



**CONCORDIA Social Projects**  
Impact Report 2021/22



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# CONCORDIA Social Projects

is an international, independent aid organisation founded in 1991, that serves children, young people and families in need in Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Kosovo and Austria and enables them to live self-determined, independent lives.

We go where the need is greatest. And where others do not go.

Our programmes focus on strengthening and respecting children's rights. As an organisation that cares for children and young people, we have an ethical responsibility and obligation to ensure that children's rights are implemented in our facilities, and above all, that they are not violated.

We support local authorities and communities in developing structures and services and manage their implementation. In this way, we facilitate independent and long-term development in the social and educational sectors in our partner countries, so that all children have the opportunities to live a self-determined life, out of marginalisation.

[www.concordia-socialprojects.org](http://www.concordia-socialprojects.org)

Dear friends,

This year, CONCORDIA Social Projects celebrates 30 years campaigning for children's rights. Together with our dedicated and committed staff and funders we have fighting for every child to have the chance to live a self-determined life out of marginalisation.

CONCORDIA was founded in Romania with the goal of giving a home to the many children left to fend for themselves on the streets of Bucharest. Today CONCORDIA is an international children's aid organisation with active programmes in Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Austria and Kosovo.

The year 2021 was marred by the Covid pandemic and its effects linger, still claiming lives and causing hardship and misery.

The consequences of the pandemic coupled with the increase in domestic violence and the regression in access to education cannot be overestimated. In response to these circumstances CONCORDIA has expanded its programme for child victims of domestic violence and day care for children from difficult family backgrounds.

But the pandemic is not the only crisis that has impacted us massively this year.

Since February 2022, more than 5 million people have been displaced following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. Most of these are women and children worried about the men they had to leave behind to fight. CONCORDIA has responded to the refugees from Ukraine by providing emergency shelters, initial care and psychological support in Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Austria.

Over the past months we have seen how vital cohesion is and that our work is needed and more urgent than ever. The future of many children is in great danger as a result of the war, both in the immediate future and long-term.

We have opened our hearts to those children, young people and families who need our support most so that a future of safety and opportunity for them can be realised. We would like to thank each of you who share our concern and vision and who contribute to CONCORDIA - with time, funding and care. Collectively we can make a crucial difference in the lives of every single child we care for!



*Ulla Konrad*

Ulla Konrad  
Chairwoman of the board



*Thomas Birtel*

Thomas Birtel  
Member of the board



*P. Markus Inama SJ*

Pater Markus Inama SJ  
Member of the board



*Bernhard Drumel*

Bernhard Drumel  
Member of the board







## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS A RESPONSE TO SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

In 2021, we continued to expand our work in isolated slums and rural areas. The pandemic caused several school closures in our project countries this year. With targeted project activities, we tried to counteract the negative effects of the pandemic on children and young people and keep our programmes operational.

Moldova was already under a state of emergency (declared in October 2021) due to the gas dispute with Russia before the refugee crisis instigated by the war in Ukraine.

Despite these horrific circumstances CONCORDIA is able to report on successful impacts.

## ROMANIA

“ In 2021, we are talking about one in eleven children going to bed hungry. At the same time, 18 percent of children drop out of school, even though education is the only way to get out of extreme poverty. It is for these children that we have developed the day centres.

Diana Certan, Country Director  
CONCORDIA Romania

### NATIONAL DAY CARE CENTRE NETWORKS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK DUE TO POVERTY

CONCORDIA Romania in collaboration with local partners, launched the #CENTREziRO initiative, a national network of day care centres for children at risk. More than sixty social workers in Romania were at the launch event on 30 September 2021. This gave them the opportunity to discuss the issues and explore how to enhance cooperation in the fight against inequality and child poverty. The overarching goal for all is how to expand the day care centres in order to strengthen families and support them so that children and young people can remain in their families of origin and have prospects for the future.

### NEW DAY CARE CENTRE OPENED IN ODOBEȘTI

On 16 September 2021, the CONCORDIA Day Care Centre in Odobești was opened.

The centre is located 200 km northeast of Bucharest. Particularly important and noteworthy is the cooperation between our multidisciplinary team and community workers. About 50 children between the ages of 6 and 16 receive social, medical care, support with homework, meaningful leisure activities as well as a hot meal at the centre. In line with our philosophy, the team also takes comprehensive care of the parents. In the course of this, the importance of education and regular school attendance is emphasised.



# REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

The Republic of Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe and has the highest rate of labour migration. The massive brain drain combined with a lack of job opportunities and apprenticeships pose enormous socio-economic challenges for the country.

“One in three young people in the Republic of Moldova is either unemployed or not in education.

World Bank<sup>1</sup>

## WINGS4YOUTH STARTS IN MOLDOVA

Wings4Youth is a project that supports employment opportunities for care leavers; those young people who grew up either in full or part-time care, and do not have any family support to rely on. This is why this bridge to finding employment is so important as they aim to live an independent life.

A similar project has already shown success with young people from the CONCORDIA projects in Romania and Bulgaria.

The project fosters mutual trust, understanding and cooperation amongst the young people, youth workers and governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Furthermore, the partnership with *Caritas Austria*, (that implements similar activities in Trans-

nistria), promotes tolerance and understanding through the activities of the summer camps, study tours and exchange engagements of young people from both sides of the Nistru River.

The virtual launch took place on 4 October 2021 and was attended by relevant stakeholders at local and international level, including members of the Moldovan government, and youth representatives.

## PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Promoting human rights is one of the United Nations' top priorities. Every year since 2004, the Moldovan UN Country Team has awarded a prize for the best action to protect human rights on both sides of the Nistru River.

On International Human Rights Day 10 December 2021, CONCORDIA Moldova National Directors Tatiana Balta and Viorica Matas were privileged to receive the UN Special Award for outstanding achievements in supporting rights to health, education, employment and/or social protection in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic March 2020 - 15 October 2021. We are very happy about this recognition of our work.



<sup>1</sup> <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/185631608708604109-0080022020/original/MoldovaEconomicUpdateSpecialFocusDec22.pdf>





# BULGARIA

– EXPANDING OUTREACH IN 2021

## OPENING OF THE CONCORDIA DAY CARE CENTRE IN MALKI ISKAR

In the small village of Malki Iskar, an hour and a half's drive northeast of Sofia, most of the population lives in abject poverty and social isolation. The closure of the local school increased the (already very high) risk of children losing out on foundation education and dropping out of school. CONCORDIA opened its facility on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and is able to offer socio-educational support for 85 children. The local team also actively works with parents to improve parenting skills and opportunities for employment.

The CONCORDIA Day Care Centre in Malki Iskar covers the basic needs of entire families with a hot meal, access to sanitation, clothing, learning support, recreational activities and a nurse for help with basic health advice.

## CLIMBING FOR CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

We are very pleased to announce that in 2021 we were able to start a new therapy programme for children with physical disabilities. This will benefit children from our facilities as well as children in need from other partner organisations. For many of the children, climbing is something they would never have dared to try. Guided by our therapists, they now climb the climbing wall, strengthening social contacts and confidence in their own abilities.



## # CONCORDIA STORIES

How Petya\* climbed into an independent life > <https://www.concordia.or.at/en/therapeutic-climbing>

\*In order to protect personal rights, all names of persons in this report have been changed.

The young people of the CONCORDIA Tranzit Orchestra were able to perform a few times despite the pandemic's restrictions. Here they are, at the launch event on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in Pristina. They performed for the campaign against hate speech "Block the Hatred, Share the Love" organised by the Council of Europe office.





# KOSOVO

Early marriages, dropping out of school, child labour, extreme poverty and domestic violence are the social challenges in the landscape surrounding the CONCORDIA Transit Centre. Women and young girls are particularly at risk due to the lack of protective mechanisms and social services.

## NEEDS-ORIENTED EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAMME AT THE TRANZIT CENTRE IN PRIZREN

At the beginning of 2021, CONCORDIA began its interventions in Kosovo by taking over the Transit Centre education and social centre in Prizren. The past year was used to bring the current programmes (early childhood education, learning support including a hot meal, music lessons with an orchestra, as well as an education programme for young people) up to CONCORDIA standards, and to expand the outreach as needed.

Through our case management approach and the establishment of a multidisciplinary team, we are now better able to respond to the needs of the children and young people, and to involve their families more. “Empowering Women of Kosovo” is one of several projects launched in 2021 and is explicitly aimed at women in the municipality of Prizren. This enables them to have access to specific social services and have greater opportunities in the education and labour market. In addition, CONCORDIA is committed to breaking down institutional barriers and establishing protective mechanisms, and to promoting the integration of Romnja, Ashkali and Egyptian women into the labour market.

## # CONCORDIA STORIES

The story of Erisa >

<https://www.concordia.or.at/en/erisa>



The global “Orange the World” UN campaign (25<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December annually) raises awareness of violence against women. During these sixteen days women at the Transit Centre were educated about different types of violence and how to prevent it.



# AUSTRIA

## A PLACE FOR OPPORTUNITIES

The LenZ Learning and Family Centre has been open for six years and assists children, young people and families with either refugee and migration background in Vienna. It offers free learning support, parent counselling and education and family support, as well as a language café, various community actions and a residential community for young asylum seekers and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, pupils with refugee experience have been at greater risk of missing out on their education and find it difficult or near impossible to catch up on their learning. However, there is great benefit from the extracurricular activities that create opportunities to promote integration. The focus on digital learning, which LenZ

## Safer Internet

**Under the motto: „Don't believe everything you see on the internet“, the LenZ team teaches how to recognise “fake news” and encourages independent research.**

has emphasised from the beginning, facilitated the continuation of the projects during the lockdowns. From spring 2022, an information and exchange café (including childcare for Ukrainians) will happen twice a week.

**Ali, one of the young adults from the LenZ flat share. Despite many obstacles, he completed his apprenticeship as an electrical engineer with excellent results.**





# INTERNATIONAL

## CONCORDIA ACADEMIA - OUR COURSE TRACK FOR PROFESSIONALS FROM THE SOCIAL, HEALTH AND EDUCATION SECTORS

To continue with the blended learning methods, (a combination of face-to-face teaching and e-learning), Academia 2021 launched a platform that serves as a training room, a virtual library and meeting place for professionals. In addition, a scholarship programme was launched to enable companies that emphasise education in their CSR policies to invest meaningfully in sustainable development and positive systemic change.

The main projects that have been (or will be implemented) by CONCORDIA Academia 2021-2022 are the Forward-Looking Social Europe Skills project, through which key competences and development potentials of professionals in social professions will be identified. There is an additional project to develop and implement a methodology that will help extremely vulnerable children be integrated in the schooling system. At the beginning of 2022, Academia (with seven other countries) conducted a study in Romania on supervision provision in the social sector. Its discoveries make important contributions to the systemic professionalisation of social services and establishes it as a pioneer in anchoring supervision as a central pillar of social work.

More about the courses offered by Academia:  
[www.concordia-academia.ro](http://www.concordia-academia.ro)

**1250+** people who took advantage of our courses

**250+** people who regularly took part in supervision and coaching

” **Young adults, most of whom grow up in institutional care, need special support.**

Ema (23), grew up at CONCORDIA Romania and is studying social work in Bucharest today.

## LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER: ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME WEEK IN COPENHAGEN

As part of Erasmus+, our programme team organised an educational trip to Copenhagen for CONCORDIA staff from all our project countries. The most important children's and youth social services gave them exciting insights into the Danish social system. Among others, BÜLOWSVEJ - For Family and Children, Børnesagens Fællesråd (Joint Council for Children's Issues) and Mødrehjælpen (Mothers' Aid) talked about the prevention of family separation and domestic violence. The team from Red Barnet (Save the Children Denmark) presented their methods for the prevention of violence at school and among young people. Through the exchange with Baglandet København, the participants learned more about the support available for young people who have grown up outside their biological family. A virtual meeting connected young people from CONCORDIA homes to their peers in Denmark.

## 30 YEARS CONCORDIA SOCIAL PROJECTS VIDEO CAMPAIGN

We took the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CONCORDIA Social Projects to let the many people who make up CONCORDIA have their say in videos and to provide insights into our programmes and work.

#30YEARSCONCORDIA



## UKRAINE – EMERGENCY AID





“ We help people in greatest need, that is our mission. Those on the refugees as well as those in countries, who are still suffering the effects of poverty due to the effects of war.

Executive Director CONCORDIA



## THE UKRAINE WAR AND HOW CONCORDIA IS PROVIDING AID

As an organisation with strong roots in countries affected by the current humanitarian crisis we take our responsibility to support people in need to heart. This concerns people fleeing and those most affected by the consequences of this war in our project countries.

The Republic of Moldova has a significant role to play and CONCORDIA's doors are also open to refugees in Romania, Bulgaria and Austria. They receive psychological support, basic care, help with official matters, a sympathetic ear and the warm welcome and integration that a safe place can offer.

crossing to Palanca in the Ștefan Vodă Rajon, which borders on Ukraine. In addition to immediate emergency aid, we provide basic care, transport, first aid and psychological and emotional support. Around 8000 people have received initial care, and by the end of May 2022, a total of 618 refugees have been accommodated in a total of 21 CONCORDIA facilities in Stăuceni, Ruseștii Noi, Chisinau, Bolohani, Tudora and Căușeni.

In all the houses, refugee children and youth have access to educational activities, online courses, sports and recreational activities. We support women to build a self-help structure and participate in the local community. Casa CONCORDIA in Chișinău houses unaccompanied children separated from their families who have been referred to CONCORDIA by local authorities.

## Emergency shelters for refugees

Romania: 146 emergency accommodation places

Bulgaria: 25 places

Republic of Moldova: 200 places

Refugee aid Romania: over 950 displaced have so far been helped with accommodation, food and hygiene packages, counselling and/or psychological care.

## PRIORITY COUNTRY REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

In terms of its own population, no country has taken in more refugees from Ukraine than the Republic of Moldova. For this small, economically poor country, providing for the refugees is an enormous challenge. CONCORDIA has been active in Moldova since 2004 in over 50 communities and is the largest aid organisation in the country.

Since the outbreak of the war, an emergency aid team has been caring for the arriving people - mainly mothers with their children - at the border

“ We left because we heard the sirens night after night. And every time my children woke up and cried...At some point we could already see the warships with binoculars, and we thought that if they were heading towards our village, our village wouldn't be around for long.



Alexandra from Odessa, fled to Moldova with her three children

More on Ukraine aid > <https://www.concordia.or.at/en/ukraine-aid/>



Tudora: Right: Veronica Mocan in front of our emergency shelter for mothers and children from Ukraine. Left: Moldovan and Ukrainian children doing handicrafts together in the CONCORDIA Multifunctional Centre.

## TUDORA: A SMALL MOLDOVAN VILLAGE BECOMES A HUB FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

The nearest village to the Palanca border crossing is called Tudora. Less than 50 km from the port city of Odessa, you can hear the bombs and sirens there too. It is the place where CONCORDIA has been supporting the impoverished rural population for many years. The houses in Tudora are half-ruined and often abandoned. The living conditions of those left behind are horrendous and very few have running water.

Despite this it is evident how generous and helpful the Moldovans are, and how open-heartedly they stand by their neighbours from Ukraine, despite having so little to begin with.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the CONCORDIA Multifunctional Centre, (under the leadership of our dedicated colleague Veronica Mocan) has been an important hub for the coordination of local aid and its distribution to families in the villages.

Almost every second household in the village has temporarily taken in families from Ukraine. Around 2,000 refugees have stayed in the Ștefan Vodă Raion for the time being, as they want to return as soon as possible to the Ukraine.

The CONCORDIA centre is open to community members and refugees alike and offers hot meals, hygiene and sanitation facilities as well as counselling, psychosocial care, educational opportunities and joint recreational activities for children.

## Partnerships and child protection in crisis situations

In Moldova, there is great fear that the war will spill over into the country. How can the current situation be explained in a way that is appropriate for children? What signals do psychologists have to pay special attention to when dealing with war refugees? How do war and flight traumas manifest themselves? Since the beginning of the war, we have strengthened our child protection measures. Through cooperation with other organisations such as Kindernothilfe, Der Möwe and Hamayat, our staff have been trained on topics such as early trauma intervention and treatment and effective support for unaccompanied minors. CONCORDIA is in the process of setting up its own department with specialist psychological staff. The expertise of our partners helps us a lot.

## BUCKLE UP FOR DISARMAMENT

Our Ukraine emergency aid is supported by many individual, group and school initiatives. We are humbled and deeply grateful for the commitment given by so many to our project and for every single donation.

Picture: Charity ski race on Goldeck for the benefit of CONCORDIA.







Anna: third from the right

## VOLUNTEERING IN A MOLDOVAN VILLAGE BORDERING UKRAINE

In addition to our full-time staff, CONCORDIA has many volunteers. Last year, CONCORDIA welcomed another group of international volunteers who gave of their time and service. We had two in Kosovo, three in Bulgaria, and six volunteers spread across various projects in Moldova.

For the young volunteers, it is usually their first work experience abroad. They are out of their usual environment and comfort zone, and as a result undergo a very formative experience. For our staff as well as the children, young people and elderly people in our programmes, the exchange is an enriching one; for those who support as for those who receive their support. Nineteen-year-old Anna Hopferwieser arrived from Salzburg and has been in Moldova working for CONCORDIA autumn 2021. From the very beginning, she has been a great support for our colleagues and the people we look after in the border village of Tudora. There are approximately 2,000 people in Tudora and CONCORDIA has been running a multifunctional centre there since 2008.

Poverty is standard and there is very little employment for those who can work. With the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, thousands of people crossed the Palanca border, (less than five kilometres from Tudora) and the numbers have not abated.

**CONCORDIA in the media** >  
<https://www.concordia.or.at/presse/>

“It was frightening how many children were there with their mothers, even very small ones. And it was extremely cold. The traffic jam stretched 50 kilometres back to Odessa.

Volunteer Anna Hopfenwieser

Anna Hopferwieser was part of the CONCORDIA emergency aid team at the border and provided the refugees with warm blankets, tea and food. It is a time of absolute emergency and great and palpable insecurity, equally felt by the Moldovan population. At the same time, the Moldovans' great willingness to help was revealed, even though they themselves have very little to begin with. These are experiences that stay with our volunteers for the rest of their lives. It quickly became clear to Anna that she wanted to stay in Tudora as long as possible and continue to help where she can: “The Austrian embassy told us that there are six warning levels, and we should leave at the fifth. At the moment (April 2022) we are at level four.”

## INTEREST IN VOLUNTEERING AT CONCORDIA?

For more information on how you can get involved with us: <https://www.concordia.or.at/en/support/volunteers/>

CONCORDIA is part of the WeltWegWeiser network, the service point of Jugend Eine Welt for foreign assignments.



## PROGRAMME AND IMPACT

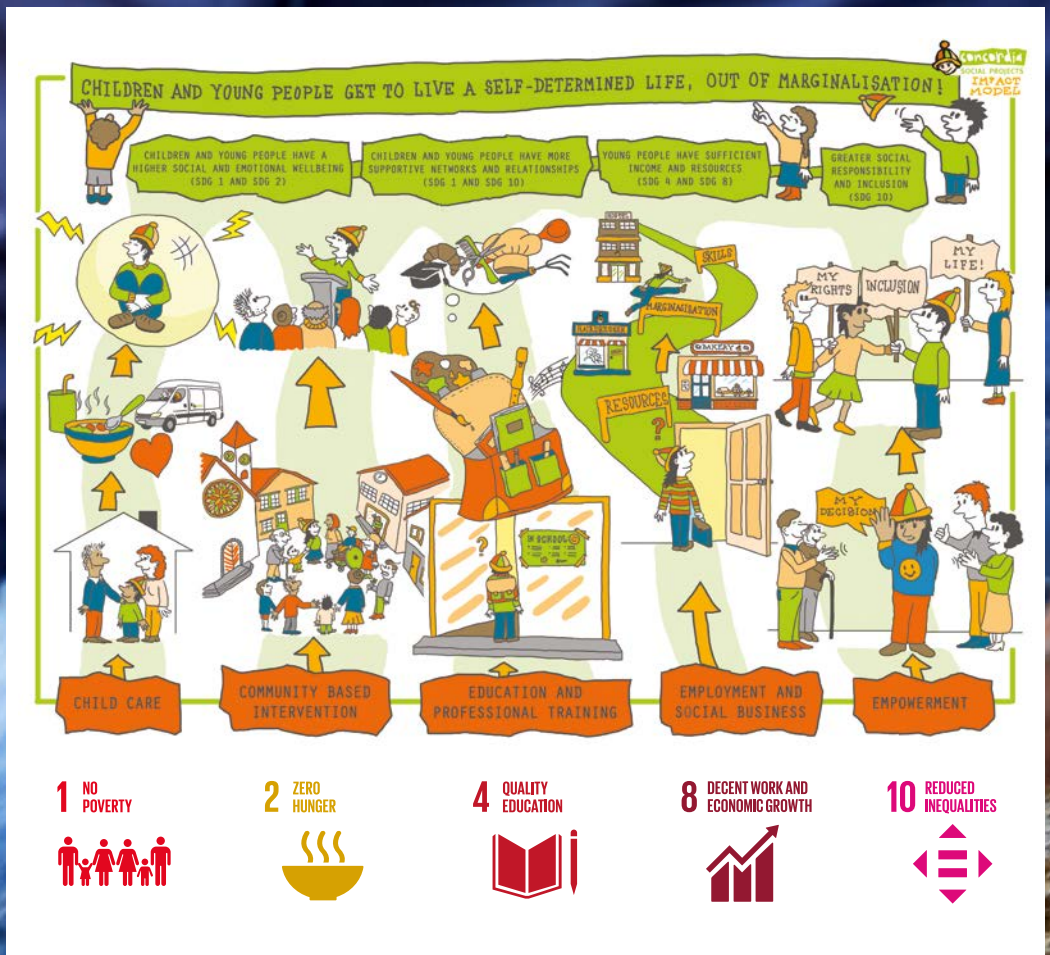
### The CONCORDIA Impact Model: Five routes to a self-determined life

In order to achieve our goal to enable children and young people to lead self-determined lives – out of marginalisation, we have created an impact model with five paths. It is through this model that we can bring about positive change.

**We reached 12.906 children, young people and families through our programme in 2021.**











## CHILDCARE



### A LOVING AND SAFE HOME

Children who do not receive sufficient protection and care from their family of origin need family alternatives and reliable caregivers.

In our family-like residential groups and foster families, up to eight children live in a house in a neighbourhood surrounded by other families. The carers often remain with the adolescents and help them navigate the difficult teenage years as they grow into adults. They offer consistent attention and care that they deserve.

Both foster families and the children in our family-like residential groups receive regular and comprehensive support from multidisciplinary teams that include educators, social workers, nurses, psychologists and various therapists.

**In 2021, 423 children and young people live in CONCORDIA family-like residential groups and family houses.**





## LIGHTHOUSE PROJECTS

### CONCORDIA CRISIS CENTRES for mothers and children in Moldova

Protecting children and young people from any kind of neglect, harm or abuse is at the heart of all our activities. In line with our Child Protection Policy, we focus on raising awareness, preventing, reporting and responding to abusive behaviour in order to create a safe and caring environment. We foster a space where children feel safe, loved and cared for; where their rights are respected and honoured and where they can voice their concerns knowing that their concerns will be responded to quickly and immediately.

The need for protection mechanisms for victims of domestic violence has unfortunately increased in Moldova in recent years.

According to a study by UNICEF, every third child in Moldova is a victim of violence, abuse, neglect or human trafficking.

This harsh reality motivates CONCORDIA Moldova to create its own pilot project on intensive care for affected children and, (on a case-by-case basis), their mothers, in order to protect and support them in overcoming trauma. In 2021, the two multifunctional centres in Nisporeni and Cosăuți were transformed into crisis centres for children and their mothers affected by violence and/or abuse. In Tîrnova we run a crisis centre for affected children.

“When we build a relationship with our parents, we usually develop a secure form of attachment. Unfortunately, the children who come to us do not have such a healthy way of growing up, and most of them, are victims of various forms of

abuse. The most common forms are neglect, physical, psychological and also sexual violence. Children who come to us are traumatised by the stress factors they have been exposed to. From a psychological perspective they demonstrate anxious, irritable, erratic attachment style. These response mechanisms make it particularly difficult for them to build healthy relationships or deal with stressful situations.

As a psychologist at CONCORDIA, I focus a lot on creating a relationship, on re-establishing a secure attachment style, and together with the whole team we try to create an atmosphere where the child can learn to develop the ability to connect with us in a healthy way, to feel safe and confident to go out into the big world and build healthy, secure relationships with the people around them. In therapy we talk a lot about emotions and identify how to manage them properly. These skills help to build positive relationships and have the hope of a beautiful life as adults.

When I see that the children are more confident, that they come out at events with their heads held high, that they are happy, that they build good relationships with new people, then I am very happy. But it requires patience and a lot of positivity.



Elena Bulat,  
Psychologist CONCORDIA Moldova

<sup>2</sup><https://www.unicef.org/moldova/media/6046/file/2019%20Light%20SitAn%20UNICEF%20Moldova.pdf>



## COMMUNITY BASED INTERVENTION



### FAMILY-CENTRED COMMUNITY WORK

Children and young people should grow up in an environment where they are supported and accepted by their families and community.

Unfortunately, this is not a guarantee. In the communities and rural areas where we work, families often struggle with the impacts of poverty, health hazards and related exclusion.

CONCORDIA accompanies and supports affected families, takes joint measures and strengthens parental skills so that children do not have to be separated from their parents. Our focus is always on what the best interests of the child are.

**7465 people will benefit from our community-based support in Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Austria and Kosovo in 2021.**

Our outreach work combines social, educational and psychological support and is holistic by its approach and collaborative in nature.

If community services for children, youth and families at risk already exist, we activate them. Where these do not (yet) exist, we work with local authorities to develop community-based supports.





## # CONCORDIA STORIES LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

### The CONCORDIA Day Care Centre in Malki Iskar



In less than a year, the team of the CONCORDIA Day Care Centre in the remote Bulgarian village of Malki Iskar has built up a good relationship of trust with the residents. The majority of them live in extreme poverty and there are few options to help them to escape these precarious living conditions. By building the centre, CONCORDIA Bulgaria took an important step in offering hope to children and the entire community. Activities are organised on a regular basis, mainly for the children, but they also include the whole community. The families who come to the centre do not have running water at home so keeping clean is almost impossible; nor do they have sufficient food and clothing. The centre provides an infrastructure to meet their basic needs.

Families like Maria's (pictured) benefit from the services offered at the centre. Our social workers got to know Maria during the first tours of the settlement, where they introduced themselves and explained what kind of support they offer. Maria was 15 years old when she gave birth to her first son. Today she is 30 and lives with her children and her second husband in a hut. It consists of a windowless room with a wood stove, nothing more. In one wall of her hut is a hole, well camouflaged with some cardboard, and a chair in front of it. "At night a rat comes in ... I hear it digging and biting - how can it not do that?" Maria told our social workers. At the moment, the family receives money for food, bills and medical treatment from social benefits and benefits in kind, with which CONCORDIA supports them. "Especially in the winter months, we don't know how to feed our children's hunger. Kiril (her husband) works in construction, but now, in winter, everything is dead."

Maria does not want to talk about her first husband. She never went to school or learned to read and write. Now she is part of the literacy group for parents in our family centre. Since the school in the village was closed, her two sons Vladi and Marin officially go to school in the neighbouring village. In practice, however, their attendance is impeded by the distance they need to travel. This is where the social workers and the family centre play their role. They analyse the causes of low school attendance and try to find solutions by working intensively with the parents. In the Bulgarian periphery, there is no compulsory school attendance and no functioning state social work structure.

Vladi and Marin now come daily to our educator (picture) at the centre, who attracts everyone's interest with her extraordinary enthusiasm, professionalism, ability to work with children and precise approach. The children and their parents show a real desire to learn and this gives us great joy.





## EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING



### OUR RESPONSE TO POVERTY: EDUCATION

Extreme poverty, neglect and exclusion lead to children being prevented from being educated. Covid-19 has further exacerbated the situation of many children and youth who were already at high risk of not having access to education.

We strongly believe that the cycle of poverty across entire generations can only be changed through education.

This methodology is a unifying theme across all our programmes, and at a systemic level. We create bridges of collaboration between the education system and the social service sector, working with teachers, partner organisations and policy makers to ensure that children and young people are provided with a respectful, responsive and encouraging environment.

We work to ensure that all children are able to attend school every day, receive the necessary learning materials, clothing and a hot meal. We provide examples of tailored educational pathways for those who have missed out on formative education and, in line with our holistic approach, we include the families of the children as well.

**4849 children and young people will participate in our education programme in 2021.**

## LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

### The CONCORDIA Edu-Campus in Ploiești/Romania

(with its primary and vocational school) is an innovative and unique example of inclusive education for children (6-11 years) and young people (14-25 years). You can feel this as soon as you enter the campus. More information about our school for all: [www.scoala-primara.concordia.org.ro](http://www.scoala-primara.concordia.org.ro)

### Vocational School 2021

- 39** YOUNG GRADUATES
- 2** PARTNERSHIPS WITH TECHNICAL SCHOOLS
- 5** SCHOOL CLASSES IN PARTNERSHIP
- 109** YOUNG PEOPLE IN PARTNERSHIPS
- 33** YOUNG WORKERS
- 25** PLACES IN ACCOMMODATION

### Primary school 2021

- so far **45** PUPILS IN 2 CLASSES (TO DATE)
- 10** TEACHERS
- 22** PAYING CHILDREN
- 23** NON-PAYING CHILDREN



## # CONCORDIA STORIES

## Gabriela from Odobești

Gabriela is among the first children admitted to the new CONCORDIA Day Centre in Odobești, which opened in 2021, and she is the one who always asks what she can do to help here. She learned to do this being the second oldest of eight siblings. Her mother entrusts her with help in the household like shopping, cleaning and taking care of her younger siblings.

Gabriela is now 13 years old but for several years, childhood and school came way down in the list because of her responsibilities at home. One day, during learning support at the centre, her mother called because she needed help with the other children. At that moment, our educator kindly explained to her mother that the tasks set by Gabriela's school should have priority. This is why she and her siblings come to the centre. Their mother understands how important education is and we find this to be common in all the parents we engage with, and more so if they have not been educated themselves. However the nature of their struggle often overwhelms this mind set. In the local state schools, the teachers are not always interested in working more intensively with these families and as a result the children miss out on many opportunities.

Gabriela lives with her siblings in a shabby room and her mother and her new husband sleep on a couch in a second room, without running water. Gabriela's older sister recently left home because she was taken in by a neighbour who provides food and shelter, leaving Gabriela the oldest sister in the house. Her father is an alcoholic and has abandoned the whole family. Gabriela and her mother do not talk about him, only about Gabriela's stepfather, who has taken over the role of head of the family. Her mother is expecting another child and Gabriela will soon have her eighth brother.

Gabriela is 13 years old and many girls her age have no access to basic sex education and how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy. At the centre, psychologists and sex educators talk to children aged 12-13 years about consensual sex, abuse, the reproductive system and contraception. Sex education does not exist in public school lessons, nor is it discussed at home so this education is a vital part of their healthy development.

Often the biggest challenge for social workers is to inspire poorly educated parents and those at risk of poverty that things can be different for their children. How can they see a future for their children leading a different and better life when their present reality is so dismal? Helping them understand that education is the key to unlock this improved future is essential to their child's future success in life. Once they understand this the levels of cooperation increase.

Gabriela with one of her sisters





## EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL BUSINESS



The best thing about working is  
the team, the people here.  
Roses, CONCORDIA candle workshop Sofia



## OVERCOMING HURDLES, DEVELOPING POTENTIAL

With the bakery, hostel, hairdressing salon and candle workshop, CONCORDIA has expanded its programme in recent years to include social entrepreneurship as a successful concept. Our enterprises create meaningful training and jobs and open-up future opportunities for young people who do not get a chance with many other employers.

Young people from disadvantaged families and marginalised groups often need additional support (such as job coaching or mentoring) to develop vocational qualifications. With us, they find a protected and encouraging environment in which they can learn a trade and gain their first work experience.

At the same time, they learn and practise the full range of soft skills required for employment and can move confidently into the regular labour market in one to two years.

In the CONCORDIA bakery, I got the first job where I take responsibility and received the support to be financially independent.

Juliana, baker at  
CONCORDIA Bakery

## CONCORDIA bakery in Ploiesti/Romania

**133.857** products sold  
Training centre for **6** young apprentices  
delivers to **70** different customers

## Hostel Bread & Breakfast in Bucharest

Rating on Booking.com: **9.3**  
Work placement for **7** young employees  
**1977** guests

## CONCORDIA Candle Workshop in Sofia

Best Business Plan of Bulgarian NGOs 2021  
**5000** Euro prize money  
Jobs for young adults with disabilities  
**7000+** candles and **1000+** pottery  
products produced

## CONCORDIA Hairdresser in Sofia

**1300+** haircuts

For me, working at CONCORDIA  
means security.

Bogdan, caretaker at  
CONCORDIA Bread & Breakfast Hostel



## EMPOWERMENT



The precarious life situation of many people often leads to hopelessness, feelings of shame and withdrawal. We support children, young people and families to look at the possibilities and their own potential, and to believe in themselves and change for the better.

We want to empower children and young people to actively participate as members of society and become agents of change. We inform them about their rights and who they can turn to for support. We encourage them to network with their peers and create networks of support where they have the opportunity to voice their opinions. Ultimately, we en-

courage them to use their own networks to engage with decision-makers and advocate for the protection and respect of their rights. Reliable sources of information must be available to all children and young people, in a language they understand and through sources they can access.

Our empowerment work is often supported by institutional partnerships, such as the European Commission in Romania and Bulgaria or the Austrian Development Agency in the Republic of Moldova.

“ I couldn't finish school because we were in Montenegro. Back in Kosovo, I worked in construction.

When CONCORDIA received food from LOYOLA High School for the children in Tranzit Centre, I joined CONCORDIA as a distributor.

I heard that they needed a cook at CONCORDIA, and I got a chance. I did an internship as a cook and today I am a certified cook and cook for 70-80 children per day at CONCORDIA.

Rahmi (20), cook at CONCORDIA Tranzit in Prizren/Kosovo







“As a girl, under the Taliban, I was not allowed to go to school, let alone outside the front door on my own. In Austria, I learned the alphabet for the first time, and here I can catch up on many things. When I look at my daughter today, who is attending grade 1 of primary school this year, I am happy.

Liah (29), fled from the Taliban with her husband and two children, and uses the courses offered at the LenZ Learning and Family Centre in Vienna.

“I am a member of the Young Care Leaver Network. The aim of this network is to bring the problems of young people to the attention of the authorities who can influence and change them. My dream is to use this network to help solve the problems young Care Leavers face today.

Pavel (20), lives in the Casa Ignatius youth shelter in Chişinău/Moldova.



“I train Taekwondo twice a week. It helps me to get rid of negative feelings. Every time I train, I feel good afterwards.

Natalia (16) Casa CONCORDIA Chişinău/Moldova

The wide range of support services offered by CONCORDIA Social Projects complement each other. Many of the people we support engage in more than one of them. In 2021, CONCORDIA reached a total of 12,906 people with at least one offer of help. In detail, these were 3,011 people in Romania, 7,135 in the Republic of Moldova, 2,070 in Bulgaria, 556 in Austria and 134 in Kosovo.

BULGARIA			RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN	ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES	COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES	EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES
PROJECT NAME	PLACE	SINCE					
Social centre Sveti Konstantin		2008					
Crisis Centre for Children	Sofia	2019	18				
Centre for temporary accommodation Zdravei	Sofia	2008		264			
Transitional housing Ropotamo	Sofia	2014	9				
Family-like home Bozhurishte	Bozhurishte	2015	10				
Supervised housing Timok	Sofia	2009		5			
Day care centre Posoka	Orlandovtzi	2009				42	
CONCORDIA Soccer club	Sofia	2015			95		
Mobile Social Work	Sofia	2015			1402		
Day care centre Zaharna fabrika	Sofia	2017			93		
CONCORDIA Candle workshop	Sofia	2010					13
CONCORDIA Hairdresser's saloon	Sofia	2012					1
CONCORDIA Cottage Day care centre	Malki Iskar	2021				118	
			37	269	1.590	160	14

\* Editorial corrected version of the Bulgarian programme participant list, September 2022



# ROMANIA

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

PROJECT NAME	PLACE	SINCE					
Day care centre Casa Alexandra	Ploiești	2015			48		
Day care centre Casa Cristina	Ploiești	2013			49		
Family-type home Casa Eva	Ploiești	2005	26				
Supervised independent living Casa Hannes	București	2015		6			
Supervised independent living Casa Iuda	București	2009		34			
CONCORDIA Vocational School	Ariceștii Rahtivani	2010				203	
Family-type home Casa Ursula	Ariceștii Rahtivani	2017	6				
Family-type home Casa Caroline	Ariceștii Rahtivani	2018	8				
Family-type home Casa Elisabeth	București/ Ploiești	2019	8				
Job Coaching	București	2013			469		
Supervised independent living Casa Abraham	Ploiești	2009		78			
Supervised independent living Casa Sf. Paul	București	1999		58			
Mobile Social Work	Ploiești	2013			793		
Mobile Social Work	Odobesti	2020			709		
CONCORDIA Bakery	Ploiești	2010					6
CONCORDIA Hostel "Bread & Breakfast"	București	2017					6
Family-type home "The Children's town"	Ploiești	2001	10				
Kindergarten Mimi	Ploiești	2015				53	
CONCORDIA Academia	București	2017					
longterm training						200	
short term webinars/workshops						435	
coaching and supervision						243	
CONCORDIA Primary School	Ploiești	2020				44	
Day care centre Odobesti	Odobesti	2020			47		
CONCORDIA Youth Transit Centre	Ploiești	2021		20			
			<b>58</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>2.115</b>	<b>1.178</b>	<b>12</b>

# REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

PROJECT NAME	PLACE	SINCE					
Social centre Zâmbete Creative	Antonești	2011			212	254	
Family-like home Casa Norocului	Basarabeasca	2015	10				
Family-like home Casa Bunătății	Cahul	2016	10				
Soup canteen Casa Așteptărilor	Carahasani	2013			45	13	
Crisis centre Casa Concordia	Chișinău	2004	21				
Family-type home Casa Atașamentului	Căușeni	2016	19				
Social centre Binecuvântarea	Cazangic	2008			166	178	
Social centre Încredere	Chetrosu	2010			21	65	
Family-type home Casa Viitorului	Chișinău	2015	9				
Temporary placement centre Casa Înțelepciunii	Cimișlia	2019	7				
Family-type home Casa Înțelegerii	Cimișlia	2015	20				
Social centre Renaștere	Ciuciuleni	2008			20	72	
Family-type home Casa Încrederii	Cojușna	2015	10				
Multifunctional centre Solidaritate	Congaz	2010		16	177	234	
Multifunctional centre Baștina	Cosăuți	2016	37		146	340	
Soup canteen Alinare	Coșernița	2010			117	96	
Family-type home Casa Fericirii	Coșnița	2016	8				
Family-type home Casa Curajului	Criuleni	2015	12				
Family-type home Casa Creativității	Criuleni	2015	14				
Family-type home Casa Comunitara	Doroțcaia	2015	17				
Social centre Călăuza	Doroțcaia	2007			117	94	
Family-type home Casa Speranței	Drochia	2015	14				
Family-type home Casa Empatiei	Drochia	2018	11				
Family-type home Casa Egalității	Drochia	2018	12				
Multifunctional centre Eternitate	Dubăsarii Vechi	2008		22	157	179	
Family-type home Casa Daruirii	Durlesti	2015	9				
Social centre Căldura sufletească	Ghetlova	2008			135	105	
Temporary placement centre Casa Susținerii	Holercani	2019	8				
Soup canteen Caritate	Holercani	2015			50	7	
Supervised housing Casa Ignatius	Chișinău	2016	4	31			



# REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION  
PROGRAMMES

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

PROJECT NAME	PLACE	SINCE	RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN	ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES	COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES	EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES
Multifunctional centre Demnitate	Lăpuşna	2010		20	86	38	
Soup canteen Nadejda	Mărculeşti	2010			58		
Soup canteen Înţelegerii	Maximeni	2010			126	7	
Soup canteen Acord	Mîndreşti	2008			41	1	
Social centre Familia	Mingir	2008			44	28	
Soup canteen ProViaţă	Negrea	2008			42		
Multifunctional centre ProDezvoltare	Nisporeni	2016	18		14	123	
Social canteen Casa Nadejda	Pîrîta	2007			35	12	
Multifunctional centre Alternativa	Pleşeni	2009		18	171	221	
Soup canteen Rază de Soare	Rădoaia	2008			42	3	
Soup canteen Vatra	Radulenii Vechi SC	2021			26		
Temporary placement centre Casa Libertatii	Ruseştii Noi	2019	21				
Multifunctional centre Casa Părintească	Sănătăuca	2010		23	85	250	
Soup canteen Din Inimă	Sărata Răzeşi	2018			40		
Social canteen Mângâiere	Satul Nou	2010			48		
Soup canteen Binefacerii	Sofia	2008			76	7	
Family-type home Casa Siguranţei	Şoldăneşti	2015		9			
Social flats Stăuceni	Stăuceni	2015		14			
Multifunctional centre Armonie	Taraclia	2010	26		200	255	
Multifunctional centre Casa Rebeca	Tîrnova	2015		18	124	220	
Multifunctional centre Empatie	Tudora	2008		21	148	239	
Multifunctional centre Izvorul vieţii	Văleni	2008		29	55	37	
Youth club	Chişinău	2017			332		
Emergency aid		2004			527		
			<b>317</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>3.638</b>	<b>3.078</b>	<b>0</b>

# AUSTRIA

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

PROJECT NAME	PLACE	SINCE	RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN	ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES	COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES	EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES
Educational support, Tutoring	Vienna	2016				77	
Parental counselling and education	Vienna	2016				141	
"Women go digital"	Vienna	2020				20	
Language café	Vienna	2017			203		
"Women 4 Women" network	Vienna	2019				25	
Supervised living LenZ Urban	Vienna	2018		9			
Competence and empowerment course for mothers, including childcare	Vienna	2020				83	
			0	9	203	346	0

This project is co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Federal Ministry Republik of Austria for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs.

 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Europe, Integration  
and Foreign Affairs



 Bundeskanzleramt

# KOSOVO

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES

COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES

EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES

PROJECT NAME	PLACE	SINCE	RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR CHILDREN	ADULT CARE PROGRAMMES	COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES	EDUCATION PROGRAMMES	SOCIAL BUSINESS PROGRAMMES
CONCORDIA Transit Centre	Prizren	2021			134		
			0	0	134	0	0



### TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST

CONCORDIA Social Projects not only takes responsibility for children, young people and families in need, but also for the donations entrusted to it.

### AUSTRIAN SEAL OF APPROVAL FOR DONATIONS

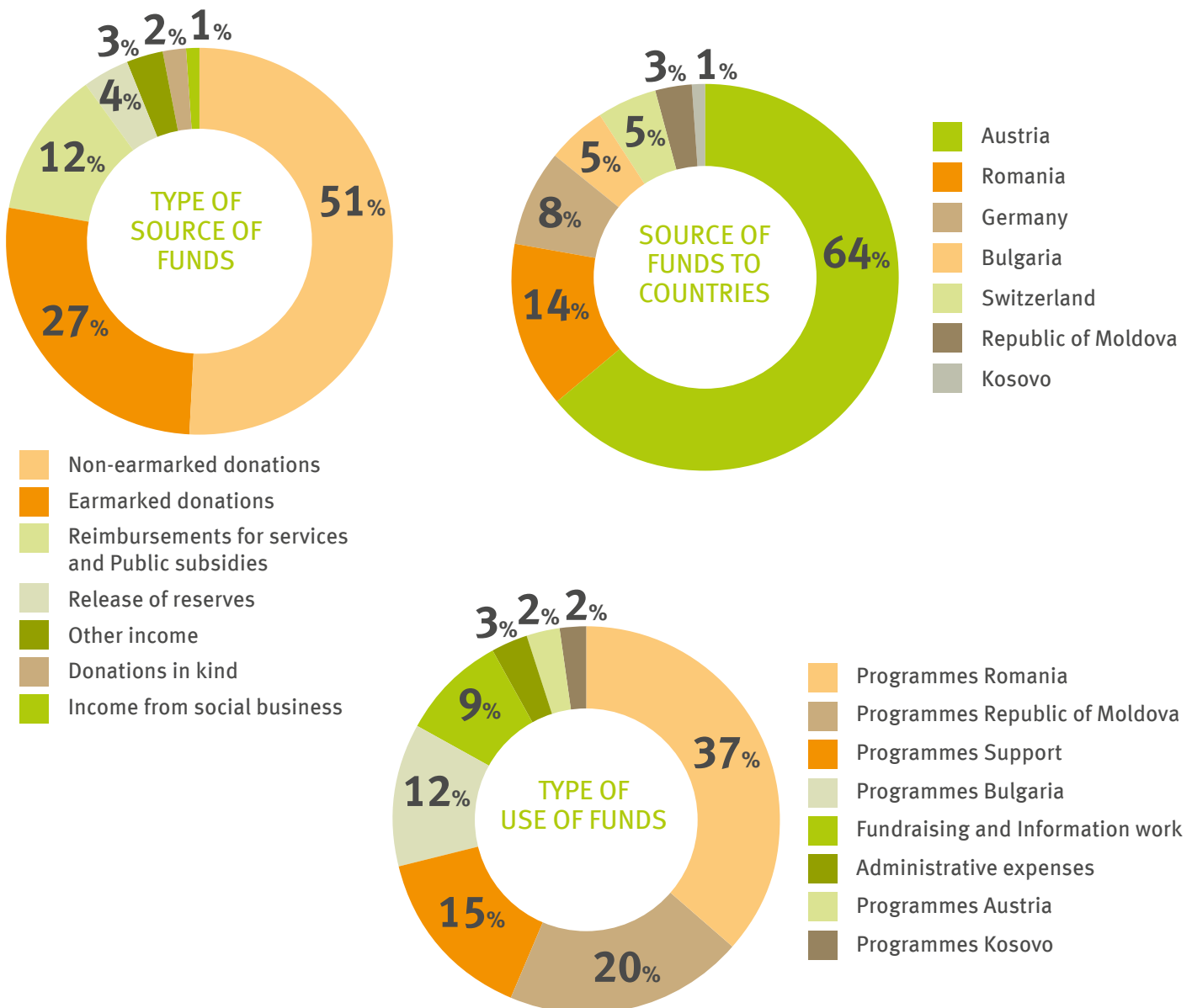
Since 4.12.2014, CONCORDIA Social Projects Charitable Private Foundation has annually been awarded the Austrian Chamber of Chartered Accountants and Tax Advisors with the Austrian Seal of awarded.

### DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Since 2009, donations to CONCORDIA Sozialprojekte Gemeinnützige Privatstiftung have been tax-deductible according to §4a Z3 and 4EStG (registration number SO 1295)

### SOURCE AND APPLICATION OF FUNDS

The following diagrams show the source and application of funds for the current programmes (total volume EUR 11.25 million) of the CONCORDIA social projects in all country organisations (Bulgaria, Germany, Kosovo, Austria, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Switzerland) for the year 2021 in an internally consolidated form. We use part of our reserves for the long-term safeguarding of our programmes through the acquisition of new supporters in order to continue to achieve the greatest possible impact in the future.







## COMPANIES GET INVOLVED

Even in difficult times there is good news: the crisis year 2021 was balanced by the cohesion that resulted. Companies with social responsibility as a core pillar of business have loyally supported us and helped us to realise our mission. In order to plan our ongoing projects and further develop them for the benefit of the children and young people for whom we are responsible, we always seek dialogue with strong partners from the business community. This is because permanent donations enable us to plan better and for the long term. We thank our reliable companions for their trust and their commitment to a fairer world.

For more information, please contact Elke Gelbmann (formerly Mühlbacher) at +43 6763175130 or [elke.gelbmann@concordia.or.at](mailto:elke.gelbmann@concordia.or.at).



### SUPPORTERS HAVE THEIR SAY

We are deeply thankful for entrepreneur Otto Hirsch. He has been associated with CONCORDIA for many years and is one of our most reliable partners. We asked him why he is so supportive of CONCORDIA.

“ I always experience CONCORDIA’s work as goal-oriented for those affected. It is also uncomplicated and effective and supported and accompanied by a high level of professionalism and a great deal of HEART in the implementation.



Otto Hirsch, Executive Director of Hirsch Beteiligungs GmbH

### WE THANK OUR PARTNERS:



### ESPECIALLY OUR LONG-STANDING SPONSORS AND COMPANIONS:





## MUSIC FOR A GOOD CAUSE: THREE GLITTERING CONCERTS IN AID OF CONCORDIA

We are delighted that a number of benefit concerts in aid of CONCORDIA returned last year. Only a few days after the pandemic's restrictions were eased, the EHL Group took the chance to make up for its **benefit concert** that was postponed in 2020. The matinée performance on 26 June 2021, featured music by Scarlatti, Vivaldi and Mozart and was well attended at the Mozartsaal of Vienna's *Konzerthaus*. The beautiful setting undoubtedly contributed to the experience and the skill of the musicians of the *Cammerata Academica Wien* orchestra (under the baton of Christian Birnbaum) captivated the audience.

“Our benefit concert is an absolute highlight of this year for me. Continuous social commitment is a matter of great personal concern to me and gives me great pleasure. I would like to thank our numerous friends and partners from the real estate industry who support our initiative so generously, so that we were able to hand over a considerable sum to a great social institution again this year.” Michael Ehlmaier, Managing Director EHL Immobilien  
Our “in-house” **CONCORDIA Matinée** had to go digital once again on 12 December 2021. And yet it was a fitting 30th anniversary benefit, thanks to the opening video message by Federal President Alexander Van der Bellen, the great support of the ORF

Radio House and the performance by the ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra Vienna, the soloists Lena Fankhauser, Maria Radutu and Rusanda Panfili, the conductor and artistic director Martin Gellner, the readings and texts by Mercedes Echerer and the Advent blessing by Prelate Maximilian Fürnsinn. The livestream event was subtitled in Romanian and was our first transnational benefit event. Last but not least, we would like to thank our sponsors and donors who made the matinée such a success.

You can listen to it at: <https://www.concordia.or.at/en/support/concordia-benefit-matinee/>

On Palm Sunday 2022, the **Tiroler Festspiele Erl** will support CONCORDIA social projects for the fifth time with a benefit matinée. The audience in the well-attended hall enjoyed the musical composition “B Minor Mass” by Bach, played by the orchestra of the Tiroler Festspiele Erl and sung by the choir *Ad Libitum*. Giedrė Šlekytė conducted and Hans Peter Haselsteiner opened the matinée with a touching speech. Father Markus Inama blessed palm bunches, which were then distributed to the guests.

“The word **CONCORDIA** means peaceful cohesion. (...) We need peaceful cohesion. We in our families, in Austria, in Europe, and everywhere in the world, we have to stick together.

Alexander Van der Bellen,  
Federal President of Austria





## THANK YOU! MULȚUMESC! БЛАГОДАРЯ! FALEMINDERIT!

Monetary donations secure our activities. A large number of donations in kind and services help us to keep our expenses low. Many thanks for your important contribution.

### WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR PROGRAMMES:

ADA Austrian Development Agency	MA27 der Stadt Wien
AGRANA Beteiligungs-AG	Marie Eberth Stiftung
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