



EMMAÜS EUROPE
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EMMAÜS EUROPA

REPORT

VIEW

2014

REPORT

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1. President Julio de la Granja's editorial

“60 years have gone by; let's rekindle the uprising of kindness...”

For Emmaus Europe, 2014 was marked by active work on the issue of migration and significant political lobbying.

Turning our attention first to migration, the expansion of conflicts and wars in several countries in Asia and Africa is forcing increasing numbers of people to flee their home countries.

Millions of people are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries.

Only a few thousand try their luck and take the long road, fraught with pitfalls, that leads them to Europe.

Are we Europeans able to welcome them and give them the opportunity to live their lives in a dignified fashion, far from the persecution and difficult daily lives that they are fleeing?

The Regional Council of Emmaus Europe met in Lampedusa. Its members were able to get a feel for the situation on the ground, notably by taking part in a seminar with the Italian non-profit organisations working on the island. They observed the work and campaigning done by Emmaus Italy on the ground.

Emmaus Europe, alongside the French groups from Northern France, Emmaus France and Emmaus International, also joined a protest in Calais, a tragic place for migrants. We rallied round to address a catastrophic humanitarian situation which is far from being resolved and is worsening year on year.

In Europe, we are able to free up significant resources to go to war on other continents. Unfortunately, it has to be said that the resources made available to receive victims of these wars fall well short of what is needed!

2014 saw a new European Parliament get elected. The new MEPs were elected by the citizens of the 28 Member State European Union in May 2014.

Our lobbying work bore fruit and enabled the Emmaus groups to meet MEPs, not only in Brussels and Strasbourg at European meetings, but also locally, when they were visited by MEPs.

Let's keep up the momentum so that the European directives are more humane and aid the struggle against poverty throughout Europe! Let's take action and let's not forget to lobby our local, regional and national political representatives.



At the present time, many European governments are telling us that the economic upturn can be felt and that the worst of the crisis is behind us. However, our groups' daily lives tell a very different tale and demonstrate that our work to relieve extreme poverty and address its root causes continues to be vital.

“...and let's share our model based on peace and solidarity”

In 2014, many of you supported our groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ukraine, with the former being hit hard by flooding and the latter by the war in the country.

As for regional solidarity, following a more 'sumptuous' 2013 thanks to the donation from the Paris Salon, in 2014 it proved difficult to fully resource our annual solidarity programme.

Nevertheless, the consolidation of the Emmaus groups in Eastern Europe is on the right track. For example, two community houses have been built in Poland.

Emmaus Europe's training initiatives – working together with Emmaus International – have borne fruit. The new team tasked with organizing training is keen to continue its work in 2015.

The Emmaus groups throughout Europe are proving that taking in migrants, giving them training and enabling them to get back to work and lead dignified and worthwhile lives is possible. This is our firm conviction!

Furthermore the amount of €100,000 was loaned interest-free in 2014 for a five-year term to three European groups. The loan repayments scheduled in the signed agreement are currently being made.

At the start of 2015, the path of solidarity and peace is still long.

This was clear to see with the demonstration on 18 December against the wall surrounding the port of Calais. The Emmaus groups are continuing the struggle and are doing remarkable work in the Calais region.

Moreover, fundamentalism and extremist radicalism have hurt us in our flesh and in our hearts. Let's hope that the example of the Emmaus groups shows us that, above and beyond what may divide us from a philosophical, political or religious viewpoint, our shared humanity unites us more strongly.

The number of acts of hatred and violence that we are seeing sprout up in Europe are mainly the

result and the backlash against the selfish policies that we have been applying for decades not just in Europe but also with countries from other continents.

Emmaus Europe will be celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2015. We will have the responsibility of renewing a large swathe of the current team; elected representatives who have been actively involved for several years.

The involvement of all the European groups in the Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe (RAEE) in September 2015 is vital in order to achieve this. Let's ensure that the companions, leaders, paid employees, volunteers and friends can take part and come in great numbers to represent their groups in Manchester (UK). Let's facilitate access and support committed people who are willing to get involved in the Movement at international level.

This sometimes difficult and tough work can also be rewarding and fulfilling for elected representatives. They also have a very interesting role in the life of the grassroots groups and in the exchanges between different nations and cultures.

Abbé Pierre's message is still topical and present in our lives. Proof of its validity is the fact that every year new people join the Movement, in part because of a range of needs, but also because of their ideals.



1 February 1954: Abbé Pierre, the founder of the Emmaus Movement, rises up in protest

Emmaus Europe does remarkable solidarity and lobbying work.

Our alternative way of life is respected thanks to the Movement's political lobbying work. Our assertions are listened to and heard. Our day-to-day work to help those who suffer most throughout Europe needs to be publicized.

2. The May 2014 European Parliament elections: capacity for action and opportunities.

In 2013, a decision was taken at Emmaus Europe's meeting in Verona to continue our lobbying work during the run-up to the European Elections.

On 22 and 25 May 2014, 751 MEPs were elected for a five-year term of office. The European Parliament plays a vital role as it is the only European institution, alongside the Council and Commission, with a mandate to represent the 500 million citizens of Europe.

The Parliament votes on European laws along with the Council of the European Union. These laws have a direct impact on our everyday lives as over 70% of our national legislation comes directly from the transposition of European regulations and directives.

Unfortunately, during the 2009-2014 parliamentary term, daily life in Europe was marked by a **decline in respect for migrants' rights, the social balance being upset by the economic crisis, and austerity policies causing poverty and unemployment to rise. In other words, a larger swathe of society is being marginalised.**

What role for the European Parliament following the European elections in 2014?

The 25 May European Parliament elections were followed in July 2014 by the election of the new president of the European Commission, Jean Claude Juncker. Democratic legitimacy was the reason behind Juncker's appointment, because he is from the political grouping that holds the majority in the Parliament, the European People's Party. New European commissioners were also appointed, one per Member State.

The Parliament votes using the co-decision procedure with the Council of Ministers, approves the makeup of the Commission, contributes to the adoption and execution of the budget, can adopt a motion of censure against the Commission and finally cooperates with the 28 national parliaments.

The European Parliament is the community institution that has gained the most power and representativeness over the 35 years of its existence. **It claims to be the most visible illustration of popular representation.**

However, many observers are talking about a real democratic deficit due to the rise in abstention recorded since 1979.

According to the official results published by the European Parliament, 57.46% of voters failed to turn out at the last European Parliament elections.

The country-by-country breakdown can be accessed on: www.touteurope.eu (French language website)



25 May 2014:
the results of
the European
Parliament
elections

751 MEPs
elected

The legislative process of the **institutional triangle (European Commission, Council of the European Union and European Parliament)** is unclear to European citizens.

While the major challenges faced by the European Union primarily call for a precise political response, it is vital that the European institutions tasked with providing these responses are fully legitimate and effective in order to ensure that the system functions harmoniously.

In this context, it is vital for the Parliament's credibility that **its work and mechanism for coordinating with the main European institutions is made clearer**. It is not advisable that the MEPs give in to the pressure of the institutional calendar and to the pressure placed on them by Member States. **They would run the risk of sacrificing social and economic rights and giving in to politicking.**

It has to be said that the harmonization processes are currently being hampered. The fact that certain Member States are blocking some directives with high social added value is having an impact on fundamental rights.

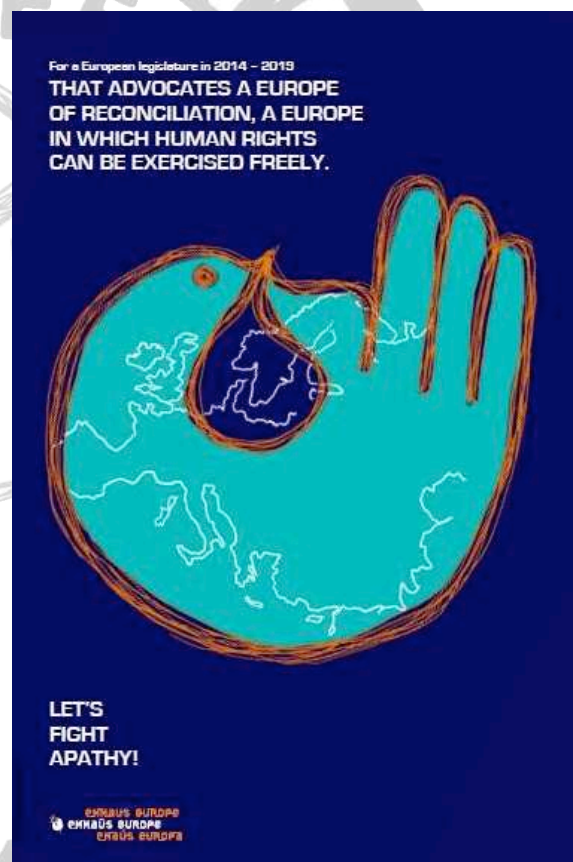
Social peace is threatened in the EU: the discriminatory and nationalist policy of the public authorities, an increasingly individualistic and selfish view based on rejecting others, etc.

The European authorities appointed following the May 2014 elections have a great if not overwhelming responsibility. Faced with the combined pressure of the Eurosceptics and Europhobes, they must swiftly give fresh impetus to European construction and the European ideal of peace and solidarity.

Emmaus Europe's major concern is that this new European Parliament respects everyone's most basic rights and notably the rights of the most excluded members of society.

MEPs, you are called upon to meet the expectations of your fellow citizens: **to rebuild a more social and humane Europe!**

Emmaus, a movement for peace, has chosen to take this path for the past 60 years by taking in migrants and fighting to ensure that their rights are protected and respected and via the social and solidarity economy, environmentally-friendly practices and consumption, and sustainable development.



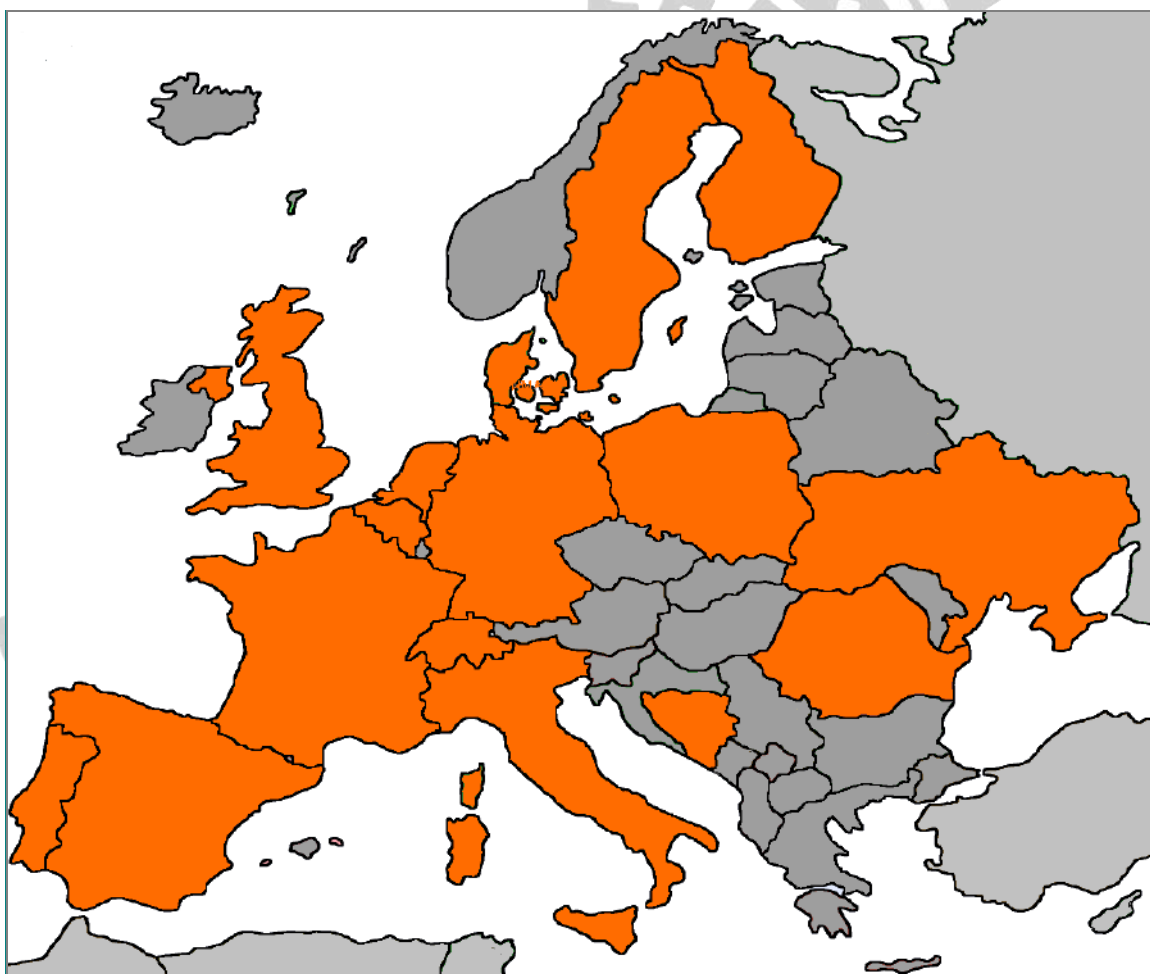
Come and have an enriching experience by viewing our work first-hand. Come and discover that an alternative to the values that hold sway in contemporary society is possible.

3. An association of Emmaus groups in Europe

Emmaus Europe in 2014,
286 member organisations in 17 countries.

Here is a map of Europe to give an idea of the locations of the Emmaus groups throughout Europe.

Emmaus is present in the countries marked in dark orange on the map: Germany, Spain, Italy, Portugal, UK, Sweden, Finland, Netherlands, Switzerland, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, France, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Belgium, Denmark and Albania.



At the end of 2014, 18 groups are currently trial members: there is one group in Bosnia-Herzegovina, one in Germany, one in Finland, one in France, one in the Netherlands, 10 in the UK, two in Romania and one in Albania.

Emmaus Europe is now the Emmaus region with the largest number of Emmaus groups.

4. Spotlight on the work of the European groups

The daily lives of the groups in Europe are filled by:

Solidarity economy work: Collecting, repairing and selling second-hand goods. Offering shelter and support, training and reinclusion to the most disadvantaged people.

Social initiatives in the following areas:

housing, social aid (emergency accommodation, social support, combating illiteracy etc), fighting for the rights of the weakest members of society (shelter and support for migrants, people with disabilities etc), protecting the environment and developing Fair Trade.

Initiatives to safeguard human rights:

campaign to ensure that the right of asylum is respected and campaign against human trafficking (grassroots initiatives and lobbying the public authorities). The Emmaus groups are working for a Europe that is more respectful of migrants' rights (reception and support).

International solidarity initiatives: sending containers of goods and other forms of support for the activities of groups in a variety of countries.

The sheer number of groups in Europe means that there are major cultural, social and even economic disparities but is also the source of Emmaus Europe's vibrancy.

Meetings, synergy and sharing experiences bring alive the region.



5. Regional life: involvement and subsidiarity

a. **The Regional Council of Emmaus Europe - RCEE** – is the organisation's Board. Two RCEE were held in 2014.

3 - 6 April 2014 – Lampedusa, Italy

This council meeting was preceded by two important events: **the “Lampedusa – a European town” meeting** arranged by Emmaus Italy with a large number of local and European associations and the island's council. The meeting aimed to tackle the **consequences of European migration policy for the island.**

A work camp bringing together young people from different areas enabled a large amount of rubbish to be cleared away. Emmaus placed the focus on caring for the environment and human dignity by lending the island's inhabitants a hand.

The representatives of 16 European countries wished to give an account of what they saw on the island. Therefore, a declaration was released the day after the Regional Council.

A number excerpts:

“Migrants have drowned just off the island's coast, lifeless bodies have been washed up on the beach and the residents have sought to contact the victims' families or have buried them in the local cemetery.”

“The European Commission reacted recently: by strengthening Frontex, its border agency!”

“Frontex is a paramilitary organisation that hunts down migrants, with a daily budget of €300,000 (...) The island has become a military base, just like it was during World War II.”

“Sleep easy in your beds, forget the deaths and disregard this scandal, or remind yourself that prejudice has no borders and denounce it!”

“The agency's budget could be used to fight poverty by encouraging the integration of these human beings who come to Europe to work and live, just like our ancestors did.”

The full declaration is available on: <http://www.emmaus-europe.org/le-conseil-regional-demmaus-europe-sest-reuni-a-lampedusa-et-temoigne-15372.html>



Boat graveyard on Lampedusa

26-8 September 2014 – Porto, Portugal

Under a clear blue sky in the city of Porto in Portugal, Emmaus Porto hosted friends from across Europe for the second statutory meeting of the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe in 2014.

Representatives from throughout Europe paid visits to all of Emmaus Porto's sites in order to discover the full range of the group's activities.



Performance put on by the companions, friends and volunteers at Emmaus Porto during the 2014 RCEE

Some of the meeting was dedicated to two topics:

- Human trafficking backstory since 2013 and the achievements of the European Resource Centre in Sarajevo, presented by Amela Afendic.
- Themed discussion on political lobbying at European level and combating human trafficking, led by Willi Does.

***The Regional Council of Emmaus Europe is comprised of Councillors of Emmaus International (CEI):** Simon Grainge, Javier Pradini, Jean Karekezi, Gérard Racinne, Hans Van Beek, Margarita Ziliacus, Silvana Nogarole, Tobias Petersson, Franck-Benoît Puntous. Gianni Belletti.

National delegates: Willi Does (Germany), Gérard Corpataux (Switzerland), Gregorz Hajduk (Poland), Gélu Nichitel (Romania), José Maria Garcia Bresó (Spain), Helka Hava (Finland), Jos Van Der Meer (Netherlands), Delia Ressende Clément (Portugal), Neil Booker (UK), Nanna Nilson (Sweden), Luisa Testoria (Italy), Lejla Mesic (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Annie Blanc (France), Julio de la Granja (Belgium).

b. Meetings of the Regional Executive of Emmaus Europe

Three meetings of the Regional Executive of Emmaus Europe were held in 2014.

The members of the Executive Committee: Julio de la Granja, President, Willi Does, secretary, Alain Capmas, treasurer. Xavier Vandromme, Silvana Nogarole and Birgita Goranson-Ilste, members.

The three meetings took place in the shared Emmaus building in Montreuil. They were held on 10 February, 29 August and 18 November 2014.

C. The European Collectives

Since the 2007 Strasbourg Regional Assembly, the aim of the European Collectives has been to support Emmaus Europe's work. The European Collectives are working groups that raise the profile both locally and across Europe of the solidarity initiatives. There are two types of collective: the geographical collectives (Romania, Poland and Ukraine and Bosnia-Herzegovina) and the themed collectives.

The geographical collectives' meetings were held in Targu Jiu in Romania, Lublin in Poland and Montreuil in the case of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Collective. For more information, please refer to the 2014 solidarity review (page 18).

Meetings of these working groups are vital as they enable solidarity to flourish in the region. These meetings were also the chance to gain a better idea of the groups' situations and to discuss:

- Each member's situation (premises, activities, shelter and support offered).
- Progress made on the initiatives supported by Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International in 2014.
- Applications for support for 2014 (practical and financial support).

- The regional transport programme (loads sent and needs for the next programme period).

As for the themed collective...

An extraordinary roundtable on *Humanist Utopia in Europe* was held

This roundtable took place on 6 May 2014 at Emmaus La Poudrière in Brussels, Belgium. European members of the Emmaus Movement and prospective MEPs were invited to attend.

Emmaus Europe has been lobbying MEPs since 2009 in order to ensure that the issues that we hold dear are part of the Parliament's debates. The meeting on 6 May was arranged in keeping with our focus on this area.

The meeting was split into two sessions:

- The morning was devoted to workshops for the Movement stakeholders on the issues of Migration and Trafficking, Sustainable Development and the Alternative Economy. Three working groups were formed. Each group worked on the three topics.

The aim was to report back on the current situation and make proposals for the future.

- The afternoon was reserved for a discussion with the MEPs: telling them about the reality of life in the Movement, explaining our model and demonstrating that it works.

The participants placed the stress on sharing experiences, awareness raising, collective actions and citizenship.

This meeting has shown that migration policy, the social and solidarity economy and sustainable development are still challenges to be met in the future.

Let's continue championing our model and values and let us join together in greater numbers to jointly develop new initiatives!



d. The year's key events

1 February	60th anniversary of the appeal made by Abbé Pierre in 1954.
4-5 April	The <i>Lampedusa – a European town</i> meeting arranged by Emmaus Italy in Lampedusa.
12 April	Burgundy/Franche Comté Regional Salon in Chalon (France) in support of European solidarity. Nord Pas de Calais Regional Salon in Lille (France), partially in support of European solidarity.
24-30 April	Emmaus International Board meeting in Benin.
3-4 May	Emmaus Sweden General Assembly with the Finnish and Danish groups invited to attend, Stockholm, Sweden.
6 May	Extraordinary roundtable with prospective MEPs in Brussels, Belgium.
22-25 May	751 MEPs elected for a five-year term of office.
22 June	Emmaus Salon in support of international solidarity. Porte de Versailles, Paris, France Convoy to Srebrenica, Bosnia.
14 September	Big sale put on by the Paris Region at La Roche Guyon Castle in the suburbs of Paris. Partially in support of European solidarity.
26-28 September	Celebrations and RCEE in Porto, Portugal.
4-5 November	<i>Emmaus in all of its facets</i> training course at Emmaus Cologne in Germany.
26 November	Debate at the European Parliament between the representatives of Emmaus Europe and the MEPs, Strasbourg, France-Herzegovina.
5-9 December	Took part in the World Social Forum on Migration in Johannesburg, South Africa (the Europe region had two representatives at the meeting).
18 December	Demonstration in Calais to protest against the building of a wall around the town's port. Emmaus Europe took part.

6. The Europe Region's solidarity work

Emmaus Europe is monitoring and supporting the rollout of the solidarity initiatives developed by the groups. A solidarity programme brought together the initiatives in 2014. The programme enables groups to become involved in funding one or more solidarity initiatives run by the European member organisations that have applied for support.

The initiatives supported by the European groups in 2014:

- Support the work of the community in Lviv, Ukraine.
- Promote girl and boy power in order to raise their awareness about the scourge of human trafficking in Lithuania.
- A new facility bringing together under the same roof the day centre, accommodation centre and a future Emmaus shop in Vilnius in Lithuania.
- Set up community accommodation at Targu Jiu in Romania.
- Renovate the house for street children in Timisoara in Romania.
- Reorganize the community's living accommodation at Satu Mare in Romania.
- Fit out the community house in Krakow in Poland (this marks the end of the renovations).
- Create a community activity for the homeless in Banja Luka in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

For detailed information about the initiatives supported by the European groups, initiatives underway and the 2014 summer camps, please refer to the 2014 solidarity report.

Monitoring of the initiatives carried out by Emmaus Europe aims to:

- Help the groups to apply for funding.
- Enable Emmaus Europe's governing bodies to examine the applications in greater depth.
- Enable Emmaus Europe to produce progress reports on the initiatives being supported and publicise progress made.
- Ensure fairness and transparency between the European organisations.

It should be noted that monitoring the groups would be impossible without the support provided and links forged with them, without their participation in work meetings, and without the friendly and responsible welcome they all offer.

Please refer to the 2014 solidarity review for more information about the solidarity initiatives.

7. Emmaus Europe's campaigns: lobbying the European political authorities

I. Events to mobilise people inside and outside Emmaus

“At European level, Emmaus Europe lobbies the European authorities and the authorities of the countries in which the Movement is established...”

Although Emmaus is a movement that refuses to allow itself to be exploited by political parties, the world of politics does have an impact on the groups.

Visits paid by politicians to the groups and discussions held with them show that we are continuing to raise our profile with politicians.

Emmaus Europe is stressing the need to go beyond national borders in order to make the views of companions heard on the European stage. Indeed, over 70% of national legislation now results from decisions taken in Brussels, as public policies are taking on an increasingly European flavour. Emmaus Europe wants to highlight its presence on the European stage in response to this phenomenon.

With this in mind, **Emmaus Europe decided to undertake lobbying work in 2014, a European Parliament elections year. The prospective MEPs were invited to visit an Emmaus group so that they could learn about the work done by all the stakeholders at grassroots level:**

- The warm welcome given to those who suffer most through work, which restores their dignity, and solidarity, which restores their pride.
- The work done by the groups, which helps improve people's lives, and also via environmentally-friendly and sustainable development practices.



Emmaus Europe has a foothold in 13 countries of the European Union. Candidates from these 13 countries were therefore targeted. Other criteria were used to select the candidates to be contacted: **in total, close to 500 candidates were listed!** Several prospective MEPs accepted the invitation and were able to **witness first-hand the Emmaus model** thanks to the commitment of the groups and their availability: the 2014 European Elections Kit was sent by post and email to each of the

candidates. The prospective MEPs were then recontacted by email and telephone in order to arrange meetings.

Contact was also maintained with:

- The European Parliament information offices in the European countries where Emmaus has a presence.
- The offices of the European and national political parties.
- The office of the president of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz (Germany, S&D)

a. Development of institutional resources to aid our lobbying work: conveying our message outside the Movement (institutions and networks)

A decision was taken at the October 2013 Regional Council to create two main resources: an open letter and a questionnaire aimed at prospective MEPs. An invitation and a poster were also created. All of these tools made up the **2014 European Elections Kit**.



Eva Joly and Jean Marie Cavada meeting Emmaus groups in the Paris Region.
Opposite: Catherine Trautmann and Edouard Martin

The open letter to the prospective MEPs aimed to set out Emmaus Europe's stance and recommendations in three areas: social issues, the economy and the environment.



The prospective MEP questionnaire aimed to collate their stances, notably on migration policy, sustainable development and the economic and social crisis.

The invitation was designed in order to invite the prospective MEPs to visit an Emmaus group in Europe or to take part in the Extraordinary Roundtable on 6 May 2014. Its usage is not limited to the run-up to the European elections. The invitation was made available to all the European groups, enabling them to send it to local or national politicians, depending on their situation and requirements.

With a view to also raising the general public's awareness, a poster was created in order to reflect our Movement's desire for peace and to live together in harmony, for each human being to flourish against a backdrop of dignity and fraternity!

All of these resources can still be accessed on Emmaus Europe's website: <http://www.emmaus-europe.org/kit-elections-europeennes-2014-14979.html>.



These tools are only a suggestion; each group can take ownership of them, develop them or add to them as they see fit, in order to get involved in their own way in the lobbying, based on their situation and wishes! **This is a non-cumulative initiative and hinges upon each individual's and each group's availability.**

b. Practical initiatives to combat human trafficking by sharing our experiences

In Lithuania, a summer camp was run in 2014 by the Missing Persons' Families Support Centre (MPFSC) bringing together local partners, guests from the International Solidarity Forum (ISF) in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Emmaus groups in Finland.

This work camp enabled new premises to be built so that the following could be located under the same roof: the day centre, the accommodation centre for human trafficking victims and a future Emmaus charity shop.

Seeing first-hand the group's surrounding environment was important because it enabled project progress to be reviewed. The visit enabled the representatives to gain a better understanding of the group's situation (premises, activities, staff and partners).

On this occasion, experiences were shared, **with stakeholders from the resource centre in Bosnia-Herzegovina talking about their human trafficking training work** and the MPFSC representatives

talking about their victim support work: they offer victims practical, psychological and legal support and help to rejoin their families, the world of work and society as a whole.

It should be reiterated that the Emmaus group offers protection, medical care, legal aid and psychological assistance to victims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The European groups can be sure of one thing: initiatives are being run on migration policy and human trafficking in Europe and are worthy of being shared.

Emmaus Europe has once again supported the leveraging of human and economic resources in this area.

The need for dialogue and lobbying is real and is shared throughout the groups in Europe. Both positive and negative experiences are instructive.

c. The 2014 International Migrants' Day was marked by an appeal made by the Emmaus Movement and the Organization for Universal Citizenship (OUC) to take action in order to:

Reject the security-based response and the building of a 'wall of shame' in Calais.

Obtain new migration policies that respect the rights and dignity of migrants at national, European and world level.

Denounce the shameful conditions being endured by migrants and in accordance with the recommendations made by non-profit activists, demand that a realistic reception system that upholds human rights is set up in the Calais area.

The aim was to denounce the horrendous conditions in which migrants are forced to survive in France. A few excerpts from the appeal:

"Despite support from local charitable associations and the generosity of local people, these migrants have been abandoned by the public authorities who offer inadequate solutions and do not shoulder their responsibilities. Do we really need to wait for the first migrants to freeze to death in the Calais jungle camps for people to finally become aware of what is happening? For decades, reinforced border controls, surveillance, intimidation and containment mechanisms and migrant deportation measures have been a complete and utter failure, have cost a lot of money, and above all have caused thousands of deaths. The wall being built in Calais is just a new and sad illustration of the security-based response to the issue. Is this what we want to do, burying our heads in the sand in an unacceptable and irresponsible fashion?"

Appalled by the treatment meted out on migrants by the EU, the President of Emmaus Europe has called on the Member States and European institutions to take responsibility in order to ensure that migration policy respects human dignity.

Political lobbying based on a human rights approach via events, taking a stance that respects differences in Europe, and the commitment of all the groups working on a day-to-day basis, is key for our future **in a crisis-ridden Europe**.

We need to continue challenging politicians.

II. Our meeting with MEPs: Emmaus is a socio-economic model based on solidarity and peace. We are a realistic and feasible alternative.

“If our practices are beyond reproach we can carry out political lobbying drawing on our day-to-day experiences.”

Words of an Emmaus stakeholder

60 years ago, on 1 February 1954, our founder **awakened the conscience of the general public and politicians** in France by launching an appeal to help the most deprived members of society. We are keeping this appeal alive as the situation remains as critical as ever today.

Our stated mission is to **ensure that people stay aware, focus our action on human beings** and to see in them an infinite wealth and the promise of people thriving in a fraternally supportive environment.



Emmaus Europe’s work with the institutions, including the European Parliament, the democratic heart of the European Union, involves:

- Publicizing all the activities and success stories generated by the Emmaus groups in Europe.
- Monitoring legislation and negotiations about draft directives and regulations on the topics of migration, the social and solidarity economy/employment, and the environment.
- Mobilizing the Emmaus groups and alerting European and national political representatives about any legislation that could potentially jeopardize human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In accordance with these principles, Emmaus Europe, a continental region of the international Emmaus Movement, invited MEPs to **dialogue with Emmaus activists about the Emmaus Movement, a social laboratory that has been operating for over 60 years, and discuss concerns about Frontex and its remit and the future of the social and solidarity economy in Europe.**

The Emmaus activists from a number of European countries visited the European Parliament chamber to watch the voting on 26 November, the day of the meeting with the MEPs.

The end of the voting was marked by the awarding of the **2014 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought** to Denis Mukwege (a Congolese human rights activist) in recognition of his unflagging efforts to provide physical and psychological care for thousands of women and young girls who are victims of the sexual abuse committed by the rebel forces in DR Congo.

As a reminder, the meeting between the Emmaus activists and the MEPs was held during the 5th plenary session of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term.

The short film about Emmaus Europe stimulated the debate with the MEPs

Migration: are there any solutions? This film sheds light on the devastating work done by Frontex and the range of practical ways in which Emmaus helps the most socially-excluded people in Europe. Screening this short film was a way for Emmaus Europe to convey to the MEPs the voices, life stories and personal accounts of people affected by migration issues.

The film was also a chance to showcase all the social innovations championed by Emmaus.

The participants were then invited to share their opinions following the screening of the film. The video made and then screened during the meeting is available on Emmaus Europe's website.

<http://www.emmaus-europe.org/rencontre-au-parlement-europeen-26-novembre-2014-strasbourg-17428.html>



Outcomes of the debate: combating poverty is a priority for the European Parliament but not for the Council of the European Union. Whereas the European Parliament and Commission believe that the

EU should be based on solidarity and cooperation, the Member States use their national interests to justify border closures. They are calling into question the founding philosophy of the European Union by doing this.

This generates a social divide and works against social cohesion. On the other hand, the Emmaus model demonstrates that offering shelter and support to the most excluded people, while also enabling them to regain their dignity via the economic, social and environmental alternative espoused by Emmaus, is possible.

The commitment of the MEPs who attended the meeting to the issues dear to Emmaus reinforces the idea that Europe will move forward thanks to its elected representatives and therefore democracy. The call is going out to our Movement, which is present in all the countries of the EU, to strengthen its links with MEPs.

The root causes of poverty in Europe are intensifying, the austerity plans implemented by governments are widening the gap between the haves and have-nots, and policies that are increasingly devoid of a human focus are gaining ground. Emmaus Europe will remain attentive and will closely monitor the legislation devised by the MEPs in the European Parliament, notably with regard to the social and solidarity economy, in order to alert people about the growing social fracture and get its proposed solutions heard.

In conclusion, Julio de la Granja (president of Emmaus Europe) stressed the importance of human dignity and encouraged the MEPs to debate European social directives with Emmaus. Throughout the European parliamentary term, a tailored annual event could maintain the link between the representatives of civil society that we embody and MEPs.

III. Is peace unobtainable in Europe?

Emmaus Europe is calling on people to join the Frontexit campaign to put an end to the war waged against the poor.

The European Commission is strengthening Frontex! Frontex is a paramilitary organisation that hunts down migrants, with a daily budget of €300,000, and has soldiers in place, as well as launches, planes and helicopters. Europe is surrounding itself with military bases.

The agency's budget could be used to fight poverty by encouraging the integration of these human beings who come to Europe to work and live, just like our ancestors did.

In our 300 groups across Europe, we live side-by-side with these 'social rejects' and we demonstrate that we can all live happily together.

Do we want a more humane and socially responsible Europe? Or do we want a rich and mean Europe, which will end up excluding those that some people believe to be worthless? It is time to awake!

Frontexit has a twofold objective: inform a wide audience about the impacts of Frontex operations in terms of human rights, and to denounce these impacts to the political representatives who are directly involved and cancel the regulation creating Frontex (by demonstrating that the agency's mandate is incompatible with respect for fundamental rights). More information: <http://www.frontexit.org/fr/>

Putting an end to violence on the continent

Emmaus Europe calls on the European Union (Commission, Parliament and Council) to work effectively and efficiently on social protection measures. It is crucial that the European Union is encouraged to differentiate itself from rampant capitalism and to finally create a fairer and more peaceful European society through concrete collective initiatives that curb individual greed. Citizens are consistently demanding it and if the Union does not heed their wishes, a social war may well break out.

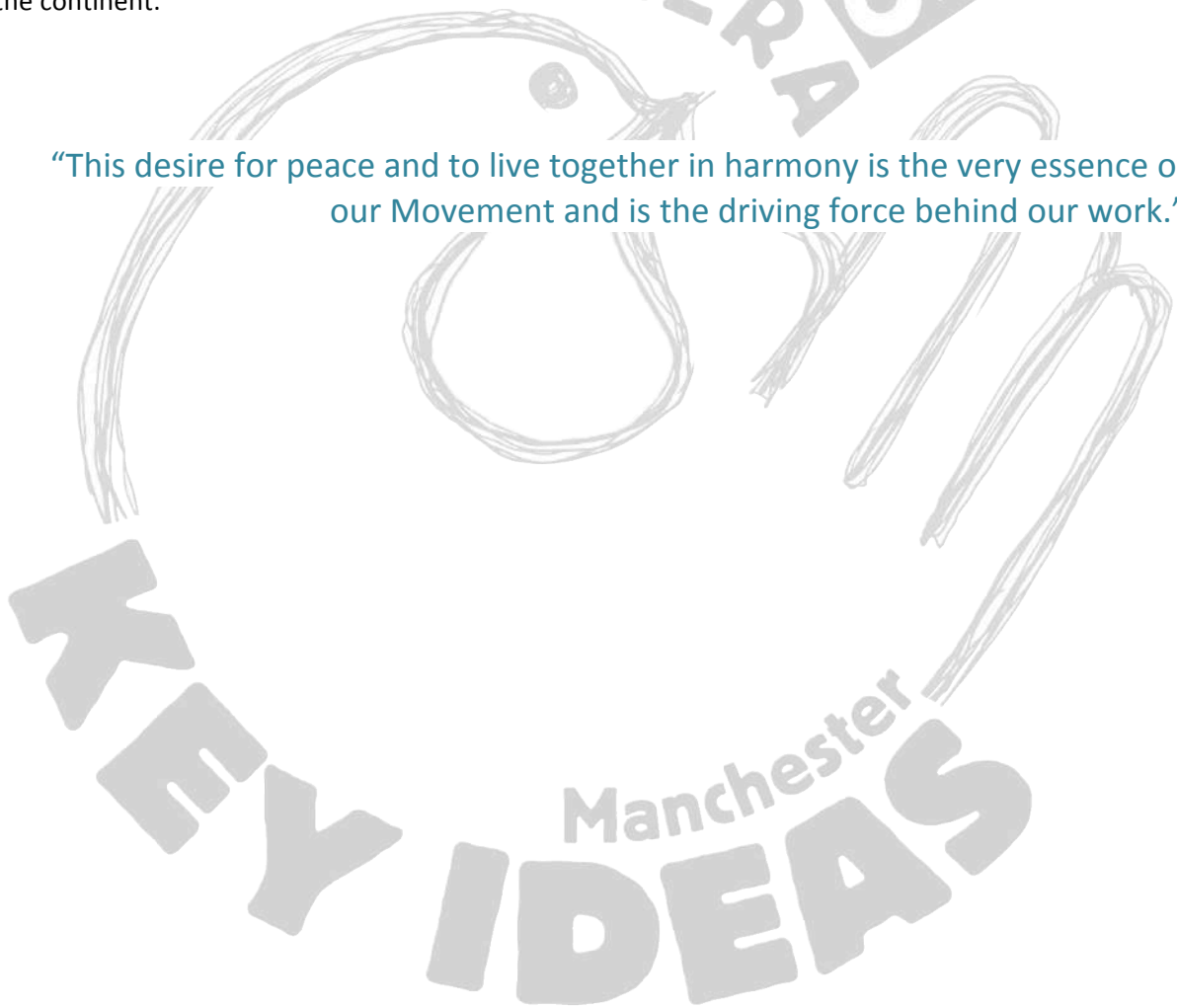
Our founder, Abbé Pierre, encapsulated this concept, saying, **"Power is not about enhancing the pleasure of those who are happy, but about relieving those who suffer unjustly."** Emmaus' mandate encourages us to act to spread respect for the rights of the homeless. Emmaus is called to advocate these rights ever more forcefully. We strongly condemn any use of violence.

Emmaus wishes to reiterate that wars are not only caused by economic problems between countries but also by social tensions that are unbearable for the poorest and most excluded people.

The Emmaus groups in Europe work to help the most deprived people. They are seen as being key players in a fairer and more peaceful society thanks to their concrete actions. This daily tireless work means that each group enables every individual to regain their dignity and contribute to a more socially-responsible way of life in a constructive and hopeful atmosphere. This work needs to be highlighted as it transcends periods of crisis and enables people to join together and interact.

Emmaus companions, leaders, volunteers and staff, let's make our voices heard so that human rights are enforced for all and to stop the escalating violence and the spread of fratricidal confrontations on the continent.

“This desire for peace and to live together in harmony is the very essence of our Movement and is the driving force behind our work.”



8. Prospects for 2015 - the statutory meeting in Manchester: generating great ideas!

“Creating together the Europe that we want by 2020!”

The social laboratories that are the Emmaus groups demonstrate their viability and vitality on a daily basis and show that a more humane European society is possible.

European construction fails due to a relative lack of citizen involvement in a joint political forum that is still being created to suit political considerations.

European construction should involve greater citizen participation. The transnational debating body is the European Parliament. Becoming key contacts for the MEPs would provide the opportunity to bring alive Europe at the national and local level and to encourage the emergence of the people's standpoint at European level.

What kind of Europe do we want at Emmaus? Europe is now the world's economic powerhouse following the many wars witnessed by the continent in the 20th century. We now want a **united, humane and supportive Europe, bolstered by its culture of peace.**

Let's accept our fundamental European choice while truly working on convergences.

Emmaus Europe was created to encourage an ethos of hope, solidarity and sharing in Europe, which is the very basis of the Emmaus Movement. Emmaus Europe is determined to be involved in building a future with a human face, so that future generations never again have to face the evils from which previous generations have suffered.

Are you looking to have a real influence on the European policies that are increasingly shaping our future but forget the weakest members of society? Emmaus Europe is counting on the involvement of all the European groups in **two upcoming meetings:**

Take part in the Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe on 3-6 September in Manchester, UK (2015)

Take part in the Emmaus International world assembly in 2016.

9. How to contact the Emmaus Europe Secretariat

- **Véronica Acevedo Caro:** Admin-finance assistant
- **Camille Decaens:** Responsible solidarities
- **Marie Tixier:** Events assistant
- **Gabriela Martin:** Coordinator

- **By email:**

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- **By telephone:**

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- **By post:**

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10. Appendices

a. Appendice part 5

A small graveyard
On a small island
Bodies buried
Tombs of the island's inhabitants
Who have changed its history.
Photos
Flowers
Flowers and thorns

Bare tombs
Anonymous tombs
Bodies that have changed the history of the island
In their own way
With their lives
We are to blame
We are all responsible

Tombs of those who
Were born on the island
Now mixed with
The tombs of those
who never saw the island
Death does not differentiate
based on background

The tomb that I didn't find
The one in which our values are buried
Offering a welcome
Hospitality
Respect
Tolerance
There is still hope.

Maria Luisa Testori. Lampedusa, Italie National Delegate . April 2014

11. b. Appendices part 7

Human rights should apply to everyone in Europe and worldwide

Open letter from the Emmaus Europe Movement

Emmaus is a **Movement** that works with some of the most disadvantaged members of society and was created in France in 1949 by Abbé Pierre. Emmaus currently works in **42 countries** on four continents. In Europe, over 16,000 men and women work together in 301 organisations in 17 countries. In fact the Movement has grown by 15% growth over the past five years. Our main activity is collecting and recycling second-hand goods and materials and enabling these men and women to make a dignified living from their work and enjoy the feeling of pride that comes from helping other socially-excluded people. The organisations provide a significant amount of support (or solidarity as we call it) for the victims of human trafficking (in Lithuania and Bosnia), war victims (Bosnia) and the victims of discrimination (undocumented migrants, the Roma community, including the Roma in Romania itself, and in Albania) and fund initiatives for disadvantaged children. Our fundamental values are *serve first those who suffer most and address the root causes of extreme poverty*.

The Emmaus Movement was ahead of its time with sustainable development, utilizing **practical social work** to improve the environment and therefore also demonstrating the viability of *an alternative economic model*. In 2009, we sent a letter to the members of the European Parliament to call for fundamental rights to be recognised and applied for everyone:

→ Respect for migrants' rights → Combatting the problem of poor housing and homelessness →
Trough promotion of a solidarity based economy

In 2014, it has to be said that these rights have regressed. We still have to demand respect for migrants' rights in Europe, *respect for human rights* for all the socially-excluded people that we take in and who demonstrate with us on a daily basis their dignity and ability to contribute to social and economic life, as long as they are not abused (being banned from having a fixed abode, work, access to healthcare and education).

Emmaus believes that the European Union has handed over too *much power to the European Commission* to the detriment of the European Parliament, which is the body that expresses citizens' votes.

The European Commission has developed an *ultra-liberal policy*, pushing what it calls 'economic integration' to *the detriment of the common resources and a social balance* that was inherent to European culture. The financial crisis and *debt repayment have totally upset this balance* in most of the countries of Europe where power and money are concentrated in the hands of an increasingly small number of people and companies (particularly banks) to the detriment of the poorest people who never benefited from growth. Emmaus Europe sent out a letter about reimbursing the debt and held a meeting with the President of the Parliament who explained his powerlessness in the face of this policy.

These ultra-liberal economic policies are counter-productive in that they are destroying the social fabric and marginalising people who until now had managed to live dignified lives. This marginalisation is increasingly visible and the victims, who are saddled with every ill and vice, find it impossible to get another job in the formal economic circuits. Increasing numbers of them are joining our alternative economy in order to restore their dignity.

Emmaus Europe is asking the prospective MEPs to take on board **true sustainable development** and its three key facets:

→ **Environmental policy** must be continued and Europe can remain pioneer by having the lowest carbon footprint via energy-saving forms of consumption, sustainable products, reuse and recycling. However, this policy should also further penalise deliberately unsustainable consumption methods, which are to the detriment of other people, and include the notion of *shared resources, particularly water, air, fauna and flora*. Food must also be reoriented by prioritising environmental solutions that encourage local production. Meat production circuits, to cite just one example, are absolutely unsustainable.

→ Environmental actions cannot be dissociated from the **social dimension** of sustainable development: the elitism produced by an ultra-liberal policy is selfish and upsets the social balance. It is vital that we review the possible privatisation of water, the countryside and waste treatment. A certain number of Emmaus groups work in Europe with the public services in order to deliver a recycling collection and resale service in which all the partners are winners. These agreements are fiercely opposed by the large private-sector groups, the self-same groups that protest about the cost of unemployment and pensions. *We are calling for these public environmental initiatives to take account of the possibility of work for the most socially-excluded people.*

→ The current **economic policy** is *catastrophic* because it is in the hands of elusive banks, as they all use tax havens to conduct their business. The current crisis was caused by high interest rate

mortgages that gave access to housing to poor families. These risky but highly lucrative loans were combined with all sorts of investments. When the price of oil rose, these families were en masse no longer able to meet their mortgage repayments, which generated what we are witnessing: a crisis that is hitting the poorest people in most countries or that is 'squeezing' the middle classes who used to have a decent standard of living. This crisis is not the doing of low-income families in Europe and *bank repayment requirements are out of all proportion*. We wish to reiterate that the **Tobin tax** (a currency transaction tax) would limit these selfish and harmful actions. We are outraged to see that high-frequency trading, which is completely disconnected from the real economy, can continue with impunity.

A more humane European society is possible: The cost of *border surveillance and combating immigration is out of proportion* and bring about serious human rights breaches. Migrants drowning close to our coastlines, being parked in horrendous detention centres or being hunted down as soon as they arrive are *serious breaches of the principle of humanity*. That Europe is still allowing *these migrants* – because they are deemed to be illegal – *to be pushed into doing illegal work and crime in order to survive goes against its history* and founding principles. We prove every single day that it is more beneficial to take in migrants and train them to make a dignified living. These migrants immediately take on a human face and we are all proud of them.

Emmaus Europe is calling for the candidates to take a stance on these issues and to join together in order to resuscitate the spirit of a more humane Europe.

November 2014