

# PEEMMAUS EUROPE EMMMAUS EURI EMMAÜS EUROPE EMMaÜS EUROPE DPA EMAÜS EUROPA EMAÜS EUR

## European Bosnia-Herzegovina / South-East Europe Collective

23-24 November 2018

Salle l'Escale, Villiers-sur-Marne, France

### Participants

Amila Okanovic, Elmedin Skrebo, Hamzalija Okanovic, Sabina Arnaut Jahic, *Bosnia-Herzegovina national delegate, IFS-Emmaus, Bosnia-Herzegovina.*

Sasa Risojevic, Nova Generacija, **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Tomislav Ramljak, **Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, Croatia.**

Ivica Bajic, **TOMS, Croatia**

René Mériaux, **Emmaus Alençon, France.**

Lahcen Boukhenaïssi, Nadia Basquin, **Emmaus Synergie, France**

Coralie Bren, **Emmaus Trappes, France**

Eddy Thoreau, Michel Charlet, **SOS Boîte de lait, France**

Laurence Metivet, Max Weiss, **Val de Brie Emmaus, France**

Jeroen Geurts, **Emmaus Langeweg, Netherlands**

Michael Spike Hudson, *member of the Emmaus Europe executive and collective representative,* **Emmaus Gloucestershire, UK**

Rita Nilsson, Robert Larsson, **Emmaus Fredriksdal, Sweden**

Muhizin Omerovic Dzile, Edith Cabordery, **guest participants**

Théo Robin, **Emmaus Europe Secretariat**

Michael "Spike" Hudson has been co-opted by the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe as the new Bosnia-Herzegovina Collective representative, with the agreement of the country's groups. He opened the meeting by thanking Hans Van Beek for his work with the collective over several years.

### Presentation of the host groups

Laurence Metivet, the director of **Val de Brie Emmaus (VBE)**, presented her organisation. The association uses an income-generating activity to foster inclusion: it monitors and supports people who are eligible for back-to-work schemes, and its income-generating activity is based on public and private sector contracts in industries such as cleansing, construction finishing and fittings, green spaces etc. Beneficiaries are not qualified but receive training and develop their skills during their two-year (maximum) contracts. The end goal is for these people to leave VBE with at least a six-month contract.

The organisation works in a priority neighbourhood (as defined by central government). VBE is one of the town's biggest employers, as it has 120-150 employees, 70% of whom come from Villiers-sur-Marne's priority areas.

The association also undertakes solidarity work, for instance by supporting SOS Boîte de lait (an Emmaus member) with employees, and by maintaining strong links with Bosnia-Herzegovina; where employees travel every year to notably work on the peace march initiative. These solidarity initiatives enable the employees to focus on something outside of their personal issues.

Nadia Basquin and Lahcen Boukhenaïssi, department head and director of **Emmaus Synergie**, presented their organisation. The association undertakes specialised prevention work targeting

young people aged 12-25. The aim is to reach out to the young people experiencing the greatest difficulties in order to help them to address their issues (justice, addiction, sex work etc.). Emmaus Synergie has a workforce of 10 employees and works in several areas around Villiers-sur-Marne. This field is specific to France and falls under the remit of the local French department. Consequently, the department fully funds the association's work. Sadly, funding relies heavily on the departmental council's policy thrust. Consequently, Val de Marne (where Emmaus Synergie operates) is one of the best served departments, with 10 specialised prevention organisations, while some departments do not have any initiatives at all of this kind. This is due to the fact that a swathe of young people in France is of no interest to politicians, particularly education system dropouts. Just like VBE, the organisation has strong ties with Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the evening event held on 23 November is a reflection of these links. Short films were screened, there was a photo exhibition, and the stakeholders and initiatives in Bosnia-Herzegovina were presented at the evening.

### **Collective objectives and organisational structure**

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A general discussion got underway about how our geographical collective operates and about its aims and objectives.

#### **The collective's name**

The participants agreed that a new name is needed in order to reflect the involvement of the Croatian groups in particular. The participants agreed upon the name of "South-East Europe Collective" in order to open up the collective as much as possible.

- The regional executive will be informed about this proposal.
- The Albanian group will be contacted to invite them to join us.

#### **The collective's key objectives**

The participants mentioned various priority areas for our collective, particularly, demonstrate the concept of solidarity with new groups, arrange for expertise and experiences to be shared, identify resources useful for developing the collective and new projects, improve our communication and our campaigning impact, and raise awareness. In an overarching sense, the mobilisation of new groups has also been identified as a means of achieving these objectives.

Finally, the participants agreed on the following key areas:

- Organise solidarity and access to resources, particularly for new groups.
- Improve internal and external communications.
- Increase our campaigning impact.
- Mobilize other Emmaus groups.

Working sessions were devoted to each of these areas to provide details about the initiatives for implementation.

### **Organise solidarity and access to resources**

Several ideas were floated. It is important to facilitate new groups taking ownership of the Emmaus values and implementing them. The sharing of information, resources and expertise between the groups must also be enabled. Finally, the collective should enable solidarity for the groups to be organised. Several initiatives were put forward as a result:

- Pass on Emmaus International's trial membership handbook: **Jeroen, Théo**  
[https://www.sugarsync.com/pf/D3942006\\_06545816\\_7134381](https://www.sugarsync.com/pf/D3942006_06545816_7134381)
- Set up an online resource page: **Sabina, Tomislav**
- Arrange an "emergency" lorry load for NG to be sent by **Emmaus Fredriksdal**.
- Arrange a group convoy in July 2019: **Eddy & René**

### **Improve internal and external communications**

The participants stressed the fact that the collective needs to work on its communication, particularly on showcasing the groups' initiatives. Internal communications tools such as the EE solidarity review or Emmaus International's Act Emmaus were mentioned at this juncture, as well as new ideas such as a newsletter, a Facebook group or a collective calendar (see page five). Regarding external communications, the aim would be to showcase the groups' initiatives and the movement's model, depicting them as successful alternatives. To achieve this, it would be an idea to draw on events such as the Emmaus Movement's 70th anniversary, IFS-Emmaus' 20th anniversary, and the youth camps.

- Create a newsletter and a Facebook group via the web platform: **Tomislav**

### **Increase our campaigning impact**

Following on from the discussion on external communications, the group discussed the impact that we could have from a campaigning perspective. In the first instance, the intention is to raise Emmaus' profile with our partners, the general public and politicians. Specifically, we need to connect with the world of politics and influencers. We also need to utilize the groups' initiatives and promote them in order to demonstrate that another model is possible and that it works. We need to convey a small number of key messages and to work in networks with partners in order to achieve these aims.

### **Mobilize other Emmaus groups**

This is crucial if the collective is to flourish and if we are to broaden our perspectives and discussions. To this end, each collective member could be an ambassador for our collective and its initiatives. Inviting speakers could also encourage new members to get involved.

- Contact Emmaus Vlora (Albania): **Eddy**
- Potentially invite a representative of RREUSE to the next meeting: **IFS-Emmaus**

### How the collective operates

The agendas for the next few meetings could focus on the areas outlined above in order to discuss the implementation of the initiatives and plan new ones. Other topics could be added according to people's wishes and needs.

### **Solidarity applications**

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It was reiterated at this point that three solidarity programmes are open to the European groups every year: the European solidarity programme (run by Emmaus Europe, with a total budget of roughly €100K), the annual international solidarity programme (run by Emmaus International with a total budget of approximately €480K) and the Fondation Abbé Pierre (FAP) programme (run by

the foundation, with a total budget of roughly €220K). These programmes operate differently and have contrasting criteria. Groups can make solidarity applications each year. The applications are examined and shared out among the programmes by the EE regional executive.

This year, collective member groups have submitted three applications:

- IFS-Emmaus wants to develop a hospital in the Srebrenica region.
- CNZD wants to expand its children's centre.
- CNZD also wants to buy a truck for its income-generating activity.

**The collective felt that the various initiatives were relevant.**

Edith, a former member of Emmaus Synergie, also submitted a project that she would like to roll out in the Srebrenica region in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It would have two components: setting up an income-generating activity by linking up with the region's beekeepers, because the honey has an excellent reputation, and also giving a special place to women and creating a space where they can socialize, with meetings, artistic workshops etc. The project would be supported by IFS-Emmaus. It is still in the discussion/planning phase.

Finally, time was taken to discuss once again the peace march held every year between Tuzla and Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A further €2,500 is needed to finish work on the pathway. VBE might well be willing to contribute the amount.

## **Group convoy**

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The idea was floated to arrange a group convoy to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. The convoy would be humanitarian and consequently the goods could not be sold. This type of convoy was organised on a yearly basis for a long time before being suspended a few years ago. There is a need to be more transparent about the arrangements when we restart the initiative. Over 10 communities have already stated that they are willing to take part (funding, goods, trucks). For information purposes, a truck costs €2,000-€2,500.

Ideally, the convoy would arrive before the IFS-Emmaus summer camp in Srebrenica so that the goods can be used at the camp. Plans should be put in place for the convoy to arrive in early July.

### Proposed allocation of roles

- Feedback about the 2017 load: **Sabina/IFS-Emmaus**
- Send out an invitation to take part to the European groups: **Théo/EE**
- Collate goods requirements: **Théo/EE and the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia groups**
- Logistics coordination, contact with participating groups: **Eddy and René**
- Admin support in Bosnia-Herzegovina: **Sabina/IFS-Emmaus**

It was reiterated that apart from providing solidarity, the most important facet of this type of initiative is the chance for members from different groups to meet. Moreover, the partnership dimension is vital; the groups will not be simply "sending" and "receiving" groups but co-organisers of the initiative.

## **Other**

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### **Regional assembly of Emmaus Europe**

The Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe will take place in 2019. The assembly is Emmaus Europe's highest authority and all the groups are invited to take part and express their views. The

assembly will be held on **27-31 October 2019 in San Sebastian in Spain**. Given the discussions over the past two days, it would seem highly relevant for the members of the collectives to take part in order to put forward the outcomes of these discussions to Emmaus Europe. A session will be held on the geographical collectives and themed workshops will be organised about which the groups may be approached, or they could contact the relevant working groups to suggest getting involved (for instance, on migration and human trafficking).

### **Yesterday Today Tomorrow**

An organisation has contacted Emmaus about setting up the YTT project in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This is a creative project that enables migrants to share their journeys and make their voices heard. Anyone who is interested should contact Spike.

### **Next meeting and schedule**

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It was suggested that the next meeting should be held **in Srebrenica on 7 July 2019** in conjunction with these events:

- Early July: the convoy arrives.
- 7 July: the geographical collective meets.
- 8-10 July: the peace march
- 11 July: Srebrenica massacre commemoration ceremony.
- 11-24 July: youth camp in Srebrenica
- Without forgetting that 2019 will be the 20th anniversary of IFS-Emmaus.

The agenda will primarily be made up of the three areas mentioned during the meeting; if other topics need to be added, the secretariat can be informed.

Future meetings could also be held in Italy and Croatia: the collective agreed to keep in mind these two venues for the 2020 meetings.

**Thank you to Emmaus Synergie and Val de Brie Emmaus for their warm welcome and to the participants for their constructive and worthwhile discussions!**

**See you in Srebrenica in Bosnia-Herzegovina on 7 July 2019!**

**THE BOSNIAN GROUPS**

<i>Group</i>	<b>International Forum of Solidarity - Emmaus (IFS)</b>	<b>Nova Generacija</b>
<i>Latest news</i>	<p><u>Duje refuge</u> this refuge is still IFS-Emmaus' biggest programme with 440 beneficiaries receiving social and medical support.</p> <p><u>Love of the mothers of Srebrenica</u> craft workshops were held with the mothers receiving support and the items made were sold at a humanitarian fair in October.</p> <p><u>Youth camp</u> the 13th camp was held in July with 70 young people from nine countries. They started working on the mobile infirmary. Registration for the 2019 camp will begin in April.</p> <p><u>Housing for families</u> Building houses for needy families. Five have already been built. The public fundraising appeals are proving successful.</p> <p><u>Support for migrants</u> Support is provided for migrant reception centres where conditions are particularly poor, as the public institutions are not involved.</p> <p><u>International solidarity</u> Containers have been shipped to Burkina Faso and Syria. A second container is currently being filled for Syria.</p> <p><u>Vegetable garden</u> 3,800m<sup>2</sup> of vegetable gardens to cover IFS-Emmaus' needs.</p>	<p><u>Income-generating activity</u> A second charity shop has been opened, the location is good and the store should benefit from the popularity of the previous shop.</p> <p><u>Family support</u> The group is widening its scope and no longer solely works with children but also with their families, via individual and group meetings with the parents.</p> <p><u>Centre for children</u> 289 workshops were held this year. 90% of the funding comes from Banja Luka council and will be discontinued next year, which is jeopardizing the project's existence. NG cannot apply for European funds, as funding is generally released after the project, which is not feasible for a small organisation. NB: A young beneficiary will turn 18 in 2019 and can no longer be supported by NG. The group has therefore decided to help him repair his house but is yet to find a company.</p> <p><u>Summer camps</u> In total, 22 young people (residents and volunteers) took part in the summer camps in order to meet with other young people.</p> <p><u>Blue phone</u> 80 cases of violence were reported this year.</p> <p>Promotional initiatives were run on the streets.</p>
<i>Prospects</i>	<p>The main prospect is the new rehabilitation centre in the Srebrenica region.</p> <p>The website is also undergoing a total overhaul.</p>	

## THE CROATIAN GROUPS

<i>Group</i>	<b>Centre for Missing and Exploited Children - CNZD</b>	<b>Association of People with Physical Disabilities - TOMS</b>
<i>Latest news</i>	<p><u>Income-generating activity</u> A building has been purchased and the shop is set to open in early December. It is located 150m from the centre and is 80m<sup>2</sup>. The mayor of Osijek will attend the inauguration and an article has been published in the newspaper. The main problem in terms of securing the long-term future of the income-generating activity is that the rent is very high and the banks refuse to lend money for a property purchase.</p> <p><u>Goods</u> A lorry load from Emmaus Åland arrived safely. The group had to pay a symbolic amount as they are not allowed to sell donated items.</p> <p><u>Advocacy impact</u> The group has managed to get all the town's schools talking about the environment and recycling to their students. This project will be partially supported by the mayor.</p>	<p><u>Joining the movement</u> The group has just been accepted as a trial member by EE and EI.</p> <p><u>Income-generating activity</u></p> <p><i>Restaurant</i> Last year, premises suitable for a restaurant were obtained. In addition to generating income for the organisation, the restaurant will employ people with disabilities and could prepare meals for needy people. Government funding has been requested and the group should receive an answer in January. If the answer is negative, the group wants to apply for movement solidarity.</p> <p><i>Charity shop</i> The group also wants to open a shop. It already has premises, five minutes from the centre of Trogir, with quite a low rent. People with disabilities will be employed at the shop. Clothing cannot be sold at the shop, but furniture and antiques will be on sale. The income generated will help support the social activities.</p>