

THE EMMAUS OF TOMORROW

WHAT WILL BE THE ROLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR MOVEMENT ?

17 participants came to this event from 8 different European countries.

Nicola from Emmaus Italy gave a presentation to open the discussion. Italy has committed to mobilising young people thanks to Emmaus' values by financing Nicola's job. Nicola described the initiatives he has organised in high schools and universities across Italy: focusing on Emmaus' topics, working with young people during and after the summer camp events as well as maintaining relationships in the long term with people who come to the camp events. For example, young people who attend a camp event will then be involved in organising the event for the year after.

Martina and Tena from the Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (CNZD, Croatia) explained how their mentorship programme works, how they manage and organise volunteering at the centre (with a major focus on training which allows young people to then promote their experience amongst employers) and how they use modern technology to communicate with young people.

These presentations showed us that recruiting new volunteers, especially young people, is something which requires time and resources. A single recruitment initiative will not be enough, you must expect to have to send out reminders, to have to remobilise, to listen to people's expectations and to meet these expectations. This work can be done on the country level or by the individual groups, but specific staff or resources need to be assigned to recruiting new volunteers.

The open debate with the participants led us on to several other topics, including: how to adapt how we operate and the idea of launching new types of activities in order to meet the expectations of young people, the different forms of commitment offered by the groups (volunteering, staff positions, governance roles, work in the public interest, etc.), how to communicate and interest young people in Emmaus' model and values and, lastly, how to train, upskill and put more responsibility on the shoulders of young people. The idea of having people within Emmaus Europe focusing on this topic seemed to appeal to several of the participants. Nicolas from Emmaus Palermo is the first such contact person, so feel free to get in touch with him for any queries you may have. We hope to identify other contact people very soon!



WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THESE DISCUSSIONS

- That training people and giving them real responsibility helps them to upskill
- That we should offer flexibility in the working hours of our missions (evenings, weekends, etc.) and that, generally speaking, we should take into account the needs of young people
- That we should promote volunteering and its impact and thank our volunteers for their work
- That we should communicate far and wide, notably via the media and social media, to ensure that people are talking about us
- That involving young people in your activities first will help Emmaus' values become clearer in their minds
- That we should base ourselves on the desires and skills young people can offer in order to provide them with missions (possibly new missions) and roles which suit them
- That working directly with high schools and universities can help to reach out to young people
- That discussing the environment and human rights is a good way of getting young people interested, these are topics which help us to attract their attention
- That having young people in for internships, civic service (or other volunteering programmes) and work in the public interest can be a good way of getting people into the movement for the first time
- That we should inform young people of the rich diversity of Emmaus initiatives across the globe so that they can remain involved in the movement even if they move to a different region/ country
- That creating a group dynamic at the summer camp events allows you to remobilise young people to organise future events or for other initiatives. Once the group dynamic is there the group will then evolve in its own unique way