

PEEMMAUS EUROPE EMMAUS EUR EMMAÜS EUROPE EMMAÜS EUROPE)PA EMAÚS EUROPA EMAÚS EUR

Report of the meeting of the European Poland / Ukraine Collective

13-14 November 2018,

Emmaus Lublin, Lublin, Poland

Participants

Willi Does, *collective representative and president of Emmaus Europe*, **Emmaus Cologne, Germany**

Ulla Hoyer, **Emmaus Helsinki (Finland)**

Dominique Saubiez, Pascal Louvet, **Emmaus Annemasse, France**

Annick Berthier, **Emmaus Chalon-sur-Saône, France**

Pierre Eliet, **Emmaus Planay, France**

Irène Meunier, **Emmaus Roanne, France**

Marie-Annick Frin, Pierre Dubois, **EMRA, France**

Giorgi Ghelagutashvili, **Emmaus Georgia, Georgia**

Jean Amblard, Solvita Fibiga, **Amis3, Latvia**

Arija Indrikovska, Iluta Medne, **Emmaus Smiltene, Latvia**

Jos Van Der Meer and Herbert Bitter, **Emmaus Haarzuilens, Netherlands**

Grzegorz Hadjuk, *Poland national delegate*, Leszek Lizon, Robert Opoka, Wojtek Chmura, **Emmaus Brat Albert, Poland**

Ela Guc, Marian Pietras, Tadeusz Mlynarczyk, Zbigniew Drażkowski, **Emmaus Lublin, Poland**

Krzysztof Serwinski, Grazyna Moskal, **Emmaus Rzeszów, Poland**

Alexandra Edgren, Artur Gostkowski, Robert Larsson, **Emmaus Fredriksdal, Sweden**

Bohdan Vitushinskij, Taras Savchak, **Emmaus Nasha Khata, Ukraine**

Grigoriy Semenchuk, *Ukraine national delegate*, Natalya Sanotska, Oksana Buchkovska, **Emmaus Oselya, Ukraine**

Théo Robin, **Emmaus Europe Secretariat**

Willi Does opened the meeting by thanking the participants for coming, in full knowledge of the difficulties involved in leaving behind their day-to-day work and travelling across Europe.

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://frama.link/L6Htw_hU.

The discussions are reported in the tables at the end of this document:

- Groups that have requested solidarity support from the movement in 2019: page 5
- Polish groups: page 7
- Georgian and Latvian groups: page 8

Collective objectives and organisational structure

The European geographical collectives were created shortly after the Europe region was formed with the aim of organising solidarity. They do not have any decision-making powers but are forums for discussion and sharing. They are vital for the movement's dynamic in Europe because they are always the first place in which solidarity is discussed. A decade after the European geographical collectives were created, the meeting took the time to discuss their aims and workings and to develop them if necessary in order to meet new needs and wishes. The idea would be to arrange a workshop on this issue at the next regional assembly (see below).

The members of the collectives were consulted in the summer to find out their opinions in order to lay the ground for this discussion. Few responses were received, but the feedback did raise a

number of major issues. Firstly, a large number of different aims were cited: fostering group self-sufficiency, organising solidarity in a transparent and fair way, developing opportunities to get to know each other, discuss and meet, supporting new groups, being trained...even if they do not contradict each other, one idea could be to prioritize some of them. The issue of how to facilitate the collective was also raised (how to follow up given that participants change from one meeting to the next, how to prepare the agenda in a more collective fashion, is there a need for a small facilitation group and so on) and people may wish to comment on how the collective is run.

The participants split into two groups to facilitate the discussion. Concise information was fed back by each discussion group in a plenary session.

French-speaking group	English-speaking group
<p><u>Horizontality</u> Some of the current practices should be abolished. We need to return to the partnership ethos rather than giving the impression in our discussions that wealthier groups have more know-how than the others. We regularly demand independence but we do not always respect it: it is important not to confuse "support" with "management". All the groups should present their activities at collective meetings and not just "beneficiary" groups. Each group could submit a short document prior to the meeting and then present a maximum of two points at the meeting.</p> <p><u>Support for new groups</u> For the new groups, it is important to ask why they are joining the movement, and they must pledge to foster the Emmaus values in their countries (while taking into consideration cultural differences). The issue of training about these values was raised.</p> <p><u>Shared facilitation</u> It could be worthwhile having a small facilitation team who would prepare agendas and facilitate meetings. It is a shame that some groups do not play a regular part. Should groups be asked to make a long-term commitment?</p> <p><u>Topics</u> Important topics are touched on or endlessly postponed due to a lack of time to deal with them: we need to consider extending meetings or at least setting aside half-days for discussing fundamental issues: the concept of solidarity, supporting new groups, exchanges of practices etc.</p> <p><u>Conditions and running</u> It is important that simultaneous interpreting is provided.</p>	<p><u>General points and objectives</u> The collective is a very important forum and it needs to be maintained; it simply needs to be "brought back to life." The collective needs to be a space for solving conflicts. Problems should be clearly stated beforehand so that they do not suddenly appear during meetings.</p> <p><u>Group presentations</u> These sessions should be better prepared and should be shorter. There is no need to discuss each item.</p> <p><u>Organisation</u> The collective should change its name to encompass a wider spectrum. We could have a smaller and a larger meeting each year in order to be more effective while remaining open to others. We could also consider arranging a joint meeting of the various collectives, for instance every two years, so that the groups that work on related issues (e.g. CNZD/MPFSC) could meet up more often than every four years. Finally, longer themed sessions need to be arranged. This would enable us to really address the issues (whether they are fundamental discussions about solidarity, for instance, or very practical aspects, such as the containers).</p> <p><u>Conditions and running</u> Interpreting takes a long time and this is a real issue.</p>

Several issues were raised by both groups and should therefore constitute the first discussion points at future meetings:

- The issue of a facilitation team: role, makeup and relevance.
- Presentation of news: to be continued as we managed to do at the start of meetings (this has subsequently gone slightly awry) with the documents submitted beforehand and a very short roundtable session. The issue of including all the groups?
- Topics for more in--depth discussion: select a subject to be discussed over the course of half a day in order to have a proper discussion. The topic at the next meeting could be the container loads.
- Simultaneous interpreting: to be provided where possible.

Unanimous agreement was not reached on the question of having a "hardcore" and this issue will need to be clarified. In the meantime, several people have volunteered to facilitate this discussion and the running of the next collective in a more shared fashion.

Finally, it was reiterated that one of the collectives' stated missions is to implement the decisions taken by EE and EI.

European and international news

Several international and European Emmaus events took place in 2018:

- Emmaus International Board meeting - May 2018 in France
 - The work on the solidarity criteria started two years ago is close to completion. A handbook is currently being put together and applications will be made electronically in the future. As for Europe, the solidarity programmes have a joint process, so there will be no fresh appeal. Projects that have already been submitted will be distributed between the various programmes.
- Global Forum for Alternatives run by the most socially-excluded people - 17-20 September in Geneva in Switzerland.
 - A large number of groups took part. A review meeting took place in mid-November and the report of this event will be sent out in the next few weeks.
- Regional Council of Emmaus Europe - 18-20 October 2019 in Turin in Italy
 - The treasurer reiterated that the **financial situation is healthy** but some 100 or so groups are still to pay their membership dues.
 - The meeting focused in particular on how to **champion our values during the 2019 European elections**, particularly focusing on three topics: migration, the circular economy and the fight against poverty.
 - Emmaus Europe is a member of various European networks that work on our key issues.
 - The council elected three new CEI: Marie-France (France), Martha (Finland), Simon (UK); all the seats on the council are now filled until late 2019.
 - New trial members were accepted, including CNZD (Croatia) and Palermo (Italy), as well as several full members. EE therefore has 300 member organisations.

Upcoming events are as follows:

- Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe - **27-31 October 2019 in San Sebastian in Spain.**

- The aim is to reduce the cost of participating as much as possible. The cost should be roughly €350.
- This RAEE will elect the 12 CEI and the president of EE for the next four years.

Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on **26-7 March 2019 in Lviv in Ukraine** and will be hosted by Emmaus Oselya. Please make it a date for your diary!

It was mentioned that container loads should appear on the next collective's agenda as a priority matter, as the topic was supposed to be discussed at two collectives and instead was put off in each case.

Thank you once again to Emmaus Lublin for hosting and organising this meeting, and to the participants for their discussions over the two days!

GROUPS REQUESTING SOLIDARITY FUNDING FROM THE MOVEMENT IN 2019

<i>Group</i>	Emmaus Smiltene - Latvia	Nasha Khata, Ukraine	Emmaus Oselya, Ukraine
<i>Non-solidarity initiative news</i>		<p><u>Group situation</u> There are 33 residents, of whom three are currently in France. The different income-generating activities are tending to generate more income. Three summer camps were held with volunteers attending from Germany, Austria and France. The group wants to submit an application for trial membership to EE/EI. The group would undoubtedly be mentored by Oselya.</p>	<p><u>Waste management</u> The council has agreed to cover the costs of the group's waste reception centre in 2019, as they do not generate waste but instead help reduce it. <u>Vehicles</u> Emmaus Fredriksdal has provided one-off support so that one of the group's cars could be repaired.</p>
<i>Description of the initiative</i>	<p><u>Background</u> The warehouse is located 48km from the shop and the association does not have a vehicle. The goods are transported using private or hired vehicles. Moreover, the group has been based in Smiltene for 20 years, but there are no longer so many highly vulnerable people in this town. On the other hand, there are more vulnerable people in a larger neighbouring town - Valmiera. <u>Initiative</u> The group therefore has two projects. Firstly, buy a minibus to transport goods. Secondly, open a new shop in Valmiera and in this way launch a new income-generating activity, by renting a shop. <u>Budget</u> In total, roughly €16K for the minibus and €18K for the new shop.</p>	<p><u>Background</u> The collective visited the building lent by Drohobytch council in April. It is in a very poor state of repair and the renovation work has already got underway. Moreover, European solidarity has been funding some of the group's wages for several years. <u>Initiative</u> The group is once again asking for support to cover three salaries. Moreover, the intention is to renovate the building in question in order to create a new community house (for more details, please refer to the application). <u>Budget</u> The salaries account for €9K. As for the building, the amount requested is €80K, out of a total budget of €89,800.</p>	<p><u>Background</u> The project was initially submitted in late 2016. Emmaus Europe agreed to provide support (€20K in 2016, €74K in 2017-2018) and the international movement offered support (€30K in 2017), making for a total amount of €124K. It has taken a long time to find a plot of land. <u>Latest progress</u> A plot was found and purchased. It is close to the community, larger (3,000m²) and less expensive than forecast. The plans are currently being developed with the architects and projections are already available. <u>New budget</u> Since late 2016, the price of metal, needed for the building work, has increased significantly. The total projected budget has therefore risen from €130,000 to €277,400. There is still a shortfall of approximately €150K.</p>

<p><i>Questions and discussion</i></p>	<p><u>Continuation of activities in Smiltene</u> In the long term, the group wants to close down the shop in Smiltene. However, the group will continue its support work with the homeless and with social services in Smiltene.</p> <p><u>Distance between the premises</u> The current warehouse and shop are rented. Valmiera is 50km from the warehouse. It could be worthwhile in the first instance considering whether to bring the premises closer together. Once the Smiltene shop closes down, the idea would be to find a warehouse closer to the new shop.</p> <p><u>Economic situation</u> The group's situation remains fragile. The population of Valmiera is four times bigger and the group hopes that the shop will be a greater success. Moreover, the group already has enough stock from clothing and furniture collections to supply this shop.</p> <p><u>Budget</u> The minibus and rent seem to be overestimated.</p> <p><u>Support</u> Closer support was needed with putting together the application prior to the collective meeting. It is a shame that the supporting group is not present.</p>	<p><u>Prioritising building work</u> The total cost of the work is high but it could be done in several phases. The most urgent - phase one - would meet the basic needs and would involve repairing the roof and the heating and water systems, with this respectively costing €11K and €30K.</p> <p><u>Help funding salaries</u> As already mentioned in previous meetings, salaries should be included in the operating budget and should not be supported by solidarity.</p> <p><u>Links with Caritas</u> The issue of the links with Caritas and Nasha Khata's identity was raised once again. In this respect, the group stressed that over the past two years Nasha Khata has become more and more independent from Caritas (for example, the new building is in their name).</p>	<p>The amount is too big to be covered by the movement's solidarity. It was reiterated that the solidarity programmes have limited annual budgets: roughly €100K for the European programme and €700K in total for the EI and FAP programmes for the whole movement.</p> <p><u>Other sources of funding</u> A loan is a possibility but not in Ukraine, as interest rates are very high. There are almost no public grants in Ukraine.</p> <p><u>Ideas for cutting expenditure</u> It would be worth researching other potentially cheaper materials, such as timber and concrete. Security is an issue, but quotes are needed nevertheless. The project could be split into several phases: purchase of the plot and drawing up of plans/construction of the building/fitting out, heating system and electrics.</p>
<p><i>The collective's opinion</i></p>	<p>The purchase of the truck seems to be important and a priority. For the new shop, it might be an idea to rework and clarify the project: budget, distance between the premises, priority/urgent nature of this switch etc. The SEE will get back in touch with the group and Emmaus Åland to clarify the roles.</p>	<p>The collective did not have the time to put forward a joint opinion. The issue of whether solidarity should be used to pay wages remains. The proposal of support over several phases in order to renovate the building also needs to be settled.</p>	<p>The collective remains convinced that this project is very important and wants to continue supporting it. There is a need to see how this can be done, if it is possible over several years etc. The next collective will be held in Lviv in order to attempt to encourage the council to support Oselya.</p>

OTHER POLISH GROUPS

<i>Group</i>	Brat Albert, Poland	Emmaus Lublin, Poland	Emmaus Rzeszów, Poland
<i>Discussion</i>	<p><u>Containers</u> The group is in direct contact with the sending groups and all the goods are of a very good quality. The sending groups want to receive direct feedback. Moreover, it would be a good idea from a practical standpoint to translate the haulage companies' documentation into English in order to facilitate the process.</p> <p><u>Local dynamic</u> Local collections now enable the group to meet its needs and households also voluntarily make donations. Volunteers are also starting to come forward. This is an excellent piece of news as a lack of volunteers has traditionally been the group's weak point.</p> <p><u>Investment</u> A new heating system is currently being installed and the building work is scheduled to be completed in late 2019. The work is partly being funded by the council. A new minibus for transporting the companions will soon be required.</p> <p><u>Support for the homeless</u> The people being offered shelter and support are increasingly elderly and the young people have more drug issues.</p>	<p><u>Tour of Emmaus Lublin</u> As the collective was organised and hosted by Emmaus Lublin, the participants had the chance to visit all the premises and find out about the group's innovative income-generating activities.</p> <p><u>Group structure</u> A slot was also allocated to reviewing how Emmaus Lublin is organised and structured, in conjunction with the Parmi Nous (social activities) foundation and the organisation running the income-generating activity.</p> <p><u>New shop</u> The group has purchased a new plot and is going to build a new shop on it. This shop will be more accessible for customers. The project is supported by international solidarity.</p>	<p><u>Economic situation</u> The group no longer has any payment arrears. The workshops are doing well, notably the carpentry workshop, thanks to the sander. The situation is still difficult with several loans still to be paid back and the entire community remains galvanised. Despite everything, the members remain dynamic and proactive in seeking to turn around the situation. The group is being monitored by the regional executive via Pierre Dubois.</p> <p><u>Public interest organisation status</u> The association obtained the status in May 2018. As a result, private individuals and businesses can opt to donate 1% of their annual taxes when filing their tax returns.</p>
<i>Questions about Polish law</i>	<p><u>Can a single person be both an elected representative and an employee?</u> Those involved in governance undertake the role on a voluntary basis, but it can be combined with the post of paid employee. For instance, Robert and Zbigniew are leaders and members of the executive committee (outside their working hours).</p> <p><u>What is the status of the companions?</u> They must be volunteers in a public interest organisation. They may work on the cash till or drive the van, but the groups prefer to have paid employees (often former companions) for these roles, as they involve significant responsibility.</p>		

OTHER GEORGIAN AND LITHUANIAN GROUPS

<i>Group</i>	Emmaus Georgia	Amis3, Latvia
<i>Discussion</i>	<p><u>News</u> Social residence with 10 places. The companions sort clothing. Support from Emmaus groups has been received and this has enabled the group to launch the income-generating activity. It was stressed that the income-generating activity fits well with Emmaus' DNA and the fact that the group is already generating income was praised.</p> <p><u>Budget correction</u> The renovation and fitting out of the social residence cost 720 GEL.</p> <p><u>Situation of the internal refugees</u> Russia is maintaining heavy pressure on the border and does not hesitate to regularly push it back, driving out residents. This causes major population movements with refugees coming to Tbilisi.</p> <p><u>Trial membership application</u></p> <p>The application has not yet been made. The secretariat will send the group a list of the documents to be submitted and the regional executive will make arrangements to visit the group at its next meeting, maybe with someone from Annemasse too, as a supporting group needs to be chosen.</p>	<p><u>Support provided by the groups in South-West France (R4)</u> The partnership was set up because Jean Amblard was from this region. This is a major undertaking for R4 and the region discusses it at each meeting. In 2018, the R4 groups provided Amis3 with a lot of support, in particular several lorry loads of goods and the funds to purchase a building and a truck, and pay the wages of a leader in the first phases.</p> <p><u>Local solidarity</u> All local solidarity work is funded by profits from sales.</p> <p><u>Communications</u> As promised at the last meeting, the group has launched its own blog that anyone can read to keep tabs on its development: http://amis3.canalblog.com/.</p>