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Dear Kolping Brothers and Sister,

We are happy to bring you the latest news from our community! Take a glance on the summary of this year's exciting discussions and fruitful outcomes of the 2023 Membership Meeting in Serbia. Moreover, in this special edition you will find an interview between a student and Adolf Kolping himself! How is it possible? You will find the answer in the article! ;)



We also had an unforgettable Youth Week in the beautiful city of Szeged, Hungary. With the motto "Where words fail, music speaks", this group of talented young people, all united by faith and by their love for music, wrote history by creating and presenting the Kolping Youth Hymn. You have not been there, but want to get a taste of the event? Or have you been there and want some nostalgic moments? Check out the article for more details.

On behalf of the whole organizing team, we would like to thank the Kolping youth, who participated in the Youth Week in Szeged. It was an honour to host you all and the amazing time we spent in Hungary was like a symphony of joy together! As the echoes of the European Youth Week in Szeged fade into the distance, we carry the memories of this harmonious journey in our hearts. :)

You can also read about heart-warming volunteering activities in this newsletter: Jakob Lutzmayer, European delegate of the Austrian Kolping Youth, has been on a solidarity visit to Ukraine to help people in need. To get inspired on how to help others, read Jakob's experiences.

We would like to also express our solidarity and thoughts for our Kolping brothers and sisters in Ukraine. In these challenging times, we stand united with them, offering our prayers and support. We admire their strength and commitment to the Kolping values in these difficult times. Let us keep them in our hearts and prayers.

Dorina Kiffer

Member of the Board
of Kolping Youth Europe



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Interview between a teenager of today and Adolph Kolping from the past

While surfing on the internet, I got hold of a text about Stefan a 18 year old Austrian who had the opportunity to talk to Adolph Kolping and I wanted to share this interesting discussion with you:



Good day, Adolph Kolping. It's an honor to have the opportunity to speak with you. I've heard a lot about your work and the impact you've made on society. Can you tell me a bit about your journey and the initiatives you started?



Thank you, young friend. It's a pleasure to be here and share my experiences with you. I started my journey as a humble shoemaker's apprentice, but I felt a deep calling to help my fellow workers and the youth of my time. I established the *Gesellenverein*, an association for young journeymen, to provide them with education, moral support, and spiritual guidance. This initiative grew into the Catholic Workers' Association, focusing on uplifting workers and their families through education, housing, and social support.



That's truly inspiring, Mr. Kolping. As a teenager growing up in this rapidly changing world, I often feel overwhelmed by the challenges and responsibilities that lie ahead. What advice would you give to young people like me who want to make a positive difference in society?



My young friend, I understand the pressures you face. The key to making a difference in society lies in recognizing the potential within yourself and others. Start by cultivating your own character and skills. Education is of utmost importance, as it broadens your horizons and equips you with knowledge to tackle the issues of our time. Always strive for personal growth, remaining open to new ideas and experiences. Additionally, embrace the power of community. We are stronger when we work together, supporting and uplifting one another. Seek out organizations or causes that align with your values and offer your time, skills, or resources to contribute meaningfully. Remember, even small acts of kindness can have a profound impact on the lives of others.



Thank you for your valuable advice, Mr. Kolping. In today's interconnected world, we often witness injustices and inequalities that seem insurmountable. How can young people like me effectively address these issues and promote positive change?



Indeed, the world can seem overwhelming, but it is through collective action that we bring about lasting change. Begin by identifying the issues that resonate with you most deeply. Is it poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, or any other pressing matter? Educate yourself about these topics, understanding their root causes and potential solutions. Next, leverage the power of your voice. Engage in constructive dialogue, both online and offline, to raise awareness about these issues. Utilize social media, write articles, or participate in local discussions to advocate for change. Never underestimate the power of your ideas to influence others and foster a sense of empathy and understanding. Remember, change starts at the individual level. Lead by example, demonstrating compassion and respect in your interactions with others. By living out the values you espouse, you inspire those around you to do the same. Together, we can create a ripple effect that transforms our society for the better.



Thank you, Mr. Kolping, for your profound wisdom. Your words have given me a renewed sense of hope and purpose. Before we conclude, is there anything else you would like to share or any final words of advice?



My dear young friend, life is a journey filled with challenges and opportunities. Embrace every experience, both good and bad, as they shape your character and strengthen your resilience. Never be afraid to dream big and pursue your passions wholeheartedly. Remember, success is not measured solely by material achievements, but by the positive impact you have on the lives of others. As you navigate through life, hold on to your values and remain grounded in faith.

After reading this text, you might ask yourself how Adolph Kolping knows about social media, or even more how Stefan succeeded in building a time-machine to go back in time and talk to Adolph Kolping in the first place. Here I reveal, that this interview was written by the new internet phenomenon of ChatGPT when giving the prompt of creating an interview between a teenager and Adolph Kolping about his life and life advice for the teenager. And even though one might see some inconsistencies and strange wordings, I still have the feeling that some of Kolping's positions shine through the text. Values, kindness, faith - these are characteristics that AI links with Adolph Kolping. And even though this was just an experiment and not a real interview, the content still speaks to me as a person. So, perhaps I add to Adolph Kolping's wisdom, "The needs of the time will teach you what to do," that "the wonders of time can assist you in this task."

KOLPING MEMBERSHIP MEETING 2023



In April 2023, a historic decision was made as Kolping Europe and Kolping Youth Europe merged under one umbrella. This decision was taken at the Membership Meeting (Kolping Youth Europe) as well as the Continental Assembly (Kolping Europe). Both meetings took place in Novi Sad, Serbia, one of the three cities to hold the title of European Capital of Culture in 2022, providing the perfect setting for this significant event.



Kolping Youth Europe's Membership Meeting brought together 27 participants from 13 countries, fostering international cooperation. The event kicked off with a casual get-together on Friday evening, where old acquaintances reconnected, and new connections were made. Attendees enjoyed large pizzas and participated in the traditional international evening, sharing their cultures through music, videos, games, drinks and food.

On Saturday, the official part of the meeting began with the board of Kolping Youth Europe presenting their annual report and financial report for 2022/2023.



Delegates shared updates on their Kolping Youth activities. The highlight of the day was the presentation of the finalized statute, which was unanimously accepted, solidifying the collaboration between Kolping Europe and Kolping Youth Europe. Due to the statutory change, the board was reelected, and Yulia Savka-Kornylo from Ukraine filled a vacant seat, bringing fresh perspectives and ideas to the team.

In the afternoon, the participants had the opportunity to learn more about Kolping Serbia, get information about the upcoming European Youth Week in Hungary, and experience different Kolping projects in Serbia in person.

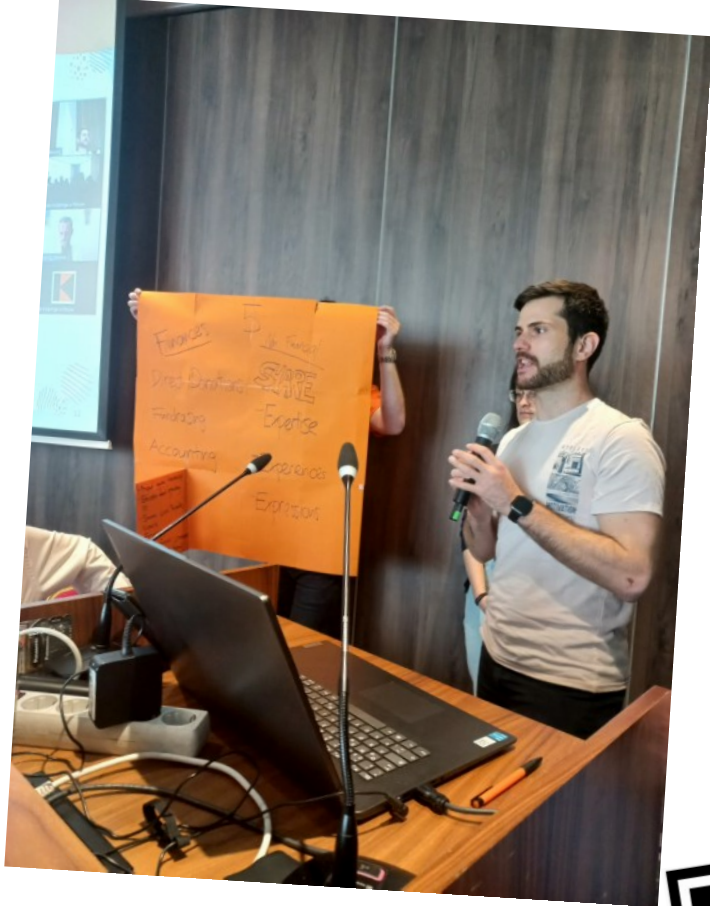
An interesting sightseeing tour through Novi Sad allowed everyone to explore the city's cultural treasures. The day concluded with a memorable holy mass held at the beautiful "Name of Mary" Church in the city center. Following the religious ceremony, a delightful feast featuring local specialties and accompanied by traditional music was organized at the Restaurant Agape Villa. It was a joyous moment as members of Kolping Europe and Kolping Youth Europe came together to celebrate and strengthen their bonds.





Sunday morning brought the participants back to the meeting venue for an intergenerational workshop on this year's topic for Kolping Europe: "Youth". Engaging in various groups, everyone brainstormed ideas on how national Kolping societies can support youth work. The workshop was led by board members of Kolping Youth Europe, fostered informative discussions, and participants shared their insights.

The event concluded with insightful summaries and closing remarks by the praeses of Kolping Europe, followed by a final lunch where everyone shared a meal, reflecting on three eventful and exciting days.



The assembly in Novi Sad marked a significant step for Kolping Europe and Kolping Youth Europe. The acceptance of the new statutes and the enthusiastic participation of members from various countries demonstrated the strength of the Kolping community. This collaborative effort sets the stage for enhanced cooperation and impactful youth work in the future, bringing the two organizations closer together under one shared vision.

Heinz Strässle, Member of the Board of Kolping Youth Europe



Video



EUROPIAN YOUTH WEEK 2023 SZEGED HUNGARY



"Where words fail, music speaks! "
Musical development for young
adults

From August 6 - 12, 2023 young adults from seven countries participated in the 'European Youth Week' of the Kolping Youth Europe, which took place this year in Szeged (Hungary). The motto of the youth meeting was "Where words fail, music speaks! Musical development for Youth". What is music basically? How do you read music and how did musical notation come into being? How does a simple melody become a complex canon? How do you write songs yourself? How can we form a choir from a broadly mixed group and organize a small concert? And how can music connect us beyond countries, languages and cultures? These were the questions the participants dealt with during the youth week organized by the Kolping Youth Hungary



The main goal of the week was to organize and perform a short public concert in the city center of Szeged. The young adults, who had a wide range of previous musical knowledge, from complete beginners to professional choir singers, were all challenged in their own way: They had a week to search for, compose or write pieces of music, rehearse them and perform them in front of an audience at the end. The concert was designed to draw the young people out of their comfort zone, to instill a strong sense of community, and to boost their confidence that anyone can enjoy music with a little practice.



A conductor and a choir director from Hungary accompanied the young adults in this task and prepared them for this challenge with exciting workshops on note reading, harmonies, and singing lessons.

After five days of intense work, cultural exchange, and lively evenings, a ten-minute flash mob concert was put together, based on various parts of the workshops. From the beautiful four-part traditional amerindian song "Evening Rise", to the US gospel song "Down by the Riverside", to the well-known "Lion sleeps tonight" - with the lyrics rewritten - and concluded with a percussion piece, each participant was able to bring their strengths to this performance and discover something new.



In order to strengthen the sense of community, besides the musical content, there were also many cultural and touristic activities: an exciting tour through Szeged including a visit to the fourth largest active synagogue in the world and the wonderful Szeged Cathedral; relaxing and bathing at the river Tisza as well as a visit to the national historical memorial park Ópusztaszer, today's location of the incredible 1800 m² large Feszty Panorama. This intensive week was rounded off with the international evenings, where each country presented itself with national specialties and offered a glimpse into the world of music, with several folk dances also being demonstrated and danced along. Through the music and singing lessons, the young adults not only learned new skills, but also got to know themselves better. And with the newly written lyrics the first building block was laid to create an anthem of the Kolping Youth in Europe, which hopefully will get more verses in all national languages in the future and thus strengthen the bond between the countries. The participants are looking forward to the next meeting, the General Assembly of the Kolping Youth Europe from April 18-21, 2024, which will take place together with the Continental Convention of Kolping Europe in Timisoara, Romania.

The Kolping Youth Europe thanks the Kolping Youth Hungary for the excellent local organization and expresses its gratitude to the Renovabis Foundation, Kolping Europe, Kolping Germany, the Hungarian Alsópáhok Foundation and Kolping Switzerland for their generous support, without which such an event would not have been possible.

Heinz Strässle, Member of the Board of the Kolping Youth Europe



Austrian Kolping Youth member on a solidarity visit to Ukraine



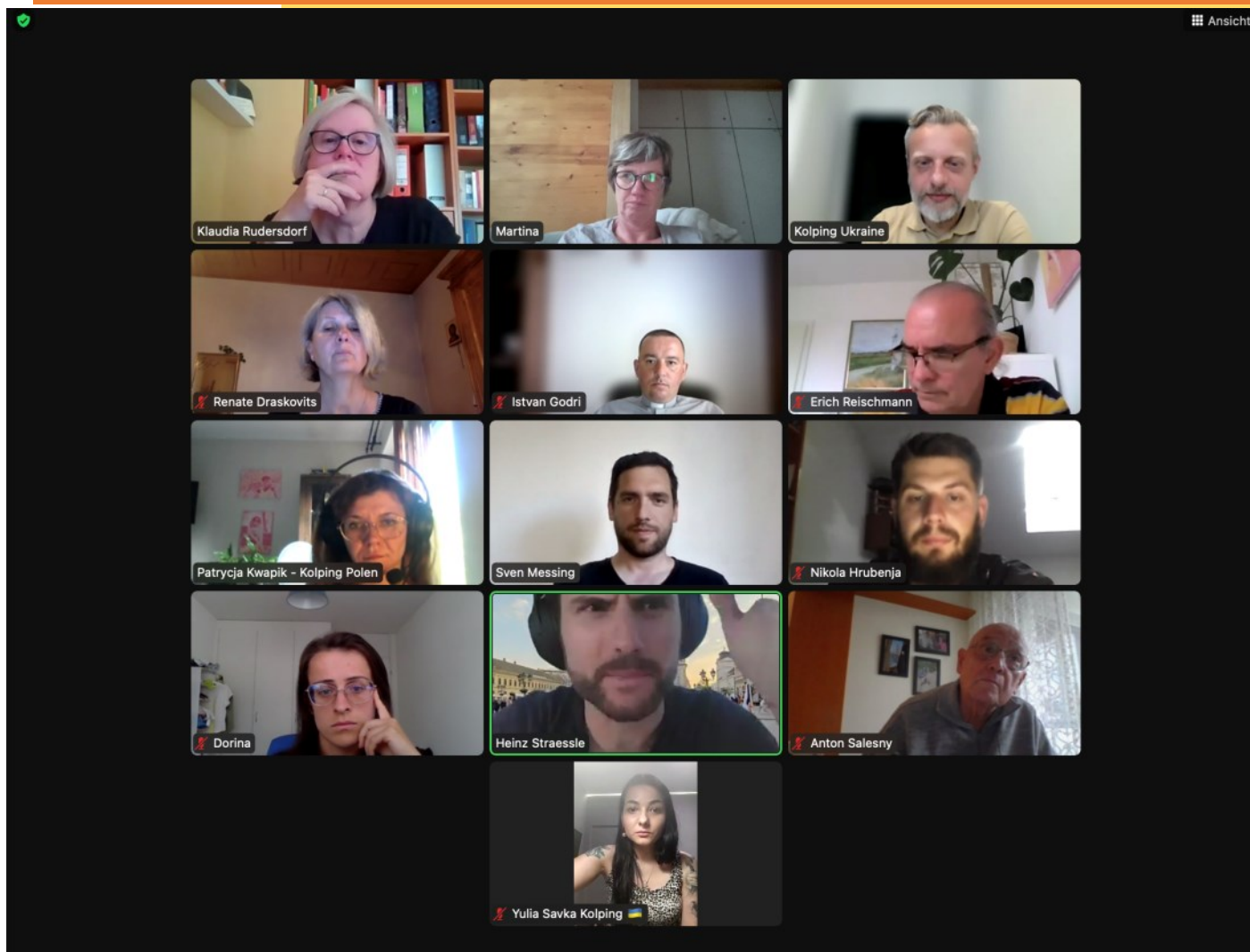
Jakob Lutzmayer, European delegate of the Austrian Kolping Youth, has just returned from a solidarity visit to Ukraine, which lasted several days. His journey first took him to Uzhhorod, where Kolping takes care of refugees from eastern Ukraine. He then drove to Chernivtsi, the Headquarter of the Ukrainian National Kolping Association, which has also been running a social kitchen there since the outbreak of the war. Over 550 meals have been prepared here every day for almost a year and a half, and distributed to displaced people and the local soldiers hospital. Further stations were the cities of Sharhorod and Vinnytsia, where Kolping Ukraine runs facilities for people with disabilities.



In Sharhorod, refugees from the east of the country are now also looked after. Jakob Lutzmayer helped, among other things, with the production of candles made of beeswax and reflectors for school bags, part of the work projects for the clients of the two centers. The solidarity visit ended with a trip to Lviv - a city with a historic centre on the UNESCO World Heritage List that is today a contact point for tens of thousands of people displaced by the war. The invitation from the leaders of the Ukrainian Kolping Society to visit their country came at the Membership Meeting in Serbia; Jakob Lutzmayer took the opportunity to accept this invitation after the European Youth Week in Szeged/Hungary. "I'm not coming back as a completely new person, but I've definitely gotten completely new perspectives," Jakob summarizes his impressions. In any case, he will remember the brave people he met in Ukraine and the great projects of the Kolping people there for a long time.



General Meeting of Kolping Europe



On 6 July 2023, the Board of Kolping Youth Europe and the Board of Kolping Europe had a momentous gathering, the first General Meeting of the newly established organization Kolping Europe e.V..

Due to the adoption of new statutes at the Continental Meeting 2023 in Novi Sad, Kolping Europe e.V. is the legal entity responsible for financial and legal aspects of Kolping at European level. The tasks of the General Meeting include, among other things, the approval of budget estimates, the adoption of annual financial statements and the election of an Executive Board. All board members of Kolping Europe and Kolping Youth Europe have the right to be members of the General Meeting.

The first General Meeting was a crucial step to foster greater collaboration between Kolping Youth Europe and Kolping Europe, recognizing the power of unity and joint efforts in driving positive change. Importantly, an Executive Board was elected that will take care of the day-to-day business of the legal entity: President Vasyl Savka, Vice President Sven Messing and Managing Director Erich Reischmann. A follow-up meeting will take place in autumn.

All in all, the atmosphere of the General Meeting was very positive, focused on the empowerment of young members, and underscored the collective commitment to a more dynamic and resilient organization. Nikola Hrubenja, board member of Kolping Youth Europe, summarized the experience as follows: "The meeting highlighted the importance of youth engagement. In addition, the spirit of camaraderie based on the values of Kolping was very motivating and embraced the forward-looking vision encapsulated in the new statute."

News of Kolping Youth Europe on Instagram!



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Continental Conference
2024

ROMANIA

Timișoara
18 - 21
April

Timișoara

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Save the date
Youth Week 2024 will
take place in Austria!

[read
more](#)

AUSTRIA

2024

14-20
JULY*

*date to be confirmed
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more information



Kolping Youth Europe



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