



EASTERN EUROPEAN OUTREACH
Registered Charity: 290643

Outreach

CSP: Situation in Eastern Europe

Another trip to Romania this year opened my eyes even further for the current situation in this country. Not only Romania is going through a rough patch, situations in Moldova, Ukraine and Albania are similar, if not worse. Many families are surviving on low salaries, unemployment and child benefits.

The Pharmaceutical Industry is a booming business. You can find a pharmacy around nearly every street corner. It looks as though people eat more Paracetamol than sweets. The reason is, that because of a lack of nutritious food people have become weak and sickly. Another reason is their cold houses and an unhygienic living environment. Most people cannot afford all the necessary medicines, or have to settle for less effective ones. Nearly every family I visited needed medicines.

Another need, which is regularly mentioned in Outreach magazine, is heating for the winter. After this recent trip, I realise that it is more important than ever.

The winter period is an expensive time for people in eastern Europe. In the villages people have to buy wood, which is expensive. In the towns and cities, they live often in apartment blocks where they have to pay for communal heating. The prices for gas and electricity are similar to the prices in western Europe. Utility bills often cost as much as a month's salary, or more!

To give you an idea, I will introduce you to the one of the families I visited:



Şilaghi family

When we visited the Şilaghi family, Ciprian and his father were already waiting for us at the entrance of the block. The first thing that you notice is that the father has lost his legs. Arthritis, plus heavy drinking and smoking were the reason that his legs needed to be amputated. I was amazed by the fact that the father was able to climb the stairs to the 3rd floor all by himself. In the past the mother was carrying him every day up and down the stairs, but because of severe back pain she is unable to do this any longer. Several years ago, the father became a Christian. Since then, life has become much better for him. I was told that he painted the whole apartment, and has won in several sports events for people with disabilities. He also goes regularly to schools to give his testimony, telling what alcohol abuse and smoking can do to your body. His testimony has a very strong impact on young people.

The family lives on the mother's pension, the father's disability support, and his salary (he works for a local Christian publisher). The main difficulties for the family are the medicines needed for both parents. The father badly needs particular medicines, which cost about 10 Euro per month, but this is too much for them so they cannot buy them. Vitamins are also essential for the father and for the rest of the family, but good quality vitamins are very expensive so they do not buy them either.

The Şilaghi's are being sponsored, and this help makes a great difference.

There are many families like the Şilaghi family who are literally fighting for survival. We are still looking for sponsors to help families like them. If you would like to sponsor a child in eastern Europe please get in contact with us. Also financial help for heating and medicines is desperately needed. Please help us to help the needy.



Children's Relief: Update on the work in Iaşi (Romania) Fundația Izvor



One afternoon I went by a taxi to a Nursing Home, just behind the Julius Mall shopping centre, in Iaşi. I was welcomed by Erica Hijkoop with whom I had an appointment to visit all the projects of her Foundation Izvor (Spring). She was very busy making everything ready, for the Dutch ambassador was to be visiting this project on the next day.

The first project is a Nursing Home for people in the last stage of their lives. This is a quite unique project for in the whole city of Iaşi which has 400.000 inhabitants, there are only 2 other Nursing Homes. In Romania it is normal for the children to care for their parents until they die. Fundația Izvor takes in people who are terminally ill and have only weeks or months to live. Binding agreements have to be made as unfortunately several families have tried to abandon their grandfather or mother and leave them behind here. In several cases, people have been accepted in the Home to temporarily take the pressure off the family.

The whole house is built to western European standards, with a very modern kitchen, rooms that could compete with any Care or Nursing Home in the west, and has

a well-qualified and motivated staff. Even a lift has been installed in the house. Erica told about the people currently on the wards. An old lady in her nineties has been left there by her family. In another room lies an elderly couple, not able to look after themselves. In another room are two men, one of them in the terminal stage of cancer, the other one is doing better. The reason he is in the Home is so that his family can take a break. His illness brought such a strain on the family that his wife had a nervous breakdown.

It is a difficult ministry. Since they opened the Home, 10 people have died. In their sadness, the families show their



appreciation for the care that their father or mother received in their last days. The next place we visited is an apartment just outside of the city. Here live 5 girls, who are being cared for by the Foundation founded by Erica and Elles van der Beek. The girls originally grew up in an orphanage. Most of the girls are mentally or physically challenged, and still relive the trauma of their past. Some of the girls are going to a special needs school, and the others are trying to keep up with studying at a normal school.

The school system in Romania is focused on a great deal of studying. Children are loaded down with homework, and the standards are extremely high, I would say a lot higher than in western Europe. Intelligent children that can keep up with this are well prepared and are doing very well at universities. The downside is that

there is no alternative for people who have less mental ability and are unable to keep up the pace. Little importance is placed on teaching practical skills.



All children from this home are struggling but are doing their best to make the most of it. The Foundation has several workers who stay there in day or night shifts looking after the girls. I was surprised to find out that 2 of the girls are very keen on football and play for a local girls' team. Some of the other girls play a musical instrument and go to lessons. These activities are extremely important for the girls' development. The last place we went to was the farm, where I met the former street children, now all in their thirties, who live here. Unfortunately it was too dark to see the playground and the animals. During the week children from the local community are visiting 'Noah's Ark'. Many of the local children grow up in unstable families, suffer from poverty, alcohol-related abuse and violence. The farm is the perfect place for them to forget their problems, and just be a child for a few hours.



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Eastern European Outreach is a 'faith ministry'. All our activities are dependent solely on the financial gifts we receive. We work on an interdenominational basis, and our goal is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in every way open to us. Our newsletter is published regularly, and sent free of charge on request or recommendation. However, a freewill gift of £7.00 per year would help to cover production and postage costs. E.E.O. UK works with Eastern European Outreach International, a group of missions and ministries. The main partner is Stg. OostEuropa Zending, The Netherlands, on behalf of Child Sponsor Programme, Christian Care East and West, Children's Relief, Medical Relief, Israel Support and Vision Latina.



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He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!", then He said "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." Revelation 21 v 5 (NIV)

"The board of Trustees, volunteers and staff of EEO UK wish you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed 2011"

It is close to Christmas, the day we remember the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ about 2000 years ago. The Creator of the universe born in a stable, as there was no place for Him in the local inn. When we say that God has a heart for the poor, He knows exactly what this is all about, not only as the all-knowing Creator but also because He went through this Himself!

Every single day children are being born in similar circumstances. I have just returned from a trip to Romania. On one of the days there, I visited a family of 13 living in 2 small rooms. The oldest daughter who lives with her husband and children in the same house as her parents, had just given birth. The ten-day-old baby was lying next to her on the couch. The house was heated by a small electrical heater, which was so unreliable it nearly burnt down the house on the previous night. At night, rats come into the house looking for food, it really broke my heart. This is the reality of an EU country on the eve of 2011.

It is comforting to know that this is a temporary struggle. Through Jesus' death and resurrection we have the hope of a better eternal life with Him. These situations make me really want the Lord to return soon, to fulfil His promise to make everything new. How great that will be!

This is the hope that has been shared on the streets in Pakistan. An eye-witness report from Jaco van der Sterre can be found on pages 3 and 4. You will further find updates on the Child Sponsor Programme and Children's Relief projects.

As this is the last edition of Outreach for 2010, we would like to thank everyone who has made it possible for us to help the poor and spread the Gospel in eastern Europe, the Balkans and Pakistan, donating money, clothes and relief goods over the last year. Even more important, we have valued your prayer support, without which we would not be able to do anything. Thankyou so very much! This has made a real difference in the lives of many people, and will continue to do so! We hope that you will continue to stand besides us when we go into 2011, to help even more people.



PAST YOUR SELL-BY DATE?!

Earlier this year a Christian organisation invited me to speak in one of their local groups, and we arranged a date. Some weeks later, the leader rang me up, saying that the rest of the leadership thought me too old, so he would have to cancel the meeting. He was not of this opinion, but the majority had voted otherwise.

This really shocked me! I was 69 years old, and *already too old to do something for God?! The president of the organisation was very surprised, and said that if they got rid of all their workers from 50-70 years old, they would have almost nobody left, for the next generation is not coming forward to take their place. Of course, this group can choose which speakers they invite, and I do not hold it against them, but this incident got me thinking.*

Many of you may have had this same experience at work, in your social life or some ministry you have been engaged in. It is hard after a person has worked many years, has gained a great deal of experience and can still make a valuable contribution, to suddenly find themselves redundant, sometimes at 40 years old!

The Apostle Paul had much experience and was a great man of God. He had mentored many disciples, helping them to develop. So when he saw Timothy, a young pastor with a church over 20,000 strong in Ephesus, who was often nervous and needed encouragement, he wrote to him: "Let no man despise your youth!" 1 Tim. 4 v 12. I would also like to say this to those of our older *Outreach* readers: *Let no man despise you when you are getting on in years!* There is a great wealth in every person of whatever age. God wants to bless and use us in every season of our life. Pension age has come, no more running to go to work. Time is your own to use as you please. *Don't feel that nobody wants you! Don't pray to die! That's selfish. There's plenty of time for that later!*

Many churches focus only on young people, but here is a wonderful opportunity for churches to channel the potential of the older members for the work of God. In church life we see many changes. Some we welcome, some we might not agree with, but we must realise that this generation will not do everything the way we might have done it for 50 years! So in our mature years, let us also learn to be flexible. You might say: "What could I do?" What about visiting people in hospital, encouraging the elderly, helping a single mother with practical jobs in the house and garden, drive people to the service or lunch club, go on a mission trip with EEO UK to eastern Europe?? The list is endless.

So let us older people arise and use our age to the best of our advantage. May Jesus be able to say of us: THIS WAS THEIR FINEST HOUR!

Mission Monitor

by Matthias J. Van der Weide



A SOBERING THOUGHT BUT GREAT EXPECTATIONS

They say Ireland is bankrupt. Europe is trying to help but what can be done when Europe reaches its limit. World War II teaches us much about money business. Hitler's Third Reich looked so powerful, but its currency no longer had any value. Germany was exhausted and more bankrupt than any nation. But look at it today. Many prayers and sacrifices have made Germany rise up again. Germany did not collapse. God was so merciful.

God once invested all He had when He asked Jesus to sacrifice Himself. The Word of God, came in the flesh and paid off all our debts. This brings us new and eternal life. No human sacrifice or investment can reach that goal. But in spite of all negative expectations, Ireland will never be truly bankrupt all the while that so many Christians there are still serving our God and Saviour.

The money system will one day break down. The Antichrist will bring a situation that no-one can buy or sell if they will not obey his godless government. But we are not lost even if there is no more money. We may pay with our lives, but we will arise in eternal glory and a new World will be created where justice and love reign. What a wonderful perspective for the Irish people! Ireland played a large part in preaching the Good News to Europe from the early ages of Christianity. It can surely expect new blessings (1 Peter 1:13) when its people call to Jesus for help!

BARNABAS PAKISTAN



The Barnabas conferences are not only organised in eastern Europe, but also further to the far East. EEO Intl. Co-ordinator Jaco van der Sterre went with a team to Pakistan and witnessed how young people were prepared, built up and sent out to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this stronghold of Islam.



Young people on the move

Together with 50 young people we were worshipping the Lord in a large church at the Barnabas festival in Asia. Not the well-known melodious songs, but worship with a very heavy drum beat! The presence of the Holy Spirit was really strong in this 97% Muslim country, where being a Christian is not something easy to do.

It is great to gather these young people together to worship our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the last evening of the conference we blessed every team with the Power of the Holy Spirit, and focused them on the outreach that would take place in the following days.

All of a sudden there was a power cut. This is common; every day has a few hours where there is no electricity. But did it really have to be right during the last evening service?!

The sermon was about being light on the mountain! The message was very

well received.... and then the light came on again. That week we organised three evangelistic events. Yes, here in Pakistan! Sports and games and a direct invitation for people to come to the church for the evening programme.

Street Service

The evening service was organised in a street that was closed for the event. At the end of the street we had built a stage. Chairs were placed in neat rows. Rob and Arianne gave their testimony. After the altar call 40 people raised their hands and gave their hearts to the Lord. Many people came forward to be prayed for. The following days we heard many testimonies of healing from people.

First Barnabas Church

A small group was waiting for us. When they saw us they stood up. Two pastors are leading this church. There is no building, but there is a Church congregation. After a short introduction they told us that their greatest desire is to have their own church building. One of the pastors showed us the place where a church could be built.

We decided to give this group the £850 that is needed to accomplish this project.

After this decision, we stood around

the place and prayed for God's guidance and blessing for this project. We congratulated the church members on their new building!

Floods

One day we visited one of the villages which had been severely affected by the recent floods. We spoke with a Muslim woman. She shared with us her frustrations about the government and the Muslim aid organisations. No-one came to bring relief goods, not from one of the large relief-organisations, or from the mosques. She told us that the only ones that came to help were the Christians.

Four times Pastor Elisha and a team had visited this village bringing emergency aid. Then followed a team bringing money for the rebuilding of the houses, and now our team was visiting to check whether the money had been spend in the right way, and to bring extra funds for emergency repairs.

The local pastor brought us to his church. We gave him a donation, to use where most needed. He was very thankful and promised to use it to build a church wall, so in the winter people do not have to stand outside. Of the 120 families in the village, only 20 are Christian. It is very difficult to be Christian in this Muslim country.

We visited several families and left some money for the rebuilding of the houses, or for some necessary furniture. Even Muslim families invited us and were very thankful for the aid we were giving. We blessed them; there is no better testimony of God's goodness, than to share with people in need.

Invaluable workers

Over the last few months the Munir family had played a crucial role in aid distribution. The family has had many difficulties of their own after the death of the father and the break-up of the marriage of the oldest sister, but in this time of need they were invaluable in making contacts and distributing the relief-goods.

Five years ago, policeman Munir died when on duty. Christians do not receive much help from the Social Services, so the family was left without the father and did not receive any financial



compensation. As a Christian it is difficult to find a job. The Munirs try to earn their income by trading, but there is not much security in this. The funeral and weddings of two of the children brought the family into debt. We witnessed what can happen when the right people are at the right place to help and were very impressed by their efficiency and effectiveness.

Farewell

Over the ten days we witnessed many miracles. The Lord healed several people after we prayed for them. We also had the privilege to organise a women's conference.

The time went by very quickly and before we knew it we had to leave. With tears in our eyes and pain in our heart we had to say Goodbye. We thanked everyone for being so hospitable and allowing us to be part of their lives.

I will never forget this time, and am sure that I will be back here next year.



GENERAL FUND

Every year we try to send as much finance and aid to the field as possible. It is our desire to help the poor, and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But to make this possible we also have to spend money here in our western offices. Every year we face a growing bill for banking costs, accountancy, general office costs, travel expenses etc. Please help us as well in this area of our ministry.