

European Bosnia-Herzegovina Collective

3-4 May 2018

Socio-educational centre, Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Participants

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The meeting report is structured as follows:

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Thank you to Nova Generacija for hosting the meeting and to the participants for the worthwhile and constructive discussions!

See you in Paris, France, on 21-22 November 2018!

THE BOSNIAN GROUPS

Group	Emmaus International Solidarity Forum (ISF)	Nova Generacija
Main activities	<p><i>FIS-Emmaus activities are presented with a video: https://youtu.be/jrPjQzggviQ.</i></p> <p><u>Duje Centre Shelter</u> and support for socially and medically vulnerable people, social reintegration programme.</p> <p><u>Centre for children and teenagers</u> from complicated family backgrounds: educational, cultural, sporting activities, and educational support.</p> <p><u>Support for elderly people</u> in the Doboj Istok region and in Srebrenica: Medical monitoring, distribution of food, home help service.</p> <p><u>Sponsoring orphans</u> Covering school fees, and activities aimed at families experiencing social issues.</p> <p><u>Boarding school</u> Accommodation, schooling and extracurricular activities in Potocari.</p> <p><u>Day centres</u> Potocari, Zvornik and Doboj, provision for children and organising educational and recreational activities.</p> <p><u>Humanitarian aid</u> in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Syria and Bangladesh (Rohingya community).</p> <p><u>Partnership in Burkina Faso</u> Funding school fees, donating school materials for children.</p> <p><u>Distribution of hot meals</u> in Doboj, Srebrenica, Bratunac, Gračanica and Doboj Istok for people in difficulty and elderly people.</p> <p><u>Farming</u> The group produces 40 tonnes of vegetables.</p> <p><u>Homeless world cup</u> The group coordinates the country's team.</p> <p><u>Summer camp</u> Hosting 80 young people from 10 countries in Potocari, taking part in the commemoration and initiatives to support people in the region.</p> <p><u>Preventing human trafficking</u> Refuge for potential victims, support for undocumented migrants, running the European Resource Centre.</p> <p><u>Child protection</u> Using new technologies to prevent child exploitation. Preventing violence against children.</p>	<p><i>The participants had the chance to visit several of Nova Generacija's locations and activities before the meeting.</i></p> <p><u>Income-generating activity</u> A second-hand store, stocked with a container load of goods sent by Emmaus Åland (Finland), received in 2017. The Åland group is ready to send another truck load as soon as Nova Generacija is ready.</p> <p><u>Social activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The telephone helpline: telephone hotline for reporting violence against children. - Day centre: Around 40 children per month, educational and fun activities, distribution of meals and school materials. <p><u>A few figures and comparisons to give a better idea of the situation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tax payable upon receipt of a container load: €4K (the last load is not yet profitable). - Attending a collective meeting in Paris: equivalent to two months of sales in the shop. <p>Nevertheless, sales income covers all our tax and expenditure, but progress is slow.</p> <p><u>Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A vehicle more suited to the shop's work. - 1-2 container loads a year.
Latest news and prospects	<p><u>Team</u> 266 paid employees (of whom 180 are permanent members of staff) and 50 volunteers.</p> <p><u>Migration crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina</u> Extra assistance for migrants.</p> <p><u>Summer camp</u> Potential participants can register on the EE website.</p>	<p><u>Opening a second shop</u> The savings made will enable the group to hire premises for two months.</p>

THE CROATIAN GROUPS

<i>Group</i>	Centre for Missing and Exploited Children - CNZD	Association of People with Physical Disabilities - TOMS
<i>Latest news</i>	<p><u>Joining Emmaus</u> The Regional Council of Emmaus Europe (RCEE) approved CNZD's trial membership application in March 2018. The desire to join Emmaus is linked to the fact that the association can only currently house and support people up to the age of 18. Emmaus is a model that enables residents to take part in an income-generating activity, meaning that they can be housed and supported for longer.</p> <p><u>Income-generating activity</u> The social enterprise has been set up and work is underway. Clothing is being sold, food and drink is being prepared, and events are being organised.</p> <p><u>National refuge for child victims of human trafficking</u> A house has been bought. The aim is to renovate it (two floors, 100m²). The first floor will be used for new victims while the second floor will be a place where "former" victims can resocialize.</p>	<p>The first presentation of the association to the BH collective.</p> <p><u>How the association was founded</u> The association was founded 30 years ago by five people with similar issues, with the aim of helping people with a physical disability. Over time, the association has begun to focus more generally on disadvantaged people: the poorest people, the homeless etc.</p> <p><u>Aim</u> Enable everyone to access all spaces and spheres: physical access, access to communications and information, access to services, work, and rehabilitation communities.</p> <p><u>Location</u> The towns of Trogir, Okrug, Marina and Segt (standing for TOMS), which have a population of around 26,000.</p> <p><u>Team</u> 280 members</p>
<i>Main activities</i>	<p>Association founded in 2006 under a contract with the state.</p> <p><u>Team</u> 18 full-time staff (psychologists, social workers, lawyers), 118 volunteers (accounting for over 3,000 working hours).</p> <p><u>Child protection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Day centre for children with behavioural issues in five counties: www.legosi.org. - Hotline for reporting missing children (5,000 children go missing each year). - Centre for a safer internet: protecting children against online risks: www.csi.hr. 	<p><u>Day centre</u> For roughly 50 children.</p> <p><u>Self-sustainability activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wine route: Volunteers travel across Croatia, pick up wine from producers, and then organise an event in the summer to promote and sell the wine. - Fundraising concerts.
<i>Prospects</i>	<p><u>Income-generating activity</u> Rent premises for the shops.</p> <p><u>Community</u> Raise funds to open a community for young people leaving the social centre.</p> <p><u>Centre for unaccompanied minors</u> They are currently held in detention centres.</p> <p><u>Social wellbeing centre</u> Purchase of a house to accommodate Roma children, help elderly people, open a public canteen etc.</p>	<p><u>Joining Emmaus</u> Trial membership process underway.</p> <p><u>Social farm</u> The group has a building on a plot of roughly 2,000m² (very well-located in the village but in a poor state of repair). The idea is to create a social farm modelled on the Emmaus communities.</p>

Return on Emmaus and Abbe Pierre history

Before starting the meeting, a moment is dedicated to a historical presentation of the movement. Hans van Beck, collective referent, presents dates and key steps of Emmaus history, relying on the life of its founder, Abbe Pierre.

European and international news

Upcoming events are as follows:

- European migration / human trafficking collective: 20-23 June in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, focusing in particular on the outsourcing of border management. The programme includes training delivered by Migreurop, visiting centres working on these issues, and personal accounts of migration and trafficking.
- Training
 - *Emmaus in all of its facets course: 3-6 June in Cologne, Germany*, a course focusing on the history of Emmaus in Europe.
 - There is also a wish to further develop our training: **groups are invited to get in touch if they wish to organise training courses** (keeping it simple and offering short courses). A training course on the circular economy is set to take place in the first quarter of 2019 at Emmaus Pamplona in Spain.
- Global Forum for Alternatives run by the most socially-excluded people: 17-20 September in Geneva in Switzerland. The forum is being arranged following a decision taken by the Jesolo World Assembly. **All the groups are invited to register (by 31 May) and suggest workshops or topics**. External organisations are also invited to set up joint initiatives.
- Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe: 27-31 October 2019 in San Sebastian (Spain).

Regarding the alternatives forum, Emmaus ISF wishes to know which of its activities should be showcased. **It was suggested that Emmaus Europe should put forward priorities.**

Moreover, the participants stated that a more detailed schedule is needed to be able to set aside the dates and make plans for paying the registration fee. Several issues are still pending: who can request a reduced rate, how to invite partners, and what accommodation is being provided?

The peace march

The aim of this initiative is to **mark out a path along the route people took when fleeing Srebrenica during the war**. The marked pathway would enable the event to be commemorated every year by a “return” march.

Several associations are working in partnership on this project in conjunction with the authorities: Emmaüs Synergie, Emmaus ISF, Solidarité Renaissance, and Val de Brie Insertion.

Work has been underway for a week and the initiative is proving to be very emotional, as traces of the massacre can still be seen.

Lorry loads of donated goods

- Shared container load for Bosnia-Herzegovina

A shared container filled by the French groups Alençon, Bourges and Val de Brie Insertion was sent to Emmaus ISF in November 2017.

Several groups are willing to take part in this initiative if it is organised again this year (eight groups have already been identified). NB: it takes around two months to organize a shared load so action needs to be taken quickly.

It would be worthwhile contacting René who coordinated the initiative in late 2017 (and asked to be excused from the meeting).

- The needs of the groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia
- o Emmaus-ISF: there are two ways to receive goods. First for donations, and it's not taxed. Second as commercial goods, this can be sold in the second-hand store, with a different procedure and more paper work. Number of loads for the first purpose is unlimited, 1 per year for the shop is enough.
- o Nova Generacija: two truck loads a year are sufficient for the current shop.
- o CNZD: the group is able to receive container loads and needs goods so that it can develop its new income-generating activity. It should be noted that Croatia is member of the European Union and the goods transport would be easier.

The participants observed that the number of container loads shipped to the different countries is very unequal. **It seems that Emmaus Europe has a role to play here and that this matter should be discussed by the regional executive.**

Preventing human trafficking - the European Resource Centre

For several years, Emmaus ISF has been developing an online human trafficking resource centre: www.eurcenter.net. **The website offers comprehensive information about human trafficking**, including statistics, national and international legislation, and a bibliography. Moreover, possible cases of human trafficking can be reported using the online tool.

The website is aimed at each and every citizen who must be legally able to recognize that human trafficking is taking place and then denounce it. **It is specifically aimed at the Emmaus communities, as they frequently work with people who are very exposed to trafficking, and even who have been or are currently victims.**

Emmaus ISF is a recognized stakeholder in this area: the group is a member of networks such as INHOPE and ECPAT, and its members take part in international conferences on the issue, taking the floor and having their views heard.

However, **the Emmaus communities currently make insufficient use of this platform, and building the capacity of Emmaus activists to prevent human trafficking and other forms of exploitation is a real challenge.** New training resources are under development, and existing resources can be used directly in the groups as they are aimed at community leaders.

Finally, as the project bears Emmaus Europe's name, **it is important that all the groups familiarize themselves with the resource**, ask questions, and comment on the form and content etc.

Running of the collective

Several observations were made about the running and development of this collective.

- Participation

A very small number of groups are represented at this meeting and momentum is being lost. As a comparison, a large number of groups attended and were willing to help when the collectives were set up. Emmaus Europe is responsible for encouraging groups to take part in these meetings because this would be a complicated task for the groups to undertake from Bosnia-Herzegovina.

- Logistics and facilitation

There is a disconnect between the allocated resources and the conditions in which the meetings are held. A large budget is utilized, yet, **conditions are not up to standard** (poor quality hotels, participants having to sleep on sofa-beds etc). Furthermore, some of the money is wasted (example of unplanned meals that are not eaten by participants). It was noted that **conditions are worsening from one meeting to the next**.

Moreover, **the planned agenda is not respected**; some slots/items are not tackled or are heavily truncated, even when they are core issues.

- Aims of the collectives

Regarding new groups, it is not right to convene meetings and then to spend all the time at the meeting reviewing groups' current work. This is one of the reasons why attendances are falling.

These meetings need to have specific aims, set in advance by the participants, so that there is a reason for them to attend. Moreover, **Emmaus Europe needs to set strategic guidelines to guide the collectives**. (For instance, is the idea to integrate more and more groups into the Emmaus Movement?)

The geographical collectives are still needed to support the new groups along the path towards independence.

- Emmaus Europe's position

The feeling that Emmaus Europe is becoming a purely administrative structure was expressed. Emmaus Europe should take ownership of the groups' initiatives as if they were its own and publicize them more. It was stated that the groups' practical initiatives take place in much shorter timescales (a child in difficulty/danger cannot wait) and that Emmaus Europe must be equally responsive in a rapidly changing world.

- Next steps

The aforementioned points need to be considered by Emmaus Europe. Time must be taken to evaluate the collectives. **This could form the bulk and even the whole agenda of the next meeting**. Discussions at that meeting could fuel debate on the regional council and at the regional assembly.

In any event, these ideas will be mentioned at the next EE regional executive and council meetings.

- Proposals

Several ideas were put forward and could be discussed and decided upon in the near future:

- **Name:** Change the name of the collective to include Croatia (the Balkans Collective, for example).
- **Meeting schedule:** One meeting per year for each collective and a joint annual meeting.
- **Organisation:** Emmaus Europe should set a budget per participant and participants should be allowed to add to it if they want better accommodation for the meeting.

Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on **21-22 November 2018 in the Paris Region in France**. The main item on the agenda will be a discussion on how our collective works and its objectives. Please make it a date for your diary!