



RED NOSES
CLOWNDOCTORS
International



Annual Report 2016

RED NOSES Clowndoctors International



Thank

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You!

Without your support, none of this
would be possible.

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A New Way Forward

2016 has been a year of renewed focus for RED NOSES International. With new projects and new faces, the future has never looked so bright! With the support of people like you, we have accomplished a lot in the past year. Our core work has not changed, but our activities reach new and broader audiences. Not only do we visit patients, young and old, but we also work with multiple and mentally disabled persons outside of the healthcare setting. Without your support, none of this would be possible.

We also strategically focused on our programme “Intensive Smile”, where clowns routinely intervene in medical treatments and operations to provide emotional support in a thoughtful and caring manner to aid both patients and medical staff.

2016 also marked the completion of our project with the European Commission’s Creative Europe Programme 2014-2020. Through the “Faces Behind the Nose” project, we raised the profile of hospital clowning as a recognised genre of the performing arts and also the positive impacts of hospital clowning in social and healthcare environments. RNI is proud of the results of this partnership and looks forward to working together with Creative Europe and the European Union in the future.

With all of this in mind, we would like to introduce our new mission statement to you.

“RED NOSES is an artistic organization bringing humour and laughter to people in need of joy.”

*We believe this proclamation better explains how we have grown with our supporters and with our audiences as an organization. Our professional artists conduct their work in a variety of settings, each more challenging than before, reaching new audiences with each new project we create. Our team is pleased to share with you this annual report as a way of saying thank you. Your support over this past year has been invaluable. We encourage you to read the next pages to further understand how you have directly helped to bring joy and laughter to people who need it most. **Thank you for making all of this possible!***

Sincerely yours,



Monica Culen,
CEO and Founder
RED NOSES Clowndoctors International



Giora Seeliger,
Artistic Director and Founder
RED NOSES Clowndoctors International



Dr. Franz Haimerl,
CFO
RED NOSES Clowndoctors International

What We Do

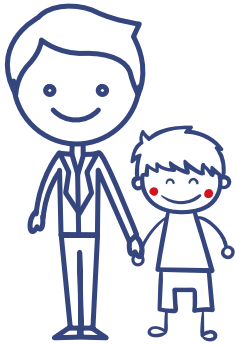
Children are **important to us!**

No child should be denied the opportunity to play – it is their fundamental right as enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Play is not only a right; it is also crucial for the cognitive development of children in their early years. These facts are not overlooked by RNI. We work both nationally and internationally to foster play for children.

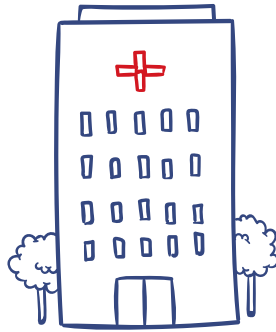
Our professionally trained artists provide and strengthen the notion of play where it is often neglected. This could be in hospital environments or in crisis situations. They use a wide array of tools to trigger playful situations with children. The resulting interactions encourage children to be mentally stimulated and build better coping mechanisms. This contributes to their well-being and their natural development in a positive way.

Facts & Figures

6 | Each year, our clowns actively work to bring humour and laughter to people in need of joy. Here is a numerical exploration of the positive impact our clowns have in each other of the countries we operate in.



708,000
Young and Elderly
Patients



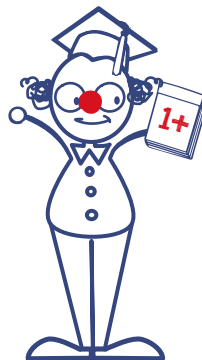
790
Medical and Social
Institutions



10
Countries
We Operate in



14,438
Clown Visits



346
Professionally
Trained Clowns



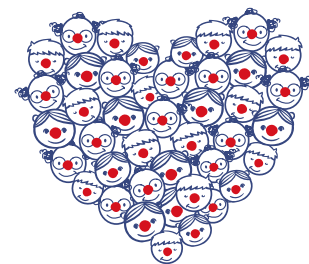
23+
Over 23 Years
of Expertise



18
Number of ISH and
ISH 2 GO Workshops



71,000
Number of Training Hours for
Professional Development



5,000
Number of Persons Impacted
by our Emergency Smile
Programme



Our Global Presence

Austria

Patients visited: 167,772
Number of visits: 4,038
Medical and social institutions: 254
Clowns: 66
Established: 1994

Croatia

Patients visited: 23,608
Number of visits: 441
Medical and social institutions: 34
Clowns: 20
Established: 2010

Czech Republic

Patients visited: 175,365
Number of visits: 3,793
Medical and social institutions: 199
Clowns: 86
Established: 2001

Germany

Patients visited: 49,647
Number of visits: 1,139
Medical and social institutions: 37
Clowns: 23
Established: 2003

Hungary

Patients visited: 92,763
Number of visits: 1,040
Medical and social institutions: 23
Clowns: 27
Established: 1996

Lithuania

Patients visited: 25,296
Number of visits: 367
Medical and social institutions: 32
Clowns: 10
Established: 2013

Palestine

Patients visited: 13,182
Number of visits: 368
Medical and social institutions: 12
Clowns: 16
Established: 2012

Poland

Patients visited: 10,220
Number of visits: 323
Medical and social institutions: 10
Clowns: 24
Established: 2012

Slovakia

Patients visited: 108,999
Number of visits: 2,340
Medical and social institutions: 146
Clowns: 58
Established: 2004

Slovenia

Patients visited: 41,053
Number of visits: 589
Medical and social institutions: 43
Clowns: 16
Established: 2004

RED NOSES International Highlights

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Through Emergency Smile, we positively influenced the lives of thousands of refugee children

Emergency Smile

Our clowns traveled quite a bit this past year! They answered the urgent worldwide call to bring more joy to those in need of it in 2016.

Our Emergency Smile missions in Greece and in Ukraine were the largest we ever undertook!

By reviewing the accomplishments of our international clown teams, we know that they made a significant improvement in the emotional well-being of all the refugee families they interacted with. Much of our work involved close partnership with many Red Cross societies.

The performances, workshops and unique visits by our artists brought a much needed spark of life and laughter for refugee families. RED NOSES clowns also created an atmosphere where children felt safe and could relax and play. Many parents joined along too!



RED NOSES Palestine continues to expand their their humorous activities

Psychosocial support through clown interventions in Palestine



In 2016, we began a **new project with the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)** to provide psychosocial support services as well as to further develop cultural activities in the **Palestinian Territories**. The project improves the social services provided to local medical and social institutions. The future results will be achieved through the consolidation of local structures, the expansion of the existing activities and the strengthening of knowledge exchange between RED NOSES Palestine and the rest of our group.

ADA and the OPEC Fund for International Development provide crucial financial assistance and allow RED NOSES to continue to reach as many Palestinians as possible while maintaining our high quality standards.

Intensive Smile

By making medical treatments less fearful for young patients, RED NOSES clowndoctors create a relaxed atmosphere for everyone involved. This helps the treatments to go more smoothly.

Over the past year, we have been preparing our professional artists to **introduce Intensive Smile into new countries**. This builds on the success of this programme in Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Through extensive internal planning, artistic exchanges, and strategic workshops, we are looking forward to the new opportunities 2017 will present.

We are excited to **expand the psychosocial support** we provide for children before, during and after medical treatments and operations to new countries.



Our clowns are intensively integrated into the treatments and therapies of young patients.

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International Project in Jordan

We began operating in Jordan in 2014 under the umbrella of our Emergency Smile programme, **visiting the largest refugee camps and community centres** to bring relief to traumatized refugee children.

RNI launched a pilot phase in November 2015, **sending professionally trained clowns to the King Hussein Cancer Centre in Amman**, one of the largest children's cancer hospital in the Middle Eastern region. Since then, they have continued to make the lives of young cancer patients brighter and more compassionate.

For 2016, our artists have visited and brought more laughter to these young patients over 36 times. The long-term sustainability of this project is more certain. With new partnerships on the way, we are confident in our mission and its impact in Jordan.



Bringing joy and laughter to young cancer patients in Amman.

The Art of Being a Professional Clown

Giora Seeliger, Artistic Director of RNI, recently sat down to discuss the achievements of the Artist Department over the past years.



Giora Seeliger always has an eye for quality. No wonder, then, under his guidance, RED NOSES International (RNI) is globally renowned for the high artistic standards demanded of its clowndoctors. In reviewing this past year's activities, he also shares with us various insights into the professional life of each artist. Read on to learn more about the philosophy of a clown, the professional development of our artists through coaching and national workshops as well as annual highlights such as the yearly event, the RED NOSES International Camp. Don't miss out, also, on the exciting news about Vision 2020 and how it applies to the artistic future of RNI.

RNI: Through your leadership, RED NOSES has developed into an organisation that is well-known internationally. What do you think contributes to this success?

GS: I cannot take credit, alone, for the progress our organisation has achieved since 1994. The bulk of the credit should go to our artists and their daily work across all the eleven countries we now operate in. I think, more and more, hospital clowning is becoming more readily accepted into society. What makes us particularly successful is the high benchmarks we set for each of our artists and their humorous interventions.

Clowning as a profession, let alone hospital clowning, is a demanding occupation which requires artists to perform at their best day-in and day-out. We are given the unique access to these sensitive environments, based on trust and communication with the medical and hospital staff.

RNI: What role does the clown have in society?

GS: Each culture develops a figure that embodies the humour, the paradoxes and the absurdities innate in being human. These figures vary in language, and in physical and visual representation, but are nevertheless, recognisable as clowns, as comic figures of the culture. In our modern society,

clowning is considered to be an essential part of any fine arts education. It is a serious artistic discipline. However, clowning is also unique in its reflective nature, informing an audience about the current state of society.

By embodying the role of the clown, a person becomes more compassionately aware and accepting of unwanted aspects of their self and the world. By becoming conscious of the nature of our being, we are more able to live an understanding and a compassion that facilitates change.

RNI: What makes the work of a clown unique in its approach to working in hospitals?

GS: We are not there to provide entertainment. This is simply not true. For example, you could look at the outfits of each of our artists. They dress only in simple clothing with a red nose. There isn't any of the face paint or exaggerated outfits we normally associate with clowns. Some describe this red nose as the smallest mask in the world.

Our artists do not hide behind a mask. Instead, they rely on their rigorous training provided by RNI. By following our comprehensive training curriculum, our artists receive over 400 hours of training.

Clown doctors need to understand how patients respond differently from typical audiences. They're required to learn how to relate to their patients. It's a constant learning process. With patients who aren't always in the best of moods, rejection doesn't always mean rejection. Our artists need to learn to discern the difference, and learn how to turn these difficulties into something valuable.

RNI: How do you avoid having a negative impact in the hospital setting?

GS: We need to continue to become better clowns. Without training and new input, our artists will become stagnant and not improve. It is not fair to our audiences. We must connect with them.

12 | Therefore, we invest both significant time and resources into our artists. Let me give you an interesting statistic that demonstrates this more plainly. Each year over 50% of our 346 clowns take part in, at least, 50 hours of additional training. Put in another way, that is over 8500 collective man-hours dedicated to the professional development of our clowns per year.

Clowndoctors develop a close relationship with their patients. Common stories and experiences are born out of this special clown-patient intimacy. To share pain, suffering or even death is a task which demands great strength on behalf of the clowns. It is for this reason that professional guidance and psychological support are both essential elements for their success.

RNI: Professional development is important – like you said. Is that why you chose to found the International School of Humour? What was your original motivation to do so?

GS: Yes – you're correct. I knew, quite early on, that our artists required a diverse range of skills that they could directly translate into their daily interactions with patients. We originally invited the occasional international expert to give a guest workshop for our clowns. However, the artists' thirst for new knowledge as well as the



ever-changing demands of our audience meant we had to continue to look for outside expertise. I began to call a few of my colleagues and mentors from the artistic world to give regular lectures and workshops. However, this quickly grew into a professional platform which services all our partner organisations. We began to invite some of the bigger names in the artistic world.

RNI: So with the high pressure that comes with working in a hospital, how is it that you can ensure the quality of each intervention?

GS: Besides having good psychological training, the clowndoctors must have excellent command of the entire artistic repertoire of a clown. It's difficult enough trying to make healthy children laugh. Giving joy and encouragement to patients suffering greatly during medical treatment in hospital demands greater empathy, knowledge and continuity in dealing with the sick. This expertise and the necessary tools required for professional clown work in the hospital environment are imparted in the International School of Humour.

RNI: How do you reach out to all 346 clowns then? Surely it is impossible to train each and every one of them continuously every year?

GS: Like I said before, each year over half of our clowns receive a significant amount of additional training. Since we are such a large organisation, geographical factors also play a role in who can attend regular training programmes and who cannot. That is why we launched a pilot programme in 2015 called the ISH 2 GO. We knew that in order to maintain the high standards we demand of each of our artists, we also had to work within their realities. So, we developed the concept with our partner organisations, to bring our ISH workshops to various capital cities.

2016 marked the real beginning of this journey, where we held four ISH 2 GO workshops by inviting our guest experts to various locations which we

deemed important. Each participant received a minimum of 26 hours of additional professional training. Let's just say that our artists are always learning and applying their new knowledge.

RNI: What kind of skills or techniques do the clowns learn in these workshops?

GS: The clowns learn a wide variety of skills. Some are predictable, like juggling, playing a musical instrument or using props. Others are more technical, like emphasizing various theatrical elements, such as the dramaturgy of a sketch or controlling one's body language in front of an audience.

However, in order to strive to be our best, the clowns must also learn more than simple physical tricks. We also concentrate on more theoretical topics, ones that rely on science and best-practice.

These workshops focus on medical knowledge to compliment the work with hospital staff; optimizing the relationships between each clown pair; and also on understanding the emotional distress each child may have to endure while in a hospital.

RNI: What other significant events occur throughout the year for RNI?

GS: Why yes, I am glad you asked! In 2016, all ten partner organisations sent delegates to convene in Zbraslavice, Czech Republic for the yearly RED NOSES International Camp.

It was a great event for us to exchange knowledge and learn from each other. Nearly 200 clowns, disguised as athletes, proudly represented their country over the course of the four days.

Each artist that attended could choose from more than 60 workshops and lectures to expand their knowledge. Topics ranged from geriatric interventions, improvisation, the history of clowning, to learning how to juggle or practice laughter yoga.



The ISH attracts internationally renowned experts like Ami Hattab (FR)

RNI: So how does all of this fit into the new mission statement?

GS: We needed to reassess where we evolved as a group but also where we wanted to progress for the future. Hospitals are not the only place that our clowns perform in any longer. We visit many persons like multiple and mentally disabled children and youth, the elderly and refugees. While the core of our work has not changed, we realized that we had to expand our vision and our ambitions beyond those who may be physically sick or limited in movement. At the heart of this new direction is bringing arts and culture to those who do not regularly have access. In other words, we are bringing humour and laughter to those in need of joy through the arts.

RNI: Why do you think access to culture is so important? Why are the clowns the best way to provide this?

GS: Access to the arts and culture is an integral part of the development of each human being. In fact, this is a human right enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It basically says that every child has the right to engage in play and participate freely in cultural life and the arts. These activities promote the understanding and sharing of culture. They promote social skills that enhance the awareness and respect of others.

RNI: Thank you for the interview!

Highlights from our Partner Organisations

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Hospitalised children enjoy the relaxed atmosphere during examinations and treatments.

Austria – Closer cooperation with medical staff

ROTE NASEN Clowndoctors could not be happier with their new programme “**Kooperation im Behandlungsalltag [Intensive Smile]**”. Clowns accompany children through difficult medical procedures to provide a soothing presence. They work in close cooperation with the medical staff to help facilitate each procedure. Their efforts have received the support from **five medical institutions** and positively influenced more than 6,600 patients in 2016!

The yearly ROTE NASEN LAUF proved to be a **great success**. 58 charity runs were organised across Austria, involving over 12,000 people. In total, the dedicated individuals ran over 100,000 kilometres for our cause. Preparations are already underway to bring the ROTE NASEN Lauf to more cities and to more people in 2017.



CRVENI NOSOVI uses new technologies to virtually interact with isolated young patients

Croatia – Innovations Through New Technologies

In 2016, CRVENI NOSOVI Klaunovidoktori explored the boundaries of what is possible! By launching a **new programme called “Smijeh je lijek – Skype s klaunom [Laughter is a cure – Skype with a clown]”** clowndoctors were able to connect with young oncology patients in Zagreb and Osijek that normally would be isolated. Their approach virtually connected the clown and the children to meet and to play.

Their innovations did not stop there. By partnering with the Croatian organisation “Deafblind Union”, CRVENI NOSOVI designed a **special interactive show where children learned about the daily challenges people with disabilities face and how to include them into society**.

To cap off their impressive year – CRVENI NOSOVI recorded the smash hit “Smijeh pomaže [Laughter Helps]” which was released with much fanfare and featured on many national radio stations.

Czech Republic – Anniversary Tour 15

As part of the RED NOSES International's training curriculum, **36 out of 86 clowns from ZDRAVOTNI KLAUN were fully certified** this past year. It is a testament to their professional and artistic development. The expertise they have honed over many years was on full display for their Tour 15, a special event **celebrating their 15th year in existence**. As part of this tour, they visited 15 facilities which normally do not receive clowndoctors. The response from the patients and the media was overwhelmingly positive. Undoubtedly, the tour will happen again next year!



Czech clowns pose in front of one of the 15 new facilities they visited for their anniversary Tour 15!

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Germany – In a Tenor World

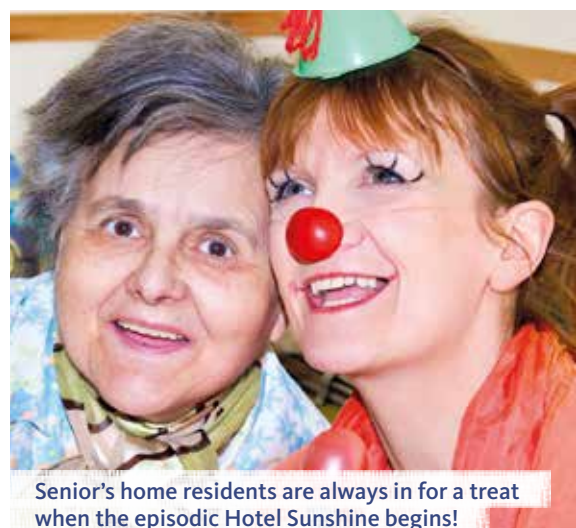
ROTE NASEN Deutschland (RND) continued its relentless mission to bring joy to those who need it most. In 2016, RND visited eight refugee homes on a regular basis. In June 2016, Rolando Villazón – star tenor, trained clown and ambassador of the RED NOSES Group – visited Germany's largest refugee home, the "Hangars" in Berlin Tempelhof. Together with ROTE NASEN Clowns Filou (Germany's Artistic Director Reinhard Horstkotte) and Bemoll (Matthew Burton), Dr. Rollo brought joy and laughter to children from Syria, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries.



Dr. Rollo, Rolando Villazón – star tenor, plays with children in Berlin's Tempelhof refugee centre.

Hungary – The Sun Never Stops Shining for PIROS ORR

PIROS ORR celebrated its 20th anniversary at the end of 2016! Many events are planned to commemorate this milestone and increase the awareness of RED NOSES in Hungary. This includes the start of Intensive Smile in Pécs, a photo exhibition, and a theatrical production in Miskolc. The anniversary also marked the beginning of "Hotel Sunshine," an interactive soap opera running in several elderly homes in Pécs. Each episode takes place in Hotel Sunshine, where the actors are clown characters and their common story is created week by week.



Senior's home residents are always in for a treat when the episodic Hotel Sunshine begins!

Highlights partner organisations

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Mayor Remigijus Šimašius accompanied RAUDONOS NOSYS to a paediatric ward in Vilnius.

Lithuania – High Recognition for RAUDONOS NOSYS

RAUDONOS NOSYS continues to shine. They recently welcomed Vilnius' mayor, Remigijus Šimašius, on one of their hospital visits as part of the larger celebration on September 7th. This was to celebrate their sixth anniversary as an organisation. This display of support shows the value of their work and the importance RAUDONOS NOSYS has gained in the public sphere. Patients, families and the medical staff all joined in the festivities.

They are one of the only artistic organisations in the country who visit refugee centres. It is an opportunity to expand the professional exchange programme introduced by RED NOSES International. They invited Palestinian clown doctors to share their expertise about working with refugee children. The partnership was so successful that plans are underway to make this exchange more permanent.



Palestinian clown doctors touch the soul and create enchanting moments for patients of all ages.

Palestine – New Audiences, New Hospitals

In partnership with the Austrian Development Agency, RED NOSES Palestine has brought more smiles to more people than ever before! 2016 has turned out to be quite successful. They have increased the amount of hospitals they visit, to eight, thereby expanding the number of young patients they reach. Strengthening their relationships with medical staff continues to be a priority as well.

They also introduced the first psychosocial support programme for geriatric patients at the Augusta Viktoria hospital in East Jerusalem, observing the severe shortage of support elders receive in Palestine. With RED NOSES Palestine's achievements so far, hospitals' staff are recognizing the importance of our support in their daily routines.

Poland – A Year of Growth and Opportunity

2016 was a year of growth and excitement for CZERWONE NOSKI (RNPL). They **expanded their visits to oncology patients** in Warsaw, Kraków, Wrocław and Łódź. This included starting interventions in the most modern oncology clinic in Poland, called the “Cape of Hope”.

At the same time, RNPL continues their regular visits at the Budzik Clinic located in Warsaw. This institution is a unique coma treatment clinic, offering one year rehabilitation programme for children with severe brain damage. Since 2013, over 30 patients have woken up and many remember our clowns from the period before waking up from their coma.



Young oncology patients are a major focus of CZERWONE NOSKI

Slovakia – Focusing on Spreading Laughter

The clowns over at ČERVENÝ NOS have had a busy year in their mission to bring laughter to people in need of joy. They **expanded the Intensive Smile programme (NOS!)** to Banská Bystrica, they **doubled the number of Caravan Orchestra performances** in special institutions and **increased their geriatric outreach** to 15 new institutions. They also welcomed a **new Artistic Director** at the end of the year, **Pavel Mihalák**. He has been an essential part of the Slovakian team since 2010.



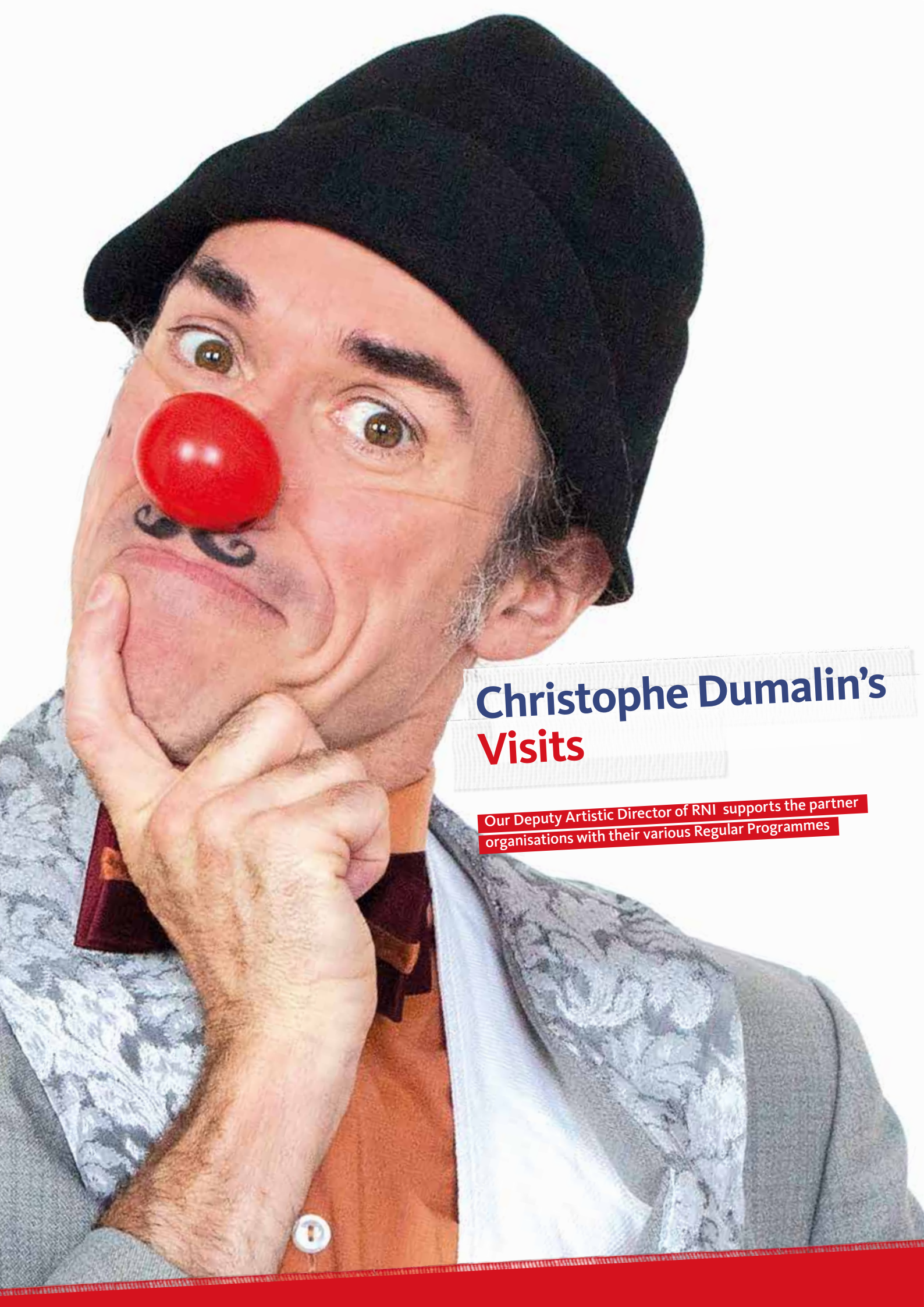
Over 200 disabled children participated in the Caravan Orchestra in Slovakia in 2016.

Slovenia – Happy Smiles, Improving Lifestyles

In November 2016, RDEČI NOSKI marked a major milestone by introducing Circus Patientus in Slovenia. Through intensive workshops led by Pavel Mihalák, from ČERVENÝ NOS Clowndoctors, three of their professional artists debuted the first 'Circus Soča' in University Rehabilitation Institute in Soča. The show was warmly received by the hospital staff and was a major success. Most importantly, the children were shining brightly as the stars of the show with the support of clowns, parents and medical staff.



The Circus Patientus programme is a major success in Slovenia



Christophe Dumalin's Visits

Our Deputy Artistic Director of RNI supports the partner organisations with their various Regular Programmes

Christophe Dumalin reinforces the artistic development of our partner organisations as part of the broader role of RNI to ensure the professional integrity of our interactions with young patients in a manner that is caring, touching and uplifting.

Below are a compilation of Christophe's travel reports from his three day trips in 2016 summarizing the RED NOSES Children's programmes. Each report details his visit to each partner organisation to maintain the high artistic standards we demand from all of our clowns.

May – Enhancing the Children's Programme in Poland

Our Polish colleagues have worked hard to build up their Children's Programme. According to Anna Williams, the Artistic Director of CZERWONE NOSKI, their priority has been to strengthen their relationships with their hospital partners. So when new clowns were successfully chosen to join the Polish team, I was invited to give feedback on their hospital interventions with patients.

They accomplished this in the one way they know best – by creating magical moments for children. These young patients must often confront Fear, pain, insecurity and boredom during their stay. The clowns help counter these negative moments by attending individually to each child's needs.

The new clowns spent many hours in the hospitals creating playful experiences in each room. The artists used a wide array of techniques and tricks to support and empower these vulnerable patients. The trip was over before I knew it, but Anna and I were confident in the empathy and capabilities of each clown.

June – Mentoring Austrian Clowns for Rehabilitation Patients

From my experiences as a professional clown, the Rehabilitation programme is one of the most rewarding. In Austria, our professional artists

have partnered with rehabilitation wards for over ten years. We assist the physical and mental rehabilitation of patients of all ages.

In one of my recent visits, I encountered a wide variety of patients. It is a unique environment where at times you cannot see progress in merely one visit. Some patients we encounter have limited abilities to communicate. Some have suffered debilitating physical injuries while others are learning to cope with their new way of living. Whatever the personal circumstances are; we are committed to being present every step of the way.

We work with these individuals on a one-to-one basis regardless where they are on their recovery path. We are there to offer respite in their difficult therapeutic schedules. Each patient must go through a rigorous regime of treatments in order to recover; we bring a breath of fresh air to this process. What is important is to help each person to accept their new situations. We do this by being present in the most difficult times.

We partner with therapists when treating their patients. The medical staff fully brief each artist on the patient's background story as well as what brought the individual into rehabilitation. We use this as a tool to better identify with their inner self.



Children are the star of the show for Circus Patientus!

20 | Using their past as inspiration, with strong emotions and themes, we aid in the recovery process. Each clown understands this unique environment and is receptive to the reactions they may receive. I am confident that through my work, we help motivate each rehabilitation patient during their recovery.

September – A Special Circus Patientus for Internally Displaced Ukrainians

We were invited to meet disadvantaged children in the L'viv region of Ukraine. Our timing was crucial. The on-going conflict in Ukraine has forced many children and families from their homes.

If a child was lucky, a member of their family was present to take care of them. Many children did not have this privilege and were orphaned by the armed conflict.

I assembled a team of clowndoctors to carry out our Circus Patientus programme in housing institutions for internally displaced persons. Each artist chosen had previous experience with the Circus Patientus programme. In total, we visited three cities and reached out to over 100 children.

Bringing together the right team of artists was no simple task. In order to ensure the necessary conditions for a successful mission, each clown had to be experienced with our Circus Patientus programme. This meant each artist already had received additional training, on top of our regular training curriculum, in order to perform this special programme. Only with the right mixture of professional artists could we guarantee the impact and significance of our mission.

Our team rehearsed with these children to produce fantastic shows at the end of the five-day workshops. Everyone could participate how they liked. Either by learning little clown pieces, performing magic tricks, assembling simple costumes or painting invitations and posters. You should have seen the final performances!

The children were wonderful. By creating a sensitive environment where the children were treated with dignity, we lifted their self-esteem and developed their creative spirit. It goes to show how important it is to positively reinforce children in life's difficult times.

The beauty of Circus Patientus is that it empowers all children who participate. Whether they are an orphan, mentally or multiply disabled, traumatized or hospitalized, we give them the attention and respect they deserve. We molded the week long workshop to the needs and capabilities of each child present. By creating a sense of trust, we maximize the benefits of our time together. It is all about reassuring the identity and actions of each child.

In this particular mission, there was an added dimension to the psychosocial support we provided. Each person we encountered had to leave their homes unwillingly. We gave them a brief refrain from this harsh reality and helped them to internalize their current life situations. This was not only for the adults, but also for the children. By making a safe, playful and respectful area for children to play, we also gave the parents an opportunity to smile once more.

October – Being Present with Children During Their Treatments in the Czech Republic

The Intensive Smile programme has been a running success in the Czech Republic for a number of years. Locally known as NOS! [To the Operating Room], their programme accompanies young patients from the waiting room until the point in which their operations begin. It is a fulfilling encounter for all those involved, most importantly, for the children.

This is why I asked Petr Jarčevský, the Artistic Director of ZDRAVOTNÍ KLAUN, to share with me his expertise on how to properly implement the programme.

We are in the preparation stages of expanding Intensive Smile to more partner organisations and so my primary goal was to gather as much information as possible to share this knowledge with the rest of our colleagues.

Intensive Smile is the natural progression of our inclusion into the hospital environment. We want to work together with the medical staff to become an integral part of their daily routines. With successful interventions also in Austria and in Slovakia, we know this is an avenue of fruitful cooperations.

Our clowndoctors are present during the highly stressful moments, providing relief and respite for everyone - the nurses, the doctors, the parents, but also importantly, the children. Several studies show the biggest emotional spikes of fear and angst for children occur directly before a medical treatment. When a child receives anesthesia, they often fall asleep with this fear at the forefront of their mind. During my visit, several doctors told me how this negatively affected not only their ability to cooperate with the child after the treatment, but it also had an adverse effect on the child's recovery.

A clown's presence helps to ease the entire journey. Not only would it make the lives of the medical staff easier, but most importantly, it would be of benefit for the young patients involved. It is a proven fact that when a child wakes up in a relaxed mood, their ability to cooperate and their eventual recovery are improved. We will continually work to make the lives of those we work with brighter and more delightful.

November – A Favourite Programme for Mentally and Multiple Disabled Children in Slovakia

Upholding our high artistic standards for our programmes requires constant observation and evaluation. Knowing this full well, Milan Chalmovsky, the interim Artistic Director of ČERVENÝ NOS in Slovakia, asked me to come to Bratislava to provide feedback on their Caravan Orchestra programme.



RED NOSES clowns help lift the spirits of children in hospital environments.

It is an important part in their organisation and is well-received in their community.

Caravan Orchestra is a tailored made musical theatre for children with multiple and mental disabilities. Many of these children come from a loving and caring environment but are often overwhelmed with all the inputs in everyday life they receive. This is why the clowns are deliberately sensitive to this audience. We give the children the opportunity to comprehend and express their feelings in their own time and how they want.

The main language used to connect with this audience is music. Soothing melodies and calming rhythms are commonplace. What is also important is building a bridge on a deeper, more emotional level with each participant. That means each child's name is sung individually. We celebrate who they are, we celebrate their names and we celebrate the emotions they feel when their name is called. It is so important for their confidence to have this confirmation. I was more than impressed with what I saw.



Humour is Not a Question of Age

Why it is important to remember the health
and well-being of the elderly

Martina Haslhofer has been a clowndoctor for ROTE NASEN Clowndoctors in Austria since 1994. The trained actress and social worker regularly visits, among others, senior citizens in nursing homes, in geriatric psychiatric institutions and in geriatric hospitals. She is, what you would call, our resident expert on elderly care. With many years of experience, Martina also holds many public lectures on the role of humour in senior care. Below is a small excerpt from her conversation about the impact of the geriatric programme of the RED NOSES Group in Austria and many other countries.

RNI: Your work with older people differs significantly from the visits to the children's wards in hospitals. How does the work of a clown in geriatric wards differ?

MH: Elderly people usually suffer from the limitations of their mobility, their perception, and their ability to remember or communicate. Moreover, they often feel disconnected or lonesome as they are not engaged in society any longer. Clowns meet the senior citizens individually, with a lot of appreciation and empathy. We help to recreate this sense of belonging. We turn these situations upside down, showing the elderly that their weaknesses are merely fictional. We engage the senior citizens in a variety of activities that reveal long-forgotten own abilities.

RNI: What do they normally laugh at?

MH: Senior citizens normally laugh at 'adult' subjects. That is, subjects that amuse people and make them laugh such as love or relational mishaps between partners. For these reasons, in my clown visits, I often seek the advice of the elderly about relationships. They often tell me to go out and fall in love with one of the caregivers or another visitor.

Before starting our clown visits, we often receive important information about the life of the senior citizens from the nursing staff and then reminisce with them about their "golden years".

That means singing songs together, sharing recipes, recalling familiar smells or telling stories. Activating all their senses brings back positive memories.

RNI: In the children's programme, the young patients meet RED NOSES clowns only a few times. This is different in the seniors programme.

MH: The senior citizens live for many years in these facilities. We interact with these persons every week. Through the establishment of deep and authentic relationships with the inhabitants, it has a positive effect on their well-being.

RNI: What do you do in the RED NOSES Varieté. Can you tell something about it?

MH: With the Variété, we show the senior citizens that there are more skills in them than they are aware of. Within two days, we collaborate to create a small performance with them. Their personal stage number can take inspiration from the fields of dance, artistry, magic and other artistic endeavours. The show is designed to help people with different physical and cognitive impairments. In front of a selected audience, such as residents, members of staff or nursing staff, the senior citizens introduce their newly discovered skills. Their successful show and the applause strengthen their self-confidence and bring back a zest into their life.

RNI: Thank you for the interview!



We treat each elder with respect and dignity.



Beyond our Borders

Discussing the challenges of Emergency Smile Missions
with Karola Sakotnik and their benefits for affected communities

Leading a team of clowns into difficult situations is no easy task. Just ask Karola Sakotnik, programme leader of Emergency Smile, as she guided this special programme through its most ambitious year yet. While there were many challenges along the way, there were also many triumphs. Karola reflects upon her missions to Greece and Ukraine, on the progress made, and also on the lessons learned from 2016.

RNI: Can you remind us where the idea of Emergency Smile (ES) came from?

KS: The spark for ES came from a broad observation by RED NOSES made during the Kosovo War in 1999. While the humanitarian organisations on the ground were doing a fantastic job to alleviate the basic human needs of the vulnerable people, we knew our unique expertise was also needed.

So we developed the concept to aid the work of humanitarian organisations based on the power of laughter. Bringing out a smile on someone's face can be one of the greatest wonders and a gift in troubling times. Following our first mission in Kosovo, we visited numerous countries over the years including Cameroon and Jordan.

RNI: What exactly is an Emergency Smile mission?

KS: An ES mission, simply put, is our effort to bring lightness to people who are in desperate situations. More concretely, that means we put

together a team of specially trained artists who visit disaster or war struck locations and provide psychosocial support, throughout a series of different activities and workshops.

Initially, our missions lasted a short amount of time. For example, in Cameroon, we were engaged in the field for three weeks, working with the local branch of Doctors Without Borders, to accompany their medical expertise with children suffering from neglected diseases. However, as time went by and as the value of this support became more widely recognized, we expanded the range and length of our missions.

RNI: How was this year different from the previous ones?

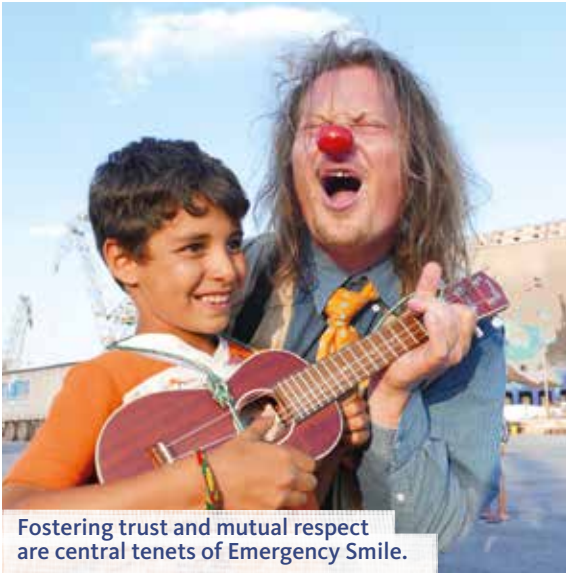
KS: This past year marked our lengthiest presence on the ground ever. We supported the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies beginning in May until early October. Our clowns brought much needed joy to those children and families in Greece fleeing from violence and persecution in Middle East and Northern Africa.

RNI: Why do you think these missions are worthwhile?

KS: They are important because we are mindful of the emotional and mental well-being of each individual in critical situations. It is not always obvious when someone is traumatized by their experiences.



Clown parades are both cheerful and fun for all participants!



Fostering trust and mutual respect are central tenets of Emergency Smile.

For example, in Greece, while our partners took care of the basic human needs of the refugees, our task was to create “normalcy” in these turbulent times; we provided the platform for individuals to rediscover what it was like to laugh again and to experience moments of joy. You could not believe the power of seeing children laughing and playing through the streets of a refugee camp, knowing that they were safe and away from immediate danger. In Ukraine, our challenges were quite different.

RNI: That’s right! The ES missions to Greece were only half of the activities you had last year. You also went to Ukraine. How were those missions structured differently?

KS: In Ukraine, we were traveling to a country where an active conflict was on-going. In fact, this is the reality still today. We visited families in partnership with the Ukrainian Red Cross Societies that were severely affected, in all senses of the term, by the current conflict.

Their living conditions were often uncomfortable, sharing a living space of 10m² with other families, no means of income and no real certainty for the future.

We entered several social institutions dedicated to helping Ukrainians who were internally displaced by the conflict. This usually meant young women and their children, who fled from their homes due to the conflict. Our missions were dedicated to providing these children with the occasion to play when such an opportunity did not exist.

The clowns provided them with numerous activities and workshops to develop their creative and artistic abilities. This included learning how to play the ukulele, walking on a tight rope and solving various challenges as a team.

While our time was limited in each institution, we concentrated on leaving each child with new skills and techniques to create more opportunities for play and humour in their daily lives. This also meant we left behind supplies and equipment each time for the children to continue to practice the new things they learned.

RNI: What was the hardest moment? The best moment?

KS: The hardest part is always leaving a location when you have a genuine connection with the community there. I know for myself and the other artists that we were profoundly impacted by the people who let us into their lives and shared their emotional tumult with us.

At the same time, this was also the most enchanting of moments. Whether it was in Greece, in Ukraine, when a person or family displays this overwhelming level of trust and respect for your craft, it reinforces the importance of our work. This was our primary motivation, being able to see the impact we made, by bringing humour and laughter to those who need it most, day in and day out, wherever it is necessary.



Research and Advocacy

We believe that international non-profit organizations play a crucial role in promoting the rights of the most vulnerable in society. Advocating for the rights of hospitalised children, youth with disabilities, the elderly and other vulnerable groups remained a priority for RNI in 2016. The fulfilment of our mission is dependent on the well-being of these “audiences”. Therefore, we are invested in a positive societal change that places these rights at the centre of governmental policies and calls attention to the role of cultural participation in championing inclusiveness, resilience and empowerment.

These topics are at the central tenet of all scientific endeavours our research department pursues. In 2016, the focus of the department was twofold: (1) to build systematic cooperation agreements with key strategic partners to set up joint research projects, and; (2) to explore new and exciting research projects such as:

Understanding of and reaction to RED NOSES clown humour by hospitalized infants and toddlers: A pilot study.

The Faculty of Psychology of the University of Vienna, in cooperation with RED NOSES in Austria, collaborated on a new research project in two Viennese hospitals. The goal of this study was to examine infants’ reactions and the factors that may influence their behaviours towards hospital clowns. Initial results suggested that the presence of the caregiver is crucial for infant appreciation of clown humour in the hospital setting. Infants not only actively searched for the signals of their parents, but parental behaviours were crucial for infants’ interpretations of the clowns’ behaviours as funny.

The positive news of this study will be presented at various scientific conferences in 2017, including the International Convention of Psychological Science and the 25th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services. Plans for cooperation between the RED NOSES Group and the Medical University of Vienna are in the pipeline, including a large scale research project, also involving the Section for Outcomes Research, Center for Medical Statistics, Informatics, and Intelligent Systems, to develop and evaluate a custom-made medical clowning intervention to improve the mental health and hygiene of children living in refugee shelters in Europe.

The University of Zurich (in cooperation with RED NOSES Austria) published a study* showing that RED NOSES clowns brought amusement to the patients, and patients felt valued and privileged by the clowns.

The patients formed an emotional connection with clowns, indicating the uniqueness of the clown visits and the positive and humorous effect by the clown intervention was not only felt by the patient. That is, those who observed the interaction between the clown and the patient were also emotionally affected. The clowns, through direct contact with the patient, provided a positive impact for observers like parents, relatives, friends, or caregivers. These results showed that in addition to supporting the essential work carried out by hospital staff, RED NOSES clowns proved to be an important component in creating positive experiences.

*Auerbach, S., Ruch, W., & Fehling, A. (2016). Positive emotions elicited by clowns and nurses: An experimental study in a hospital setting. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, 2, 14-24.

Our Partnerships

28 | Our valuable partners invest in the hope and joy we bring. They directly empower many people and give them the confidence to deal with their challenging situation. Here are some success stories.



Go ahead and overtake me, I've already won ... for laughter in hospitals!

The C&A Foundation raised over €120,000 for RED NOSES International in the Vienna City Marathon. Divided into 38 relay teams, 152 C&A employees from 17 different countries competed in the Vienna City Marathon on April 10th, 2016. This inspiring commitment empowered sick children through uplifting clown hospital visits in Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia.

A warm-up session led by a RED NOSES clown, provided the best motivation to share in the joy of the event. Norbert W. Scheele, CEO of C&A Mode Austria and Central Eastern Europe, showed his sporting side by joining the running team, "I am pleased that our employees were so engaged with this mission to bring laughter and joy into life in hospitals. Running together for a good cause is something we value in our employees!"



UBER provides a once-in-a-life time opportunity in honour of RED NOSES Germany

The famous tech company, Uber, partnered with RED NOSES Germany and Grand Tour to create the project "Supercars on Demand". This unique event started in December 2016, where Ferrari and Lamborghini fans could book a free ride through Berlin via the Uber app. Subsequently, they would be informed about the work of RED NOSES Germany and had the possibility to donate an amount of their choice to RED NOSES via the Uber App. Many drivers also collected in-kind donations for RED NOSES Germany in Berlin and Munich.

Their generous support gives more young patients the opportunity to rediscover their zest for life. Social engagement is important for a young and international company such as Uber. Together with RED NOSES this is a big chance to show the world, that giving hope to those who need it most is possible in a positive way full of fun.

Reaching patients with innovative technology in partnership with Microsoft and HT

In the beginning of 2016, RED NOSES Croatia started the project "Laughter is a cure – Skype with a clown", with funding from HT (Croatian Telekom) and technical expertise from Microsoft. Its purpose was to reach out to young oncology patients in the lonely and difficult afternoon hours. Relying on the technical expertise of its partners, RED NOSES Croatia could Skype call a group of children in a common area of the hospital to virtually entertain and interact with them. With the help of new technologies, the clowns visited sick children more often, in addition to their regular visits. The project is currently in three oncology departments in two different cities. Over the course of 2016, a total of 36 calls were made featuring different clowns with their unique skills and tricks. The calls received great reactions from the children as well as their parents and the hospital staff.



Co-funded by the
Creative Europe Programme
of the European Union

Completion of “The Faces Behind the Nose”

Our project “The Faces Behind the Nose – Promoting Hospital Clowning as a Recognized Genre of Performing Arts” supported by the European Commission’s Creative Europe programme concluded in late 2016. During the two year project, we delivered high quality training to more than 300 artists from nine European Union Member States. As a result, more than 50 national and international workshops were held to develop new artistic skills and to invest in the professional development of the clowndoctor artists. This training was complemented by more than 60 international exchanges and cross-border performances that fostered the exchange of know how and artistic approaches to hospital clowning.

In addition it supported the development of a comprehensive training curriculum, that set new benchmarks for the professional development of our clowndoctors in each country we operate. The project further resulted in the development and implementation of new artistic formats designed to reach new audiences, either by enlarging the geographic reach of the partner organisation’s work or by reaching out to new target groups. This included testing innovative approaches aimed at new audiences including children and youth with disabilities, children in palliative care at home, the elderly, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. In total, more than 700 performances and 180 tailor-made workshops were carried out in 11 different countries.

The project allowed us to have a broad social impact stressing the important role played by the arts in bringing about social innovation and enhancing the overall well-being of the beneficiaries.

As an artistic organisation, our cooperation with the healthcare and humanitarian aid sector brought about synergies and complementary actions that opened new avenues and perspectives into our work.

As a result of the “Faces Behind the Nose” project, RED NOSES built an important expertise in working with a variety of vulnerable groups, also outside of the hospital, and will continue incorporating these learnings in its activities. The project positively impacted the lives of thousands of children in hospitals, refugee camps and IDP centres, as well as children and youth with disabilities. We are continuing our efforts to bring about social change through the transformative power of humour and will build on the project and its results to maximise the reach and the positive impact of our work.

We want to increase the inclusion and participation of vulnerable groups in society, building on the accomplishments of the project. We want to keep on responding to the diverse needs and challenges faced by our societies, and we know that art and culture play a crucial role in finding sustainable solutions. Through art, doors and minds are opened that would otherwise be closed. We believe that a cross-sectorial approach is essential to access mainstream culture and thereby enhance the inherent power of the arts to bring people together and contribute to a more inclusive and open society.



Our partnership with Creative Europe allowed us to reach many IDPs in Ukraine!

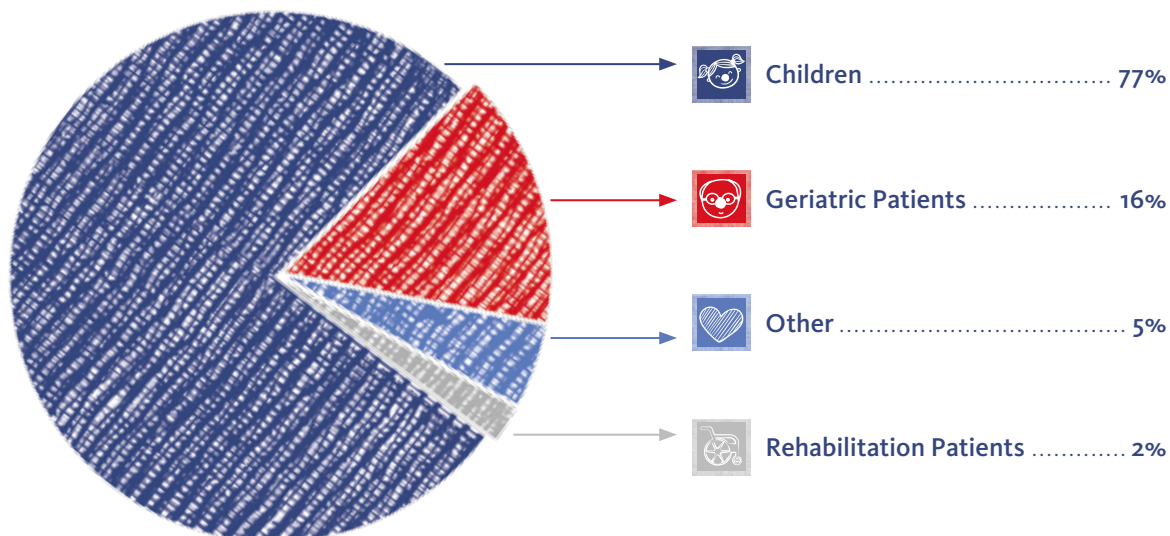
RED NOSES Clowndoctors International Financial Report 2016

Sources of funding	€
I. Donations	2,279,264
a) Non-dedicated donations	2,242,690
International cooperation	2,206,399
Corporate donations	28,643
Private donations	7,648
b) Dedicated donations	36,574
II. Subsidies and public funds	210,900
III. Other revenue	17,518
a) Interest and other financial revenues	5,335
b) Miscellaneous revenue not included in I-III	12,182
Total	2,507,682

Allocation of funds	€
I. Expenditures to achieve charitable status	1,675,354
a) International clown programmes	1,298,838
b) Research, information and communication	170,617
c) Foundation management	205,899
II. Expenditures to achieve non-profit status	170,373
Fundraising	170,373
III. Administrative costs	228,393
IV. Allocation to Reserves	433,563
Total	2,507,682

RED NOSES Group Clown Visits by Patients

Thanks to the monitoring and artistic training programme of RNI, our clowns visited around 708,000 patients through our partner organisations.



RED NOSES

Clowndoctors International

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