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South-East Europe Collective  
7 July 2019  
Srebrenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina

## Participants

Muhizin Omerovic Dzile, Habib Dzananovic, Hamzalija Okanovic, Sabina Arnaut Jahic, *Bosnia-Herzegovina national delegate*, **Emmaus International Solidarity Forum (ISF), Bosnia-Herzegovina**  
Jadranko Jankovic, Sasa Risojevic, *Nova Generacija, Bosnie-Herzegovina*  
Tomislav Ramljak, **Centre for Missing and Exploited Children, Croatia.**  
Ivica Bajic, Marina Perleta, Marta Viljac, Mira Bublesudina, **TOMS, Croatia**  
René Mériaux, **Emmaus Alençon, France**  
Anne-Marie Bretonneiche, Christian Bouyer, Gilbert, John Bourgeois, **Emmaus Angoulême, France**  
Maryse Faure, **Emmaus Chalon-sur-Saône, France**  
Rodolphe Lemercier, **Emmaüs Grenoble, France**  
Michel Fardet, **Emmaüs Limoges, France**

Ludovic Chausse, Agostino Lorenzoni, **Emmaus Périgueux, France**  
Coralie Bren, **Emmaus Trappes, France**  
Eddy Thoreau, Grégory Wuillemier, **SOS Boîte de Lait et Val de Brie Emmaus, France**  
Marie Balseca, **Emmaus Prato, Italy**  
Joe Feeley, Michael Spike Hudson, *member of the EE executive, collective representative*, **Emmaus Gloucestershire, UK**  
Karl-Johann Karlsson, **Emmaus Akvarn, Sweden**  
Gerardo Lizano, Rafael Carrillo, **Praktisk Solidaritet, Sweden**  
Eve Poulteau, Théo Robin, **Emmaus Europe Secretariat**  
Stéphane Puechberty, **Emmaus France Secretariat**  
Thomas Bodelet, **Emmaus International Secretariat**

Michael "Spike" Hudson opened the meeting by thanking the participants for attending and by reiterating the collective's three working areas selected at the previous meeting: solidarity and supporting new groups, internal and external communication, and campaigning.

## Group news

A recap of group news since the previous meeting was sent out prior to the meeting and can be found by clicking on the following link:

[https://app.sugarsync.com/iris/wf/D3942006\\_06545816\\_8676746](https://app.sugarsync.com/iris/wf/D3942006_06545816_8676746).

The discussions are reported in the tables at the end of this document. The tables also contain a summary of the visit paid to Emmaus Vlora in Albania before the meeting took place.

## Solidarity, inter-group exchanges, and supporting new groups

Brief feedback was provided about the *Emmaus in all of its facets* training course held in Cologne in June, by groups that have recently joined the movement. It was stated that this course is very informative and that most of the content could also be disseminated in the form of written resources or videos, meaning that participants would not have to travel. The new groups' needs are also focused on meeting other groups, networking and exchanging practices, which could be developed. Regarding the last of those aspects, the participants stressed that it is important for the groups to take part in the movement's various collective forums in order to create opportunities to meet groups, compare experiences, share expertise etc. This type of forum also needs to be developed to

foster exchanges of skills between groups. The matter is part of the proposed orientations for 2020-2024, will be discussed at the RAEE and the new elected representatives will need to address the issue of funding.

## **Communications**

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Following the decision taken at the last meeting, Tomislav Ramljak and CNZD have developed a website for the collective: [www.emmaus-seec.org](http://www.emmaus-seec.org). The website has two levels - a public area and a private area - which enables us to communicate between ourselves and with the outside world.

The public website will contain information on our members, general information about the movement, photos and a diary of upcoming events. If users log in, they will be able to access the collective's documents, a list of members' areas of expertise, and equipment offers. It was emphasized that this website will only come alive if it is regularly updated by the various members and their news is added.

As things stand, only CNZD can publish on the site, but in the long term the idea is for everyone to be able to publish content directly.

- **Tomislav** will send an email to all the participants in the last two meetings to ask them for content (website, description of their work, upcoming events etc).

Several issues were raised:

- Why have a website? Emmaus' initiatives do not currently enjoy a high enough profile. We need a space where we can directly showcase our initiatives and where we can discuss our areas of expertise and requirements. This platform needs to be more responsive than the institutional websites. However, we will need to link up the site with the existing sites so that we do not end up duplicating similar resources. This website will have to be linked to Emmaus Europe one and the latter should be updated.
- And what about translation? The translation apps currently available are suitable for grasping the main thrust and discussing our needs and areas of expertise.

## **Campaigning**

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Several campaigning initiatives are already underway at the European level:

- Emmaus Europe is a member of several networks, such as RREUSE (circular economy), EAPN (anti-poverty), which lobby the European authorities in these areas.
- Emmaus Europe has done a significant amount of work on the Circular Economy Package. The package was debated by the European Parliament, and EE's aim, by its work with the solidarity economy circle, was to ensure that social enterprises have an official status, which is not the case in the European level (neither in most countries in Europe).
- 2019 is the 70th anniversary of Abbé Pierre meeting Georges Legay, the very first companion, and therefore of the creation of the Emmaus Movement. In France, the groups are going to hold open days on 16-17 November. It has been suggested that this initiative is extended to the rest of Europe for any groups wishing to take part and to take the opportunity to invite the authorities and the new MEPs. Emmaus Europe could use this initiative to show and

value the European groups dynamic to the new MEPs and propose to work with them in the future.

The groups at the meeting seemed quite interested in taking part in this event. Emmaus Europe will prepare resources for the groups so that they can utilize them when discussing matters with their local elected representatives. Emmaus Europe will also send this information to the political groups in the Parliament.

The possibility of the collective undertaking campaigning was also discussed. It was suggested that the campaigning needs of the groups and countries represented in the collective should be collated, letting each group list their priorities. A discussion could take place at the RAEE during a workshop or informally. It was emphasized that campaigning takes time, notably because the political systems in the various countries differ considerably. However, managing to share information and understand how the systems work in other countries will already be a positive step forward.

The matter of the recognition of the specificity of our non-profit economic activity is a status shared by different European groups, especially within the collective.

- Gather together the groups' campaigning needs.
- Gather together the information on the stakes related to our non-profit activity in the collective's countries before considering the possibility of organizing a sharing meeting on this matter at the European level.
- It was suggested that a session at a future meeting should be devoted to presenting the networks of which EE is a member.

## **Regional assembly of Emmaus Europe**

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The RAEE is the organisation's general assembly and therefore its main governing body. The assembly brings together all the EE member groups and is held every four years. **The next assembly will take place on 28-30 October 2019 in San Sebastian in Spain.** The assembly will discuss Emmaus Europe's policy areas for the next four years, new European representatives will be elected to sit on EI's Board, and a new regional president will be elected. The assembly will also vote on new statutes. Two major areas will be at the heart of the discussions and the policy report:

1. Our advocacy, both on migrant reception and combating the rise of nationalism and xenophobia, and on adapting to climate change, and reuse and recycling initiatives.
2. Intensification of the movement animation, by developing exchanges of practices and experience, via the rollout of training courses and pooling information, supporting new groups, and the rollout of the European policy areas in the groups.

Sessions in sub-groups will be devoted to discussing the content of the policy report in order to add to and amend it.

## **Climate issues (EN)**

Areas that we can showcase and/or in which we can progress:

- Reduction (food waste in particular).
- Reuse (textiles, furniture, books).
- Repair.
- Recycling (textiles, plastics, WEEE).

- Energy: energy-efficient appliances, solar panels, wind power, geothermal energy etc.
- Travel: "green" fuels.
- Food: purchase local produce and develop farming in the groups, vegetarianism.
- Rainwater collection.
- Initiatives to preserve biodiversity.
- Discussion on sending container loads.

### **Discrimination and shelter & support (FR)**

#### Needs

- Legal support and European political pressure to force governments and then prefects to actually apply the law (in France in particular).

#### Proposed initiatives

- Educating group members so as to combat prejudice and racism.
- Example of groups that have established a quota of undocumented migrants in order to offer them more effective support.
- At the European level, collect migration data from the groups in order to have reliable information to underpin our initiatives and increase our credibility when undertaking advocacy (create a paid position?).
- RAEE: an initiative is being planned for Irun Bridge on 31 October (early afternoon). A suggestion has also been made to put together content about the history of Spanish migration and potentially to screen the film *Nous avons traversé les tempêtes*.

### **Building group and member capacity (FR)**

#### Exchanges of practice

- An Emmaus Erasmus – especially developing the exchanges (if possible reciprocal) of people, via stays in other communities to discover other practices.
- Use Emmaus Europe as a bridge between the groups to develop exchanges of practices. (Issues of budget/time to be discussed).

#### Reinforcing new groups support and accompanying

- Use the aforementioned proposals to enable them to discover the movement's different dimensions.
- Consider different types of training resources focusing on the movement's history (webinars etc).
- Bolster the work done by the CEI to support groups.
- Consider splitting into two the role of mentor group so that each group is mentored by an organisation that operates in a similar way and a different sort of organisation. Arrange meetings/training for the mentor groups to help them in their role.

### **Other matters**

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#### **Emmaus International work camp**

At the Jesolo World Assembly in 2016, the movement's groups decided to arrange international work camps in each of the Emmaus regions. The camps would enable participants to discover the context in a specific region, take part in the struggles championed by the region's groups, share in

the host group's work, learn more and educate themselves about the movement and its struggles, and mobilize the Emmaus groups about future undertakings. The Europe international work camp will take place in spring 2020. We now need to identify a host group and choose the theme (which will focus on combating rejection of others). Any proposals are more than welcome!

### **BBF partnership**

This partnership brings together groups from Bosnia-Herzegovina (Emmaus ISF), Burkina Faso (Emmaus Solidarité in Ouagadougou) and France (Emmaus Angoulême, Limoges, Périgueux and Ruffec). Several projects are underway, notably on the issues of access to water and education. A member exchange project is also under consideration.

### **2020 World Assembly**

The EI World Assembly will be held in Uruguay in autumn 2020. The programme and key issues are yet to be defined, but it was reiterated that it is very important that the majority of the groups attend. Specifically, groups must plan ahead to ensure that they can pay the registration fee, so that the fee does not constitute an insurmountable barrier to taking part.

### **Peace March**

The Collective meeting coincided with the Srebrenica 'Mars Mira', a 3 day Peace March to commemorate a massacre that happened during the 1995 wars. Several Emmaus members took part in the event.

### **Next meeting**

A proposal was made to hold the next meeting in **Osijek, Croatia, hosted by CNZD, in spring 2020**. Date to be arranged. The idea was floated of holding the following meeting in Albania. The group in the country has warmly invited us to do so. However, it would be a good idea if the members of Emmaus Vlora attended the meeting in Osijek so that they can get to know the collective.

**Thank you to Emmaus ISF for hosting and to the participants for the invaluable and constructive discussions!**

## THE BOSNIAN GROUPS

Group	Emmaus International Solidarity Forum (ISF)	Nova Generacija
<i>Latest news</i>	<p><u>Solidarity and social action</u>            Nine lorry loads have been <b>received</b> from Sweden since October 2018. Every time, a group of volunteers (employees and volunteers) travels to Sweden to help the Swedish group with their work and load the container together. Moreover, a load co-organised by several French groups arrived on the eve of the collective meeting and contained school materials, clothing, crockery etc.            A 13t container of second-hand goods was <b>shipped</b> for the children of Burkina-Faso, and the school fees of 1,600 pupils have been paid through a sponsorship scheme; the intention is to do the same in Niger.            25 lorry loads have been <b>sent</b> containing aid for the refugees at the Turkish-Syrian border.            The group has started working in western BH with a mobile kitchen.</p> <p><u>Group life</u>            Emmaus ISF has recently become a state partner for supporting refugees arriving in the country.            Registration for the summer camp is now open and the camp will start a few days after the collective meeting.            The group celebrated its 20th anniversary in April and a book is going to be published about Emmaus' 20 years of work in the country.</p>	<p><u>Social activities</u>            The group is developing its family initiatives and a preschool programme has been launched to get children ready to start school.            New facilities have been put in place for the day centre where at-risk children are given support (neglected by their families, living or working on the streets).  <u>Blue phone</u> Over 12,000 calls have been received since the launch in 2013.  <u>Income-generating activity</u>            The shop has been closed down because the group can no longer import goods due to a regulation passed to limit the abuse of humanitarian imports.            The group is considering new income-generating activities. For instance, they are considering collecting unsold supermarket products and selling them on. Ideally, further value would need to be added to the goods, by restoring or upcycling them.</p>

### Feedback from the visit to Emmaus Vlora in Albania

#### Backstory and current situation

Following the last meeting, Eddy Thoreau, Gianni Belletti and Sabina Arnaut-Jahic travelled to Albania to meet with Emmaus Vlora. The group was **founded in 2008** by Edison Stefa, a former Emmaus Ferrara (Italy) companion and now the leader of Vlora. **The group has been a trial member since 2014.** Its main activity is **collecting and sorting plastics and glass.** The waste is collected, sorted by type and colour, washed (the glass), compressed and sold to businesses. Around **80 people are involved in collections** (70% from the Roma community) and **10 people sort the waste** (mainly men collecting, while there is a gender balance for sorting). Collections are paid at €0.2/kg and those who sort are paid €300 a month (close to the average wage in Albania of €350 a month). The employees receive social support. The association has a **500m<sup>2</sup> building, collects 1,000 tonnes** of plastic per year (compared with 200t in 2008), and generates an **annual income of €200K. The state checks operating methods and the**

**accounts** every four years. The group also receives **an annual grant of €6K from Emmaus Ferrara**. The group has little contact with EE because it has historically been very close to Emmaus Italy and they continue to be in regular contact. However, **the group wants to take part in the RAEE and is offering to host a future collective meeting**.

Questions and comments

Positives identified during the visit: a warm welcome, very open, and a clearly stated desire to take part in the movement. The group champions the Emmaus values, is self-supporting and targets a priority group - the Roma community.

Negatives identified during the visit: totally reliant on Edison. The income-generating activity is at times threatened by the group's status falling into a legal void: their turnover means that they exceed the threshold for charitable organisation status. They are currently supported by a deputy mayor, but this could change.

**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> The shop is now open and three people (from the day centre) are employed full-time. A van has been bought thanks to the movement's European solidarity: the group can now transport goods and children.</p> <p><u>Social activities</u> The group bought a house in June. Major work is underway to try to alter the law on social enterprises. They are currently subject to the same regulations and taxation as standard businesses.</p>	<p><u>Social activities</u> 27 children receive help with their schoolwork and social support (meals and clothing). A new project is being developed - assistance with everyday tasks for 25 elderly women from the most vulnerable social groups.</p> <p><u>Income-generating activity</u> The group wants to set up a social restaurant which should open in roughly six months' time. The restaurant will enable jobs to be created for people with disabilities, free meals to be distributed to the most deprived people, and a "classic" restaurant business to be run to generate income. The group needs outdoor furniture: tables, chairs, fridges (small and large). They were advised to contact other groups with similar activities in Finland (Åland), France (Forbach...), Poland (Lublin), Romania (Frères Europa), UK (several groups have cafés) and to look at the <a href="http://www.actemmaus.org">www.actemmaus.org</a> website, which lists the initiatives run by many of the groups. The idea of a second-hand shop is also under consideration.</p>