



# MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF EMMAÜS EUROPE

## 21-23 APRIL 2022 – CISP MAURICE RAVEL

emmaüs

EUROPE

### **PRESENT: 23 VOTERS**

Carina Aaltonen, Sabina Arnaut-Jahic, Marie-France Bedleem, Julio De La Granja, Maryse Faure, Tony Ferrier, Jose Maria Garcia Bresó, Michael Hudson, Anu Lähde, Serena Lemmens, Aurore Querel, Grigory Semenchuk, Amanda Stekly, Maria-Luisa Testori, Leïla Thouret, Jérémie Urdy, Gelu Nichitel, Eduardo Sanchez, Pierre-Yves Lenglard, Christian Calmejane, and Jean-Philippe Légaut (treasurer).

### **GUESTS**

Patrick Atohoun, Nathalie Pere-Marzano, Anaïs Gournay, Stéphane Melchiorri, and Hélène Perrot.

### **EUROPE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT**

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

### **APOLOGIES RECEIVED**

Rosa Gil Elorduy and Virginia Tallone.

<b>Preamble</b>	<p>Carina took the floor to open the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe (RCEE). She stated that the meeting would review events of the past two years, during which we only met virtually. In addition to the start of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine started on 24 February, and this morning we will continue discussing this difficult situation.</p> <p>Sabina, Tomislav, Grigory and Amanda will join us remotely for the first morning. The absentees were excused: Martha, Jos, Eduardo, Charlotte, Rosa, Virginia (who has resigned from her post as Italy national delegate; Maria Luisa is her temporary replacement). We are welcoming Patrick to the meeting. Emmaus International is getting ready for the eagerly-awaited world assembly, which will be held in a few weeks' time.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION / DEBATE	CONCLUSIONS   DECISIONS
<b>1. Approval of the minutes</b>		The minutes of the previous RCEE were unanimously approved.
<b>2. Update on the situation in Ukraine and in the countries directly impacted by the war and refugee reception</b>	<p>Carina reviewed the initiatives set up by Emmaus Europe: joint press releases with EI, letter sent to the Presidents of the European Commission and European Parliament, creation of the Ukraine support fund, etc. Grigory will speak about the situation in Ukraine, and a review of what has been done by Emmaus; the challenges and future prospects will be made during the morning.</p> <p>Grigory, the Ukraine national delegate, took the floor.  <i>I am delighted to see you all, despite it being via ZOOM. The all-out war in Ukraine has been going on for 57 days. Approximately 3,000 Ukrainian soldiers and over 5,000 civilians, including 206 children, have been killed over this period. The Russian occupier has lost close to 21,000 soldiers. These are rough statistics because it is impossible to identify those killed in areas where fighting continues.</i>  <i>Over 5 million Ukrainians have left the country, and 6.5 million are internally displaced. There is significant damage, to the tune of \$85 billion. Ukraine has also sustained economic losses: \$600 billion. Half the country, 300,000km2, needs demining. These mines could still be there in 40 years' time, so this heralds future difficulties.</i>  <i>Reconstruction has got underway in Kyiv and Chernihiv, which have been liberated from the occupying Russian forces. Another good piece of news: over 1 million people have returned to Ukraine since the war started.</i>  <i>However, acts of genocide have been perpetrated in Bucha, although they have not been declared as such: over 420 people (men, women and children) were buried in mass graves, shot in the head, having been tortured and raped. Numerous war crimes have been committed</i></p>	<p>Grigory's statement about the situation in Ukraine was transcribed in full. His statement led to a discussion between the RC members about the impact of the war in Ukraine on countries in Eastern Europe in particular, as well as the long-term impact of this war.</p> <p>It also raises issues with regard to our model (income-generating and solidarity), our way of living out solidarity at the international level, and the strategy that should be adopted by the movement in this type of crisis.</p>

*across all the areas in which there is fighting. It is estimated that 1/10 of Ukrainian women have been raped.*

*Mariupol, under siege since the first week of the war, is on the brink of a humanitarian disaster. The city's total population has dropped from 500,000 to 150,000 inhabitants. 90% of the buildings have been destroyed. Those left have no access to medication or food, and the authorities estimate that 20,000 civilians have been killed. The Russian army has deployed mobile crematoriums to conceal these terrible losses, and undertaken the mass deportation of civilians to Russia, to faraway regions.*

*A week ago, the Ukrainian army said that chemical weapons had been used and deployed across the city.*

*These acts, along with other crimes, are proof that Russia's aim is the genocide and extermination of the Ukrainian people.*

*Kherson remains the only major Ukrainian city fully occupied by Russian forces. The occupying forces have been unable to cement their power because of mass local resistance. The city is the scene of guerrilla warfare. Major cities such as Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia and Mykolaiv are under constant attack by the Russian army. However, the occupying forces have not managed to take control, because of the mass resistance. It is predicted that the Russian offensive in the Donbas region may be the bloodiest in Europe since World War II.*

*The situation is tense in Lviv, even though the city is far from the fighting. Lviv has been targeted by ballistic missiles on three occasions. Five missiles hit us on Monday 18 April, with one landing in a garage. There were seven fatalities and 11 injured, including a child. Generally, despite the danger, the region has become a hub for coordinating humanitarian aid and supporting displaced people (officially, there are 300,000 people in the region). The two biggest camps were opened over the last two weeks in Lviv.*

*Our Emmaus communities in Lviv and Nasha Khata help the refugees by addressing their needs, without stopping their homeless outreach work. Five Oselya companions have joined the Ukrainian army. Their military base was bombed on Monday 18 April. Our colleague from Nasha Khata, Vasyl, the local community leader, has joined the defence forces.*

*We receive humanitarian aid from Poland in coordination with Emmaus Europe, and we share the task of distributing the aid with volunteers and local organisations working with displaced people.*

*We are continuing our solidarity work, and we have increased our support for displaced people: we provide food, clothing and counselling.*

*We are very grateful for Emmaus Europe's financial support and the newly-created Ukraine Fund, because the two communities no longer have any source of income. We will discuss the matter further, specifically during the solidarity update.*

*I wish to end on a more positive note: in April, we are seeing a move towards resuming our core activities – the Emmaus workshops and charity shops are gradually reopening. Our work is disrupted, because there are bomb alerts three to four times a day, but we are trying to resume a normal way of life.*

*We have no doubt that our groups have more work. Now that the initial shock is over, we are resuming a more normal way of life, despite the extremely difficult situation. We are making every effort to be effective and help our country prevail. Thank you for listening.*

Patrick took the floor. He expressed his support on behalf of Emmaus International and the world's other regions. EI is very concerned about the situation in Ukraine and the violence being perpetrated on the ground. He raised the issue of the vicious circle of war and the arms race.

Grigory:

*It may seem that sending weapons from the West to Ukraine is not helping the peace process. However, it needs to be stressed that if we had not stopped them in the east, the Russians would have wanted to go further, towards central and western Ukraine. Cities that have not suffered the torments of the war must be protected, so that they too do not share the fate of Mariupol. For Russia, military might is all that counts; it needs to be stated that Ukraine wants to reach an agreement via a peace process. Russia's plan was to seize control of Ukraine in three to four days. Everybody thought this would happen. Nobody expected such widespread resistance. People need to understand that if Russia achieves its aim in Ukraine, it will move on to Poland and the Baltic states. Putin has already made threatening statements about Finland and Sweden. Ukraine is fighting for the rest of Europe, civilisation and European culture. This is a struggle for the very survival of democracy in the future. Our resistance needs to be as strong as possible, and this involves arms shipments. Russia would not have been able to launch its offensive two months ago if we had had the means to defend ourselves.*

*In this war, there are only massacres, rapes and bombing...there is no longer any humanity. This is very difficult for the West to understand, as the West has a tradition of negotiation and*

*finding common ground. This is impossible in the context of this war. What is happening in Ukraine could happen in the rest of Europe.*

*The discovery of the mass graves in Bucha changed the Ukrainian people's feelings. Until then, negotiations were very active. Since Bucha, people need to grasp that the aim of the war is not denazification, as Putin says, or supporting the Donbas, but the full and total genocide of the Ukrainian people. When I see that 83% of Russian society supports Putin, I cannot see how we can find a peaceful way out. Russian society is blinded, and the population is caught tightly in the noose of propaganda. This is not a new situation, as there has been disinformation in Russia for 80 years, such as "Ukraine is not a proper country, not a sovereign state...it was a historic mistake..." When reading the Russian media, I realise that 50-60% of Russians are pleased with the situation, the massacres, bombing raids, etc.*

*Pre-Bucha, Ukraine was willing to start discussing its status (NATO, Crimea, Donbas), but this is impossible for the Russians. They will try to seize the Donbas region at the administrative borders in order to claim victory in the eyes of the Russian population. Then, a long war will begin, in several phases. We cannot know how long it will last. Change will only occur if the political elite is replaced and the propaganda is reversed.*

Carina gave the floor to Tomislav (CNZD – Croatia) and Sabina (Emmaus-ISF – Bosnia-Herzegovina), whose countries experienced war less than 30 years ago. The war in Ukraine is rekindling tensions in these countries in the Balkans.

### **CROATIA**

Tomislav talked about his experience of the war in the 1990s, and the resulting trauma for the Croatian population. The Croatian people have mobilised to welcome the Ukrainians, who were the first to recognize Croatia's independence.

CNZD has opened two information and support centres for Ukrainians. Their work is co-funded by Emmaus' Ukraine Fund:

- Information centre in Osijek, providing information about international protection, social security, and access to rights. We have recruited Ukrainian interpreters who were living in Bosnia. We have supported 450 people. This centre enables them to go through all the information given by close friends and family. Many believe incorrect information: that they would be unable to return to Ukraine if they obtained international protection...
- The Children's Corner: centre for traumatised children. Open on a daily basis after school: counselling, preparing children to join the Croatian education system, attempting to resume a normal way of life. The children attend primary/secondary

school and sixth form college. We have arranged Croatian lessons to enable them to learn the language quickly.

The two centres are recognised by the Croatian authorities, and support numerous Ukrainians on a daily basis.

Amanda joined the meeting.

### **BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**

Sabina spoke about the very difficult situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH). The international geopolitical context is affecting the country's domestic politics. Calling out Russian crimes is very important, as this was not done in the Balkans during the war. ISF prepared 140 accommodation places in its housing stock for refugees, but there is no need for them at the present time. The group is in touch with the state in order to meet needs. The ISF can provide care, hygiene services, counselling, and help with working on the ground, and work in conjunction with the Emmaus groups in Ukraine and Poland: plan with them, call the Ukraine and Poland NDs to explain how we can help.

Another important piece of information: counselling for children is vital. The children we are seeing are deeply traumatised, and we are organising counselling in conjunction with Ukrainian professionals, who are best placed to help.

We are drawing on the experience of these psychologists. They are keen and want to help the children and families affected by the war in order to manage their trauma.

### **ROMANIA**

**Gelu** spoke about the situation in Romania and the arrival of the Ukrainian refugees. Emmaus is providing support by means of food, clothing and beds. Leila and Gelu make the round trip every week to deliver humanitarian aid to Chernivtsi, in Ukraine. The goods are then distributed throughout Ukraine, to conflict zones, hospitals, etc. People are starting to suffer from food shortages.

**Carina** picked up on an upcoming problem: the lack of food resources will also affect the other countries in the Maghreb, Africa...because Ukraine and Russia are the world's breadbaskets.

This war is also raising the issue of access to energy and sources of energy. We could view it as an opportunity to change our groups, become greener, and have cleaner sources of energy. We will return to this topic.

**Maryse** mentioned the importance of supporting Ukrainian children. She also went back over the socioeconomic impact of the war, even in France, even if companies are receiving government support. This will not be the case in many countries, specifically Africa, where they are forced to take a stand against Ukraine and the West, because they are so economically tied to Russia.

Maryse kicked off the discussion about the meaning of this war: as the heirs of the manifesto, what is our stance? What can we do?

**José Maria** talked about a global awareness of Emmaus' response to this war: modus operandi, analysis...we are taking direct action with the resources available to us. Food aid, clothing...our groups' response is our strength.

But we need to reflect and analyse the root causes of these situations of suffering. We are taking sides, and are supporting the suffering populations. However, the Ukrainian situation goes above and beyond the Ukrainian issue. It is affecting global geopolitics, and we are not picking up on this point. Who is benefiting from this war?

When I say that we are on the side of people and the most deprived, we must undertake the following analysis, which cannot ignore what Chomsky said: we must reject the violence perpetrated for Ukraine. But we must also analyse the factors that have contributed to this situation. When the USSR collapsed and Yeltsin came to power, poverty stood at 2% in Russia, but it has risen to 40%. Assets have been sold to the mafias and capitalists. Yet we are only analysing this situation today.

Energy is only an issue in Europe, not in the US, which is taking advantage of the war to sell gas to Europe at a very expensive price (are they benefiting from the situation?): information is also a weapon of war, and is disseminated by the dominant media outlets, which have economic interests to defend. We need to keep this analytical framework in mind.

Emmaus should defend the most deprived people, but should not forget the Global South (international movement): we need to understand the underlying economic reality that has meant that these countries have not condemned the war.

We should not forget that in Iraq, there are a million dead, including 500,000 civilians. 50,000 people, the majority civilians, have died in Libya. All of these situations are subject to political rationales.

A new paradigm is arising, stemming from a handful of people monopolizing wealth. Our Western mindset is not regarded in the same way elsewhere in the world. China prizes efficiency.

Clear solidarity is needed with our Ukrainian friends. Energy and strength conveyed to the countries and people fleeing Ukraine.

There are 150,000 refugees in Spain.

But what is happening in Ceuta, Melilla, Gibraltar, Lesbos? We are rolling out the red carpet for the Ukrainians, but Africa, Syria...we do not allow them food or to be legal. We need to keep this in mind, carve out a path and have a deliberate and steadfast response, without ever wavering in our solidarity towards the people of Ukraine.

Ukraine has produced a lot of weapons. Germany has drawn on this, defence budgets have been increased, NATO's role has grown, war budgets have risen...while other budgets (social, education...) will go down, we are entering into a European wartime economy, a new world is emerging, we must respond to it in a more fraternal, human and supportive way.

**Jean-Philippe** went back to the impact of the current context on the groups in Europe, and highlighted the consolidation of two trends:

- Energy inflation. In Eastern Europe, little government support: energy bills now amount to half of our expenditure.
- Container offers/solidarity lorry loads: price increases (€4,000 for a shipment from Brittany!).

It will certainly be worse when shipping to other continents, should we reassess our model?

→ Reappraisal of our groups' economic models and their financial independence?

**Amanda** thought that the impact of this war would be felt for many years to come.

- Immediate repercussions: need to provide counselling to address trauma. Need to provide food aid, clothing.
- Long-term repercussions: Redesign a more appropriate model as a movement in order to help the most deprived people.

**Carina** agreed: the Emmaus groups will be part of the response for Ukraine.

**Patrick** took the floor: this session on Ukraine is challenging us across the movement. We are feeling the effects in Africa and Asia. No diesel in my home town. Bread, oil...all the prices have gone up. The impact is already being felt.

In Europe, people are saying that Africa has not taken a stance, but what should we do?

Apart from Putin's nonsense, we can see that there is an international geopolitical game. So, what is really going on? Rearmament, weapons sales...we do not understand it in Africa.

Why is this happening?

With regard to this mobilisation and extraordinary support for Ukraine, there is also incomprehension. There are very serious issues in India, Pakistan, Mali, Burkina Faso, but nobody says anything about them. What Emmaus is doing for Ukraine is needed, but are we not all members of the movement? Two million people have fled their homes in Mali because of jihadists.



	<p>A wider debate is needed above and beyond this war. Abbé Pierre had his ideals of peace, tolerance and solidarity. We need to offer solidarity in these critical situations.          Broader debate: how can we do more for global solidarity? Only financial solidarity? What have we done since 2014 to prevent this situation in Ukraine?          When I hear that Emmaus volunteers are enlisting to fight, should we not say that this isn't right, and have a collective debate so that we do not move away from our shared focus on peace? That is EI's message to EE.</p> <p><b>Carina</b> thanked Patrick and returned to the joint EI/EE lobbying of the European Commission, calling for other suffering refugees to be properly supported, using the welcome given to Ukrainians as an example. She also referred to the meeting on 17 May with the EU's commissioner on external partnerships. The meeting will be attended by Patrick, Antoine Sueur and Carina. The meeting will be an opportunity to talk about migration, because it is part of the EU-African Union agreements to be discussed.</p> <p>Martha joined the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>3. Ukraine Solidarity ESP next steps</b></p>	<p><i>Emmanuel provided an update on the Ukraine Fund and support for the Emmaus groups in Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Croatia and Georgia.</i>  <i>The groups donated significant funding, without us even asking for donations. A funding appeal was not made to the public or the groups, and the funds have almost all been donated by Emmaus groups from around the world, who spontaneously wanted to help.</i></p> <p>Discussions about the decisions in the next column:</p> <p><b>Grigory presented the project to build a new social support centre for Oselya</b>, the aim of which is to increase daily support capacity for displaced and homeless people in the Lviv region. Costing €290,000, this project could be undertaken quickly because the building firm is available. All the groundwork has been done by Oselya; the community thought it would be able to fund this project independently. Then the war came, the partners had to withdraw, while needs have increased.</p> <p><b>Grigory</b> presented the project: <i>Since 2008, Oselya has been running a social support centre where the homeless can get support. The centre offers clothing, food, a shower... It was planned with capacity for 25 people per day, but is now supporting some 50 people. It is too small. The group has been in talks with the council for four-five years. The council has provided premises, a building on a social lease with a guarantee of being available for at least 15 years, with Oselya paying for building renovations. The advent of the war stopped the project, yet needs</i></p>	<p>Summary of decisions:</p> <p><b>Fund lorry loads to Poland and Ukraine by making use of the Ukraine Fund?</b>          The RCEE unanimously voted that the Ukraine Fund can only be used to fund the shipment of humanitarian lorry loads on an exceptional basis.</p> <p><b>With regard to the European solidarity programme:</b>  <i>The RCEE unanimously decided not to launch the ESP in 2022 on an exceptional basis, and to use the 10% of solidarity from the international solidarity sale takings allocated by EI, i.e.,</i></p>

have increased. This new centre would enable the group to support 150 people a day while offering short-term housing for a few families. When the war ends, this centre will be able to support more homeless people than before, and in better working conditions.

### **Build a house amid Russian airstrikes?**

**Risk of bombing:** *The missiles that hit the city were scary. It seems that the airstrikes had many targets. However, the targets will still be critical large infrastructure (oil depots, garages). The aim is to disrupt Ukrainian infrastructure with clear targets. These missiles are very expensive for Russia (€500,000 per missile). The front would need to be nearer Lviv for small targets such as ourselves to be hit. I am trying to be optimistic and hope that the front will remain faraway. Yes, there is always a risk of a ballistic missile attack. But if the Russians start targeting faraway cities, they will focus on major military targets.*

### **Green transition fund**

One of the impacts of the war is the massive increase in energy prices, including for the Emmaus groups, and particularly those in Eastern Europe, where there is no government support for associations, and where winters can be tough for the communities. EE has held a reserve of unallocated solidarity (€200,000) for a long time, donated by the European groups, and which must be used for the Emmaus member groups in Europe, as per its cash allocation. Using these funds to enable groups in Eastern Europe to cut their energy expenditure and greenhouse gas emissions in a sustainable fashion could be a good opportunity. Following a debate which emphasized that it would be worthwhile looking into how to use this fund in the future to help more groups than the Eastern European groups to insulate their premises, but also move towards renewable energies, a vote approved the creation of this fund (see decisions).

Gelu reiterated that the situation in Romania is also very difficult, as energy prices are similar to the rest of Europe, but wages are very low. *Emmaus' solidarity is vital. We have three sites, we are developing our activities, we are managing to expand the country's social sector. We can never afford to buy new (cars etc). As the director, I earn €600.*

€45,000 to fund the three projects presented at the RCEE in February.

### **Regarding the new Oselya social support centre aimed at homeless and displaced people:**

The RCEE approved the principle of helping to build this centre using the Ukraine Fund up to a maximum of €200,000.

The group was asked to extend the council lease for as long as possible, seek out co-funding, and minimize the building's energy use.

FOR: 11 people.

AGAINST: One person

ABSTENTIONS: Four people.

### **With regard to the creation of a Green Transition Fund for the Emmaus groups in Eastern Europe**

*The proposal is to use the sum of €200,000 of unallocated solidarity at EE's disposal, donated by the European groups, and which needs to be used to support the EE member groups, as per its cash allocation: the primary aim will be energy-saving work.*

	<p><b>Third vote</b> Regarding financial support from the EI solidarity fund, which voted and allotted 10% of this fund to EE (€45,000), as part of the group support programme.</p> <p><b>Unanimously adopted.</b> For the 2022 ESP, the executive decided to use the full EI amount, and not make a solidarity appeal to the European groups, as a one-off measure. The groups in Europe may be asked to organise solidarity for EI, and be encouraged to arrange solidarity sales and contribute to the international solidarity fund, which is used to help this type of initiative.</p> <p>A debate got underway about the option of not making an appeal to the groups this year for donations to the European Solidarity Programme (ESP). The groups really rallied round to donate funds to the Ukraine Fund, and some are wondering if they can be asked again for support, for long-term projects. However, others thought it regrettable that the groups would not support the ESP because of the existence of the Ukraine Fund.</p> <p><b>Carina</b> raised the possibility of forging effective cooperation with EI, and communicating with the groups about arranging the annual solidarity sale: the idea would be “<i>don't forget others</i>”. We have collected these funds, but let's not forget the other regions.</p> <p><b>Patrick</b> took the floor: <i>The situation in Europe is having many and varied repercussions, including in Africa, which consumes a lot of bread. These are unforeseen circumstances, are there other initiatives possible as a response to them? We have planned ahead at EI level, by organising food aid. Africa, the Americas and Asia received allocations for food kits for the regions. OK for the earmarked funds, but in an emergency situation, we could refine our thinking.</i> <i>EI is willing to harmonize operations to make for a more supportive movement.</i></p> <p>Following this discussion, we need to look into making a shared EI/EE proposal and joining forces, and raising the issue of the global energy impact with the countries in the Global South, to leave behind our dependence on fossil fuels, and take action together.</p>	<p><b>To help the groups in Eastern Europe in particular, who are facing skyrocketing energy costs, may we use the €200,000 from general solidarity?</b> FOR: 15 AGAINST: 1 ABSTENTIONS: 2 <i>A decision was taken to create a green transition fund and allocate €200K to it.</i> <i>The exec must set the criteria for the fund.</i></p>
<p><b>4. 2022-2023 Action plan</b></p>	<p>Eve presented progress made in the main areas of the action plan.</p> <p><b>Life of the movement</b></p> <p>➔ Internal and external communications. We have made progress in this area because of the pandemic.</p> <p>Monthly newsletter, website, members' area, exchanges of practices online three times a year.</p>	

Not done: EE presentation brochure

- Welcoming new groups and stepping up visits: we managed to resume visits to trial members, and have started to identify what is missing from the support provided before a group becomes a trial member, but there is more to be done.
- Network development: underway, data collection is set to begin in late 2022/early 2023.
- No progress: Membership policy
- Role of the national organisations: we met with boards, very worthwhile, enabled us to learn about issues in countries that we do not normally see.
- World Assembly: we will be taking part.
- Youth participation: joining the movement, values and principles. Two online meetings (life of the movement and handing over). Work with EF, which travelled to Spain to see what is being done in terms of youth education. We still need to work on volunteer status.
- Companions: tomorrow.
- Containers: container handbook done!

**Two other major issues:**

- Climate change resilience: we have not made sufficient progress. Advocacy with RREUSE. Not done: good practice charter, climate fund. The question has been raised; we will go back to it at the end of the afternoon. → Using the Ukrainian crisis as a lever.
- Migration and foreign national reception: poster campaign

**José Maria** took the floor: *we need to pace ourselves. We need to take our time, and look at each topic at the right time. We need to go into depth. We looked into lots of issues in one go at San Sebastian. They were all of great interest. We got delayed by the pandemic. The action plan needs to be robust. If we have more time, we will deal with it in more detail. Very important issues, which are worthy of more in-depth analysis of the practical initiatives involved. And we need to know why no progress has been made on certain points.*

*Even if gradually, we need to put in place priorities before the next assembly. Work in depth on the right to freedom of movement in particular. We are seeing an increase in borders and police presence in Europe. FRONTEX costs €200,000 a day. They use neighbouring countries (such as Turkey or Morocco) so that the Europeans are not the "bad guys".*

*My community contains 34 different nationalities. 10 are undocumented migrants. Let's take our time and set our priorities.*

→ *Look at what our focus is, and then work in depth on it.*

**Pierre-Yves** wondered if the action plan contained too many topics?

- Should we set priorities or timeframes? Some initiatives also appear in the national organisations.
- Could we add someone from EE to an EF working group to avoid duplication?
- List of the issues that will not be addressed.

Shortcoming: No reference made to the future of Emmaus in Europe. Three countries are in difficulty: Belgium, Germany and Italy. It is important to look at what is going on, what is Emmaus' current role, should we find another role for it?

Membership and payment of dues procedures: Very tricky. Difficult being a member of EF, EE and EI. Three lots of dues. Trial membership applications...

Pool things so as not to overly engage resources?

The issue of membership dues has been raised for seven years in the governing bodies, is a single payment possible? This was discussed two years ago and rejected on two grounds:

- Technical The dues are classed differently in the accounts.
- Political EI refused, because the dues are a direct link between the group and governing body, and make for a real feeling of belonging.

**Aurore** took the floor to speak about the action plan and the work done: lots of new things, notably regarding:

- Climate and the environment – European climate fund, features.
- Establishing support for groups with a green transition dimension (financial and environmental aims).

Look more deeply into: showcasing and bolstering our resilience to climate change:

- Climate fund
- Energy-saving support for countries in Eastern Europe.

### **Feedback on the action plan**

Continue with exchanges of practices

- An exchange on textiles. Worth supplementing it with another exchange.
- Information about EU regulations, we are available if the groups need us. Go into further depth?

- Bring together those who collect small amounts of textiles? Not done yet, should we do it?

#### Website members' area:

- Produce resource sheets about good practice in certain countries (EF and UK): identify documents for translation, long-term undertaking. Worth pursuing between now and 2023.

#### Advocacy work with the European institutions

- Environment
- Climate
- Re-use

Work with RREUSE. Good progress made; we are carrying on.

French presidency of the EU initiative: We reached out to EF; we took part together and coordinated the meeting within the scope of the social economy summit in Strasbourg in May.

Raise citizen awareness about the social and environmental dimensions of reuse: over-consumption, fast fashion...

- Poster campaign in the charity shops. We talked about it yesterday. Outcome: we can run this campaign, which is not solely focused on textiles, but on raising awareness about the social dimension of reuse, and Emmaus' work. We are relaunching this working group with the aim of running a shared European campaign (best case scenario) or developing exchanges about what is being done in different countries.

Changing our practices in the groups to reduce the impact of climate change and practice what we preach: work has been done on this topic, we need to take a fresh look at it in order to tailor it to our current requirements, and be more mindful about our consumption.

A large number of groups submitted their results, it would be interesting to track the data. This will be discussed again by the exec.

**Maria Luisa** asked EE and EI to help the groups to undertake the green transition by means of resource sheets and educational posters, which could be translated.

**Serena** reiterated that despite the efforts of each community, and EE and EI, the companions go to the supermarket to buy food, which is normal, as it is less expensive. This contradicts our values.

	<p><b>Eve:</b> How can EE improve its practices, as members of the board and RCEE, climate impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate fund to develop Emmaus energy-saving and alternative energy projects.</li> <li>- Real need to support the groups with eco issues: this needs to come from the groups.</li> <li>- With regard to the companions, the groups need to take action.</li> </ul> <p><b>Jérémie</b> suggested creating an Emmaus environmentally-friendly logo to motivate the groups to further sort waste.</p> <p><b>Aurore</b> felt that it was more important to raise companion and volunteer awareness about waste sorting, and so on, than to create a good conduct charter for RCEE members.</p> <p>The idea was put forward of running a poster campaign on the impact of a donation made to Emmaus rather than reselling items on commercial websites.</p> <p><b>Eve</b> reminded the meeting that new EU legislation will affect the way Emmaus groups manage their waste on a day-to-day basis. The information has been passed on, but few national delegates have requested support from EE.</p>	
<p><b>5. Migrant reception in Europe</b></p>	<p>Since 2019, a new European pact on migration and asylum has been put forward by the European Commission. The European Parliament and Council have been discussing this plan since then in order to formulate proposed legislation that would be subsequently transposed in the various Member States.</p> <p>The pact revolves around closing borders (FRONTEX), outsourcing checks, and little funding is earmarked for migrant reception. The pact also officialises detention at the EU's borders. It will become legal.</p> <p>It is also the end of European solidarity: some countries will be exempt from taking in migrants if they fund returns, and so on.</p> <p>The war in Ukraine and the millions of people who have been displaced and welcomed could be used as proof that we can quickly take in four million people. Temporary protection has finally been activated, even though we have been requesting it for a long time (Afghanistan). We will put forward these arguments when we meet the European commissioner for external partnerships.</p> <p>The Emmaus groups could also use them: we are helping the state by taking in Ukrainians, but we also have other undocumented migrants to help.</p>	<p><b>The RCEE set up a working group to make the arrangements for a migration conference before the end of 2022.</b></p> <p><b>The organisation of an EE international work camp was postponed until 2024</b>, a year after the possible adoption of the EU Asylum and Migration Pact. It will need to convey a strong political message about migration, and bring together Emmaus members from around the world. It has been added to the calendar of</p>

The EE poster campaign was released at the time when war in Ukraine broke out, and could be used as a lever.

This campaign was sent to all the French groups, and the posters will shortly be sent across Europe.

Discuss what more we can do with regard to the Migration and Asylum Pact.

Resources to use in order to mobilise people in the groups:

- Use the EI Global Report.
- ⇒ A resource presenting the report is needed so that the groups can get to grips with it.
- Use the migration campaign, and the covering letter sent to all the European groups.
- Become aware of all the initiatives undertaken on a daily basis by each Emmaus group to support and integrate migrants.
- Contact Eve for more information on the Asylum and Migration Pact.
- **We need to make better use of our resources.**
- ➔ How can we improve on the migration issue?
- ➔ How to put together the conference?

**Christian** referred to Ukrainian refugees being housed and supported in Montauban, despite the local council's reluctance. He felt that we need to capitalize on this welcome and impetus to prove that we can properly welcome everyone. Paradoxically, the welcome extended to the Ukrainians has been very tough for other migrants to see.

**Tony** spoke about migrant reception in the UK. There is a stated desire to welcome refugees, but the formalities are very difficult to complete, even for the Ukrainians. Refugees are going to be deported to Rwanda, via an agreement reached a short while ago. The UK is a very divided country.

**Carina** referred to all the potential striking communications initiatives to make ourselves useful as a federation (Grande-Synthe, La Roya, Briançon...) Emmaus Europe may be a small organisation, but everything that is being done in Ukraine and in the surrounding area are wonderful examples that can be used to promote our work.

**Aurore** felt that we should intelligently use Abbé Pierre's image to communicate about the need to welcome suffering people to France, and raise the awareness of decision-makers (prefects, etc).

Transcription of the discussion about Emmaus' remit with regard to welcoming migrants

events that will raise the issue of migration:

2022: World Assembly  
2023: RAEE and application of the Asylum and Migration Pact.  
2024: international work camp  
2025: World Assembly  
We must ensure that the work camp does not solely focus on European migration issues, as migration is a global issue.

Members of the working group to arrange the migration conference:

- Christian
- Maryse
- Marie-France
- Leila
- (José Maria – contributions in writing)



**Patrick:** *We need to ask our MPs and other politicians why, in their view, migrants are unable to integrate society, when we manage to do so at Emmaus. With the Ukrainian crisis, politicians are now saying that Europe can take in hundreds of thousands of people. So? Why not do the same for everyone else?*

**José Maria** took the floor:

- *In Spain and various European countries: issue of “illegals” who live alongside citizens. We are addressing this issue on a daily basis.*
- *Migrant camps – the migrants work in the strawberry greenhouses in Huelva. What are their rights?*
- *Since June 2017, the Spanish groups have been developing a discussion, culture and poetry event.*
- *A people’s initiative, suggest something like granting leave to remain to 500,000 undocumented migrants. We need to force the debate in a parliament.*

### **Conference**

At the previous RCEE, a proposal was made to run a European conference on migration issues to look at all these topics in a collective fashion at the EE level. The December 2021 EE exec suggested linking migration to local issues; in fact, it is better to know about the challenges in each country before launching European initiatives. When we called for people to fast, for many countries it was too far removed from their reality.

What could the other objective of this meeting be?

*Jose Maria: European conference: in EE, we need to go into greater depth, look into the scale of the problem, geopolitics, economic issues, defending human rights. If we gain an idea of the true scope of the problem, this will shed light on the actual situation, and this will give us an idea of the extent. Those with power have defined borders.*

*With this authentic initiative, we should form an action and campaign group. We have enough wisdom and experience to politically oppose the developing model (capitalist, appropriation of assets).*

*Latest EU environmental regulations: Europe does not have all these assets; we have brought them from elsewhere. We are stealing from countries outside of Europe. Let’s situate ourselves and let’s be on the frontline.*

*Our movement is fragile, because there are differences. But as an international and European organisation, Emmaus Europe must be on the frontline.*

**Maria-Luisa:** *We started to destroy the concept of living together in diversity when Sarajevo was bombed, as the city was an example of living together. When Europe decided to separate the Muslims on the one hand, and the Christians on the other, we destroyed the true essence of Europe. The narrative in Italy is that migrants are “guilty”.*

*The press has called rescue boats the “migrant taxi service”. How can we change this narrative? How to undertake advocacy when the government is paid by and pays Libyan traffickers?*

*We opted to run cultural initiatives: we published a book telling the story of a child who crossed the Bosnian and Croatian border. A name and a face make all the difference. A shared story. A show aiming to create doubt in the minds of the audience. Take a stand against a policy that has destroyed the true meaning of Europe.*

**Gelu:** *What should we do in this situation, in which a Ukrainian can obtain leave to remain, but others cannot? Emmaüs Solidarité was involved at La Chapelle with migrant reception. A lot of shops, communities and companions with no papers: how can we pass on this information and create advocacy tools.*

*We are strong when we stand together.*

*We have been talking about migrants and humanity for years.*

**Carina:** *We have the chance to create a new policy in Europe. We should share our homes with others, and ask politicians to help us. And ask young people to help us.*

**Christian:** *We must teach decision-makers to put themselves in awkward positions. Our everyday actions enable us to stand tall. These actions have value. The butterfly effect is important. Think with the heart.*

*The awareness-raising campaign is fantastic. It could be prefects or other officials, we have faced difficulties because of a lack of papers, yet now, since Ukraine, we are needed and are great.*

**A working group to arrange the migration conference was put forward:**

- Christian
- Maryse
- Marie-France
- Leila
- (José Maria, but suggested that the group should be French-speaking to facilitate arrangements.)

	<p>See also the advocacy section (links with politicians).</p> <p>The conference could be linked with the one planned by the OCU, which could take place in the autumn in Strasbourg.</p> <p><b>Initially, the idea of the conference was connected with EE organising an international migration work camp. This was postponed because of the 2019 WA</b> and then COVID, and now the 2022 WA. It seems difficult to plan such an event with the RAEE in the near future. The international work camp will take place in 2024, one year after the European Pact on Asylum and Migration is released. It will need to convey a strong political message about migration, and bring together Emmaus members from around the world. It has been added to the calendar of events that will raise the issue of migration:  2022: World Assembly  2023: RAEE and release of the Asylum and Migration Pact.  2024: international work camp  2025: World Assembly  We must ensure that the work camp does not solely focus on European migration issues, as migration is a global issue.</p>	
<p><b>6. Circular and social economy</b></p>	<p>At European Commission level, several initiatives are due to be launched, and RREUSE has monitored developments on behalf of reuse and recycling stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>European textile strategy</u> – end of process. We made a proposal along with other associations to go further on social and environmental issues. This will be partially incorporated into this textile strategy, new rules on importing textiles and on production in Europe, sustainable and socially acceptable. Steps must be taken upstream to reuse and recycle, and introduce eco-design measures (green from the get-go).</li> <li>- <u>Initiative for sustainable products</u> Soon to be adopted by the European Commission. European eco-design initiative. Requirement not to destroy unsold items. Already implemented in France, and having a major impact on Emmaus: products are sent elsewhere to be resold, or donated to associations? It is not in our remit to sell new products, and this is not preventing over-production. Ongoing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Transposition of EU directives on reuse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suggest that the other European countries draw on the Spanish example in order to influence the law (via the NDs). EE could coordinate these discussions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Overproduction and competition in the second-hand market</b>  Share initiatives to showcase Emmaus' social and environmental work and explain why people should</p>

- Review of the rules on transporting and sending waste in Europe and abroad – the question of what waste actually is. Still not clear, notably with regard to textiles. Reduce imports within Europe and outside of Europe.
- Call to revise the regulations on WEEE: products should be manufactured to make repair easier and products should be long-lasting.

Discussion on the impact in your respective countries, separate waste collection obligation for textiles, and for gardening, sport, leisure and DIY equipment.

Les Ateliers du Bocage have produced a documentary on the social economy, find out more from Maryse if you wish to watch it.

**Jose Maria:** Regarding the issue of the potential impact on Emmaus of the transposition of EU regulations covering the reuse and recycling sectors:

**In Spain**, the package was transposed into the Spanish law on polluting products.. Emmaus worked with AERESS to attempt to influence this legislation. This package sets an objective for 2025: and we managed to get the Senate to amend it - **50% of all textile and waste collection services must be delivered by social enterprises and employment access schemes**. Positive discrimination for the associations working in this sector.

It is important that the Emmaus groups in each country apply pressure to secure positive discrimination so that in each country the law on public services stipulates that a percentage of contracts are granted to social organisations and employment access schemes.

**Eve:** If the other Emmaus member countries wish to work on transposing these directives in their countries, EE could arrange a discussion with the Spanish to draw on their experience.

As part of the French EU presidency, EE, along with EF, the City of Paris and RREUSE, is going to lead a roundtable in Strasbourg or EE.

#### **Fast fashion – issues and discussions**

The intention was to organise a European campaign on fast fashion, and the impact of the socio-environmental link, but many organisations have already got to grips with this issue, as well as our groups in Europe, joining forces with NGOs.

- Consequently, the idea is to run a campaign to remind our customers why it's important to shop at Emmaus, and use second-hand clothes from charity shops.

donate quality items to Emmaus.  
Also share initiatives condemning overproduction and overconsumption. Find out whether a medium-term campaign would be worthwhile at the cross-Europe level. Share the experience of the French campaign (currently being devised).

The RCEE took formal note of the idea of working on an **internal climate tax** to offset our actions, including our travel, with the aim of funding climate protection initiatives, such as planting fruit trees.

→ Share the groups' work on the textiles overdose, and repeat the message from a socio-environmental perspective?

OK for the RCEE.

**Pierre-Yves** announced that the EF Board has decided to allocate some of its budget to a major awareness-raising campaign about donating items to Emmaus, rather than private sector competitors. This campaign will last for several years and could be run in conjunction with EE. It is estimated that the groups will lose €20-40 million because of competition in the second-hand market.

**Carina** felt that all the regions of the world need to be brought together to have an overview of overconsumption and clothing manufacturing issues, in particular.

**Jérémie** felt that this campaign to raise awareness is very important and should be accompanied by short social media films and posters to be visible in the charity shops, and reach as many people as possible. **Carina** liked the idea of sharing on social media.

In Romania, **Gelu** described an existing awareness-raising initiative: 20% discount in store if a customer shares our content on Facebook.

OK to take on board these different aspects.

#### **Environmental and climate issues**

What more can we do in terms of advocacy on these issues? What can we/should we do to change practices in the groups? Energy crisis brought about by the Ukraine war could be a lever for getting to grips with these issues and making progress.

Carina: Create an Emmaus climate tax in Europe? To encourage the development of these initiatives. For our campaigning work, work trips...provide ourselves with the funds to invest in climate issues.

This tax could enable us to build up a fund to pay for the insulation work in the communities, as previously mentioned.

**Patrick** thought the idea of a climate fund was great. In Pahou, the group is clearing two hectares to plant palm trees. This will generate resources for us.

**The RCEE took formal note of the idea of working on an internal climate tax to offset our actions, including our travel, with the aim of funding climate protection initiatives, such as planting fruit trees.**

## END OF DAY 1

### 7. Companions and community life in Europe

The action plan included plans to arrange a European meeting of companions. Following several discussions, it turns out that such a meeting would be difficult to set up, both from a logistics perspective (interpreting, number of people, travel for people without papers) and topics that might be discussed, without the issues really being addressed, as the administrative situation differs depending on the country, salaries, etc. We need to encourage bilateral exchanges, which can already be done, but arranging such a meeting is very challenging.

- We are not ready at the present time, but we do need to strengthen companion exchanges. We should also work on a tour of Europe with different topics/themes; this would be an online tour so that undocumented people could take part.

Regarding handing over leadership and the survival of some communities in some countries. There were many French and Italian participants in the exchanges of practices on the issue of handing over to new generations and community survival after the founders have left.

**Maria Luisa** mentioned the difficulties finding new companions in Italy following the rollout of the Citizens' Basic Income.

**Aurore** also felt that companions need to be offered training about the movement, which is very complex, before taking part in a movement conference, and being able to tackle deep issues.

*We are working on companion participation in the communities, so we should wait until that is done before organising something.*

*We are turning down three to five people a day in France, while in Italy they are struggling to get new community members. Work on the new generation of companions. Work between groups close to the border?*

*In France, there are working tax credits, but companions prefer to live in a community with €350 a month without bills and no outgoings, rather than live elsewhere.*

#### **European companion meeting:**

- We are not ready at the present time, but we do need to strengthen companion exchanges. We should also work on a tour of Europe with different topics/themes; this would be an online tour so that undocumented people could take part.

#### **Regarding handing over leadership and the survival of some communities in some countries**

- *It is important that we continue discussing changes to community life and adapting to new political contexts and populations.*

**Spike** spoke about the situation in the UK: the country has a national Companion Forum: companions meet up and share their difficulties. The forum participants would be very interested in an international exchange. This topic comes up in discussions, the opportunity to understand how to better organise the movement. The opportunity to play more of a part in the life of the movement.

Agreed with Aurore and Maria Luisa: issues could come to the surface. A training course/prior preparation is needed before this meeting, give people a good idea of what to expect, the realities in the different communities, countries, etc.

Other challenges:

- In the UK, the homeless do not tend to stay long in the communities (a year, for instance). Finding new companions is challenging.
- There is tension between the companions who work in the shops, and the time needed to do other things. In the UK, there is a difficulty with under-occupation: the pandemic and homeless support policies, fewer companions, because there are joint initiatives to get people off the streets. Tension between those working in the workshops, and those who want to get more involved in the movement. With regard to the homeless, Emmaus is an incredible opportunity to experience different circumstances in each country, and other issues. Regarding the companion charter, we could ask: do you need a charter? Should your rights be safeguarded?

**Carina:** We have visited several countries. I have realised/I am wondering if traditional companions still exist. In many European countries, the social situation has improved, with minimum incomes and “housing first” policies, which is positive! However, the situation is causing us to question Emmaus’ role in these circumstances. In some countries and France above all, the situation of undocumented migrants means that they are replacing traditional companions. Do we need to think of a new way of regarding companions? Keep the name? My community is a working community rather than a residential one; we are all colleagues with the same status. Has this changed the way that we perceive each other? The grassroots situation differs in each country. A lot of people in many countries say that it is difficult to maintain the concept of a residential community.

**Jean-Philippe:** Two types of companion exchange:

- With Iasi in Romania.
- With Switzerland, France and Italy in Europe.

They all have papers, are young and want to travel. It is always highly positive, even when things go wrong, it enables us to progress. After a four to six-week stay, they are delighted with the experience and happy to return.

	<p><i>Companions who do not speak one of the three official languages are perhaps excluded, so if we have tangible topics, to enable companions to meet up and get trained (environment, for instance), it would be better to arrange interpreting in the local languages. It is a shame that we are not holding a meeting, but I understand the reluctance.</i></p> <p><b>Julio</b> felt that we should draw on the reports written by the national delegates to find out what is happening in other countries. He spoke about the difficulties in Belgium, which are the same as in Italy. There were four Emmaus groups four years ago. Nowadays, there are two groups, because there is a shortage of companions, and the leaders are elderly. Marchienne closed down this year after running for 60 years. The community donated its assets to LILO, an association under Belgian law. The work continues, but no longer under the Emmaus name. There is just Mons with and La Poudrière left in Belgium.</p> <p><b>Serena:</b> <i>Getting young people involved in our groups: we are working on it in our communities. There were plenty of young people in 1997, there was enthusiasm, hope, and a vision of how it should work. Nowadays, some groups no longer have a community life. We want to restore this ethos, be a family, and do things. Things are gradually restarting after COVID. We have a day centre, which enables us to “recruit” people, who come to help and end up staying. However, we haven’t recruited anyone for a long time. This is also due to German law, which stipulates that we must pay the minimum wage. We do not have the resources and we need new ideas, to spend free time together outside of working hours, and recreate a community life. We are in the process of writing new community living rules.</i></p> <p><i>It is important that we continue discussing changes to community life and adapting to new political contexts and populations.</i></p>	
<p><b>8. Statutes</b></p>	<p><b>Statutes working group progress report</b> Two documents were presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The EE working group’s proposals for national delegates.</li> <li>- EI WA preparatory document on statutory work areas.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>EE working group’s work on national delegates</u></b> <b>Definition</b> of a ND: NDs are <u>elected</u> (to safeguard democracy) by the members of EI in a country to represent them at the regional level and as a contact person. <b>Duties:</b> Represent their country’s groups on the international and regional governing bodies, and foster the participation of the groups in these bodies.</p>	<p>The RCEE officially noted the proposals made by the EI Board to be discussed and voted on at the WA. The next step will be to adapt them to the European context.</p>



**Mandate:** Four-year term of office, can be re-elected once, with a year's transition period if the country feels that the new ND needs a transition period, but only if necessary.

**Election procedure:** Via the national organisation, or at the national general assembly or competent general assembly, in line with the relevant arrangements.

If there is no national organisation, the outgoing ND should coordinate and arrange new elections, having called for and encouraged the groups to put forward candidates. Secret ballot.

**Remit and role:**

- Draft reports for their country's groups about EE's work to be presented at national assemblies. Circulate information about their country (reports, press releases, etc).
- If there is no national organisation, establish and maintain cooperation between the country's groups, and act as an ambassador for their country abroad.
- If possible and feasible, visit the groups to find out about their circumstances, needs and challenges.
- Coordinate work with the CEI: the NDs and CEIs have different roles, which should complement each other in order to bolster a feeling of unity and belonging.
- The international governing bodies must contact the ND when there is a question about a country.

The CEIs and NDs have some shared remits:

- Answer the groups' questions about EE and EI.
- Be involved in trial and full membership processes.
- Promote the solidarity programmes.
- Inform about EI and EE events.

Coordination with the national organisation

- Keep in constant and close contact.
- Obtain information to create a shared vision.
- Improve communication between the NDs and the members of groups in their country.
- Reports on their work in EI and EE.

**Resources:** NDs must be provided with the resources needed to fulfil their roles.

***EI's proposals***

*Article 55 about ND definitions and remits*

*NDs are regarded as facilitators and leaders, but not as country ambassadors.*

Article 56 on terms of office: Four years, from one GA to the next, can be re-elected once.

→ We would like to add an extra transition year in the EE statutes.

EI would like NDs to play a role on the national organisation's executive. This is a strong recommendation, but may not be done.

Article 57, ND election. Elected by the GA or board? To be clarified.

If there is no national organisation, the ND is elected by a grouping of three *geographically close* countries.

**Hélène** reminded the meeting that this is a proposed basis, and can be tailored at regional level to adjust to regional specifics.

It will be forbidden to combine the roles of ND-CEI; the same person cannot hold two votes. However, if the ND is part of the EF Board, one-third of the members are newly elected every three years, there will be situations with two NDs every four years...two NDs with the same mandate?

Another EI proposal whose implementation in each region will need discussing:

*If there are fewer than three groups in a country, it is suggested that the ND is elected along with the neighbouring countries. This is an example; we need to look at the specifics. EI has established a basis for discussion.*

**Maria-Luisa** went back over the aim of these clarifications: *The aim is to have a common basis shared by the four regions, and which incorporates developments to the movement over the past few years.*

**Julio** said that a ND should also be able to be a CEI. Each country with an Emmaus group should have a ND, because situations differ between Belgium and France, for instance. Georgia and Croatia have different situations, so a ND is needed, even if there is just one group.

**Pierre-Yves** understood Julio's point and said that if the ND does not represent the country, maybe we should change the title.

- Discussion: It would be easier if the EE and EI statutes were as identical as possible.

- Comment: EE document concerning the definition, elected by EI members in a country: EE or EI? In my case, the EF Board elected me. Some organisations are members of EI, but others are not.
- Potential transition year: one additional year – outgoing or incoming?
- Report on the ND's work for the national organisation: Annual report? Frequency.

**Jean-Philippe** regarding the election of a national delegate to represent several countries: with regard to the countries affected in Europe, there would be challenges as to how to represent the situation in certain countries (Belgium, Portugal) which have larger neighbours (Spain and France, for instance). The groups in the Balkans are quite close (language, geography), which could help.

He called to mind the highly specific case of Georgia. The leader is French-speaking, but how to keep the link alive with the ND, given the distance from the nearest Emmaus countries?

→ *What steps need to be taken to ensure that countries with few groups continue to be represented.*

**José Maria** raised several points:

- *Summary of the contribution from the different regions: we do not mention the fact that they are **representatives**, a term which is much more meaningful. This word underlines the fact that the groups elect someone to represent them. It is bizarre that we use adjectives such as mediators, coordinators, facilitators, but not representatives. "Representative" gives authority, as proposed by the EE working group.*
- *Even though we were maybe not as effective in the EE working group, our work did lead to a comprehensive proposal. We should use this definition as a basis for the EE statutes, and make use of it at the next RAEE.*
- *3<sup>RD</sup> section: It is vital that the candidate has the country's support.*

**Maryse** highlighted the opposite issue for some countries: a single ND for so many French groups?

**Christian** shared Maryse's concern, and felt that the ND should draw on the French regions, and that each region of France should have someone focusing on the European/international dimension.

**Hélène:**

- **Germany:** *Steps need to be taken to create an official national organisation, such as in Romania (in the near future). Stay within the existing framework.*

	<p>→ <i>Three groups: one ND</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Georgia</b> <i>Regarding the issue of electing a ND per country, even if there are fewer than three groups: when do we belong to the movement? Being involved in the RCEE and taking part in the collectives, in EI forums, enables groups to feel that they are members (WA, online meetings). The CEIs are elected by all the region's groups, cumbersome election procedures. A national delegate has the same standing as a CEI on the RCEE, but could have been elected by a single group, whereas a CEI is elected by all the European groups? If people's feeling of belonging comes solely from taking part in the RCEE, something is missing. In the Americas: the ND takes part in the regional council, and then debriefs the groups in their country to explain what is happening. There is a real link, which is the inspiration behind this role of contact/facilitator.</i></li> <li>- <b>"Representative</b> <i>or country ambassador": we do not champion a country's vision as NDs. The CEIs do not represent Asia, Africa or Europe. There is no power at stake. A CEI is part of a movement and must have an overview.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Eve</b> reiterated a nuance regarding what seems to be a divergence between EI and EE: EE operates in such a way that it is important for someone to represent the issues in each country in order to work on EU laws and their transposition in each country, and it is also important to understand the political contexts in order to run awareness-raising campaigns or report back on political issues at the European level. The ND does have a "representative" role in this respect.</p> <p><b>Jean-Philippe</b> raised the language issue, and the complications that could be created by not having a ND per country, taking the example of Ukraine: Oselya could be represented by Poland, but not Nasha Khata, as the members only speak Ukrainian. This could cause complications in terms of language and geographical issues. This solution could prove complicated from a practical standpoint.</p> <p><b>Hélène:</b> How about having observer members, who take part without voting?</p> <p><b>Jean-Philippe</b> felt that this was a good idea, it would help maintain a link with their country, notably for vulnerable groups in Ukraine and Georgia: we need to keep them close to the movement. <b>Maintain a link without calling into question our democratic principles.</b></p>	
<p><b>9. Co-presidency</b></p>	<p><b>Carina</b> presented the proposal to include in the EE statutes the option of having a co-presidency at the head of the association, as happened, quite naturally, with Simon at the</p>	<p>The RCEE postponed the discussion on co-presidency until a future session.</p>

	<p>start of the presidency in 2016. She referred back to the early days of Emmaus, when two leading figures emerged: Abbé Pierre and Lucie Coutaz.</p> <p>There are positives, but also some pitfalls that need to be avoided by making provision for new rules and a new operating method.</p>	
<p><b>10. Discussion on the development of advocacy work</b></p>	<p>Reminder of what is done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Advocacy work</u> in partnership with other associations/European networks. RREUSE, EAPN (poverty), Migreurop and more infrequently directly with MEPs and commissioners.</li> <li>- <u>Awareness-raising work</u>: migration (example of posters about migrant reception). Through our grassroots presence, in contact with people: make known our point of view, way of doing things...to subsequently direct policies.</li> </ul> <p>Today: Run 30-minute workshops and then come back and take stock for 20 minutes – <b>regarding advocacy, what can be improved or what more can be done?</b></p> <p>Full transcription of the work of each group:</p> <p><u>Group 1</u></p> <p>Three issues raised, which seem to be the most important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Migration</li> <li>- Social economy</li> <li>- Climate change</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Review the situation, each ND needs to say what is happening in their country.</li> <li>2) Work in small groups (like on migration).</li> <li>3) What should be done to ensure that the groups take ownership of this work?</li> </ol> <p>Climate change as an example: we can pool resources created in the past in different countries e.g., EF four or five years ago: short document with illustrations, no major translation cost, to explain simple and fundamental things (how to save water) done in the communities. Or EE on the same topics.</p> <p>Get more closely involved with existing networks.</p> <p>Need to get back in contact with the European Parliament, including with Damien Carême, who knows Emmaus well, and might be able to give us names to contact and some tips.</p> <p>Everything is circular, these three issues overlap at the edges.</p>	

Strategy: challenging, as we only have a team of four paid employees.  
Proposal: Add to the team, either a permanent position, or temporary contracts, or young students on assignments. Call on the elected representatives; apart from the exec members, they have not been called upon much in the last few months. The strength of the elected representatives.

### Group 2

Think about conditions, preliminary steps. No developments.

Conditions:

- 1) WA, set strategies, ways of undertaking struggles. At the regional level, we need to work to deliver political literacy.

We need to improve politically. Our messages are lacking well thought-out content. We need to consolidate our thinking and have arguments. Capitalist economy, environment, migration, increased consumption, work, circular economy.

- Set up educational initiatives to develop our political literacy. It is hard to read a book if you don't know how to read. Likewise, a well-argued approach is needed to consolidate our stance.
- ⇒ Training before action: training courses, workshops, discussions. This will enable us to fulfil the second part of our remit: delivering direct aid to people. Undertake analysis in order to eradicate the root causes of poverty.

At the local, regional and international levels.

- 2) Bolster networks and alliances with other organisations: social economy, migration...reach out to other groups, who champion social housing, who oppose ministries, local councils. Pressure and advocacy groups. Go back to our groups' values.

- 3) Assessment: what improvements are we trying to achieve?

Appraise the work done currently by the secretariat and executive. Ratio of time dedicated to topics, and resources allocated to them. Do we need to hire a new member of staff? What skills/characteristics should they have?

- 4) In response to issues that may arise: develop communications campaigns with images. Simple but effective, like the migration posters, which are an excellent attempt to raise the profile of our issues using the groups as a platform.
  - What do we want to say about the most difficult situations in our regions?

### Group 3

- 1) See if new networks with a good vibe could work with us? They would need to fit in with and address the issues in our action plan.

One of the aims of network creation: increase our political impact. Change driven by our experience and know-how.

Need to be supported by the groups, change via lawmakers who would be on our side. But driven forward by our groups, the companions and customers within Emmaus, and then by politicians and local networks outside of Emmaus.

“Act local, think global” encapsulates Emmaus. It works the other way too: global needs to think local, and know what is happening on the ground.

EI and EE need to support this action plan.

The groups are busy trying to survive from day to day: they are interested, but not able to have an overview. This overview could be provided by the EE and EI Secretariats.

- 2) To achieve this: TRAINING

Content of the Global Report and its recommendations: use it to work out what to do at the movement level.

Practical training to raise people’s awareness.

- 3) Social media influencing – we need to be better. Influence between the local and higher levels. People are bombarded with information on a daily basis.

Clear information from EI or EE, with links to find out more.

- Invest in people at all levels. Need to give space and time for these discussions. Invest in recruiting a new staff member for EE. The person would be tasked with media relations, social media specialist.

Other big topics:

- Environment
- Migration, as ever.
- Poverty

New challenges:

- Business model, the pandemic has changed everything. Achieve a balance with these changes.
- Change the law and policies that will affect what we do and how we do it.

#### Group 4

What is advocacy? Only at a political level, or does it encompass the local actions of groups?  
We need a basis for work.

- Ensure that we attend committees that affect us: with what resources?
- More communication campaigns on topics: migration – posters, videos, easy and asked for.

Take the campaigns beyond the walls of our shops and groups: how can we target those who do not come to us?

→ Demonstrations, events...

E.g.: In Alençon, a big Ukraine solidarity evening was held on 30 April. There were stands (Red Cross, food bank..) and a roundtable about the initiatives being run to support Ukrainian refugees. Present these posters to reiterate that there are others to help and not just stay within the confines of “our” Europe.

- Find out about world days: shared initiatives/hard-hitting actions.
- Advocacy tools to present the movement: PowerPoint, videos, available in the members’ area so that we have a common base.
- Get back in our seat at the UN, because it is important = EI
- Publicize other awareness-raising campaigns.
- Seek out people with expertise in certain topics, not necessarily elected representatives or employees, but with expertise.

**Anais**, the EI advocacy officer: presented an EI Board proposal revolving around two future advocacy working areas:

- 1) Set up regional advocacy working groups, with a member of each region’s exec = four regional working groups (Asia, Africa, Americas and Europe).

Use the Global Report’s assertions as the starting point, and see how to transpose them into tangible advocacy initiatives with a regional slant, and which do not have the same timescales or working methods.

The idea is to discuss in more practical terms and take into consideration specifics.

The working groups would be quite small, see who is interested in taking part.



- 2) Run an international survey in the movement, using the Global Report as a basis to go to see the Emmaus groups (recruiting volunteers doing voluntary community service) to review advocacy initiatives and mobilisation.

This could help us to gain an idea of what is happening in the groups. Identify what is being done, and see how the groups bring to life what is happening on the ground.

- Make young people want to get involved.

Coordinated by Anaïs in conjunction with the regions.

It will quickly come around: Paris, five-months grassroots survey, and then feedback. Four volunteers

- One in Africa + Europe (groups that send containers).
- One in the Americas.
- One in Asia and Europe.
- One in Europe

**Stéphane** from EI: what is coming out of your workshops is very interesting, as the movement is now wondering: ***how can we become actively involved in advocacy from the regions, and what are we trying to achieve?*** We are spending years discussing the local struggles, the causes of poverty, and collective actions.

Observation: Our analysis is correct, and our local struggles and assertions are right, but we are finding it hard to all collectively undertake advocacy.

Two questions will be raised at the WA:

- Are the assertions and themes in the global report the ones that the groups wish to commit to, or should we add more?
- What do the groups want in order to get involved and make a contribution to advocacy? (Training, shared resources etc)

- The WA will be the opportunity to look with all the movement's groups at what is lacking so that we can collectively champion struggles.

Our local actions are very important but are not enough in themselves to change the world and combat poverty.

We look forward to you speaking about this topic at the WA.

The aim of this survey is also to improve how we work together, between EI and EE, to link up with the whole RCEE (including the NDs, and not just the CEIs), and to forge stronger links between the secretariat employees.

	<p><b>Carina</b> reiterated what was said in the morning: how should we present the global report on poverty? The groups do not have the resource.          Situation in which the Global Report on Poverty is not used, because we do not know how. It was mentioned by the council this morning: we need to work on it.</p> <p>Anaïs said that EI could provide a PowerPoint and develop more accessible communications resources.</p>	
<p><b>11. Discussion about how EE-EI action complements each other / Decentralisation</b></p>	<p>Carina, Eve, Patrick and Nathalie reviewed relations between EI and EE over the past few years, with the stated desire of each organisation to work more effectively together, and develop links between the executives, members of the Board, and employees of both secretariats.</p> <p>The issue of decentralisation is also at the heart of the discussion, because it can be confusing in certain areas: how to work as a decentralised organisation? This issue is shared by the other regions of the world.</p> <p>Inviting Carina to attend the EI Board meetings needs to be considered, and she will be invited to the upcoming EI meetings.</p> <p>Three main questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ How to work more effectively, without being burdened/overwhelmed with information (EI, EE emails, with the groups etc).</li> <li>➔ How to coordinate more effectively?</li> <li>➔ When all is said and done, what is decentralisation?</li> </ul> <p><b>Patrick</b> felt that we need to work better together, despite misunderstandings on both sides, and frustrations caused by certain events. A more general discussion is also needed; it would take into account the movement's aspirations. He agreed about the need for the EE president to become a member of the EI Board in the future.          He reiterated that EI is not the boss of the other regions, but is there to act as Abbé Pierre's universal legatee.          EI does not impose anything on a region → how can we work and reflect together, and pool resources?          Patrick came back to the Europe Region's place and importance in the movement, due to the number of member groups, and the resources generated by the region. A global,</p>	

strategic review of solidarity and the annual sales is needed, and we need to gradually switch to a collective dynamic.

Until the matter is discussed by EI, we will be inviting the EE president to attend each EI Board, even though this is not provided for in the statutes.

**Nathalie** took the floor to go back over a few misunderstandings resulting from the publication of the Global Report, among other matters. She called on the Europe Region to take steps towards amending their statutes so that there is no more hesitation and that the president is a CEI in order to facilitate relationships.

*The CEIs are the links between the EI level and the regions. It would be worthwhile if the CEIs held a meeting with the region's president after an EI Board in order to report back on what was said. There would be no frustration about not knowing what happened at the meetings.*

*We sometimes realise that the CEIs do not pass on news to the Secretariat; this is not a criticism, merely an observation. We forget that they take the time to come for a meeting, and then swiftly head home, and do not immediately pass on information.*

*The SEI is considering what steps to take to give the regions access to Board preparatory documents in advance: an intranet section on the new website (lost at the present time): upload the preparatory documents to the intranet?*

**Nathalie** reiterated that the ultimate authority comes from the grassroots, i.e., the World Assembly. *It is not EI, but all the movement's groups that meet every four years and take decisions. The World Assembly is therefore the highest authority.*

**Carina** felt that it is important to analyse these 20 years of decentralisation: have things worked out as we thought two decades ago? This would enable us to get to grips better with the future.

**José Maria** reminded the meeting that right at the start of decentralisation, Spain made a different proposal, taking into consideration cultural, linguistic and geographical proximity... We need to consider regions with better prospects of working together.

*After 20 years, can we undertake an evaluation in order to consider other pathways? Maintain the regions, but create working groups based on closeness?*

*Another thing: the impression/awareness that the local and national groups, region, and grouping of regions have a shared DNA: options, ideological view of shared struggles. This is the legacy of our shared history, manifestos and documents from our World Assemblies. We already have ideas which can be used to combat destruction, capitalism and environmental damage.*

	<p><i>However, the regions need to have their own identities and work at their own pace, emphasize their identities, without necessarily agreeing with the other regions if there are different obligations.</i></p> <p><i>Once the initial moments of uncertainty passed, it seems that the Europe Region has taken a different path: enthusiastic in Spain, because the talk no longer is of statutes, articles, membership dues: instead, we are focusing on European problems – the circular economy, reuse, waste management stemming from EU standards.</i></p> <p><i>If the regions identify work to be done, we are not in contradiction with EI, the Board, etc. Instead, we need to improve and polish up our communication methods, and ensure that the reports from the different governing bodies are submitted earlier. However, the region needs to have a common agreement and opinion, and an action plan rooted in regional reality.</i></p> <p><i>We should not waste time on small internal disagreements, but we need to be given the resources to make our struggles and work meaningful. We need to organise our struggles and work, and then see how to convey it to our groups, share our know-how with the other regions. We need to have our own strength and mass. We are wasting our energy if we do not have this sort of identity.</i></p> <p><b>Marie-France</b> agreed with José. <i>We are wasting our time. Origins in 2003: we agreed that France would stop being a region, and it is pointless to say that things were better in the past.</i></p> <p><b>Patrick:</b> <i>A good discussion. We have said that our struggles are local, important and global. What we embody in the regions has local, important and global repercussions. We are no longer referring to Europe, Africa...</i></p> <p><i>My takeaway: YES, small inadequacies in the past. What should we do? Find solutions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Talk more to each other.</i></li> <li>- <i>Pool our resources.</i></li> <li>- <b>Advocacy:</b> <i>do things together.</i></li> <li>- <b>Solidarity:</b> <i>more information</i></li> </ul> <p><i>There is no reason that things will not work if we have this dynamic.</i></p> <p><i>Each region will have the legitimacy and opportunity to move forward its work.</i></p> <p><b>The next World Assembly will be in 2025, and there will be a European elective assembly on the day before, at the WA venue, and then a RAEE a year after the WA (in 2026).</b></p>	
<p><b>12. Organisation of the World Assembly/Registration</b></p>	<p>Nathalie provided an update on the number of participants, registrations, problems encountered (visas, COVID, etc).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 400 people.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 215 groups set to attend.</li> <li>- 40 proxy votes in the pipeline. The quorum has been reached.</li> </ul> <p><u>Emmaus UK</u>: 20 communities. 28 people of whom 50% are companions.  <u>France</u>: 75 communities, high participation rate.  <u>Asia</u>: All the groups if visas are obtained.  <u>Africa</u>: All the groups are coming; they will apply for their visas in France. The EI team is arranging Schengen visas so that they can travel to Uruguay.</p>	
<p><b>13. Visit to Emmaus Coup de Main's Porte de Montreuil recycling centre</b></p>		
<b>END OF DAY TWO</b>		
<p><b>14. New full and trial member groups</b></p>	<p>The members of the RCEE reviewed the new full and trial members. The following groups were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amis 3, Latvia</li> <li>- MPFSC, Lithuania</li> <li>- SMILTENE, Latvia</li> <li>- Emmaus Lokihonen</li> <li>- Emmaus Medway, UK</li> <li>- Akvarn and Fredriksdal, Sweden</li> <li>- Simplified membership procedure for new groups in France.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Amis 3, Latvia</u></b> <i>Christian went back briefly over the association's backstory.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Founded in 2015 by Solvita and Jean, with the help of Region 4 in France.</li> <li>- Objective: Help people in the east of the country.</li> <li>- Main activities: medical assistance, help with in-patient stays, prosthetics – not covered by the State.</li> <li>- AGR: farming, agricultural processing: preserves.</li> <li>- Context and weak points: no real culture of donating in Latvia, the group relies heavily on containers, and the increasing cost of energy will also affect them.</li> </ul> <p><u>Vote on whether Amis 3 should be admitted as a trial member:</u>  FOR: 16  AGAINST: 0</p>	<p><u>Vote on whether Amis 3 (Latvia) should be admitted as a trial member:</u>  FOR: 16  Against: 0  Abstention: 0</p> <p><u>Vote on whether MPFSC (Lithuania) should be admitted as a trial member:</u>  For: 16  Against: 0  Abstention: 0</p> <p><u>Vote on ending the trial membership of Smiltene, Latvia:</u> The RCEE members unanimously voted to end Smiltene's trial membership.</p> <p><u>Vote on ending Lokihonen's membership:</u></p>

Abstentions: 0

**MPFSC, Lithuania:** *The association was founded by parents who had lost their children to human trafficking, which was a major problem in Lithuania. The association has been in contact with EI and EE for many years. They submitted a trial membership application a few years ago, but it was turned down on governance grounds and a lack of self-sufficiency.*

Changes that have enabled the group to reapply for trial membership:

- Beneficiary participation in the income-generating activity: the trafficking victims sort and help to sell the second-hand clothing when living at the association.
- Governance: a large number of people have joined the association's board.
- Belonging to the international movement: the association identifies with the values advocated by the Manifesto, and wants to join the movement despite a model that does not totally fit with that of a traditional Emmaus group.
- Background: the association runs the 11600 number, used to report missing children in Europe, part of a big network in which CNZD in Croatia is involved. The association delivers paid services for the police and local council.
- Team: 15 employees, 200 volunteers, 10 very active volunteers.
- The association has been very actively involved in welcoming and providing information for migrants from Belarus and Ukraine since 2021.

Vote on whether MPFSC should be admitted as a trial member:

FOR: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

**SMILTENE, Latvia**

Since becoming a trial member, it has always been difficult to monitor Smiltene because they do not speak any of the movement's official languages. During the trial membership visit conducted by Carina and Christian in October 2021, a joint decision was taken with the group that it would be better to terminate their trial membership, because the group is too small to get involved in the life of the movement and has no development prospects.

VOTE: The RCEE members unanimously voted to end Smiltene's trial membership.

End of membership, no further action taken:

The RCEE members unanimously voted to end Iokihonen's membership.

- We need to check with EI about usage of the Emmaus name and trademark.

Officially recorded the end of Turku's trial membership, without any further action.

Vote on ending Emmaus Medway's trial membership (UK)

The RCEE members unanimously voted to end Medway's trial membership.

Vote on ending the trial membership of Emmaus Fredriksdal and Akvarn in Sweden

The RCEE members unanimously voted to end both groups' trial membership.

Vote: 16 votes FOR

Against: 0

Abstention: 0

The RCEE officially noted the closure of Marchienne au Pont in Belgium.

The RCEE noted that the following groups joined using

**Emmaus Iokihonen**, member: still have their small shop, two people, very small. They have not taken part in the Finnish meetings and do not answer emails. They have just ceased being involved in the movement. They do update their website and are open once or twice a week, but no longer have anything to do with Emmaus. Their website says that they are still members of the movement, but they do not pay their membership dues, etc. We have been unable to contact them by email.

**Carina**, as president of Emmaus Finland, has sent them a letter informing them that their membership has been terminated. They have not been active members since the 2007 Lisbon international work camp.

The national organisation has decided that the group is no longer a member of the movement.

→ We need to check with EI about usage of the Emmaus name and trademark.

The meeting officially noted the end of this group's membership and the termination of **Turku's** trial membership, which has not proceeded. Decisions on all the donations were made by the Finnish national organisation.

#### **Emmaus Medway, end of trial membership.**

- Background: founded in 2005, EI membership application in 2012, everything was going well.
- Buildings: 24 residential places, two charity shops.
- However, the group then lost key members of staff. Efforts were made to help them, Emmaus UK extended loans to enable the group to continue its work.
- In 2018, the company that owned the buildings decided to end the lease, site reconstruction, and the group was kicked out.

Simon wanted Emmaus Medway to survive, time and energy. The leader was great and did absolutely everything. A suggestion was made to move to other premises provided by another association.

However, Emmaus Medway turned down the opportunity, and this created a form of misunderstanding. Unfortunately, that is how things ended.

Positives: all the companions were rehoused + are in work. For Emmaus UK, this was the first group to end its trial membership and shut down.

The group had numerous costs, everything has been paid off, but their NGO work has not been fully closed down.

The RCEE recorded the termination of Emmaus Medway's trial membership, with no further action taken, as decided by the national organisation, Emmaus UK.

the simplified membership procedure: [Emmaüs Défi, Vertex, 100 pour 1 Tours, Espaces.](#)

*Proposal to end trial memberships with no further action taken in Sweden - **Akvarn** and **Fredriksdal**:*

At the outset, there was a big Emmaus group in Bjorko in Sweden. However, there were tensions and conflicts with an employee, who founded two new groups in 2006 and 2007. These two groups became trial members in 2017 at the EE meeting in Southern Sweden.

However, right from the start, they were asked to comply with the following conditions:

- Expand the two boards in order to include outside expertise.
- Examine in depth the feasibility of merging the two groups to improve governance.
- Develop a succession plan for both governance and operations.

None of these conditions were ever met, even after visits were paid.

Furthermore, in 2019 Emmaus Bjorko sent a message detailing the major difficulties with these two groups. Their actions forced the group to leave the movement. Upon leaving Emmaus, they wanted to change name and use the name under which they were already known – Bjorko Freedom. However, upon registering this name, they realised that it had already been registered by Fredriksdal.

This led to Carina stepping in to resolve the conflict and to a second trial membership monitoring visit by Carina and Simon.

Regarding governance, there are the same problems as at the beginning. Same staff in the organisation and on the board of these two groups: Emmaus Akvarn and Fredriksdal.

Robert Larsson was still the director of both organisations.

Simon, Carina, Michael and Gabriela all asked for the two groups to merge or have two boards and different leaders, but they failed to listen. Shortly after the second trial visit, Robert took over the leadership of a third Emmaus group.

The RCEE voted unanimously to end the trial membership of these two groups, without any further action.

**Marchienne au Pont** (Belgium) has ceased operating under the Emmaus name due to a lack of leaders able to continue with the initial community vision.

**Julio:** The work is continuing but under another NGO name. Therefore, in the presence of a notary, resignation from the Emmaus Marchienne Board and mandate given to another association. Everything was done legally.

The RCEE noted the closure.



**France**, a series of groups missed the boat for joining the international movement a few years ago. A simplified membership procedure was proposed.

Four groups joined using the **simplified procedure**:

Pierre-Yves:

- **Emmaüs Défi**: Paris, 2007. Aim is to reintegrate the most excluded people through work. Similar activity to the communities. Innovative: *les recruteurs* (upcycling). 2020: 175 employees. Three shops in Paris. Emmaus Connect stems from this group, and is developing well. *Premières Heures* scheme: integration through employment, starting by working a few hours/days, adopted by Paris City Council. Solidarity equipment bank. Unsold food service. Emmaus Campus as well for students.

Plan to set up a community to benefit from companion status. Highly dynamic group.

**Carina:** *This group is inspiring. They have come at the right time with their activities. Business model could be used in other places. They are finding modern ways of working, and are heavily involved in integrating the homeless into society. They work closely with the council, etc.*

- **Emmaüs Vertex**, Occitania: this employment access company was founded in 2010 by Emmaüs Ariège. They collect, sort and sell textiles, and have 50 employees on back-to-work contracts.
- **Emmaüs 100 pour 1** Tours: Founded in 2010 in Tours. Idea: 100 people join forces to house a homeless family of undocumented migrants. Solely draws on the donations made by members, who run the association. 15 families housed in Tours and process to follow: housing provided until migrants are given leave to remain and secure employment. Requests school places for children and takes part in solidarity work (Emmaus community work or work done by other associations). Very long-term support, as some families have been supported for five years. It is very difficult for them to obtain work and housing, in the long term, even when they are given leave to remain.

Since Tours, 60 similar associations, with the same name, have been set up across France. Five are part of the Emmaus network. Pierre Yves is involved in this informal network, which works according to this principle.

The groups are entirely composed of volunteers, and had forgotten to submit an application. This has now been done.

- **Espaces**: Paris Region, 1994, integration through urban ecology.

→ Green space maintenance, contracts with local councils. Railway embankments, riverbanks (Seine), forests. Innovation: urban farming (market gardening on rooftops). 170 employees on employment access contracts, and 70 employees on permanent contracts. EF members since 2017. Well-integrated into the movement. The EF vice-president is from this association.

*Jean-Philippe presented an update on the project to create a group in **Cluj** in Romania, run by Paul, a former Emmaus companion at Montpellier and Satu Mare (Romania). Following Regional Council discussions, the association has ceased operations, and Paul should be returning to France. A support group had been created to support the setting up of this new group, but it did not work out in the end.*

**Patrick** took the floor and referred back to the Emmaus project in Cluj, which he felt only came into existence because of the financial and practical support provided by other Emmaus groups. The situation is different in Asia, Africa and the Americas, where this is not possible, and this causes frustration.

*My community was founded 30 years ago and we are still not independent. This is the same around the world. We scrape a living. When the solidarity projects arrive (FAP): €272,000 for the four regions, and Africa requested €700,000 worth of project funding.*

*When we hear about solidarity in Europe, we need to ensure that another form of solidarity is not being created.*

*Regarding container loads and requests for containers, there are 75 requests in Africa. We had to reduce it to 55 containers, which are needed for the groups to survive.*

*What can be done to redistribute wealth more effectively, and open up further to the world to support vulnerable people?*

**Jean-Philippe:** *EE is not financially supporting Cluj. There is only a monitoring group. EE has no budget and is not in the habit of supporting groups at the beginning of their journeys. Instead, there are bilateral partnerships between groups to support their work.*

**Eve:** *In fact, we realised just that when trying to support this group: groups have significant funding needs at the start, and EE does not support them. This is also an issue.*

*Regarding container loads and containers in Africa, as we said yesterday, the rising cost of fuel is going to raise questions for Africa and Eastern Europe. Is a joint discussion needed?*

**MF Bedléem:** *Money is not a dirty word, it remains pivotal. Use it well, YES, and yes, we need more solidarity, but even in France there are groups that are not self-supporting, and the work*

done is needed, whether the group is a community, committee of friends, or an employment access scheme. Agrees with Patrick, we need to redistribute resources. Over time, I feel that we are undertaking less solidarity than before.

**Maria-Luisa:** The money earned by the groups should be regarded as belonging to the movement as a whole. The mentality of isolationism is difficult for the movement. Some groups are building or fitting solar panels, car parks...while other groups are finding it hard to work, or work in difficult conditions. Money earned is not just for the group and for the development of its income-generating activity, but also for others.

**Pierre-Yves:** Big debate. On the one hand, there is a call for more solidarity being made by other countries to Europe and France. On the other hand, a desire for self-sufficiency emphasized when doing public fundraising in France, this was reined in by EI because it is not in the Emmaus ethos. The EF GA has stopped these initiatives. However, we are denying ourselves resources which would enable us to do even more solidarity. Challenging: we want more solidarity and resources, but we are denying ourselves significant resources. A major policy decision.

**Patrick:** We are talking about operational matters. However, we do not sufficiently broaden the debate, ok for giving money, but for what purpose? We need to look into these issues. 2021 international solidarity: EI only raised half of the expected amount: €600,000. This is an issue, but some communities are well-off.

**Carina:** We need to improve; we will discuss the matter again at the assembly. We have a major responsibility towards our companions and customers. We need to ensure that every penny goes to the best place, and know where the money goes. We need to tear down barriers, and develop the solidarity fund. We will think about it and come back to this issue.

**Aurore:** Money is pivotal, but there is something that can be done without money, and that is "take part". Some groups, notably in France, do not participate. Le Relai does an amazing job, but does not take part in the governing bodies. The movement is not just about money! In Alençon, we do not have a lot of money, but we get involved in the governing bodies.

**Eve:** We have been working on this for a few years. Getting groups to understand that the movement is international, and making them want to take part, rather than forcing them. We can see that we are not perfect.

	<p><i>For instance, after our initial discussions with Emmaüs Défi, they quickly became very enthusiastic.</i></p> <p><b>Pierre-Yves:</b> <i>In Tours, 100 pour 1, there are only volunteers who are busy with the work. EF: faraway. EE and EI: the group doesn't think about them. But once they find out more, it's great. We need to REACH OUT to people. That is the role of the ND!</i></p> <p><b>Patrick:</b> <i>We need to raise awareness at the grassroots level. Even if there is some reluctance, let's question ourselves: how do we facilitate, how do we convey information? We can forget quickly. Gradual facilitation.</i></p>	
<p><b>15. 2022 budget</b></p>	<p><i>Jean-Philippe presented the 2022 projected budget, approved by the exec, and presented to the February RCEE. It is similar to the 2021 budget.</i></p> <p><i>Regarding the discussions, few major changes.</i></p> <p><i>A handful of additions since February:</i></p> <p><i>Overall cost of the posters: under €10K. We did a great job! Translation and printing for each country was praised.</i></p> <p><i>Hire an additional staff member to undertake advocacy? Not included in this budget, but no proposal yet, await the exec to further debate the matter. Cash funds would enable us to hire someone. And we could be more active with regard to collecting dues.</i></p>	<p>The RCEE approved the adjusted 2022 budget.</p>
<p><b>16. Conclusion and proposed schedule for future meetings</b></p>	<p>Future meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RCEE: Lublin, two potential dates. 10-12 October, or 6-8 October.</li> </ul> <p>Preference: 10-12 October.</p> <p>Serena: Complicated, because there is a special sale in Saarbrücken on 8 October. <b><u>So, the 10-12 October option is better.</u></b></p> <p><i>In the end, 20-23 October was selected.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Migration conference with EI: 7-8 November or in conjunction with the RCEE in Lublin. Awaiting a response from Nathalie with regard to whether we can run a conference at the same time, otherwise we will run it at the same time as the RCEE.</li> <li>- Exchange of practices, farming: 16-18 September in Iasi, Romania.</li> </ul>	

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- RAEE, Iasi, 2023: 23 (participants arrive), meeting on 24-26, depart 27 October 2023.<br/>We are going to fully book a hotel, where the meeting will also be held.</li></ul> |  |
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THANK YOU to the interpreters, who are really part of the Emmaus family.  
Thank you to everyone for enabling us to take part, work for peace, have hope for the future,  
for the elections in France.

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

## **Appendix 1 - Situation in Bosnia and Croatia with regard to the war in Ukraine**

### **TOMS**

The TOMS Association does not have accommodation facilities for the reception of refugees. Refugees living in the Trogir area mostly live in their own real estate or are accommodated with friends or relatives. In total, it's registered 45 refugees from Ukraine.

The association has made its services of psychosocial rehabilitation, half-day stay for children with disabilities and learning assistance available through the local refugee reception headquarters, but there are still no registered users.

Also, the president of the TOMS association is a member of the national Crisis Team led by SOIH - Croatian union of associations of persons with disabilities, whose purpose is to enable refugees with disabilities to protect all their rights while staying in Croatia.

Additionally, the Association carries out the usual activities: 25 geronto-housewives provide home help services for over 200 elderly users, 10 people stay in the day care center for the elderly with dementia, and 70 elderly people use physical therapy services in the association's premises or their own homes.

In cooperation with one local association, hot meals are delivered daily to the 5 most vulnerable locals. Services for children with disabilities are provided as per usual, including half-day stay, speech therapy, physical therapy, transportation and assistance for students with learning disabilities. When it comes to the restaurant, all activities are going in their usual manner. We are preparing for the upcoming summer season in order to facilitate better service to our customers and even better working conditions for our workers.

### **Center for Missing and Exploited children (CNZD)**

Croatia is hosting more than 13,000 people from Ukraine, with more arriving every day. As Ukraine was among the first countries to recognize Croatia's independence in 1991, the links between the two countries are strong, and the proximity of their languages makes integration easier.

CNZD is helping over 350 people who had to flee Ukraine.

The situation in Ukraine has many repercussions and there are great outpourings of solidarity as we wait for peace to return.

The Centre for Missing and Exploited Children Croatia - Emmaus group based in Croatia, specializes in psychological support for children and adolescents. It has opened a "Children Corner", allowing children from Ukraine traumatized by the conflict to be monitored give psychological help and start to prepare integration in school program.

The Info Centre is opened and run by CNZD, there is two employees, lawyer and translator, Info Centre is opened Monday to Friday from 8-16h, idea was that on one place refugees can get all information, fill the documents, get information regarding social and health care, and also seek for job.

So far over 400 people came in these 3 weeks, a lot of volunteers are helping out. This is only Info Centre this type in Croatia, and lot of other county's are now copying our model.

Since 95% of refugees came to Croatia are women and children one of our first goal was to open place for children so we could evaluate and prepare them for regular school. So far every day we have around 15 children every day, but we have registered over 70 children (and that is max. limit ) they stay for several hours, a lot of children is also going to online school in Ukraine language. Our intentions is to open two more Children Corner as soon as possible. In Children Corner is translator, teacher and psychologist that are working with children. Parents leave children in room and they can drink tea or coffee in other room, but children can and come see them, process of separation due to trauma must be in baby steps at first. After few days parents can leave children for several hours.

Every refugee is placed in hotel, hostel, apartment, also provided by 3 meals and hygiene products so all basic need are fulfilled. Croatia was in war 30 years ago and we know what war trauma is, to us every city in Ukraine remind us to Vukovar ( our city that was destroyed in war ). People from Ukraine are culturally, mentally and even genetic very similar to Croatian people and they are very well received here, a lot of them founded job here in Croatia as soon as they arrived. When they register as refugee from Ukraine they have all same rights as Croatian people, health insurance and social rights also.

Our state and people are doing everything to help Ukraine people to integrate them in jobs, school and normal life, we understand what war is, and that it is crucial to make every one coming from Ukraine feel safe and accepted in Croatia, and I think that every person that came from Ukraine will tell you that it is true.

### **International Forum of Solidarity - Emmaus (IFS-Emmaus)**

Since the 24th of February, and latest happenings in Ukraine that reflected to the Europe and the world, in Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no organized arrival of refugees. The number of registered refugees from Ukraine is 140, but most of them are accommodated in private houses. It depends on the status they are requesting from the state, it will be resolved. In the first two weeks of March, it was registered around 1000 citizens of Ukraine entering the states. They can stay only 30 days in the country, if they don't request the asylum. The state prepared the Centers for the reception of refugees, as well the hotels, but according the information, the refugees are mostly accommodated in the private arrangement.

It is not expected significant change the number of the people from Ukraine in BiH in further.

International Forum of Solidarity - Emmaus (IFS-Emmaus) has established cooperation with the Ministry of Secure and Foreign Affairs, as a partner on projects of prevention of illegal migration and trafficking on human beings. As a service for the vulnerable groups as well displaced persons (migrants, unaccompanied minors, refugees) IFS-Emmaus put the capacities of 120 beds within the premises of the Center for children and youth to disposal for the people of Ukraine if they start organized to enter the state. Within the Center, IFS would provide with full accommodation, hygienic, medical and psychosocial assistance.

Due to the latest crisis in the world, increased fuel prices, IFS faced the high increasing prices of the basic groceries needed for the all projects implemented by IFS - Emmaus, especially One Meal per Day project. The number of beneficiaries is higher from day to day and at the moment we distribute 1,000 meals daily.

Second hand shop is in lack of the goods for selling, since the rare transport that IFS received during the pandemic and during the 2022 we didn't received not even one truck of the goods. So it further leads to the closure second hand shop since we are making only the costs.

The other activities are still on going.

The risk of a war is low, and refers in this context to the presence of NATO and the EUFOR-Althea protection force – which, however, is still quite modest, with around 700 soldiers. But implication on possible unstable situation in this region is still mentioned in different international events and presentation. Among the general population, the fear is present and causes the reaction of uncontrollable purchasing the food, groceries, making the supplies that reflect on unjustified increasing the prices. Having this situation, the poverty is spreading among the wider population - elderly, unemployed, disadvantage groups, even the regular population with an average wages.

### **Nova Generacija**

Currently, there are no refugees from Ukraine in Banja Luka. For now, there are estimates that there will be none. But, we are monitoring the situation and will make our capacities available in terms of accommodation and provision of food and hygiene.

In addition, the war has had a significant impact on our group. Rising prices diminish our opportunities on ongoing projects. But we still manage to overcome that. There is also a fear of war among the elderly population and children, which is reflected in the wellbeing of our citizens

Currently, Nova Generacija continues with all their activities.



## **Appendix 2 - Situation of the Emmaus groups in Belgium**

There are now only two communities in Belgium. Emmaus Ghlin in Mons (8 companions) and La Poudrière (40 companions) across three sites: Brussels, Péruwelz and Rummen Farm. Emmaüs Marchienne au Pont in Charleroi has just closed down and is no longer a member of the Movement. Emmaüs Lodelinsart in Charleroi also closed its doors four years ago. At Marchienne au Pont the board decided to stop working with Emmaus, but work continues with another association called L'Îlot, in accordance with Belgian law on non-profits. (non-profit association).

### Ukraine

Several thousand Ukrainian refugees have come to Belgium. They first have to register in Brussels, and are then spread out across the country. Belgians must register with their local councils to be able to host Ukrainians in their homes. In three small districts with Péruwelz the local population offered 300 accommodation places. La Poudrière volunteered to host Ukrainian refugees in its three houses.

At Péruwelz, we signed a mandatory welcome document created by the council so that the council can intervene if there are any problems when hosting the refugees. Ghlin and La Poudrière have already held sales in support of Ukraine. Our customers really responded and the sales were successful.

In Belgium, we have already seen an increase in energy, fuel oil and food prices.