

November 2015

26th Report on the work with abandoned children in Romania

The organisation »Samariteanul Milos« (Good Samaritan) in Ghimbav near Brasov in Romania is home to nearly 20 children in three groups. The children are either orphaned or can no longer live with their parents for various reasons.

Dear Friends and Supporters of our work,

We can look back thankfully on another eventful year and see how God has carried and protected us. In November 2014, Maja had to return to Germany at short notice because her hip arthrosis had worsened. She had two operations (two artificial hips) and was away for seven months. We are thankful that everything went well, that she is now free of pain and has been back in Romania since June.

Caty Roos, our director, stepped into the breach, and Uwe Tesch took on the responsibility for the buildings. The other workers were also a great support. Julia provided advice and help from afar, and kept up contact to the German sponsors and supporters. Christoph was also able to offer advice via Skype conferences. It was a challenge for everyone to take on new responsibility, but it worked well and we experienced God's protection and strength.

Despite the challenges during these months, we were still able to undertake some renovation on the buildings. Many thanks to all those who helped, supported, prayed and advised us. We are still amazed to see how far we have come in the past year.

The children have also done well on the whole over the past twelve months. The atmosphere is still peaceful, happy and relaxed, with the usual ups and downs. Here are a few impressions from the children's home:

Uwe and Gabriel beim Kartenspiel



Erst Auberginen – dann Marshmallows!



Titel und Claudiu machen Spätzle



The Situation in Romania

Klaus Johannis achieved a shock victory in the Romanian presidential election at the end of last year. The newspaper "Stuttgarter Zeitung" published an article about him in May, entitled: "Klaus Johannis – a Stoic in the chaos parliament". Johannis is different to his predecessor. He is the first president with German roots, and achieved a lot in his time as mayor of Sibiu. He is often praised for his straight-forward approach and "German virtues". His calm demeanour and efforts to enter into dialogue with others contrasts dramatically with the approach of his predecessors, who aimed for high-profile publicity and often caused conflict with members of parliament. He meets once a month with the heads of every party represented in government, to discuss reforms in Romania. We hope that this strategy will bring long-term success.

Linked to this, we recently (at the start of November) received the news that Minister President Ponta and the entire government have resigned because of accusations of corruption. The public prosecutor is investigating. This is not the first such case; corruption and mismanagement are one of the basic problems in Romanian politics. We are waiting to see how this case continues.

At the same time, there have been several legal changes which are relevant for our work. The Romanian government is trying to improve the work done in children's homes. Firstly, subsidies are being slightly increased. Secondly, there are many new requirements to be met, e.g. for the treatment and training of staff. We welcome this trend, although some of the requirements will mean more work for us. We need to show the authorities what the children are fed, for instance, which means producing daily meal plans in line with nutritional standards. Everything has to be documented and followed exactly, and this all needs to be proven (by receipts) by our bookkeeper. This is a lot of extra work, which will not actually mean substantial changes to the care provided for the children in our home. It would be great if this actually leads to improved conditions for children in state-run homes



Unser Büroteam (v.l.): Andra, Carolea, Majda, Cathy

Developments in our organisation – an overview

As in the previous year, the groups of children have remained stable. No new children have joined us, and Darius has returned to his foster mother. The staffing situation is also more or less unchanged.

Enikö, who left us just over two years ago and now lives with a Pakistani man in London, has given birth to a healthy baby boy. We are in regular contact with her, as with many other former residents.

The project in Dumbravita has continued successfully, but has not really grown at all over the past year.

We would like to thank our volunteer for the past year, Jonas Steinhäuser. His successor, Silas Dargel, joined us in September and is helping in many different areas of our work.

We would like to give a special mention to one of our staff members. Uwe Tesch has been with us for four years now, and leads the second group of older children with two other social mothers. For some time, he has also been responsible for the building and supervising the caretaker. After Gotthold's death in 2007, we needed someone familiar with building maintenance. We are therefore extremely grateful that Uwe manages this topic with such enormous commitment and technical expertise.



Please give your full address under the heading "Verwendungszweck" (reason for payment) on the transaction form. Donation receipts will be issued at the start of the following calendar year. If your address has changed, or if you no longer wish to receive our updates, please inform us.

This year, the project managed the partial renovation of the roof. This was possible thanks to financial support from another foundation, and the help of many volunteers from Uwe's large circle of friends and acquaintances in Saxony. The cellar floor was completely re-concreted, and the walls were whitewashed. An organisation from the region around Pirna with which we have contact renovated the facade in the inner courtyard, paying for the costs out of their own funds. Both bathrooms in the Casa Noua, our second house in Ghimbav, are currently undergoing complete renovation (the wiring, water pipes, bathroom facilities and tiles). We are extremely grateful for the support in the form of manpower and money!

Uwe mit Helfern beim Richtfest



Our Children

The youngest group

The children have developed something of a group identity. Little Gabriel and Claudiu, despite having very different characters, are now particularly close friends. They are in the same class at school and are almost inseparable. Gabriel is very alert, extremely lively and interested. It is a joy to observe him. Claudiu is more calm and detached.

The three girls, Ioana and the sisters Marcela and Crina, giggle a lot and are almost preadolescent children. They sing, dance, chat and laugh a lot with one another. They make a very happy and loving group. Crina is particularly open and confident, maintains eye contact and smiles a lot more than she used to.



The second older group (former Jocz Group)

We had to rename this group. The children didn't want to be called the "middle group" any more, as they are just as old as the other older group! Here too, everything continues to go smoothly on the whole. Ildiko, who has been with us for 14 years, had left us temporarily to move in with her boyfriend. After around six weeks she returned to us. We hope that she stays with us at least until she has her school leaver's certificate. Stefan and Reli, her two younger siblings, are still with us and feel at home with us. Regular football games continue to take place; sponsors provided the children with old Germany football shirts which only have three stars on the front and are no longer current following the last World Cup.

v.l.: Titel, Vasile, Ildiko, Stefan, Luisa, Reli, Uwe, George



(v.l.): Gabriel, Claudia, Oana, Ana, Casandra, Radu, Joni, Ionuț

The older group

This group is the most heterogeneous group. Ionuț Ionuț and Joni, both 17, are close friends, as our Casandra and Oana, both 18. Ana, 19, has finished school and is having some difficulty finding her feet in the world of work.

In summer, the children (except Gabriel) were in England for ten days. Amongst other things, they attended a Christian conference. They came back full of enthusiasm about the country and now speak with a more British accent and intonation. Radu now has a big Union Jack hanging over his bed.



The Project in Dumbravița

Our project with the Roma in Dumbravița, which we run together with a Swiss organisation, has now been ongoing for more than nine years. Not much has changed this year. We continue to provide more than 300 people, including 180 children, with daily bread rations (22000 loaves of bread in total). In the meantime, we have extended the project to provide families with other basic groceries and supplies. The requirement in order to receive this support is that the children attend kindergarten or school.

95% of the children now attend regularly. We want to use this to provide the children with education so that they can build themselves an existence that is not normally possible for the Roma in Romania. Mrs Serbanescu, a retired teacher from Dumbravița, continues to keep detailed records and administers the finances carefully yet strictly. She travels to Ghimbav regularly to keep us up to date with what is happening in the families.

In his book "Poor Roma, Evil Gypsies" ("Arme Roma, böse Zigeuner"), the author Norbert Mappes-Niediek investigates lots of aspects of the Roma in Europe. One of the topics he examines is the logic behind the economics of poverty, which is an unfamiliar topic for us in the West, because we don't know poverty in this existential form. Reading this book really opened my eyes to these issues, and showed me why the project in Dumbravița works. It is manageable, with the right proximity to and distance from the organisers, no complex long-term objectives, and meets the needs of the Roma. Certainly recommended reading!

v.l.: Frau Serbanescu, Julia, Maja



And finally...

For one year now, I (Christoph Scheytt) have been on the board of the Scheytt Foundation. Together with Maja and Julia Scheytt and the board of trustees, we try to support and guide the work of the organisation in Ghimbav from Germany. I can still remember how everything began in 1991 – on a small scale, with simple structures and processes. On my first few visits to Romania I experienced the start of our work, which was inspired by my father's shock at the fate of Luminita, a street child from Brasov / Kronstadt. Looking back, I am amazed and thankful about how the work has grown and developed. I am delighted to be involved.



On behalf of the foundation, we would like to thank you for your practical support, your donations and for your prayers. It is thanks to you that so many children here can experience God's love, and that their lives can get back on track, despite the difficult start they have suffered. God bless you!

These M. Scheytt

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