



European First Aid

A guide for Young People

developed by Johanniter International



Annual Review 2023

johanniter
international



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A Message from the Chairman



Dear colleagues and friends,

It is a pleasure to introduce our Annual Review for 2023. This report sums up a particular year that saw humanitarian crises all round Europe - the continuation of the war in Ukraine, the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, and the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. We hope you will find it interesting and contribute to a better understanding of our networks' activities and the realisation of our shared values through actions and projects.

Thanks to the work of the Clinical Working Group, JOIN published the 'European First Aid for Young People' in December. This Manual promotes the importance of first aid and helps young people to develop their knowledge and understanding of first aid. It provides awareness of potential risks and situations that may lead to injury or illness, how to avoid them and how to manage and treat any injuries or critical clinical situations. It is available to all users for free and can be downloaded at www.firstaidjoin.org

While our member organisations share one single aspiration to help people in everyday life as well as in crises, the actual range of services – based on the Christian values of the Orders of St John - is extensive: ambulance services, help to the homeless, retirement homes, hospitals, first aid and first aid training, mental health first aid, youth work, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, home nursing and many other related activities.

Within this comprehensive picture, the mission of JOIN is to help its members, large and small, to cooperate on as many issues as possible and facilitate their access to the relevant institutions of the European Union when necessary. In 2023, the JOIN Office participated with Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe Austria on the European-funded project, MED1stMR. The project aims to better prepare medical first responders for mass-casualty incidents by developing advanced mixed-reality training scenarios.

The heart of JOIN's activities revolves around its working groups, where representatives of our members exchange best practices and develop JOIN projects. During the year, all working groups met face-to-face and online, and the physicians of our Clinical Working Group held three face-to-face meetings.

To the delight of all delegates, and for the very first time, the Annual General Meeting 2023 took place in Brussels. The meeting provided an excellent platform to discuss the activities of the JOIN Office and our members.

My very best wishes to you all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Broughton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Broughton

Selected Activities 2023

JOIN members provide emergency aid after earthquake in Syria and Turkey

On 6th February 2023, an earthquake of magnitude 7.8 hit Turkey and Syria, followed by numerous strong aftershocks, last with magnitude 6.3 and epicentre in Samandag on 20th February.



On 7th February, Johanniter International Assistance deployed an assessment team to the affected regions with the aim of identifying concrete relief needs in Turkey and Northern Syria in close coordination with local partner organisations. The team conducted situation assessments in cities in Turkey and Syria that were severely affected by the earthquake: Gaziantep, Antakya, Osmaniye, Nurdagi, Islahiye, Reyhanli, Jinderes, Idlib, Afrin, and relief activities started in cooperation with local partners in all cities.

On 19th February, another emergency response team arrived in Turkey to replace some members of the first assessment team and expanded the emergency response activities in Turkey and Syria. Two HQ staff and one emergency response volunteer traveled to Turkey, accompanied by a photographer.

Turkey

In Gaziantep and Hatay, Johanniter set up new soup kitchens with MAPS and provided 80.000 hot meals as well as 1.300 hygiene kits and 1.400 baby kits. Families were also given 5.000 vouchers for supermarkets to cover their basic needs. Together with the local organisation Kirkayak Kültür, our

German member supports families who belong to the discriminated Dom and Abdal minority in Gaziantep with financial aid as well as with parcels containing nappies and baby food.

Syria

In the first few weeks after the earthquakes in Jindires and Afrin, Johanniter provided emergency aid and supplied the affected people with 34,000 hot meals together with the MAPS organisation. Our German member also supported five hospitals with 2,000 litres of fuel for generators and patient transport. Building materials for 175 damaged houses as well as vouchers and cash to buy everyday necessities are enabling people to return to their homes and provide for their families.

Johanniter and its partner BAHAR also help people to earn money in the short term through a cash-for-work programme with activities for the community in the process. In the long term, the aim is to help the disadvantaged to become self-employed with their skills and ideas through courses. They also receive start-up money and counselling.



The earthquake also destroyed important infrastructure. Together with BAHAR, Johanniter rebuilds damaged water tanks, supply roads and canals, thereby improving the living conditions of 7,000 people.

Other activities:

- The Johanniter Competence Center European Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance delivered medical supplies to Turkey and Syria as part of the rescEU Stockpiling project.
- Johanniter volunteer Gerhard Jäkel was deployed to Ankara as part of the European Civil Protection Team of Experts.

Other JOIN members were also helping the people affected by the earthquake.

On 15th February, our Hungarian member met with the Turkish Embassy. The following day, about 200



quilts, 200 pillows and 15 pallets (3,000 kg) of durable food were delivered to the temporary storage in Dunaharast, followed by 1,300 polyfoams.

Evacuation and emergency relief operations in Kherson

7th June 2023

On 6th June, the dam in Kachowka was partially destroyed. 18.2 billion liters of water are now pouring out of the breach and flooding the villages along the Dnipro River. Around 16,000 people are acutely affected by the floods.



Johanniter has been working with its partners in the flooded areas for several months and has been in direct contact with them. "Vehicles for evacuations have been provided, and further emergency relief measures are being explored," says Florian Beck, Johanniter Programme Officer for Ukraine.

In addition to other emergency measures, such as providing shelter and supplies for the evacuees, Johanniter and its partners will continue to work in the region: "The floods have washed away mines

and unexploded ammunition. Food warehouses and infrastructure were destroyed. Our project activities have thus become even more important," emphasises the 38-year-old.

Since October, NEW DAWN and Johanniter have been providing the survivors and returnees in the villages of the Kherson and Mykolaev regions with daily necessities and repair materials for houses and water infrastructure. The project is currently being expanded to include mine risk education, especially for children. Another partner, ELEOS, distributes food and hygiene items in Kherson thanks to donations to Johanniter and Aktion Deutschland Hilft.



Johanniter delivers relief supplies following the destruction of the Kakhovka dam

9th June 2023

Relief supplies worth 200,000 Euros were procured for people in the trapped villages north of Kherson.

Four days after the destruction, water continues to flow from the Kakhovka dam. Over 600 square kilometres of the Kherson region are already underwater. North of Kherson city, in the Chernobryvka region, villages are also trapped by water and difficult to access for aid organisations. On 8th June, the staff of Johanniter partner organisation NEW DAWN reached the remote villages by boat.



On board, they carried drinking water and water filters that can purify 1,200 litres of water daily. On the way back, they picked up people and animals to take them to safer areas. "Boats are not available in the villages, and many inhabitants cannot swim," reports Philipp Francke, coordinator at NEW DAWN.

Johanniter partner organisation ELEOS is also helping with the evacuation. A total of nine boats

from both organisations are already in operation, bringing relief supplies to the villages on the way there and people to safety on the way back. "The willingness of the Ukrainian population to donate is enormous. We get so many things donated that we had to set up a distribution centre, where trucks now bring relief goods from Odessa to Kherson every day. From here, the goods are then distributed by boats," Francke describes the situation.

The aid measures are made more difficult by the difficult security situation. "There was heavy shelling in our project region yesterday. Our staff were just able to get to safety," explains Philipp Francke.

200,000 Euros provided for emergency aid

In addition to donations from the population, NEW DAWN and ELEOS are using funds from Johanniter to procure up to 1,000 water filters, 1,000 hygiene kits, clothing, life jackets, medicines, mattresses, camp beds and about 100,000 litres of drinking water. For the time being, Johanniter is providing a total of 200,000 Euros for emergency relief after the flood disaster.

Johanniter in Ukraine

Johanniter International Assistance has been working in Ukraine since the beginning of the war. They help refugees, displaced people, those who have stayed and returnees in different regions of Ukraine. Together with partners in 100 towns and villages across the country, Johanniter supports around 30,000 people with food and hygiene items every month.

St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group wins the world's largest award in the field of Vision

Lisbon, Portugal, 6th September 2023

The St John of Jerusalem Eye Hospital Group has won the 2023 edition of the António Champalimaud Vision Award. The award was announced in a ceremony chaired by the President of Portugal, H.E Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, and President of the Champalimaud Foundation, Leonor Beleza, in the presence of public figures and international organizations' representatives.

The one million Euro award recognises the Hospital Group's longstanding charitable provision of eye care in the region for the last 140 years. First established in 1882 by Late Queen Victoria, the St John Eye Hospital served millions of people to restore their sight, in war and peacetime, in the wider Middle East region and has been serving the poor and the sick in the Palestinian territories



► From left to right: David Dahdal (SJEHG Director Grant & Development), Dr Ahmad Ma'ali (SJEHG CEO), Gullapalli N. Rao, President H.E Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, Leonor Beleza (President of the Champalimaud Foundation).

including the Gaza strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem. The mission of the Hospital Group is built upon the ethos of the Venerable Order of St John in serving humanity. The St John Eye Hospital Group is part of the Order of St John, which has become a global humanitarian charity, active in more than 30 countries.

The St John Eye Hospital is internationally recognised as operating at the highest standards of care and it is the first hospital in the Palestinian territories to be awarded the Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation. The Hospital Group is the leading education and research institution working to build capacity and generate data on the prevalence of blindness, which eventually informs its programme operations in the prevention of avoidable blindness in Palestine.



► From left to right: David Dahdal (SJEHG), Patricia D'Amore (ARVO President), Dr Ahmad Ma'ali (SJEHG), Céline Carré (Johanniter International Assistance, Germany), Mark Patrah (ARVO Vice-President).

Launched in 2006, the globally renowned António Champalimaud Vision Award is the largest award in all fields of Vision, recognizing leadership in both scientific discovery and humanitarian impact. The Foundation, constituted at the bequest of the late Portuguese industrialist António Champalimaud, is based in Lisbon, Portugal, but its action in several fields spans the globe.



► From left to right: André Valente (Director of the Champalimaud Vision Award) David Dahdal (SJEHG Director Grant & Development), Leonor Beleza (President of the Champalimaud Foundation), Dr Ahmad Ma'ali (SJEHG CEO), Patricia D'Amore (ARVO President), Céline Carré (Johanniter International Assistance, Germany), Johannes Bucher (Johanniter International), João Silveira Botelho (Vice-President of the Champalimaud Foundation).

Under the Chairmanship of Prof Alfred Sommer, the International Jury Panel comprises world leaders in ophthalmology, research, and global public health, in addition to prominent individuals in the field of international development and outstanding scientists in fundamental research and biomedical sciences such as Susumu Tonegawa, a Japanese scientist who was the sole recipient of the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1987; Amartya Kumar Sen, an Indian economist and philosopher, who was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences; and Gullapalli Nageswara Rao, an Indian Ophthalmologist, and founder of the L. V. Prasad Eye Institute.

The Ceremony was held at the premises of the Champalimaud Foundation in Lisbon, Portugal on 6th September.

Former JOIN Chairman Johannes Bucher was present at the event representing the JOIN network, together with delegates of other JOIN members.

Humanitarian Aid in the Middle East

10th October 2023

Since 7th October, the escalating crisis in Gaza, Israel, and Palestine has caused large numbers of civilian deaths and injuries. The hostilities are the latest in seven decades of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians that has destabilised the wider Middle East. In the Gaza Strip, airstrikes and a lack of medical supplies, food, water and fuel have virtually depleted an already under-resourced health system preventing health facilities from functioning and treating the injured.



Johanniter International Assistance demands access to the region for humanitarian aid measures and the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Johanniter welcomes the fact that the first aid measures to Gaza via Egypt are in the planning stage. At the same time, our German member urgently calls for an expansion of humanitarian aid to ensure the survival of the 2.2 million people in Gaza. "In addition to opening the border crossings for aid shipments, the protection of the civilian population must also be a top priority," says Susanne Wesemann, head of Johanniter International Assistance. "According to international humanitarian law, schools, hospitals, and relief goods warehouses and transports must not be attacked. This is essential for us."

Public life in Gaza has come to a standstill since the shelling. "We hear from the people of Gaza that they don't know what to do. Social media channels and news are blocked, so they have no information. Therefore, they stay where they are or seek shelter near hospitals that are perceived to be safe," reports Céline Carré, Johanniter Head of Mission in the Middle East.

Eye Hospital has sustained collateral damage.

The St John Eye Hospital in Gaza sustained collateral damage as a result of hostilities in the neighbourhood and it is no longer functional. The St John Eye Hospital maintains eye clinics in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza. In the Gaza Hospital alone, eye specialists treat 45,000 people with eye diseases annually.

Relief efforts planned

Johanniter is in daily contact with all staff and partners in the region and is continuously assessing the situation. The St John Eye Hospital plans to carry out an assessment of the extent of the damage to its facilities and carry out any restoration or repair as needed before resuming its work. However, immediately after any cessation of fire, it is expected that St John Eye Hospital staff response will focus on Outreach Services to resume medically necessary care for patients, for example, to prevent irreversible blindness.



Internally displaced persons in Lebanon

Johanniter and its partner organisations in Lebanon are also preparing for a possible increase in the number of internally displaced persons. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), some 12,000 people have already fled to other regions of Lebanon due to the current fighting in the border region. "Our partner NABAA has started to provide first aid to displaced persons in southern Lebanon," says Roy Joude, Johanniter programme coordinator in Lebanon. "As a result, 600 hot meals, a hundred blankets, and mattresses have already been distributed." Johanniter will support the provision of relief supplies to the displaced.

Johanniter International launches European First Aid for Young People

18th December 2023

For the first time, there is now a European-wide First Aid Manual intended for young people (age range 13 to 17 years inclusive). Launched on 18th December 2023, the Manual promotes the importance of first aid and helps young people to develop their knowledge and understanding of first aid. The publication spreads awareness of potential risks and situations that may lead to injury or illness and provides ways to avoid them.

Developed by an international team of experts, who form the JOIN Clinical Working Group, the Manual is designed to apply in every European country. It also provides a solution to some cross-border health issues and will help to foster international cooperation.

The JOIN Manual is intended for young first aiders and the general public and is available to all users for free. It can be used by teachers, parents, carers or anyone who is interested in facilitating the learning of young people. They can be used in a classroom, at home, in large groups or on an individual basis.

“We believe that promoting first aid is to the benefit of all of us, as the skills can really save a life. Our Clinical Working Group has worked hard to create this Manual, and we are proud to offer it to all European young people as our Christmas gift” said Mark Broughton, JOIN Chairman.



The Manual is launched in English and will be soon available in many other European languages.

For free download of JOIN European First Aid for Young People, go to:

www.firstaidjoin.org

Member in focus

JOIN's newest member: St John Malta

Founded in 1882 as the inaugural international branch of St John Ambulance, St John in Malta continues its legacy of service and innovation. In a significant stride, 2023 witnessed the amalgamation of the Rescue Corps and the First Aid and Nursing Branch, forming St John Ambulance and Rescue. This transformative integration enhances operational efficiency and collaboration among volunteers who are trained in first aid, nursing, urban search and rescue, high angle, firefighting, water rescue.

In the past year, St John Malta's noteworthy milestones include responding to a critical call, assisting the Civil Protection Department during a storm in February, showcasing its unwavering commitment to community safety. Moreover, the establishment of a dedicated diving team further strengthens its water rescue capabilities. This milestone was made possible through governmental support to acquire specialised equipment including a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), a multifunctional drone, and special scooters that can be used underwater, coupled with rigorous training efforts.

In May, the organisation has put its technical skills to the test through an incident simulation exercise with multiple casualties. This exercise also tested communication and coordination between the St John Malta Fire, Ambulance and USAR Sections. Scenarios included setting up medical tents for multiple casualties, search and recovery of casualties from inaccessible deep valley.



Beyond rescue operations, St John Malta actively engages in environmental conservation through underwater clean-up initiatives and extends vital logistical support to the Foodbank, ensuring equitable access to essential supplies for those with mobility challenges.

In 2023, St John Malta's steadfast presence within the community was also felt across various large-scale public events, notably EuroPride, where over 40 volunteers provided indispensable aid over two days. Large scale public events aren't new territory for our newest member.



Last but not least, throughout the year St John Ambulance and Rescue Malta saw vibrant activity in its youth groups, the Badgers and the Cadets engaging into community service, advanced first aid, training drills and enjoyable activities.

Insights on the work of our Hungarian member

Johannita Segítő Szolgálat, founded in 1989, is not only active in Hungary with ten local divisions across the country, but also abroad with local offices in Romania, in Ukraine, in Slovakia and in Serbia.

All activities of our Hungarian member have been significantly impacted by the war in Ukraine. Staff and volunteers taught first aid courses to the employees related to the Reformed Church in Ukraine and brought special aid to ministers and priests of any Christian community, that feel most threatened. Our Hungarian member also gave ambulance cars to the Ukrainian health administration and regularly transported tons of goods and supplies from Hungary to Ukraine.



Johannita Segítő Szolgálat organises for its volunteers an annual first aid summer camp which is also open for international volunteers taking part in the Volunteer Swap. They train in accident scenarios that are as close to reality as possible. There is also plenty of team building, socializing and singing around the campfire in the evenings. A



volunteer from Johanniter Austria was welcomed to the camp last summer. He assisted with the various scenarios and practiced techniques such as rescue grips and bandaging different types of wounds with the participants.

Our Hungarian member is collaborating with our Swedish member on implementing training for care personnel specialised in dementia. The methodology developed by 'Silviahemmet', the Swedish non-profit foundation of Queen Silvia of Sweden, focusses on personal and family-centred care, free of restrictions, paying attention to the patient's life history.

A Hungarian elderly home of the Lutheran Church will be certified in 2024 based on the Silviahemmet method of care after a series of trainings conducted by Swedish tutors. This home can become training center in the future. A 'train the trainers' programme is planned which will educate trainers for Silviahemmet certified nurses and allow Johannita Segítő Szolgálat to offer trainings for affected family members, diakons, and nurses.



2024 will be a special year for Johannita Segítő Szolgálat. The Hungarian Commandery of the Johanniterorden will celebrate its centenary in 2024. A series of festive events will take place around the year. Moreover, the JOIN Annual General Meeting will be hosted in Budapest.

Selected Meetings 2023

JOIN Annual General Meeting 2023

Brussels, Belgium, 19th - 21st May 2023

The JOIN Annual General Meeting 2023 took place in the city hosting the official seats of the European institutions – Brussels, for the first time. Twenty-four delegates from St John organisations across Europe met to discuss a broad spectrum of topics.

The first day began with our Chairman, Mark Broughton, outlining the activities of the Board and the network over the past twelve months. He highlighted the humanitarian aid for Ukraine provided by all JOIN members and the relaunch of the Volunteer Swap programme. He then presented a future strategy for the development of JOIN, setting priorities and concrete objectives for the coming years. Our Vice-Chairman, Christian Velten-Jameson, provided comprehensive financial information.

This was followed by presentations from the working groups providing more detailed information about their activities which encouraged discussion and planning on several issues. The Head of the Clinical Working Group (Richard Webber, St John Ambulance) showed the final draft of the European 'First Aid Manual for Young People'. This guide will be translated into different languages and made available to the public at www.firstaidjoin.org. The

PR, Marketing & Communication Working Group (chaired by Dr Robert Brandstetter, Johanniter Austria) reported on the progress of common corporate identity among some JOIN members. Delegates welcomed the restart of the Volunteer Swap programme organised by the Volunteering & Youth Working Group (chaired by Nancy Kestler, Johanniter Germany) and committed to broadening its offers and spectrum of volunteers. Finally, the Fundraising Working Group (chaired by Frederik Ahlefeldt-Laurvig, Johanniterhjaelpen Denmark) highlighted the cooperation in knowledge exchanges and grant management.



Two further presentations were given by Mario Di Gennaro (Johanniter Germany), outlining the activities of the Competence Center EU Civil



► From left to right: Dr Robert Brandstetter (Austria), Joachim Berney (JOIN Office), Dieter Meyer (Germany), Mark Broughton (JOIN Chairman, England), Petra Grell-Kunzinger (Austria), Christian Velten-Jameson (France), Dr Panos Constantidines (Cyprus), Floor van Dedem (Johanniter Orde), Thomas Vorwerk (Switzerland), Susan le Jeune d'Alleeershecque (Most Venerable Order of St John), Frederik Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Denmark), Dr Sarah Vecchione (Italy), Prof Graziella Kainich (Italy), Dr Grzegorz Giemza (Poland), Dr Ingo von Voß (Johanniterorden), Dr Davide Laetzsch (Italy), Nancy Kestler (Germany), Mario Di Gennaro (Germany), Melanija Grundšteina (Latvia), László Porcsalmy (Hungary), Dr Michael Frendo (Malta), Richard Webber (England), Andrew Grech (St John Malta), Eva Pelgen (JOIN Office).



► The new JOIN Board 2023-2025.
From left to right: Andrew Grech, Dr Sarah Vecchione, Mark Broughton (Chairman), Christian Velten-Jameson (Vice-Chairman). Not in the picture: Christian Meyer-Landrut.

Protection, and Thomas Vorwerk (Swiss Johanniter), providing an update on the Alliance Orders Charity Cooperation Group. The work of the Brussels Office was outlined by Joachim Berney, our General Manager, who provided detail of its activities while emphasising its focus on EU funding opportunities. Eva Pelgen presented the newly published Annual Review 2022.

On the second day, the delegates gave an overview of the general activities of their respective charities within the past twelve months. These were followed by Eva Pelgen (JOIN Office) presenting JOIN's ongoing EU-funded research project called MED1stMR (see pages 26 - 27).

The delegates unanimously re-elected Mark Broughton from St John Ambulance as Chairman for the next two years and Christian Velten-Jameson (Association des Oeuvres de Saint-Jean France) as Vice Chairman. Three other Board members were elected - Dr Sarah Vecchione (S.O.G.IT Italy), Andrew Grech (St John Malta), and Christian Meyer-Landrut (Johanniter Germany). Johannes Bucher (Johanniter Austria) and Lidwien van der Reep (Johanniter Nederland) were thanked for the many years they dedicated as Board members.

Finally, after what was perceived by all delegates to be a successful AGM, a last tour de table provided the opportunity to offer feedback and suggestions for the coming years.

The AGM 2024 will take place in Budapest from 24th to 26th May.

JOIN Board meetings

The JOIN Board met four times in 2023.

On 23rd March, the JOIN Board came together in Berlin for a regular meeting.

The organisation of the AGM 2023 in Brussels was the first topic addressed. Comprehensive financial information was then provided by our Vice-Chairman. The meeting continued with a presentation on the humanitarian aid provided by JOIN members to the regions of Turkey and Syria hit by the earthquake in February (see pages 4 - 5). The Board further discussed the continued efforts to deliver material, medical and financial aid to Ukrainian refugees. The JOIN Office gave feedback on the working groups' activities, including upcoming opportunities within the Volunteer Swap programme. Finally, an update was provided on the implementation of the European MED1stMR project, developing innovative mixed-reality training for medical first responders.

On 21st August, the JOIN Board met online and the JOIN Office presented its latest lobbying activities at the European Parliament (EP). The JOIN Office met representatives of the Cabinet of the EP's President

to stress the importance of mentioning first aid training in the new Directive on Driving License, to explain the humanitarian aid provided by JOIN members to Ukraine and to distribute hard copies of the first aid material developed by the Clinical



► From left to right: Mark Broughton (England), Christian Meyer-Landrut (Germany), Johannes Bucher (Austria), Christian Velten-Jameson (France). On projection: Lidwien van der Reep (The Netherlands).

Working Group. Friederike von Bar succeeded Christian Meyer-Landrut in representing our German member within the Board.

On 13th December, the JOIN Board met in London for a face-to-face meeting. The meeting started with a presentation on the working groups' activities. It was decided to officially publish the Young People First Aid Manual at www.firstaidjoin.org on Monday 18th December.

The JOIN Office provided feedback on the successful lobbying activities at the European Parliament where the Transport and Tourism Committee revised the Directive on Driving License and decided to include mandatory First Aid training for driving licence applicants.



JOIN Clinical Working Group meetings

With the aim to finish drafting the First Aid Manual for Young People, the JOIN Clinical Working Group met in Berlin from 24th to 26th March. Delegates from Cyprus, England, Germany and the JOIN Board came together in the German capital.

During the three-day meeting, our medical doctors reviewed the content of the manual and decided on each sentence of each chapter. Professional illustrations were also inserted in the manual. The overall document has been additionally reviewed by educationalists.



► From left to right: Nils Schröder (Germany), Dr Andreas Tanos (Cyprus), Dr Paul Hunt, JOIN Chairman Mark Broughton, Richard Webber (Chair of the Clinical Working Group, England)

From 12th to 13th August, the Clinical Working Group met in London where further activities of the Clinical Working Group were also discussed, which will include the development of first aid materials for the age range of 8 to 12.



► From left to right: Dr Alexander Hermann (Austria), Nils Schröder (Germany), Dr Andreas Tanos, JOIN Chairman Mark Broughton, Richard Webber (Chair of the Clinical Working Group, England), Dr Sarah Vecchione (Italy).

The JOIN Clinical Working Group met again in London on 15th and 16th December just before the publication of the European First Aid Manual for Young People. Delegates from Austria, England, Germany, Italy and the JOIN Office came together in the English capital.

During the two-day meeting, our medical doctors finalised the manuscript of a third story teaching basic first aid to the children (the first two stories published are available on www.firstaidjoin.org). The Clinical Working Group also started the development of first aid modules for children from 8 to 12 years.

JOIN Fundraising Working Group meets in Berlin

Berlin, Germany, 22nd - 23rd March

From 22nd to 23rd March, representatives from Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Sweden, and Switzerland were hosted by our German member in its headquarters in Berlin.

The day began with a welcome and briefing by the working group's new Chairman, Frederik Ahlefeldt-Laurvig followed by presentations of Johanniter Germany's fundraising activities in the regional association in Berlin and institutional Fundraising by Johanniter International Assistance. Each member organisation gave feedback on new fundraising activities since the last meeting before focusing on the direct mailing experiences of our French, Hungarian, and German members.

On the second day, the JOIN Office reported on the fundraising appeals for Ukraine launched by the member organisations, and participants explored further ways for timely collaboration in emergency and disaster situations. The JOIN Office gave further updates on the development within the three other working groups and participants discussed their national regulations on legacy fundraising. Our Hungarian member gave detailed insights into the

work of its staff and volunteers for Ukraine and ways of food- and goods distribution. A review of the terms of reference of the group followed by a discussion on software and lessons learnt formed the final topics of the meeting.



► From left to right: Christian Velten-Jameson (JOIN Vice-Chairman, France), Johannes Bucher (Austria), Jürgen Wacker (Germany), Dr Robert Brandstetter (Austria), Nikolett Biró (Hungary), Petra Grell-Kunzinger (Austria), Andreas Hauptmann (Germany), Frederik Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Denmark), Eva Pelgen (JOIN Office), László Porcsalmy (Hungary), John Montgomery (Sweden), Maja Münch (Germany). Behind the camera: Joachim Berney (JOIN Office).

JOIN PR, Marketing and Communication Working Group meets in Berlin

Berlin, Germany, 24th - 25th March 2023

From 24th to 25th March, the JOIN Working Group for PR, Marketing and Communication met in Berlin. Johanniter Germany hosted representatives from Austria, England, Switzerland, the JOIN Board and the JOIN Office.

After a presentation by Johanniter Germany about their successful new Corporate Identity and Corporate Design, the participants gave positive feedback and discussed possibilities of implementing elements in their own countries. Johanniter Germany shared their employer branding campaign showing the wide range of activities of the organisation, and St John Ambulance shared their Communication and Media Volunteers Initiative, informing on the expanding pool of volunteers who take on communication tasks regionally. Following an update on the Cooperation of the Five

Orders of St John and its planned joint website, participants shared their practices of political communication. The working group discussed social media developments and possible new channels. Johanniter Germany reported about the Future Days event held in Berlin in October 2022, dedicated to digitisation, diversity and sustainability, placing the focus on human resources. The JOIN Office gave insights into the developments within the other working groups and presented its website management and the Volunteer Swap.

The second day started with Johanniter Austria presenting its newest fundraising campaign, as well as its employer campaign filmed in 2022 with focus on the diversity of Johanniter employees. Our Austrian member's new website and podcast were also presented and received with enthusiasm.

After Johanniter Germany informed about the development of a joint action plan against xenophobia and racism in rescue services, the MED1stMR project was presented to the working group, and participants addressed internal communication via intranet. A discussion on the future of the working group, its structure and upcoming agenda formed the closing topic of the meeting.

Participants: Dr Robert Brandstetter (Chairman of the PRMC WG, Austria), Mark Broughton (JOIN Chairman, England), Petra Grell-Kunzinger (Austria), Claudia Hauptman (Germany), Marlene Havel (Austria), Eva Lösch (Germany), Rodrigo Olivares-Alba (Austria), Eva Pelgen (JOIN Office), Therese Raatz (Germany), Friederike von Bar (Germany), Thomas Vorwerk (Switzerland).

JOIN Volunteering, and Youth Working Group meets in Brussels

Brussels, Belgium, 18th May 2023

On 18th May, the members of the Volunteering and Youth Working Group came together for their annual face-to-face meeting. The JOIN Office hosted representatives from Austria, England, Germany and Hungary in the Belgian capital.



Topics of the meeting were engaging different generations in volunteering and comparing the medical qualifications of volunteers across Europe to facilitate their effective deployment abroad. The group also discussed the legal frame needed to facilitate Swap opportunities for young volunteers under 18. The participation and opportunities of the past Volunteer Swap programme were reviewed, and the latest Swap opportunities were presented.

The group then planned the upcoming Volunteer Swap between young people (under 18) from England and Germany in June. For the first time, a group of young people from St John Ambulance will travel to Nürnberg, Germany and participate in the celebrations of Kirchentag (Protestant Church Congress) from 7th to 11th June. In the following weeks, young Johanniter Germany volunteers will travel to London and participate in the St John's Day celebrations.



► Left to right: Nancy Kestler (Chairwoman of the Volunteering and Youth Working Group, Germany), Lucy Gardner (England), Petra Grell-Kunzinger (Austria), Mark Broughton (JOIN Chairman, England), Eva Pelgen (JOIN Office), Zsófia Porcsalmy (Hungary), Thomas Leimer (Austria). Behind the camera: Joachim Berney (JOIN Office).

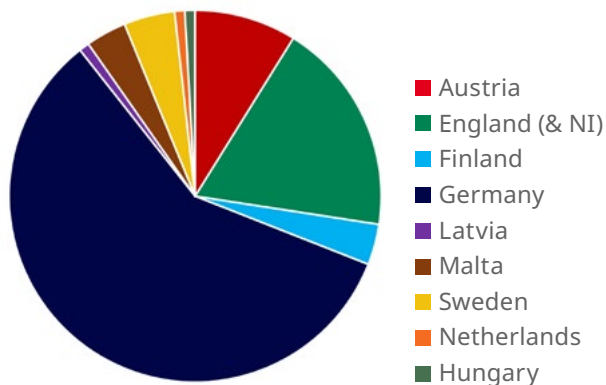
JOIN Volunteer Swap

Looking back on the Volunteer Swap programme 2023

In 2023, our Volunteer Swap programme offered the record number of 48 opportunities for volunteers to join their colleagues abroad and participate in events and social activities.

9 JOIN members welcomed volunteers to provide first aid at major events such as the Berlin Marathon, the Athletics Championships and the Euro-Pride, but also to join local teams in social care activities like assisting in Day Care Centres for mentally challenged people, in Summer Camps or homeless kitchens and shelters. In 2023 our Dutch member joined the programme and offered 2 opportunities

Volunteers welcomed in

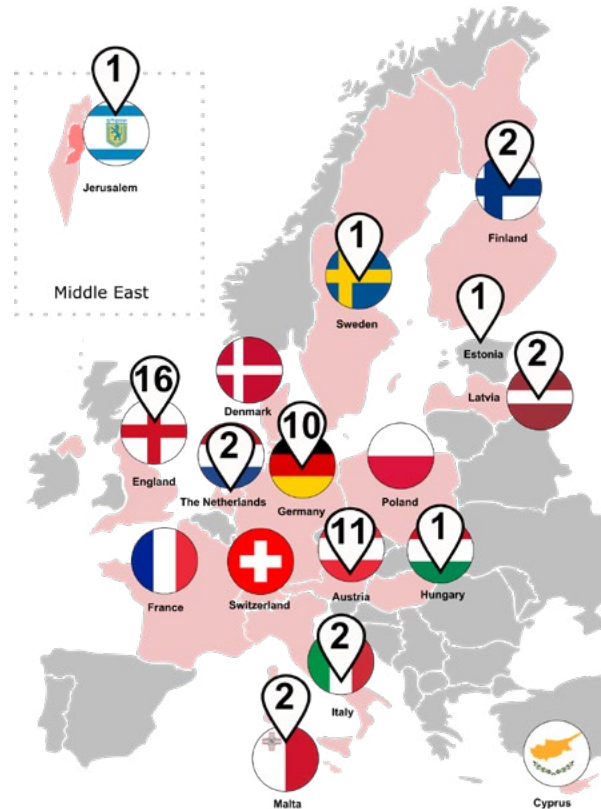


for volunteers to join their organised and assisted holiday trips for groups of older people in the Netherlands. 8 Swaps ran throughout the year, offering the volunteers more flexibility and a different way to experience the hosting organisation and its activities. The Medical Student Exchange in Jerusalem is a unique, constant and flexible 'Swap' that welcomes students for a practical short-term placement in the St John Eye Hospital. Another record was set with 113 volunteers from 4 countries who took the opportunity to participate in the Volunteer Swap programme:

- 36 volunteer of St John Ambulance
- 28 volunteers of Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe Germany
- 26 volunteers of Joannici Dzieło Pomocy
- 24 volunteers of Johanniter Austria

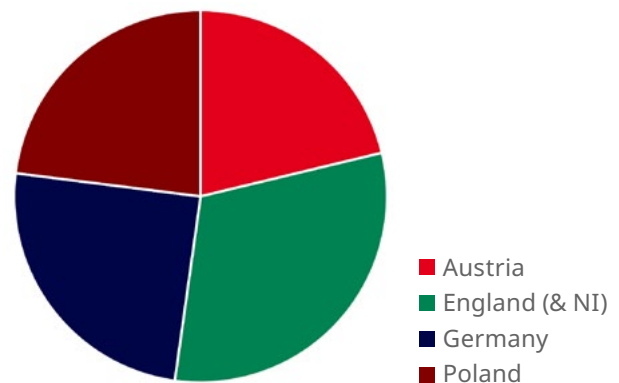
For the first time in the history of the Volunteer Swap programme, a Swap for young people (see pages 20 - 22) was organised between our English

Volunteer Swap opportunities offered



and German members. After careful planning by the Volunteering & Youth Working Group, JOIN enabled 11 English and 13 German young people and their supervisors to travel and experience each other's areas of activity and learn from each other.

Participating volunteers from



Seven English and twenty Polish volunteers at 'Tag der Johanniter' in Germany

5th - 7th May 2023

From 5th to 7th May, a team of seven English volunteers and twenty Polish volunteers attended 'Tag der Johanniter' (Johanniter Day) and joined the first aid competition of Johanniter Germany as guest teams. The English volunteers were invited by Larissa, a German volunteer who joined St John Ambulance in London for the provision of first aid at the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Our Polish JOIN member has a longstanding friendship and exchange with its German sister organisation and regularly participates in the activities of 'Tag der Johanniter'. Read the report by Alice Guillaume from St John Ambulance below:

"On the first weekend of May, we attended 'Tag der Johanniter' as a guest team from St John Ambulance England. We're very grateful to Larissa for inviting us, as the weekend was a fabulous experience, and definitely one of the highlights, if not the highlight, of being part of St John Ambulance.



► The whole group before the first scenario Left to right and back row to front row: (back) Alice, Oliver, Jonah, Sue, (front) Dani, Kathleen, Larissa, Emma (and Dino), Jonas, Orla

We were a little trepidatious in advance, as some of us had never even met before and we hadn't trained together as a team. We thought we would be well out of our depth! But those worries were quickly put to ease with the welcome we received.

We are very grateful in particular to Jonah and Dani, who looked after us across the weekend, ensuring we were in the right place at the right time and translating the tasks for us so we knew what we were doing! We are also grateful to the referee of the written theory test, who was so accommodating of us and let us use Google translate on our phones: this was appreciated, because as a team going into the test we knew 'Schlaganfall' – having desperately asked for last-minute first aid vocab – and not much more German. The theory test was reassuring,

because once we'd translated it, we realised we actually had the same first aid knowledge.

The biggest point of difference for us probably came with the stretcher race in the afternoon. In England we don't carry patients on stretchers (and so we even had to borrow helmets and gloves from another German team!), but watching the German team before us we thought it seemed fairly doable. This perspective changed when we were actually out there on the course carrying the 75kg stretcher. We quickly realised more time should have been spent in the gym in preparation! Despite completing well over the time limit, we did manage to finish the race with not too much water lost, and we had fantastic support from all the other teams who were watching and cheering us on.

The setting of the event was really novel. We'd never done scenarios in a Film Park before! The casualties were incredibly realistic, and overall, it was easy to become completely emersed in the scenarios. We would like to thank all the assessors and casualties we had for their patience and willingness to speak English (it certainly made things a lot easier for us).

Probably the thing we were most impressed by was the atmosphere of the event. The prize-giving at the end of the event was such a joyous, celebratory experience. We came away feeling really motivated as volunteers and feel like this is such a valuable experience to have. It was also wonderful to see all the different German regions and learn a bit more about them and their teams.



► Group photo on the stage at the awards event

The weekend flew by and yet looking back so much was done: we learnt lots about our sister organisation, including about aspects that are different to us, such as the search and rescue dogs, and enjoyed the fun – if chaotic – moments such as the stunt show in a volcano and excellent silent

disco. However, the people we met were definitely the main highlight. Everyone was so friendly to us and made us feel incredibly welcome, which we are very grateful for. We'd like to say a huge thank you

to Johanniter for allowing us to attend the event and also supporting us with the travel. We look forward to seeing many of you again in the future (maybe at the next Tag der Johanniter??)."

An English volunteer at the Ambulance Service in Vienna

24th - 31st May 2023

Johanniter Austria offers the opportunity for volunteers of all JOIN members to participate in the Patient Transport and Ambulance Service all year round.

From 24th to 31st May, Joshua, from Brighton in the UK, took part in the Volunteer Swap programme and worked for a week on the ambulance service with Johanniter in Vienna.



► I've always wanted to learn something new and meet new people, help across borders, and get to know other organisations."

Johanniter in Vienna provides a 24/7 patient transport and emergency medical service throughout the whole city of Vienna. Scheduled patient transports to and from the hospital or doctors' offices are common. The ambulance car, with two trained paramedics on board, also responds to emergency calls. Joshua joined the teams of both services for a week and learned about the procedures of Johanniter Austria.

The 24-year-old has been a volunteer for more than 5 years with St John Ambulance and has already completed more than 3,000 volunteer hours with the organisation. Initially, Joshua joined SJA as a 'First Aider', before progressing to an 'Advanced First Aider', and has more recently qualified as 'Emergency Ambulance Crew'. Alongside this, Joshua also volunteers as part of the 'Medical Response

Team' (MRT) who provide life-saving interventions to patients in both fast-paced environments and high-density crowds; such as those seen at marathons and festivals.

Together with his fellow volunteers, he ensures the safety and care of visitors at numerous events across the country – from local school fetes through to large events such as the London Marathon, Notting Hill Carnival and Brighton Pride. During the COVID-19 pandemic, after special training, both himself and the team in Brighton even stepped up to support the country's National Health Service by providing care for patients at the Royal Sussex County Hospital.

During his time in Vienna, Joshua was paired up each day with two fellow Johanniter colleagues on either a KTW (Kranktransportwagen) or Rettungstransportwagen (RTW), which roughly translates to a patient transport vehicle or a medical response vehicle – the service in Vienna would put out approximately 45 trucks each day across the city during peak times, with approximately half this number during nights and weekends.

"We would often be taking patients to or from their hospital appointments, providing a first response to emergency calls or conveying patients into hospital at the request of a doctor – it was a hugely rewarding experience"

The city of Vienna has approximately 30 private and public hospitals, 2 medical helicopters and a range of private medical companies, including Johanniter, who work alongside the country's own 'Berufsrettung' – the equivalent of an NHS ambulance back home in the UK.

"I was made to feel incredibly welcome during my stay in Vienna – it was a great experience and I learned a lot in my time here."

"I would highly recommend this experience to other volunteers throughout the Johanniter community!"

First Volunteer Swap for young people between England and Germany

June 2023

A Volunteer Swap for young people took place in June for the first time between volunteers from England and Germany. The JOIN Volunteering and Youth Working Group has initiated this idea and after long planning, JOIN gave 15 young people and their supervisors the opportunity to experience each other's areas of activity, learn from each other and join forces at major events.

From 7th to 11th June, seven young people and four Youth Leaders from St John Ambulance travelled to Nuremberg to join Johanniter Germany at the 38th German Protestant Kirchentag (Church Congress). There, the young St John people actively assisted in the various operational areas of Johanniter-Jugend (Johanniter Youth). Two weeks later, from 23rd to 25th June, eight young people and their supervisors from Johanniter Germany travelled from Cologne to London, where an exciting programme awaited them ending with the festivities of St John's Day together with Cadets of St John Ambulance.

Our English and German members have programmes and associations for young people engaging them in learning about health and first aid with many social activities. These formed the starting point of the first 'Youth Volunteer Swap'.

Cadets

St John Ambulance offers young people (aged 10–17) to join its Cadet units, which operate across England and meet once a week to learn life-saving skills and support adult volunteers at events. The Cadets also engage in social action and help their local community, learn about health and well-being, develop communication skills through Cadet leadership courses, teach others first aid, and participate in residential summer camps.

Johanniter-Jugend (Johanniter Youth)

The Johanniter-Jugend offers young people (aged 6–27) opportunities to spend their free time and engage in first aid training and School first aid service, classic youth work in youth groups through joint, age-appropriate projects in the social areas and implementation of camps. The Johanniter-Jugend is regularly involved in the areas of childcare and assistance for people with disabilities at the Protestant Church Congresses and carries out campaigns to check and update first-aid kits for motor vehicles.

Volunteer Swap in Nuremberg, Germany

The 38th German Protestant Kirchentag (Church Congress) attracted well over 100,000 guests to the central Franconian city. Johanniter was on major deployment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the visitors over five days. More than 520 volunteers from all over Germany provided first aid



in emergencies, along with childcare, and medical care. The volunteers also provided driving services and assistance for people with limited mobility. Johanniter volunteers dedicated 18,331 hours of their time.

This major event saw seven young people and four Youth Leaders from St John Ambulance joining Johanniter-Jugend in Nuremberg. After the group had arrived on Tuesday with a day's delay, as they were stranded in Paris due to the train, they went to visit the regional headquarters in Nuremberg on the same day. There they were shown both the premises and the vehicles by parts of the Nuremberg local youth leadership. After exchanging their experiences and addressing the differences between youth work in England and Germany, the group went bowling in the evening.



On Wednesday, the Church Congress started and the young people from England supported the team of the Johanniter Youth energetically and very flexibly as helpers. They were especially involved in assisting people with disabilities and limited mobility and also helped with childcare. On Thursday and Friday, the Cadets also provided support at various stands of the Kirchentag.

The English participants gave the German supervisors St John Ambulance T-shirts and lovingly handwritten thank-you cards including photos and souvenir of the exchange. On Saturday morning, the group returned to England.

The group vlogged their stay in a video diary, in which the Cadets reported their experiences.

Volunteer Swap in London, England

The group of young people from Johanniter Germany spent four and a half days in London.

The young people left Cologne on Wednesday afternoon and arrived in London in the evening. There they were met by a Youth Leader from St John Ambulance and drove together to their accommodation. On Thursday they went to visit an ambulance station. Besides the ambulances, they also tried out the equipment and talked about the differences in practices between the countries. In the evening, the young people took part in Cadet training. Together they trained diligently in case studies.



On Friday, they went to London Stadium to look over the shoulders of the helpers during the ambulance service at a baseball event. Fortunately, there were no casualties, so the young people practiced together and tested the equipment. Finally, in the evening, they went out for Fish'n Chips, tasted local food specialties, and went on a city bus tour.

On Saturday morning they went on an exciting and educational tour of the St John Museum. Here the young people learned a lot about the Order of St John as well as the common history and common origins with the Johanniterorden. Some interesting

facts have remained in memory, such as the use of St John Gate, (the museum building), as a pub and coffee shop, the reestablishment of the Order of St John in the 19th century in the Anglican Church, the fact that women may be members of the Order of St John and much more. In the afternoon, the German volunteers went to church service for St John's Day in St Paul Cathedral. If you simply want to visit the



cathedral as a tourist, you normally have to pay an entrance fee, but thanks to their friends from St John Ambulance, the participants not only got around this, but even got tickets for the same block where the members of the royal family took their seats - directly under the dome of the cathedral. A very special honour! Outside in front of the cathedral, a diverse programme was organized for St John's Day with various stands. Among other things, the young people met the mascot for children under 10 years at St John Ambulance, called 'Bertie Badger'. They learned that children (aged 5-11) at St John Ambulance are called Badgers, while young people are Cadets and talked to Jan, a cycle first responder who comes from and works at St John Ambulance. The group also met the delegation of the German Johanniterorden, who had also arrived on the occasion of St John's Day and had a meeting with JOIN Chairman Mark Broughton.



In the evening, the young people had dinner with the 'Cadets Of The Year'. On Sunday, the young people had some time to explore more of London before heading back to Germany, with many lasting memories and new friends.

Follow-up 'Youth Volunteer Swap'

Due to German school holidays and the fixed period for the return exchange around St John's Day, the project could only be advertised in the county association North Rhine Westphalia this year.

"The participants from both exchanges had a lot of fun and a great time. The organising team has already carried out initial evaluations and learned a lot from them, so nothing stands in the way of further exchanges with young people. For a pilot project, it was a complete success," sums up Maria Röh, deputy federal youth director of Johanniter Germany, who organised the project together with Margarethe Vahldieck from the federal office and St John Ambulance.

St John Malta welcomes volunteers for two Swap events

July and September 2023

St John Malta joined the Volunteer Swap programme in 2023 and offered two volunteer Swaps, The Isle of MTV Malta in July and the EuroPride Parade and Concert in Valletta in September.

July

On 18th July, St John Malta provided First Aid at the Isle of MTV Malta 2023, Europe's biggest free music festival, featuring a lineup of international acts headlined by Grammy-nominated DJs. The team of our Maltese member was joined by two English volunteers who travelled to Valletta for the event.

Here is what Julia from St John Ambulance reports:

"I had recently finished university when I read an email entitled 'Fancy a trip to Malta from 17th to 19th July to help St John Malta with the Isle of MTV music festival?' caught my eye. I usually stay local when volunteering for St John Ambulance (SJA) but this looked exciting. I was free and I could travel at short notice so I applied. The travel date was only 5 days away so I had to move fast. My application was approved and I was ready to go.



St John Malta kept in regular contact with me regarding the details of my trip and I felt confident that I would be welcomed. I was looking forward to meeting the other volunteers who had made the trip. As it turned out, there was only me and a young man called Lewis from the north of England. I was collected from the airport by Lewis and Chris and we went out to dinner where we met Andrew, the commissioner.

After dinner, we were taken to our accommodation at Fort Madliena where St John Malta is based. I was surprised to be staying in an actual fort and the facilities were basic but unique!

The next morning, Reuben collected us and took us to see the historic city of Mdina where we learned of the Knights of St John. We ate lunch, then back to Fort Madliena to rest before being taken to Valetta for the Isle of MTV Malta music festival.

It had been very hot in Malta and so everyone was prepared to receive participants suffering from dehydration and the effects of the extreme heat. There were 8 beds in our marquee, a large fan, bottled water and facilities to rehydrate patients intravenously if necessary.

There were similarities to the way SJA operates here in the UK and I felt the same team spirit and cohesion I have come to know over the years but Lewis and I were surprised by the presence of so many nurses and doctors from the local hospital. In the UK, first aiders are the initial point of contact for all patients. They only get to see a health care professional if it is indicated, and they are usually also St John volunteers. We had fewer patients than I expected and I had very little to do as a first

aider. It was, however, a great experience and I was very grateful that the participants were not drunk, vomiting or fighting like we sometimes see here in the UK at similar events.

Thank you, St John Malta, for having us at the Isle of MTV Malta event and for the superb hospitality you showed us over the 3 days. It will be an experience I will share for many years with my SJA family here in the UK."

September

On the third September weekend, our Maltese member provided medical coverage at the EuroPride Parade and Concert in Valletta.



St John Malta was joined by two English volunteers who supported the festivities. Here is what Richard Salter and Mark Adhen from St John Ambulance report:

"From the weekend of 15th to 17th September, we flew to Malta to volunteer alongside the St John Rescue Corps and St John Ambulance Malta at the EuroPride Parade and Concert in Valletta. I had previously attended a Volunteer Swap in 2019 at the Berlin Marathon and had really enjoyed the experience. We had also been to Malta before on a holiday, where we visited the St John Rescue Corps, so it was great to have the opportunity to go back and volunteer alongside the team this time.

On Friday we arrived and headed to the St John Rescue Corps headquarters at Fort Madalena, which was also our accommodation for the weekend. From the very start, the team was so welcoming to us, that we instantly were made to feel part of the team as members of the global St John family.

The event itself took place on Saturday which was a pride parade through Valletta, followed by a concert headlined by Christina Aguilera. It was really interesting to see both how St John Malta worked differently and how the crowds behaved differently as well. There were some similarities also that we

didn't expect, such as learning that St John Malta has the exact same uniform and supplier as St John England. It was also great to see lots of equipment and vehicles that St John England had donated to Malta over the years.

During the parade, we set up our treatment centre by the St John's Co-Cathedral. We had time before the parade started so were able to chat with the volunteers from Malta and share stories of what we get up to. It was particularly great to speak to some of their Youth Leaders who run Badger Setts and Cadet Units across Malta. We were split into teams where we were both made the lead first aiders and deployed to different locations along the parade. The crowds were large, and everyone was having a great time, but casualty figures were very low compared to what we may see in London, particularly with the heat. After treating 1 or 2 patients in total we then moved to the concert site. The crowd was very well behaved, even picking up their litter after them.

It was great to see how these events are run in different countries. The approach in Malta felt like a more simplified approach, the kit was more basic, they didn't have specialist teams such as our Medical Response Team, but everyone worked together really well and provided a brilliant service to their community. Volunteer welfare was a massive priority, with lots of food and snacks available and lots of opportunities to take breaks.

Different countries do work differently, which I was more prepared for this time after going to Berlin, but to fully prepare future volunteers they could maybe have a briefing or a Q&A session with a volunteer who has been on a Volunteer Swap before. The key to doing well on these Swaps is to be flexible and go in with an open mind.

I would love the opportunity to attend another Swap in the future, to learn about other countries, to share best practices and to continue to show how St John truly is a global family of like-minded people, all wanting to do their best to support their communities."



An English volunteer at the day care centre in Latvia

15th - 22nd July 2023

One of the activities of our Latvian JOIN member is running a day care centre for mentally challenged people. The work is conducted by employees as well as volunteers. From July to August, volunteers are welcome to help with care including playing games together and accompanying trips to the countryside.

Luke Middleton from St John Ambulance travelled to Riga and joined our Latvian member at the day centre from 15th to 22nd July. Here is what he reports:

"In July 2023, I participated in a JOIN volunteer swap to the Latvian arm of St John Sveta Jana Palidziba where I was working in a day centre for adults with learning difficulties and mental health conditions. I was attracted to this volunteering opportunity in Latvia because it demonstrates the wider ethos and scope of charities across the orders of St John and Johanniter. Sveta Jana Paldiziba is a social care charity that primarily focuses on delivering passionate and effective care to the local community and people who most need it. In contrast, St John Ambulance primarily focuses on the provision of first aid and medical care. Personally, I am also currently training to be an Occupational Therapist therefore it was a great experience to share and learn new skills both personally and professionally whilst exercising the HEART values of St John.

I arrived on Saturday before commencing work in the day centre on the following Monday, this allowed me plenty of time to get used to my surroundings and explore the amazing culture and atmosphere of Riga. I joined a group tour on Sunday which took me to see some of the main attractions of Riga around the old town and away from the city centre including Riga Central Market, The House of Blackheads, St Peter's Church and the Swedish Gate. This was a really good experience to understand the culture and history of Latvia enabling myself to share my



experiences with the service users many of whom have lived in Riga for many years.

On Monday, I was picked up from my hotel by Ieva Zandberga, Deputy Director, of Sveta Jana Palidziba and her colleague. I was quite nervous to start with however upon arrival I had a very warm welcome from service users and staff alike. The day centre offers a range of music, art and dance therapies daily as well as supporting people to learn Latvian language and cook foods. On Monday, we had a guest speaker who works for a company that makes easy-read books, the service users were asked to feedback on how they found the books and whether they could be improved. In the afternoon, there was a music lesson where I supported the music teacher in helping to teach the service users how to play musical instruments, dance and sing. This was an enjoyable experience even though I may not be the best singer! We also spent time during the day



playing games such as cards, snakes and ladders and Novuss (A Latvian twist on Billiards) this was a good opportunity to meet the service users and introduce myself. There were some difficulties with language barriers with some service users keen to use google translate to translate from both Latvian and Russian language so that I could understand more about their interests and culture whilst equally sharing mine.

On Tuesday, we went on a trip to the Latvian National Museum of Art which was a very nice experience, and it was pleasurable to see the service users taking photos and enjoying the visit. In the afternoon, we had some free time before completing a cooking lesson where we learned how to cook cold beetroot soup, a Latvian tradition. It was really tasty and interesting to learn the recipe for this delicacy so much that a few days later I chose beetroot soup as a starter in a Latvian restaurant. Delicious!

On Wednesday, we met at Riga central station and went on a train journey to the beach and coastal resort of Jurmala, there was a nice wide sandy beach and the weather was rather pleasant. We returned to the day centre for lunch and spent the afternoon socialising and playing games with the service users.

On Thursday, we went for a walk in the morning before participating in free time afterwards. In the

afternoon, I taught the service users how to cook one of my favourite family recipes Chicken Fajitas, everyone enjoyed getting involved in the cooking experience and there was a queue for second portions as well! The service users reported that they really enjoyed trying Mexican-style food and were thankful for the opportunity to engage in this activity. I found it very rewarding to see the service users smile and be enthusiastic about taking part.

An Austrian volunteer at the first Volunteer Swap in the Netherlands

23rd – 27th December 2023

In the last week of December, Johanniter Nederland organised holidays for lonely older people who cannot afford to go celebrate the holidays during the festive season. Patrick Stegmann from Johanniter Austria travelled to De Rijp (province North-Holland) for our very first Volunteer Swap in the Netherlands to join the volunteers taking care of the guests. Together they organised activities and trips and ensured that the guests have a carefree, happy holiday. Patrick has written about his experience below in English, German and Dutch:

I was recently in the lucky position to participate in a Volunteer Swap to the Netherlands. The project was a Christmas weekend for seniors which may not have the financial resources to celebrate Christmas properly. On this weekend they'd have events to do, games to play and good food to enjoy the holidays. The event lasted from 23rd of December until 27th of December and I planned my flights to Amsterdam Schiphol accordingly.



When I applied for the swap, I said that I was able to speak Dutch, and I guess I do, but the first thing I noticed is that my language level is a bit below

what is necessary to hold a normal conversation, that goes especially with the guests who could not always switch to English with me. Luckily, I found a few volunteers who could help me whenever I talked myself into a corner. While I already knew from my shifts on the ambulance service that you have to have patience with older patients, working with them in this manner was a tad different: The schedule and tasks are pretty clear when working a shift on the ambulance, I've found the work here somewhat more subtle. The workday started with breakfast and ended shortly before I went to bed - longer than any ambulance shift. And you have to be concentrated, but on a different level than on the



ambulance. But I have very welcoming colleagues: They'd help me whenever something was unclear or if I had a bit of a problem communicating with the guests. By the end of the weekend I was a van driver, a bartender, an expert sjoelbak player and a part of the holiday trip just like everyone else. I even had a nickname from one of the games we played! My personal takeaway from this swap - apart from improved Dutch skills - is a lot more patience, both with others and with myself if I can't get across what I'm trying to say. If the stars line up, I'll probably go back next year on my own.

European-funded projects

MED1stMR project in Field Trial phase

The research project MED1stMR (Medical First Responder Training using a Mixed Reality Approach) entered its trial phase in 2023. The JOIN Office and Johanniter Austria are participating in adapting current training practices to better prepare medical first responders for stressful and highly complex disaster situations. The multidisciplinary consortium of 19 European partners, coordinated by the Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT), received a 7.8 million grant from Horizon 2020 to implement the three-year project. Johanniter International contributes to the communication, exploitation and dissemination of the project's content and results.

MED1stMR consortium meeting in Madrid 17th – 18th April 2023

The 5th MED1stMR consortium meeting was held at the facilities of SERMAS – Salud 112 in Madrid. Representatives from all organisations attended and planned the six field trials starting in June 2023. The technical status was presented, and the participants were able to explore the latest VR assets generated for the mixed reality solution, the stress measurement wearable solution, and insights on the powerful backend that will gather all generated data and be able to display them live to the trainer on the Trainer Dashboard. This built the base for the AI-based automated scenario control feature to enhance the options for medical first responder training.

During the two days, the partners discussed end user requirements and refined their needs. The project's Dissemination and Communication status were presented, and an exploitation workshop was conducted. Research partners scheduled studies on the individual stages of development where input from and participation by the end users is required. All partners were invited to try the different prototypes and technologies used in the field of virtual simulation, mixed reality environment, and bio signal measurement. The Virtual Reality (VR) Co-creation tool to collaboratively design disaster situations was tested, and biosensors to assess the trainees' stress level were presented. The tests of the Mixed Reality prototype provided tangible interaction with a manikin. End users got a hands-on impression of the technology and gave important qualitative feedback on usability

requirements and needs to the research and development partners.

MED1stMR pilot session in Zurich 03rd – 4th July 2023

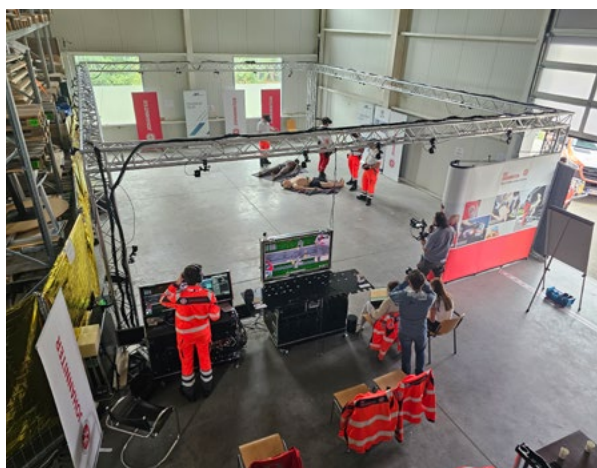
On 3rd and 4th July 2023, the project consortium gathered in Zurich to prepare for the field trials starting in the end of July. Hosted on the premises of the technology partner Refense AG, small groups tried the system and the newly developed features. The feedback given aimed to finalise the scenario script for the virtual triage training and check the procedures for the field trials. Moreover, trainers from all over Europe got familiarised with the MED1stMR system operation to be ready for the coming 6 months.

Field Trials in Austria, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Belgium and Greece

During the six different field trials, the developed technology with the associated training programme was tested by over 200 rescue and emergency paramedics from all over Europe. They trained in one-week sessions in six countries and provided feedback to the research and development team.

Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe Austria hosted the Pilot Field Trial from 25th to 28th July. In their Johanniter Research and Innovation Centre in Vienna, different groups of four medical first responders trained in the MED1stMR solution supported by





educated Mixed Reality Trainers. Before, during, and after the training, research on different levels was conducted to include these results (stress data, behaviour, the usability of the technology, etc.) in the forward development of the project.

The biosignals data was analysed and interpreted as individual stress levels in a backend and displayed together with other training information to the observing trainer in a user-friendly dashboard. This dashboard provides the trainer with the virtual scenario flow, the decisions of the trainees, and their performance data. Based on this evidence, the trainer is able to change the scenario to provide the best learning results for the trainees. Additionally, the scenario can be controlled automatically with artificial intelligence (based on biosignals and behavioural data) in order to support trainers and optimise outcomes.

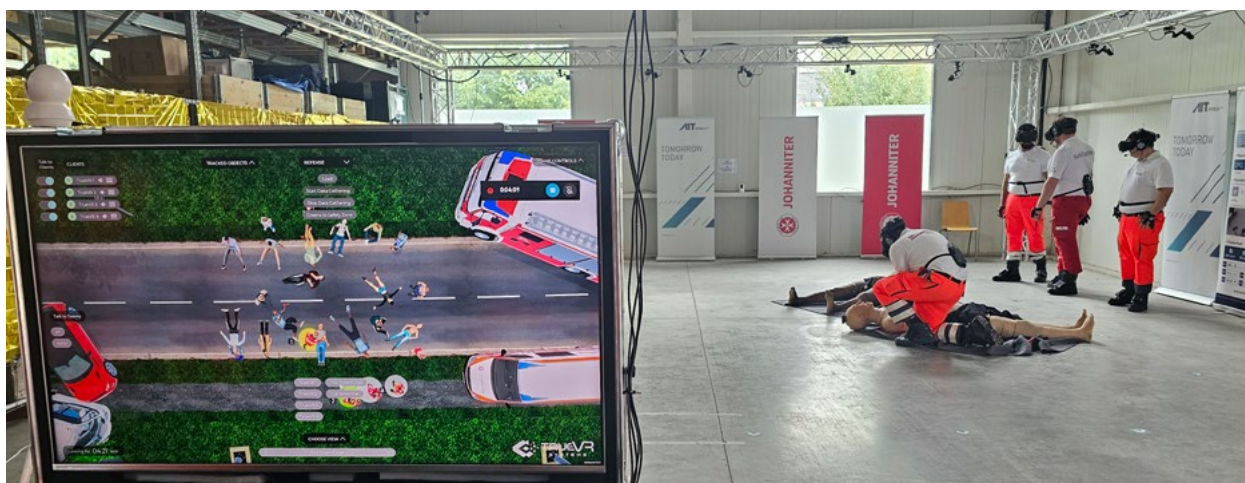
The second Field Trial was held in Heidelberg, Germany, as a City exercise from 25th to 29th

September. In parallel, on 26th and 27th September 2023, the project consortium gathered for a general meeting at the facilities of our partner Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg.

The Field Trial started with the set-up of the mixed reality training system, some test trials and a train-the-trainer session to get all local trainers on board. The combination of training including preparation, training goals discussion, execution and debriefing was accompanied by intensive research activities by our scientific partners. Almost 40 trainees from different organisations trained with the MED1stMR solution triage in two different scenarios.

The third Field Trial was hosted by our Swedish partners in Östersund from 16th to 20th October with end-user organisations and MR trainers. The solution received good feedback from the trainees and local trainers, and the consortium was able to identify areas for improvement. These were addressed in preparation for the fourth Field Trial in Ranst, Belgium from 27th November to 1st December. The training scenarios included a bus accident in a tunnel, with twenty people injured and in need of emergency medical care. During a full week, trainers and 53 first responders tested the mixed reality training system. The fifth Field Trial was held from 11th to 15th December in the Spanish capital Madrid at the premises of the Emergency Hospital Nurse Isabel Zenda. The sixth and final field trial will take place in January 2024 in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The project results will be shown at the final MED1stMR conference in Ranst, Belgium on 17th and 18th April 2024.



TeamUP project to start in January 2024

Brussels, Belgium, September 2023

In September, TeamUP project was confirmed to start in January 2024. A multidisciplinary consortium of 23 European partners, led by the Greek Institute of Communication and Computer Systems, received a grant from Horizon Europe to implement the three-year project. Johanniter Austria will participate as end-user organisation and Johanniter International will lead the communication and dissemination of the project's content and results.



CBRN-E incidents and resulting casualties are a permanent threat across the continent. In past incidents, first responders were often required to provide help without having conducted sufficient training on how to operate in CBRN-E incidents. Moreover, first responders seldom are aware of the risks that CBRN-E material poses to their health. The management of a CBRN-E scene including the recovery of persons concerned requires standard operating procedures,

advanced skills and suitable equipment. A step-by-step approach needs to include (1) detection of the CBRN-E threat, (2) triage of casualties and (3) on-site decontamination before the provision of medical aid.

In this frame, the TeamUP project will analyse how first responders can meet operating requirements. It will then develop and test innovative technologies for the detection, identification, and monitoring of hazardous material, as well as for the monitoring of the health status of first responders. Moreover, TeamUP will integrate tools for triage and decontamination. Next to the training and equipment of first responders, TeamUP aims to raise awareness for CBRN-E incidents in the general public, making our societies more resilient. By bringing together experts from a broad range of disciplines and regions, the project will develop holistic products, accounting for the needs of end users.



JOIN's Work in 2023

The JOIN Board

The JOIN Board is made up of representatives from JOIN member organisations who are elected by the Annual General Meeting for a period of two years. Its main tasks include supervising the work of the JOIN Secretariat and the General Manager, dealing with strategic questions and managing JOIN's relations with the Alliance of the Orders of St John.

In 2023, the Board was composed of Chairman Mark Broughton (St John Ambulance), Vice-Chairman Christian Velten-Jameson (Association des Œuvres de Saint-Jean, France), Dr Sarah Vecchione (S.O.G.IT

Italy), Andrew Grech (St John Malta), and Christian Meyer-Landrut (Johanniter Germany). Since August, Friederike von Bar represents our German member within the Board.

The Board meets regularly at face-to-face and online meetings and holds conference calls. In 2023, the Board held three face-to-face meetings (see pages 13 - 14).

The term of the current Board ends at the Annual General Meeting in May 2025.

Working Groups in 2023

Given the aim of JOIN to derive benefits for its members from increased exchange and cooperation, the working groups are one of the essential institutions in JOIN. The working groups provide a platform where JOIN members can exchange knowledge and experience on any given issue, and also offer a space where JOIN members can set the thematic foundation for common projects. By combining resources within the network, JOIN can realise projects for which individual members might not possess the capacity.

Moreover, the working groups also guarantee a participatory and transparent structure within JOIN as participation in the working groups is not only open to all members, but also strongly encouraged.

The working groups meet on a regular basis. While a face-to-face meeting allows for a more thorough and personal exchange at least once a year, regular online conferences ensure continuous close collaboration between the working group members.

In 2023, four working groups were operative within JOIN.

Clinical Working Group

The Clinical Working Group has been chaired by Richard Webber (England) since 2022. As its name suggests, the group deals with clinical and medical cooperation at both national and international levels. It is made up of chief medical officers from JOIN members.

In 2023, the JOIN Clinical Working Group published a European-wide First Aid Manual intended for young people. The Manual is available to all users for free and will be soon available in many other European languages on www.firstaidjoin.org. Stories for children called 'European First Aid for 5 to 7 years old' were also further translated and are available on the same link.

The members of the working group met twice in London and once in Berlin in the course of 2023 to finalise the drafting European First Aid for Young People (see page 9).

PR, Marketing & Communication Working Group

This working group, chaired by Petra Grell-Kunzinger (Austria), deals with all issues concerning JOIN's press work, the website, and publications, as well as corporate identity (CI) and corporate design (CD). The working group has developed the JOIN logo and helped create brochures and information material on JOIN activities. The group's primary purpose lies in sharing experiences, best practices, and know-how on related topics.

In 2023, the PR, Marketing & Communication Working Group met in Berlin (see pages 15 - 16).

Volunteering & Youth Working Group

This working group, chaired by Nancy Kestler (Germany), is responsible for volunteer exchanges between JOIN members and the Volunteer Swap

programme. These activities enrich the individual volunteering experience, enhance cooperation and understanding between the members, and enable JOIN members to work together efficiently and practically. Moreover, the working group deals with all other issues regarding volunteering, such as legal guidelines and the recruitment of volunteers. It also discusses common interests in JOIN members' youth activities such as summer camps, first aid training, competitions and youth exchanges.

The Volunteering & Youth Working met in May 2023 in Brussels (see page 16).

Fundraising Working Group

Motivated by positive cooperation examples in the past, this working group exchanges best practices and know-how in fundraising, grant management and other related topics, with the aim to mobilise financial resources and to strengthen fundraising capacities and cooperation among JOIN members. The working group consists of senior members of the fundraising departments of JOIN members. Since 2023, it is chaired by Frederik Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Denmark).

Created in 2019, the Fundraising Working Group held in 2023 its third face-to-face meeting so far in Berlin (see page 15).

The JOIN Secretariat in 2023

The JOIN Secretariat is located in Brussels, at the heart of decision-making in the European Union. This enables the office to observe relevant European policy developments firsthand and report these back to its members, as well as to advocate the positions and interests of JOIN and its member organisations directly to decision-makers.

The Secretariat also acts as a communication and information centre for JOIN members, e.g. by publishing the monthly newsletter JOINews, running an informative website and social media channels and replying to enquiries on European matters put forward by JOIN members. Furthermore, the JOIN Secretariat identifies relevant EU funding opportunities for its members.

The Secretariat maintains close contact with NGO partners, the Brussels offices of national and regional representations and the members of the Orders of St John who work in the European capital.

A significant influence on the work agenda of the JOIN Secretariat in 2023 was the implementation of the European project MED1stMR and the preparation of the project TeamUP, as highlighted on pages 26 to 28.

Furthermore, the JOIN Secretariat participated in the drafting of four European project proposals linked to the topics of health and of disaster resilient. The first project, called E2WELL, aims at maintaining the quality of health and the wellbeing of health workers by reducing work-related stress and support medical interventions. The second project, called BE-PREPARED, aims at generating new knowledge and technology that can contribute to good practices to the social preparedness

for disasters and health emergencies. The third project, called THF-APC, is designed to develop comprehensive health literacy tools, employing AI-driven models for predictive health crisis management and advancing comprehensive crisis communication strategies. The fourth project, HYGEIA, aims at improving diabetes treatment and overall healthcare through a transparent AI platform, enhancing clinical decisions and tapping into extensive medical data for profound research. Three out four of the project proposals were involving Johanniter Austria.

Throughout the year, the JOIN Secretariat maintained its representative character for members in Brussels. Upon request and on behalf of several JOIN members, the JOIN Secretariat took part in various online meetings at European level, for instance, in the areas of humanitarian assistance, development cooperation, civil protection, care, research and innovation.

In 2023, the JOIN Office team consisted of Joachim Berney (General Manager) and Eva Pelgen (EU Officer).



Perspectives on 2024

In 2024, the JOIN Office aims to remain the motor for cooperation among St John charities in Europe. In this light, the working groups continue to be the main priority for JOIN, and the Brussels office will support them in the best way possible.

One of the main challenges expected is to keep the links among JOIN members as tight as possible. Some JOIN members are currently under financial pressure and have expressed the pressing need to reduce every kind of expenses where possible. The JOIN Office will have to convince the member organisations not to reduce budget for cross-border projects.

Furthermore, promoting EU funding opportunities to our member organisations will stay a priority. The JOIN Office is actively exploring options for preparing European project proposals, especially in the frame of 'Horizon Europe', the funding programme for research and innovation 2021-2027. JOIN wishes to bring its members closer to innovative, cutting-edge research in relevant service areas.

The Clinical Working Group is expected to publish further European First Aid stories for 5 to 7 years old and to start drafting First Aid material for 8 to 12 years old.

The Annual General Meeting in 2024 will take place in Budapest from 22nd to 24th May.

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About JOIN

Johanniter International (JOIN) is the partnership of the four protestant Orders of St John and their national charities. Our member organisations, based in Europe and the Middle East, work in close cooperation and are supported by more than 100,000 volunteers. They serve humanity with medical services and first aid, social care, international aid, disaster relief and youth work. The services of JOIN member organisations are open to everyone. Core to our values is our Christian heritage which underlines our work.

The JOIN central office in Brussels advocates the interest of the St John charities towards European and international bodies and facilitates international projects and working groups.

For further information please contact our Brussels office at join.office@johanniter.org or www.johanniter.org.

