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# ECM LIFE

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION IRELAND  
NEWSLETTER



A CONTINENT  
SEARCHING FOR  
**HOPE**

 **ecm**  
European Christian Mission

# ECM IRELAND

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN MISSION IRELAND  
IS AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL,  
EVANGELICAL, MISSIONARY ORGANISATION  
WORKING IN EUROPE.

ECM'S MISSION IS TO



EQUIP,  
CONNECT  
AND MULTIPLY  
FOLLOWERS OF  
JESUS



THROUGH  
DISCIPLESHIP  
AND



CHURCH  
PLANTING  
ACROSS  
EUROPE

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# EDITORIAL

BY GEOFF DONALDSON / DIRECTOR / ECM IRELAND



## Europe is a continent searching for hope.

**You can see it in many ways: in cultures that once carried a vibrant Christian faith but now struggle to remember it, in generations growing up with little understanding of the gospel, and in communities asking questions about meaning, identity and purpose.**

And yet, even in the places that seem most distant from faith, God is at work. His power is changing hearts, forming communities, and raising up a new generation to carry His hope across the continent. That is the hope we hold — because God holds Europe in His hands.

At ECMI, we believe every generation in Europe deserves the chance to hear the gospel.

You may know us as ECM through a national office, but behind those familiar names stands European Christian Mission International — one mission, united across borders by a shared calling: to see lives and communities transformed in the name of Jesus Christ.

Today, more than 250 ECMI workers serve in 25 countries. They are planting

churches, making disciples, and demonstrating God's love in practical, life-changing ways — bringing the hope of Christ where it is rarely experienced.

This magazine is a window into that work. Inside, you will meet the people, places, and ministries that show God's power at work across Europe. You will see stories of courage, faith, partnership, and transformation — and discover how God is using ordinary people to write an extraordinary story.

Our prayer is that as you read, you will not only discover more about ECMI — but also sense the invitation to be part of what God is doing across Europe today. Together we can join Him in bringing hope to a continent longing for it.

**Europe is searching — and God is answering.**



# A CONTINENT SEARCHING FOR HOPE

Across Europe, many people are searching for meaning, identity, and hope. Behind the statistics are real lives. Meet Sander.

## **Sander had been searching for years.**

Growing up in the north of the Netherlands, he had drifted through different ideas and beliefs, trying to find something solid. By his early twenties he was exploring Islam, drinking heavily, and struggling to make sense of life. He found himself asking the deeper questions of life: Who am I? Who do I want to be? Is there something more? Surely there had to be more between heaven and earth. Yet nothing seemed to answer the longing inside.

His search took him in many directions. Online videos introduced him to other religions. The sense of community and belonging he saw there appealed to him. Yet the emptiness inside remained.

Then his younger brother Peter came to faith in Jesus through conversations with

ECMI worker Kees, and invited him to his baptism service. Sander almost didn't go. The night before, he had been out drinking heavily. But he went anyway.

As he listened to his brother speak about faith, something shifted inside him.

***"I realised," Sander says, "that the gospel was good news for me too."***

That day Sander put his trust in Christ. In time he was baptised himself and became part of a local church community. At first, everything felt unfamiliar — the songs, the prayers, and the rhythms of church life were new to him, but step by step he began to find his place, learning alongside others and discovering what it meant to follow Jesus. Today he is studying at Bible school, growing in his relationship with God and taking steps to build his life on a new foundation.

*“I realised that the gospel was good news for me too.”*

**One Life. A Reflection of a Continent**

Across Europe, millions are searching for meaning, identity, and hope. Many have never heard the gospel explained clearly or experienced Christian faith lived out in a genuine community.

Yet God continues to draw people to Himself.

And when believers are present — listening, building friendships, and sharing the message of Jesus — lives are changed. Stories like Sander’s are not the exception. They are a reminder of why the gospel is still needed across Europe, and the reason why ECMI exists: to see lives transformed through the good news of Jesus.



**Europe Today**



**500+ MILLION**  
people live in Europe



**1-3%**  
evangelical believers in much of Western and Southern Europe



**MILLIONS**  
have never heard the gospel clearly



**5%**  
identify as Muslims



**1,500+ CHURCHES**  
have closed in the Netherlands alone since the 1970s



**40-50%**  
of marriages in many European countries end in divorce



**84 MILLION PEOPLE**  
live with a mental health condition



**OVER 100,000**  
die by suicide each year

**Across Europe, the search continues — and the gospel remains good news.**



# LIVES TRANSFORMED

Across Europe, lives are searching for hope. ECMI steps into that reality, caring for people, not numbers; listening to stories, not statistics.

Discipleship lies at the heart of everything we do — investing in people so they can grow in faith, lead others, and see transformation ripple through their communities. Our work flows through cross-cultural workers sent from abroad and first-culture workers serving in their own countries. Together, ECMI brings over 250 workers from 31 nationalities into a shared mission centred on Christ, led by the Spirit, and glorifying our Father.

In this section, five stories open a window into the real people and communities ECMI serves — the mosaic of hope God is bringing across Europe. Together, they show the beauty of what it means to see the peoples of Europe transformed in the name of Jesus Christ.

## The Sun Shines for Irene

Irene grew up in Catholic Seville, Spain, and was raised as such. However, like many in Europe, she became disillusioned with religion. New Age spirituality attracted her, and seemed a response to her search, but it did not fill the emptiness she felt.

*“In my worst moments, I didn’t even want to live anymore. I was coming out*

*of a painful divorce and had sunk into depression,”* shares Irene. In her anguish, she began looking for Jesus. An online search connected her with an ECMI couple in Seville.

*“We have a heart for discipleship, which is a high priority at ECMI”* say ECMI workers Henk and Hanneke. With a gift for hospitality, their doors were open for all,

*“The sun has finally begun to shine in my life again.”*

and through long, regular conversations around their table, Irene came to faith in Christ. She was baptised in the ECMI workers' garden pool, surrounded by her family and friends — a joyful celebration!

At first, her family was very suspicious of her decision. Now they see in her a deep peace she had never known before.

*“The change had to happen by placing my life in the hands of Jesus”, says Irene. “The sun has finally begun to shine in my life again.”*

**Her journey continues as she meets biweekly with Hanneke, discovering more of what it means to follow Jesus.**



### **A Life Saved**

When Jeroen and Marieke responded to God's call to go as ECMI missionaries to Romania, they did not imagine the impact their obedience would have. The ministries they started, the church they planted, the many they would help. For one man, Mr. Dumitru, it meant saving his life.

Mr. Dumitru was one of the regulars who first started attending their soup kitchen. Some time later, they were able to build him a small house in the woods, where he could live. Things were going well. However, last year, his health started to deteriorate rapidly, becoming increasingly weak and even losing consciousness.

The hospital refused to treat him, but the ECMI workers determined not to give up. They contacted other doctors, got him referrals, and advocated for him until, after much work and prayer, he was admitted. The next day, he underwent surgery for prostate cancer and received six bags of blood transfusions in the days that followed. The surgery saved his life.

After leaving the hospital, Dumitru stayed with an elderly woman to help him recover. When Jeroen and Marieke visited, what followed was unexpected: a moment of gratitude, conversation, and prayer together.

**Transformation is sometimes dramatic, sometimes quiet — but it always requires faithful workers willing to be present and serve others sacrificially.**

*“Transformation requires faithful workers willing to serve sacrificially.”*

## Hope for the Overlooked

Since 2016, ECMI worker Luciana has served the Roma community of Ano Liosia, on the outskirts of Athens. Families often live in hardship, children struggle at school, and the community feels overlooked.

Seeing this need, Luciana and her team created the Petalouda Centre — a place to offer them more than education: a consistent presence, care, and hope. Early resistance from neighbours gradually gave way to trust. One afternoon, after a season of prayer, a neighbour brought bags of fruit for the children. As they thanked him and asked forgiveness for taking some earlier, reconciliation and understanding blossomed — a quiet, but powerful moment of change.

Nearly 400 Roma children now attend local schools with support from the centre, gaining literacy, confidence, and hope. Mothers join women's groups to share struggles and celebrate victories.



Neighbours who once mistrusted the ministry have become friends.

Petalouda — Greek for “butterfly” — is a fitting symbol. Transformation here is gradual: a child learning to read, a mother finding her voice, a community discovering hope.

**Through the faithful presence of ministries like this across Europe, the love of Christ continues to ripple outward, transforming lives — one at a time.**

## A New Path

*A story by an ECMI worker in the UK*

I first met Fatima\* just over a year ago. A refugee from the Middle East in the UK, she had already endured trafficking, forced marriage, and domestic violence in her young 21 years. Having courageously left her abusive marriage with her baby, Fatima longed for friendship and support as she learned to parent in a new culture.

Given her past, she rejected all religion and quickly shut down any conversation about

God. Nevertheless, I continued meeting her regularly, offering practical support on parenting, education, and employment. Several months later, she allowed me to pray for her before a job interview — which she successfully passed. Weeks later, she phoned with something unexpected: she wanted to become a Christian. Waiting for a bus in the city centre, she wandered into a nearby church and experienced an overwhelming sense of God's peace and love.

Though initially resistant to the gospel, God had been at work through our friendship, preparing her heart so she had a Christian friend to turn to when she was ready. Fatima now attends a fellowship for Muslim-background believers and passionately follows Jesus, even amid harassment and intimidation. Pray for ECMI workers ministering to Muslims in Europe, that many more lives will be changed by Jesus.

*“God had been at work through our friendship, preparing her heart for Jesus.”*



### Faith from the Ruins

When the war reached Irpin, Ukraine, daily life collapsed almost overnight. Families fled, homes were destroyed, and those who remained struggled to find food, medicine, and support.

Through a fundraising campaign, ECMI helped local partners respond quickly to the need. Thanks to the generosity of donors across the world, volunteer centres were set up to walk alongside those in crisis, offering both practical and spiritual support.

As people received aid, hearts began to open. Many asked questions about God, some chose to follow Jesus, and daily services started in the volunteer centres. The seeds planted in those moments grew into three new church communities, led by local couples trained and supported by ECMI.

*“Even amid war, God’s work continues – lives changed, churches planted, hope restored.”*



Anatolii and Olena, Andrii and Luda, and Illia and Iryna now pastor these new churches, bringing hope, discipleship, and outreach to children, students, veterans, and displaced families.

**Through ECMI’s presence, the community has witnessed transformation in the midst of hardship. Even amid war, God’s work continues – lives changed, churches planted, and hope restored.**

# ECMI ACROSS EUROPE

## WHERE WE WORK TODAY

**SWEDEN:** Among the most secular societies in the world, Swedish are interested in discussing meaning, purpose, identity, and mental health.



**UNITED KINGDOM:** Thousands exploring faith through Alpha and small groups, as openness to spiritual conversations rises.



**GERMANY:** Migrant and international congregations grow in major cities. The world church coming together!



**IRELAND:** Evangelised by St. Patrick in the 5th century, it now needs a new spiritual awakening.



**NETHERLANDS:** Growing interest in spirituality creates a fertile field for small discussion groups and missional communities.



**ITALY:** Did you know Italy has Europe's oldest average population? Loneliness and isolation rise among the elderly, providing challenges and opportunities.



**FRANCE:** More churches than McDonald's... mostly empty.



**SPAIN:** Suicide is the leading cause of non-natural death, and mental health struggles rise among young adults; they need Jesus!



**PORTUGAL:** Strong family culture makes personal evangelism and hospitality natural.



**SLOVENIA:** For nature lovers: did you know over half of Slovenia is covered in forests? Perfect for a prayer walk!



**MALTA:** Traditionally said to have 365 churches — one for every day of the year, Catholicism now gives way to secularism.





**FINLAND:** More saunas than cars — warm conversations guaranteed!



**CZECH REPUBLIC:**

Over 70% identify as atheist or unaffiliated. Many have never met a practising Christian.



**AUSTRIA:** Vienna's coffeehouses are known as the city's "living rooms," where spiritual seekers open up to conversations.



**POLAND:** Beliefs, faith and morality divide generations between the traditionally Catholic and the secular youth.



**HUNGARY:** University students are asking big spiritual questions, who will give them answers?



**ROMANIA:** Rural poverty remains significant, opening opportunities to show practical love.



**UKRAINE:** War has displaced millions and devastated entire cities, creating a need for trauma and humanitarian help. And the church is responding to that need.



**CROATIA:** Hospitality and long chats open hearts to the Gospel. So, be ready to talk... for a long while!



**BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA:**

High rates of youth unemployment lead many to dream with emigration. They need the hope of Jesus.



**BULGARIA:** A nod means "no," a head shake means "yes." Missionaries, get ready to be confused!



**KOSOVO:** Often open to friendships with foreigners and new ideas.



**GREECE:** Some islands have more goats than residents! But even those few need to know Jesus.



**ALBANIA:** One of Europe's youngest populations, great opportunities for children ministries!





# CALLED TOGETHER

Mission is not the calling of a few — it is the invitation of God to His whole Church.

**Across Europe, lives are being changed through the gospel. Churches are being planted. Communities are being reached. Hope is taking root where it was once absent. And none of this happens alone.**

Today, the need for the gospel remains urgent. God continues to call His people to respond. Some are sent across borders. Some kneel in faithful prayer. Some release

resources so that the work can advance. Different roles. One mission.

**Each of us has a place in God's plan of salvation for the world. The question is not whether you are part of the mission — but how you will take your place in it.**

**Will you go? Will you pray?  
Will you give?**



## GO:

### When God Calls, He Makes a Way: Anna's Story

***"God's call on my life to return to Romania was reignited during a visit to Timisoara in October 2023." For Anna, an ECMI candidate from New Zealand, something planted in her heart years earlier was coming alive. She chose to trust God and obey.***

Back in New Zealand, she began exploring the possibility of serving in Europe with ECMI. The path forward, however, was not without obstacles. Health challenges and insufficient funds delayed her hoped-for departure in April 2025. *"Looking back, I can see God's faithfulness in the delay,"* she reflects. *"He had purposes for keeping me in New Zealand longer."*

For many who sense God's call, fundraising can feel overwhelming — awkward, uncomfortable, even impossible. Anna understands that tension. *"Even I — someone with a lot of energy and confidence — struggled,"*

*"When God calls,  
He does not send us alone."*

she admits. *"I knew people were facing economic pressure, and I wondered how it would all come together."*

Yet she was not alone. In her calling, supporters, churches, ECMI, and an experienced coach united, showing that mission is done together. With encouragement, practical tools, and the right guidance, she kept moving forward. And God provided.

*"At the beginning of December 2025, I was at 45%," Anna shares. "By 21 January 2026, I had reached 80%." Today she is fully funded. "I can testify that God does do fundraising miracles."*

Her message to anyone sensing a call to Europe — whether strong or just beginning — is simple: *"Keep going. Be bold. Share your needs honestly. Use the support available to you."*

When God calls, He does not send us alone. The road may stretch your faith, but He is faithful to open doors and provide what is needed.

**If you are praying about going, Anna's story is a reminder: it is possible. And ECMI is here to walk with you.**



**Explore Mission  
Opportunities  
with ECMI**

[ecmireland.org/long-term](https://ecmireland.org/long-term)

# PRAY:

**Prayer is at the heart of mission. It connects us to God and to each other, supporting those who go and sustaining the work that continues across Europe.**

One way we invite you to pray is through the ECMI *Prayer Diary* — a free monthly prayer calendar highlighting missionaries, ministries, and specific needs across Europe. Delivered by email or app, it makes it easy to know what to pray for and when, so that every ECMI worker experiences the encouragement of faithful prayer.

An ECMI worker in France once told us she always notices when it's her turn on the *Prayer Diary*. She experiences the power that comes when people lift her and her ministry before God — a reminder that no one ministers alone.

**Sign up to receive our monthly *Prayer Diary* and join a community lifting ECMI workers in prayer:**



**Subscribe to the Prayer Diary**  
[ecmireland.org/pray](http://ecmireland.org/pray)

PRAY WITH US

# PRAYER DIARY

*“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God”*





# GIVE:

**Church planting in small towns can seem impossible — especially in Europe! But where there is faith, obedience and generosity, God surprises us beyond our expectations.**

When ECMI workers Jonathan and Nicola felt called to Claremorris, a town in County Mayo with no evangelical church, they started small — just a few people meeting in the town hall. Yet God began to move. Through outreach and discipleship, people from different nationalities and backgrounds came together, united in the desire to know Jesus.

As the group grew, the town hall could no longer hold them. Buying a building felt overwhelming — until supporters joined to help. They prayed. They gave. Donations totalling over €400,000 not only made the purchase possible but also showed Jonathan, Nicola, and the growing church that they were not alone.

Today, the church in Claremorris stands as a lighthouse in County Mayo — a visible sign of hope and the fruit of generosity. Your giving continues to make stories like this possible across Europe.

## Your Generosity Matters

The church in Claremorris is a reminder that generosity matters. Through your giving, missionaries are sent, churches are planted, and communities encounter the hope of Jesus. When we give, we become part of what God is doing far beyond what we can see.



**Join us in bringing the gospel to Europe. Give today at:**

[ecmireland.org/give](https://ecmireland.org/give)

**OUR VISION IS TO SEE THE PEOPLES  
OF EUROPE TRANSFORMED IN THE  
NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.**

**BE PART OF THE TRANSFORMATION.**



**GO**



**PRAY**



**GIVE**

**At European Christian Mission we  
believe every generation in Europe  
deserves the chance to hear the gospel.**

Yet today, only 2.5% of Europeans identify as  
evangelical followers of Jesus — a powerful  
reminder of how great the need still is.

That's why over 250 of our workers are serving across  
25 countries, planting churches, making disciples, and  
sharing Christ in practical, life-changing ways.

But none of this happens alone. Every ministry is built  
on partnership — and that's where you come in.

**Together, we can bring the hope of Jesus to Europe.**



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