



**Speechless**  
Reconciliation

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# **Western Balkans Camp 2022 Report**

# 2022



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Thank you for supporting our  
efforts!



# INTRODUCTION

Speechless Reconciliation is a project that later evolved into the program founded by Matej Keka in February 2021 as a project of the Rotary Club Prague International in the Czech Republic. From early beginning the project has received tremendous amount of support from Tim Belon and Gerry Tipple.

It was created with the intention of providing youngsters from homes for youth without proper parental care with the opportunity to meet and create their first cross border relations and in 2 years it grew into the idea of creating an online space where they will have the opportunity to use their potential to the fullest.

One of the reasons why this project is referred to as „Speechless Reconciliation“ because not all of the participants have a common language. Although translation will be available, the focus will be on 6 groups of young adults (16-21 year) from maximum 6 different countries finding common ground and comprehending each other without language in common, through body language, facial expressions, tone of voice and other cues.

We believe that an initial encounter that is coupled with a longer-term continuity of contact between several groups of these youth can be an engine that helps transform the way they live and think about each other and contribute to a better community.

Our vision is to create strong community leaders that will build a more equal and better world for others. We want to expand the project through organization of the developmental camps into other countries (first in Europe and then on a global scale) as well as onboarding of new partners on the online “opportunity matching” platform. These developmental camps are entering points into our Speechless Reconciliation community.



# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



01

## Phase 1

A 10-day long summer camp for youngsters from max. 6 homes for youngsters without parental care in the age between 16-21 years. Through usage of a wide mix of non-formal education methods, experiential learning, discussion, and creative workshops helping youngsters to create an action plan for their future, identify their skills and talents. Main themes of the summer camp are feeling of worth, sparking the curiosity and opening up the opportunities.

02

## Phase 2

Online matching platform for the participants that will allow them to look for the right opportunities for their personal and professional development - using the leverage of global partnership between Rotary International and SOS Children's Villages International and other 3rd party partners. The platform itself serves 3 different purposes. Firstly, it is a place where community of the Speechless Reconciliation is able to gather. Secondly it is an e-learning platform for our alumni to further develop their potential. Lastly, it also serves a place where youngsters can find and apply for different work-related opportunities.

The main goal of the program is to help youngsters from homes for children without proper parental care to develop their potential by creating action plans, find their talents and identify their skills with the help of a professional trainers and mentors during the youth exchange based on the selection process that takes place before the youth exchange. This is then combined with the activities that takes place during the youth exchange.

This is followed based on the outcomes of the youth exchange with offerings for youngsters with the opportunities for their personal and professional development through usage of the online platform where our 3rd party partners will be offering possible opportunities, matching the individual needs of the youngsters.





# REPORT OF 2022 WESTERN BALKAN EDITION

What a powerful and unforgettable week it was for the participants, group leaders, project team, volunteers and Rotary members. It was a week that will be remembered by many for a long time.

In the following paragraphs you will be able to discover what happened during 10 days of August 2022 when **35 youngsters** from **six different countries** - Lithuania, Kosovo, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia - came to the Czech Republic as part of our program Speechless Reconciliation.



*Rotary members from three different Rotary and Rotaract clubs from all over Europe.*

## Sunday, 22nd August

On the first day of the camp, we started with an introduction and team-building activities. The aim of this day was to create one group out of the 7 groups that were there including project team. With this goal achieved the follow up aims that required full focus from the participants could be easier to achieved.



*Naming exercise. The goal of this particular exercise was to stand in the circle and remember as many names as possible. Secret friend drawing. The aim of this exercise was for participants to get comfortable with each other and have a fun.*

## Monday, 23rd of August

In the morning we had our group leader and trainer at one role, Ljupco Trifunovski giving a lecture on the topic of Redefining yourself and Who am I. The aim of this session was to show our participants that the current state of living that they are in is not permanent and that they should always thrive for improvement.

In the afternoon we had first of our walks. This time it was with the aim to give the opportunity to our participants to get to know each other even more by trying to figure out who is who through paper hints that were given to them through out the walk. This activity was very much welcomed, and our participants really enjoyed it.

In the evening we had the first of our motivational speeches where Matej Keka shared his life story through talking about 7 of his life lessons.



*Insert a pictures description*





## Tuesday 24th of August

After two days the group was already formed, and we were able to enter the next part of the camp at full speed to be able to get the best out of it. With our Head of Training, Valery Senichev, we worked on developing the talents, skills, and future design exercises for the youngsters. These exercises were aiming at stimulating and inspiring our youngsters to really think deeply about the topic. As last year we had a concrete outcome from our participants such as plans of their future. This part of the camp program aimed to help youngsters to realize what talents they have (not just one), how to work with them, how they can use them at school, during the process of choosing high school, university or even first job. In general, we helped them to train the ability to be aware of their talents, related skills and actively use them in their private and school life.

The evening program was dedicated to the life story of Tim Belon, who told them a story of how modest, humble and hardworking individual can become a very successful entrepreneur.



*Valery Senichev during his training to design the future, talent and skills identification*

## Wednesday 25th of August



On the second day of Valery's workshops, we were going deeper into the topics and groups were also divided into small teams. Each of the group was supported by project team members and its group leaders through out the whole process. In the afternoon they had the opportunity to sign up for one-on-one session based on their needs and interests. Very positive outcome of these sessions was the fact that many of the mentorship relations were forged in those one-on-one sessions. Therefore, we will keep this for next year because it proved to be very useful for our participants.

*One-on-one sessions*



## Thursday 26th of August

The goal of the day was to multiply the impact of two previous days where youngsters had the opportunity to talk about their skills, talents, and future. Therefore, we played them the interview from Veronika Kašáková, who is the founder of the foundation that helps youth from homes for children without proper parental care.

Since we finished with the first part of the week, we held a feedback session where we went deeply into the program and the feelings that our groups of participants have about the program. We got useful insights that will help us to improve the program of the developmental camp even more. Afterwards our groups of participants had the opportunity to enjoy the scavenger hunt that was created by our partner organization, Wenable. The practical aim of the scavenger hunt was to make youngsters work in the different teams while aiming at the common goal.



*Nature was a crucial factor in the stimulation of creativity of our participants*

## Friday 27th of August

For the last three days of the camp, we have moved to Prague where participants were welcomed by the CEO of Volvo Czech and Slovak, Alican Emiroglu, who showed participants the biggest Volvo dealership in Central Europe. For the last activity, our participants moved to the city center of Prague to visit the Senate of the Czech Republic. Participants were astonished by the architecture of Valdštejn Palace, where the Senate is located.



*Alican Emiroglu during his presentation. Visit to the Senate of the Czech Republic*





## Saturday, 28th of August



On Saturday, we had the opportunity to introduce the participants to the concept of the Speechless Reconciliation Job Fair, where they had the opportunity to learn more about startups, companies, and NGOs sectors. One of the highlights of the Job Fair was an interview with the director of the Tereza Maxová Foundation, Terezie Sverdlínová.

In the morning we had three different workshops held by our partners Wenable, Late Night Diplomacy and Nikola Isaković with his innovative concept of the Item Theater. The whole event culminated in the afternoon, which was full of different sport activities such as climbing and boat rowing.



*Late Night Diplomacy workshop - Item Theater with Nikola Isaković - Wenable marketing campaign workshop*

## Sunday 29th of August

On the Sunday morning we have gathered to go for a guided tour organized by Lara DeCorte who was very excited to take our participants on the tour around the most beautiful sights of the Prague. In the late afternoon everything culminated in the certificates ceremony where the project team gave to all of our participants their certificates.



*Walking tour that involved visit to the Prague castle & certificate celebration*

Already after the camp we have engaged in the second phase of the project by offering different opportunities but also further developing online platform with our partner from Spain, Wenable Solutions. We have also created our first subcommunities on our platform dedicated to talented artists from the camp and individuals interested in public speaking.



## Team members with quotes about the project



### Matej Keka

For me and most of the people, who are part of the Speechless Reconciliation community, the biggest impact this program has is feeling of belonging into the one big family of likeminded people who are there for each other and are willing to offer any kind of support that is needed. This is what I believe is the biggest impact of this program and it will be like that for years to come because we leave no one behind.



### Tim Belon

The impact is immense on all stakeholders which are present on the 'design your life' camps. It is amazing to see how these youngsters connect very quickly with their peers from different regions, countries or cultures. They create friendships among each other in a very short period of time. They really create their own international network in fact. True friendships over borders & cultures which seem to last for a very long time. Step by step we create this SR community, this SR movement almost.

The impact on me personally is quite significant. I seem to resonate quite ease with most of our participants, even after the camp I keep on having contact with most, also as a mentor within the SR project. These youngsters have taught me so many lessons in life, I could fill some books describing these. The impact is bidirectional, we learn as much from them then they learn from us. That is maybe the most beautiful aspect of the camp. The IMPACT is life changing for all us.

We can all leave the camp... but the IMPACT of the camp never leaves us.



### Eva Buydens

For me, Speechless Reconciliation means growth and the creation of long-lasting friendships.

These two elements are the common thread of the project and I believe have the greatest impact on the participants and myself as a project team member, both during and after the summer camp.

Dealing with challenges and having confidence in your own abilities makes us all more resilient.

Developing talents and growing is also about making new friends, daring to talk to someone you don't know, helping or leading others, or persevering until something succeeds. The Beskydy Mountains is the perfect environment to encourage exploration, learning new things, taking on new challenges and positively impacting the lives of others.



### **Gerry Tipple**

It seems to me that the biggest impact on those that take part is to broaden their horizons and give them the belief in new possibilities. The fact that they can relate to and make friends with their peers from other countries is also a great plus and supports their self-esteem. For myself, it is very satisfying to be able to share my experience and approach to life issues and see that it has some relevance for these kids that may be 60 years my junior.



### **Andreas Fehrens**

The meeting of people from different cultural backgrounds, the approach to each other to do activities, tasks, fun and games together gave a high level of positive energy for all participants.



### **Joke Cocquyt**

It gets the best out of everybody involved, especially on the project members who work closely together with our participants. Personally, this experience made me even more thankful for what I have in life. At the same time I always feel humble when I see how these kids interact with the ones they trust. Once they start to trust you, you really become part of their life. The way they care about the ones they love is truly very beautiful to see.



### **Andrea Obach**

The camp brings together many people from different backgrounds, cultures and countries with a common goal: to support and create an impact in other's lives. Out of it we all create boundaries and relationships that will last forever and eventually lead towards better communities.



### **Francesc Galbany**

All of us need objectives in life. In order to meet those you need to be part of the society, have friends and colleagues that can give you support and to give something to them as well; this is an act of reciprocity.

I was amazed about the capacity of the youngsters to build new connections, to make things grow and to feel that sometimes you just need to have good will, be at the right place and things work and start moving.





### **Martin Bieniek**

I experienced that being together with totally unknown youngsters and their accompanying group leaders in a outback location gave me 'a lot to reflect on'.

It confirmed again that time for openness, tolerance in combination with humor and respect for others with different background is the best you can offer to change the word.



### **Laura Potisková**

I think it is people, that has biggest impact on both me and others on this camp. Group of people that are interested in other people, with will to listen and share their experience and knowledge and support each other. With kindness and respect. It is the "collective will" to bring up your talents and interests, to become aware of them and cherish them and express them. And by expressing our selves and seeing others we grow.

## **Group leaders with quotes about the project**



### **Greta Divonyte**

The biggest impact for me and others was an amazing people, who were very positive, happy, and inspiring. it was a great place to get to know yourself, in a very positive, safe, and supporting space.



### **Vykintė Berė**

Youngsters in this camp get big motivation from the „speechless" leaders. Some of them saw an example of what kind of person they would like to be. The program was really helpful to find the strongest sides of themselves. But the biggest impact youngsters mention as all community, meet new friends from other countries. Also practising English with each other, spending amazing and beneficial time and taking unforgettable memories for the rest of their life. For me, the most significant impact at camp was seeing the changes in our youngsters, and how self-confident they left.



### **Lirim Berisha**

Based on my evaluation, I consider that the Speechless Reconciliation camp had a very important impact on the views of each participant. Now that almost three months have passed since the end of the camp, in almost every meeting that I have with young people who have been participants, the main topic is the camp experience and memories.



They have managed to learn a lot about the cultures of the participating countries, many of them have managed to remove any prejudice they had about any participating country. Also, they continue to keep in virtual contact with other participants even after the end of the camp and having friends in different countries is a great thing. As for me personally, I also saw the whole camp and the activities carried out as a unique experience. I met people from different cultures. I also met colleagues from different countries with whom we shared very valuable experiences in the way of working with children who have similar challenges.

## Camp Shadowers

Their role was to shadow our camp to be able to understand the concept and to have the opportunity to organize developmental camp themselves.



### Jelena Radonjić

Camp had the biggest impact on youngsters because they could think and plan their future careers and life paths, meet new people from different countries that are in similar situation and challenge themselves to daily speak on English. For me, biggest impact had life stories of youngsters with whom I had opportunity to talk.

## Learnings for the next year

- Smaller age difference
- Group divided into two for some of the workshops
- Even bigger language diversity
- More intercultural elements included in the program
- Selecting the participants earlier before the camp

## Next steps

- On the 7th of November the project team will organize big debriefing session to finalize the program concept
- By the end of this year launch our newest version of the online platform.
- Launch preparations for organizations of at least 3 camps in 2023 in the decentralized form
- Onboarding new partners from private and non-governmental sector.
- Continuous follow up with participants from both years.
- Continuous recruitment of new volunteers for different positions
- Continuous integration of the developmental camp into the overall concept of the Speechless Reconciliation program
- securing the 3rd strategic partnership



# SUCCESS STORIES OF OUR PARTICIPANTS



## Aleksandar Vuckovski

*It has changed the way I think about a lot of things and the way I see things mostly. In the long term before the camp, I was quitting on my goals most of the time and I was blaming it on others. Right now, I am more proactive, and I take responsibility for my own acts.*

*Before the camp I was living from day to day. Now I have a set of goals such as video editing and filming and even though I don't have all the skills I need now I know that I can learn them with the help of my mentor Andrea whom I met because of the Speechless Reconciliation and who became not just a mentor to me but also a friend.*

Aleksandar have been offered the opportunity of internship in the Wenable Solutions after the camp. He proved to be really good and talented in video editing and therefore he has been offered a paid student job at C9 (Belgium).



## Anastasija Anastasijevic

*When I was on the camp, I was very motivated all the time. People there were kind, always inspiring us and had answer on all question. After camp, on the beginning, I was confused. I didn't know how and where to start.*

*How to plan because when I heard more good things, ways, and steps how I can do things, I still had old mindset and after a week the camp was over, I tried to overcome some bad habits. After camp I realized that I desire a good thing in my life. In the camp I got a lot of energy because all mentors were talking about failures and how it is normal to happen. How all people have bad moments in life and that finally I can stop running from my failure.*

*I'm still putting off making the final plan even though I have it in my head because I'm afraid that maybe I will mess it all up, I can't hang it in the room, look at it all the time, I'm afraid to talk about it, but now it's in my head and thanks to the motivation I gained on the camp, I can put it on the paper and into the practice. Before, I would just suppress it.*

Anastasija stated that she really likes communication and diplomacy is one of her topics that she is really interested in. Therefore, with the help of her mentor. She got an internship offer in the European Academy of Diplomacy, where she will work as a social media manager.





## What our participants think about the impact of the developmental camp?



**“**

*You exceeded my expectations. I felt like in a big family. In which everyone helps everyone. After the camp, I am a richer person, I have gained friends, experiences and knowledge. My motivation is at the highest level. You work miracles. What more can I say, except a big thank you.*

**MARTINA**  
Summer Camp 22 Participant



**“**

*I have attended other exchange programs with young people and this one left a special impression on me. After going through such a program, real-life stories, friendships...One cannot remain indifferent.*

**BOSILKA**  
Summer Camp 22 Participant



**“**

*At the camp in the Czech Republic, I met a lot of new friends who motivated me to go on even stronger than before. I learned a lot in workshops and in life stories, which further motivated me to go on.*

**ANDRIJA**  
Summer Camp 22 Participant



**“**

*The "Speechless Reconciliation" Summer Camp was the most extraordinary experience for me so far, in the camp we had workshops that were very necessary for work and life. It will be unforgettable for me because now I have friends from many other countries and with different cultures.*

**F.S.**  
Summer Camp 22 Participant



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Our DNA:

- Founded in 2004 in Brugges (BE)
- 2 offices in Antwerp-Boom (BE) and Prague (CZ) + 2 partners in Rotterdam (NL) and Hannover (Germany)
- 54% female
- 41 average age
- 8 languages
- Values: equal opportunities, open & honest communication, respect & equal rights for all
- 1% Pledge company & C9 Foundation to donate 1% of our profit and some free time to the Community

## What do we do?

**C9 transforms (y)our customers  
into fans**

Our mission is to empower businesses to create and continuously improve exceptional customer journeys by understanding the needs and expectations of our current and future customers.

We deliver results through

- strategy development
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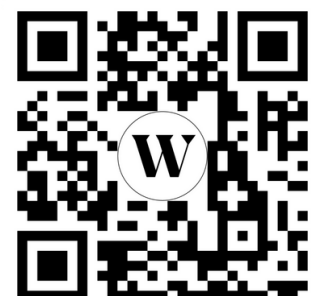
Wenable is a non-conventional digital consultancy from Barcelona. It is dedicated to simplifying, optimizing, and integrating technological processes in the business environment. Its main goal is to maximize and make profitable the time and resources that companies invest in achieving one of their main objectives: attract and retain customers.

### Who we are?

When it comes to tackling projects, we combine three very different areas: consultancy, creativity, and technology, impacting across the whole collaboration process. This singularity defines us as a team and at the same time allows us to face your objectives from both an effective and an original perspective.

### What we do?

We are specialists in developing both large and small projects for all types of businesses. From small companies with a local impact to large international corporations.





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