



Minutes of the Regional Executive of Emmaus Europe

11 December 2020 - Videoconference

EMMAÛS

EUROPE

PRESENT

Carina Aaltonen (president), Jean-Philippe Légaut (treasurer), Simon Grainge, Leila Thouret, Eduardo Sánchez, and Rosa Gil Elorduy.

EXCUSED

Aurore Querel (Secretary)

EUROPE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

Véronica Acevedo Caro (admin-finance assistant), Marie Tixier (events coordinator), Théo Robin (solidarity coordinator), and Eve Poulteau (chief executive).

- PREAMBLE

Carina Aaltonen welcomed all the members of the executive. She thanked the Emmaus Europe Secretariat for its day-to-day commitment during the pandemic. Finally, she thanked the interpreters who enable us to understand the meetings better.

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION / DEBATE	CONCLUSIONS DECISIONS
1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS	<p><u>Approval of the minutes of the Regional Executive held in October 2020</u> None of the participants wished to make any additions, remarks or oppose the proposed minutes of the 22 October 2020 Regional Executive meeting.</p>	The minutes of the 22 October 2020 Regional Executive were unanimously approved.
2. FEEDBACK FROM THE ONLINE RCEE	Following the first online regional council, we asked the meeting participants for their feelings about the meeting, and for ideas on how to improve future online meetings. The secretariat received six responses.	<p>👁 Issue raised for discussion purposes.</p> <p>Find a way of ensuring more speaking time for everyone at the future meetings without overly extending the meetings. If necessary, run two separate sessions.</p>

Two stated that they would like more speaking time because they felt that there was not enough time to discuss matters. One suggested holding the regional council over a full day, or two half-days. Some requested longer breaks if the sessions last for three hours. It was also stressed that it is important that participants read the documents before the meeting so as not to waste time.

Simon asked the members of the executive for their feedback about the meeting and their opinion on future meetings.

Rosa Gil Elorduy said that it was difficult to chat informally and share other moments that can sometimes prove useful during meetings, but that these online meetings do enable us to see each other in these difficult times. She did not speak at the meeting but followed the discussion. She preferred to understand how everyone operates and learn to get to know each other.

Eduardo Sánchez said that the meeting was well organised, but it was difficult to have one's say because of the number of participants.

Jean-Philippe Légaut missed the in-person meetings but said we must make do given the COVID-19 crisis. He felt that meetings should last slightly longer. But he also felt that the format was good.

Leila Thouret said that this was a big first for her. Time was short, and she would have liked more time so that the participants could describe the impact of COVID-19 on their current circumstances.

Carina Aaltonen said that arranging this meeting was a major challenge because all the planned items on the agenda needed to be discussed in a short space of time. There was a need to hold a roundtable session to find out what was happening in all the countries. Admittedly, this is different from what happened in Esteville.

	<p>Eve Poulteau passed on a message from Aurore Querel, who was unable to attend. Aurore would have liked to lengthen the meeting time in order to have time to discuss, or schedule two half-days, as EI does, for instance, but we would need to find out how this is working at EI to know whether this would be a viable option. One option would be not holding a nations roundtable at each meeting.</p> <p>Marie Tixier thought that we needed to keep in mind several points because an interactive online meeting is quite complicated, and more precise questions need to be asked, because that would make it easier for participants to respond. After two hours people’s attention wanders, and people are not able to concentrate so effectively. If meetings are to be lengthened, longer breaks need to be scheduled, or meetings should be split into several sessions. Another factor to be taken into consideration is that it is more difficult to interpret at a remote meeting than a face-to-face one.</p> <p>Discussion on the role of the national delegates on the RCEE – their role is not yet specific enough, reminder on the length of term of office, EI is also awaiting feedback on this matter from each region: need to discuss the matter with the RCEE.</p> <p>In addition, introduce the question at the end of the training course at the next RCEE and then check with EI when they are expecting an answer from us in order to allocate more time with the members of the RCEE, particularly the NDs, and listen to them. They must be sent the questions in advance.</p>	
<p>3. TRAINING FOR THE NEW CEIs/NDs</p>	<p>The plan is to run a training course for the new NDs and CEIs on how the EU works and about our partners, and have a Q&A on their roles in EE (while awaiting the EI training course) prior to the February 2021 Regional Council.</p>	<p>The Emmaus Europe executive gave its unanimous agreement to incorporating the training course on the morning before the February 2021 Regional Council.</p>

4. EXCHANGE OF PRACTICES BETWEEN THE EMMAUS GROUPS IN EUROPE

Debriefing from the first exchange of practices on textiles session

Carina Aaltonen: Several groups presented their work at this meeting but there was not a lot of discussion between the groups. We received a lot of information about their work, in France, Pamplona (Spain) and regarding the new European legislation with RREUSE.

Eduardo Sánchez agreed with Carina. We had a deluge of information from the speakers at this meeting, and the meeting was open to all in the Movement, so different groups may have different concerns, depending on their size, for instance. We need to share as widely as possible our experience and the work done over previous years.

Eve, Vincent from Emmaus Jura said after the meeting that not only are they not in Europe (the EU), but they are also a small group for whom the sheer size of the projects presented at the meeting is too big.

Carina Aaltonen thought that this initiative should be continued in a working group in order to prepare another session more tailored to other groups. We could ask Eduardo and Vincent to look into it. We could also look into how to monitor the issue of EPR (extended producer responsibility) with the countries affected.

Update on the next exchange of practices meeting on youth and how to retain young people in the movement, and choice of next topics


Discussion on internet sales + practical training on internet selling with the Emmaus label?

OK.


And next? How to offer more shelter and support? What shelter and support practices are there specifically for foreign nationals? What practices can help support social integration?

We had planned to run an exchange of practices on farming but it would be better to save it for an in-person meeting.

Rosa: Do the issues of shelter and support, and social integration revolve around the right to work? In Spain, there are few people, they are those who find it most difficult to become independent.

 Issue raised for discussion purposes.

OK for an exchange of practices on internet sales following the discussion on youth. This would be followed by a discussion on how to offer more shelter and support and social integration of companions. This would need to be prepared for in a working group. We can start delving into this issue at the next regional council.

	<p>The issues of the community’s vision, the right to work, and the rights of people in Emmaus are interesting.</p> <p>JP: Yes, the issue of integrating companions into society, and the different ways in which we do it in the Emmaus groups would be interesting.</p>	
<p>5. NEXT RCEE</p>	<p>Training in the morning.</p> <p>Afternoon: 2021 budget, new groups and debate to be prepared “How to offer more shelter and support, and how to better integrate companions into society.”</p> <p>How can informal discussion be fostered during the RCEE? Should the microphones be left on before or after the meeting, or during the break (without the interpreters)?</p> <p>This issue needs to be discussed in time for future meetings.</p>	
<p>6. 2021 BUDGET</p>	<p><u>Update on the financial situation on 30 November 2020</u></p> <p>Jean-Philippe Légaut provided an update on the financial situation on 30 November 2020.</p> <p>The first point to take away from our actual budget is that we received a lot more membership dues than we had expected and budgeted for, even before the pandemic. As a reminder, we reduced the expected amount of membership dues in April 2020. We felt that the COVID-19 crisis would make it difficult for many groups to pay their dues.</p> <p>Expenditure remains within the set budgets in the adjusted April budget, apart from for the in-person meetings, which had been maintained but were not held.</p> <p>The executive’s attention was drawn to pay for the coming month of December. The September 2019 executive decided on a pay increase of 1.5% to take into account the rise in the cost of living caused by inflation, with this taking effect in 2020.</p> <p>However, the pay increase has not been implemented on the 2020 salaries to date, and will be rectified in December.</p>	<p> Issue raised for discussion purposes.</p>

This means that we could end 2020 with quite a large surplus, with the membership dues paid, and consequently, we could start discussing what to do with it. Three options are:

- Option 1: Be careful, because membership dues could be an issue in 2021, as they are based on the year N-1.

- Option 2: Pay into the EI Ethical Fund, enabling loans to be granted to the groups.

- Option 3: Develop our work.

This is a very broad issue. But the decision will need to be taken in 2021 when the financial year ends.


The executive primarily favours prudent option number 1, while waiting to see the amount of membership dues received.

The surplus is not structural but has been caused by the COVID-19 situation.

Eve Poulteau added that the organisation had received government support to cover wages at the time when the secretariat team were working reduced hours.

First proposal for the 2021 budget

Jean-Philippe Légaut, the EE treasurer, submitted a first proposal for the 2021 budget. The budget is balanced and prudent because of the membership dues situation. He announced that an “Internal/external communications” heading has been created in the “Life of the Movement” section, because communications are one of our policy areas, and fit better in this section than in general administration as initially planned. We are planning to only request €25K from EI out of solidarity with the other regions.

	<p>We have rationalised certain contracts to limit admin costs and this has impacted the 2021 budget. We have only planned a handful of in-person meetings in autumn 2021. This suits the members of the executive.</p> <p>For 2021, the proposal is to index-link pay to inflation at a rate of 0.6%. This decision needs to be taken in the absence of the members of the EE Secretariat, apart from the chief executive.</p>	<p>The members of the EE secretariat left the online meeting before the decision was taken on the increase.</p> <p>The EE executive gave its agreement to the principle of the 0.6% increase.</p>
<p>7. 2021 SOLIDARITY</p>	<p><u>2021 European programme update</u> A call for projects for the European solidarity programme was made just after the last executive meeting in October 2020.</p> <p>Currently, seven requests for a total of €65K have been received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ISF (Bosnia-Herzegovina) - CNZD (Croatia) - TOMS (Croatia) - Emmaus Geo (Georgia) - Brat Albert (Poland) - Emmaus Iasi (Romania) - Nasha Khata (Ukraine) <p>The total requested funding amount is higher than the last few years but lower than what we put forward two years ago. However, the amount has not been finalised, as some of the requests are still being examined and could be submitted to the EI programme or the Fondation Abbé Pierre (FAP) programme.</p> <p>Detailed information about the projects will be presented at the March executive. Executive members are free to review the applications beforehand if they wish to ask the groups any questions.</p> <p>EI news EI wishes to run a different programme in 2021 but still with a crisis theme and three priorities: bolster the groups' work in response to the crisis, create new activities on the same grounds, and finally fund advocacy.</p>	<p> Issue raised for discussion purposes.</p>

	<p>There is a budget of €600K. Applications will be examined on a quarterly basis, instead of once a year.</p> <p>EI is going to ask for a description of the groups. We can ask all the groups to undertake this task, or only those who submit applications.</p> <p>OK to only send it to the groups that make applications, because we want to limit the number of questionnaires sent to the groups.</p> <p>+ Send this news to all the groups in Europe?</p> <p>Yes, general information about the EI programme because it is a new feature.</p> <p>Keep in mind that since the EE Esteville executive we have wanted to gather more information about the European groups to check the impact that we have. Opt for a specific questionnaire with a small number of questions to gather this information.</p>	
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As there were no further items on the agenda, the president closed the meeting.

Carina Aaltonen
President of Emmaus Europe

Aurore Querel
Secretary of Emmaus Europe