

Report of the
EXCHANGE OF PRACTICE AND DISCUSSION SEMINAR
FOR FRIENDS AND VOLUNTEERS
2 - 10 June 2011 in Åland/ Finland

Participants: Helka Ahava (Helsinki/Finland), Ulla Hoyer (Helsinki/Finland), Filippo Testa (Association Emmaüs Paris/France), Iryna Krokhmal (Oselya/Ukraine), Alicia Salas (Les Ulis Committee of Friends/France), Kaarina Saavola (Helsinki/Finland), Alain Brun (Emmaus Chambéry/France), Pascal Guenichon (Association Emmaüs Paris/France), Oskar Dreyer (La Ferme des Vosges/France and Emmaus Germany), Ursula Dreyer (La Ferme des Vosges/France and Emmaus Germany), Clotilde Aksin (Emmaus Rédéne/France), Elisabeth Brost (Les Ulis Committee of Friends/France), Eric Esser (Annecy Annex/Emmaus Annemasse/France), and Carina Aaltonen (Åland/Finland).
Seminar led by: World Council on Training and New Generations (Françoise Clausse and Carina Aaltonen)

The first training course for Emmaus Europe friends and volunteers brought together 13 participants. Although the group was small, it quickly became close-knit and reflected on the Emmaus values and took part in the Åland group's work. A sale to support international solidarity rounded off this intense and sociable week. The accommodation and training venue was also conducive to the kind of informal contact that reinforces links. There were two components to the course: training and practical work with Emmaus Åland. This report recounts the discussions held during the training component.

Committed participants

Holiday homes: The Vosges Farm (Ursula and Oscar)



There are several types of holiday homes in France: Lespinassière (in the south near to Carcassonne; Primelin in the west near to Pointe du Raz in Brittany, and the Vosges Farm in eastern France, close to Emmaus Cernay in Alsace).

People come to the Vosges Farm (either as individuals or a group) to live in a family setting and jointly put together an activity programme. Activities include hiking, mountain biking, skiing, trips, discussions, games and environmental awareness raising. The Vosges Farm is open to companions, volunteers and groups that work in the third sector worldwide.

Emmaus Chambéry (Alain)

Emmaus Chambéry was founded in 1982 and has 31 companions, 80 friends and three leaders. A community plan is currently being drawn up encompassing companion and friend induction, increasing the accommodation capacity, discussion of resource-generating activities, internal / external communications, lobbying the authorities and solidarity in our Movement.

Emmaüs Vêtements: an inclusion organisation created in 1985 on the community premises and with 30 inclusion contracts, 50 friends and three leaders. It processes 400 tonnes of clothing a year (NB: Emmaus Chambéry earns its living from activities other than the clothing that it collects for Emmaüs Vêtements).

Emmaüs Rhône Alpes (EMRA): the EMRA platform was formed in 2011 on the initiative of the region's communities and is designed to collect surplus goods from the communities. The surplus is then redistributed in accordance with needs.



Emmaüs Les Ulis (Alicia and Elisabeth)

This Committee of Friends was formed 15 years ago. The store (250m²) is open six days a week and is located in a new town with a population of 48,000. 60% of housing is social



housing. 40 volunteers and five paid members of staff work to develop solidarity: a community café run with the local residents, afternoon tea for elderly people, two special sales at Christmas and in spring, and the Paris Salon. Unfortunately, state administrative stumbling blocks sometimes put a stop to young people's initiatives (weekly meals for needy international students and renovation of bedsits for elderly people). Les Ulis Committee also works on issues with SOS Familles volunteers (serious debt), the DALO law (Enforceable Right to Housing) and the ASTI partnership (migrants).

Emmaus Annemasse: Annecy annex (Eric)

An annex of Emmaus Annemasse (Haute Savoie), Annecy collects and sells goods (one sale a week). Some 20 volunteers help to sort and sell goods and meet with some of the companions from the Annemasse community. They receive a lot of good quality donations.



Association Emmaüs Paris (Pascal and Filippo)



The association was founded in 1954 and has 500 paid employees and 500 volunteers and manages 70-80 shelter and support centres in Paris and the surrounding area. The association primarily focuses on housing, healthcare, employment, basic training and outreach work.

The Emmaus Paris community (2010) has four paid members of staff and 70 companions spread across three sites. It also has a 300m² warehouse. The community collects, sorts and recycles unwanted goods, and offers logistics and a social removals service. It plans to open stores and develop economically.

Three halfway houses accommodate around 50 people with two social workers, a house manager and volunteers.



A partnership with Culture du Cœur, an association that manages and delivers cultural activities by providing tickets to shows, enables us to organise individual or group outings, visits to museums and heritage sites. Duty offices enable us to meet with residents, although it is difficult to interest them and it is a long term job.

Emmaus Helsinki (Kaarina, Ulla and Helka)

Helka)

Since 1966, Emmaüs Helsinki welcome 80 volunteers and 1 salaried permanent employee.

Two second hand shops are working on : Solidarity co-operation on 4 continents: Emmaus groups in Burkina Faso, Peru, Indonesia, Poland –Ukraine, Benin, Finland, Estonia ; Social pricing in the shops ; Redesign and reuse of textile material (“trademark”-clothes made by Emmaus volunteers, open textile-workshops at big public events, mending clothes in a nursing home ; Networking with other associations (Development NGO’s, recycling issues, “Paperless”).



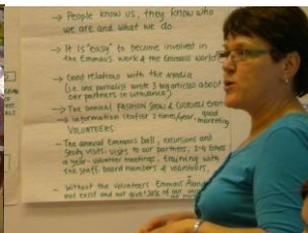
Oselya (Irina)

This Emmaus group in Ukraine started in 2001. 24 persons live in the community. There are also partners, sponsors, volunteers.

Activities: Community, furniture workshop, workshop decorating plates, shop, social training, street work, street magazine (“Prosto neba”), solidarity actions.

New projects: social hostel in Lviv, ceramic workshop.

Emmaus Åland (Carina, Robert and Margaret)



Since 1989, with 400 members in the association, is member of Emmaus Finland, Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International.

Different activities are developed: 6 shops, 1 art gallery, manifestations, solidarity work in Peru, Lithuania, Estonia, Kaliningrad, Ukraine. Three focus areas: Social integration work locally, environmental work and international solidarity.

Well integrated in the Åland society (people know us and trust us). It is easy to become a volunteer. We have an annual fashion show and cultural evening. Information leaflet is distributed 2 times a year.



We were also accompanied by Erika (Emmaüs Åland), and Rachel and Eugénie (our interpreters).

An active reflection on the Movement's manifesto

Following a look back at Emmaüs' history, the participants split into small groups and translated the manifesto's different articles into their own words and identified concrete examples of how the articles are implemented. This exercise enabled the participants to effectively internalise our core principles.

Introduction:

- Love involves respect.
- Awareness that we are privileged involves responsibility and commitment.

E.g.: the work of the companions with the most deprived members of society (outreach work).

The manifesto's eight articles

1. Helping others and first and foremost the most vulnerable people will enable everyone to live dignified lives in a peaceful society. Serving first those who suffer most will enable us to live in a more dignified society.

E.g.: For inclusion work, employ the person experiencing the greatest difficulties, unconditional shelter and support in communities, welcome fragile volunteers.

2. Peace is maintained by justice.

E.g.: Share batches between clients, volunteers respecting the buying rules, each person must work in accordance with their capacity.

3. Interaction and sharing in equal dignity. This action, mutual support and justice principle should apply to all levels: people, organisations and countries.

E.g.: community café, no difference between companion and friend relations.

4. Develop spaces in which everyone feels free, respected and able to take part in order to meet their needs.

E.g.: culture, artistic expression, art as a means of expression, holidays (Emmaüs holiday homes: Vosges Farm), a community that runs smoothly, leaders, friends and companions for a balanced whole.

5. Our recovery work enables us to recycle and gives us the means to help people.

E.g.: Emmaüs de Paris Community; collection and sale, going further by recycling glass, plastic, paper etc.

6. Without faltering, continue our political struggle until the root causes of extreme poverty have been addressed.



E.g.: demonstrations / undocumented migrants, socially responsible criminals' campaign, sleeping rough for charity, our daily stance.

7. Independence from political or religious institutions. Safeguard human rights. Not subordinate ourselves to an authority other than the manifesto.

E.g.: unconditional shelter and support (undocumented migrants by Association Emmaüs Paris, ex-offenders at the Vosges Farm), i.e. refuse to comply with unjust laws and not depend on commercial partners.

8. Adhesion to the manifesto unites the Movement.

Volunteering at Emmaüs, a necessary commitment

Why am I a volunteer?

- Because Emmaüs exists- Having energy and want

Why did I choose Emmaüs?

- Concrete work, non-profit and secular

<p>to be in relations with others - To be closer to people - Being a family member</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am privileged and want to help - To be in the reality, not in the parliament - Society is sick and I believe in social engagement - Collective work, to keep my eyes open - I can use my creativity and help myself while helping others – Share experience -To discuss ideas - Helping without economic (self) interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working on the same level - Make everybody work. An own place for everybody - Helping men and women without work - Helping without discrimination - Community projects - Not charity, working together - Both practical and intellectual work - Alternative way to what the system offers - Change the world together- Democratic structure - Coincidence, “it just happened” - to be involved
<p>What do I offer to Emmaus?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time, patience and good food. - Skills: knowledge and experience. - Energy and passion, good spirits and joy. - Ideas but also hands, legs, a brain, ears, eyes and a heart. <p>What does Emmaus offer to me?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The place where I have found the true meaning of the saying: “No man is an island; we are all part of a continent.” 	<p>What do I expect from Emmaus?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A return to a fair reality. - Recognition. - Preserve the fundamental values. <p>What does Emmaus expect from me?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time, endurance and patience. - Team working – take responsibility. - New ideas – involvement and commitment. - Passion, flexibility, generosity and loyalty.

Good practice ideas for volunteering in the future



- Have ‘relay’ friends trained by Emmaus.
- Get a companion to give new volunteers a tour of the community.
- Importance of the relationship with the president, board and leaders.
- Clear definition of individual responsibilities: leaders, companions and friends.
- Rotate volunteers (workshop / selling).
- Set up tri-pronged committees: friends, companions and leaders: leisure, security, solidarity and communications.
- Internal regulations (signed by the volunteer?), not signed by the companions.
- Handbook for friends to be put together by the friends, companions and leaders.

- Visit a nearby community - spend a day with the community: tour, meals and work with the companions.
- Make a space for everybody : different days, different teams, different times, different ideas
- Clear rules and same rules for everybody; discuss the rules every time and time again.
- Actively finding about if people are interested to participate in administration work.
- Information in the good time : information to the right people in the right moment.
- Operation “Super Talka” : bringing a lot of people together to work and eat during a limited time (3 or 4 hours) : a lot of fun, you see the result.
- A leaflet-guide for volunteers with practical information about the group, rules etc.
- Regular meetings for the volunteers.
- Recruitment of new volunteers : media, internet, facebook, sms, shop, universities, leaflets personal invitations.
- Inform about what Emmaüs needs : for example someone who can work with the books...
- To appoint somebody to be responsible for the welcoming of new volunteers.

*For the World Council on Training and New Generations:
 Carina Aaltonen and Françoise Clausee*