

**Minutes of the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe (RCEE)**

**06-08 October 2017 – Höör, Sweden**

**NATIONS ROUND TABLE SESSION**

**Two minutes presentations delivered by the national delegates on the following five issues:**

1. Number of existing groups/ communities
2. Latest news/ changes in the member organizations.
3. How are the member organizations working on the Emmaus International and Emmaus Europe themes?
4. Latest events in the country, with emphasis being put on themes that are closely related to EI and Emmaüs Europe.
5. Do you know which groups in your country use ethical banks ? How do you list them ?

<p><b>GERMANY</b> <b>Willi DOES</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Four groups members (Sonsbeck, Krefeld, Stuttgart and Köln). Krefeld's group celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2017 through several events: -Exhibition on their work, -Presentation of the film "Winter 54" at the cinema and a solidarity sale on October 14th together with all the German groups.</li> <li>2. One trial member group in Krefeld (Anstoss eV) and a second very stable group close to Cologne (at Bergisch - Gladbach) which will request for membership in order to join the movement. -Next year we are planning to work on the following points: -Stabilizing the situation in Sonsbeck -Get back to creating a national structure in Germany with statutes and a new ND.</li> <li>3. Emmaüs group in Sonsbeck, member of the movement for 30 years now, is facing internal conflicts. Meetings with managers and companions are being held every two weeks. The results are not convincing, so Krefeld and Cologne groups are organizing seminars in order to find solutions. Germans groups will attend the "salon" in Lille, April 2017.</li> <li>4. Political context: National elections held last week generated the following results: Christian/social democrats' government (Merkel/Schulz) has lost 13% of votes. A new extreme right party ("Alternative for Germany") is now installed at the Parliament. A coalition between Christians, Neo-liberals and the Green party should soon be created.</li> <li>5. Concerning migration issues, a recently approved law is now making migrants and refugees' hosting more complicated. If Germany considers their country of origin is safe, refugees and migrants are then sent back to their countries.</li> </ol>
---	---

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SPAIN</b> José María <b>GARCIA BRESO</b></p>	<p><u>Emmaus groups in Spain</u> There are eight Emmaus groups in Spain. Five of them are members of Emmaus International and two of them want to join (Huelva and San Sebastian).</p> <p><u>Latest news / changes in the groups</u> Just like every year, an annual meeting for companions will take place on 20-1 October. Topics such as politics, social issues and culture will be discussed during this two-day meeting. Emmaus Pamplona will be celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2017.</p> <p>The socioeconomic and political situation in Spain is dramatic. Politicians are discredited. There is currently a conflict between Madrid and Catalonia about Catalanian independence.</p> <p>Since the 2000s, the population has increased due to people coming from Latin America and Eastern Europe looking for work. Now the Spanish are leaving Spain in order to find work anywhere in Europe or elsewhere.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>UNITED-KINGDOM</b> Michael « Spike » <b>HUDSON</b></p>	<p><b>1. How many Emmaus groups/communities exist in your country?</b> In the UK there are 29 member communities that accommodate companions including 4 newer groups that are working towards becoming communities.</p> <p><b>2. News and groups/changes</b> <b>EUK are Developing a Referral Gateway to maximize accommodation capacity.</b> A referral form and process document has been circulated to Exec Leads and Chairs for them to consult with their community and seek feedback. If a system is agreed, a second piece of work will be developed, looking at marketing Emmaus UK to referral agencies, in order to ensure they fully understand what we do and can make suitable referrals.</p> <p><b>EUK Companions' Forum.</b> This mechanism for involving companions is being reinvigorated. A schedule of 'Road shows' has started with one meeting being held in Emmaus Burnley with 13 communities/groups represented. There will be a Strategy day for the Forum on 4th December. Training needs for the Forum have been identified.</p> <p><b>Study visit to Esteville.</b> Has been postponed due to transport issues.</p> <p><b>3. How the groups treat the issues related to Emmaus International and Emmaus Europe?</b> The EUK Reps are working to include more awareness of the issues related to Emmaus International and Emmaus Europe.</p> <p>The EUK induction process has been updated to include 'The Three Struggles'. Space has been requested for the UK National Assembly 2018 March to include discussion on 'The Transition'. Locally groups have been looking at how their Solidarity projects link to 'The Three Struggles'. Completed and returned the <b>Emmaus Environment environmental legislation survey for</b> Marine Didier, Emmaüs Europe, and Environmental Intern.</p> <p>In March 2017 a letter signed by Simon Grainge, Chief Executive of Emmaus UK, was sent to The Rt. Hon. Andrea Leadsom Secretary of State at the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs stating: "Emmaus colleagues in 13 other countries are lobbying the European Parliament to ensure adoption of 3 particular amendments to the package (Waste Framework Directive) to:</p>

- Acknowledge and bolster the role played by social stakeholders in waste management and recycling
- Keep the distinction between waste and non-waste
- Distinguish between preparing for reuse and recycling targets”

### **Recycle Week 2017**

Emmaus has been successfully celebrating national Recycle Week. So far there have been 21 pieces of news coverage from communities across the UK. Content placed across social media has also been a huge success. On Twitter, when compared to Recycle Week 2016, there has been a 644% increase on impressions, and a 2133% increase on the number of total engagements.

#### **Examples**

##### **Emmaus Dover**

Furniture upcycler Hester Van Overbeek visited Emmaus Dover’s charity shop as part of a national upcycling challenge for Recycle Week.

##### **Emmaus Leeds**

Emmaus Leeds are celebrating a record year for recycling. Over the past 12 months they have diverted 218 tonnes of household goods from landfill.

4. The UK Government has revealed that the Homelessness Reduction Act will come into force in April, with the funding allocations announced this autumn.

The Homelessness Reduction Act will give councils in England more responsibilities to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place. It could help prevent more than 40,000 people from becoming homeless each year and save the state as much as £370m a year.

Simon Grainge, Chief Executive of Emmaus UK said: “There is an urgent need to take action to reverse the rapid increase in rough sleeping, which grew by 16% in 2016 and has more than doubled since 2010. This new legislation is a huge step forward in improving support for people who are experiencing, or are at risk of, homelessness.

“Taking actions to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place is a big step forward and we hope local authorities are given the financial resources they need to fulfil these new duties. It is also essential that the government does not undo this great work with its new welfare reform policies. There is a risk the policies could unintentionally penalise charities and supported housing providers who are working hard to help those who have experienced homelessness.”

5. **Migreurope**

Attended UK launch of Migreurope Report on Privatization of Migrant Detention system in March 2017. Established contact with UK Migreurope Rep Bill MacKeith.

#### **Removal of EU Rough Sleepers**

The number of EU mobile citizens being removed from the UK has increased fivefold since 2010. One of the main targets of these enforced removals are mobile EU citizens who sleep rough. Through the adoption of an unprecedented - at EU level - piece of legislation, the UK has made sleeping rough a sufficient reason to forcibly remove EU nationals. This implies that

	<p>even those who are working but cannot afford a place to live, may be subject to administrative removal.</p> <p>Besides criminalising homelessness and adopting myopic and xenophobic measures, FEANTSA believes that the UK's interpretation of free movement rights is unlawful. FEANTSA calls on the European Commission to adequately address this issue by starting investigations. UK policies not only infringe EU citizens' rights but also jeopardise the work of homelessness services which work daily with people who need support and, instead, see their situation becoming even more precarious.</p> <p>EUK are considering a campaign that we could get involved in both locally and nationally possibly through a partnership with FEANTSA?</p>
<p><b>POLAND</b> Grzegorz <b>HAJDUK</b></p>	<p>Regarding the political context in Poland, the government comprises populists, members of the far right and anti-EU parties.</p> <p><u>Emmaus groups in Poland</u></p> <p>The number of groups in Poland remains unchanged. There are four Emmaus communities: Nowy Sacz and the Krakow site, Lublin and Rzeszów. Emmaus Rzeszów currently has a major debt following the construction of the community house.</p>
<p><b>BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA</b> Sabina <b>ARNAUT JAHIC</b></p>	<p><u>Emmaus groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina</u></p> <p>There are two Emmaus groups in the country. The International Solidarity Forum (ISF) is a full member of the Emmaus Movement. Nova Generacija in Banja Luka is a trial member.</p> <p><u>Latest news / changes in the groups</u></p> <p>Regarding the socio-political context, Bosnia-Herzegovina has applied to formally join the EU. The application has been accepted but the country still has to meet requirements. The process could take several years.</p> <p><u>The circular economy</u></p> <p>Businesses have been involved in reuse and recycling for 15 years.</p> <p>Some groups could replicate this initiative. Collection points have been created but collected items cannot be sold.</p>
<p><b>UKRAINE</b> See by Nataliya <b>SANOTSKA</b> See by Zbigniew <b>DRAKOWSKI</b></p>	<p><b>Current situation in Emaus Oselya</b></p> <p>Emmaus Oselya continues its work. We have 15 companions, 6 full time and 2 part time workers, and 10 everyday volunteers. We continue to run Social support center for people who live in the street, we distribute food once a week in downtown, and organized Easter breakfast as always. For the last year we also had a project with local elderly people supported by Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research.</p> <p>Last month the book about history of Emmaus, Abbe Pierre and Oselya was published. It's big event for our community. We've been waiting for a while to have it published. The author of the book is famous Ukrainian writer who is member of Oselya. We presented this book in September during Literature festival and it attracted a lot of attention. The book will be sold in the network of book stores all over Ukraine.</p>

Another news about Oselya is that Natalya Mysula who was National Delegate and executive director since beginning of the year resigned her position in Oselya. Unfortunately, she faced some difficulties working in community and had emotional burnout. So the Board hired two more people and right now they have internship in community.

About Solidarity program action. We are still looking for a spot to build depot, we have few options to consider.

This collection and sorting activity is a new challenge for us and our city. Recently it became a very important issue. In Ukraine we have never had obligatory waste sorting and no culture of recycling. Because of some ecological problems, the city is very much concerned about recycling. As long as we have some experience and we have been doing this work for couple of years now, they see us as the partners and they want Oselya to be the important stakeholder in the clothing recycling. It's a good opportunity for us. We participate in many meetings and programs of city council and expect to take this niche. Many nonprofits want us to share our experience so we have visitors from all over Ukraine. This ecological part of our work is very actual and even urgent, so we are now concentrated on its development. And we hope that solidarity program project will help us with that.

#### **NASHA KHATA**

Natalia Sanotska and Zbigniew Drazkowski visited Nasha Chataon Sep, 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017. We had meeting with Vasyl Holod, responsible, Oksana accountant and Father Andriy.

#### **During the last 6 months the following happened in community:**

Fundraised 5 500 EUR from Caritas Vienna for reconstruction of the premises for carpenter workshop. Caritas – Wiedeń

1. The community held 3 work camps with participants from Emmaus Innsbruck, Emmaus Dijon and organization Bauorden from Germany.
2. The two social projects were implemented, financed by local authorities.
3. The new (second) shop with the stuff for children was opened next to the old one.
4. Community finished summer farm works and started autumn works. It was easier this years as community received tractor from Emmaus Dijon.
5. The well is being build for the needs of community. This project is financed by Emmaus Europe.

This actions also took place

1. Charitable Easter breakfast for 120 homeless people.
2. Every Thursday food distribution for 50 homeless people.
3. Free furniture, clothing and shoes donation for appr. 100 poor people.

Nasha Khata needs:

1. Finances for the salary for 3 employers next year.
2. Vehicle, van; no older than 5 years, otherwise you can't bring it to Ukraine.

	<p>Emaus- Lublin</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In December 2016 we started cooperation with Lublin Volunteer Center. Dozens of volunteers help homeless people in the streets (street workers). On Feb 12<sup>th</sup> together with them we organized “Meeting in the open air”. We invited homeless people from Lublin. The meeting was devoted to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Abbe Pierre death. Also since December until now, besides every Sunday food distribution that we do for many years already, we provide food for homeless people on two extra days in a week. The food is distributed by volunteers from Lublin Volunteer Center.</li> <li>2. In spring 2017 the representative of Emmaus Fredriksdal group from Sweden contacted us in order to establish cooperation. Robert Jansson, responsible of the group visited us and Emmaus Rzeszow twice. He tried to contact Emmaus Krakow but he didn’t succeed. Since April we received 5 transports from Emmaus Fredriksdal. This support together with transports from other groups and growth of local collections led to general growth of sale income in our group.</li> <li>3. We have made important and strategic decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Since March we limit economic activities in production; we focus on pizzeria as its income keeps growing since January 2017.</li> <li>– In August we started to rent warehouse premises, we increase the sales area and in September we hired the worker responsible for sorting of clothing;</li> <li>– As long as the location of our shop is not convenient for our customers, we are in the process of buying a plot in a good location and at the same time close to the current site. We have already signed an initial purchase agreement. For this purpose, we want to borrow about EUR 50 000 from Polish government fund for the development of social enterprise. For construction we would like to ask for help from Emmaus groups ...</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROMANIA</b> Gélu <b>NICHITEL</b></p>	<p><u>Emmaus groups in Romania</u></p> <p>There are three groups in Romania on four sites.</p> <p>Frères Europa in Satu Mare is a community with 15 companions. The house at Timisoara managed by Satu Mare is home to three companions and community service volunteers.</p> <p>Iasi has been open for 15 years and has 35 companions.</p> <p>Amicii in Târgu Jiu is gradually developing.</p> <p><u>Latest news / changes in the groups</u></p> <p>A Romanian law regulating social organisations has just been passed. The law affects all the Romanian groups, who have had to adapt to it very quickly.</p> <p>Emmaus Iasi was the hardest hit, as it has had to reduce the number of companions. The community’s residential capacity has been cut to 30 since the law came into force.</p> <p>Furthermore, Frères Europa in Satu Mare can no longer accommodate companions over the age of 30.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PORTUGAL</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There are two Emmaus groups in Portugal: Caneças and Porto.</li> </ol>

<p>Délia <b>RESENDE CLEMENT</b></p>	<p>2. In Porto, the group is planning to create a knowledge-sharing centre. Local residents no longer spend time on the streets and no longer interact or talk to each other. The group wishes to remedy this situation by inviting people to come out of their homes to musical and drama events in the streets. They are also setting up a socially-responsible laundrette.</p> <p>3. From a political perspective, Portugal is doing better, as the coalition is restoring the social rights abolished by the previous government.</p>
<p><b>FRANCE</b> Annick <b>BERTHIER</b></p>	<p>In France, the Emmaus Movement comprises 284 member organisations subdivided into three arms (known as branches) based on their type of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 117 residential communities plus one community association (known as ACE).</li> <li>- 77 social action and housing groups.</li> <li>- 89 inclusion structures.</li> </ul> <p>Emmaus France is also divided into 10 Emmaus regions.</p> <p>Each entity is an independent legal structure and signs a membership agreement with Emmaus France, enabling it to use the logo and the “Emmaus, founder Abbé Pierre” name. The agreement also lists rights and obligations covering ethics and respect for the Emmaus values.</p> <p>Emmaus France represents and coordinates the Emmaus Movement at national level and the national team based in Montreuil helps to organize the operational implementation of the Board’s decisions.</p> <p>The board comprises 25 elected representatives from throughout France and delegates to those elected on the branch committees operational or other coordination activities specific to the branch and to those elected to sit on the Emmaus France college of regions, regional coordination and cross-cutting coordination between the groups.</p> <p>The 2012 national meeting selected five work areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offer shelter and support appropriate to people’s needs.</li> <li>- Convey the voice of the socially excluded and collectively affirm the economic and social alternatives.</li> <li>- Develop the groups and redefine our presence across the country.</li> <li>- Help to secure the long-term future and development of the groups and encourage innovation.</li> <li>- Consolidate democratic governance in each group.</li> </ul> <p>In 2016, the Emmaus France board confirmed four priority work areas, which were then rubberstamped by the 2017 General Assembly.</p> <p>Emmaus France is taking a strong stance at a time when freedoms are being violated, particularly freedom of movement, in a world in which everyone is isolating themselves behind their borders.</p> <p>Through its member groups, Emmaus France is also developing initiatives designed to offer lifestyle and development alternatives, thus addressing extreme poverty and its root causes.</p> <p>Finally, Emmaus France is campaigning to ensure that the measures taken by the current government do not ride roughshod over rights that help the most disadvantaged people (for instance, state-aided contracts, housing benefit etc). 2</p> <p>The movement that began when we commemorated Abbé Pierre on 22 January 2017 has mushroomed and is enabling Emmaus to campaign in shared forums with associations and/or collectives which share our values. We are completely independent from the ‘powers that be’ when undertaking campaigns, thus keeping alive Abbé Pierre’s ethos.</p>

	<p>Past, current or future initiatives in 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10th anniversary of Abbé Pierre's death.</li> <li>- Launch of the <i>Chômage , précarité : halte aux idées reçues</i> book (<i>Unemployment and instability: putting an end to preconceived ideas</i>).</li> <li>- Took part in the <i>Chant des Colibris</i> initiative (sustainable transformation).</li> <li>- <i>Alert platform</i>.</li> <li>- <i>Délinquants solidaires</i> initiative (socially-responsible criminals).</li> <li>- Launch of the book <i>Le combat continue : 10 propositions</i> (<i>The struggle goes on – 10 ideas</i>).</li> <li>- <i>Répondons présents !</i> (Count me in) solidarity appeal followed by the publication of a book with <i>120 propositions pour une société solidaire</i> (<i>120 ideas for a society based on solidarity</i>).</li> <li>- National Emmaus Salon (big sale) complete with debates.</li> <li>- Groups' initiatives in Tarifa (Spain) to champion Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guaranteeing freedom of movement.</li> </ul> <p>A joint Emmaus International/Emmaus France initiative is underway in the Emmaus France regions in order to champion the campaigns and include the initiatives in the priority campaign areas selected by Emmaus International at the Jesolo World Assembly.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>FINLAND</b> Martha <b>HANNUS</b></p>	<p><b>1. Number of existing groups / communities</b></p> <p>Six groups reported last meeting. Two of those are inactive (Emmaus Aurinkotehdas, trial member, and Emmaus Jokioinen). 4 active groups: Emmaus Helsinki Emmaus Westervik Emmaus Åland Svalorna/Swallows</p> <p><b>2. Latest news/changes in the groups</b></p> <p>The active groups have developed activities within the area of migration, work pool and roma rights. This reflects the current political situation in Finland, where the government is reluctant to address issues of economic and social security policies as well as migrant rights.</p> <p>Continued focus on migration and integration: Emmaus Helsinki has continued working with a labor pool for Roma and Bulgarian migrants; Emmaus Åland is starting a project on integration through work. Helsinki has developed cooperation with a free clinic for migrants (Global Clinic) Emmaus Åland participated in the local Pride festival and hosted a seminar and activism session on the rights of LGBT migrants in Finland and Sweden.</p> <p>Both Helsinki and Åland are about to start projects for the Roma in Bulgaria and Romania respectively. Åland will focus on a project in cooperation with a local organization called E-romnja, a feminist Roma organization. Åland – three day festival “The Emmaus Festival” with focus on rights, sustainability and culture. Westervik has held discussion evenings at a local café to highlight different issues.</p>

	<p>The Finnish groups support solidarity projects in Estonia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Lebanon, Western Sahara, South Africa, Togo, Benin, Peru, Nepal and India.</p> <p><b>3. How are the groups working on the EI and EE themes?</b>  As already mentioned, focus on the migration and integration issue.  Joint projects on education such as school project in Togo, press school for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.  The Swallows are focusing the work in India on the themes of ecological sustainability, secured livelihood and equality.</p> <p><b>4. Latest events in the country, with emphasis being put on themes that are closely related to EI and EE</b>  No big changes in national policies in Finland. Government is still undermining the social security policies, and the issue of migrant's rights is still an issue where the human rights and right to asylum is not respected. Recent changes led to that people who did not receive permanent residence but cannot return to their home country are left largely without social security and health care.  The support system for organizations working with projects in third countries and developing countries has changed, which has been a challenge for the Swallows that finance projects through government funding.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ITALY</b>  See by Maria Luisa <b>TESTORI</b>  Absence of Marie <b>BALSECA</b></p>	<p>Emmaus Italy has organized and supported a large number of events this year. The May <b>assembly</b> was held in <b>Palermo</b> and was attended by the chair of Emmaus International. He also attended the meeting in <b>Assisi</b> which enabled Emmaus' core issues to be relaunched thanks to the involvement of Banca Etica, Numeri Pari and Alex Zanotelli. Furthermore, the meeting with Corrado Clini, the <b>minister of the environment</b>, enabled Emmaus Italy to promote Emmaus' work and present the communities as being active players in the <b>circular economy</b>.</p> <p>The event in <b>Catania</b> in partnership with SOS Méditerranée was all about awareness-raising for the young volunteers who came to Palermo and also for the local organisations and the Italian Emmaus Movement which was delighted to welcome the president of Emmaus France. The <b>Turin</b> meeting will also be the chance to hold a big event and to renew our commitment to stopping the criminalisation of solidarity. The camp organized by Emmaus Palermo in <b>Lampedusa</b> on 23-8 October will also be an opportunity to raise the residents' awareness about the need for more open and humane solidarity.</p> <p><b>2017 summer camps in Italy</b>  The three summer camps in Arezzo, Catanzaro and Palermo were a resounding success. A large number of young people joined the movement this summer and many of them are continuing and will continue to take part in initiatives and events over the course of the year (SOS Méditerranée Catania, meetings, the big Turin sale, the autumn camp in Lampedusa etc).</p> <p><b>Turin special sale</b>  The sale will be held on 14-15 October 2017 in Parc Valentino in 7,000m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space. Many young people will be actively involved in the organisation of the event, meetings and promotional work. The big sale will be attended by a large number of French and Italian activists from the third sector and from various Italian solidarity networks (see the programme). Migreurop's <i>Moving Beyond Borders</i> exhibition will also be on display. The profit from the sale will be split 50-50 between the Italian groups in difficulty and between Emmaus International, Emmaus Europe, the Abele group and the Cottolengo institute.</p> <p><b>Reform of the third sector</b>  The reform concerning social cooperatives, volunteer organisations and non-profits will affect the grassroots Emmaus</p>

	<p>organisations. Over the next few months, we will need to gain an understanding about the extent to which the reform may lead to statutory changes for the Movement.</p> <p><b>Communication and future prospects</b>  Emmaus Italy's website has undergone significant development since last year and the Facebook page has doubled its number of followers (because of the youth camps in particular). The next assembly will be held on 29-30 October 2017 and will coincide with the election of a new president and board. The meeting will also be a chance to discuss one of Emmaus Italy's major problems: identifying new leaders to manage communities in difficulty. Emmaus Rome will need to find a new leader in early 2018.</p>
<p><b>NETHERLANDS</b>  Jos <b>VAN DER MEER</b></p>	<p>Emmaus Haren has stopped their collecting/sales activities and sold their premises. The responsible moved to Emmaus Feniks. The foundation still exists to round up the financial business. A question went out get an update.  Emmaus Friesland already stopped their membership in 2016. Since 6 March 2017 there is a new board of Emmaus Nederland:</p> <p>Jeroen Geurts – chairperson  Xander van Asperen – secretary  Anita Hoogerwerf - treasurer</p> <p>The secretariat moved to Emmaus Overvecht:  Gloriantdreef 403  3562 KW Utrecht  Tel. +31 30 666 89 30  Marieke Samson is the new coordinator of the secretariat.</p>
<p><b>BELGIUM</b>  Julio <b>DE LA GRANJA</b></p>	<p><b>1- Emmaus groups in Belgium:</b>  La Poudrière: Composed of 3 communities with 50 people in 3 regions of the country: Brussels, Wallonia and Flanders. Three small traditional communities exist in Wallonia, with less than 10 companions per community. Each group is independent and carries out its own actions.  We had two meetings with Fleur Service Social ASBL (nonprofit association) of Liège, an association created in 1980, which would like to join the Emmaus Movement. Since 2014, it makes part of the TERRE group (former member of Emmaus). Their activities include: accommodation for people in need, material recovery and social moving. The application for membership could be official in 2018.</p> <p><b>2- Latest news and changes in groups:</b>  For the first time, La Poudrière hired in 2016 through a contract of employment a former head of the Poudrière who already worked as a volunteer with us. In January 2017, La Poudrière contracted a second driver. The ninth youth camp in Péruwelz with 7 young people was a great success last August. In 9 years, there are 80 young people who have been to Péruwelz (67 girls and 13 boys).  In Lodelinsart (Charleroi) the community is in trouble because there are no companions on the spot and the work is done by volunteers.  No changes in other groups.</p> <p><b>3- How do groups work on the EI and EE themes:</b></p>

	<p>Only the Poudrière works actively with EI and EE: Youth Camps, Salons de Lille and Paris, etc. Only La Poudrière has an account in an ethical bank, the Triodos bank.</p> <p>4- <b>The current Belgian right-wing government</b> develops a very liberal policy which does not really contribute to improve the lives of workers or the fight against poverty.</p> <p>Change of regional government in Wallonia: For many years this government was formed by the centrist party and the Socialists (the first party in Wallonia). This centrist party wanted to exclude the socialists from the government and managed to make a coalition with the liberals Charles Michel (currently Belgian Prime Minister) in a very abrupt manner. This event will have repercussions in the upcoming elections. To be continued....</p> <p>5- <b>Migration:</b> In 2015 there were 35,500 asylum applications in Belgium, twice the number reached in 2014. Positive decisions reach 60% of requests. In 2016, asylum applications decreased sharply.</p> <p>In Belgium there are 11 million people and around one million foreigners. Within this million people, 63% are citizens of the EU, France being the first country represented.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUÈDE</b> Lottah-Mathilda <b>OLUND</b></p>	<p>Emmaus groups in Sweden: there are five member groups in the country although only three are active. Some groups are not yet members.</p> <p>The groups are made up of friends as there are no companions. Sales figures are good and the profits are allocated to international initiatives.</p>