



MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE OF EMMAÜS EUROPE

9 -10 DECEMBER 2022 - MONTREUIL, FRANCE

emmaüs

EUROPE

PRESENT

Carina Aaltonen (president), Aurore Querel (secretary), Jean-Philippe Légaut (treasurer), Leila Thouret, Eduardo Sanchez, and Sabina Arnaut-Jahic.

EUROPE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

Eve Poulteau (chief executive), Emmanuel Rabourdin (solidarity coordinator), Véronica Acevedo Caro (admin and finance assistant).

Preamble
Carina Aaltonen

Last meeting in Lublin, for the RCEE. It is good to hear that the social centre will open on 6 January. It is a real success.

Last December, we took the decision to hire a new employee to work on advocacy and awareness raising. Camille Bellanger will join us on 1 February. She has just taken part in the Brussels conference where she made a big impression.

We are going to begin 2023 by sending out a survey to the groups to obtain more information about the people involved in Emmaus Europe.

The Brussels meeting about migrant reception in Europe was very interesting and a real success, with 11 countries represented and 50 participants in total. We went to the European Parliament and met with three MEPs specialising in migration. They spoke to us about the efforts they are making on the new Migration and Asylum Pact, and violence on Europe's borders.

A big thank-you also to our interpreter colleagues from Emmaus International, and to Emma and Victoria for their last-minute help.

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION / DEBATE	CONCLUSIONS / DECISIONS
<p>1. Word of welcome and approval of the minutes from the last meeting</p>	<p><i>Approval of the minutes from the last meeting: summary of decisions from our last videoconference on 22 September.</i></p>	<p><i>The executive unanimously approved the minutes of the last meeting.</i></p>
<p>2. Migration: feedback from the meeting and future initiatives</p>	<p><i>Leila: The meeting was a visible success, as it enabled very in-depth discussions in small groups.</i> <i>Day one, which followed migrants' journeys and the different migration routes, interspersed with explanations from Euromed and Migreurop, was very dynamic. It made us realise about the difficulty of migration routes, with the different sections becoming ever more difficult. Everyone enjoyed day one, despite the amount of information provided. It was a real success.</i> <i>It was followed by language-based workshops. They generated lots of ideas. Interpreting into all the languages was provided so that participants could vote on the best proposals.</i> <i>The session at the European Parliament was short but very impressive.</i></p> <p><i>Carina: Regarding the Migration & Asylum Pact:</i></p>	<p><i>A large number of ideas were generated in Brussels.</i></p> <p><i>Broad action areas are already emerging: Continue working on raising citizen awareness via Emmaus charity shops and communities, and how EE can step this up with personal accounts and events, such as the international days. Prepare proposed meetings and</i></p>

the Council and Parliament representatives will not be able to reach an agreement on a text before the end of the year, and then the various presidencies will be very right wing. The text needs to be approved in late 2023 or early 2024 under the Spanish or Belgian presidency.

The agreement will be no better than the last one; the main thrust is outsourcing and moving migrants as far as possible from Europe's borders.

Eve: When discussing with the MEPs who champion our ideas what Emmaus could do to help change these unfair practices and laws, they said that through its work and local roots Emmaus can help change people's views of migration and change the narrative.

Try to ensure that migration is not a central issue at elections.

Carina: We have emphasized that Europe's population is ageing, and migrants' usefulness in the future, without however espousing a utilitarian vision of migration, this service provided by migrants should be stressed.

We are also going to consider the possibility of taking legal action against a country in the international courts to denounce violations of international law.

Overview of the proposals from the workshops:

English-speaking group

- Change people's mindsets about migrants to prevent them voting for populist parties. Highlight positive examples of migration.*
- Posters are not translated into Arabic, which would be useful for the Emmaus stores in Italy, where customers speak Arabic. The posters may not be suited to the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina or elsewhere.*
- Communicate about migrants' life stories, use storytelling: posters, videos.*
- Deliver political training. Use Emmaus Recife's knowledge (Brazil) and invite them to the assembly to see how they set about this training.*
- Local level: lots of ideas about inviting people to take part, make use of resources in daily life (such as "Nobody is illegal").*
- Set up information centres in our Emmaus stores, making use of retired social workers, to help migrants and asylum seekers who could come to obtain information and advice.*

initiatives before the EU elections, involving the groups. Bring alive our European partnerships and join forces with advocacy organisations (notably European Council on Refugees and Exiles [ECRE], alliance of associations with whom the MEPS we met work to devise amendments).

We will go into greater detail in order to make tangible proposals at the next RCEE.

→ In the meantime, examine the option of re-joining the ECRE and of taking legal action in order to discuss the topic at the RCEE.

- *Asylum seekers and people without leave to remain should also be able to work in our groups in the rest of Europe and in France (where companions have a special state-recognised status): is volunteering an option?*
- *Directly give a voice to migrants? How? Some have leave to remain, so they can travel around in order to tell their stories.*

French-speaking group

- *Suggest to EI that it works with the OUC to reactivate initiatives campaigning for universal citizenship. At least in the Emmaus groups everyone could have a means of feeling that they are universal citizens – passport.*
- *Change people's views, get people to tell their stories. In France, there is a mental block about storytelling, but it could be worthwhile. Also, the option of not only speaking about people's life stories, but also giving migrants' opinions on different issues, on their current jobs, on what they contribute.*
- *Presidential election, or other elections (2024 EU elections): work with companions with difficult migration experiences, and propose that they meet the candidates face-to-face.*
- *How to draw on the positive welcome given to the Ukrainians to show that this is possible. Crossovers between Ukrainians and Sudanese? People who are fleeing war and have found refuge in Europe.*
- *Use outdoor spaces to attract people and reach out to new people.*
- *Develop our advocacy with points of contact in Brussels.*
- *Set up a travelling caravan, and maybe have a touring exhibition? Instead, maybe an Emmaus caravan touring the country, organising meetings...*

Spanish-speaking group

Emmaus examples to be showcased:

- *Examples of positive shared lives.*
- *Training contract with a salary/grant.*
- *Welcome migrants into the community, and sign a pre-contractual agreement to get their situations regularised.*
- *Special reconciliation measures taking into consideration gender issues.*
- *Support family reunification processes.*
- *Work on expectations of migration, and grief/post-trauma.*
- *Help migrants integrate into the world of work.*

Awareness-raising ideas:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster change: citizen mobilisation (petitions etc), denounce unlawful situations, get in touch with groups in the regions of origin, analyse the socio-political and economic circumstances in countries of origin. - Join in all the campaigns that fit with our struggles. - Set up a political school. - The European “Open Door” campaign. 	
<p>3. EAPN /RREUSE / Donations campaign</p>	<p>EAPN Carina and Eve took part on 5 December in a meeting of the anti-poverty network of which we are members (EAPN). The network has been experiencing difficulties since the pandemic and the departure of its previous director. EAPN also has financial problems. When EAPN was formed in the 1990s, there were no other networks, but there are now several, and there are associations whose advocacy is more audible.</p> <p>EAPN has national platforms in several countries. They feed back to the European level. Other associations are only Europe-level members (such as EE and FEANTSA for homelessness, or Euro Diaconia and the European Federation of Food Banks, for instance). It is challenging for us to carve out a place, as we only work at the European level. The European organisations have not been consulted as much over the past few years, and the network has primarily been drawing on its national organisations.</p> <p>How can we be more involved in the network at the European level? That was the purpose of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → EAPN is going to make proposals on greater involvement for the regional organisations (notably on the day when people living in poverty tell their stories). → EAPN is going to send us some policy proposals. → A review of the first year following the Porto Social Summit will be arranged in April. <hr/> <p>RREUSE: We have an excellent partnership relationship with RREUSE. Emmaus members are regularly invited to represent RREUSE. For instance, Carina was</p>	<p>Plan to get more involved with EAPN, notably their conference in late April in Porto, and in meetings of people living in poverty.</p> <p>Examine whether it would be worthwhile for EE to join other collectives, such as FEANTSA.</p> <p>RREUSE: monitor VAT and the preparing for reuse rate planned for 2025 + digital.</p> <p>Donate to Emmaus campaign: monitor EF’s campaign to work out how to achieve this.</p>

invited to Vienna in November to take part in a roundtable about the issues involved in bringing social enterprises into the digital era.
On the other hand, we lack the resources to monitor the good advocacy work undertaken by RREUSE and liaise with the countries: this needs to be stepped up with Camille's arrival.

Topics to monitor in 2023

VAT: The European States must take a decision on favourable rates for waste management-related business sectors. We will need to see over the coming months how to support the Emmaus organisations so that they can obtain a favourable rate and not face even more competition from businesses in this sector. In particular, associations with VAT exemptions in many countries must not be negatively impacted by this decision. Discussions on this topic have already advanced with EF. In Spain, AERESS is monitoring the issue, and the Fundación Social has already undertaken formalities in the Basque Country.

Preparing for reuse rate to be achieved across Europe for waste management: Eduardo reminded the meeting that it was an important aspect of the waste directive and that countries must achieve 55% of waste being prepared for reuse and recycling in 2025: see what the situation is with RREUSE and check if the countries need support to continue focusing on reuse and then preparation for reuse, rather than recycling.

Following the Vienna conference, Carina also stressed that we need to continue monitoring **digital** (with Label & Connect in particular).

Donate to Emmaus campaign

Across Europe people are preferring to resell or throw away unwanted items rather than donate them. We are facing a drop in the quality of donations, also caused by poor quality products. We felt that a campaign to further raise awareness about Emmaus' work and to encourage donations from a solidarity, environmental and combating overconsumption perspective would enable us to take action on several fronts at the same time.

	<p><i>EF identified this issue a long time ago. They approved a budget for a national campaign on donating to Emmaus, and worked with a communications agency. This campaign could be used to a greater or lesser extent at the European level. At the present time, EF is just at the early stages:</i></p> <p><i>Strategic thinking, KEY CONCEPT: “Emmaüs, la seconde main, en mieux ” (Emmaus – doing second hand better)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>→ Enables people to earn a living.</i> <i>→ Society: solidarity, sharing, mutual support, reintegration</i> <i>→ Environment: circular economy, reuse</i> <i>→ Self-esteem: pride of donating, rewarding alternative.</i> <p><i>Two phases, single campaign: reiterate what Emmaus is all about “Why not donate it to Emmaus?”</i></p> <p><i>Other component: ambassadors, films etc.</i></p> <p><i>Track the progress of the campaign and suggest to the NDs that they check whether all or some of the campaign could interest their countries, and how to disseminate it at EE level.</i></p>	
<p>4. Strategic plan</p>	<p><i>The executive addressed the pending issues and a new version will be submitted to the next executive before the March RCEE. That meeting should rubberstamp the version to be sent to the groups for amendments.</i></p> <p><i>First question: who does the strategic plan belong to? The groups? Emmaus Europe?</i></p> <p><i>What is our aim? Develop, accompany, or support.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>→ It belongs to Emmaus Europe. We are developing a strategic plan for EE. National solutions need to be implemented at the national level, and local ones at the local level.</i> <i>→ Accompany and support the groups, undertake European exchanges, but leave them to implement at the local level.</i> <p><i>Differentiate between the levels of proposal: Keep general objectives that provide directions at the national and local level, as well as the European level.</i></p>	<p><i>Alongside the strategic plan discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- It is important that people can find somewhere on the website all the newsletters + articles arranged in sections.</i> <i>- Potential exchanges of practices topic for the coming years: poverty and prison/prison and poverty.</i>

	<p>For the proposals, group together what can be done by EE. Keep some at national and local level which could be supplemented by GA workshops by providing examples like for the last strategic plan.</p>	
<p>5. Solidarity: 2023 projects + Ukraine Fund + Transition Fund + Alternatives to the spring collectives</p>	<p><u>UKRAINE</u> The executive requested that Nasha Khata submits a statement of actual expenditure since March 2022 based on Oselya's model to enable their budget to be monitored and report back to the donor Emmaus groups.</p> <p>Nasha Khata needs a 20kW generator to cope with the endless power outages. A decision was taken to wait until the group has been visited before deciding, and consider what would best fit their needs, without taking urgent action. Eve will get back in touch with the head of Caritas Europe to find out more about their links with Nasha Khata and coordinate about Ukraine.</p> <p><u>Visit to Ukraine</u> The opening of Oselya's new social centre is planned for 6 January. The group has invited members, partners and beneficiaries to the opening ceremony. The visit will enable us to see Nasha Khata too. Five exec and team members will take part: Carina, Jean-Philippe, Leïla, Eve and Emmanuel.</p> <p><u>2023 solidarity projects</u> Three projects were submitted for the 2023 ESP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CNZD: purchase of a seven-seater vehicle as part of their work with Ukrainian refugees. Unanimously approved and covered by the Ukraine Fund. - Emmaus-ISF: funding for external constructions at the Ensemble house, complex located at Pale Farm. The executive did not approve this project. - Emmaus Forbach: funding for an international work camp bringing together young people from Algeria, Burkina Faso, France and Romania. The executive did not approve the project in its current state. We will get in touch with Emmaus International to see if EI could fund the project, if the project is adjusted to fit the international work camp criteria. </p> <p>CNZD</p>	<p>Summary of the decisions taken since March 2022 on funding groups in Ukraine and Poland: the exec unanimously approved these decisions.</p> <p>2023 ESP CNZD The exec unanimously approved the purchase of a seven-seater vehicle so that the group can work with Ukrainian refugees located far from the urban centres. Amount: €10K from the Ukraine Fund.</p> <p>Emmaus-ISF: The application for funding to build the external sections of the Ensemble House was turned down.</p> <p>Emmaus Forbach: The application for funding to organise a youth camp in Romania was turned down. Discussions need to be started with EI to find out if they are interested in developing this project in a different way.</p>

The project was approved and funding of €10K will be provided. As this project involves Ukrainian refugees, it was suggested that it should be funded using the Ukraine Fund, so as not to use international solidarity funding.

However, as it involves a purchase that could be of use to the group after the end of its work with the Ukrainian refugees, the exec felt that this project fitted the ESP criteria: CNZD will therefore not be able to apply to the solidarity programmes until 2024 (criterion of a two-year gap between two solidarity applications).

Emmaus-ISF

Although the project is very interesting and innovative, the EE exec felt that it does not meet the objectives of the ESP, and that it is difficult to ask the companions to fund the construction of a “high-end” sports and tourist complex even if it would generate income for the group. The exec felt that the ISF could secure funding elsewhere to develop this activity.

Emmaus Forbach

Despite the fact that the basic idea is excellent, the exec did not approve the international work camp project in its current state, on several grounds:

- The Emmaus movement is not really involved and included in this planned camp, which would only be open to a few people.
- The cost (€35K) is too high for its one-off impact: two weeks of summer camp.
- This type of project was already supported in the past by Forbach/Targju Jiu.
- The schedule is unfeasible: even if the project was given the green light, the funds would only be available in late 2023.

However, the exec will mention the project to EI, as it might be interested if the project could be amended so that it fits the international work camp criteria open to all the Emmaus groups.

Emmaus Europe collectives in spring? (The RAEE in the autumn will prevent the collectives from being held as normal)

- Romania: the EE GA will be a meeting place replacing the Romania Collective.
- South-East Europe: the organisation of the Emmaus Football Cup during the summer could replace the SEE collective, highlighting the issues in this sub-region for new groups, and enabling the movement’s companions to meet up.

	<p><i>Poland-Ukraine: the plan is to discuss the matter with the groups on the ground, and try to replace the meeting with an exchange of practices in spring 2023. Contact the groups to identify a worthwhile subject that could interest new groups too. (Woodworking, restoring furniture): <u>a decision needs to be taken by early March.</u></i></p>	
<p>6. 2023 regional assembly: Agenda</p>	<p><i>The RAEE preliminary programme is set to be sent out just after the RCEE.</i></p> <p>Mandatory sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Extraordinary GA for the statutes.</i> - <i>Activity report for the past four years.</i> - <i>Strategic plan discussion.</i> - <i>CEI and presidential elections.</i> <p>Themed roundtables</p> <p>Potential themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Climate justice</i> - <i>Youth and renewal</i> - <i>Building peace and combatting racism and discrimination.</i> - <i>The next 70 years: 70th anniversary in 2024, how do we picture ourselves in the future?</i> <p>➔ <i>Assembly for the future, rather than the past.</i></p> <p>Potential speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Post-growth: Timothée Parrique</i> - <i>We mentioned the Jesuit researcher: Gael Giraud, but his latest book is highly controversial.</i> <p><i>Carina, Jesolo, Italy: workshops in which the groups could share their experiences and fresh ideas. Particularly about IGA: the opportunity to learn was missing in Uruguay, not enough time to find out about each other's work.</i></p> <p>Workshop ideas</p> <p><i>Also talk about political training, and the school set up in Recife.</i></p> <p><i>India: A lot of work with young people on environmental justice.</i></p> <p><i>Africa: Representatives?</i></p> <p><i>Do not have a world assembly, but equally demonstrate that Europe is not alone.</i></p>	<p><i>OK to link the strategic plan to the workshops like in San Sebastian in order to enable us to consider local transposition and draw inspiration from the other groups' ideas.</i></p> <p><i>Tote bag: Satu Mare is starting to make bags using recycled cloth, ask them for a quote.</i></p>

Companions, participation: how culture can be a work tool in the groups, for community life...

Workshops to prepare campaigns on overconsumption, or handing over to the new generations.

New initiatives, such as Fermes de Moyembrie (they work with soon-to-be released prisoners) and Emmaus Connect (digital exclusion).

1 ¼ days for the mandatory parts.

BUT – example of the strategic plan: not much interaction with the floor.

Work on stimulating the floor with regard to the strategic plan. Was two hours at the last assembly not enough?

Should the workshops be disconnected from these discussions?

Aurore: Link the workshops to the strategic plan to obtain some substance. Be mindful about not having an overly rigid strategic plan leaving no room for amendments.

Carina: The strategic plan already has four general topics. Let's focus on these four topics, and send out this plan before the RAEE. Option of suggesting amendments before the meeting.

See how these ideas could be rolled out locally in our groups at the workshops?

Could Emmaus members present their initiatives and then experts could go into greater depth about these topics? Like the Brussels format.

Inaugural plenary session on the major issues: poverty, climate, change for the future, and then smaller sessions based on that?

Intro, workshops, strategic plan, conclusion?

San Sebastian: Three roundtables were possible.

	<p><i>Eduardo: We could envisage workshops based on the objectives for each strategic plan topic.</i></p>	
<p>7. Actual 2022 accounts and 2023 budget</p>	<p>Presentation and discussion of the 2023 budget <i>Payroll increase, including Camille’s wages, and an intern for the RAEE. We are awaiting confirmation from the chartered accountant with regard to the employer social security costs.</i></p> <p>Interpreter reimbursement <i>It is becoming increasingly difficult to find interpreters, several charities have started reimbursing volunteer interpreters, and inflation is affecting them too. EI/EE proposal to reimburse (at least a little) the interpreters for the online meetings, as other charities do: €50 per hour online. They tend to work for 2.5 hours. This figure has been included in the 2023 budget.</i></p> <p><i>Membership dues: forecast to increase because of the RAEE (late payment of previous years’ dues).</i></p> <p><i>In spring, an in-person exchange of practices will take place in Poland, unless the war has ended, in which case we could potentially hold a collective meeting in Ukraine. However, we cannot do both. Plan for a budget of €4K if in Poland, and €4.5K if in Ukraine.</i></p> <p><i>ISF Emmaus Football Cup – allocate roughly €10K to support this event.</i></p> <p><i>Estimated cost of trial membership visit to Georgia, and meeting with groups in the Netherlands and Switzerland.</i> <i>Sweden to sort out problems, and Portugal to be added to the budget, as well as the trip to Ukraine in January.</i></p> <p>Erasmus +: <i>European fund for travel and European gatherings. We could set up an exchange of practices programme.</i> <i>Schedule: February if between two countries, or March or October for several countries.</i></p>	<p><i>The exec agreed that from now on interpreters will be paid an hourly rate of €50 for online meetings. They will not be reimbursed for in-person meetings.</i></p> <p><i>The exec agreed that an Emmaus Europe football cup should be organised in support of human rights and peace in Bosnia next summer.</i> <i>€10,000 allocated in the budget, and Sabina is preparing a proposal to put to the RCEE along with Emmanuel.</i></p> <p><i>Work out whether to apply to the Erasmus+ fund, preferably in 2024, to fund exchanges of practices.</i></p> <p><i>The exec decided on a 3% pay increase from January.</i> <i>Lunch vouchers will be increased from €8 to €9 in January.</i> <i>An extra wage share bonus of:</i> <i>€800 for the median salaries (Marie and Manu), €900 for</i></p>

	<p>OK to utilise European funds for exchanges of practices (preferably 2024 because there is not much time to put together an application in time for 2023)?</p> <p>→ OK, work out the working time involved and see if an additional person will be needed to coordinate it, some of the funding could be used to pay their wages.</p>	<p>the lowest (Véronica) and €700 for the highest (Eve).</p>
<p>8. Agenda for the next RCEE</p>	<p>Approval of the accounts 2023 budget Major agenda item on the RAEE – RAEE documents, preliminary programme. Strategic plan. Amendments to the statutes</p> <p>Detail the 2023 initiatives. Present the new networks in which we could get involved. Prepare for the CEI elections – prepare all the documents, including the candidacy documents. Explain that groups must pay for representative travel, without discouraging people from standing for election. Rework the candidacy document.</p>	
<p>9. Other items and 2023 schedule</p>		<p>The schedule for the first six months of 2023 was unanimously approved.</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