



WeMove Europe gGmbH - Activity report 2023

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Foundation

WeMove Europe gGmbH was founded in March 2016 as a daughter organisation of the European Social Cooperative WeMove Europe SCE mbH.

The non-profit “WeMove Europe gGmbH” is a society for EU-wide education, democracy, international understanding and environmental protection. It fosters action in these fields, within the European community, and promotes European political discourse for, and by, European citizens. Indeed, the EU works best when its citizens are engaged and address European institutions through instruments of citizen participation, like for example the European Citizens Initiative, made available by the European Commission. Also the creation of campaigns is another illustration of successful citizens' engagement: recent experiences in Europe have shown how powerful they can be, for addressing and informing important issues like climate change or social justice.

WeMove Europe gGmbH empowers citizens, and enables them to learn about and directly engage and communicate with European institutions.

Visual identity

After having launched our new visual identity in 2022 we worked on maintaining and improving the new website. The website has been updated on a regular basis with the new WeMove Europe gGmbH campaigns and partnerships, it reflects our new visual identity for communicating our history, experience and expertise in the European digital campaigning space. Our brand reflects cooperation and is meant to solidify and make it easier to navigate the visual identity relation between WeMove Europe gGmbH and its legal partner WeMove Europe SCE.

Activities & Charitable causes

Introduction

Through communications and a series of online and offline tools, WeMove Europe gGmbH promotes the participation of citizens in the creation of the European political discourse and involves them actively in the European political agenda. Our YouMove platform offers Europeans the opportunity to create their own campaigns, disseminate them to a wider audience and bring upon real sustainable change.

We have learned throughout the years that some initiatives need sustained efforts over time to be effective and in 2023 we scaled up three of our long-running campaigns related to GMOs and labelling, gene drives and how to protect our health by campaigning for clean air.

Through internet-based educational formats, we are able to make some challenging topics accessible and understandable for all citizens. This year we provided information about fundamental EU social and environmental issues like energy poverty, migration routes and pollution provoked by the exportation of European plastic wastes or luxury emission.

People from all over Europe got involved in these campaigns, sharing ideas and taking action through signing petitions or writing to local representatives. All these possibilities have been promoted by WeMove Europe gGmbH, to enable people to play their part in the European democratic space.

Webinars have been a successful tactic for reaching out to citizens and in 2023 we explored the opportunities for enhancing the promotion and functionality of our YouMove platform by introducing webinar tools.

WeMove Europe gGmbH continued in 2023 to coordinate the campaign to build bridges between climate activists and farming communities in Poland, with the aim to promote sustainable practices and create a dialogue between different sectors of the civil society. A new participatory project was launched, with the initiative to create an alliance with other organisations to raise awareness about the 2024 EU elections and bring people out to vote.

Here is a detailed presentation of the outcomes of our activities in 2023, displayed following the missions reflected in our statutory purposes.

Purpose: Education

WeMove Europe gGmbH contributes to citizenship education by informing its members about the political decision-making processes at EU level. In 2023, again, we informed members through internet-based educational tools such as online petitions. We designed and hosted public information events, and disseminated information online in order to generate citizens' expression and participation on pressing environmental issues.

Moratorium on Gene Drive Organisms



Our "[Stop Gene Drives](#)" campaign continued to inform civil society and decision makers about the risks and unanswered questions surrounding the environmental release of gene drive organisms. Gene drive technology has emerged as a new genetic technique of engineering living organisms however when released in nature, they can replace their natural counterparts until they're eradicated, thus harming biodiversity, human health, agriculture and peace.

During the first phase of this campaign in 2021, our members funded an [opinion poll](#) which highlighted that the majority of Europeans wanted to ban this specific technology. Combining education and online tools, we promoted what citizens expected from politicians in terms of protection of nature and the environment.

In 2023 our members were given another opportunity to send tweets, emails and personal messages to their representatives, drawing their attention to the implications of releasing any gene drive organisms into nature before we understand and know how to avoid the risks.



Signature collection for the petition calling for a [global moratorium on gene drive organisms](#) closed on 30 March 2023. Over 300,000 signatures were collected from European citizens, and the signatures were delivered to environmental and agricultural ministries in Germany, Poland, Slovakia and Spain. The signatures also reinforced a call for a moratorium at the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 meeting in December 2022.

Ban EU plastic waste exports

Our unsustainable economic system is built on the needless production of plastics and it's hard to avoid plastic packaging in our daily lives. We're so often told that recycling is the answer. But much of the plastic waste we put aside to recycle is actually shipped to Turkey and Southeast Asia for recycling.



The EU is one of the largest exporters of plastic waste in the world and it has led the EU to export its plastic waste pollution problem, together with the related harm to the environment and human health. In many of these plastic recycling sites, workers and local communities suffer from respiratory problems, severe headaches and skin conditions.

All because of toxins emitted from recycling plastics.

It is therefore that WeMove Europe gGmbH, together with partner organisation experts in plastics, has launched the campaign [Ban EU plastic waste exports](#). The campaign is calling on the European Union to ban all exports of plastic waste outside of the Union, and put in place additional protections to protect people's health and the environment for intra-EU waste shipments. The goal of a ban on exports of plastic waste could also force the EU to rethink its entire approach to plastic production and pollution and be a step in the right direction.

The campaign reached a major milestone on the 15th November 2023 when the petition signatures and message of thousands of engaged citizens who want to protect the environment was successfully and directly brought to our decision-makers. WeMove Europe, together with its partner coalition delivered the petition with over 160.000 signatures to the cabinet of Commissioner European Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries.



In November 2023, the European Commission published a legislative proposal to ensure that the EU does not export its waste challenges to third countries. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council agreed that exporting plastic waste to non-OECD countries is to be prohibited within 2.5 years.

The topic of plastic waste is strongly felt by the members of our community as we collected an amount of signatures as never before and received many messages of support:

"Abfallexport und wieder sind die Auswirkungen unseres ungebremsten Konsums aus den Augen."
Kerstin from Germany

"Jeglicher Abfall sollte in dem Land, in dem er entstanden ist, auch behandelt werden. Dies entspräche einer tatsächlichen Verantwortung eines Landes unter anderem für den Klimaschutz und den Schutz von Ressourcen!!!" Petra from Germany

We will continue to follow developments closely, as the reduction of waste and harmful substances represents a major contribution to environmental protection.

Purpose: Democratic State

WeMove Europe gGmbH launches campaigns aiming at the political participation of citizens in the EU political decision-making processes. With a simple petition, European citizens have a window to express what they expect from their own political systems. As the role of our platform is to promote democratic principles, we provide European citizens tools so that they can fully participate in all aspects of their lives.



Protect our health. Clean air now!

Combining health and environmental aspects, our campaign "[*Clean air for all*](#)" reflects the needs of European citizens on the issue of air pollution that affects their lives daily. Air pollution causes asthma, cancers, and chronic diseases and leads to hundreds of thousands of deaths in Europe every year.

Current EU air quality standards don't meet the science-based air quality recommendations of the World Health Organisation (WHO). In 2021 we launched a campaign together with the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) to promote that the Commission's proposal for improving EU air quality standards should meet the recommendations of WHO.

More than 140,000 Europeans decided to take part in the participatory process by signing our petition *"Clean air for all"*. In 2023, we invited the signatories of the petition to write to their EU representatives and in September 2023 the EU Parliament plenary voted in favour of the "Ambient Air Quality Directive". This would mean new, legally-binding air quality limits for Europe who would finally be in line with WHO Guidelines on clean air.

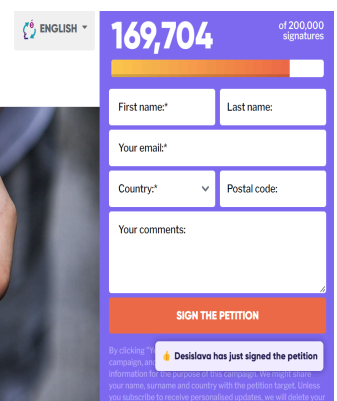
This successful vote is a crucial step forward and we are relieved that Members of the European Parliament (MEP's) listened to WeMove members and to our partners Health and Environment Alliance. That they saw the urgency to act. Poor air quality is the top environmental threat to people's health and currently, over 97% of people living in European cities are breathing health-threatening air.

The next step is the bigger challenge: national governments approving the stronger air quality limits. This will take a huge show of support for clean air from people all across Europe, and WeMove Europe gGmbH will be with them every step of the way.

Keep GMO food regulated and labelled!

In Europe, for our safety and transparency, we have strict regulations on genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In 2022 the European Commission published a proposal for the deregulation of GMO foods. WeMove Europe gGmbH, together with a strong coalition of partners, responded by creating a campaign calling to keep GMO food regulated and labelled.

Keep GMO food regulated and labelled!

The campaign "[Keep GMO food regulated and labelled](#)" gives European citizens the possibility to participate directly in the democratic process by giving resonance to their concerns about losing the right to safe, healthy and transparent food. Furthermore it promotes existing alternatives and really sustainable farming practices which have been well researched like agroecology and permaculture.

WeMove Europe gGmbH alone collected over 150,000 signatures and altogether the coalition against the deregulation of GMOs collected more than 400,000 signatures. In the beginning of 2023, a public manifestation was organised for the handover of the petition, to send a strong

message to the European Commission and EU governments that people all over Europe want to keep GMO foods regulated and that deregulating GMOs would be a huge step backward for farming communities, people and the environment.



On 7th February this year, the European Parliament voted in favour of a vast deregulation of new GMOs which is a disappointing result.

The legislation passed by a relatively narrow margin of 307 to 263, with 41 members abstaining.

No power cuts for those who can't pay!

The Russian invasion of Ukraine exacerbated the energy crises of many households all around Europe. The energy crisis is a crisis of deeply rooted inequalities and people who already struggle are affected the most. But what makes this even worse are the power cuts for people who cannot pay their enormously increased electricity bills. To tackle this, after the Russian invasion and the rapid energy cost increase that followed, WeMove Europe gGmbH started a rapid response campaign "[No power cuts for those who can't pay!](#)" to call for a stop of power cut-offs during the winter.

The goal of this campaign was primarily to protect vulnerable people during the coldest month of the year and ideally to include a ban of power cut-offs in EU policy. Supported by around 65,000 Europeans who came together and signed the petition, we pressured the European Commission to do so. As we wanted to make sure that a strong message reaches the politicians, we invited the signatories to write individual twitter posts to them. This enormous pressure from our community led the commission to advise the policy to the member states.

No power cuts for those who can't pay this winter!



ENGLISH

65,293
of 75,000 signatures

First name:
Last name:

Your email:

Country:
Postcode:

Please let us know if you're worried about being cut-off for not paying bills
We will not reveal this information to anyone

Your comments:
Janine has just signed the petition

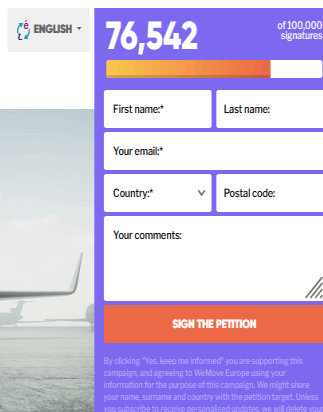
Purpose: protection of the environment

WeMove Europe gGmbH works actively on the promotion and dissemination of campaigns to protect the environment. The aim is to raise awareness towards the degradation of our natural ecosystem, contribute to citizens participation in the decision-making process at EU level and create solid and lasting collaborations to fasten the adoption of pivotal measures on pressing environmental issues.

Ban private jets and luxury emissions

In light of the reality that only 1% of the population is responsible for almost all CO2 emissions and private jet sales have never been higher, WeMove Europe gGmbH launched the campaign "[Ban private jets and luxury emissions!](#)" in May 2023. The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of the severe inequality that exists as many of us struggle to make ends meet while private jet sales are skyrocketing and billionaires are responsible for obscene amounts of luxury emissions.

Ban private jets and luxury emissions!

ENGLISH - 76,542 of 100,000 signatures

First name* Last name*

Your email*

Country* Postal code*

Your comments:

SIGN THE PETITION

By clicking "Yes, keep me informed" you are supporting this campaign, and agreeing to WeMove Europe using your information for the purpose of this campaign. We might share your name, surname and country with the petition target. Unless you subscribe to receive personalised updates, we will delete your

More than 76,500 people of this community have come together to support the call for more climate justice and to cut emissions from luxury flights. We demanded to ban private jets from European airports, establish a tax on frequent flyers and an end to frequent flyer programmes.

From the many hundreds of emails and comments from our members on the campaign, we can tell that people are clearly worried. Here are some comments from our members:

"Our use of fossil fuels has spiked rather than gone down. The (increased) use of private jets is an ill advised phenomenon that needs to end." - Andrea from Denmark

"Many of us are every day trying to take measures that will take the pressure off the problem of accelerating climate change which is affecting large swathes of our small planet, why then are the richest people allowed to use private jets as they wish with no thought for the rest of us? They will suffer too as catastrophic effects become entirely clear!" - Linda from United Kingdom

Purpose: Internationalism and Tolerance

WeMove Europe gGmbH proposes activities for creating connections among cultures and promoting internationalism and tolerance. In 2023, we gave voice to the international spirit of solidarity and tolerance, advocating for migration policies that protect people and put humanity first.

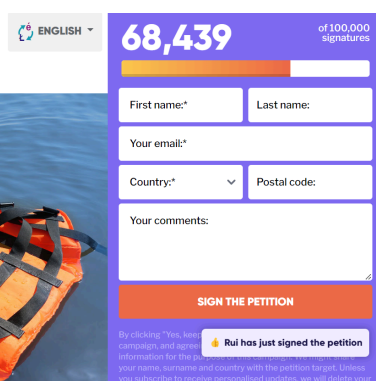
No more deaths on migration routes

In the face of the devastating events of boats sinking in the mediterranean sea in June 2023, WeMove Europe gGmbH has launched a rapid response petition in collaboration with [Campax](#) and some organisations from the [OPEN network](#).

The campaign [“No more deaths on migration routes”](#) aimed to call on MEPs and EU member states to support a more just and humane migration policy. By sending out mailings and posting on social media, we pressured our leaders to stop the Migration Pact from being cemented in EU law and replace it with a migration system that respects the rights of people seeking asylum and reassures that these rights are not violated. We also called for Frontex to be dismantled and funds redirected to efforts to properly receive stranded refugees at Europe’s coasts and borders. Also decision makers and officials must be held accountable for their part in facilitating these deaths.

Around 68.000 Europeans have decided to take action and be part of the collective call on our leaders. This significant pressure from our community opened the way for an [investigation launched by the EU Ombudsman](#) into Frontex’s role in the Pylos shipwreck and how the

No more deaths on migration routes

A screenshot of a petition sign-up form. At the top, it says "68,439" in large blue numbers, with "of 100,000 signatures" in smaller text to the right. Below this is a progress bar. The form fields include: "First name:", "Last name:", "Your email:", "Country:" (with a dropdown arrow), "Postal code:", and "Your comments:". At the bottom is a red button that says "SIGN THE PETITION". Below the button, there is small text: "By clicking 'Yes, I want to sign the petition', you agree to receive updates from the campaign and agree to share your name, surname and country with the petition target. Unless you unsubscribe to receive personalised updates, we will delete your..."

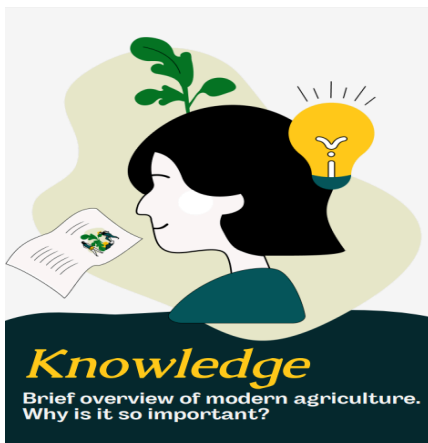
Agency does not comply with its fundamental rights obligations in the context of its search and rescue activities. In February 2024, the results of this investigation were published, concluding shortcomings in Frontex’s reactions to maritime emergency situations.

Purpose: Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is one of the core values of WeMove Europe gGmbH. Throughout the years we have developed and implemented various projects to foster the participation of ordinary citizens in the political decision making process of the European legislative institutions, through educating and making tools available for participation and citizens' meetings.

Farmer's project in Poland

Since 2022, WeMove Europe gGmbH has supported a project to establish relationships and create an alliance between climate activists and farming communities in Poland.



Organised by a local working group of climate activists, Polish small-scale farmers and climate volunteers have been equipped with the resources and networks to communicate with each other more effectively, in their joint cause for climate-friendly farming in Poland. To build bridges and trust-based supporting relations between these communities, in-person and online meetings were organised, culminating in trainings on topics ranging from methods of self organising to working with narratives on issues around climate and farming.

Learnings from the project have been shared with the wider European climate communities through the project's own [web page](#) and [facebook page](#). One of the milestones was the publication of a [handbook](#), in English and Polish, connecting climate and farming narratives. The handbook presents in a succinct way regenerative or agroecological methods to do farming in a better way and plenty of guidance for climate activists on how to initiate and develop long-term relations with farmers.

In 2023, WeMove Europe gGmbH handed over the project to the Polish local working group, successfully reaching the goal of helping to kick-start the movement and let it become independent and self-sustaining.

European Parliament Elections 2024 Get Out To Vote

In 2023, WeMove Europe gGmbH initiated a new project: **EP Elections 2024 Get Out To Vote**. Calling on partners across Europe, a European wide coalition was created to promote European democracy and raise awareness about the 2024 EP elections. In partnership with the [OPEN network](#), the project endeavours to engage European citizens for the 2024 European elections, with a focus on boosting voter turnout, particularly among the youth.

Harnessing the wide network of civil society groups, the initiative aims to strategically engage diverse communities, tackle pivotal issues like climate change, and amplify voices advocating for progressive change. Through coalition-building and targeted outreach, the project seeks to promote a more inclusive and sustainable vision for Europe. Rooted in grassroots activities and digital innovation, the project is a collaborative effort to shape the future of Europe.

To build community between WeMove Europe gGmbH, the OPEN network and partners, a first coalition meeting was organised in Amsterdam in November 2023, where a common strategy and shared tactics for the project were developed.

For the implementation of the project, a project coordinator and a contracts manager were hired in 2023. To mobilise people in key countries, WeMove Europe gGmbH is hiring local Community Organisers in Spain, France, Poland and Belgium, while our coalition partners cover other important EU countries.

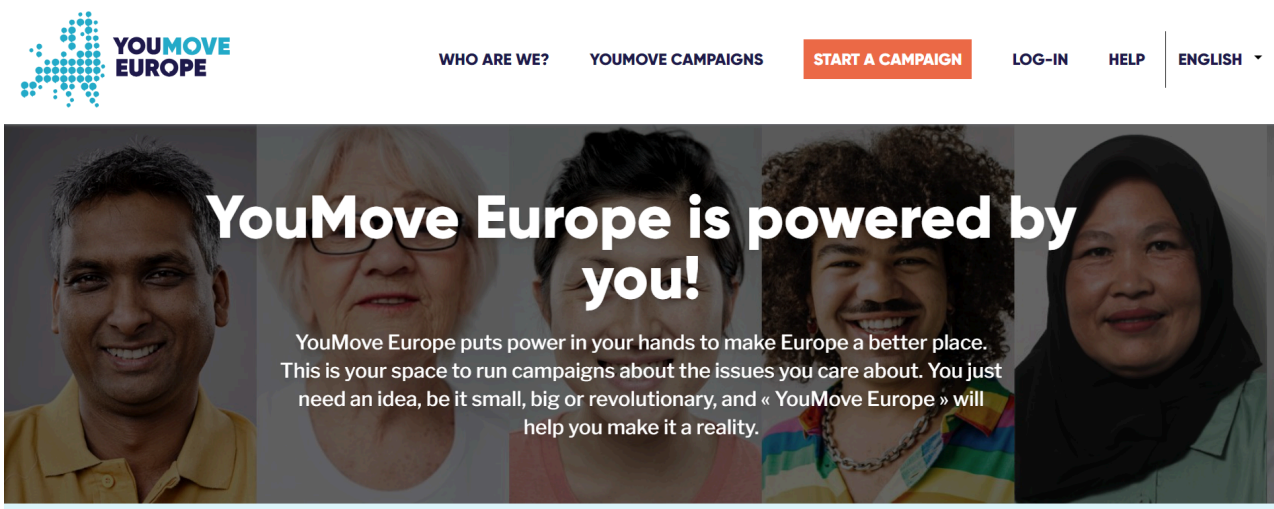


YouMove Europe

Our YouMove platform enables committed citizens and organisations from all over Europe to publish own petitions related to European policies, thus contributing to the public debate. WeMove Europe gGmbH ensures continuous maintenance of this platform and provides both technical support and advice for those who want to run a campaign in the European sphere.

The YouMove platform is especially effective in that the Europe-wide petitions can be set up in multiple languages. The aim of this is to promote stronger citizens' engagement across borders and broader participation in the formation of political processes in Europe.

In total 100 new campaigns were launched on the YouMove platform in 2023 in 15 different languages. YouMove petitions collected over 500.000 signatures (in 2022: 280,000 signatures) and we received 45,000 new contacts (in 2022: 152,000). As more people engaged in campaigns and more partners initiated campaigns, it strengthened our ability to campaign on issues that citizens find important.



In 2023, we invested in hiring YouMove connectors in two countries with the aim of promoting the YouMove platform and connecting YouMove with local communities. Together with the connectors we created informational content on how to create and run a successful campaign on the YouMove platform, we launched explanatory videos on how to reach out to national media agencies and to make the user journey friendlier. Furthermore, Q&A webinars and video forums were organised to share knowledge on how to use the platform.

Petitions for which the interest of citizens is particularly high, are promoted further by WeMove Europe gGmbH to a wide range of interested parties. This has brought impressive successes for among others the following campaigns: "[Save Europe's Amazon](#)", "[End bottom trawling](#)", "[Save the great river of Rafinha](#)", "[EU-Stop selling out people and nature to mining](#)" or "[Let's save the Oder river from another disaster](#)". Some of the initiators of these campaigns, together with our staff, organised webinars for providing more in-depth information about the campaign and to answer questions.

The team

Our YouMove team got a boost in 2023 through the contracting of two part time country connectors to connect YouMove with local communities. The inspiration of broadening the YouMove team contributed to the successes we saw in 2023.

While one of our significant projects ended, the Polish Farmers project and with that the coordinator role of that project, in the second half of 2023 the preparations for the EP Elections were initiated through the hiring of a Project Coordinator (FT) and a Project Contract Manager (PT, 50%).

Financial Development

Income in 2023 amounted to 385,000 euros, with support from individual donors and continued project support from the European Climate Foundation (for the Get Out To Vote project) and Porticus Foundation (for the Farmer's project in Poland). The project income brings stability in the financial development of WeMove Europe gGmbH and 2023 ended with a positive balance.