinator gardens and trees**



**Cleaned up waste along beaches and riverfronts and in public spaces**



**Visited and socialized with patients in nursing homes and children's wards in hospitals**



**Raised funds for causes and organizations including End Polio Now, ShelterBox, homeless shelters, and sending medical supplies to victims of floods and earthquakes**



**Gathered and donated household items for refugees**



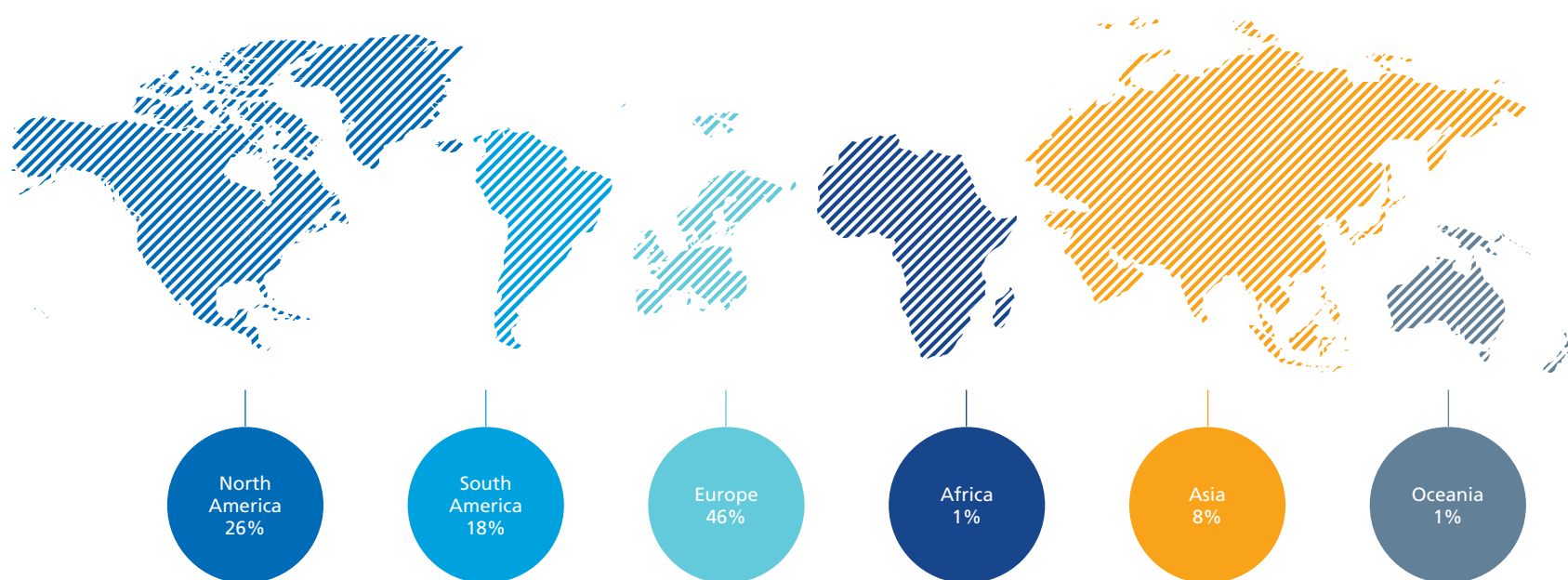
**Packed food and necessities into bags for people in flooded areas and collected and packed donations for food donation centers**



## LONG-TERM EXCHANGES

Long-term exchanges usually last a full academic year. In 2022-23, **220** participating districts hosted **3,875** long-term exchanges, representing **69%** of all Rotary Youth Exchange activity.

### 2022-23 LONG-TERM EXCHANGES BY HOST REGION



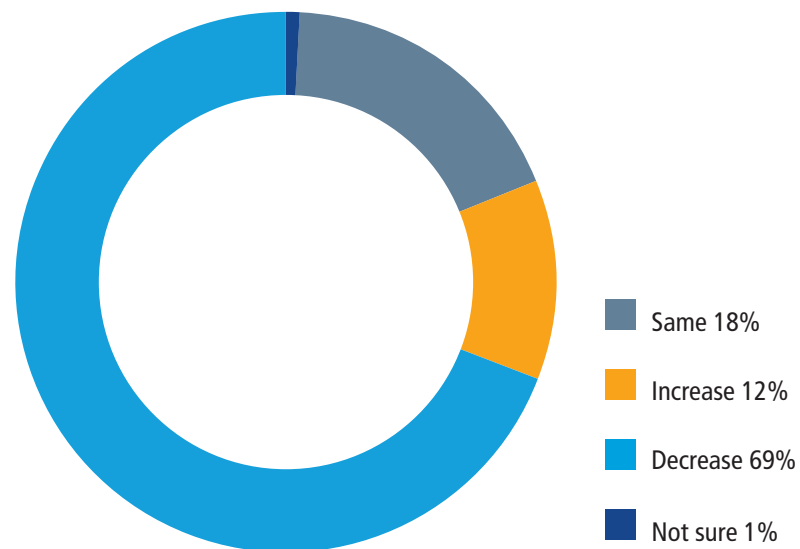
## LONG-TERM EXCHANGES BY COUNTRY OR TERRITORY

COUNTRY	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
United States	605	15.6
France	379	9.8
Germany	361	9.3
Brazil	337	8.7
Mexico	304	7.8
Argentina	179	4.6
Italy	160	4.1
Belgium	154	3.9
Spain	124	3.2
Denmark	113	2.9
Canada	113	2.9
Taiwan	103	2.7
Finland	97	2.5
Japan	89	2.3
Netherlands	78	2
Switzerland	75	1.9
Colombia	68	1.8
Thailand	63	1.6
Chile	62	1.6

COUNTRY	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Ecuador	59	1.5
Czech Republic	56	1.4
Sweden	54	1.4
Austria	43	1.1
India	37	1
Australia	33	0.9
Norway	29	0.7
Poland	21	0.5
Turkey	18	0.5
Hungary	16	0.4
Romania	12	0.3
Aland Islands	10	0.3
Indonesia	6	0.2
Lithuania	4	0.1
Korea, Republic of	4	0.1
Croatia	3	0.1
Zimbabwe	3	0.1
Peru	2	0.1
South Africa	1	0.03
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,875</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table shows the number and percentage of long-term exchanges hosted by country or territory, organized from largest to smallest.

## CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF LONG-TERM EXCHANGES



### Long-term exchange trends and challenges

As the world continued to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022-23, the total number of exchanges was lower than in the most recent years of the program's full operation.

Community interest and participation, especially that of students and clubs, are vital to the growth of Rotary Youth Exchange.

#### Top reasons for increases in long-term exchanges:

1. Increased interest from prospective participants
2. Relaxation of restrictions prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic
3. Stronger relationships with partner districts

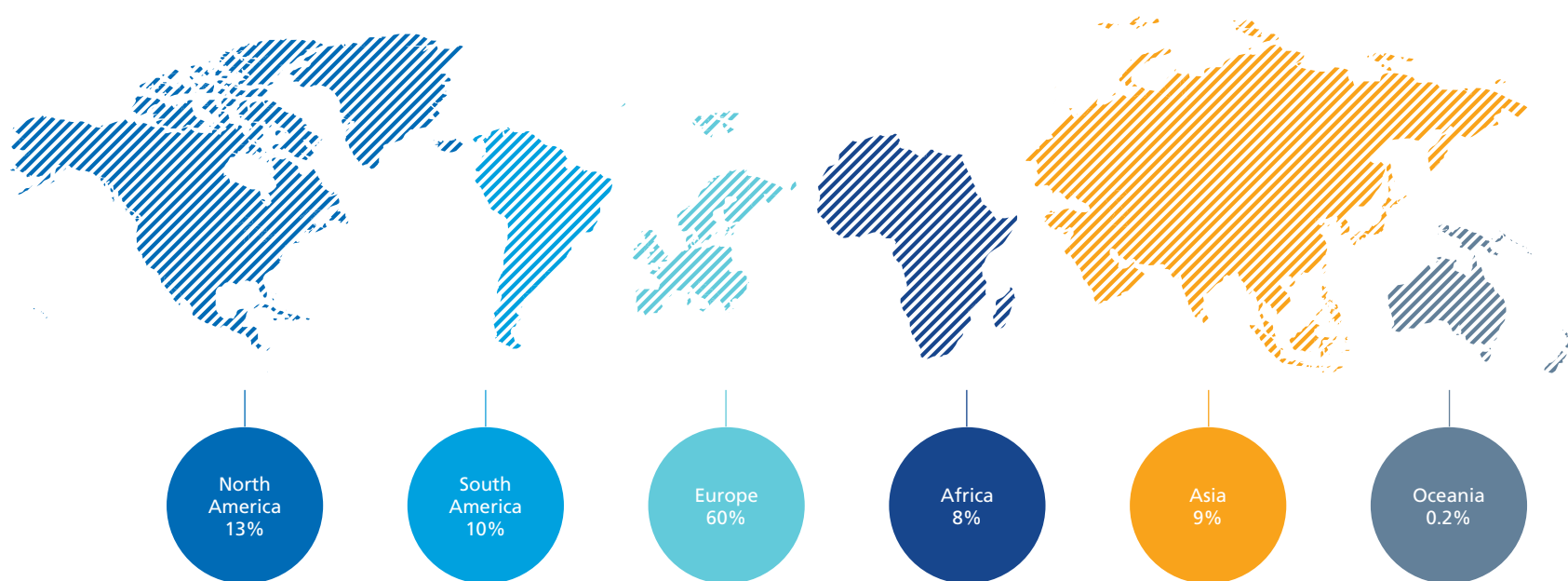
#### Top reasons for decreases in long-term exchanges:

1. Lack of interested exchange candidates
2. Reluctance to participate due to COVID-19
3. Lack of interest by clubs

## SHORT-TERM EXCHANGES

Short-term exchanges last from several days to a few months. They often take the form of a camp, tour, or homestay and take place when school isn't in session. In 2022-23, **167** participating districts hosted **1,759** short-term exchanges, representing **31%** of all Rotary Youth Exchanges.

### 2022-23 SHORT-TERM EXCHANGES HOSTED BY REGION



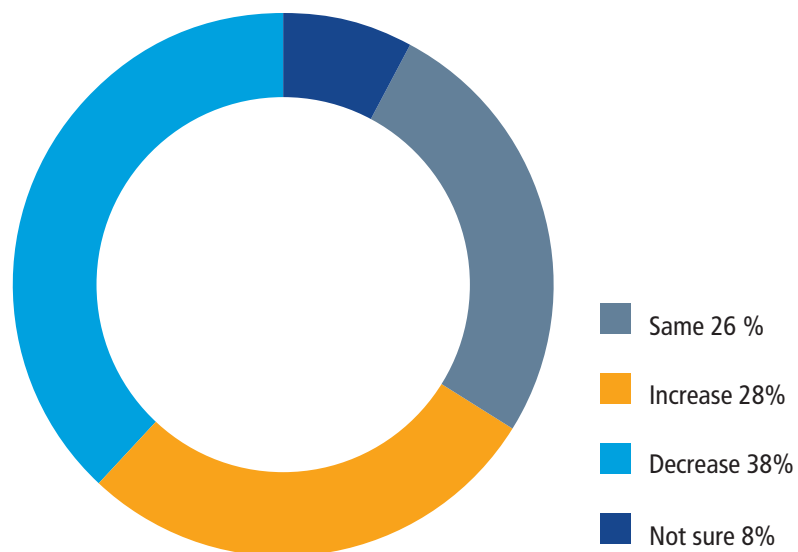
## SHORT-TERM EXCHANGES BY COUNTRY OR TERRITORY

COUNTRY	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Germany	224	12.73
Italy	172	9.78
United States	160	9.1
France	133	7.56
Taiwan	93	5.29
Czech Republic	88	5
Argentina	83	4.72
Brazil	75	4.26
Finland	73	4.72
Spain	72	4.09
Turkey	66	3.75
South Africa	64	3.64
Denmark	49	2.79
Hungary	49	2.79
Belgium	45	2.56
Canada	39	2.22
Croatia	36	2.05
Mexico	34	1.93
India	25	1.42
Japan	24	1.36
Bulgaria	20	1.14
Poland	18	1.02

COUNTRY	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Lithuania	17	0.97
Ireland	12	0.68
Switzerland	10	0.57
Aland Islands	10	0.57
Slovenia	9	0.51
Thailand	7	0.4
Austria	7	0.4
Egypt	6	0.34
Sweden	6	0.34
Norway	5	0.28
Colombia	4	0.23
Australia	4	0.23
Netherlands	4	0.23
Portugal	3	0.17
Ecuador	3	0.17
Romania	2	0.11
England	2	0.11
Chile	2	0.11
Nigeria	2	0.11
Bangladesh	1	0.06
Malaysia	1	0.06
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,759</b>	<b>100%</b>

This table shows the breakdown of short-term exchanges by country or territory, organized from largest to smallest.

## CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF SHORT-TERM EXCHANGES



### Short-term exchange trends and challenges

#### Top reasons for an increase in short-term exchanges:

1. Increased interest by prospective participants
2. Increased participation by clubs
3. Stronger relationships with partner districts

#### Top reasons for a decrease in short-term exchanges:

1. Reluctance to participate due to COVID-19
2. Lack of interest by prospective participants
3. Lack of interest by clubs





## VIRTUAL EXCHANGES

Virtual exchanges are an alternative to in-person exchanges that offer young people unique opportunities to interact and collaborate with people from other cultures and communities online. When they are structured and safe and are developed with specific goals in mind, virtual exchange experiences can be just as valuable as physically going abroad.

Though it was the pandemic that spurred the creation of virtual exchanges as a Rotary Youth Exchange option, they remain a wonderful way to offer young people — especially young people who are underserved, underrepresented, or marginalized — chances to engage in meaningful conversations that promote respect and understanding across cultures. They can also help students challenge stereotypes, increase empathy, and develop intercultural competencies, all of which can help them develop the knowledge and skills they need in order to become global citizens and peacebuilders.

In 2022-23, **5** participating districts hosted **30** virtual exchanges, representing **0.5%** of all Rotary Youth Exchanges.

### Virtual exchange trends

We asked districts to tell us about their methods of facilitating virtual exchanges.

#### Top types of interactions in virtual exchanges:

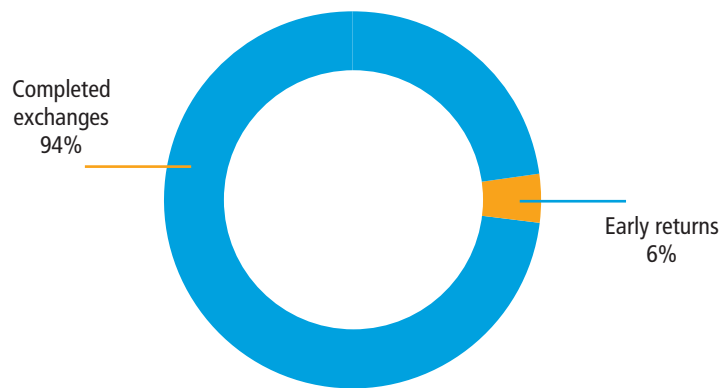
1. Student to student
2. Student to Rotary or Rotaract members
3. Student to virtual host family

#### Top platforms used for virtual exchanges:

1. Zoom
2. Google Meet
3. GoToMeeting or GoToWebinar
4. Microsoft Teams

## ENDING AN EXCHANGE EARLY

### REASONS FOR ENDING AN EXCHANGE EARLY



Participating districts reported that **349** exchanges, or **6%**, ended early in 2022-23.

Homesickness was the most frequent reason given for students returning early from their exchanges.

Reasons given for early returns	Number
Homesickness	88
Rule violation	52
Mental health concern	50
Problems with host family	28
Problems at school	26
Medical health concern	19
Problems with host club	18
School requirements in home country	16
Breach of law	11
Other	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>

# ROTARY'S COMMITMENT TO YOUTH PROTECTION

The safety and well-being of young people and youth program participants are Rotary's highest priority. Rotary International has a zero-tolerance policy for abuse and harassment of young people.

## Statement of Conduct for Working With Youth

Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotary members, their partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people with whom they come into contact and protect them from physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Reporting incidents to Rotary allows our Youth Protection staff to guide local leaders in responding to, investigating, and resolving these matters in accordance with our youth protection policies and procedures. Reporting also allows Rotary staff to monitor members when appropriate and prohibit them from interacting with youth if they are found to have violated policy.

## What is reported to Rotary International?

Rotary encourages anyone who has a youth protection concern to use our online form to report it. Follow the link on our [Youth Protection page](#) to get to the form. Reports can even be submitted anonymously. Reported concerns may involve any minor who is participating in Rotary in any way, whether by being a Rotary Youth Exchange student, attending a RYLA camp, belonging to an Interact club, or even just attending a Rotary club meeting. We require our members to report any allegations of abuse, harassment, or misconduct that involve a minor in Rotary, as well as medical incidents, accidents, Rotary Youth Exchange early returns, and allegations against Rotary members that involve minors and arise outside of Rotary programming.

## Trends in youth protection during 2022-23

Even the most robust, proactive youth protection efforts cannot prevent all misconduct, accidents, and other youth protection concerns. Thorough reviews of each situation and a commitment to taking corrective action ensure that we do everything we can to prevent any problems from happening again.

Rotary International supports districts that are involved in Rotary Youth Exchange by analyzing trends in the youth protection concerns that are reported around the world so we can identify potential root causes and develop resources and support to reduce risk and keep our young participants safe. We are responding to growing trends and redoubling our efforts related to some key issues, as follows:

**Mental health and coping strategies.** According to the World Health Organization, 1 in 8 people worldwide lived with a mental health disorder in 2019. Young people who are away from their support systems and experiencing the stressors of life abroad are even more susceptible to mental health challenges. Learn more about destigmatizing mental health and understanding postpandemic challenges in our webinar [Supporting Students in Our New Reality](#). Use the passcode GbK28=qB to gain access.

**Host family challenges.** Placing students with willing and enthusiastic host families is vital to the success of an exchange. And recruiting safe, welcoming, respectful, and supportive families that can bear the financial responsibility of hosting has become more difficult. Most important, we want to place students with families that want to host, not ones that need to be incentivized or persuaded to host, which could result in tension, hostility, or a lack of support for our students. Before families commit to hosting, make sure to discuss with them the added responsibility, challenges, and costs of hosting and the tools that are in place to enhance the exchange experience for everyone. Write to [youthexchange@rotary.org](mailto:youthexchange@rotary.org) to get resources that can help you place students with host families successfully.

**Community grooming.** “Grooming” is when a predator establishes an emotional connection with a potential target to lower their inhibitions and gain their trust, with the intent to be sexually abusive. But did you know that predators also groom the community? They may do anything they can to earn the trust of those around them, and they often are respected members of the community who are charming, successful, and helpful. Caring adults who are committed to working with youth may not notice the warning signs, because they sometimes find it difficult to believe that others would abuse the trust placed in them. They may even dismiss allegations without investigating them thoroughly — especially when the accused person is a friend or family member or is highly respected. Recognizing the signs of abuse, investigating every allegation that is made in good faith, and holding

everyone accountable to the same standards are all critical to avoiding the pitfalls of community grooming. To learn more, including how to respond to signs of community grooming, read chapter 4 of our [Youth Protection Guide](#).

## Barriers to reporting

The decision to report harassment or abuse is a personal decision, and it can be a difficult one, especially for young people living in a different country, culture, and language. Young people especially tend to minimize and deny abuse, not exaggerate or over-report incidents. People who have experienced trauma may not report it for many reasons, so it’s especially important to recognize the signs of abuse and barriers to reporting. Reaffirm your commitment to reporting, investigating, and follow-through for any and all youth protection concerns that are expressed in good faith.

## Resources

If you need advice or assistance, visit [rotary.org/youthprotection](https://rotary.org/youthprotection), write to [youthprotection@rotary.org](mailto:youthprotection@rotary.org), or call +1-866-976-8279 from 08:00 to 16:00 Chicago time (UTC-5 or UTC-6) to talk with Rotary’s Youth Protection staff. Our staff members are experienced and are trained in receiving reports of abuse or misconduct that involves youth. Each situation will be handled with care and confidentiality.

### Discover even more resources to make your programs safer:

[Rotary’s Youth Protection Guide](#)

[Rotary’s Youth Protection page](#) — with the link for reporting youth protection concerns

[Protecting Youth Program Participants](#) (online course)

[Preventing and Addressing Harassment](#) (online course)

## ALUMNI OF ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

In 2022-23, **289** districts, or **81%** of participating districts, reported actively engaging Rotary Youth Exchange alumni in some way after they completed their exchanges. These alumni are often referred to as Rotex. They are frequently asked to serve as volunteers for district-organized Rotary Youth Exchange events or invited to participate in other Rotary youth programs in service projects and club events.

### **Top ways Rotary Youth Exchange alumni were engaged by Rotary or Rotaract clubs:**

1. Student orientation (246 alumni)
2. District conferences (184 alumni)
3. Orientation for students returning home (163 alumni)

District leaders said that 1,791 of the 5,664 students who participated in Rotary Youth Exchange in 2022-23 planned to participate in other Rotary programs, like Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) or Interact, in the future.

## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS:

1

**Rotary Youth Exchange alumni form new club**  
[blog.rotary.org/2021/10/01/rotary-youth-exchange-alumni-form-new-club/](https://blog.rotary.org/2021/10/01/rotary-youth-exchange-alumni-form-new-club/)

2

**Rotex fills the gap after Rotary Youth Exchange**  
[rotary.org/en/rotex-fills-gap-after-rotary-youth-exchange](https://rotary.org/en/rotex-fills-gap-after-rotary-youth-exchange)

3

**A dual investment**  
[rotary.org/en/dual-investment](https://rotary.org/en/dual-investment)



# 2023 YOUTH EXCHANGE OFFICERS PRECONVENTION

About 300 members of the Rotary Youth Exchange community gathered in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, 26-27 May 2023. During this critical year for the program as in-person exchanges resumed, participants from around the world had the chance to network, take part in breakout sessions to learn from one another, and hear inspiring speeches from both alumni and fellow leaders.

## Youth Exchange Officers Preconvention highlights:

- **Keynote speaker: Isabelle Roughol**  
Read about the history Roughol experienced on exchange to the U.S. in 2001:  
[rotary.org/en/youth-exchange-globe-trotting-journalist](https://rotary.org/en/youth-exchange-globe-trotting-journalist)
- **Exchange alumni photoshoot**  
Alumni from various places and decades found themselves at the 2023 Youth Exchange Officers Preconvention event in Melbourne. View the photos:  
[my.rotary.org/en/exchange-ideas/events/convention-images-videos-2023](https://my.rotary.org/en/exchange-ideas/events/convention-images-videos-2023)



# RESOURCES FOR ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

1

## VIDEOS

Overview video for  
Rotary Youth Exchange:  
[on.rotary.org/ryevideo](https://on.rotary.org/ryevideo)

Overview video for virtual  
exchanges through Rotary  
Youth Exchange:  
[on.rotary.org/  
virtualexchangevideo](https://on.rotary.org/virtualexchangevideo)

2

## PHOTOS & GRAPHICS

Promotional materials  
available on the Rotary  
Brand Center (photos,  
graphics, printed materials):  
[brandcenter.rotary.org](https://brandcenter.rotary.org)

3

## YOUTH PROTECTION

Rotary International  
takes all youth protection  
concerns seriously.  
You can access our  
online youth protection  
reporting form on  
[rotary.org/youthprotection](https://rotary.org/youthprotection).

## REFERENCE MATERIAL

[rotary.org/en/we-are-family-rotary-youth-exchange](https://rotary.org/en/we-are-family-rotary-youth-exchange)

[rotary.org/en/rotary-youth-exchange-your-passport-to-adventure](https://rotary.org/en/rotary-youth-exchange-your-passport-to-adventure)

[rotary.org/en/rotex-fills-gap-after-rotary-youth-exchange](https://rotary.org/en/rotex-fills-gap-after-rotary-youth-exchange)

[rotary.org/en/youth-exchange-alumni-honored](https://rotary.org/en/youth-exchange-alumni-honored)

[rotary.org/en/dual-investment](https://rotary.org/en/dual-investment)

[rotary.org/en/ambassador-large](https://rotary.org/en/ambassador-large)

[blog.rotary.org/2023/08/11/the-life-of-a-rotary-youth-exchange-student/](https://blog.rotary.org/2023/08/11/the-life-of-a-rotary-youth-exchange-student/)

[blog.rotary.org/2022/09/29/rotary-youth-exchange-returns-the-making-of-a-video/](https://blog.rotary.org/2022/09/29/rotary-youth-exchange-returns-the-making-of-a-video/)

[blog.rotary.org/2022/05/20/my-rotary-youth-exchange-venezuela-to-the-united-states/](https://blog.rotary.org/2022/05/20/my-rotary-youth-exchange-venezuela-to-the-united-states/)

[blog.rotary.org/2021/10/01/rotary-youth-exchange-alumni-form-new-club/](https://blog.rotary.org/2021/10/01/rotary-youth-exchange-alumni-form-new-club/)

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**LEARN MORE ABOUT  
ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE  
ON [ROTARY.ORG](https://www.rotary.org)**

Email [youthexchange@rotary.org](mailto:youthexchange@rotary.org) for questions about the program.