



NGO "Our Serbia"

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СРПСКИ КОД

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International children's camp  
**«Eurasian School of Friendship 2018»**

organized by

**Non-Governmental Organization "Our Serbia"  
Belgrade, Serbia**



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**Project title:**

**Children's camp "Eurasian School of Friendship 2018"**

**Name of the organization:** "Our Serbia"

**Location:** Mount Tara, Serbia

**Official languages:** Serbian – Russian – English

**Dates:** 15-27 July 2018

**Short history and project contents:**

Project "School of Friendship" is a traditional children's camp that a Serbian non-governmental organization "Our Serbia" has been organizing since 2000.

Since the moment it was formed in 2000 and until 2011, "Our Serbia" was implementing a program aimed at aiding orphans, who were left without one or both parents during the wars in the Balkans. This program entitled "Our Serbia to its children" provided help to more than 1.500 children from Serbia, Montenegro and Republika Srpska. Among other projects, as a part of this program, a children's camp "School of Friendship" was organized on a yearly basis. During the camp, the wards had the opportunity to meet children from other countries and, at least for a bit, put off the thoughts about their hardships. Since the moment it was founded, the "School of Friendship" hosted more than 10.000 children, who, thanks to the organization's sponsors, spent a part of their summer holidays in our camp free of charge. Moreover, for many of these children, regular financial help was provided throughout the year, in order for them to reach a full potential in their development. Further on, the organization started helping low-income families with many children from underdeveloped regions, as well as talented children and students.

The goal of "Our Serbia" is to improve the general life conditions, education, healthcare and social protection of children and youth, support gifted children and students, encourage children's creativity, and foster values such as benevolence, friendship, solidarity, tolerance and patriotism through various projects and charity events.

Starting from 2010, the basis of the "School of Friendship" was a cultural-educational program "The Serbian Code", intended for Serbian children living in countries of the Balkan region – Montenegro, Republika Srpska, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Macedonia... The main goal of this program was the preservation of the Serbian national identity and ties between these children and their homeland. In 2013, the "School of Friendship" became an international camp, when its participants became Russian children from Russia. In 2014 they were followed by Russian children from Transnistria (Moldova), in 2015 by those from Donetsk (Ukraine), as well as Russian-speaking children from Bulgaria. It needs to be stated that in these cases "Our Serbia" covered all costs for transportation, stay and food for children from Serbia, while our partners and benefactors from abroad financed the participation of Russian and Russian-speaking children. In order for the camp to become fully international and for it to bring together all participants, the team of "Our Serbia's" professionals developed a program entitled "Serbian-Russian Code", which will be described below.



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One of main peculiarities of the “School of Friendship” is the concept of learning through communication, games, creativity, and discovering one’s interests, talents and hobbies. Numerous activities are carried out during the camp, which are aimed at revealing talents and encouraging intellectual, creative and sports potentials of children. In order to reach this goal, various specialized workshops are organized, where children from both Russia and Serbia develop their skills and acquire new knowledge.

By including the most diverse aspects of working with children, the “School of Friendship” offers a large number of workshops. They are all aimed at children acquiring knowledge and expanding experience in the fields of ecology, ethnology, languages, music and folklore, fine arts and sculpture, acting, etc. An important segment of the “School of Friendship” is the school of sports including football, basketball, volleyball, rhythmic gymnastics, tennis and martial arts.



Spending time in this unique school provides children with the possibility to obtain an immense quantity of new knowledge and skills, get acquainted with one another, communicate and share. This project is especially useful for Serbian children living in Kosovo and Metohija, who rarely have the possibility to get away from everyday life spent in fear and danger and feel the joy of childhood in a peaceful and safe environment. This is why “Our Serbia” does its best to host as many children as possible from Serbian enclaves – to give them everything they lack at home.





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### **Serbian-Russian code**

The goal of involving Russian children in the “School of Friendship” in 2013 was to strengthen bilateral relations between Russia and Serbia, promote common values, and get children acquainted with cultural and linguistic characteristics of both countries. In order to achieve this, a program entitled “Serbian-Russian Code” and the corresponding workshop were developed. Their most important component was the topic of Serbian-Russian friendship and history of their relations, as well as characteristics and common cultural, spiritual and social values, which bring together the two peoples.



Within the framework of the “Serbian-Russian Code” children learn about topics that help strengthen the ties between Serbian and Russian peoples, as well as those acquainting them with traditions, customs, beliefs, history and culture of both nations. For instance, in 2017, topics from Serbian history included such as the foundation of the Serbian state, its rulers, autonomy of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Saint Sava, the Kosovo Battle, great scientists, writers, etc. On the other hand, Russia-related topics included the Russian role in the First World War and the White Movement in the formation of special relations between Serbian and Russian peoples after the Russian Revolution in 1917, as well as the role of some of the greatest Russian scientists, artists, and educators, who found their shelter in Serbia, in the expansion of Serbian culture. An equally important part of this workshop is introducing Serbian children to the basics of the Russian language and vice-versa, which makes it easier for children to communicate with one another, get acquainted and know more one about another by using some of the phrases they are taught during these lessons. Our experience shows that in these lessons children conclude just how similar our languages are, they find the same Slavic roots, inter-language homonyms, learn basic expressions, read poetry and learn it by heart. They develop a special interest towards reading Russian and Serbian children poets and writers in the original, without translation. Most importantly, they receive the linguistic basis during the camp and develop an interest towards learning a naturally close foreign language.



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## **Eurasian School of Friendship**



“Our Serbia’s” plan for 2018 is to host the “Eurasian School of Friendship”, in which children from more than 15 Eurasian countries would participate, get acquainted with one another, and learn about cultures and traditions of participating peoples. Thus, children would develop such values as tolerance and respect towards others and spread the ideas of peace and cooperation regardless of other’s religion or nationality.

Apart from becoming acquainted with cultures, traditions and customs of the peoples of Eurasia, one of the most important tasks of the camp will be to overcome different stereotypes about people living on the Eurasian territory. According to psychologists, stereotypes are means for an individual to adapt to the environment. By classifying people into various groups, we try to make sense of our worldviews without noticing that we thus generalize and make primitive everyone belonging to that group. Thus we get to the point when all Montenegrins are lazy, Americans arrogant, while all Muslims hate Christians and vice versa. Therefore, stereotypes negatively affect communication and make common understanding between different ethnic, religious or cultural groups practically impossible, thus bringing about xenophobia, hatred, and, eventually, wars.





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This is why our camp is aimed at overcoming stereotypes by enhancing communication and establishing close connections between the participating children. The children will get to know real representatives of different peoples, thus creating a personal relationship with their cultures, values and traditions. By getting acquainted with their peers from the whole Eurasian continent, children will get the possibility to understand the basis of national identities of each and every one of them and will be able to create more founded opinion about their behavior and understandings of the world around them.



One of the main values which will be implemented in the system of values of participants during the camp will be respect towards other people. Moreover, the children will learn about how important the preservation of differences among our peoples is, as well as in which way this fortune of differences can improve the life of all of us. After the camp ends, the children will not only obtain wider knowledge about their own culture and cultures of others, but they will also become much more tolerant towards people around them in everyday life.

One of the questions, which "Our Serbia" has been facing from the very beginning of our work, was if anything can be changed in children in such a short period during the "School of Friendship". Our answer is YES. Through intensive communication and spending whole days with representatives of different peoples children of that age tend to develop very close, friendly relationships in just a couple of days. For the time they spend in the "School of Friendship" they get the possibility to establish a unique type of contacts with their peers, many of which are maintained among them long after the camp ends and they leave the Mount Tara.



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With the help of donors and friends of "Our Serbia", it is planned that around 190 children from more than 15 Eurasian countries will participate in the "School of Friendship 2018". Apart from children from Serbia (Kosovo and Metohija and cities Paracin and Popovac) and countries from the region (Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina), as well as children from Transnistria and Russia, which are planned to arrive with the help of the Foundation for Social and Cultural Initiatives, Transnistrian-Prut Information-Analytic Center and the Department for Youth of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, the participation of children from Austria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Slovenia, and Switzerland, among others, is expected. They will all be invited to participate through cooperation with the Eurasian Peoples Assembly and its member organizations.

### **Workshops in the Eurasian School of Friendship**

In order for children to make friends and spend time communicating and getting to know each other during the camp, based on many years of our organization's experience, a special program entitled the "Eurasian Code" will be developed. The basis of this program will consist of values such as tolerance, solidarity, respect for cultural differences, nonviolent communication and peaceful cooperation. In order to teach children the basis of the "Eurasian Code" and implement the values it





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promotes, a daily workshop with the same name will be organized. In it, experienced teachers, pedagogues and psychologists will be working with children through games and communication. Since our camp is international with three working languages (Serbian, Russian, English), translators will be present in each workshop. Their main task will be to facilitate communication between participants and teachers. Except for the “Eurasian Code”, which will be a mandatory workshop for all participants, children will have the possibility to choose to participate in one creative and one sports workshop each, depending on their talents and interests.



Creative workshops the “Eurasian School of Friendship” will offer include ecology, ethnology, music, drawing, acting, and boy scouts. Sports workshops will offer children the possibility to choose between basketball, football, martial arts, tennis, and rhythmic gymnastics. Depending on the number of participating countries of the “Eurasian School of Friendship”, each delegation should receive a day when the children – assisted by their group leaders, organizers, and, as we hope, embassies of all countries – will be given an opportunity to present their national culture, dances, language, dishes, and clothes. Apart from aforementioned, cultural and entertainment program will be organized every evening in the camp. This means that every day closes with an open-air night show involving animators, contests in mixed teams that enhance the development of communication skills, creative potential of children, self-expression, and teaches them how to interact within a team. Moreover, during these shows, the children get acquainted with famous Serbian artists, learn national songs and dances thanks to Serbian cultural ensembles, which gladly participate in our camp every year.





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### **Objectives of the School of Friendship**

- 🇷🇺 Enhancing love and devotion to family.
- 🇷🇺 Developing the children's love towards their homeland and their nation, taking into consideration all of its differences.
- 🇷🇺 Developing interest towards Eurasian cultures.
- 🇷🇺 Acquainting children with symbols of Eurasian cities and countries.
- 🇷🇺 Improving the children's knowledge about their homeland and other Eurasian countries.
- 🇷🇺 Developing interest towards traditions of the Eurasian peoples, their respect and preservation.
- 🇷🇺 Developing senses and feelings of tolerance and respect towards other nations and their traditions.

### **Goals of the School of Friendship**

- 🇷🇺 Presentation of positive role models.
- 🇷🇺 Teaching children civic behavior and nonviolent communication.
- 🇷🇺 Developing the feeling of solidarity with those in need of help.
- 🇷🇺 Motivating children to strive for knowledge.
- 🇷🇺 Creating maximally pleasant conditions for discovering the creative potential of children.
- 🇷🇺 Formation of patriotic feelings, as well as enriching and widening the children's knowledge about their homeland, family, culture, and traditions.
- 🇷🇺 Acquaintance with cultures and traditions of other peoples of Eurasia and developing the sense of respect towards other countries, peoples, and their customs.
- 🇷🇺 Socialization of children.
- 🇷🇺 Developing children's self-respect and self-esteem.
- 🇷🇺 Developing the sense of responsibility for own success and behavior.
- 🇷🇺 Strengthening the spiritual, psychological, and physical health of children.

### **Target group**

The program of the "School of Friendship" summer camp is adapted for children from 9 to 11 years of age. Our organization's rich experience shows that these children are most able to create strong connections with one another and learn the basis of any foreign language in a relatively short period of time. Besides, acquaintances of children of this age and further maintaining of these contacts after the end of camp often tend to grow into friendships for life and can be the basis for further formation of socially and emotionally mature personalities.

In order to achieve all goals and objectives set by the camp, a team of professional pedagogues, social workers, psychologists, doctors, trainers, and teachers works with children at all times. Moreover, Serbian special police forces make sure that the camp works in a completely safe environment.

Finally, several tens of young volunteers participate in the work of camp every year, many of which were once participating in our camp and/or were earlier helped by "Our Serbia". Therefore, they can transfer the values nurtured in them by our organization from their earliest childhood to new generations. Thus, the continuity of work of our organization is maintained. Moreover, this brings up the best results of our work, which can be best observed in communication between the volunteers and the new generation of "Our Serbia's" children. On the other hand, our project offers the possibility to the youth to get acquainted with the Eurasian continent, as well as cultures, arts, and languages of its people.



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### **Budget of the "School of Friendship"**

BUDGET ITEM	LUMP SUM
<p>The costs of <u>twelve-days</u> stay for one participant in the "School of Friendship" includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Hotel accommodation with three meals a day;</li><li>➤ Return transportation from Belgrade to Mount Tara;</li><li>➤ Not less than two excursions in the nearby area;</li><li>➤ Royalties for the camp's personnel, involving: teachers in workshops, trainers, animators, medical personnel, security staff, translators, group leaders, additional staff, etc.;</li><li>➤ Clothes, equipment, and memorabilia for participants: t-shirts, polo-shirts, sweat suits, backpacks, hats, notebooks, etc.;</li><li>➤ Sweets and bottled water;</li><li>➤ Materials and equipment for workshops, diplomas, awards, etc.;</li><li>➤ Preparation works and decorations of the camp (flags, scenography, necessary reconstruction works, etc.);</li><li>➤ Logistics of the camp, technical and audio equipment;</li><li>➤ Evening programs, concerts, guests;</li><li>➤ Medicines.</li></ul>	<p><b><u>650 euros</u></b></p>
<p><b>ATTENTION!</b> The given price does not include return airplane tickets to Belgrade.</p>	





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## **Schedule of a day in the School of Friendship**

**8.00 – awakening**

**8.30 – breakfast**

**9.15 – walk along a treadmill**

\*The walk helps to physically prepare children for a day in the School of Friendship, wakes up their organisms, immune systems and rises up their energy.

**9.30 – anthems**

**9.40 – 11.00 – sports workshops**

- Basketball
- Football
- Volleyball
- Tennis
- Rhythmic gymnastics
- Martial arts

**11.00 – changing clothes**

**11.30 – 12.30 – workshops**

❖ **Creative workshops (1<sup>st</sup> Group)**

- Ecology
- Ethnology
- Drawing
- Boy scouts
- Music
- Acting

❖ **EURASIAN CODE (2<sup>nd</sup> Group)**

**12.30 – short rest before lunch**

**13.15 – lunch**

**14.15 – rest**

**15.30 – 16.30 – workshops**

❖ **Creative workshops (2<sup>nd</sup> Group):**

- Ecology
- Ethnology
- Drawing
- Boy scouts
- Music
- Acting

❖ **EURASIAN CODE (1<sup>st</sup> Group)**



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### **17.00 – 19.00 – free time in the City of Friendship and Days of Eurasian Cultures**

\*This time the children spend according to their own preferences (sports, rock climbing, playing in the park), but, of course, under the supervision of their group leaders, teachers, medical staff and volunteers. They are free to make friends by doing whatever they like most in the School of Friendship – talking and playing with each other, thus strengthening their relationships. Additionally, during these times, Days of Eurasian Cultures will be organized in the School of Friendship, when children will get acquainted with the cultural wealth of the Eurasian continent.

**19.00 – short rest in rooms before dinner**

**19.15 – 20.00 – dinner**

**20.30 – 22.30 – evening programs**

**22.30 – 23.00 – bed time**