

Since the country's liberation from the clutches of the Soviet Union, The Order of Malta Relief Organisation has been operating in Lithuania for over 30 years and celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2021. We are uniting 2 000 volunteers who help people in need in 42 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 2022, the Maltesers helped 2 800 pensioners in 42 locations across Lithuania.

As the society ages, the issue of **day care centres for the elderly**, to which they are driven by loneliness, is a topical one. In 2022, 2 Maltesers' centres were opened in rural areas. Currently, we operate 7 such centres, where seniors, under the guidance of professional staff, take part in gymnastics, arts and crafts, participate in IT training, grow vegetables, and participate in other activities.

One of the largest and longest running Malteser programmes in Lithuania is **food delivered to the homes of the elderly** ("Meals on Wheels"). For the weakest, the lonely and the disabled, hot food is delivered in thermoses and is ready to eat. Food packs are provided for those who are stronger and able to prepare meals by themselves. Generally, the packs include a ration of 8-9 kg of food 1 time a week. Volunteers who visit these seniors help prepare the food, spending time together etc.

In 2022, the **first Maltesers Home** ("Saint John the Baptist Care Home") celebrated its one-year anniversary. It is a social care home that has 28 residents. It is staffed by 13 employees and 3 permanent volunteers. The distinctive feature of this establishment is its homely atmosphere and Catholic values.

To fund projects and programmes for the elderly, the fundraising campaign "**Maltesers' Soup**" is carried out in November-December every year.

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 2022, there were 14 Maltesers **children's day care centres** in Lithuania, with 370 children aged 7 to 14 years attending and receiving services. 30 child refugees from Ukraine found shelter here and participated in the educational process together with Lithuanians.

To ensure that older children receive services tailored to their needs, the first Maltesers **day care home "Stories"** for teenagers aged 14 to 18, opened its doors in Kaunas in 2022. In cooperation with the celebrated Lithuanian and NBA basketball player Jonas Valančiūnas, the work with teenagers is based on sports methodology.

Yet another new service introduced in 2022 was the **leaving care** service for young people. It was launched in 3 cities. Young people aged 16 to 21 years receive the service, with 3 coordinators working with 23 young people in different cities. The service helps young people gain independence and self-confidence by engaging with each young person according to their individual needs.

A fundraising campaign "**Step Bolder into Life**" was held in August-September 2022 to raise funds for youth programmes, with donations being collected for specific purposes.

Assistance to people with disabilities

Like every year, the traditional summer **camp for people with disabilities** “Turn Disability into Power” took place on 14-19 June 2022, with the aim to enhance the self-esteem of people with disabilities through faith and communion with the Maltesers.

1 February 2022 saw the launch of the project “**Caring for disabled and elderly people in their homes. Providing nursing services to the residents of Vilnius**”. The services of a caregiver and a care assistant were provided based on individually identified needs. Personal hygiene, bathing, nail and wound care services were among the most needed. Over the course of the project, 62 people received services from 3 workers.

In 2022, disabled people were provided with **personal assistant services**. This project took place in Vilnius, where 33 people received such services from 27 personal assistants. Per month, each recipient received on average 70 hours of personal assistance tailored to their individual needs: help at home and in public, assistance with personal hygiene, meal planning, developing and maintaining social relations with relatives.

Assistance for refugees

From the beginning of the war on 24 February 2022, Lithuanian Maltesers have been providing all manner of assistance to **Ukrainian war refugees**. In the early days of the war, Maltesers opened a refugee registration centre on the border with Poland, and a hotline call centre in the capital, where people could get information about accommodation, medical and veterinary assistance, essential hygiene kits, phone cards, and news about their relatives. To this day, the Lithuanian Maltesers still have 11 help desks for war refugees in different cities, which Ukrainians can contact with questions related to integration: taxes, accommodation, employment, schools, activities, children’s day care centres, polyclinics, and other domestic concerns. A total of 23 745 cases of assistance to people arriving from Ukraine were registered. We also assisted in the integration of refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, Belarus, etc.

First Aid

This programme covers first aid training (for adults, children, seniors, people with disabilities, health professionals), as well as participation in mass events where first aid might be required. In 2022, first aid volunteers took part in the different kind of festivals and events. More than 2 000 people were trained during events and trainings. We expect 50 volunteers to join the programme each year, to expand the training to 10 regional Malteser groups, and to have at least 10 specialised trainings per year for disadvantaged groups.

Volunteering and young Maltesers

The Lithuanian government declared the year 2022 to be **the year of volunteering and youth**. In October, we organized a dedicated campaign aimed at introducing the public to the Malteser community, where every person matters: outdoor advertising billboards in 5 major Lithuanian cities featured portraits of Malteser volunteers, showcasing different areas of Maltesers’ activities: helping the elderly, the disabled, children, the youth, and war refugees from Ukraine. The campaign received considerable public attention and interest in volunteering with Maltesers.

Maltesers in Lithuania unite 2 000 volunteers, 700 of whom are Young Maltesers. It is the youth of the organisation, whose aim is to bring young people together and to help shape their personality through social volunteering, spiritual guidance, and training. Young Maltesers Consider the following bars of activity as their foundation: social activities with the elderly, disabled, children, also pastoral care, training, community strengthening and First Aid.

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