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## Emmaus in Europe

**emmaus****euROPE**

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

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## Editorial by Carina Aaltonen, President of Emmaus Europe

Dear friend,

I hosted a large group of people from another NGO visiting my Emmaus group some weeks ago. The guests were impressed by our work, the diversity of activities and the engagement of our staff, board members and volunteers. One of the visitors explained the difference between Emmaus and their association to her colleague: – At Emmaus, they are activists and passionate about the work – for us, it is just an ordinary job.

I am grateful for all of you who are passionate, engaged, and willing to take the extra steps needed to help us create this unique Emmaus spirit in various ways and different manners, no matter where you come from. To understand the differences and open our eyes and minds, we must meet and learn from each other. By inviting visitors to your group or making study visits, you can see your own activities from a new perspective and get inspiration on how to improve your work and do things in other ways. Exchanges are vital and can get you to realize that we are passionate activist for change – even if we might have forgotten that from time to time.

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then became a monthly publication with a view to developing the level of knowledge we have about the other European groups. We may increase the frequency of these publications in exceptional circumstances, as we did when the war broke out in Ukraine. Various articles from the newsletter are later published on our new website.

Thank you for reading the articles and being curious about what is happening in Emmaus in Europe. For me, it has always been important that Emmaus Europe is relevant and able to engage different people from all parts of the region. We cannot consistently and all the time please everyone, but often, one should find something interesting that tickles the curiosity, catches the eye, and gives new angles and information on different issues and perhaps inspires us to work better together.

How can we ensure that this newsletter ends up in the hands of as many people as possible? Well, we send the link out to many people and to many groups but please feel free to share it with others within your groups/countries/regions and let them know that they can also sign up for the newsletter by heading over to the [member's area of our website](#). Many of us are often rushed off our feet and we don't have much time to sit down and read but it is important to take a little bit of time to gain inspiration from others. If you wish to pass on our articles to others or if you have ideas for topics that you would like us to look into then please get in touch! You can contact us by email at [contact@emmaus-europe.org](mailto:contact@emmaus-europe.org).

I hope to see you in Iasi, Romania, at the Regional Assembly. If you can't attend, read more about the event on social media or in the following newsletters.

Yours always,

Carina



## Emmaus stories

### Knitting together a social and circular future for textiles

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Conference organised by RREUSE 22-23 June 2023, Berlin. Credit: RREUSE

**An interview with Yvette Gumbs, the national delegate for the Netherlands. Yvette represented Emmaus Europe at the conference organised by RREUSE on the urgent topic of textile waste and the impact that this has on the fashion industry.**

**Let's get started by talking about the current challenges in the textile market. What do you think are the main problems we are currently facing with regards to the textile industry?**

The textile market is facing significant challenges in terms of sustainability and waste management. One of the main problems is the linear nature of this industry: textiles are produced, used and then thrown away at breakneck speed. Thus huge amounts of textile waste are produced and a significant proportion of these textiles end up being sent for incineration or to landfill sites.

Another challenge is the social impact of the textile industry, especially in manufacturing for fast fashion. In several regions across the globe working conditions are poor, wages are low and workers' rights are often violated. We must solve these problems in order to build a fair and sustainable future for the textile sector.

**Given the complexity of these challenges, how can we move towards a more circular and responsible textile industry in terms of its social impact?**

The transition towards a more circular and socially-responsible textile industry requires a multifaceted approach with the involvement of several stakeholders. First of all we must promote the adoption of more circular and socially-oriented business models amongst textile producers. They may need to focus on producing less in order to produce better as well as implementing new practices such as repairing items and taking into account the end of life when designing pieces.

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adopt more responsible behaviours such as purchasing second-hand clothing or renting clothing.

[Read more...](#)

## European action

### Solidarity with those who arrived in Lampedusa



Lampedusa, picture taken in front of the hotspot, September 14, 2023. Credit: Maldusa

Following the arrival of a record number of people on the move in Lampedusa, civil society, including Emmaus Europe, expresses in a statement its deep concern at the security response of European states, the crisis of reception, and reaffirms its solidarity with people on the move arriving in Europe.

**Read the statement**

### Statement made alongside Migreurop

**The European Union should stop obstructing the efforts made by civilian ships to save people at sea.**

Since the start of 2023 the Italian authorities have detained eight sea rescue vessels in the Mediterranean that belong to NGOs. This has led to a total loss of 140 days of operations

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detained.

This situation has been caused by the implementation of a new law in Italy that has tightened the requirements for such ships and that grants the authorities the right to order ships to port and to detain them. These obstacles to humanitarian action are part of a long history in Italy of criminalising and obstructing civilian search and rescue activities.

Alongside the Migreurop network (that Emmaus Europe is a part of) and 55 other organisations, we are launching an appeal to the EU and its member states to bring an end to the detention and criminalisation of these ships. We ask the EU to respect international maritime law, to ensure that these laws are being respected for search and rescue operations at sea and to guarantee the respect of human rights as well as the principles of the rule of law. The EU must urgently establish legal and safe migration corridors.

**[Read the statement](#)**

## **New Migreurop publication Increased criminalisation of migrants in Europe**



Document on 'Preventing migrations: dissuasion and repression', Migreurop, July 2023 – Credit: Migreurop

Within Emmaus Europe many of our members are affected by what is known as the “crime of solidarity”. This has been the case for Loïc Le Dall, the Chair of Emmaus Roya, who will be telling his story at our general assembly in October. If you would like to find out more about this aspect of European migration policy then we encourage you to read the recent publication by Migreurop.

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Adopting this objective means that Europe never really questions the impact of closing its borders, focusing instead on “protecting” the victims from the “smugglers”. But in reality this approach is used to dissuade and condemn both exiled persons and those who support them. NGOs that help migrant persons are indeed targeted, but it is people on the move who suffer the most because of this approach. In reality this strategy widens the definition of a “smuggler” in order to repress any form of solidarity, between exiled persons themselves or from people who come to their aid.

**[Read the document \(in French\)](#)**

## **Housing exclusion in Europe 2023 report by the Abbe Pierre Foundation and FEANTSA**

The Abbé Pierre Foundation and FEANTSA recently published their annual report on housing exclusion in Europe. The report shows that homelessness has been on the rise in the majority of European countries, with the exception of four countries that have implemented “Housing First” policies.

In 2023, 895,000 people were homeless in Europe (an estimate based on fragmented data and which only takes into account the most visible forms of housing exclusion).

This year’s version of the report goes into more detail on undignified housing in Europe, highlighting the vulnerable conditions that over 20 million people have to deal with (this figure is also on the rise).

**[Read the report](#)**



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## Welcome Manon!

We are delighted to announce that our team is expanding with the arrival of Manon Gaham in late August. Manon will be taking on the role of Awareness Raising and Advocacy Officer. Manon is young and dynamic and she already has a lot of experience! During the internships and the first roles she has carried out she has learned a lot about Europe's mechanisms on migration from Green Party MEP Damien Carême and from our partners at Migreurop. She also learned a lot about different topics as part of the Advocacy Department of the European Youth Forum. So, with European elections scheduled for 2024, Manon's arrival is a timely one indeed!

## Spotlight on...

### This was more than just a football tournament



Many fans came to watch their favourite teams play. Credit: Emmaüs Europe

**In July Emmaus Europe and IFS-Emmaus organised the first edition of the Emmaus Football Championship for Peace and Human Rights in Srebrenica. Touching**

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**from 17 groups in 13 different countries. They reflected the diversity of Emmaus in Europe.**

*“We had a good time over there,”* says Gusti, a companion who has been living in the Emmaus Cabries community for 4 years. He signed up for the event in order to play football and to learn more about the Emmaus movement across Europe, but he did not expect to get so emotional when listening to people’s stories and whilst attending a conference on non-violence, *“it was the first time I had ever been to a meeting like that. The content was really interesting and I learned a lot...Listening to Dzile and Abdul almost brought me to tears. I will never forget those moments.”*

The stories of Dzile, who escaped the Srebrenica genocide, and Abdul, an Afghan refugee who is now a photographer, were indeed amongst the most touching moments in the agenda of this event on building peace and respecting human rights.

Zizou, a former companion who has now become a group leader in Cabries, agrees with Gusti, *“I remember hearing about the war in Yugoslavia on TV and so to find myself in Srebrenica over 20 years later it was...emotional.”* When we asked him what he thought of the stories of Dzile and Abdul, Zizou was unable to find the words to express himself, he was overcome with emotion. What he did outline was the importance of meeting people and the fun he had when playing football, *“after the first day we had already become good friends and that was thanks to the football games. There were people from different age groups and cultures, who spoke several different languages...events like this are just amazing!”*

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**See the photos**



## **Emmaus Movement solidarity**

**Call for solidarity**

**Emmaus Satu Mare needs your support!**



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The roof of Emmaus Satu Mare's second hand shop that was torn off during a storm on 29 August 2023. Credit: Emmaus Satu Mare

On 29 August a **powerful storm ripped the roof off the shop of the Emmaus Satu Mare** group in Romania. The reactivity of the group and of its workers, who worked for 12 hours without stopping, helped to save the building's structure and to reduce the damage caused to the inside of the building. This storm was unprecedented in its intensity and also caused [significant damage](#) across the city. The town hall estimates that 10% of roofs in the city were ripped off or damaged due to the high winds.

Emmaus Europe and Emmaus Satu Mare are calling upon you to offer solidarity! The cost of the work is **€12,000 for 350m2 of roofing** and the group's insurance will only cover around €2,000.

Emmaus Europe has committed to providing the group with **€5,000** via the regional Emergency Fund which was set up by Emmaus International and which is managed by Emmaus Europe. This fund is intended for use following natural catastrophes or to support groups who are operating in difficult political contexts.

**The group thus requires a further €5,000 to finish paying for the work done on the roof.**

If you would like to answer this appeal then you can send a bank transfer to Emmaus Europe with the reference '**Regional emergency fund – Emmaus Europe**'. In case we collect more funds than required to cover the costs of the work done on the roof, the surplus amount will be kept to deal with other similar emergencies in Europe. Thanks for your trust and support.

### **Emmaus Europe's bank account details**

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We talked to you about this back in late June and now they've done it! A team from Emmaus Synergie travelled to the summer camp held by IFS-Emmaus in Bosnia-Herzegovina to spend 10 unforgettable days with around 100 young people from all across Europe!

Instead of trying to sum up the event with words, you can take a look at the adventures they had in video form (with music of course!).



## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF EMMAUS EUROPE

24-27 October 2023 - Iași, Romania

Do you have any questions? Do you need more information? You can find all of the documents for this event on the [member's area of our website](#) and feel free to get in touch with Théo if you need to: [theo.robin@emmaus-europe.org](mailto:theo.robin@emmaus-europe.org).



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