

Solidarity and support from Germany for Northern Europe

from the Diaspora Kommissariat and
the Bonifatiuswerk of German Catholics



DIASPORA-KOMMISSARIAT
DER DEUTSCHEN BISCHÖFE/
DIASPORAHILFE DER PRIESTER



Hilfswerk für den Glauben

**bonifatius
werk**

What is the Diaspora Kommissariat?

From priests for priests

From priests for priests – This is the guiding principle of the work of the Diaspora Kommissariat of German Bishops / Diaspora Aid of Priests. It supports the pastoral care in the area of the Nordic Bishops' Conference by funding building projects, providing salary subsidies and offering motorisation grants. The financial means for this are provided by the priests in the German dioceses as every priest pays one percent of his personal salary to the Diaspora Kommissariat.

The possibly most important way of providing help is by **subsidising salaries**. The Diaspora Kommissariat transfers a certain amount to the priests of the local Nordic churches on a monthly basis. This support is necessary in many places as the cost of living in Scandinavia is very high.

Bridging long distances characterises the daily life of every priest in Northern Europe. Here the Diaspora Kommissariat provides **financial aid** for the procurement of vehicles, because without their own vehicle, many priests would barely be able to do their job at all or only at great cost.

The third kind of support provided by the Diaspora Kommissariat is by **subsidising building projects** that sponsor residences for priests. In doing so, it not only supports new buildings but also renovations and conversions. In many places there are not enough residences for priests. The Diaspora Kommissariat attempts to remedy this deprivation.

In addition, 15 percent of the allocated funds go to Central and Eastern Europe.

The authorised representative of the Diaspora Kommissariat is the Archbishop of Paderborn, Hans-Josef Becker, together with the Bishop of Fulda, Heinz Josef Algermissen, and the Bishop of Osnabrück, Franz-Josef Bode. The Executive Director of the Diaspora Kommissariat is Monsignore Georg Austen.

For further information please visit: www.diaspora-kommissariat.de

Bishop Bernt Eidsvig, Diocese Oslo:

“For many years, the Parish of St. Gudmund in Jessheim had to celebrate Mass in a building constructed from containers. Since June 2016 they have finally had their own house of prayer, including residences for priests. This would not have been possible without the Diaspora Kommissariat.”



Bishop Teemu Sippo, Diocese Helsinki:

“‘Motorised pastoral care’ is part of the everyday life of priests in Finland. 1,000 kilometres travelled by car in one weekend is nothing unusual. Without their own vehicle, they would be unable to cope with these distances.”



Vicar General Niels Engelbrecht, Diocese Copenhagen:

“Every priest in Denmark is given a salary subsidy totalling EUR 800, which is taxable. The better part of this, approximately EUR 500 per priest per month, is funded by the Diaspora Kommissariat alone.”

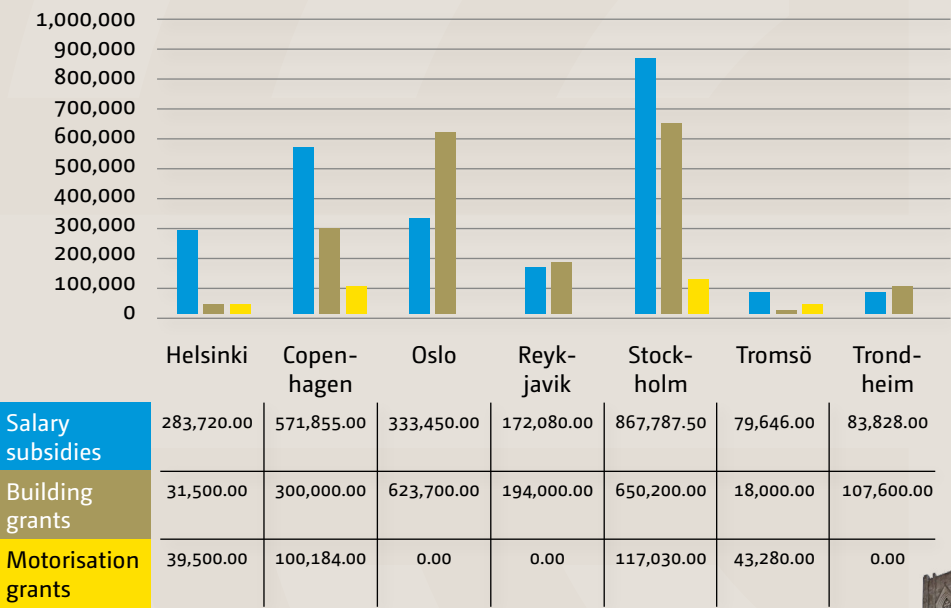


Aid of the Diaspora Kommissariat for the Northern European diaspora dioceses 2015

Iceland
Inhabitants: 330,000
Registered Catholics: 10,500
Percent: 3.25
Priests: 16
Parishes: 5



Aid by type and diocese

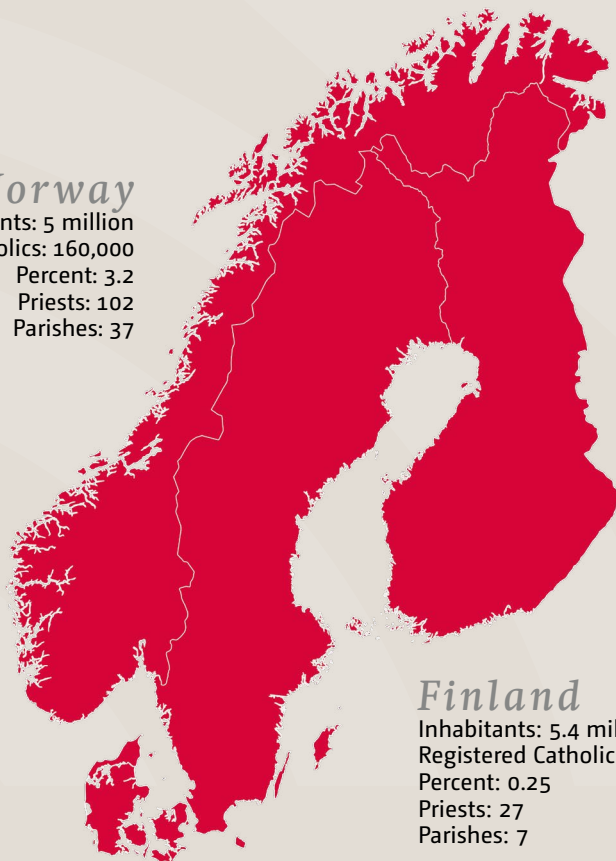


Figures: Diaspora Kommissariat, 2015



Norway

Inhabitants: 5 million
Registered Catholics: 160,000
Percent: 3.2
Priests: 102
Parishes: 37



Finland

Inhabitants: 5.4 million
Registered Catholics: 13,422
Percent: 0.25
Priests: 27
Parishes: 7

Denmark

Inhabitants: 5.76 million
Registered Catholics: 42,768
Percent: 0.74
Priests: 75
Parishes: 45

Sveden

Inhabitants: 9.7 million
Registered Catholics: 110,000
Percent: 1.1
Priests: 161
Parishes: 44

Figures: NBC, 2014, Map: www.freevectormaps.com, 2016





What is the Bonifatiuswerk?

“No one should have to believe alone.”

The vision of the Bonifatiuswerk is, that Catholic Christians – no matter whether they live in Germany, Northern Europe or the Baltic states – never feel alone in their faith and are given help to self-help.

Since 1849 the Bonifatiuswerk has sponsored Catholics who live as a minority, promoted the propagation of faith and enabled the faithful to live their faith in a community.

Initially commissioned only with the pastoral care of Catholics living in Germany, in 1974 the General Assembly decided to extend its sponsorship to Northern Europe. In 1995 the diaspora of the Baltic states and therefore the support of the Catholics in Estonia and Latvia were also included in the aid provide by the Bonifatiuswerk.

The President of the Bonifatiuswerk is Heinz Paus; Monsignore Georg Austen has been the Executive Director since 2008.

Monsignore Georg Austen,
Executive Director
of the Bonifatiuswerk



Heinz Paus,
President
of the Bonifatiuswerk



In 2015 the Bonifatiuswerk handed over EUR 15.7 million to the different countries for educational tasks and for a number of projects through its four types of aid.

For instance, it helped

- to build new houses of prayer
Sample project: New construction of St. Olav Cathedral in Trondheim
- to provide mobility within parishes by funding transportation vehicles (BONI buses)
Sample project: Redemptoris Mater seminary, Copenhagen, Denmark
- to enable young adults to make valuable life experiences in the Nordic diaspora
Sample project: Bonifatius trainee programme
- and to open up future prospects to socially disadvantaged youths
Sample project: Don Bosco House, Chemnitz

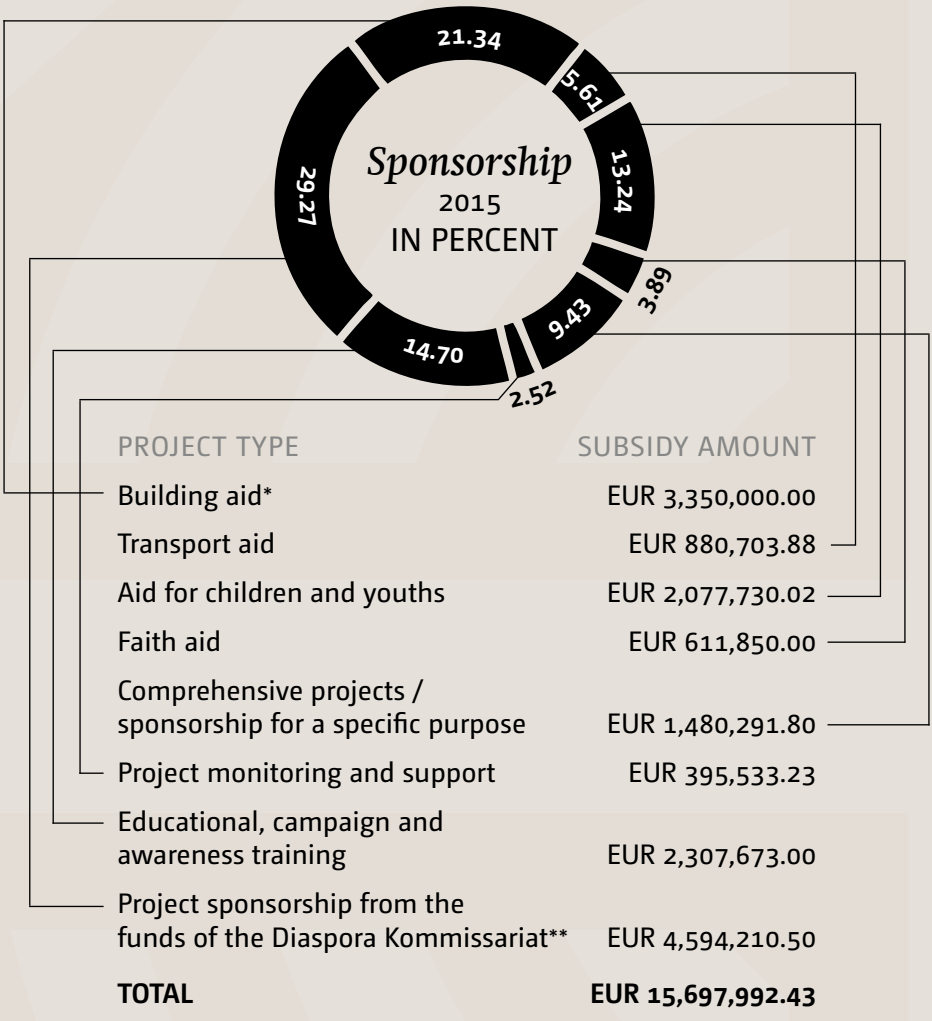
➤ *Building Aid*

➤ *Transport Aid*

➤ *Faith Aid*

➤ *Children's Aid*

Sponsorship with funds provided by the Bonifatiuswerk in 2015 – by types of aid



*plus reallocations from project savings totalling EUR 79,500.00

**Transfer of project sponsorship from the funds of the Diaspora Kommissariat through the Bonifatiuswerk

Of these funds, the following were allocated specifically to Northern Europe:

FIGURES IN EUR

DIOCESE / COUNTRY	TOTAL	BUILDING AID	AID FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTHS	FAITH AID
Denmark	345,040.00	269,040.00	76,000.00	—
Finland	55,000.00	35,000.00	20,000.00	—
Iceland	159,360.00	157,560.00	1,800.00	—
Norway	216,900.00	200,000.00	16,900.00	—
Sweden	331,000.00	245,000.00	46,000.00	30,000.00

Earmarked funding Nordic Bishops Conference: €304,239.84

For further information, please read the annual financial report on the homepage of the Bonifatiuswerk

www.bonifatiuswerk.de/werk/zahlen-fakten/

You can find the most important information about the Bonifatiuswerk of German Catholics in english on the homepage of the Bonifatiuswerk as well: www.bonifatiuswerk.de/english/



Diaspora Sunday 2016: “Our Identity: Mercy” 20th November 2016

Every year the Bonifatiuswerk prays for its fellow Christians in the diaspora regions. In 2016 Diaspora Sunday takes place on 20th November.

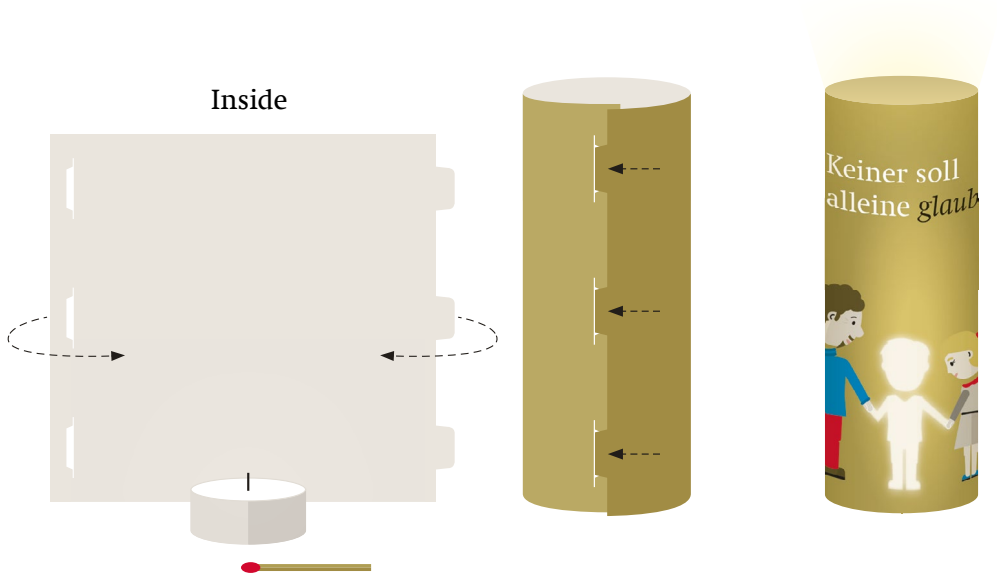
Let us pray for one another together in solidarity on Diaspora Sunday.

We invite you to pick up the theme of Diaspora Sunday in your church services, to pray for this issue in the intercessions and to light a candle as a symbol of our solidarity. In Germany many candles will burn on Diaspora Sunday, too.

The theme of this year's diaspora campaign wants to emphasize this notion of community. The enclosed tea light holder picks up this theme. There is a gap in the group of people depicted on it. Place the tea light holder around a tea light and light the latter: The heat from the candle makes a further person visible who closes the empty space and thus completes the community.

The tea light holder for this year's Diaspora Sunday:

Instructions



1. Bend the ends of the tea light holder together
2. Push the flaps of the tealight holder into the slots
3. Light the candle and push the tea light holder over the top



"The help from Germany is immense. It shows that the Church is universal and that we are not left alone. It also shows that we belong to one Church and that we help each other as much as we can. That is important."

Bishop Viktors Stulpins,
Bishop of Liepaja

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