



MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF EMMAUS EUROPE (RCEE)

27 APRIL 2021

ZOOM MEETING



PRESENT	MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL	
	Carina Aaltonen, president of Emmaus Europe Jean-Philippe Légaut, Emmaus Europe treasurer	
	NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES	NUMBER OF VOTERS
	Serena Lemmens, Germany Julio De La Granja, Belgium Sabina Arnaut Jahic, Bosnia-Herzegovina José Maria Garcia Bresó, Spain Anu Lahde, Finland Annick Berthier, France	Virginia Tallone, Italy Jos Van der Meer, the Netherlands Gélu Nichitel, Romania Tony Ferrier, UK Jérémie Udry, Switzerland Grigory Semenchuk, Ukraine 12 voters
	COUNCILLORS OF EMMAUS INTERNATIONAL (CEIs) – EUROPE REGION	NUMBER OF VOTERS
	Maryse Faure, France (had trouble connecting and was not able to take part in the vote) Simon Grainge, UK Martha Hannus, Finland Aurore Querel, Emmaus Europe Secretary, France	Amanda Steckly, UK Maria Luisa Testori, Italy Leila Thouret, Romania 7 voters
	EX OFFICIO MEMBER	
	Patrick Atohoun, chair of Emmaus International	
	GUEST PARTICIPANTS WITHOUT VOTING RIGHTS	Secretariat of Emmaus Europe
	Adrien Chaboche, Emmaus International Secretariat Hélène Perrot, Emmaus International Secretariat Marie-Laure Aumard, auditor	Véronica Acevedo-Caro, admin-finance assistant Marie Tixier, events coordinator Théo Robin, solidarity coordinator Eve Poulteau, EE chief executive
EXCUSED	Mikel Azkona, Spain (CEI) Christian Calmejane, France (CEI) Rosa Gil Elorduy, Spain (CEI) Michael "Spike" Hudson, UK (CEI) Grzegorz Hajduk, ND for Poland Charlotte Wester, ND for Sweden	

Preamble	<p>In Europe, we are gradually moving out of lockdown, but our thoughts are with our Indian friends, who are experiencing an extremely tough third wave of coronavirus.</p> <p>However, we also have some great news, namely that Véronica is expecting her second child. I am delighted for her. We are going to have to replace her during her maternity leave, which lasts for at least four months at Emmaus Europe, and will begin in late October in this case. This will have an impact on the budget and we will submit a revised budget to you in July.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION / DEBATE	CONCLUSIONS DECISIONS
1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS	<p>Approval of the minutes of the February 2021 Regional Council</p> <p>None of the participants wished to make any additions, remarks or oppose the proposed minutes of the 4 February 2021 videoconference Regional Council meeting.</p>	<p>The Regional Council unanimously approved the minutes of the February 2021 Regional Council:</p> <p>✓ <u>For:</u> 17 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes</p>
2. CALL FOR CANDIDATES TO FILL THE POST OF ND ON THE EXECUTIVE	<p>Maria Balseca was elected to sit on the executive but has had to quickly resign because she is unable to take part in the meetings. Our statutes specify that at least one national delegate (ND) must sit on the executive, but the process of replacing Maria has been delayed because of the COVID-19 crisis. Please submit your candidacies in time for the July RCEE.</p> <p>Simon Grainge has announced his departure from the movement, because he is terminating his contract with Emmaus UK. Carina paid tribute to him, as he has been a terrific “informal co-president” over the past year, and has always been there for the movement over the past 18 years. Marie France Bedleem, who was not elected at the last RAEE, agreed to stand for election as a CEI to replace Simon. This election will take place at the July RCEE.</p>	
3. 2020 ACTIVITY REPORT	<p>The activity report was sent out in advance because the RCEE members were asked to volunteer their opinions on the report.</p> <p><u>José-Maria’s comments:</u></p> <p>He praised Carina’s introduction, because poverty is a violation of fundamental human rights, and we must constantly reiterate this point. He stressed that the concept of a co-presidency does not exist in our statutes, and therefore asked for the relevant passage to be amended.</p> <p>He would also like to have more information about the executive’s work. As a matter of fact, the executive minutes have not been sent out regularly during this slightly chaotic year, and the website where they tend to be published is currently being overhauled. It was suggested that all the minutes should be sent to the RCEE to make up for this oversight.</p>	<p>The Regional Council unanimously approved the 2020 regional activity report:</p> <p>✓ <u>For:</u> 17 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes</p>

4. 2020 ACCOUNTS

Reading of the 2020 treasurer's report by Jean-Philippe Légaut

2020 proved to be a difficult year for many groups because of the pandemic, lockdowns, and restrictions affecting their income-generating activities. Admittedly, membership dues were calculated based on the previous year's sales figures, so it will only be in 2021 that our accounts record the difficulties encountered by the groups in 2020. In the meantime, our very positive financial result is a bitter reminder of the fact that we have had to cancel all "in-person" meetings since March 2020.

However, notably due to the work done by the secretariat, we have been able to meet up in other ways, resume online meetings, and even begin the exchanges of practices decided upon at San Sebastian. 75% of the groups paid their dues in 2020, compared with 58% in 2019. Indeed, payments of 2020 membership dues have exceeded our initial forecasts, and are also the proof that the Emmaus groups are continuing to actively choose to belong to the movement and support solidarity, rather than isolating themselves in this difficult period.

Presentation of the 2020 accounts

Result

Our total expenditure was €310,341 and our income totalled €447,486, making for a surplus of €137,146. The surplus is not structural but due to circumstances, namely the unique situation caused by COVID-19. The cancellation of all in-person meetings from March 2020 onwards significantly reduced the year's expenditure.

Income

We made provision for receipt of membership dues totalling €324,500 prior to the pandemic. We reduced this estimated figure in April because of coronavirus, but in the end, we actually exceeded the figure by almost €50,000 (a total of €373,038.63).

In total, 239 groups paid their 2020 dues, out of a total of 316 groups in Europe, i.e., 75% (compared with 58% in 2019). 38 groups also paid dues from previous financial years.

We also turned down half of the funding allocated to us by Emmaus International (50% of the allocated amount of €50,000) out of solidarity towards the other regions.

Expenditure

Expenditure was greatly reduced in comparison with the initial pre-pandemic budget. The lack of in-person meetings (RCEE, executive, collectives, exchanges of practices, training courses) is the primary reason for this figure, as well as the fact that we were able to benefit from the French government's wage support scheme for a few months to cover the wages of the secretariat staff.

The 2020 accounts were **unanimously** approved by the Regional Council:

- ✓ For: 17 votes
- ✗ Against: 0 votes
- Abstentions: 0 votes

The Regional Council **unanimously** approved the treasurer's 2020 report:

- ✓ For: 17 votes
- ✗ Against: 0 votes
- Abstentions: 0 votes

The Regional Council unanimously approved the allocation of the surplus of €137,146 to the association's funds.

- ✓ For: 17 votes
- ✗ Against: 0 votes
- Abstentions: 0 votes

Loans

The following loans are outstanding:

- 2016: Emmaus Rzeszow – €25K Repayment began in October 2017.
- 2018: Nova Generacija – €25K Repayment began in February 2019.
- 2018: Villafranca – €35K Repayment began in January 2020.
- 2019: Emmaus Satu Mare – €30K Repayment began in January 2020.

The executive suggested that the borrowing groups defer repayment of the loans in light of the coronavirus situation. Consequently, repayments were frozen for six months, and the total repayment term has been extended by the same length of time.

Cash and investments

Crédit Coopératif – We have €396,653.13 in this account.

Livret A – We have €83,683.76 in this account.

Banca Etica – We have €143,068.45 in this account.

Banca Etica ethical fund - €70,000 is currently invested with Banca Etica in the EI Ethical Fund to guarantee current loans. This financial guarantee expires in 2021. A decision needs to be taken about this sum in 2021. The transfer of these funds to the new EI Ethical Fund is an option.

Solidarity

When the pandemic started in early 2020, Emmaus International and its four regions (Emmaus Africa, Emmaus America, Emmaus Asia and Emmaus Europe) decided to suspend their usual solidarity programmes and pool the movement's resources. This decision enabled emergency funding mechanisms to be developed to meet the needs as quickly and tangibly as possible of the groups whose work was affected by COVID-19. The various mechanisms put in place notably funded groups' running costs and the rollout of their social initiatives.

The funding was primarily raised thanks to the work of the movement's groups. 47 groups contributed to the mechanism, and we are also grateful to the national organisations in France, UK, Switzerland and Sweden, who kindly rallied round. The collective efforts by the movement's members raised over €800,000 across the whole period, i.e., two-thirds of the resources needed to meet the emergency needs. Contributions were also made by foundations, by Emmaus International's allocated funds, as well as the four regions' emergency funds, which were reallocated. Thank you once again to those who were able to take part!

Consequently, Emmaus Europe's allocated funds remained stable and are as follows, as of 31 December 2020:

- Programme allocated funds: €48,209
- General solidarity, non-programme funds: €215,690

- Total: €263,899

Allocation of the surplus

The treasurer suggested allocating the surplus to the association's funds.

Usage of general solidarity funds

The treasurer invited the RCEE to consider regular allocation of general solidarity funds.

José-Maria suggested that some of the funds should be used to make a one-off donation to international solidarity, given the catastrophic situation in other countries, and particularly in India and Brazil.

This idea will be put forward for discussion by the executive, which will make a proposal on how to allocate these funds. The proposal will also take into account the risk of the crisis developing in Europe.

It should also be noted that there is a plan (not using solidarity funding in this case) to keep back a sum as a contribution to the groups' travel expenses for the World Assembly and the RAEE planned for 2023.

Statutory auditor's report, Ms Marie-Laure Aumard

The auditor certified that the annual accounts, in light of French accounting rules and principles, were in order and genuine, and provide a faithful image of the operating result from the previous financial year, and of the association's financial position and property at the end of the financial year.

She made the following comments:

Observation

Without calling into question the below opinion, we wish to draw your attention to the following point set out in the "Accounting rules and methods" note of the appendix to the annual accounts and relating to the application, as of 1 January 2020, of accounting regulation number 2018-06 of 5 December 2018 on the annual accounts of private law non-profit legal entities.

Justification of assessment

The global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in this year's accounts being put together and audited in unique circumstances. As a matter of fact, the COVID-19 crisis and the exceptional measures taken during this public health emergency are having manifold effects on organisations, particularly on their activity and funding, as well as increasing uncertainty about their future prospects. Some measures, such as travel restrictions and remote working, have also had an impact on the internal organisation of organisations and on auditing arrangements.

	<p>It is in this complex and developing context that, in application of the provisions of articles L.823-9 and R.823.7 of the French Commercial Code on Justification of Assessment, we bring to your attention the following points, which, in our professional judgement, are the most important for auditing the financial year's accounts.</p> <p>The assessment was made in the context of the audit of the annual accounts as a whole and the formulation of our above opinion.</p> <p>We do not express an opinion on elements viewed in isolation.</p> <p>As previously stated, the "Accounting Rules and Methods" note contained in the appendix states the changes to the accounting methods that took place during the financial year in application of ANC regulation number 2018-06.</p> <p>As part of our assessment of the accounting rules and principles followed by your organisation, we have made sure that the accounting procedures used to apply this change are correct and that the change has been appropriately presented.</p>	
<p>5. NEW MEMBERS/TRIAL MEMBERSHIP</p>	<p>Full membership applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Emaus Traperos Sociedad Cooperativa, San Sebastian, Spain</u> The group started life as an association in Rentería (Guipúzcoa) in 1980. In 1996, the association was disbanded and they set up a foundation and a non-profit social co-operative. In 2010, they decided to follow their own path, separately from Emaús Fundación Social. <p>A founder member of the Emmaus Spain Association. The group currently comprises 33 people (regulated workplace), 13 women and 20 men.</p> <p>Their 1,583.90m2 premises are authorised to operate as a "preparing for reuse centre", and the premises are divided into textile sorting and storage areas, shop floor, furniture storage and unloading, and WEEE repair and storage area. The group has five vehicles for collections.</p> <p>Sales are virtually their sole source of income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Emmaus Huelva (Spain)</u> Traperos Emaús in Huelva has been operating since 2014, firstly as a training and residential centre, subsequently as a co-op, and finally as an association, its current legal form. <p>The group is located in Gibraleón, a district of Huelva in Spain. They are a social enterprise, focusing on reuse, recycling and environmental training, based on the principle of socio-professional integration and personal development, with a strong</p>	<p>The Regional Council approved Cooperativa San Sebastian's full membership application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <u>For:</u> 17 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes • <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes <p>The Regional Council approved Emmaus Huelva's membership application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <u>For:</u> 17 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes • <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes

commitment to the circular economy and the environment.

The group now has 12 companions and they provide support for dozens of migrants who have come to work for farmers and live in inhumane conditions.

Thanks to the support of the Spanish groups and groups from the rest of Europe, they did the building work needed to obtain accreditation so that they could win preparing for reuse public procurement contracts.

Both groups have joined EE after numerous meetings, and now take part in the Spanish assemblies.

Trial membership application

• **Vivre au peux, France**

The Vivre au Peux association was founded on 3 December 2014 and began working on 1 January 2015. Its initial aim was to support people who were already at Emmaus Peupins but who, following the creation of the employment access schemes, had lost their jobs because of their age or difficulties preventing them from working on these schemes. The group then extended its scope to include people who are socially-excluded: they may have lost companion status because of their circumstances (retired, disabilities, tax credit claimants etc) or in similar situations.

The provision of shelter and support for asylum seekers, via the *Centre d'Accueil et d'Orientation* (migrant reception and guidance centre) scheme, was part of the association's DNA. Its abolition in 2019 led the association to apply for HUDA status (emergency accommodation for asylum seekers) in order to continue its work.

Located 5km from Le Pin in the Deux-Sèvres department in the Nouvelle Aquitaine region, the association is located 35km from Cholet and around 100km from Poitiers and Nantes.

The association is currently home to 30 people:

- 15 people in "sheltered housing".
- 11 people in emergency accommodation for asylum seekers.
- Four people in social accommodation.

Lunch is provided and open to all in order to connect all those living at Vivre au Peux. Joint celebrations and outings are organised on a very regular basis. A qualified teacher also delivers French as a Foreign Language lessons.

The association is currently undertaking a big accommodation project which should enable site residential capacity to be increased from 30 to 40 residents (initially by 2022).

The Regional Council approved Vivre au Peux's trial membership application:

- ✓ For: 17 votes
- ✗ Against: 0 votes
- Abstentions: 0 votes

	<p>VAP is working with the funding body SOLIHA and has produced a balanced projected budget for the period up to 2022. The association has a DLA (local support mechanism) for developing its human resources so that it is able to work with a larger number of residents.</p> <p><u>Question raised by the RCEE members:</u> What happens when asylum claims are turned down? There is a partnership with local associations, including Emmaus communities, to house and support them in the same French department as they make their appeals.</p> <p>The group was founded by an Emmaus group, and is a solution for collectively housing and supporting retired companions, and could be a worthwhile option in other European countries.</p>	
<p>6. 2021 SOLIDARITY</p>	<p><u>2021 solidarity programme</u></p> <p><u>Emmaus-ISF - Bosnia-Herzegovina</u> The group has requested €15K of funding to equip the kitchen at the new centre for elderly people. It was proposed that this request should be submitted to EI's special 2021 solidarity mechanism.</p> <p><u>CNZD - Croatia</u> The group has applied for €5K to launch a multimedia studio, which would be a new income-generating activity for the group. It was suggested that this initiative should be included in the 2021 European solidarity programme. Discussion: How are they going to generate a profit to fund these projects if the income-generating activity is not profitable from the start? They have drawn up a development plan which envisages gradually generating a profit over the next five years and using it to fund the social projects. What will happen if the people with expertise in this area leave the group? One of the people with expertise is the director and founder of the group, so it would be fair to assume that he will be staying for a long time. Furthermore, a significant swathe of the group's activities are organised around these areas and guarantee that this expertise will be maintained.</p> <p><u>TOMS - Croatia</u> Application for €5K to start a delivery service running from the new social enterprise restaurant. It was suggested that this initiative should be included in the 2021 European solidarity programme. Discussion: A further €74K needs to be found in addition to our potential help. How are they going to secure the rest of the funding required? In fact, they have already secured funding to launch the restaurant (the launch took place in June 2020). The</p>	<p>Emmaus-ISF – EI special solidarity mechanism: ✓ <u>For:</u> 17 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes</p> <p>CNZD – European Solidarity Programme (ESP) ✓ <u>For:</u> 16 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes</p> <p>TOMS – ESP: ✓ <u>For:</u> 16 votes ✗ <u>Against:</u> 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions:</u> 0 votes</p>

	<p>funding was provided by public funds and the support of ISF-Emmaus. All that remains to be done is fund the development of the delivery service in light of the COVID-19 situation.</p> <p><u>Emmaus Brat Albert- Poland</u> Application for €15K to purchase a new vehicle. It was suggested that this initiative should be included in the 2021 European solidarity programme.</p> <p><u>Nasha Khata - Ukraine</u> Application for €5K to fit out and make secure the community houses. It was suggested that this initiative should be submitted to the FAP 2021 programme.</p>	<p>Emmaus Brat Albert – ESP: ✓ <u>For</u>: 16 votes ✗ <u>Against</u>: 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions</u>: 0 votes</p> <p>Nasha Khata – ESP: ✓ <u>For</u>: 18 votes ✗ <u>Against</u>: 0 votes ● <u>Abstentions</u>: 0 votes</p>
<p>7. NATIONAL DELEGATE/WISE PERSONS UPDATE WA SCHEDULE</p>	<p>NDs are not mentioned in EI’s statutes and receive very little mention in EE’s statutes. NDs are a legacy dating back to before the 2003 reform. They were the main representatives in EI.</p> <p>The proposals contain a series of ideas which are sometimes duplicated and some which still require discussion.</p> <p>The ideas need to be organised so that they can also form a contribution to the statutes voted on by the RCEE and then can also be discussed with the other regions.</p> <p><u>Point 1:</u> Detail which information should be shared and how often, with examples for the new CEIs. Clarify the role and remit in the statutes, and put the rest in the internal regulations.</p> <p><u>Point 2:</u> For Point 1, Julio: each country needs to make arrangements. Martha: Each country has differing numbers of NDs and CEIs. Patrick: Each has a specific role - national for one, Europe and international for the others. Annick: Yes, currently in France we have a clear distinction between the NDs who represent the national organisation’s board, the CEIs who do not sit on the national governing bodies.</p> <p>Point 3: Nothing to add. Point 4: Nothing to add. Point 5: Mandate ok for all. José-Maria adds: in our experience in some countries there are no NDs, we need to look into this in the future. Point 6: Raises new questions, which will be dealt with.</p> <p>Everyone OK with questions 7, 8 and 9 – we will send a response to EI with our comments.</p>	<p>The Regional Council approved the remit given to the working group to make proposals on how to develop our statutes and internal regulations on the roles, remit, and election procedure for NDs.</p> <p>The Regional Council approved the answers given to EI’s questions.</p>

	<p>Following the announcement of the new WA schedule: a virtual assembly in 2021 and an in-person meeting in Uruguay in 2022. In this case, is it a good idea to hold another WA in 2025, given that the Europe Regional Assembly is planned for 2023?</p>	
<p>8. LIFE OF THE MOVEMENT</p>	<p>Carina informed the members of the RCEE that the long-awaited meeting between EI, EF and EE, which has been in the pipeline for a year, is scheduled to take place on 12 May, so that the participants can discuss matters in person.</p> <p>She also stated that several members of the RCEE felt that the letter sent out solely by the EI EC to all the world’s groups raises the issue of internal democracy, and that we need to see how to improve how we operate collectively in the future, even if we are not going to discuss the matter today.</p> <p>However, our discussion today is focused on the essence of what is expressed in that letter.</p> <p>José-Maria reminded the meeting that the Spanish groups have expressed their support for this EC initiative.</p>	
<p>9. CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION STARTED AT THE LAST RCEE - “HOW TO HELP MORE?”</p>	<p>How can we help more people while safeguarding our financial independence? Simon reminded the meeting that several topics emerged from the debates at the last RCEE: about the various income-generating activities (long-standing and innovative), the need to have a precise definition of self-sufficiency, as everyone has their own vision, etc. In particular, these discussions could help us to clarify our acceptance criteria for new groups wishing to join the movement. EI is planning to hold debates with the groups in preparation for the WA, focusing on the issue of independence and playing a part in funding the movement, among other topics. Online workshops will be offered to the groups in May. At the European level, we also have questions about the development of our work, with reuse and waste management being increasingly regulated. It is going to become difficult not to be under contract with local government or service providers. How can we move forward in this area, more actively involving the groups, and reaching actual decisions and conclusions? What role can EE play in supporting this development?</p> <p>Tony felt that sometimes too many written surveys are sent to the groups and these surveys do not always deliver much in the way of results. However, surveys can still be a relevant resource, particularly as they are little-used at the European level.</p> <p>José-Maria reminded participants that this debate has been going on for many years. One of the ideas already put forward is that each group does not necessarily have to be self-sufficient, provided that the movement as a whole is self-supporting. Regarding the issue of groups with service contracts with local councils and government, or that have work integration contracts, he stated that it is important that we maintain our independence from all political parties and interest groups. For instance, the Spanish Emmaus groups make a great deal of use of this mechanism, but reserve the right to declare themselves to officially be anti-capitalism. The groups do not benefit from any favours from the authorities, but simply from the common legal framework.</p> <p>Amanda felt that it would be impossible to agree a single definition of self-sufficiency. She suggested asking each group to assess their self-sufficiency based on their own criteria.</p> <p>With regard to the issue of external funding appeals, Annick explained that the French funding appeal had enabled several vulnerable groups to be saved. If the initiative was replicated in France, it would not be used to fund the running of the groups, but instead to innovate and develop new income-generating activities, which now seems to be needed to address the issue of our core model losing impetus and the competition that our model is encountering.</p>	

	<p>Carina felt that this issue should also be discussed by each nation to enable discussion between groups who are sharing the same issues.</p> <p>Martha thought that it would be worthwhile thinking longer term, and wondering what the world will be like in 30 years' time, and who we want to be by that time. We also need to gain some perspective on our current situation so that we can discuss together the path to take and the strategy to be implemented to achieve this objective. The issue of our funding, for instance, is part of this strategy, rather than falling under the debate on our purpose.</p> <p>Maria Luisa informed the meeting that the Emmaus Italy Board is planning a debate on solidarity, sharing and self-sufficiency (they would like to invite the Italian-speaking Swiss groups to join them). She felt that a debate would be more effective than written consultations, which tend not to work well in our groups.</p>
<p>10. SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING MEETINGS</p>	<p>Thank you once again to Simon for his 18-year spell with Emmaus.</p> <p>We are meeting with Emmaus Switzerland on 7 May. Anyone wishing to be involved in this visit should contact Carina and Eve.</p> <p>The meeting documents for this RCEE contain the schedule of upcoming meetings, specifically 4 June (Executive) and 12 July (RCEE).</p>

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