

[View this email in your browser](#)

May 2022

Emmaus in Europe



emmaus

EUROPE

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

Dear friend,

"Laughing made us invincible, not like those who always win, but like those that never give up." (Frida Kahlo)

With this quote, the 14th Emmaus International World Assembly in Piriápolis, Uruguay, opened on 9 May 2022 – six years after our last meeting in Jesolo. It was the first time the Americas region was hosting the WA. We were received with warm-hearted hospitality from the moment we arrived. There was art, dance, and a colorful cultural program in between intense work undertaken in various workshops. We listened intently to the emotional testimonies about resisting dictatorships and oppression in the Americas region. 385 participants from 34 countries took part, representing 210 groups. From Europe, delegates from 15 countries were present.

This Assembly gave us a chance to look back and celebrate the heritage of our movement. The meeting took place on the shores of the Rio de la Plata river, not far from where Abbé Pierre almost lost his life 60 years ago when the boat he was travelling on sank, causing hundreds of people to drown. Abbé Pierre survived the shipwreck and also saved the life of a small child. At that time, only one man had information about all the Emmaus groups in the world. Abbé Pierre's conviction was that the groups needed to be united to ensure the continuation of this newly born and steadily growing movement. The shipwreck was the starting point for what would become Emmaus International.

Over five days in Uruguay, we tied new bonds of friendship and reunited with friends that we had not seen in person for a long time. We shared thoughts and ideas for the future; people turned out in numbers! I feel that we are embarking upon a new era with more international and regional engagement from groups in Europe, including from younger and newer people.

Due to the war, our friends in Ukraine could not attend the Assembly. Still, Grigory Semenchuk from Emmaus Oselya took part by sending a video message. Zbigniew Drażkowski from Emmaus Lublin gave an informative update on the situation in Ukraine and Poland since the beginning of the war. We stood with Ukraine during the whole Assembly.

One of the topics I and others brought up was climate justice as the root cause of poverty. Especially with regard to women and children in Asia, Africa, and the Americas being the main victims of this. That being said, sooner or later we will all be affected. Gladys from the Emmaus group Cordis in South Africa told me about disastrous flooding in the Durban area, and that the death toll had climbed to more than 400 people, to give just one example.

Climate change is not a thing of the future. It is here now, and in Europe, we have a responsibility to do our utmost to speed up the transition and eliminate the carbon footprint from all our activities. We have to be the forerunners in this work; we need to walk the walk. This is our fight, but it is also that of future generations. I am convinced that when Emmaus takes on this struggle, alongside other actors in this field, new people will choose to come and work with us. We are the activists for change - and now is the time to act.

The Emmaus International board elected a new Executive committee with Aurore Querel (France) as first Vice President, Christian Calmejane (France) as treasurer, and Amanda Stekly (UK) as a member. Aurore is also on the Emmaus Europe Executive committee. She will now be the connecting link between the regional and international levels. Good luck with your important work. I am looking forward to inspirational cooperation.

The pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and daily struggles have been brutal for many of us. To continue with our work, we need time to laugh, relax, and be inspired by others. Thank you, Emmaus International and the Americas region, for bringing us together. The next time we will have a large gathering will be at the European Regional Assembly in Iasi, Romania, in October 2023. Make sure to join us then.

And thank you for reading this newsletter. Please share the link with others or encourage people to sign up. The next issue will be out in June.

We will keep in touch,

Carina
Chair of Emmaus Europe

E-mail: carina@emmaus.ax / Whatsapp: 00358405645102



Emmaus International World Assembly, 2022, © Emmaus International

Emmaus stories

Emmaus Oselya's daily life has been turned upside down



Natalia (Emmaus Oselya, Ukraine) and Zbigniew (Emmaus Lublin, Poland), at a meeting in Lublin in early May 2022, ©

Emmaus Lublin

This month, we are speaking to Natalia, the leader of Emmaus Oselya in Ukraine. The group has been supporting people fleeing the fighting right from the start of the conflict. Emmaus Oselya has provided support, handed out food, offered accommodation, counselling, and so on. Natalia tells us about the community's daily life, which has been turned upside down since the beginning of the conflict.

How is your community involved in supporting displaced people?

In April, around 50 people came every day to our social support centre in Lviv to take a shower, get their hair cut, do their washing and change their clothes, get something to eat, receive medical care, or simply relax and chat. This makes for a total of over 600 meals handed out, around 100 loads of washing, over 500 items of clothing donated, and close to 200 showers. All of these services are delivered by the community's companions, who know all about the difficulties of life on the streets. This creates a rapport with the beneficiaries, who are forced to seek help because of the war.

However, our social centre is small – two small rooms and a bathroom. Since the start of the war, the number of people coming to the centre has continued to rise, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to welcome them properly and provide them with support.

Our Emmaus charity shop, located in Vynnyky in the Lviv suburbs, is close to our community house, and reopened in April. However, the air raid warnings and risk of being bombed force us to take refuge in bomb shelters and close the shop regularly. This is having a major impact on our income-generating activity, which is so important for our community and our customers. Once again, thanks to the

funding provided by the Emmaus groups, via the Emmaus Europe Ukraine Fund, we are able to maintain our community life and help the displaced people and war victims.

The Lviv charity shop only opens three times a week. On the other hand, the furniture restoration workshop is practically back to normal, and people are placing orders once again. We are delighted about this.

In April, we received a container of humanitarian aid from the Emmaus groups via Emmaus Lublin (the third since the start of the conflict). We are working with a range of associations and volunteers across Ukraine to provide support where it is needed most. In April, we helped the children's hospital in Chernihiv and Buda Hospital in the Kharkiv region. Much-needed humanitarian aid was delivered to Ovruch, Kharkiv and Chernihiv.

Your community supported the homeless before the war. How are you organising your solidarity work at this time?

Our day-to-day solidarity work continues despite it all, and we are helping everyone who needs it. We distributed around 800 lunches on the streets in April, in addition to the work done at the social centre. We are also helping the residents of Lviv who are hosting displaced people by providing bedding, mattresses, pushchairs, etc.

[Read more...](#)

Exchange of practices

Our farming and food practices in Europe

17-18 September 2022 - Iasi, Romania

Let's meet in Romania for this new exchange of practices hosted by Emmaus Iasi!

Gelu, Leila, Florin and the Iasi companions will be delighted to share their unique experience of growing and selling field crops and of livestock farming. They would also like to learn from participants in order to develop their market gardening business, as this exchange of practices will provide an opportunity to learn from each other the many farming skills applied in our movement.

Apart from the highly-practical exchange of practices, we have also scheduled time to discuss the food issues facing our groups and the way in which farming can help improve the food and health of companions. Fabien from Emmaus Pamiers in France will come to share his experience with us.

The meeting will also enable a European farming discussion group to be set up. Please let us know if there are any specific questions that you wish to tackle: eve.poulteau@emmaus-europe.org

Please contact Marie by 31 July if you wish to register: marie.tixier@emmaus-europe.org

Preliminary practical information

- Arrival date: 16 September 2022
- Departure date: 18 September evening or 19 September 2022

- Languages: French and English
- Maximum number of participants: 15 (open to all Emmaus stakeholders)
- Registration deadline: as soon as possible and by 31 July 2022 at the latest (if spaces remain).

European action

European Social Economy Summit in Strasbourg



Roundtable in Strasbourg, © Emmaus Europe

Emmaus Europe held a roundtable with its circular economy partners to coincide with the release of the European Action Plan for the Social Economy presented at the 5-6 May summit.

With RREUSE, Emmaus France, ENVIE Federation, City of Paris and Les Canaux, Emmaus Europe reiterated the vital role played by social economy stakeholders in the circular economy. As reuse pioneers, our organisations create more jobs than all the other stakeholders in the same reuse sector, according to a [French study by Ademe](#).

However, they are now facing competition from the second-hand market, partly because of European waste sorting regulations, but primarily because of unremitting global overproduction and the abolition of import quotas in the early 2000s. We stressed the importance of developing European regulations to limit overproduction and overconsumption, notably by working upstream on product repairability. We also suggested carving out a bigger space for social economy stakeholders and moving away from the ethos of competing with non-social enterprises.

[Read more...](#)

Spotlight on...

Georgia: Emmaus Geo is supporting refugees



Refugees from Mariupol in front of Emmaus Geo's shop, © Emmaus Geo

The war in Ukraine has triggered a wave of solidarity in Europe and around the world. The Emmaus groups located in the countries neighbouring Ukraine are helping refugees, with each group running initiatives that draw on their know-how. This month, we are showcasing the work of Emmaus Geo, in Georgia.

Since it was founded, Emmaus Geo has been working with the Georgians displaced following the annexation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russia in 2008. Working in several locations in the Tbilisi suburbs, on the brownfield sites where many displaced people have settled, Emmaus Geo hands out clothing, hot meals and food. This Emmaus group also helps them with their administrative and legal formalities.

Since late February, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Emmaus Geo has been

doing the same work with Ukrainians fleeing the fighting: handing out crockery, clothing (over 500kg since early March), beds for children, and food. Thanks to Emmaus Europe's Ukraine Fund, the association is going to be able to provide over 500 hygiene kits for refugees.

At the present time, over 30,000 people from Ukraine have taken refuge in Georgia, and roughly 500 new people arrive every day. They travel by plane or car, via Poland, Armenia, Austria or Turkey, in the main

[Read more...](#)

Emmaus Movement Solidarity

Ukraine Fund

Update and details about support provided

In April, we provided an update about the overall state of the Ukraine Fund and the initiatives supported thanks to your donations. As of mid-April, the fund contained €661,000. By mid-May, donations totalled €773,000, notably thanks to the many solidarity sales run by groups. A massive “thank you” for your support!

Emmaus Europe has already transferred over €150,000 to our groups located in Ukraine (over €70,000), Poland (approximately €45,000), Romania (€10,900), Croatia (€22,400) and Georgia (€5,135).

Supporting the construction of a social aid centre in Lviv



Social aid centre in Lviv, © Emmaüs Oselya

In late April, the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe approved funding for the construction of a new social centre in Oselya, using donations from the Ukraine Fund. The funding cannot exceed the sum of €200,000 (total budget of €290,000). Building work is scheduled to start in mid-2022, with the intention being for the centre to open in October or November 2022.

This support is in keeping with a desire to support the Ukrainians beyond the current emergency, with a medium and long-term focus. This new social centre will enable Emmaus Oselya to develop its work. The group's work with vulnerable communities is recognised and supported by Lviv City Council and the city's third sector organisations. In phase one, the *Social Aid Centre for Vulnerable and Homeless People* will support people displaced by the war. When phase one ends, the centre will enable Oselya to support and house homeless people, and will replace their current small day centre, which is too cramped and old to offer proper support.

If you would like more information about this social aid centre, please contact the EE secretariat or [Emmanuel](#), who will be able to answer any questions. This will also be an opportunity to provide more information about the new activities made possible by the construction of this centre.

Shipment to Ukraine: update on needs

In Poland, our groups continue to transport essential goods to Ukraine. In addition to their links with Nasha Khata and Oselya, Emmaus Rzeszow and Emmaus Lublin are sending humanitarian convoys to other associations in Ukraine. These convoys are made possible by the goods sent by our groups in Western Europe. Please help them to help.

In our first newsletter about the situation in Ukraine, we told you about the [main needs](#) of our Polish and Ukrainian groups.

These needs have barely changed.

In addition to the previously stated needs, the groups now also need non-perishable food items (tins, packs of water, powdered milk, etc.) to make up for supply shortages in Ukraine. If you require more information, please contact [Emmanuel](#).

Registration has started for the European summer camps

We are delighted to inform you that registration has opened for the summer camps in Italy! Four Italian groups will host camps this year. All the information is on [the dedicated page](#) on Emmaus Europe's website, so take a look!

Emmaus-IFS in Bosnia-Herzegovina is also opening registration for its summer camp to be held on 17-31 July. The registration link will be posted in May. If you want more information in the meantime, you can contact Mirela Ahmetbegovic at the following email address: mirela.ahmetbegovic@mfs-emmaus.ba

Contact details and information about Ukraine solidarity

Following the initial emergency situation, solidarity for Ukraine is up and running! If you want more detailed information about solidarity convoys or the situation in the various countries, please contact Emmanuel, the solidarity coordinator: emmanuel.rabourdin@emmaus-europe.org

Updates and a list of needs are regularly provided on the [Ukraine page in our members' area](#)



Copyright © 2022 Emmaus Europe, All rights reserved.

Emmaus Europe

47 avenue de la Résistance
93100 Montreuil
contact@emmaus-europe.org
[Website](#)

To unsubscribe, click [here](#)

