

## Balkan Youth Challenge - Event Evaluation and Feedback

### ABOUT the BALKAN YOUTH CHALLENGE

The Balkan Youth Challenge was a large-scale activity held as part of the Erasmus+ Bridge Project. The idea was to unite young people from five Western Balkan countries in one place to talk about the regional economy and ways to further enhance regional cooperation. The BYC part of the project is based on the idea of improving team work, rhetorical and presentation skills.

The Challenge was organized for Practice Enterprise trainees from five countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. Kosovo students could only take part remotely due to visa problems.

Multinational teams were created with young people from the different participating countries, to get the students to learn how to work in a multinational team, get to know students from other Western Balkan countries, and learn about the challenges and opportunities of regional cooperation in the economy and in education.

Teams were given 2 hours to meet, review the presentation format, discuss the information included in the presentation, compare notes, prepare a basic multimedia presentation on the real company, develop a script, and rehearse their presentation. Each team was then given 10 minutes to present to a panel of judges. Each presentation was followed by a brief question and answer period from the judges.

They had to participate in discussions and share ideas; analyze and make conclusions; work effectively in a group; learn new information; research topics on their own; figure out how the company works; improve their transversal skills:

**CRITICAL THINKING** - examining all sides of an issue, reflecting on past experiences, and listening to what other group members have to say.

**PROBLEM SOLVING** - think outside the box when challenges or issues arise.

**COLLABORATION** - BYC was a great opportunity to uncover creative ideas, share different perspectives and experiences, as well as enhance their own skills.

**COMMUNICATION** - talk openly and honestly with the group members about expectations, deadlines, and responsibilities.

**TIME MANAGEMENT** - learn how to balance multiple deadlines and assignments and prepare for a collaborative work environment in the future.

**LISTENING** - recognize that the team members may see things from another perspective, and hear them out. Listening to other points of view that can help see multiple sides of an issue, including ones that they have never considered before.

## ACTIVITY

One real-world company that works inter-regionally was chosen by the event organizers – MEGATrans (Mega Trans d.o.o Visoko is a transport company founded in 2000 with a primary specialization in road transport. Together with their company in Slovenia – Mega trans d.o.o. Krško generates an annual income of more than 18,000,000.00 KM and completes more than 7500 transport orders, which ranks them among the largest carriers in BiH). All participants had to analyze and present on the same real-world company. Participants were given basic information on the challenge event, the structure of the presentation, and general information on the real company is sent to the participants in the Challenge. Participants had the option of researching the enterprise in advance of the competition. There was nothing formal to plan or prepare in advance, only to study the enterprise. Participants could choose to organize ideas in advance to offer to their group as time and curriculum allows.

On the day of the Challenge, participants were divided into teams of members from different countries. In the Challenge four countries participated, and each team had one representative from each country.

After all teams presented, the results were collected, and the top teams advanced to the final round.

On the main stage, the final teams present once again to another group of final-round judges.

### Motivation to participate:

To show the world what we are capable of.

I am a student in the final year of the secondary school of economics and I would like to meet students from the countries of the Western Balkans. I am communicative and like to meet other cultures and traditions. I have never been to Sarajevo and I have a great desire to get to know the city, culture, food and customs.

We have had a virtual enterprise at school for three years. I really like the way of working in these classes, we can apply the knowledge we have acquired in other subjects and show our creativity in our work. The work environment is dynamic, real jobs are simulated and work is done with original documentation. I learned about this project from Professor Ana and I liked the idea of solving a specific problem of a real company with other students from the countries of the Western Balkans.

I am always very excited to participate in international competitions that will enhance my knowledge and skills in the area of the case we are presented. I have previously participated in a global competition in New York at the Youth Business Summit in 2023, where me and my team won 3rd place out of more than 30 other teams. These challenges help us talk with people around the world and make new connections that help improve our networking skills. Competitions of this kind provide a sense of real world problems that we need to solve, which greatly improves quick thinking with logical and realistic ideas, and problem solving.

Participating in the Balkan Youth Challenge offers me a unique opportunity to push my creative boundaries and contribute to groundbreaking solutions on a global scale. This challenge serves as a platform to showcase my

skills, demonstrating my ability to tackle complex problems and drive positive change. I don't just see it as a competition, but as a journey to elevate my capabilities and leave a lasting impact on the global business landscape. This way I can seize the chance to be a catalyst for change, and let my passion for innovation propel me to new heights.

I believe that the Balkan Youth Challenge is a wonderful opportunity that will help me improve useful and important skills like talking in front of an audience, managing team work, leadership and many more. Aside from that, it would be an amazing experience to gather with like-minded individuals from other countries and develop a project with them. That way I could make wonderful new friendships and connections. I also hope to learn about the enterprise that will be discussed as I want to better understand the strategies used for building a successful business. The competition will push me outside my comfort zone which is a good thing, because that way I will foster personal and professional growth.

Travel, socializing, learning, exchanging experiences.

Language learning, socializing, entrepreneurship.

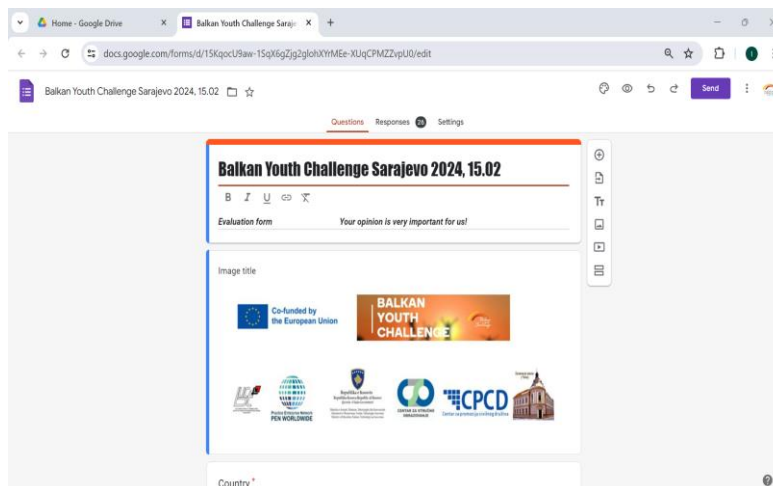
I am a second-grade student of the School of Economics. I want to expand my knowledge in entrepreneurship, innovation, develop a competitive spirit, and connect with other virtual enterprises.

I'm an excellent second grader, I have a virtual business in school and I want to see how other virtual businesses work.

Learning based on practical examples, meeting new people and cities.

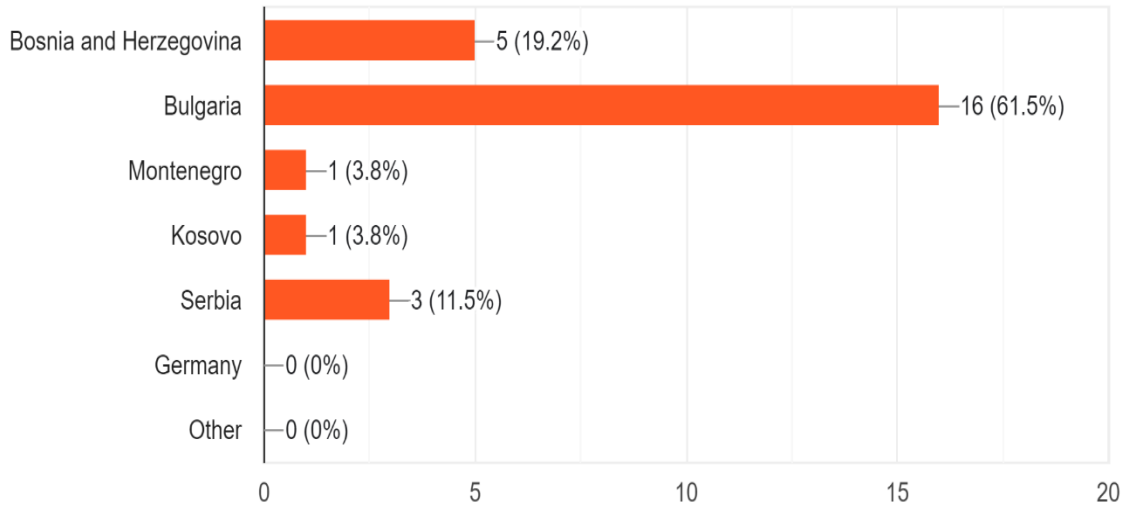
I would like to get to know Sarajevo and see how students in other countries work, what they learn. I want to improve my knowledge of the language.

**Evaluation: 26 respondents (due to the streaming of the event the students who made the evaluation are more than the participants).**



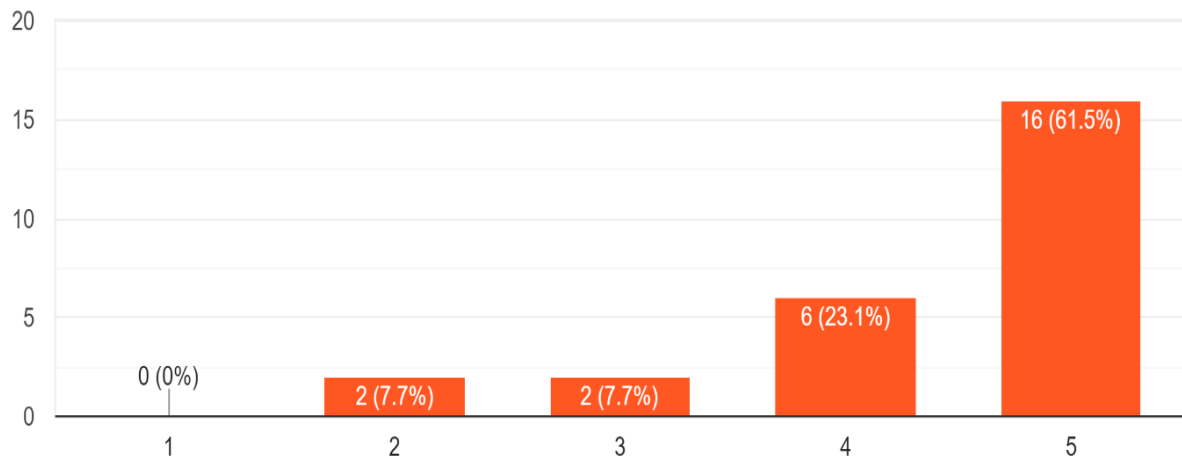
### Country

26 responses



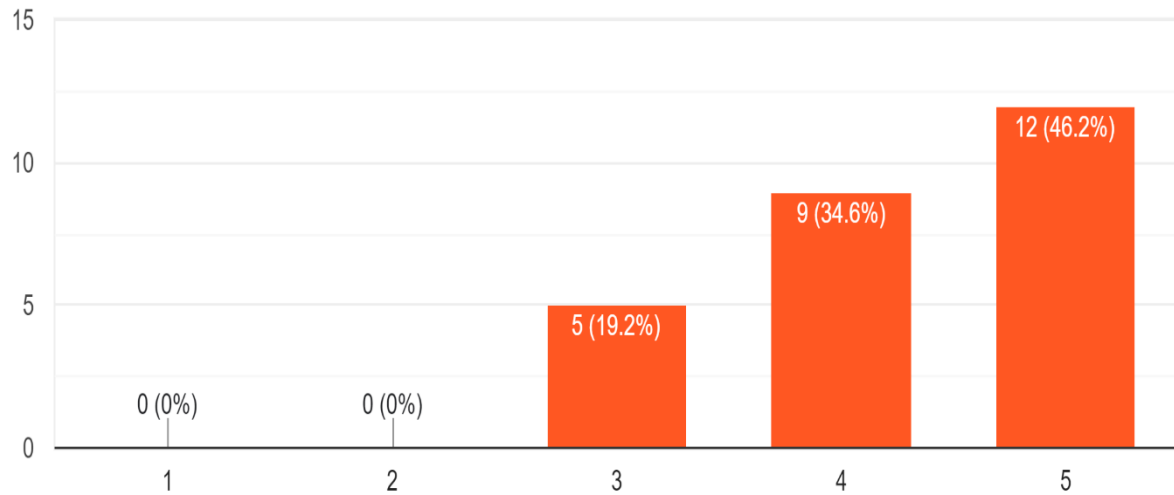
### How do you assess the preparation for the event?

26 responses



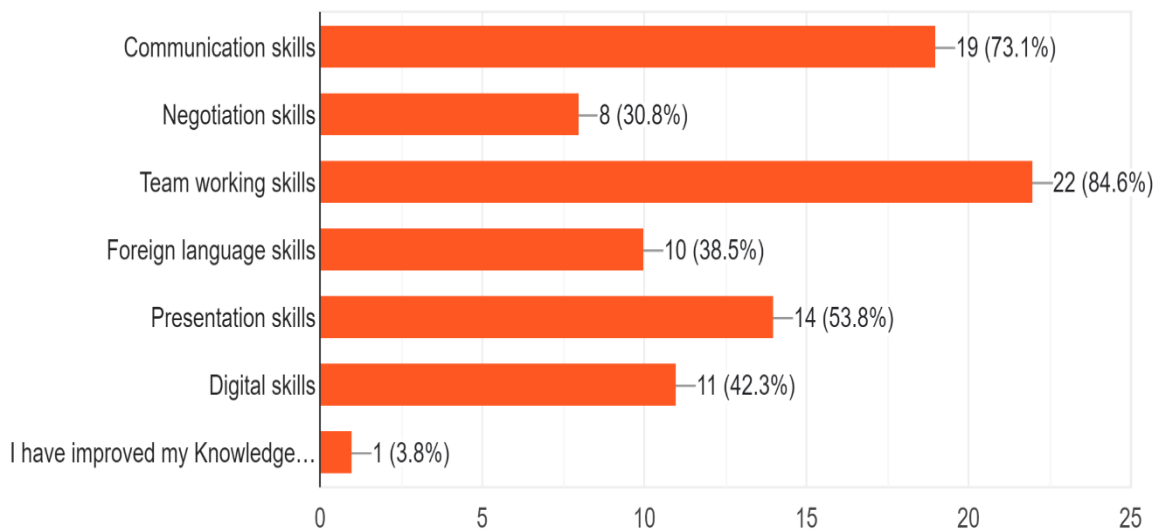
How do you assess the participation of MEGA Trans in the event? (1 is the lowest - 5 is the highest)

26 responses



Do you think you have improved your:

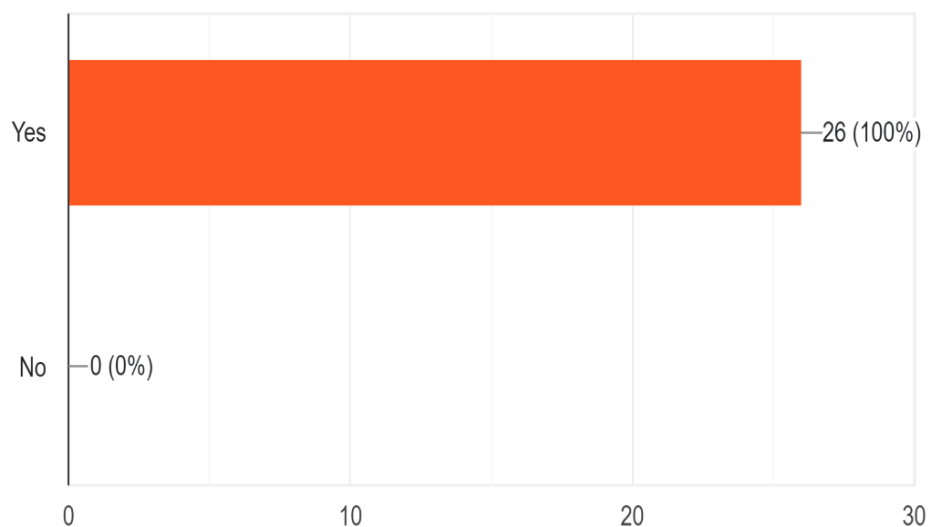
26 responses



**Team working skills, communication skills and presentation skills were assessed as the most important ones improved at the Balkan Youth Challenge.**

Do you think that regional competitions and events like Balkan Youth Challenge will help for the development of regional and international cooperation?

26 responses



**If you were the organizer of such a youth event, what would you change in the preparation and the organization?**

Nothing.

Everything was good.

Everything was perfect.

Organized tour of the city and some important historical and cultural sights.

Do you have any recommendations and suggestions for the improvement of the Western Balkan Country youth participation? 16 responses

More schools and more partners in order to show that youth has been valued by deeds not just words.

No, just to say it was great.

I would organise more activities for the students before and after the competition in order for them to be able to spend more time together and get to know each other so they can develop connections between one another and their countries. Also inviting more countries to participate would be a pretty fun and exciting thing to do for the students.

These events should be promoted and organized annually in the Western Balkan countries, especially those involving youth participation.

