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Emmaus in Europe

January 2022



emmaus

EUROPE

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

Dear friends, companions, leaders, volunteers,

I hope you are well and keeping up your excellent work in good spirits.

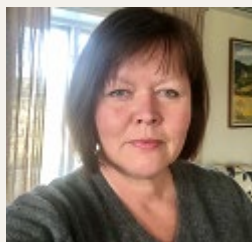
Another unusual year has passed, and everything seems more unpredictable than before the pandemic. This is the new normal, and we will have to learn to live in a world with mutated viruses for a long time. Right now, it seems like the omicron variant has taken over Europe, and it travels fast. I hope you and the people around you stay safe.

I wish you a happy new beginning — a new year with hope and new possibilities for us and the world. At Emmaus, we can give, receive, and restore hope. Let this year be a year where we can give people more hope, in our communities, locally, but also outside Europe. We act on a local and global scale, and we think globally. Being part of the Emmaus International movement gives us opportunities to open a window to the world and to listen and learn more about the struggles people are facing. The first "Global report on our fight against poverty" is an excellent start to learn more about combatting inequalities, our six demands, and three requirements to overcome poverty.

In 2022 we will continue to focus on migrants and exiles in Europe. In most parts of Europe, migrants and exiles are greeted by higher and higher fences along the borders guarded by armed forces, and are often thrown into waiting zones, have their campsites destroyed, and are sent away. Later this year, a new EU Migration and Asylum Pact will make it more difficult for migrants to enter Europe. Freedom, equality, and fraternity are not compatible with the way foreign children and adults are treated. This kind of action must be condemned. We must do better. The European Union and the countries in Europe must change their policies. People in exile should be treated with dignity.

May this new year mark the beginning of better cooperation between all of us. Please let us know if you have any ideas, thoughts, questions, or proposals for the secretariat, the board, or for me, about how we can be more present in your community or group, or if you have any issues you would like to raise. We are here for you.

Warmest regards,



Carina Aaltonen
Chair of Emmaus Europe

Emmaus in practice

Emmaus Helsinki:

A cooperative to support Roma migrants



© Emmaus Helsinki

Emmaus Helsinki has for many years worked on finding a way to support the Roma migrants so that they could secure regular work and a decent income, and in this way fully participate in the world of work, and enjoy equal rights and responsibilities.

The Roma migrants from Romania and Bulgaria are one of the most vulnerable groups in Helsinki. They come to Finland to earn money for their children, who stay behind with relatives in extremely poor living conditions. In Finland, Roma migrants usually earn a meagre income from street work: begging, collecting bottles, or selling the street magazine Iso Numero (Big Issue in English). It is rare that somebody finds work in the Finnish labour market. In view

of this situation, it was very important for us to find a way of helping them to actively participate in society.

In 2017, we founded a cooperative called Work and Hope, which is a labour pool for migrant Roma, mostly women. They sign a work contract with the cooperative, and the cooperative coordinates their work assignments at the premises of private clients or organisations.

[Read more...](#)

European Action

Frontex:

A European agency out of control

Migreurop, which Emmaus Europe is part of, has just republished its report on Frontex.



Criticised for its practices by NGOs, but much lauded by all of the European institutions, Frontex has grown in scope over the past 15 years, gaining greater powers of control and expulsion, and its budget has increased from 5 to 543 million euros.

Migreurop, which Emmaus Europe is part of, has just republished its report on Frontex. It provides an overview of this European border and coast guard agency which has played a growing role in the implementation of EU migratory and security policy since its creation in 2005.

Since 2020, however, criticism of its activities and governance has been raised even within the institutions (particularly by the European Commission and Parliament, the European Ombudsman, and the European Anti-Fraud Office).

[Read more...](#)

Frontex report (in French)

The republished Frontex report (Report #3, 3rd edition) is online in French. Translations will soon be available in English and Italian.

Immigration to Spain: The terrible toll

Over 4400 migrants died or disappeared at sea whilst trying to reach Spain in 2021

According to the NGO Caminando Fronteras, the vast majority of these migrants lost their lives whilst trying to reach the Canary Islands from the north-western coast of Africa. The terrible death toll for 2021 is the worst since at least 2015.

This very dangerous route has been travelled much more often over the last few years, due to tighter controls in the Mediterranean. The report also highlights the growing number of women and children who have died whilst undertaking this voyage.

The NGO has spoken out about the lack of resources for search and rescue operations and the dangerous political games played by Spain and other European countries.

[Caminando Fronteras report](#)

Spotlight on...

The Abbé Pierre memory centre celebrates its 10th birthday!



© Abbé Pierre-Emmaüs Centre, Abbé Pierre's room.

In the house in Normandy, France, where Abbé Pierre lived out his final years, a museum has been open to the public since 22nd January 2012. Many exhibitions have been held there, but his room and the chapel have been kept in their original state.

Each year, a commemorative march starts off from the Emmaus Abbé Pierre Centre and ends at Esteville cemetery. Abbé Pierre is buried in his adopted town, along with Lucie Coutaz, co-founder of Emmaus,

Georges Legay, the first companion, and more than 80 other companions. The keys of the houses built by the Emmaus movement over the past year are then placed on Abbé Pierre's grave.

This year, we are commemorating the 15th anniversary of Abbé Pierre's death, following these traditions. However, 22nd January this year also marks a new beginning for this place, as the first stone of the Emmaus Abbé Pierre Centre social housing block will be laid down.

[Read more...](#)

[Programme \(in French\)](#)

[Abbé Pierre-Emmaus Centre website](#)

How to prevent debt leading to extreme poverty: The French experience

Webinar on Thursday 3rd February

3pm-4:30pm (Paris time GMT+1)

In many countries, excessive debt and bad credit are pushing more and more people into very insecure conditions. To tackle this problem, the Emmaus France groups have created and are funding new Emmaus associations: SOS Families. Within these associations, volunteers support people and help them to get out of debt, and financial relief can also be provided via donations and the Emmaus groups.

Emmaus France and Emmaus International would like to share these initiatives with you, discuss any similar experiences you may have in your countries, and reflect on how these useful actions can be adapted to tackle the causes of poverty.

The presentation will be in three languages (French, with Spanish and English simultaneous interpretation).

Introduction by Patrick Atohoun, Chair of Emmaus International, presented by Catherine Girard, Vice President of the Social Action and Housing branch, and Thibaut LARGERON, National Director of the SOS Families groups.

[Online registration](#)

Emmaus Movement Solidarity

Transportation of goods-at the heart of solidarity exchanges

It's already January 2022, and we hope this will be a year full of solidarity! Like every year, certain groups are counting on the solidarity of the European groups, which takes the form of sending goods via lorry. The European Transportation Programme helps support the social activities of the groups which receive them, and gives a second or even third life to the goods collected in your countries!

In addition to sending physical goods, these lorry deliveries are an opportunity for groups to meet and get to know each other. If you would like to get involved with solidarity transportation of goods in 2022, get in touch with [Emmanuel](#). You can also consult the [European guide to transportation of goods](#).

2021 ESP: objectives reached!

Thanks to your generosity, the 2021 European Solidarity Programme has funded the [three projects selected](#) at the beginning of the year—many thanks for your contributions!

Once again, European solidarity has risen to the challenge! Your efforts will help the groups receiving support to develop their activities and face the challenges linked to the current economic context. Many thanks to all!



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