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Emmaus in Europe

EMMAUS CUROPE ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

Our assembly is just around the corner!

Are you ready? It's almost time - for those lucky enough to be participating in the assembly, there's not long left now before we'll all be heading off to Romania! Meetings and gatherings are a key part of Emmaus' DNA so we hope you're ready and your bags are packed for this key event in the democratic life of our movement.

All the information and documents you may require can be found on the <u>special regional</u> <u>assembly section of our website</u> and, of course, please feel free <u>to get in touch</u> if you have any questions.

Whilst we're waiting for this major event, and to give you a bit of a taste of what it will be like in Romania, here is the latest solidarity and activism news from our region. This month we'll be focusing on Romania and Ukraine.

Happy reading and see you soon in laşi!

The Emmaus Europe team

Spotlight on...

The birth of the new Emmaus Romania Federation!



The members of the new Romanian national organisation in Iaşi in June 2023. Credit: Emmaüs Iaşi

On 1 June the three Emmaus groups in Romania met in Iaşi to finalise the creation of the Emmaus Romania Federation, the new national organisation for the country.

Thanks to this shared body the three groups will be able to overcome the geographical distance that separates them in order to better promote Emmaus' values and to work together to ensure that their voice is heard on the national level.

Gelu Nichitel, the leader and founder of Emmaus Iaşi, will be serving as the first Chair of the federation whilst Jean-Philippe Légaut and Rodica Bizu, the Chairs of Emmaus Satu Mare and Emmaus Targu Jiu, have been named as Vice-Chairs.

The first Emmaus group was created in Romania in 2001 when Emmaus Iaşi joined our movement. Emmaus Satu Mare joined in 2015 before Emmaus Targu Jiu joined in 2017. <u>Read more...</u>

European Action

Coming together for the general assembly of Migreurop

On 7-8 October Emmaus Europe participated in the general assembly of the Migreurop network. During this 2-day event we worked with the other members of this Euro-African network of academics and associations to continue our efforts to



protect the rights of exiled persons.

At this meeting we analysed the achievements of the network over the last two years, we worked together to strengthen Migreurop's strategic and political objectives and we were given a sneak peek of the 4th edition of the Atlas of Migration in Europe. This year's edition focuses on the topic of freedom of movement. At the general assembly we also elected the new board of Migreurop.

Read this article to find out more about the Atlas of Migration in Europe (this article is only available in French): <u>https://migreurop.org/article3119.html?lang_article=fr</u>

Green Friday: get involved in the campaign to denounce Black Friday

Have you ever heard of Green Friday? Every year the textile industry throws away 4 million tonnes of clothing and sells 5 million tonnes in Europe. Green Friday says "stop" to the environmental and social costs of this system and of the industry of excessive consumption.

The approach of this campaign is to raise awareness about more responsible consumption whilst questioning the logic behind Black Friday. The goal of Green Friday is to encourage citizens to think about the environmental and social impacts of their purchases whilst avoiding making people feel guilty in any way.

This year Emmaus Europe will be supporting this campaign, as we did last year. We are working with RREUSE to create posters for an online campaign that will be translated into several different languages. Given that this cause is closely linked to Emmaus' core values, we would also encourage you to participate by sharing these posters on your social media accounts.

If you would like more information about this campaign or if you would like to know if these posters will be available in your languages then please feel free to get in touch. We would be delighted to talk to you about this campaign.

You can find more information on this campaign here: <u>https://greenfriday.fr/</u> Your contacts: <u>manon.gaham@emmaus-europe.org</u> / <u>eve.poulteau@emmaus-europe.org</u>

Emmaus stories

An exchange of practices on working with wood: feedback on the event



losif showing off his sanding technique before applying a French polish finish. Credit: Emmaus Europe

In mid-September several European groups met in Krakow, Poland, to talk about the topic of wood - how to renovate wooden objects, how to re-use them, sanding techniques, etc. The Brat Albert group hosted 15 participants from all across Europe who went away with new ideas and plans to lead group projects in the future! Manon and losif from the Satu Mare group in Romania told us a little bit more about this informative 2-day event...

First of all, could you tell us a little bit about yourselves and about how Emmaus Satu Mare works?

Our names are losif (warehouse manager) and Manon (educator). The objective of our association is the socio-professional integration of young people who are leaving the child protection system. What we offer is an integration programme that is well-rounded and that covers many different aspects. Our goal is to help them move towards independent living, to help them to acquire vocational skills through practice in the workplace and to provide them with safety and stability by offering them housing.

What does your group do in terms of its work with wood?

We often receive pieces of furniture in pieces that we then assemble. If not all of the pieces are present we then try to replace them with other spare pieces that we have in the workshop. If we are unable to replace them and we cannot find any other solutions to fix it then the piece of furniture will be sold to be used as firewood. We don't do a lot of creating wooden pieces ourselves for the time being. But recently our young people, supervised by losif, made a table for 6 people on top of an old sewing machine! At this best practice exchange we learned a lot from the other participants.

Emmaus Movement Solidarity

Ukraine - Despite the war the Oselya group is continuing its fight against poverty



Credit: Emmaus Oselya

Emmaus Oselya is continuing with its work to support vulnerable people whilst also continuing to lead its income-generating activities. This group fights to offer dignified living conditions to the thousands of vulnerable people who are living in the Lviv region as well as to the victims of the ongoing conflict.

For several years Emmaus Oselya has distributed 150 hot meals to vulnerable people on Thursdays. In 2023 the group has distributed over 5,700 meals thanks to the funding provided by the Ukraine Fund.

In addition to all of this Emmaus Oselya also offers various services at its new day centre that was opened in January 2023 and that was largely funded by the Ukraine Fund (a fund that has been built thanks to the contributions of many Emmaus groups from all across the globe). In the 9 months that the centre has been open it has done a great job: the centre has welcomed over 1,346 people, including 492 internally-displaced persons.

Some key figures about the services provided:

- 7,133 pieces of second-hand clothing have been distributed
- 8,012 hot meals/food supplies have been distributed
- 4,071 showers have been taken
- 439 people have benefitted from medical care
- 10 people have been regularly seeing a psychologist
- 19 film projections have been organised
- An English class has been set up for a group of 10 people
- 1,631 loads of washing have been done
- 974 people have had their hair cut
- 1,832 hygiene products have been distributed

Welcoming more people within the community

Since the start of the conflict Emmaus Oselya has been hosting 10 internally-displaced persons as companions. Since 2021, due to the pandemic and then the outbreak of the war, the group has doubled the number of people it welcomes, up to 30 companions from 15.

IN MEMORIAM

In September 2023 the group learned of the death of Nazar, a former companion of the community. He died in the fighting at the age of 29. A portrait of Nazar <u>can be</u> <u>found on Facebook</u>. Just to remind you that 15 companions have left for the front since the conflict broke out in February 2022



Nazar, a former companion of the Oselya group. Credit: Emmaus Oselya

Three European projects supported by the Abbé Pierre Foundation!



Emmaus Oselya's old workshop is going to be transformed into a community house in order to provide a more dignified welcome to the people hosted by the group. Credit: Emmaus Oselya

Every year Emmaus Europe works with Emmaus International to present projects put forward by the groups in Europe (excluding France) to the Abbé Pierre Foundation. The projects must be focused on the topic of improving housing conditions. This year 3 of the 8 international projects that were chosen to be given support by the Foundation are European projects!

IFS-Emmaus – Bosnia-Herzegovina

The group will receive €32,402 in support in order to build housing for two single-parent families that have suffered from domestic violence. Social services put the group in touch with these families.

Emmaus Oxford – UK

The group will receive €20,000 in support in order to build 10 bathrooms. This amount will be part of a renovation project for two adjoined houses with the goal of providing dignified housing for 10 companions in an autonomous setting - a final step of sorts in their transition towards leaving the community.

Emmaus Oselya – Ukraine

The last project selected for support will benefit from funding by both the Abbé Pierre Foundation and Emmaus Europe: due to the Covid-19 pandemic and then the war led by Russia, this Ukrainian group has doubled the number of people it hosts over the last 3 years. And it has done so in an emergency context. This welcome has been provided thanks to the selfless commitment of all of the members of the community and by transforming certain shared spaces into new bedrooms.

Thanks to joint funding from Emmaus Europe (€30,000 from the Ukraine Fund) and from the Abbé Pierre Foundation (€36,006) and by using some of its own funds, the group has now been able to start the building works: renovating an old workshop and transforming rooms into bedrooms. This project will provide a more dignified welcome to the companions and will help replace the shared spaces that have been transformed into bedrooms over the last few years. The building work should be finished before winter hits!

Emmaus Lublin - inauguration of the new shop!



Emmaus Lublin's new shop building. Credit: Emmaus Lublin

The Emmaus Lublin group in Poland opened its new shop on 28 September! It is located on a street where lots of people pass by and provides 400m2 of space across two floors. The group hopes that this shop will help it move towards self-sufficiency.

And they are right to be hopeful: at the grand opening this 28-year-old group broke its daily sales record! The €3,540 of income will be sent to Emmaus International as the group decided to organise its annual solidarity sale on this opening day.

After several years of construction and after overcoming several difficulties, including the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, this shop will now provide better working conditions for the companions. The building work was partially funded by Emmaus' international solidarity (€73,290 was sent to the group as financial support).



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