

**2026 Impact Report & Continuation Request – Project 626 (Machane Shachbag Nitzan Matanel)**

Dear Board of Trustees of the Matanel Foundation

When we began this partnership, we spoke about investing in young people as a way to secure the future of Jewish life in Europe. Following the March 2026 Machane Shachbag, we are able to report with clarity and confidence that this vision is not theoretical, this vision is happening.

This year's camp brought together approximately 350 senior youth participants from across Europe. More than a standalone event, it served as the central educational peak of our annual leadership process, translating identity, values, and responsibility into lived experience. The programme was delivered within a fully immersive residential camp setting in the UK, enabling continuous educational engagement across structured daily programming.

In our original proposal, we committed to three core objectives:

1. strengthening Jewish-Israeli identity,
2. developing youth leadership, and
3. building a connected European Jewish network.

All three were fully delivered, both in design and in measurable outcome. The intentional integration of Israeli and European-born participants fostered meaningful cross-cultural exchange and mutual understanding, strengthening the pan-European Jewish network envisioned in the project design. This shared vision is proven in reality.

From an Educational Framework point of view, the camp implemented a structured, age-specific educational process guiding participants through identity exploration, leadership development, and preparation for adult responsibility.

All participants engaged deeply with questions of identity, belonging, and responsibility, while acquiring practical leadership tools such as decision making, group facilitation, and peer mentorship.

The educational content was intentionally designed around core themes central to the development of Jewish youth in Europe today. These included identity exploration across Israeli, Jewish, and European dimensions; personal responsibility and leadership; ethical decision-making; and the transition from participant to community leader. Participants explored questions such as "What defines my Jewish identity in a European context?", "What does leadership require from me?", and "How do I translate values into action within my community?"

These discussions were complemented by practical leadership exercises, peer-led facilitation, and group challenges, ensuring that learning was not only conceptual but directly applied, transforming Leadership in Practice.

What made this experience particularly impactful was the environment in which it took place. For many participants, this was the only space in their daily lives where they could fully operate in Hebrew within a shared cultural and educational framework. This immersion enabled not only learning, but internalisation transforming abstract identity into lived experience.

In addition, the programme included practical scouting components and experiential outdoor activities, reinforcing teamwork, problem solving, and resilience, core elements of the Tzofim educational methodology.

This integrated approach ensures that leadership is not taught as theory, but developed through reflection, shared experience, and real responsibility within a community setting.

### Creating Safety

In the current European context, the ability to create a secure and open environment is essential to any meaningful educational process.

This year, there was no other option but to reinforce our security infrastructure with an additional professional security officers around the clock, ensuring a safe physical environment for all participants during the camp. Beyond this, the programme succeeded in creating a space of psychological safety where participants could express themselves freely, engage honestly with complex realities, and reconnect with their identity without external pressure.

This dual layer of safety, the physical and the emotional, was a critical factor in achieving the depth of engagement observed throughout the camp.

Besides that, the 2026 camp took place under significant operational constraints. The Israeli delegation (around 20 participants) was unable to attend due to the situation in Israel, alongside an additional 11 cancellations from across Europe that did not feel was the right time to come to the Camp. At the same time, a substantial portion of the Israeli educational staff could not travel, creating a reduced and restructured team.

Despite these challenges, the programme was delivered in full. All planned programme components, including educational modules, leadership training, and group activities, were executed in full, with adjustments made only to staffing structure due to external constraints.

All activities were successfully led by the European based team (Merkazim, Shin-Shinim, and senior madrichim) who assumed expanded roles across both educational delivery and operational management. We believe that this reflects the strength and maturity of our European leadership model built during all these years.

This moment represents a strategic milestone. It demonstrates that Tzofim Europe has evolved into a self-sustaining educational and leadership framework, capable of maintaining quality and continuity independently. What was once supported externally is now embedded locally—a key indicator of long-term sustainability and impact.

### About our Impact and the Multiplier Effect

The immediate outputs of the programme are clear: around 350 participants engaged in a full educational curriculum, delivered across all planned components. The deeper impact lies in the multiplier effect.

These participants are not end beneficiaries but leaders. Upon returning to their local chapters, they take on active leadership roles, collectively guiding over 1,200 younger participants across Europe and even more people if we have in mind their schools, communities and families. **This ensures that the educational investment made in this camp extends directly into weekly community life, strengthening the quality, continuity, and resilience of Jewish engagement across the continent.**

In parallel, the camp created a pan-European network of young leaders who continue to maintain relationships, collaborate, and support one another forming a lasting infrastructure of connection and shared responsibility. Moreover, we addressed the role of this generation in today's complex social and cultural landscape, encouraging participants to understand their influence both within and beyond their immediate communities.

Impact was assessed through participant feedback, staff evaluation, and post-camp engagement levels within local chapters, all indicating strong outcomes in leadership activation, identity strengthening, and continued community involvement. This demonstrates the high leverage of the Matanel Foundation support, enabling impact that extends far beyond the immediate programme.

We would like to share these thoughts in the words of some of the participants:

During the opening ceremony, one participant reflected on the absence of the Israeli delegation and shared:

**"This year, I realized the movement doesn't happen to me, I am the movement."**

We believe this moment captures the essence of the programme's success: **the transition from participation to ownership, from experience to leadership.**

Another participant from a chapter in Germany arrived at camp very hesitant. With the situation in Israel, he felt isolated at his school. During the Havdalah ceremony, he was asked to lead a discussion on "Decision Making." He realized that the same tools he uses to lead a Tzofe, listening, empathy, and courage, are the tools he needs to stand tall in his own city. He left not just as a "tzofe," but as a young man who understands his role and value within the Jewish community. This is the kind of impact that extends far beyond the duration of the camp.

Regarding evaluation, the programme was evaluated through participant feedback, staff assessment, and postcamp engagement in local chapters. All results indicate strong outcomes in leadership activation, identity development, and continued involvement across chapters.

### Financials

We confirm that the funds allocated by the Matanel Foundation are applied solely to the purposes defined in the agreement, supporting the educational, leadership, and programmatic components of Machane Shachbag Niztan Matanel 2026.

The programme was delivered in full in advance of the transfer of funds, reflecting our commitment to ensuring continuity and quality regardless of timing. The Matanel Foundation's support will therefore be applied to cover and sustain the costs of this successfully executed project, in full alignment with the agreed objectives and in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement. The project has been implemented in accordance with the framework outlined in the original application, with careful and responsible management of resources despite operational constraints.

A detailed financial report is attached in the annex.

### Looking Forward

The 2026 Machane Shachbag Nitzan Matanel has demonstrated both the effectiveness and the necessity of this initiative. Demand continues to grow across Europe, particularly among youth seeking structured, meaningful frameworks for identity, belonging, and leadership in Hebrew.

At the same time, the evolving reality underscores the importance of investing in resilient, locally grounded leadership infrastructures capable of sustaining Jewish communal life across diverse contexts. In this light, we view the continuation of Machane Shachbag Nitzan Matanel as a strategic investment in the next generation of European Jewish leadership.

We would therefore be honoured to continue and deepen our partnership with the Matanel Foundation in the coming cycle, building on the strong foundation already established.

To Finalize, we would like to share our thoughts and invite you to see first hand our work. While this report outlines the outcomes, the full impact of this work is best experienced directly. We would be pleased to host a representative of the Foundation at an upcoming programme to observe the “Youth Guiding Youth” model in practice.

Last but not least, the partnership between Tzofim Europe and the Matanel Foundation reflects a shared commitment to strengthening Jewish life through education, leadership, and community across Europe.

We thank you once more for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in the young people who are shaping the future.

With sincere appreciation,

Ezequiel Burstein on behalf of all Tzofim Europe Leadership Team