

# Emmaus Europe

2009 was an important year for Emmaus Europe with its third Regional Assembly and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Emmaus Movement. Thank you to all those whose ongoing involvement helped to develop Emmaus Europe.



## 2009 Review

Fundamental rights should be recognised and implemented for everyone

*At Emmaus Europe, including “human rights” in all European policies remains a major concern, and a lobbying campaign on three key themes was carried out in 2009.*

### Respecting migrants’ rights

The rise in the number of deportations, unstable living conditions and the refusal to provide healthcare all worsen migrants’ living conditions and physical and psychological health.

**We want a different Europe from the one that is turning into a fortress and is implementing excessive measures to prevent access to its territory and deport undocumented migrants.**

### Encourage the solidarity economy

There are ways of creating long-term employment when confronted with increasingly unstable companies and jobs. The solidarity economy brings together thousands of initiatives and in this way aims to address the issues of the most destitute members of society and the individual and collective needs that have been overlooked by the market and the state. This is why Emmaus Europe highlights the fact that the social economy generates quality jobs and a fairer distribution of wealth. **The social economy operates democratically, reinforces the role of citizens** and offers real solutions to the economic crisis.

### Fighting the problem of poor housing and homelessness

The right to housing is enshrined in several international agreements. **This international recognition gives it a special moral if not legal standing.**

**“Housing is a question of justice”,** said Abbé Pierre. It is also primarily a human issue. **Extreme poverty and social exclusion go against fundamental rights.** This is why Emmaus Europe is asking the EU member states to pledge to create and pass laws that include a compulsory right to housing.

### « On peut refaire le monde »

The *On peut refaire le monde* (We can change the world) bus was created in 1999 to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Emmaus Movement and its crazy appearance really fires the imagination. The bus accompanied Emmaus Europe at its Regional Assembly in Brussels in October 2009. Whether on the road or at the entrance to the European Parliament, the bus drew the attention of passers-by and marked the presence of the movement, 60 years after it was founded, in the capital of Europe.



# Political initiatives

Emmaus Europe continued to get involved in a large number of initiatives in order to fight extreme poverty, the various forms of exclusion and their root causes in Europe.



## Appeal to the candidates for the European Parliament

The 2009 European elections were held from 4 to 7 June in the 27 member states of the European Union. They allowed the election of 736 MEPs for the term 2009-2013.

Two months before the elections, Emmaus Europe launched an appeal to the candidates, for a Europe that would show solidarity and be respectful of Human Rights, values defended by the Emmaus Movement.

With the objective of raising awareness, Emmaus Europe reminded the candidates to the European elections that the European Union remains passive in terms of social rights to all of those who live on the European soil.

For that, three themes were approached in the letter:

- Migrant's rights: "At Emmaus, we offer an unconditional welcome, so we want the rights of migrants to be respected"
- Poor housing and homelessness: "A human being's fundamental right to suitable housing must be respected"
- Solidarity economy: "By collecting, recycling and selling second-hand goods, our structures also carry out social inclusion initiatives, as they employ people who are experiencing difficulties"

Having written to the EU Parliament elections candidates, Emmaus Europe received around fifteen responses by post and email from the candidates.

Two meetings were held in France as follows:

- Tuesday 26 May 2009: meeting with Dominique Riquet, mayor of Valenciennes,

France. UMP (Union for a Popular Movement) leading candidate for the North electoral region.

- Thursday 29 May 2009: Meeting with Christophe Bechu, president of the Maine and Loire regional council, France. UMP (Union for a Popular Movement) leading candidate for the North-west electoral region.

A meeting was held in Poland:

The group Emaus Lublin welcomed a Polish candidate, Lena Kolarska-Bobinska, to the community on 9 May.

Thirty people -members and friends of Emaus Lublin- also took part in the meeting.

## Roundtable with MEPs

During Emmaus Europe's Regional Assembly from 16 to 18 October 2009, the Emmaus European groups visited the European Parliament.

The groups then took part in a roundtable with the MEPs Niccolo Rinaldi (Italy, Vice-president of the Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe - ALDE) and Karima Delli (France, member of The Greens / European Free Alliance) and the parliamentary assistants of MEP Harlem Désir (France, Party of European Socialists, PES) and of MEP Sylvie Guillaume (France, Party of European Socialists, PES) moderated by Alain Capmas, a member of the Emmaus Europe Regional Executive, and in the presence of Julio de La Granja, the president of Emmaus Europe, and Jean Rousseau, the president of Emmaus International.

The groups were able to exchange with MEPs

on the challenges and possible actions to take on with the European Union's decision-making bodies in order to make progress on the themes of solidarity economy, poor housing/homelessness and migrants' rights (themes of the appeal campaign), all a priority to Emmaus Europe.

## Improving communication

### The Emmaus Europe website

A major project involving writing content, technical development and information accumulation was carried out in 2008 enabling Emmaus Europe to start 2009 with a new communications tool.

The Emmaus Europe website was launched on 1 January 2009. Content and updates were added over the course of the year. New sections were created and others were developed following the key regional events in 2009.

Two new sections were added to the **members' area** in preparation for and following the 2009 Regional Assembly. All the minutes and reports from the various meetings and from Emmaus Europe's statutory meetings are also available in this area.

You can access the members' area by clicking on [members' area](#) and logging in to the restricted access area using the username **emmaus** and the password **ee2005**.



[www.emmaus-europe.org](http://www.emmaus-europe.org)

**The Groups' directory** was developed throughout the first half of 2009. All the European groups were included on the interactive map by the start of July. You can now access information about all the European groups with just a few clicks of your mouse!

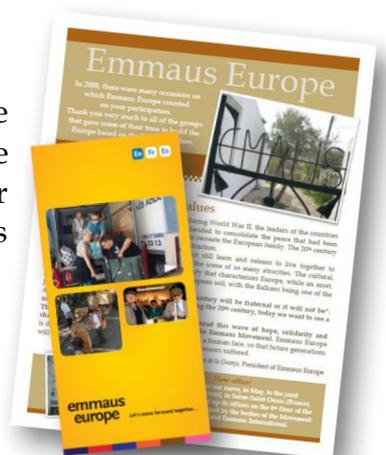
The Emmaus Europe directory is also available in PDF format. Do send us any comments when trying out these resources.

## Documentation

Emmaus Europe produced two new resources in 2009.

**An information leaflet**, the preliminary version of which was used at the 2009 Emmaus Salon (Paris, France) and facilitated interaction with the public. The final version was given to those who attended the October Regional Assembly so that they can more effectively present Emmaus Europe in their groups.

**The annual review** (the second edition of which you are reading now) was published for the first time in early 2009. The review seeks to inform the groups about the various initiatives and key moments during the year in the Europe Region.



# Regional life

2009 was packed with events which all showcased, each at their own way, regional life.



## The Regional Assembly in Brussels

The third regional assembly since Emmaus Europe was formed was held on 16-18 October 2009 in Brussels (Belgium).

The members of Emmaus Europe from 16 different countries had numerous opportunities to discuss the Europe of Emmaus with the programme including a visit to the European Parliament, the roundtable with MEPs, discussions with European Commissioners, workshops and plenary debates.

There was also the chance to relax thanks to the sociable atmosphere at *Le Chant d'Oiseau*, the assembly venue, and the warm welcome from Emmaus La Poudrière, where all the assembly participants shared a meal with the members of the Belgian community.

## The new makeup of the Regional Council

On 18 October the Regional Assembly elected three new **European councillors of Emmaus International** and a new **member of the World Council on Political Action and International Solidarity** who are now also members of the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe. (See image below)

11 Councillors of Emmaus International



15 National Delegates  
(not all represented)

4 WC PAIS

4 WC TNG

## 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Emmaus Köln

Emmaus Köln (Germany) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a special sale on 12 September 2009.

Emmaus first started work in Germany in the city of Köln (Cologne) in March 1959 and subsequently expanded to other towns where other groups were formed.

## The movement's 60th anniversary

Different activities were organised in the groups to coincide with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Emmaus movement.

Emmaus France arranged a big celebration so that the whole movement could celebrate the anniversary together. Groups from all four corners of the globe, including several European groups, travelled to Paris for an emotional event. A look back at the history of the Movement, personal accounts, workshops and concerts enabled the movement's stakeholders to meet and share experiences.

## Regional coordination

The secretariat delivered several presentations about Emmaus Europe to European groups and circulated documents setting out proposed solidarity initiatives needing support.

The presentations delivered to French groups, with the help of French elected representatives, used a fun resource known as the *Emmaus Europe Quiz*.



## Regional coordination

At the **Emmaus France general assembly** held in **May 2009**, the international and European EF elected representatives presented the participatory regional assembly preparation method in a fun way. It was decided to prepare for the assembly in advance in order to collect the opinions, contributions and viewpoints of each French group, who are stakeholders in the life of the movement. Working groups were set up at the meeting and discussed the seven sub-themes that formed the basis for the discussion at the regional assembly.

## Meeting with the mayor of Lviv (Ukraine)

The Poland/Ukraine collective met the mayor of Lviv and the city's social affairs councillor at the city hall on 17 April 2009.

The city council stressed its wish to set up a care and shelter system for the city's homeless and its desire to work with organisations such as the Oselya Mutual Aid Community (a trial member of Emmaus International and Emmaus Europe), which already works with the most underprivileged members of society.

Following the discussion, Emmaus Europe presented the Emmaus movement at international level and then focused on the role of Emmaus Europe and its undertakings with the aim of boosting the role of Oselya with Lviv council.

The presentation aimed to highlight Emmaus' experience in combating homelessness and the root causes of exclusion.

## Two training courses were held in 2009

### Emmaus Europe and water (6-9 April in Montreuil, France)

The European members of the world council proposed an Emmaus Europe and water training course in conjunction with one of the 2007 World Assembly priority action areas – **water access for all** – and the October 2008 Lisbon work camp on **Emmaus and sustainable development**. They decided to focus on the political, economic and environmental facets of the issue.

### Exchanges of practice between European community leaders (22-25 June in Montreuil, France)

Emmaus was created by people joining together, so the question must be asked, can Emmaus Europe be consolidated by people coming together? Meeting gives us the chance to get to know each other but primarily it is the chance to recognise each other as members of the same solidarity movement that is fighting the root causes of exclusion.

While seeking to leave room for local initiatives linked to the mutual history of individual groups, the aim of the course was to give these exchanges a helping hand and encourage a discussion process between community leaders in the first instance.

This two-and-a-half day meeting also enabled the participants to share experiences and different visions of Emmaus.



## New members

In 2009, five UK groups applied to join the Movement and therefore joined the Europe Region as trial members. They are Emmaus Gateshead, Emmaus Ipswich, Emmaus Rugby, Emmaus Bridgend and Emmaus Norwich.

The Europe Region continued to monitor and inform the other trial member groups: Oselya Mutual Aid Community (Ukraine), Emmaus Burnley (UK), Växjö Solidaritetsförening (Sweden) and Emmaus Feniks (the Netherlands).

Three French groups and a Polish group also became full members: Les Papillons d'Emmaüs (Reunion Island), SOS Familles Emmaüs Tarn Nord, Emmaüs Action Ouest and Emmaus Rzeszow.

## The 2009 solidarity salons

Emmaus Europe was represented at the 10<sup>th</sup> Emmaus Salon by the many European groups who made the journey to Paris to exhibit the wonders of their countries and by elected representatives and the secretariat on an information stand.

Information on the work of Emmaus Europe, the region's story to date, the roadmap and member groups was available.

The stand was a new way of making Emmaus Europe's voice heard and raising public awareness about our goal of building a Europe based on the values of Emmaus.

The Europe Region was also represented by a stand presenting its work and undertakings at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Alsace-Lorraine-Champagne-Ardenne Salon held in Charleville-Mézières (France) on 12-13 September 2009.

The region attended the Emmaus Italy national salon in which European groups also took part.

The salon was held on 25-27 September 2009 in Turin.

## Tributes

2009 was also marked by the loss of two of the movement's great figures:

*Charlie Jordan* and *Daniel Schneeberger*, who were members of the Emmaus International board and the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe.



*Thank you Charlie and Daniel: you leave behind a Movement that is grateful for your commitment and your work in favour of solidarity and helping others.*

## Statutory life

The **Regional Assembly** of Emmaus Europe was held on 16 - 18 October in Brussels (Belgium).

Two **Regional Councils of Emmaus Europe** were held in March in Montreuil and in October in Brussels.

Five **Regional Executive meetings** were held: 24 January in Bougival, 28 February and 6 June teleconferences, and 4 May and 11 November in Montreuil.

Participation of European members in the two **World Councils**:

- WCPAIS, 16 - 20 February in South Africa.
- WCTNG, 10 - 14 November in Bangladesh.

**Meetings of the European collectives:**

- Bosnia, 16 January and 19 September in Montreuil (France).
- Romania, 14 February in Montreuil (France).
- Poland/Ukraine, 13 - 14 April in Lviv (Ukraine) and 27 - 28 November in Nowy Sącz (Poland).



## Regional solidarity

Regional work continued through the four collectives: a European solidarity programme and a container programme were developed for 2009.

### The Bosnia Collective

Initiatives supported in 2009:  
**International Solidarity Forum (ISF), Bosnia**

- *Organisation of an international youth camp and goods convoy*

This initiative is an annual European event as part of the youth camp scheme. Objectives: do the outside building work at the *European Community Service Centre*.

- *Occupational therapy project (work-based rehabilitation) in Duje*

Objectives: this scheme enables those living in the centre to take part in its economic development through their work and to develop the centre's economic activity via the involvement of the residents. (A regional initiative to be carried out in 2010 and supported by the Emmaus International annual solidarity sale).

### The Poland/Ukraine Collective

Initiatives supported in 2009:  
**Oselya mutual aid community, Ukraine**

- *Financial contribution to the running of the community in 2009.*

Contribute to the stability, management and organisation of the community by covering the

wages of the people who run the group's activity.

**Emmaus Brat Albert, branch of Krakow, Poland**

- *Construction of a house for the community on the outskirts of Krakow.*

Create stable working conditions and increase the residential capacity from 10 - 30 companions. Support the reintegration of homeless people into society. Consolidate Emmaus Krakow's economic activity.

- *Build a workshop with the aim of improving the commercial facilities, currently leased to the town's authorities. (A regional initiative to be carried out in 2010.)*

### The Romania Collective

Initiatives supported in 2009:  
**Un Coup de Main**

**Foundation in Iasi, Romania**

- *Fundraising for the purchase of a new vehicle for collecting and delivering goods.*

### Human Trafficking and Migration Collective

In 2009, the initiative supported by the region and run by the **MPFSC (Vilnius, Lithuania)** was called *Averting risks such as trafficking, abuse and social exclusion*.

The initiative aims to build the capacities of young girls via the use of the group

method, give each at-risk girl the option of taking control of her life and promote gender equality and democracy.



### Summer volunteering - the European Youth Camps

**In 2009, groups in Spain, Bosnia, Belgium, Finland, France, Italy, Portugal and the UK hosted work camps.**

Links were included on the Emmaus Europe website in order to guide young people wishing to take part in an Emmaus camp in France or Italy. Young people were also able to find information about camps in the six other countries on the region's website.

2009 also saw the organisation of the first ever youth camp in the UK. Emmaus Village Carlton hosted young Europeans from 29 June - 6 July 2009. The young people helped organise and promote a special sale to raise the profile of Emmaus and recycling.

*"A new war now needs to be fought,  
this time against extreme poverty."*

The war of which Abbé Pierre was speaking is still ongoing throughout the world and the whole Emmaus Movement is still fighting staunchly.

**2010**  
**European Year**  
**for Combating**  
**Poverty and**  
**Social Exclusion**

The European Union has decided to devote 2010 to combating poverty and exclusion. However, we regret that this statement is just a façade.

That is why Emmaus Europe will challenge the EU in 2010 on the following issues:

- The need to prioritise tackling extreme poverty and inequality in the European Union.
- The need to define and monitor EU objectives on the reduction and eradication of homelessness over the coming years.
- The creation of social support policies for families in difficulty (housing, healthcare, employment and education).
- Producing an action plan as part of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in 2010.

**We will continue  
to tackle all forms  
of exclusion in 2010!**



**EMMAUS EUROPE**  
**EMMAÛS EUROPE**  
**EMAUÍS EUROPA**

47, avenue de la Résistance  
F-93104 Montreuil Cedex

+33 (0)1 41 58 25 70  
+33 (0)1 48 18 79 88

contact@emmaus-europe.org  
www.emmaus-europe.org