

# 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN



emmaus

EUROPE

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

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The Emmaus Europe General Assembly passed this strategic plan in October 2023.

Photo on cover: IFS-Emmaus, Bosnia-Herzegovina / Photos on pages inside: Emmaus Europe (pp. 2, 5, 10, 13), Emmaus Iasi, Romania (p. 7), Emmaus Jura, Switzerland (p. 8), Emmaus Lublin, Poland (p. 15).

# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**This strategic plan adapts the policy directions approved by the World Assembly to the European context and will be implemented in synergy with Emmaus International's programme of action.** The plan also addresses Europe-specific issues.

**It directs our joint actions in Europe** over the next three years in order to achieve a greater impact by working in a coordinated fashion with the EU institutions and also with citizens to bring out the best in humanity.

**With this strategic plan, Emmaus Europe commits to mainstreaming gender equality and diversity in all our actions** in order to build inclusion and resilience both locally and regionally.

**It was approved by the 2023 Regional Assembly** and seeks to guide the work of Emmaus Europe's team of elected representatives and our team of employees over the next three years. The plan is in line with what we can do together at the European level, and will be transposed into annual action plans adjusted to our capacity.

We also hope that while the plan is an accurate reflection of our shared challenges, groups and national organisations will want to focus on practically implementing all or some of it at their respective levels in order to increase our collective impact.

# ACT FOR PEACE

**The war in Ukraine has been a terrible reminder of the fragile nature of peace** on our continent, at the precise moment when we are seeing the devastating effect of war around the world.

**We must take action to encourage peace in Europe over the coming years.**

In addition to Ukraine, peace is still under threat in the Balkans and, more generally, the rise of extreme Right in Europe is stirring up hatred and discrimination that are conducive to conflict.

**A peaceful society involves everyone being able to participate in the democratic process** and nobody being discriminated against because of their gender, ethnicity, religion, or on other grounds. The Emmaus Movement is going to continue to step up its work to bolster human rights, and develop a feeling of trust and human communities to achieve lasting peace.

**We need to go back to basics** – after World War II, Abbé Pierre invited young people from across Europe to stay in his house outside Paris. The aim was to build peace and prevent young people from aiming weapons at each other once again. Emmaus-ISF in Bosnia-Herzegovina has done the same thing in Srebrenica. We need to build on this legacy.

## AIMS

- Bolster democracy in the Emmaus groups and increase everyone's involvement in the different levels of our movement.
- Build trust between people.
- Combat discrimination.
- Increase solidarity and understanding between people.
- Analyse the causes of war in order to address them.

## PROPOSED INITIATIVES

- Encourage the groups to arrange meetings, twinning arrangements and exchanges at the national, regional and international levels, in coordination with Emmaus International.
- Organise exchanges of practices on democracy at group level.
- Proactively work for gender equality on all levels of the movement.
- Foster the development of European youth camps.
- Arrange “political literacy” sessions on the causes of war and hold joint discussions about action to take.
- In our practices and advocacy encourage ethical finance and refuse to use carbon-emitting banks that are involved in the arms trade.
- Develop European partnerships with pacifist networks.

Emmaus representatives at the commemoration of the Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia-Herzegovina.



# ACT FOR AN ECO-REVOLUTION

**Climate change and the collapse of biodiversity are increasingly being felt in our lives, and always impacts the poorest people first.** A simple transition is no longer enough.

Although the Emmaus groups' main income-generating activities are environmentally-friendly, we are aware that we now need to do more, we must act anywhere that Emmaus can have an impact.

The principle of autonomy lies at the core of Emmaus' values and also encourages us to develop our food, energy and technical autonomy in order to help create a post-growth society.

Moreover, we are seeing that we ourselves, as well as the people that we support, are victims of the effects of climate change. We are also going to have to adapt our practices to reduce our expenditure and we must also support the most vulnerable people in this new context.

Construction of a recycled plastic bottle greenhouse in Iasi, Romania.

## AIMS

- Continue our involvement in reuse and recycling, always taking social and environmental innovation further.
- Prioritise environment-related activities when seeking out new activities.
- Reaffirm the role of solidarity and social organisations in the circular economy.
- Show that a green and social economy can and should become the main economic model.
- Call for and implement a drop in overproduction and overconsumption.
- Call for and take action to protect the poorest people from climate change.
- Further improve our own practices to limit as much as possible Europe's contribution to climate change: container loads, housing, food, income-generating activities, solidarity: looking at how to save energy, increase our autonomy and frugality, and decrease our dependence on the most polluting forms of energy.





## PROPOSED INITIATIVES

- Green transition fund: a first fund was created to support the groups in Eastern Europe in their energy transition process. The fund will be developed to cover other areas of the green transition (farming, waste management), and could even become an international fund.
- Internal climate contribution: This type of tax could be created in Emmaus Europe to contribute on a voluntary base to the transition fund. The groups would be encouraged to pay to compensate their travelling.
- Exchanges of practices: enable the Emmaus organisations to discover other European Emmaus organisations' good practice in areas of the green transition and foster energy, food and technical autonomy.
- For European activities, find a good balance between online and physical meetings, and limit emissions when travelling.

### Awareness raising

- Implement awareness-raising initiatives aimed at the Emmaus groups themselves based on the areas in which they wish to improve their practices.
- Pursue and develop general public awareness-raising initiatives by targeting Emmaus customers in order to put a stop to overproduction and over-consumption.

### Advocacy

- Continue with RREUSE + EAPN on the link between ecology and poverty + develop partnerships with local environmental activists.

# ACT FOR A SOLIDARITY-BASED SOCIETY

**In response to the challenges of changing lifestyles and global tensions that may increase over the next decade, it is vital that a solidarity-based and hospitable society is built,** and is able to respond by limiting violence, and enabling a collective response. This society must be able to deal with the population movements which are going to increase with the effect of climate change.

**In terms of combating poverty and migrant reception, Emmaus has a part to play,** not just by continuing with and further developing its initiatives welcoming migrants and speaking out against the policy of border closures, but also by sharing its experience of being a welcoming “micro-society”.

**Finally, since the early days of globalisation, we have been aware that the root causes of poverty are not only local,** but most often global. We want to better organise our work at the different levels.

Emmaus Jura's Vélüs project in Switzerland, depicted by a drama group.



## AIMS

- Reaffirm and corroborate our stance on freedom of movement and in favour of migration policies that respect human rights.
- Further improve the quality of our shelter and support.
- Get ready to welcome a greater number of climate refugees.
- Prepare European citizens to live in harmony with the migrants who will need to be welcomed.
- Address the international causes of poverty with Emmaus International.
- Bolster European and international solidarity.

## PROPOSED INITIATIVES

### HUMAN PROVISION AND HOUSING

- Develop exchanges of practices on these issues to improve the quality of our shelter and support in general (involvement of companions, living conditions, adapting to new needs).

#### Advocacy

- Get more involved in a partnership with EAPN to join forces for the fight against poverty.



Emmaus Satu Mare offers an alternative to young adult care leavers to help them build their adult lives in Romania.

## MIGRATION AND MIGRANT PROVISION

- Develop our partnerships with collectives that work to ensure that migrants no longer end up on the streets.

#### Awareness raising

- Develop our awareness-raising initiatives to share the Emmaus experience of a simple, multi-cultural and solidarity-based life.
- Make use of the migrant reception poster campaign in Emmaus public spaces undertaken in 2022 along with other tools and through discussions with citizens.

- Place the emphasis on communications tools to change the image of migrants and share life stories.
- Get involved in an international initiative with the other Emmaus International regions.

#### Advocacy

- Join a European lobbying network to have more influence on migration policies that guarantee safe migration routes and respect human rights.

### SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE EMMAUS GROUPS

- Container loads in Europe: Emmaus Europe will support the continuation of these vital partnerships over the coming years, while encouraging the development of relations between groups around other projects, and a shared discussion about the development of each group's economic activities to achieve greater economic self-sufficiency and have locally-based income-generating green activities.

- Work on merging our solidarity programmes with Emmaus International
- Actively participate in the 2024 Forum of Alternatives.
- Develop solidarity projects focused on the green transition.

# MAKE NEW FROM OLD

New target groups, new economic contexts, handing over: will we be the future?

The participants in the 2023 football tournament for peace and human rights before a workshop on non-violence, Bosnia-Herzegovina.



## ADAPTING TO NEW TARGET GROUPS

**Those who suffer most have changed over the years and depending on the country:** women (particularly single mothers), undocumented migrants (including families), young people, have come to swell the ranks of the people who knock on Emmaus' door, and for whom we do not always manage to offer a suitable response.

### PROPOSED INITIATIVES

- Arrange exchanges of practices about qualification-based training for companions and beneficiaries.
- Arrange a meeting about new target groups and Emmaus' initiatives in order to adapt to them.

## HANDING OVER AND ADAPTING THE EMMAUS GROUPS TO NEW CONTEXTS

In some countries, there are virtually no free spaces in the Emmaus communities. However, in other countries, some groups no longer have enough companions.

### AIMS

- Recruit and train the activists of the future (volunteers and leaders).
- Add to Emmaus International's work on conveying the Emmaus values to the new members and new generations.
- Help tailor these values to the new generations.
- Give more room to the new generations so that they contribute their ideas.
- Develop links between the movement's groups.

### PROPOSED INITIATIVES

- Organise training courses with outside speakers and long-standing Emmaus activists so that new members improve their "political literacy" in harmony with the Emmaus International action plan.
- Continue with exchanges of practices and training in these areas: volunteer recruitment, the role and responsibilities given to new arrivals.
- Put in place modern, youthful and attractive communications tools that motivate people to get involved.
- Suggest twinning arrangements to support transition between groups that have developed their practices in order to continue helping those who suffer most, and those that are struggling to find enough companions, volunteers or paid employees.

## DEVELOPMENT OF OUR INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITY AND ECONOMIC MODELS

**Reuse has become a market**, and the Emmaus groups are facing competition from large private groups.

**The drop in donation quantity and quality is having a direct impact** on our groups' funding and our solidarity initiatives in Western Europe, and indirectly in Eastern Europe and around the rest of the world

**Challenge of finding new income-generating activities** for the groups (also see the green transition)..

### PROPOSED INITIATIVES

- Pool countries' initiatives to enable Emmaus to remain a key reuse stakeholder.
- Organise a communications campaign on donating to Emmaus, with the twin-pronged aim of also raising awareness of Emmaus' social, environmental and solidarity work.
- Arrange exchanges of practices to provide ideas for developing new sources of income (green space maintenance, catering, third spaces, public services in disaster-hit rural areas etc).

Emmaus Lublin (Poland) diversified its activities by opening a cooperative pizzeria in 2015.







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Emmaus Europe is the decentralised organisation of Emmaus International in Europe.