

CONNECT



TRANSFORM
EUROPE
NETWORK

April - June 2023

Magazine



LIVING

Hope

Streams of Living Water in Romania

Walk the Balkans Challenge!

Lives Renewed in Serbia

Overflow with Hope: Wellspring Appeal

Living Hope

‘Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead’ (1 Peter 1:3).

Such words of hope are because of Christ! This edition of Connect is all about our Living Hope. It is about how the gospel transforms people and gives them new life and everlasting hope.

In Split, Croatia, Vjeko Mrsic demonstrates how God established a house church, even during a time of war, which has grown and faithfully shared the good news of Jesus for thirty years. Bera in Novi Sad, Serbia shares the wonderful story of Vlada,



Tanja and Filip who have been restored through the ministry of the church and the Rainbow Rehabilitation Centre. Andrew Saxton at Life to Romania and Didi Oprenova in Bulgaria write respectively about the provision of clean running water and education in Roma communities, bringing hope, acceptance and demonstrating God’s care for them.

In this edition we also launch our new Wellspring Appeal to raise funds for our partners and encourage prayer so they may ‘overflow with hope’ despite the challenges of the cost of living. You can also join us as we Walk the Balkans to raise awareness of our partner countries with the fewest protestant churches, raise funds for where most needed and encourage prayer for more churches to be planted. You can even join us on one of our TENteams trips and work shoulder to shoulder with our partners.

Our prayer is that as you read on, you overflow with hope and are spurred on to support our partners however you can. Praise God for his goodness and be blessed this Easter. Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

Tanja getting baptised by Pastor Bera, Serbia

TRANSFORM EUROPE NETWORK

Registered office:

23 Apex Court, Woodlands,
Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS32 4JT

Tel: +44 (0)117 961 5161

Email: info@ten-uk.org

Web: ten-uk.org

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REGULATOR

Welcome



Living Hope—not just another Christian cliché!

As Connect drops on your doormat or in your inbox I will be in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In February I spent time in Montenegro. Both nations have small numbers of practicing Christians. When I spend time with our partners I realise very quickly that it is only because they have a living hope that they keep going. Our country profile on Montenegro (p.17) tells a story of seven registered churches and two hundred Christians where leaders are isolated. Whilst I was in Montenegro I met Srdjan and Ruth in Kotor, church planters TEN will be supporting. Kotor is beautiful but tough spiritual ground. They can only do what they do because they are rooted in their call by the one who is the Living Hope.

The key is the word 'living'. True hope cannot be based on past success, dead heroes of the faith or future optimism. 'Living' is present, and the truth is that we can be a people of hope because the source, Jesus Christ, is alive and at work now.

My verse for the year is 1 Corinthians 15:58, 'Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.'

Our labour as TEN, your prayers, your support and our partner ministries are not in vain. Why? Because of the Living Hope.

In Christ, The Living Hope,

James Vaughton, CEO, TEN

P.S. If you like a challenge, please consider joining me on Walk the Balkans on p.19

P.P.S. Please consider supporting our Wellspring Appeal as we support partners facing the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis.

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CURRENT CAMPAIGN



WELLSPRING APPEAL
The cost-of-living crisis is
hitting our partners hard.
We want to bring them hope.

Lives Renewed in Novi Sad

By Dusan Beredi (Bera), Pastor of Novi Sad Christian Fellowship, Serbia

This is Vlada, Tanja and Filip's story. Vlada had used drugs occasionally since high school. But later in life he gave in to harder drugs. Eventually, Vlada lost control over his life completely.

Vlada says, 'I gave up on myself... but others didn't give up on me. They asked to help me and I turned to the Rainbow Rehabilitation Centre.'

The Rainbow Centre is a ministry of Novi Sad Protestant Christian Fellowship. The programme is based on biblical principles and discipleship; addicts gradually rebuild their lives, but this time on firm foundations.

'When I entered the programme, I prayed to Jesus, but no great change happened. Then God showed me my corrupted heart and I begged him to change me. He changed my life.'

Tanja adds: 'I started coming to church because of Vlada. I would support him, but the message and worship constantly touched me. I often cried listening to the words of the worship songs.

'I came from a dysfunctional family... That dysfunctionality just kept following me. I was searching for love and tried everything but was never fulfilled... When Vlada entered the programme, I couldn't sleep for months; I struggled with fear, worry and anxiety.

'After one sermon, Pastor Bera made a call for prayer, so I stepped forward asking for sleep at night. But the prayer team led me to a repentance prayer and I accepted Christ in my life and my heart has been changed.'

Last year, Vlada finished the programme. Vlada and Tanja married in the spring and in June, both were baptised. Vlada has a job again and both he and Tanja serve God and the church. And in our Christmas play, little Filip had his part. God has reached the whole family and renewed them.



Photo: Vlada, Tanja and their son, Filip

Novi Sad's Winter Youth Conference

Novi Sad Christian Fellowship's Winter Conference, organised by young people from the church, demonstrated God's heart for restoration and overcoming all boundaries.

There were a hundred and fifty people from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia. Pastor Bera says, 'This is the generation whose parents participated in the [Balkans War] of the nineties.'

Here are some testimonies from those who were there:

Elizabetha from Osijek

'Nothing went according to plan, everything that could have prevented us from going to the conference appeared either on the road or at the border or on the parade route, but God's hand firmly held our Osijek group... The power of God descended on the youth. It awakened in us whether we should change our generation.

'The speaker told us that this generation today is the generation that prays the least, and that truly broke me. That evening 150 young people got on their knees, prayed and celebrated... A double measure of presence, glory, love and that joy that comes from the Father is what I and many others have received. This conference left a mark on my heart, a mark that I will proudly carry and keep! Pray for us young people and the future of the Church.'

A group from Šibenik, Croatia

'I was amazed at how many young people there are in the church... There was no division or difference. Everyone as one family.

'Jasmin's sermon was excellent; he shared with us his experiences from his youth and encouraged us for our current and future actions. It encouraged us to hunger.'

Pastor Bera concludes, 'Love could be felt, strong celebration and great joy... We are constantly receiving messages of encouragement from young people who have experienced the blessing, from various cities and churches. Next year, we continue.'



Thirty Years of Good News in Split

By Vjeko Mrsic,
Pastor of Good News Church, Split, Croatia



Good News Church Split officially started on 3rd March 1993. In the time of war, Pastor Danije and Eva Mrsic moved to Split and started the first evangelical church there in the known history of the city.

When they arrived, very soon they saw the need to minister to drug addicts and war refugees there. Over the next few years, with the help of many international teams the church was born and grew from a house group to a church with many born again believers.

The church started serving and ministering to different needs in the city—street evangelism, the abandoned children’s home, by sending drug addicts to the rehabilitation programmes and reaching out to parents. Programmes like Alpha, Awana and others were used to reach new people and raise and develop new leaders.

After ten years of renting space for the church meetings, in 2003 the church got its first building. The building was as much a miracle from God as the church itself was.

Through many challenges and happy times, Good News Church has been a beacon of light in the city of Split. On 18th March this year, we celebrated our 30th anniversary with the desire to give God the glory and praise for all that He has done over the years.

We ask for a fresh vision for what God will do among and through us in the city of Split and this region of the Balkans.

Thank you for standing with us, praying and visiting us. It is a joy knowing that we all belong to the heavenly kingdom.



Photos (top to bottom): Josipa and Vjeko Mrsic; Eva and Danijel Mrsic; Good News Church today; Worship at Good News Church

Alpha Courses Prepare the Way

By Ken Millwood, Partners Officer at TEN

Twenty-seven years ago, TEN worked in partnership with Sandy Millar and Nicky Gumbel from Holy Trinity Brompton to put on the first ever Alpha conference in Eastern Europe.

630 delegates attended the training event in Prague, Czech Republic from many different nations. There was a hunger for evangelism and discipleship after the spiritual vacuum created by communism.

The first event was later followed by conferences in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Albania. Alpha was the key to open these countries and has now been translated, printed and established in thirteen different countries across Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Alpha courses are still making a difference. Pastor Vjeko Mrcic at Good News Church in Split, reports, 'Last year we ran the Alpha Course from March until May. We had nine people on the course. From that nine, seven regularly attend the church now and are part of the church family.'

Vjeko shares a short testimony of one family impacted by the course: 'Ani came to the church with her husband Bruno, who used to be in a rehab centre many years ago, and there gave his life to Christ.'

Photos: Translated Alpha resources; Vjeko leading an Alpha study; Alpha meal



After many years not being part of the local church, Bruno and Ani came to Good News Church in the summer of 2021. Ani was on our next Alpha course where she gave her life to Christ and was baptised in the summer. They have three children and are part of our church family.'

Praise God for the many lives won for Christ through Alpha and the different ways he uses his people to share the good news of Jesus Christ.



TEN Snippets



Christmas Blessings in Banja Luka

Believers at Banja Luka Christian Fellowship were once again able to host Christmas events after two years of not being able to. The church distributed Christmas shoeboxes from Samaritan's Purse at a nearby town, and also at the church. In total, six hundred shoeboxes were distributed!

At the church, a new group of children performed Christmas plays, including an adaptation of Max Lucado's *You Are Special*. Two young people who had previously performed in the church's plays are now volunteers who help to run the drama club.

Superwomen in Kosovo

Alban Krasniqi, who leads Youth for Christ Kosovo, was delighted that a presentation for the Superwoman programme went ahead at the start of this year. Superwoman helps equip female leaders who work with teenage girls to encourage, empower, and disciple them in a culture that does not.

Marieke Klaasse gave a helpful presentation and encouraged the women present to share their personal stories and deepest dreams for the teenagers they serve. There was a deep sense of unity. As a result of the presentation, two participants registered for the training with the hope of starting the first Superwoman clubs in Kosovo.

Staying Close to Partners Through Online Prayer



Our online Partner & Supporter Prayer Meetings provide an opportunity to hear from a guest partner and then gather in smaller groups to pray for them and the other partners present. They are held about once every two months and they enable supporters and partners to meet with us and each other directly, albeit online!

In February, we were privileged to have Monika Mahr share about CASA Grace's work with vulnerable families and children, and the vocational courses they run to bring hope to people in Oradea, Romania. If you would like to join our next online prayer meeting, look out for our next invitation on social media and email.

HEART Cry

Prayer requests from across Europe

April - June 2023

ten-uk.org/pray

— APRIL 2023 —

PLAMEN & KREMI BORISOVI BULGARIA



- 1 We need to find a church building to purchase as soon as possible. We have found a larger hall to rent for which we praise God, but this is temporary. We need a long-term solution.

MISSION POSSIBLE BULGARIA BULGARIA



- 2 Today, the Bible conference for Roma pastors and their wives on Prospering in All Things concludes. The theme is based on John 3:2. Pray for the fifty couples in attendance.

DANNY & VERA KURANJI SERBIA



- 3 Several billboards have been placed around the city to let people know that becoming free from addiction is possible. Pray that many will respond.
- 4 There are several men finishing the rehabilitation programme very soon. May God lead, direct, and use these changed lives.

- 5 Several men in rehab are visiting churches in Serbia with the Rainbow Rehabilitation team. Pray that those who need help will come and hear testimonies. Pray that believers will catch the vision and share Christ with needy people everywhere.
- 6 Pray for godly women to come into the lives of the men who have finished the programme, are clean and would love to have a family.
- 7 Praise the Lord for several new promises we have received for food donations.

LJILJANA BANICEK BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



- 8 Pray for the IFES students from the Czech Republic who will come to help us with Easter outreach among students.
- 9 Please pray for the new Bible study group.

DRAGAN & BILJANA MANEV NORTH MACEDONIA



- 10 We are planning evangelistic outreach events around Eastertime. Easter is celebrated 16th April in North Macedonia.

- 11 Pray against the cultural and divisive issues which exist between Bulgaria and North Macedonia. Currently, Bulgaria is objecting to North Macedonia joining the European Union.
- 12 Pray for the Roma community in Resen. We want to plant a Roma church there.

VASILE & MARIA GRIGORITA
MOLDOVA



- 13 Please pray with us for the Easter events we have planned this month. We want to share the gospel with the people here.
- 14 Pray for us as we organise day camps in June for the local children. Remember the team who are preparing and delivering the programme. Pray also for the finances we need.
- 15 In July, an event organised by the Billy Graham Association will take place at the football arena in Chisinau. Pray for us as we support the preparations for this event.

EMIL & VESNA PUZDERLIEVI
NORTH MACEDONIA



- 16 Please pray for our Easter bag outreach. Today is Easter Sunday.
- 17 Thanks to the Christmas party we held and the gifts we gave out, we have started a children's class each Saturday.
- 18 There has been a major shift in attitudes thanks to our distribution of firewood and food. It has resulted in people coming to church to attend the services.

DUSAN & MIRA BEREDI
SERBIA



- 19 Pray for the Alpha course which will begin after Easter. We plan to take a step further and invite many more friends than before.

- 20 A team of women from our church are participating in a women's conference called The King's Daughter in Sarajevo from tomorrow. Mirjana, Erika and Jelena will lead prayer workshops. Pray for the conference but also for God to use these ladies.

DARIO & SILVIJA KAPIN
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



- 21 Please pray for our ministry in Zenica and how we reach people. We have a goal to plant a church in Derventa where we have had opportunities to witness.
- 22 Pray for the church facility we are going to renovate and that God provides for all we need as we look to purchase a property and renovate it so it is fit for purpose.
- 23 Pray for the apiary, especially for a productive season and for all our work there.

KATERINA KOLEVA
NORTH MACEDONIA



- 24 Pray for our Mission Week which starts today and concludes on Friday.
- 25 Please pray for our Alpha Course for students which starts next month and lasts about ten weeks. Pray many students would put their trust in Christ.
- 26 We would like to distribute a new Macedonian-language book on evangelism at events for students and young people.

BEGINNING OF LIFE
MOLDOVA



- 27 Pray for the physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of Moldovan and Ukrainian families, that they come to know God's love and grace. Pray that local churches have the opportunity to share the gospel with them.

- 28 Pray for wisdom for our leaders and young volunteers. Pray for over ninety mothers whose infants are going through early years education. Pray for over two hundred young people who take part in our educational activities and community initiatives.

MISSION POSSIBLE BULGARIA BULGARIA



- 29 Today, we begin The Hem of His Garment; a biblical recovery course for vulnerable and abused women. We are expecting twenty-five women. Pray that through his word, God will restore them spiritually, emotionally, and physically from their trauma.
- 30 Next month, we expect about a hundred men from various evangelical churches to attend More Than Overcomers, a conference based on Romans 8:37. Please pray for us all.

— MAY 2023 —

MISSION POSSIBLE ALBANIA ALBANIA



- 1 In the area we work in, every family has at least one person between 15-20 years old who has emigrated or is looking for a way to leave Albania. Please pray against depopulation.
- 2 It is very common here for girls to be married very young to men who live outside of Albania and the practice is increasing. We have many girls who are part of our ministry who are fighting with their families to not get married and to finish high school. Please pray for them.
- 3 During winter, we delivered groceries to some families in Bathore, supported by the Harvest for The Hungry appeal. We want to share the message of the gospel with them, so they can be reconciled to the Father and Creator.

SLAVKO & SANJA HADŽIĆ BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



- 4 This week Slavko is speaking at evangelistic events in Serbia. Pray that the events will be well attended and that people will respond to the message.
- 5 At the start of next month, Slavko will speak at evangelistic events in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Pray they will be well attended and people will respond to the message.
- 6 Between 5-10 June, Slavko will train evangelists at FEUER Balkan (Fellowship of Evangelists in the Universities of Europe). Pray that all the training would be beneficial and practical for the evangelists.

ANITA DIMITRIEVSKA NORTH MACEDONIA



- 7 Please pray for liberation in Ohrid from religiosity, and for hearts to open up to the truth.
- 8 May God bless the ministry with women and give us new souls which are hungry for him.
- 9 Ohrid is a tourist city, but with the economic crisis, many people are being left financially wounded as things are more expensive and people spend less. Pray that God sustains those people in need.
- 10 We want to start a Royal Rangers squad but it is difficult to reach the children here. Please pray for a breakthrough.
- 11 May God bless our church with those who are on fire for him and contributing to his kingdom through godly service.

GAVRIL & AGHI COVACI
ROMANIA



- 12 Pray for the How to Interpret the Bible course for brothers from several Roma churches. Our hope is the course will raise up local deacons and preachers in our newest church plants.
- 13 Please pray for those who want to be baptised but who need to formalise their common law marriages first, as they do not have the money for a civil marriage.
- 14 Pray for those in our Roma communities who are disabled, elderly, widowed and those with serious chronic diseases.
- 15 Pray for me, my family, the mission and all the difficulties we face in the communities and churches. Pray we can overcome the trials and temptations every day. May the Lord give us the victory so that though his grace, we can serve him and our dear Roma brothers.

EVANGELISIMO EN ACCIÓN
SPAIN



- 16 Please pray for the people we made contact with during our Christmas events. Several are immigrants who are enduring great difficulties.
- 17 Please pray for the youth camp we had in the mountains over Easter. Pray for the team and that eternal fruit would be produced in young lives.
- 18 We had children's and youth camps at our retreat centre during the Easter holidays. Pray for the children to receive the good news. Several come from difficult family backgrounds or circumstances.
- 19 Please pray for the ministry at the market in Torremolinos. We pray for new contacts where we book a table, give out free literature, and have conversations each week.

- 20 We praise God for the 50th anniversary of the first church planted by EEA in Segovia. There will be several public events, including a documentary which will be shown in Segovia's most important cinema.

MARSEL & GRETA FIRANJ
ALBANIA



- 21 We currently use two gas cylinders to heat the church. We are trusting God for an air conditioner. Pray he will provide all the finances needed to buy one.
- 22 We currently rent our house. Pray that God would direct us to another newer and warmer home. Greta is expecting our first child too so keep our growing family in your prayers!
- 23 Marsel is applying for a driving license. Pray that God will provide all the finances to get a car and that Marsel will get his license.
- 24 Please pray for the church. We want to win the lost for Christ. Pray for new strategies from God in how we work and for revival in our church.

LJILJANA BANICEK
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA



- 25 For one month between May and June, we will host approximately thirty InterVarsity students from the US. We will share the gospel at each activity to try and reach the students.
- 26 Next month, we expect to have a mission week with Andy Mayo and Slavko Hadžić. Pray that students will attend this event.
- 27 During June and July, between five to ten students from InterVarsity California are coming to run sports camps for children. At the end, we will run some activities with the children and their parents.

VANCE & TANJA GOLOMEOVI
SERBIA



- 28 Our church building needs much reconstruction. Please pray that God provides resources so we can use it to its full potential.
- 29 Please pray for Vance's one-to-one ministry and that God will give him wisdom for every person who meets with him.

VJEKO & JOSIPA MRSIC
CROATIA



- 30 We have been running an Alpha course since April. Pray that God would open the eyes of all those who have participated and they will see their need for Christ.
- 31 Next month, we will have our Outback Weekend for married couples, parents and teenagers. Pray for opened hearts in relationships for all the campers.

— JUNE 2023 —

ROBERT & KRASI SALAMANOVI
NORTH MACEDONIA



- 1 Please pray that we can purchase the church building and house.
- 2 Pray for the young people in the church.
- 3 Please remember the miners we minister to, particularly those who struggle with alcoholism and gambling addictions.
- 4 Pray for the centre to protect women who have suffered domestic violence and that Krasi can develop her relationships with people there.
- 5 Krasi runs creative workshops at a centre for children with special needs. Pray for her as she seeks opportunities to share the gospel with parents.

PETRE & DANIELA PETROVI
NORTH MACEDONIA



- 6 There is no hunger for God. People are indifferent, lukewarm, and more inclined to follow material things. Pray for spiritual hunger for God among his people.
- 7 Pray that God would raise up the next generation of Christian leaders and ministers.
- 8 Pray for us to reach people with the gospel and that they accept Christ as their saviour.

MISSION POSSIBLE BULGARIA
BULGARIA



- 9 This weekend we have our Christian Women's Conference for women who have completed The Hem of His Garment course in the last twelve years. There are over 450 women who have been changed by this course.
- 10 Pray as we organise a seminar for Christian writers and publishers in Bulgaria with Media Associates International Europe, which will be held later this month.

JOVICA & SAVKA BACVANSKI
MONTENEGRO



- 11 Please pray for our young believers to grow in faith and spiritual hunger. All around us, people are hungry for material and worldly things. Only a few want God in their lives.
- 12 Pray that our church members recognise the gift of having the Lord in their lives so they can serve more effectively and with greater quality.

- 13 Please pray for Montenegrins to be saved. In the whole country, we have less than two hundred believers and most of them are foreigners. We have only a few Montenegrin Christians in our church; we want to see many saved.
- 14 Please pray for my assistants Boris and Ursa and their children. They left their homes in Serbia and Slovenia respectively to serve in Montenegro. There is so much to do and we need them to work full-time in the church but finances are needed for this.
- 15 Pray that God would provide the finances to renovate the toilets as we only have one. We expect the law will change soon so that we need to have one for men and one for women.

FETIJE HALILI
ALBANIA



- 16 Many Albanians are leaving the country for economic reasons, including families in the church. Pray that people would find the means to stay.
- 17 Pray that God would provide the finances for the new church in Bathore.
- 18 Pray for the healing of some church family members.
- 19 Pray for peace and harmony within Albanian families.

**EVANGELICAL CHURCH
OF MACEDONIA**
NORTH MACEDONIA



- 20 Pray for this month's summer camps.
- 21 Pray for the finances for mission work. Our need for leaders in new churches is growing but the finances are less.
- 22 Pray for North Macedonia. Many young people are leaving the country. There is a lot of corruption here too.

DUSAN & MIRA BEREDI
SERBIA



- 23 Over the next four days, Montenegro is hosting a big conference called, My Brother's Keeper. Bera will be one of the main speakers. Please pray for wisdom and for the conference to be a blessing.
- 24 Please pray for the news guys at Rainbow Rehabilitation Centre who are mostly heroin addicts, for the growth of those who have been in recovery over a longer period and for wisdom in how to encourage Christlike character in them. Pray God sustains our finances.

IGOR & TATIANA ISMAILOV
MOLDOVA



- 25 Please pray for the growth and strengthening of the church in Badicul Moldovenesc. Ask God for a spiritual awakening in our local community.
- 26 Pray for the church we want to plant in Larga.
- 27 Pray for the day camp for children that we are planning.

RUSLAN & LARISA TELPIZ
MOLDOVA



- 28 Please pray for us to have everything we need as we provide meals for poor people. We want to feed them physically and spiritually.
- 29 Pray for our ministry to teenagers in Gotesti and Chircani.
- 30 Pray for the church plant in Tiganca village; that those who put their trust in the Lord will grow in their faith.

Lucy's Roundup

By Lucy Reid, Mission Engagement Worker at TEN



Prayer has a powerful way of softening our hearts and encouraging in us the same love God has towards nations, people, or circumstances we once felt apathy for.

In January, we hosted our first in-person prayer gathering for Eastern Europe and the Balkans in partnership with Burn 24/7 Europe. We prayed for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine in turn after hearing about the situations and prayer needs in each country. Woodlands Church in Bristol generously provided space for us to use, and Jo Demçolli led us in a beautiful time of worship.

It was good to learn more about what is going on in these nations, both circumstantially and spiritually, from Neim Demçolli from Albania and Ian Watt from Burn 24/7 Europe who shared the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also heard from Bristol-based Christians who have helped Ukrainian refugees both here and abroad.

To encourage people, I shared John 15:15: 'I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.'

We get to have a close friendship with God and he wants to share with us what he is up to among the nations. He wants to lead us in intercessions and for us to partner with him in all we do.

Why not gather some of your friends and pray for Eastern Europe and the Balkans?

You can learn and pray about each country's circumstances or pray for the diaspora where you live. We would love to support you! Get in touch with me at lucy.reid@ten-uk.org to share ideas.



Photos: Praying together for Eastern Europe and The Balkans; Ian Watt shares the needs in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Hope and a Future

By Didi Oprenova, Co-Pastor of Sofia Baptist Church, Bulgaria

The cycle of poverty is not easy to break for a young child—or even desired.

How can you grasp how important education and hard work are, when your own family and community think that going to school is pointless? How can you appreciate good results and qualifications if you still go to bed hungry? Live for the moment and make the most of that!

With every generation, the story repeats itself. This is the mentality one must break through in both children and parents before any productive work is done. For kindness to be embraced, a sense of trust and a loving relationship must be developed. Bringing those walls down is where literacy classes begin.

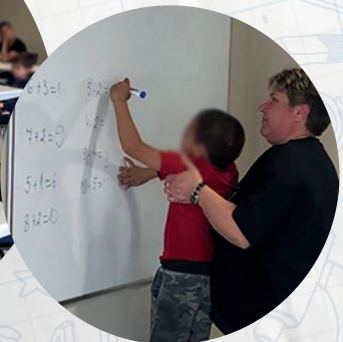
For nearly two decades, faithful and committed teachers within the First Baptist Church in Sofia have given time, effort, skills, kind-heartedness, and patience to teach illiterate poor Roma children.

The goal is to encourage children and parents to believe in themselves so they make a conscious decision of going successfully through the education system, to get as far ahead in their education and work towards a better future. Also, the love of God in Jesus is practically lived out, as the children come to a place where they can have a long, hot shower, warm meal, clothes; they can even take aid home.

It is a rewarding experience to look back and count the people who have studied. Not everyone succeeds; some only finish primary school, others manage to complete secondary school, and some finish high school. The kids grow up, get married, have children and many of them send their children to our classes in the faith and conviction that it is good for them, that it is a place of acceptance and hope.



Photos: A young girl learns fractions; teaching the class; a young boy learns maths



Country Focus: Montenegro

By James Vaughton, CEO at TEN

I visited Montenegro in February. Historically, Montenegro was part of the Roman, 'Illyria' as mentioned by the apostle Paul (Romans 15:19). It was not until the late 16th century that Montenegro was established as a country. In 2017, it became a member of NATO and now hopes to join the EU along with other Balkan nations.

Montenegrin culture follows Orthodox traditions with a strong Serbian influence. 90% of Orthodox churches remain Serbian and the remainder align with the new Montenegrin Orthodox Church. This causes some conflict and because of that, many people do not want to hear about God.

TEN has three partners in Montenegro—Jovica and Savka Bacvanski of Christ Gospel Church, Vladimir and Marjana Cizmanski of Podgorica Evangelical Church and Daniel and Irinka Stracinski, of Mosaic Church in Bar.

Montenegro means 'black mountain.' Jovica told us that 'the nation is in spiritual darkness'. In a population of 650,000 there are just seven registered protestant churches and two hundred Christians. Only 40% are Montenegrin. This presents a challenging picture, which often means the church is marginalised. Talking with Christians in Montenegro, there is encouragement; God is at work and the Spirit is bringing in believers from other nations and sowing Kingdom seeds.

TEN is about to start supporting church planters from Podgorica Evangelical Church in the coastal town of Kotor. There are fledgling church plants in Budva and Kamenari too, supported by Christ Gospel Church. There is a fragility, however there is also anticipation of what God is doing at this time.

Please pray for our current partners and these new church plants. Daniel adds, 'pray for wisdom, energy, support for servants who are equipping a new generation to stay in Montenegro. Pray for Montenegrins to be changed in a special way, just like the apostle Paul'.



- = Registered churches
- = Church plants (that we are aware of, there may be others)

Photos: James in Montenegro;
Worship in Montenegro

TENteams Take Off

Last year we started an exciting new venture, TENteams, with our women's trip to Hem of His Garment in Dobromirka, Bulgaria. In response to partner requests, we have increased the number of teams we will send this year to three team trips!

Women's Trip to Pogradec, Albania: 20th-25th April

Melanie Griffiths will lead a team to support a short women's conference. The hope is to encourage women who are in ministry. We will spend time with the women's groups in the churches and villages. If you are gifted at listening, prayer, leading worship, sharing God's word, encouragement, please get in touch as soon as possible.



Kids Summer Camp, Croatia: 2nd-9th July

This is a great opportunity to work with Croatian young people and adults as part of a team of about twenty who will run a children's camp for 6-11 year-olds. The camp has been organised by partner Vjeko Mrsic. We are looking for people gifted in children's work, leading games or crafts.



Student Trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina: Dates TBC

Lucy hopes to take a group of students to Bosnia and Herzegovina in the autumn to reach out to students there and invite them to events.

There are still more opportunities available.

If your church can put a team together we would be very happy to support you to coordinate a trip. Your team could teach English classes or facilitate summer camps in Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, and North Macedonia.

For more information contact Melanie or Lucy at tenteams@ten-uk.org as soon as possible.

Walk the Balkans 2023 Challenge

The vision

Back in 2021 we held the Via Ignatia fundraiser which raised nearly £10,000. Thank you to everyone who took part. This year we are doing it again with a new Balkans route to inspire people to get walking and to raise £5k-£10k to bring hope in Eastern Europe.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo are our three partner countries with the fewest protestant Christians and churches. This challenge aims to raise awareness of these countries and to increase prayer for their people.

Walk, pray, give

This is a **virtual walk challenge** through three countries, over 300 miles. Start in **Sarajevo** (Bosnia and Herzegovina), walk to **Podgorica** (Montenegro) and finish the journey in **Pristina** (Kosovo).

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

Sarajevo

MONTENEGRO

Podgorica

KOSOVO

Pristina

How to achieve your goal

Walk, jog or cycle. You can complete the challenge yourself or with a friend. You can walk as part of a group and combine your mileage. Participants can choose to complete a stage of the virtual walk, a specific distance or the whole 300 miles. Walk the Balkans 2023 challenge launches in May and will run until November.

For more information, contact melanie.griffiths@ten-uk.org, or visit walkthebalkans.org.

Would you like to actually walk the Balkans?

James Vaughton, our CEO, is working with a local mountain guide from Sofia Baptist Church to organise a trek to climb Musala in Bulgaria, the highest mountain in the Balkans. It stands at nearly 3000 metres!

The trek will be over three days (two nights) and the overall trip will be four to five nights. The walk will happen the week of 11th September. It will be an opportunity to get into the mountains, fundraise for TEN, make new friends, join an adventure, and pray together for the Balkans.

Places are limited.

To find out more please email james.vaughton@ten-uk.org

Supporting Partners During Hard Times

By Ken Millwood, Partners Officer at TEN

We all know the cost of living has risen dramatically. Partners in the Balkans and Eastern Europe were already reporting in 2021 that basics such as food, heating and fuel were rising, the costs of some items doubling in a matter of months. The invasion of Ukraine and the international sanctions on Russia last year simply escalated the increases across Europe.

We monitored the situation and decided to act. We wanted to support any partners who were personally struggling to pay bills, put fuel in their vehicle or afford the basics.

Based on personal information

provided, we sent out one-off hardships grants before Christmas to twenty-seven partners and funds to a further eight partner organisations to help them manage through the winter.

A total of almost £24,000 altogether.

Here are some of the responses to the personal grants sent:

'Thank you all, every help is a gift, really appreciated!'

'My family and I appreciate it. It will be a great help for us.'

'I am very overwhelmed with emotions; I want to thank you and the entire TEN team for what you do for us as a family and for the Church.'

'Thank you for thinking of us and our families in these difficult times. Your help means a lot to us in these days.'

'Big thanks to... the whole TEN team, and of course the biggest thanks goes to our God who provides everything.'

And from one of the partner organisations:

'Thank you so much TEN for your partnership. Indeed, the cost of living went up, and it is sometimes quite uncertain how we will keep on paying rents, and salaries, and continue caring for the clients. We have to trust God that He would provide from day to day, like He did now through you.'

Wellspring Appeal

Our partners in Europe report big rises in living costs hitting them hard, especially in poor countries like Moldova and Romania.

Many work hard to sustain their ministries by growing crops to sell or running small businesses like a charity shop or a removal business. Nonetheless, life is tough. We hear frequent reports of rent rises and food and fuel price hikes.

Two of our partners in North Macedonia write...

The economical crisis is a great challenge to us and many Macedonian citizens. Pray for God's provision. Pray also for us, as we are giving food parcels to many people in need.

Dragan Manev, Resen

People in Ohrid are struggling with the harsh reality of daily living and are left alone, helpless and living a patchy life in their houses on the verge of decay and with minimal income.

Anita Dimitrievska, Ohrid

We recognise things are tough in the UK too and are immensely grateful for your faithful support for our partners. Thank you so much!

We are asking if you can respond again in one of a few ways:

- If you give regularly, could you **increase your giving** by as little as £2-£5 per gift?
- **Please donate** to our **Wellspring Appeal**, which provides for partners facing financial hardship.
- **Pray for our partners.** We have included a special prayer postcard with this edition to encourage you to pray. Please pray that God will sustain our partners and their amazing ministries.



Our spring campaign, Wellspring, is about sustaining life and blessing our partners through prayer so they can 'overflow with hope'.

Please give at wellspringappeal.org.uk or by completing the tear-out slip in this magazine.

GIVE TO TRANSFORM EUROPE NETWORK

1. SINGLE DONATION

I would like to give £ (total amount). Please acknowledge my donation:

I enclose a cheque made payable to TEN | Please charge my: Visa Mastercard CAF Charity Card

Card number:

Security code: (Last three digits on back of card) Expiry date: /

Signature:

Name on card:

2. REGULAR DONATION

Instruction to your bank or building society to make standing order payments to TEN.

Name and address of your Bank or Building Society:

Bank/Building Society:

Branch address:

Postcode:

Account number: Sort code:

Please pay to: **Lloyds, Regent Street, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 2HT** to the credit of **Eurovangelism**, account number: **38611760**, sort code: **30-94-80**, the sum of:

£ First payment date: / /

and on the same day of each successive (month/quarter/year) until otherwise advised.

Signature:

Full name:

Date:

3. I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE TO:

- Wellspring Appeal TEN's Strategic Fund* Specific people or projects:** _____
- I would like any tax reclaimed to go to the above people or projects. _____
(Leaving this blank will enable us to use your reclaimed tax for our Strategic Fund*.)

4. *giftaid it* MAKE YOUR GIFT WORTH 25% MORE!

If you are a UK taxpayer please complete this Gift Aid declaration which will enable us to claim tax back on your gift, making it worth 25% more.

I am a UK taxpayer and want TEN (registered name Eurovangelism) to reclaim tax on **all my donations until further notice**. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

Please notify us if you: want to cancel this declaration; change your name or home address; no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

Title:

Full name:

Address:

Postcode:

Date:

Please tick if you want tax to be reclaimed only on this single donation.

* The strategic fund forms part of our general funds and enables us to meet whatever need arises.

** At least 85p in every £1 donated is spent on your specified restricted charitable activities.

Please complete and return this form to:
**Transform Europe Network, 23 Apex Court,
Woodlands, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS32 4JT**

Streams of Living Water in Tarcea

By Andrew Saxton, Life to Romania

When Pastor Gavril first visited the Roma neighbourhood in Tarcea, Romania, he said, 'I didn't know that people still live like this'.

What he saw there were people living in very poor conditions, eking out a meagre living from hedgerows and casual labour, largely unwashed and unconcerned about children running around barefoot and worse.

Now six years on, there is a Roma church in Tarcea with around seventy adults, over a hundred children, and a constant stream of people responding to the good news of Jesus Christ and coming forward for baptism. Living conditions have improved as they enjoy the prayerful support of the church family both in Romania and the UK.

But until recently, they shared just one clean water tap between over forty homes and so struggled to send their children to school in clean clothes. Children were often sent home from school because of this. Although people in Tarcea knew the unconditional love of God, they still felt the rejection of humanity every day.

The church and community prayed for a solution for their children, and they were overjoyed when a UK church agreed to raise funds to install another fourteen taps in the community. Their prayer had been answered. December saw the completion of the works to install the new taps, each one shared between three or four homes.

Pastor Gavril said: 'It is a great success and a great help for Roma families. It gives a future for their children. There is a spiritual change too; something changed their lives and destiny. They are very thankful to God and to the sponsors. They say that this water aid is a miracle for them; that the whole community has water and can wash the children, clothes and prepare food with clean water.'

*Photos: Fresh water at a new tap (top);
Lady at one of the new taps (bottom)*



The cost-of-living crisis is hitting many of our partners hard.

They are doing what they can to sustain their ministries and we want to bring them hope.

You can help.

Donations to TEN's Wellspring Appeal will encourage our partners, make their resources go further and even **sustain them and people in their communities** despite the cost-of-living crisis.

To give, please visit wellspringappeal.org.uk



Pray for our partners and their communities so they overflow with hope, knowing that God is good and he sees them.

wellspringappeal.org.uk