

Activity report 2023

The Order of Malta Relief Organisation has been operating in Lithuania for 32 years. We are uniting 1839 volunteers who help people in need in [44 locations](#) across Lithuania today.

Assistance to the elderly

Helping elderly people who live alone is our signature activity. We are the largest organisation in Lithuania that cares for the elderly in all kinds of ways. In 2023, the Maltesers helped 2,878 pensioners in 44 locations across Lithuania.

One of the largest and longest-running Malteser programs in Lithuania is **food delivered to the homes of the elderly** ("Meals on Wheels") in 27 locations. For the weakest, the loneliest and the disabled, hot food is delivered in thermoses and is ready to eat twice a week or daily in some areas. Food packs are provided for those who are stronger and able to prepare meals by themselves. In 2023, 820 elderly individuals received food assistance. The program was implemented by employees, volunteers, and young Maltesers – a total of about 120 individuals.

Home assistance is carried out through voluntary aid in household chores and visiting lonely seniors to reduce isolation and loneliness. This activity is one of the oldest ongoing activities, covering the largest part of projects and programs and has the widest geography in the country.

As society ages, the issue of **day care centres for the elderly**, driven by loneliness, become topical. In 2023, 6 Maltesers' centres were working with elderly people, reducing social exclusion.

The **first Maltesers Home** ("Saint John the Baptist Care Home") celebrated its 2nd anniversary. It is a social care home with 28 residents. In 2023, 14 new residents moved into the Maltesers Home. It is staffed by 15 employees and 5 permanent volunteers. The distinctive feature of this establishment is its homely atmosphere and Catholic values.

To fund projects and programs for the elderly, the fundraising campaign "**Maltesers' Soup**" is carried out in November-December every year. In 2023, physical donors and companies contributed a total of 834,046,08 euros.

Assistance to children

Assistance to children encompasses a full cycle of services to ensure that a young person, at all stages of their activity and development, receives a quality service from the Maltesers.

In 2023, there were 13 Maltesers **children's day care centres** in 9 municipalities of Lithuania, with 296 children aged 7 to 14 years attending and receiving services.

To ensure that older children receive individual psychological and other services tailored to their needs, the first Maltesers day care home, "Stories", for teenagers aged 14 to 18 is already in its second year of operation in the second-largest city, Kaunas. In 2023, 14 youngsters were attending.

The Open Youth Space, located in the rural area of Vyžuonos, provides social services and conducts youth work, focusing on less motivated individuals, those with fewer opportunities, and youth experiencing family difficulties.

The Leaving Care Service is dedicated to young people aged 16–24 who are starting independent living. This service assists young individuals in gaining independence and self-confidence by engaging with each person according to their individual needs. In 2023, the service was provided in three municipalities across the country, benefiting 30 young individuals.

A fundraising campaign, titled "**Step Bolder into Life**", was held from August to October 2023 to raise funds for youth programs, with donations being collected for specific purposes. The final event – a hackathon – marked a first among non-governmental organizations. The aim was to draw public attention to the challenges faced by young people from difficult backgrounds during adolescence and the transition to independent living. A total of 20,000 euros was raised for individual needs.

Assistance to people with disabilities

During 2023, assistance was provided to 247 disabled individuals, who were cared for by 181 volunteers.

Like every year, the traditional summer **camp for people with disabilities** "Turn Disability into Power" took place in 2023. 50 people participated in the camp: 27 were individuals with disabilities, and 21 were helpers.

The Club for People with Disabilities operates in Kaunas, bringing together individuals with disabilities twice a week for events, outings, education, and activities. The club consists of 20 people with disabilities. Additionally, a boccia team named the "Knights of Malta" has been established as part of the Paralympic sports branch.

Assistance for refugees

During 2023, approximately 1300 various consultations, mediation, and accompanying services were provided to individuals holding refugee status. More than 10,000 services were provided to Ukrainian refugees.

Social integration of asylum recipients receiving state aid encompasses a package of implementation services for refugees from Afghanistan and Belarus. Case management is applied, and there is continuous collaboration with the Refugee Reception Centre.

The "Malteser International" project named "Relief actions for Ukrainian refugees in Lithuania" aims to provide assistance tailored to the needs of war refugees from Ukraine in Vilnius, Kaunas, Marijampolė, and Viekšniai, including the provision of social workers, psychologists, and legal aid. Remote employment training is also conducted to help them integrate into Lithuanian life. The project duration is from August 1, 2023, to November 30, 2024, with a value of 150,000 euros.

The "Buddy" project, financed by French Maltesers (l'Ordre Souverain de Malte), aims at the successful integration of Ukrainians, maintenance of the UA center in Marijampolė, and implementation of the "Intercultural Buddy" program for refugees. The project is valued at 21,540 euros.

First Aid

The program includes first aid training; provision of first aid and emergency medical care during events; voluntary activities; and international transportation. In 2023, there were 111 shifts at events, 46 training sessions, and 5 international transportations. In total, 13,000 people participated in the activities.

Volunteering and Young Maltesers

In 2023, 1839 volunteers participated in the organization's activities, collectively contributing 101,835 hours of volunteer work valued at 823,120 euros in financial terms (benefit to the state). The Volunteer Activity Enhancement Package, initiated in 2023, aims to strengthen activities in the regions, with a value of 29,162,07 euros. Young Maltesers are a part of the Order of Malta Relief Organisation consisting of youths aged 14 to 29. 344 Young Maltesers got involved in Maltesers activities in 2023. The aim of the Young Maltesers is to educate young individuals through social voluntary activities.

The "Maltesers Academy" is a program that unites four training modules: 1. Volunteer Management 2. Pastoral Care 3. Maltesers Identity: Community and Ethics 4. Leadership. The target group includes group leaders, program managers, and volunteer coordinators, for whom 216 hours of training are allocated.

In the anniversary year of 2023, the team of Young Maltesers celebrated its 30th anniversary. More than 120 young people and alumni participated in the celebratory event, with the first lady of Lithuania, Diana Nausėdienė, attending to extend her congratulations.

Young Paramedics Program is aimed at preparing young people aged 14–25 to independently provide first aid, recognize life-threatening conditions, and ensure their own and the victim's safety. In 2023, the program involved 6 coordinators studying health sciences, training 150 young people, out of which 70 received certificates. The program was implemented by 8 schools, 1 university, and 3 Young Maltesers groups.

Spiritual development

During 2023, we strengthened pastoral care. **The Pilgrimage to Lourdes** in 2023 marked the 15th Pilgrimage of Lithuanian Maltesers to Lourdes. It was the largest delegation ever: 22 pilgrims on the plane, 50 on the bus, and 12 traveled independently. In total, 10 wheelchair users, 15 individuals with visual and other disabilities, and 39 helpers who participated. The **pilgrimage to the Šiluva** – a traditional pilgrimage of the Maltesers community to participate in the Day for the Sick and the Poor. In 2023, 200 Maltesers participated with their elderly and disabled wards.

On occasion of St. John day we celebrate Malteser day, during which group leaders and most active community members made a **promise to fight against the eightfold poverty of the world**. The following honoured guests participated: representative of the German Association of the Order of Malta, Constantin von Brandenstein-Zeppelin; the interim head of the Order of Malta Embassy in Lithuania, Krzysztof Edmund Wardawy; the Hospitaller of the Association in Poland and the President of the Maltesers in Poland, Marcin Swierad, with his wife Ilona (a Knight and Dame of the Order of Malta) and daughter; Robert Wyrashka, a member of the Order of Malta in Poland; and Father Edgaras Versockis from Estonia. The Pastoral care Committee is a special team of 15 members assembled to address spiritual development issues within the organization.

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