

THE LAYOUT AND SET-UP OF OUR SHOPS

HOW CAN WE SHOW PEOPLE THAT EMMAUS IS UNIQUE?

47 participants from 9 European countries attended this video conference

At Emmaus we have second-hand shops but we are much more than just that! How can we make our customers and the general public understand that they are in an Emmaus shop and that this shop is different from other second-hand shops? This question was at the heart of this exchange.

- **The layout and set-up of our shops is a vast topic.** During this first meeting on this topic we suggested spending time discussing awareness raising in our shops about our values and struggles and how to teach people about what it means to buy something in an Emmaus group. Nowadays second-hand goods have become a key part of daily life and we are no longer solely dealing with the challenge of the impact of fast fashion! Why should our customers continue to buy from Emmaus when they now have more options for purchasing second-hand goods? How can we stand out, how can we create interest in Emmaus and how can we attract new customers?
- **This exchange represented an opportunity to share our experiences and best practices** in terms of passing along the spirit of our movement in our sales areas. Despite the meeting being held by video conference we were able to visit the Emmaus Åland group in Finland by video and to discuss the initiatives that the group has implemented.
- **We were also able to benefit from the experience of two staff members from the national organisations:** Amandine, who is in charge of the Coordination and Development of sales areas for Emmaus France and Mark, Sales Area Support Manager for Emmaus UK. They came to this meeting to share their knowledge about how to structure our sales areas. Following their comments we had a discussion about the successes and difficulties faced by the groups in attendance in order to learn from one another as much as possible!



The new, more open-plan and environment-focused pluri-activity sales area in the Emmaus Mundo group (France).



WHAT WE NOTED DURING THESE EXCHANGES

- We should display information about our values and actions in our shops at eye-level
- We should be transparent on how we use the money received from selling donations and on what we recycle. This helps us to establish a relationship of trust with our customers
- We can display posters with quotes about what Emmaus means to the companions and to the people welcomed by Emmaus. This is something that Emmaus UK does
- Our shop window should be welcoming and activism-focused (displaying activism messages, street art, etc.)
- We should ensure that everyone can access our sales areas (access for persons with disabilities, prams, etc.)
- We should have attractive shops in terms of lighting, cleanliness, the presentation of our objects and we should have different sections for different themes as well as regularly changing our displays
- We should provide information in our sales areas about current or trendy initiatives that are linked to our struggles (for example an urban gardening stand or the radio programme supporting Ukraine launched by the Åland group)
- We should have dedicated spaces for meeting people, chatting and socialising (lobbying areas, a café/restaurant, etc.)
- We can organise events to talk about our political actions, as well as special sales to support certain initiatives, (and communicate about them) and sales in pop-up stores outside of our groups
- We should organise free, participatory workshops that are consistent with our commitments such as upcycling sewing workshops, repair cafés, etc.
- We should always preserve the social role of Emmaus and create a pleasant environment that makes people want to spend time within our groups and stay to chat
- We should preserve the idea of feeling useful by consuming differently when buying something from Emmaus
- We should use local communication means and digital tools to attract new customers
- We should rethink the practice of having tickets to pay before collecting the objects, notably in France
- We should implement initiatives to thank our customers for coming to Emmaus and to make them want to come back (such as one-off reductions, sales, etc.)