



Annual Report 2023
of the Foundation
socioMovens. Giving Europe a Soul.



DORTMUND, APRIL 2024

Preface

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends and supporters of **socioMovens. Giving Europe a Soul**,

In 2023, our young foundation “socioMovens. Giving Europe a Soul” has taken many more steps on its journey as an international youth movement! Since its establishment in 2022, it has been travelling with its partners in the project countries to organise seminars with young people and further develop the joint network and organisational structures.

Last year, we were even able to celebrate a small anniversary: Youth social project weeks in Central and Eastern Europe have now been running for ten years! Once again this year, a total of five project weeks took place in Poland, Romania, Kazakhstan and Croatia, about which we provide information below.

During these weeks, young people between the ages of 13 and 17 meet people on the margins of society where they live. This shared experience is interpreted based on the Christian faith and the values of Catholic social teaching. An intensive community is formed between the young people, which motivates many of them to continue their commitment to helping disadvantaged people after the project week. This commitment strengthens civil society in the project countries in

the long term – true to our motto “Giving Europe a soul”.

In Croatia, Romania and Poland, several communities of young people have been established who want to get involved as volunteers in the long term. They meet regularly for exchanges, workshops and social activities.

For our project country Poland, 2023 was a special year: the first national section in the legal form of a Polish member association was founded there at the end of December!

The foundation was also active at international level in various events. For example, the socioMovens committees met in Alba Iulia in September to discuss the future of the movement.

We are looking forward to 2024 and our planned events. The highlight will be the tenth anniversary of our sister association at the beginning of October.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for the spiritual and financial support of many people connected to our cause! Without them, our work would not have been possible.

With kind regards and best wishes



Claudia Schwarz
Chairwoman of the Executive Board



Prälät Dr. Peter Klasvogt
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

The heart of our work: youth social project weeks in cooperation with Kommende Dortmund

2023 was the tenth year in which youth social project weeks were organised in Central and Eastern Europe. Building on many years of experience and the existing partner network, a total of five project weeks in

Poland, Romania, Kazakhstan and Croatia were supported this year in cooperation with Kommende Dortmund, involving a total of almost 140 people. Our report provides a brief insight into this.

Project week in Koszalin/ Kołobrzeg (Poland)

As in the previous year, the first project week in 2023 took place in north-west Poland with participants from two cities. In February, the appx. 25 participants were able to work on the topic of “Social Exclusion”.

Starting with theatre exercises, the young people approached the topic in small groups and developed perspectives on how community can function without exclusion. These ideas were to serve as a guideline for working together during the project days.



Project week in Lipova (Romania)

The project week in Romania, which took place in cooperation with the local Caritas volunteers, brought a particularly powerful moment for the almost forty participants

Building on these experiences, the participants spent the second day at a centre for working with people with disabilities in Kołobrzeg. Even though there was some uncertainty and fear of contact at first, the participants were soon able to organise independent art and movement workshops for children and discover the joy of this time together. The group spent the next day with a tried-and-tested cooperation partner: the House of Mercy (Dom Miłosierdzia) in Koszalin. The house sees itself as a place where people in difficult life situations are supported.

At the beginning, the participants got to know the home and listened to the residents' stories. In the evening, they helped to prepare dinner for around one hundred people and then talked to those who were open to it.

During the project week, there was also time for group educational exercises, walks, prayer and reflection. Although the group was a colourful mix, a sense of community quickly developed in the commitment to the disadvantaged in society.

and team members in 2023, as project coordinator Attila Dobai reports: “The day was characterised by the joyful laughter of 100 children from a poor village. We played, sang and painted their faces and enjoyed the simple pleasures that they often don't

have. However, a major challenge arose when our food supplies ran out. At that moment, our volunteers lived the true essence of kindness by selflessly sharing their own food [...]. The news [of this] spread throughout the community and reached compassionate people who rallied behind us: They donated food to



support our volunteers [...]. It was a testament to the power of unity and the profound impact we can make when we stand together.”

It is precisely moments like these that not only turn the project work on site into “rich” experiences, but also have a lasting impact on the socioMovens network.

Project week in Ludbreg (Croatia)

At the end of June, almost 20 young people in Croatia dedicated themselves to the topic of “Raising awareness of the realities of life for people with disabilities.” The socioMovens project week was held for the eighth time in cooperation with the pastoral care for people with disabilities at the pastoral centre of the Varaždin diocese in Ludbreg. For the first time, young people from six different schools took part.

As part of the project week, the young people visited various associations, centres and homes for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses. They learnt how to ap-

proach the members and residents without hesitation.

Two young people who took part in the project week describe their impressions:

“For me, this project week was an unforgettable and wonderful experience. I learned to have a new perspective on the world and the people around me. The people I met and worked with encouraged me to be an even better person and to put my new skills into practice. I realized that there are always people who have a harder life but are sometimes happier than us. I have learned to give more attention, love and understanding to others around me, and that has made me stronger as a person.” (Mihaela, 15)

“Volunteering is full of emotions and positive feelings. Through the project week, I discovered and built up a part of myself.” (Hana, 15)



Project week in Almaty (Kazakhstan)

The fourth socioMovens project week took place in Kazakhstan in July 2023. The 25 young people aged 16 and 17 who took part came from the transcontinental region of Atyrau – the border between Europe and Asia. socioMovens volunteers from Slovakia also took part in the project week.

Together they spent a week in Almaty, where they had the opportunity to help orphans and other neglected children and explore the potential of their own commitment.

Domonkos Fejér was part of the leadership team as a representative of Fazenda da Esperança. He reports: “When I arrived, I found a really peaceful and humble country. Although I didn't have a common language with the majority of the group, we were able to understand each other well because the young people were so open. We tried to communicate with our hands and feet. One evening I noticed that some



of them opened up during the reflection. It was a very nice experience for me to see that they had overcome this inner barrier. I experience the people here as very cheerful. They like to dance, spend a lot of time together and enjoy working together. Although there are many religions here – Muslims, Orthodox, even many atheists from the communist era – they live together in a special kind of peace.”

Project week in Poznań (Poland)

For the project week in Poznań, the local partners took up an idea from alumni of previous socioMovens projects and set themselves the challenge of working on the topic of mental health during the joint project days.

Participants from three schools in Poznań and the city's suburbs spoke to a psychiatrist, a psychotherapist and an occupational therapist, among others. The experts reported on their experiences of working with people in mental health crises. They also led workshops for the young people to equip them with relevant knowledge, tools and soft skills for their encounters during the project week and beyond.

Afterwards, the participants also faced joint action in the concrete social reality: together with those responsible at the so-called Green Center (Zielone Centrum), a community (self-)help facility for people in mental crises, the topic was first made tangible in personal stories. The young people were then able to take part in movement and integration workshops with the people undergoing treatment at the Green Center, including making their own tea bags and clothespins.

The participants also learned about the work of the Łącznik Youth Center and got involved in helping people with disabilities.

Growing communities of young engagement

A core concern of “socioMovens. Giving Europe a Soul” is to empower young people for long-term social engagement. On the one hand, this requires a lively local group life, but it also requires opportunities to

come together. We are therefore delighted to be able to present impressions from the volunteer communities in Poland, Romania and Croatia in this report, in which numerous participants were involved.

Step in! The Romanian socioMovens community

The Romanian socioMovens community has set itself the action call “Step in!” and is able to involve young people and young adults in two to three locations through various activities and engage them in the long term. Smaller social campaigns are also launched time and again, for example in support of Roma families or for disadvantaged children starting school.

With their own products, which are offered on a donation basis, for example on Assumption Day or St. Martin's Day, they can make concrete contributions to youth-related Caritas work.

At the end of the year, 38 volunteers from different age groups and backgrounds, all of whom had already taken part in a project week and other social initiatives, came

together for a three-day network meeting: The aim was to improve their own skills and prepare for leadership and coordination tasks in future social activities.

In various workshops, the volunteers gained insights into their strengths and weaknesses, among other things. One volunteer described the workshop experience as follows: “What a weekend! Full of fun activities, with lots of joy, laughter and interactive games. It was a little journey to understand what it really means to work together as a team of volunteers. We played different games that brought us together as a team and through work and communication we made it!”

Croatia: Being there regularly for people with disabilities

The project weeks in Croatia also inspire many alumni to continue their involvement. Throughout the year, around 50 alumni from previous project weeks are involved in various activities for and with people with disabilities. Looking back on the activities of previous years, the “Bartimej” community, which meets once a week, is particularly exemplary. The regular meetings are open to all people with or without disabilities and have various

purposes. The regular meetings are open to all people with or without disabilities and have a variety of content: from catechetical, psychological and professional topics from different areas to personal testimonies from people with disabilities and their parents.

In this context, there was also a targeted meeting of socioMovens alumni to look at the roles and tasks of the volunteers.

Exchange and consolidation in the socioMovens network

A series of event formats also took place within the network: For example, the Foundation's sister association, in cooperation with Campus-Weggemeinschaft e.V., enabled coordinators from Poland and Romania to spend Holy Week and Easter together in Israel.

A joint workshop was held in Paderborn with participants from five countries to design an Erasmus+ project. There was also a workshop for young facilitators in Poland and the closed meeting of the Advisory Board and Board of Trustees in Alba Iulia. Here are some impressions:

A training course for junior coordinators of the socioMovens network took place near Poznań, generously sponsored by Evonik Industries AG via Kommende Dortmund. The participants, all alumni of previous project weeks, had the opportu-

nity to engage in intensive discussions in lectures and workshops on group education, planning youth projects and prevention. Afterwards, individual options were also explored as to how the participants could continue to get involved.

Marek, 20, sums up: "The training was a great opportunity to learn more about how to work in a group and also how to become a leader. I was able to reflect intensively on my ideas and my way of working with and in a group (as a leader/mentor and co-leader/co-organizer)."

Finally, in September 2023, Alba Iulia in Transylvania, Romania, was the center of our European youth meeting for a few days: At the invitation of Advisory Board member Archbishop Gergely Kovács, we were able to discuss current developments in the socioMovens network on site. Top-



ics included the cooperation between the local groups and the national sections currently being established with the international foundation and the members' association.

The aim was also to define strategic priorities for future development. It was important for the participants not only to hear about the various challenges and issues in

the project countries – in some cases digitally – but also to get to know the church realities in these parts of Europe personally. It is important to keep the network present in the partner countries and to be in dialog with the local partners.

Outlook for 2024

For 2024, in addition to the locations where project weeks were offered in 2023, a project week in Ružomberok, Slovakia, will also be supported by the foundation.

Furthermore, several local and regional activities for alumni of project weeks are being planned. Last but not least, in cooperation with Kommende Dortmund, there will also be several offers for coordinators to further develop the network. These include a training program for the younger socioMovens generation and the anniversary events of the sister association and

Kommende Dortmund. In addition, joint work on a method box for successful safeguarding work in the socioMovens movement has been taking place since fall 2023 and will be brought to a successful conclusion in 2024.

Last but not least, the focus in 2024 will also be on steps to consolidate the foundation and the public perception of its work in order to make it sustainable.

Financial report

In its second year of operation, the foundation received almost 80 individual donations totalling 16,399 euros for its work. In addition, 3,280 euros were donated earmarked for personnel costs in connection with the foundation's project work. Last but not least, 2,293.80 euros were collected from reimbursements and interest.

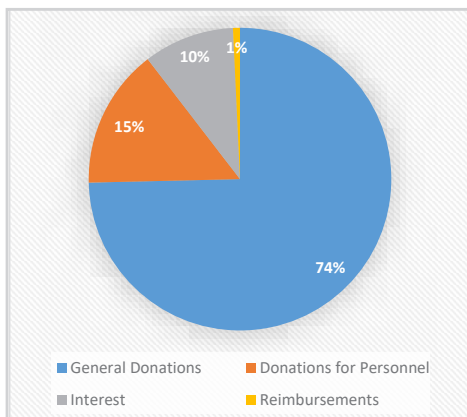
Due to the cooperation agreement with Kommende Dortmund, the foundation reimbursed the costs for the project work from 2022 at the beginning of the year.

Accordingly, the costs for the youth social project work shown here in the report will be carried out in 2023 in accordance with the foundation's purpose, but will not be invoiced until 2024. An earmarked reserve of EUR 16,938.31 was formed to cover these expenses. EUR 1,880.55 was incurred for the foundation's public relations work, while administrative costs and insurance amounted to EUR 1239.10.

Income and expenditure 2023

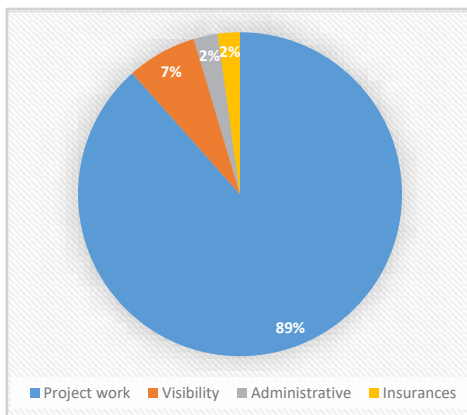
Income of the Foundation

General Donations	16.399,00 €
Donations for Personnel	3.280,00 €
Interest	2.130,00 €
Reimbursements	<u>163,80 €</u>
Total	<u>21.972,80 €</u>



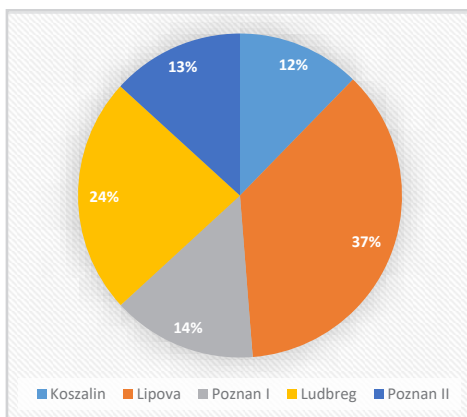
Expenditure of the Foundation

Project work	23.821,51 €
Visibility	1.880,55 €
Administrative	644,10 €
Insurances	<u>595,00 €</u>
Total	<u>26.941,16 €</u>



Details for project expenditure

Koszalin	2.926,46 €
Lipova	8.686,22 €
Poznan I	3.435,65 €
Ludbreg	5.622,15 €
Poznan II	<u>3.151,03 €</u>
Total	<u>23.821,51 €</u>

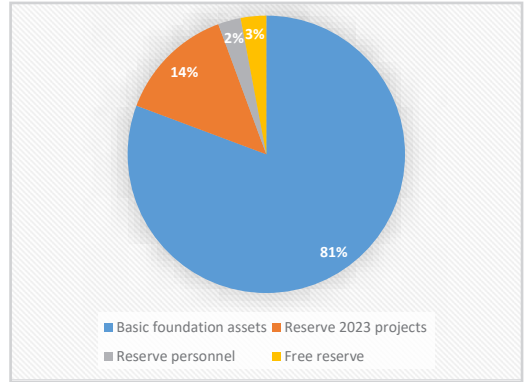


Distribution of assets

31.12.2023

Assets

Basic foundation assets	100.000,00 €
Reserve 2023 projects	16.938,31 €
Reserve personnel	3.280,00 €
Free reserve	3.690,87 €
Total	123.909,18 €



Committees of the foundation

Executive Board

The Executive Board is primarily responsible for the Foundation's operational work and meets at least three times a year. The composition of the Executive Board changed in 2023 due to the change in personnel supporting the socioMovens program. The following people made up the Foundation's Executive Board:

- **Claudia Schwarz**, Münster, Chairwoman of the Executive Board
- **Raphael Röwekamp**, Münster/Jerusalem, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board
- **Jakob Ohm**, Paderborn/Soest (retired in June 2023)
- **Gregor Christiansmeyer**, Dortmund (appointed in June 2023)

Board of Trustees

The Foundation is advised, supported and monitored in its work by the Board of Trustees. It meets at least once a year for this purpose. International socioMovens partner organizations are also given the opportunity to send members. The following people were members of the Board of Trustees in 2023:

- **Prälat Dr. Peter Klasvogt**, Schwerte, Chairman of the Board of Trustees
- **Dr. Michael Kohler**, Dortmund, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Trustees
- **Guido Baranowski**, Fröndenberg
- **Dr. Richard Böger**, Paderborn
- **Erich G. Fritz**, Dortmund
- **Ute Hanswille**, Dortmund
- **Pfarrer Matthias Hembrock**, Bocholt
- **Josef Lüttig**, Bad Driburg
- **Diakon Jakob Ohm**, Soest
- **Lukas Trötzer**, Köln

IMPRESSUM



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- S. 1, 7, 8: Kommende Dortmund/socioMovens
- S. 3 socioMovens Polska
- S. 4 oben: stepin
- S. 4 unten: Anika Sačić
- S. 5: Domonkos Fejér

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