

# ECM NEWS

..... WINTER 2025 .....

**EQUIPPING ACROSS EUROPE P4**  
**FOCUS ON THE CZECH REPUBLIC P8**  
**DONIKA HOTI PROJECT P10**

## EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION

Europe needs Jesus, now more than ever. A hundred years ago 70% of the world's Christians lived in Europe but it now has the **smallest number of committed Christ followers in the world.**

European Christian Mission's vision is to see the peoples of **Europe transformed in the name of Jesus Christ.** Our workers partner with local believers to **Equip, Connect and Multiply** followers of Jesus through disciple making and church planting across Europe.

Can you partner with us?  
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### New Zealand

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## .... GETTING TO KNOW ....

### AN ECM CANDIDATE



**Andrew Jones, candidate for the Czech Republic**

#### What has been your previous experience with mission work?

Apart from a decade of pastoring churches, I have been a missionary for most of my adult life, including two years on a mission ship called M.V. Logos and about 10 years as an itinerant missionary in a motorhome with my wife and five kids. Our 4x4 motorhome took our family through 35 countries from Africa to Asia. Much of my work has been enabling young people to start new organic churches and ministries in their local context and more recently, in a digital world.

#### How did you first sense God calling you to overseas mission?

I have always sensed a call to overseas mission. At the age of 11 my Sunday School teacher took us to NZ Bible College (now Laidlaw) to watch a mission film called 'Peace Child'. Even the cannibal scene did not put me off the calling to missions. Years later, missionary statesman J. Oswald Sanders visited our Bible College and told us that most Christians were willing to go, but preparing to stay. He suggested that we be willing to stay but preparing to go. I suppose I am still going.

#### What led you to choose ECM?

After a break from overseas missions, to allow my body to heal from malaria, I asked my closest friends and confidants which mission I should choose to return to Europe with. ECM was the most popular answer.

#### What are your hopes or plans for the future?

I hope to return to Prague, where our family lived for four years and planted some seeds. That was 20 years ago but there are some ministries in Prague and around Europe that I feel a part of and opportunities to start some new ones. What is different this time is that I will be returning alone. My wife passed away from that same malaria I had, and all my kids have moved out. However, there is a wonderful missional community awaiting me in Prague. They even built me a tiny house to live in when I return. I am excited. And I hope you will pray for me.

## A REFLECTION FROM THE DIRECTOR

**And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near (Hebrews 10:25 NLT).**

Every two years nearly all of ECM's personnel gather for their 'Biennial Conference'. This year, the biennial was held near the 'Plastic Sea' (hectares of greenhouses that can be seen from space) in Roquetas de Mar in the south of Spain. 535 people came from more than 40 different nations for a week of worship, prayer, teaching, seminars, food and fun.

Teams of people, from more than ten different countries, ran four different programmes for the 142 youth, children and babies (mission kids). A team from the UK led the worship, and a team from Ireland came to serve through prayer ministry, supporting those working in the field. Another team of professionals was available for anyone who needed to have a chat with a counsellor or psychologist.

The biennial was amazing! There is something quite remarkable and unique about being in the midst of over 500 like-minded people, either serving in the field, or supporting those field workers in a whole variety of ways.

*Now may the God of peace .... equip you with all you need for doing his will. (Heb 13:20-21 NLT).*

Alongside the excellent morning worship and teaching, on the theme of 'In God's Garden' (over the 6 days it touched on the Garden of Eden, the parable of the sower, Gethsemane, Mary thinking Jesus was a gardener, Paul planting, Apollos watering but God gives the growth, and lastly the new creation), we also watched video reports from a range of ECM's ministries. The reports were inspiring and challenging (many of these will be featured in our E-Connect over the coming months). In the afternoons, people had the opportunity to attend seminars covering a wide range of topics designed to help and support ECM's personnel working across Europe.

In this magazine you can read four ministry reports from our Australian and New Zealand ECM workers, including one from Alex and Liz (Kiwis serving in Romania). These reports focus on ECM's mission to 'EQUIP' followers of Jesus through discipleship and church planting. In our next editions we will highlight ministry reports on the themes of 'connect' and 'multiply'.

In this edition we also introduce ECM NZ's newest candidate. Andrew Jones has served as a missionary, mostly in Europe, for more than 40 years, and comes to us with a wealth of experience and interests. You can read about Andrew on pages 2 and 14.



**Féy Cotter**  
**NZ National Director**

**Interested in playing your part in the mission to Europe?**  
**Head to [ecmnewzealand.org/contact-us](http://ecmnewzealand.org/contact-us)**

# EQUIPPING ACROSS EUROPE

We asked some of our workers to share how they are equipping those around them.

## Adi & Jennifer Romania



### Australians Equipping Children's Ministry Workers

My husband Adi and I serve in Timisoara, Romania and while Romania is considered a very religious nation, with over 90% of the population of 20 million classifying themselves as Christian, to many this may mean little more than a cultural identity rather than an active relationship with the living Jesus Christ.

From our personal experience over many years, we saw that while Christians were keen to have children as a part of their church, many lacked the training and resources needed to effectively reach children in their communities with the gospel. We also saw that in many places children were only taught a moral gospel of being 'good boys and girls'. We were struck with the need to encourage and equip local Christians to teach children the true gospel of grace, how to

become followers of the Lord Jesus and to grow in their faith.

It is our aim to encourage and equip local Christians to share the gospel of Jesus with the children of Romania, so that all children through every part of Romania get to hear and respond to Jesus.

While we are based in the city of Timisoara, through our partnership with AMEC (Child Evangelism Fellowship) our ministry extends to other parts of Romania, even to Romanians living throughout Europe via online training. Most recently we were encouraged to be able to assist in three local AMEC conferences, over three Saturdays in three different counties. The theme was 'Beyond Words', challenging and equipping children's workers to find ways to teach Biblical truths in engaging and interactive ways.

Our prayer is that those who attended were encouraged and equipped to use new and creative methods to teach the Scriptures to the children in their churches and communities.

## Samuel & Emily Portugal



### Australians Equipping University Students with God's Word

The University Bible Group (GBU) with which we work in Portugal, catches people in a very formative stage of their lives. For those who are not followers of Jesus, it is a time where they are often open to exploring faith as an adult, and for those who are followers of Jesus, it is a time where they are able to be matured in their Christian faith and witness as they receive Bible teaching and training through GBU activities.

One of these key GBU activities is weekly Bible study groups in faculty groups. In Coimbra, the city in which we work, several leaders of the GBU Bible studies expressed a lack of confidence in how to lead it, and how to read the Bible with others. In response to this, last year, we ran a Bible study leaders training course

over 5 x 2 hour sessions during the semester aimed at equipping students with tools to be able to read the Bible well, and be able to lead others in it.

Some key focuses of the training included helping students understand the historical and literary context of a Bible passage, how a Bible passage fits within God's big story of salvation centred around Jesus, and how to make Bible studies welcoming and inviting to non-Christians. These were new concepts to many of the students.

The take up of the training was more than we had anticipated, with 15 students (half of the GBU Coimbra group) taking part, most attending with eagerness to learn and apply what they had been learning.

These are now 15 students who are now better equipped to handle God's word and love those they lead, not only in the context of GBU Bible studies, but more significantly, in their respective churches across Portugal and beyond, now and for their lifetime.



Samuel teaching one of the Bible study leaders training sessions.  
Photo by Emily, Portugal (ECM Australia)

## Alex & Liz Romania



### Kiwis Equipping For Abundant Life

Liz and Alex Preotesea-Wagner have a God-given vision of seeing the young people of their town transformed by God. They plan to reach young people through a social enterprise using woodwork and other creative opportunities, broadening their horizons, fostering creativity, and teaching the reward of hard work!

None of us can disagree that our God is a God of transformed lives.

He is the healer, the one who brings hope in the darkest of places. As Jesus said, 'I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.' (John 10:10).

In the small town of Cernavoda, Romania, a generation of young people are growing up with narrow horizons and little hope. For many young people, home is not a happy place. They struggle through school - if they attend at all - and have few trusted adults in their lives. Options for free-time activities are scarce, and future opportunities are limited. Human trafficking is a significant challenge in the area, and teenage boys and girls are at risk of involvement in this deceptively alluring activity.

God has given us a vision to play a role in equipping the young people of Cernavoda for a better life. We want to see them experience the joy of expressing themselves creatively. To know the pride of crafting something beautiful with their own hands. To train them with skills for honest work to prepare them for their future.

We also want this social enterprise to offer young people a safe place with trustworthy people. We want it to be a place they can see the witness of Jesus' followers, and

where discipleship can begin. And, through God's grace, for their lives to be transformed, for them to know the abundant life that Jesus promises.

Only God can bring this project to life. Only he can bring the hope that is so desperately needed in this town, and if transformation is to be seen, it is only through the Holy Spirit at work.



Learning to use a lathe  
Photo by Alex & Liz, Romania (ECM New Zealand)

These young people are the present and future of Cernavoda, and they are the present and future of the local church. Pray with us for God's work in their lives, His revelation of each next step in this project, and his light to be shone into the darkness.

## Georg & Sandra Austria



### Austrians Equipping Their Church Community

Every summer (July in Austria) we run kids camps which is a big highlight of the year. Our main goal is to share God's love with the kids in a variety of ways. But it's not just about the kids who come along to camp. It's a great way to equip believers to lead others closer to Jesus.



The Camp Team  
Photo by Georg, Austria (ECM Australia)

Prior to camp, we sit down with each leader to look over our goals and vision. This sets and clarifies expectations and gives me (Georg) the chance to talk with them about their faith journey which gives me an insight into where they are currently at spiritually.

We also hold planning and training sessions to get ready for the programme. We use this time to ensure that the leaders are well equipped for the task of leading. We remind the team of the vision and the primary goal of sharing the hope of Christ Jesus. We aim to use this time to create unity within the team and create a sense of togetherness in God's mission.

During camp, it takes a whole team to execute the planned program. There are whole group teaching times, small groups and activities which include craft and games. Camp is such a unique environment of intense focus on running a program where kids and leaders



The Camp Team  
Photo by Georg, Austria (ECM Australia)

spend a lot of time together. We see leaders grow personally and spiritually as they rise to the challenges of running such a camp. These challenges include possible extreme weather conditions, tiredness amongst both leaders and kids towards the second half of camp, pressure on team relationships and managing a range of camper behaviours.

Once camp is over and everyone has recovered, the leadership team comes back together two months later in September to reflect and debrief. Over these two days, we celebrate and reflect as we give thanks to God for what he has accomplished in and through the team. We count it a privilege to be equipping our fellow Austrians to share the hope of Christ Jesus.



## AS YOU PRAY

- Give thanks for the opportunities God is providing for the ongoing equipping of the church.
- Pray for wisdom and grace as workers in the field seek to come alongside others for the sake of the Gospel.

# Pray for

# THE CZECH REPUBLIC



**The Czech Republic, a nation nestled in the heart of Europe, boasts a rich and complex history, and its religious landscape is no exception.** While often perceived as one of the most secular nations in the world today, the Czech lands have a deep, albeit often turbulent, Christian heritage, significantly shaped by figures like Jan Hus, the Moravian Brethren, and the powerful forces of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. The story of Christianity in the Czech Republic is a complex tapestry of faith, persecution, reform, and revival. However, the forces of Counter-Reformation, and Communism have left a deep imprint, resulting in a largely secular society today.



## PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that the hearts of Czech people, many of whom are irreligious or skeptical, would be softened and receptive to the gospel. Pray for a breaking down of barriers such as cynicism, historical baggage, and secularism.
- Pray for a revival and revitalisation of existing Christian communities. Pray for passion, boldness, and unity among believers.



## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- The most significant opportunity is the vast number of irreligious individuals who have yet to hear of the hope of Jesus Christ.



POPULATION  
**10.9M**



300 births  
per day



320 deaths  
per day



90 migrations  
per day

64% of the Czech Republic's population is Czech, followed by Moravians (5%), Slovaks (1.4%), Poles (0.4%) and Germans (0.2%).

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Having been inhabited and conquered by many groups over its long history, key points in time include the Kingdom of Bohemia, Habsburg rule, and Czechoslovak independence in 1918. German occupation, communist rule, the Velvet Revolution in 1989, and the 1993 peaceful split from Slovakia have significantly shaped modern Czechia.

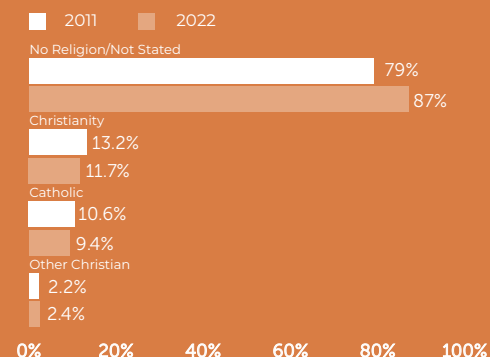
## UNREACHED PEOPLE

109,005 (1%)

'Unreached' people have no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate resources to evangelise their people group.

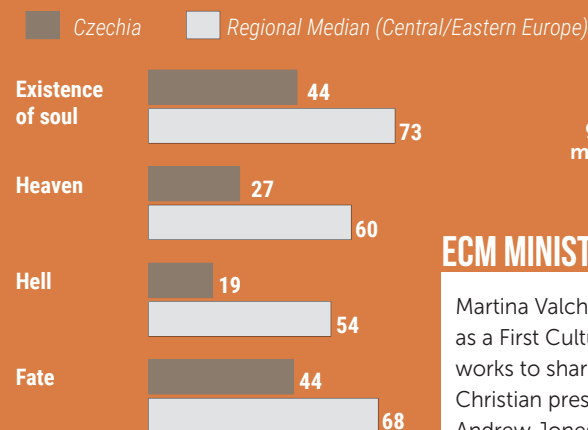


## RELIGION



## BELIEFS IN CZECHIA

% of people say they believe in



Sources: [ecmi.org](https://ecmi.org), [joshuaproject.net](https://joshuaproject.net), [pewresearch.org](https://pewresearch.org), [worldpopulationreview.com](https://worldpopulationreview.com), [cia.gov](https://cia.gov), [operationworld.org](https://operationworld.org), [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion\\_in\\_the\\_Czech\\_Republic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_the_Czech_Republic)

## CHURCHES



Historically, tensions have existed between Catholics and Czech Protestants during and after the Reformation. Today, relations are generally peaceful and cooperative, with ecumenical dialogue. 'Co-operation' and 'dialogue' are more accurate descriptions than perhaps 'unity' in the fullest sense of the word.

## ECM MINISTRY

Martina Valchářová (above) serves in the Czech Republic as a First Culture Worker, focusing on evangelism. She works to share the gospel primarily in areas with a limited Christian presence, reflecting ECM's broader mission. Andrew Jones from New Zealand (above) has just been accepted as a candidate, and will be based in Prague.

TO FIND OUT MORE HEAD TO [ECMNEWZEALAND.ORG/CZECH-REPUBLIC](https://ecmnewzealand.org/czech-republic)



# EQUIPPING THE NEXT GENERATION



**'It's my desire to come back from studying theology equipped to do gospel work here.'**

Meet Donika Hoti.

For the past three years she has been discipling students with the Student Life Team at Torchbearers Bible School in Albania. Donika is involved in translation and teaching and hopes to be involved in Biblical counseling amongst her own people. Donika has recently been accepted by Sydney Missionary & Bible College (SMBC) to study for a Bachelor of Theology for the next 3 years (2025–2027) on a scholarship.

We are seeking to raise \$15,000 per year in 2025–2027, to help cover Donika's living expenses while she studies.



**This is a wonderful opportunity to be directly involved in training and resourcing the next generation of Christ followers in Kosova!**

*Scan me to watch a video of Donika or to give to this project*



To partner with Donika or to find out more, head to [ecmnewzealand.org/donika-training](https://ecmnewzealand.org/donika-training)

**'It is my desire to serve among my own people, considering the lack of gospel workers among the Albanian people'**

Donika Hoti

# MISSION OPS



**DO YOU SEEK TO SERVE THE GOSPEL NEEDS OF EUROPE?**



## SERVE IN YOUNG CHURCH PLANTS FRANCE | LONG TERM

We're looking for people to help in the development of relatively young church plants in Romorantin, Chinon Saintes and Montreuil Belay. This region of central France has very few Bible believing churches and you will be involved in equipping these churches towards greater maturity. Qualities such as a pastoral heart, good organisational skills, sufficient theological training, experience in church leadership and an ability to speak French or a willingness to learn are vital.

[ecmnewzealand.org/serve-in-young-church-plants](https://ecmnewzealand.org/serve-in-young-church-plants)



## CLUSTER LEADER GERMANY | LONG TERM

ECM has been involved in church planting and other Christian ministries in Europe for over 120 years. Our vision is to see the peoples of Europe transformed in the name of Jesus Christ. We are looking for a Cluster Leader for one of our clusters in Germany to oversee the ministries and workers there. Residence in the country and command of the language is desirable but not essential. This is a self-funded role.

[ecmnewzealand.org/cluster-leader-for-germany](https://ecmnewzealand.org/cluster-leader-for-germany)



## MUSIC MINISTER TO SERVE IN ANDALUSIA SPAIN | LONG TERM

We are looking for a Music Minister (missionary) to work in the Subbética Cordobesa in Andalusia, Spain to lead and develop the congregation's worship ministry and to develop and lead evangelistic events and projects through music in the surrounding towns. The vision of the team is compassion for the lost and making and multiplying disciples of Christ through the cell groups.

[ecmnewzealand.org/music-ministry-in-spain](https://ecmnewzealand.org/music-ministry-in-spain)

To find out more about any of these opportunities, please email us at [serve@ecmnewzealand.org](mailto:serve@ecmnewzealand.org)



### ROSS & SHONA MCGAUGHNAN AUSTRIA

After a long and winding path, we finally have our visas! Praise the LORD!!! We have completed the second level of our German language classes and are feeling much more settled. E (3) has been enjoying her playgroup, and K (2) is excited to join hers after our summer break. We are feeling more confident in conversations with people at church and feel like we are being woven into the community there. God has been blessing us with Gospel opportunities as well as continuing to connect us with people, primarily in our language classes.

#### Please pray:

- **Pray for these people, especially for one who invited others to church immediately after her first visit. Pray for God to call these people to himself through our sharing of the gospel in word and deed.**
- **Pray that God would continue to strengthen our German as we slow down formal classes and 'water in' our language until the new school year in August.**



### ANNA TOVEY CANDIDATE FOR ROMANIA

Unfortunately, I was not able to leave for Romania in early April as hoped, so will need to continue to work and 'do life' here in NZ for a while longer, while I continue to raise support to move to Romania when the timing is right. Meanwhile God continues to do a deep work in my life, challenging and strengthening me – though sometimes it is not easy.

#### Please pray:

- **Pray for wisdom to walk humbly with the Lord as he continues to work in my life preparing me as I seek to follow his calling.**
- **Pray for new opportunities to share my vision for serving in the Juvenile Detention Centre in Romania.**



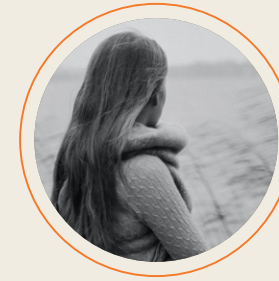
### ALEX AND LIZ PREOTESEA-WAGNER ROMANIA

Luca (4) has started preschool and Caleb (8) is attending sports and computing classes. These help their confidence in Romanian. Partnership development, to enable us to remain in full-time ministry here, is a priority.

While working on our social enterprise plans, we are serving in our local church (Betel). Growing relationships, and working with the children and youth (which has grown) is a blessing, and helps us connect with the community and gives opportunities to share the gospel. We pray that God will use this ministry and the future social enterprise to bring transformation in people's lives. Thank you for praying!

#### Please pray:

- **Translating at the English Family outreach camp in late June. Pray for good collaboration and for people to hear and receive the Gospel message.**
- **Day Camps and activities at the Foundation and Betel.**
- **That the Betel Youth's enthusiasm to attend groups and church will grow as we invest in them.**
- **For connections with partners who share the vision to see young people transformed in Cernavoda.**



### CAREN CANDIDATE

Thank you all so much for praying for Féy and I during our vision trip. I know the Lord confirmed for me again my call to missions during this time.

As of yet, I have no clear direction of a place, and I have a real sense of God asking me to wait on him to show the place. I have every confidence that he will.

For now, I am focusing on being present and faithful with the task at hand in Australia: that is finishing my GP/Rural Generalist training. As part of Rural Generalist training, we must also acquire an extra skill. As I did anaesthetics in Germany, I am applying for jobs in this area. It is very competitive.

#### Please pray:

- **Please pray for me as I start tackling exams in June.**
- **Pray that God will show me clearly where to serve.**



As I gear up to return to Europe with ECM, I have a number of questions in my mind.

It was 20 years ago when our family left Prague, but it was a wonderful four years where there seemed to be a wave of creativity with the launching of new church movements across Europe and invitations to speak into these groups. Fresh Expressions were just getting underway. The alternative worship movement was bringing interactive worship off the stage and into the pews to be curated rather than conducted. 24/7 Prayer had a single prayer room in Chichester, and now they have thousands.

The church we started in a hard-core music club in downtown Prague, which we called 'Bohemian Rapture', had to create meaningful services through art. The Christian leaders' network gathering we hosted in Prague began with a go-kart race on the track we rented for the evening. The winner was Mark Pierson from Citsyde Baptist Church, whose

## 'Prague was the spiritual centre of Europe in the 1500s. Could it become so again?'

father used to own a go-kart track in Auckland.

As I return to Europe, I wonder if there is a fresh wind again. I have heard rumours of large gatherings across Europe among Gen Z and Gen Alpha who are genuinely seeking God. What kinds of churches will they start? How will their culture of video games and social media affect the forms of those ministries? How will the new Christian residents from Ukraine impact the wider church in countries like the Czech Republic? And is there a place for someone who has just entered their 60s to speak once again?

Another question that has sat with me for a few decades is from the late president of the Czech Republic, Václav Havel, who once stated that Prague was the spiritual centre of Europe in the 1500s and asked, 'Could it become so again?'



**ANDREW JONES**  
CANDIDATE FOR THE  
CZECH REPUBLIC

## QUICK SNIPPETS

### ■ INTRODUCING DANETTE

Kia ora! I'm Danette, and I've recently joined the ECM NZ team, supporting with admin and social media. Before this, I spent four years working in a Christian school—an experience that deepened my passion for Christ-centred education. I've always felt that this is something God placed on my heart, and I'm grateful for the ways he continues to lead and shape that calling.



I'm also in my final semester of a Diploma in Digital Marketing. This season of study has been both challenging and exciting, and I can already see how God has been using it to equip me for the work I now get to be part of with ECM.

The theme of Equip has reminded me that God doesn't just send us—He prepares us. Sometimes that equipping happens through formal study, sometimes through experience, and often through the quiet seasons in between. What excites me most about being part of ECM is its heart to see lives transformed through the gospel across Europe. It's a privilege to support a mission that equips others to share Christ's love, hope, and truth in the places they're called to.

'Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.' – Hebrews 13:20–21

Ngā mihi nui,

Danette



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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT

# ecm

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Christ's mission  
in Europe!



→ Tuesday 17th June  
6PM NZST  
[ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-slovenia](http://ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-slovenia)



→ Tuesday 15th July  
6PM NZST  
[ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-portugal](http://ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-portugal)



→ Tuesday 19th August  
6PM NZST  
[ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-austria-italy](http://ecmnewzealand.org/pray-for-austria-italy)

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