



Dear friends,

Let's catch up again for the last solidarity and commitment news of 2023! We're going to talk about digital inclusion and look ahead to 2024, particularly with the European elections and the upcoming meetings of the geographical collectives.

We look forward to seeing you in 2024, but in the meantime, we'd like to wish you a very happy end to the year and a wonderful festive season.

The Emmaus Europe team

Emmaus stories

Tackling digital exclusion Further afield in Europe with Emmaus Connect



Credit: Emmaus Connect

Emmaus Connect is a French group created in 2013, which promotes digital inclusion for people experiencing social and digital exclusion. We met up with Lilan Criscuolo, who is in charge of international partnerships, to hear what she has to say about future plans for Europe.

After expanding rapidly in France (where the organisation is active in 18 areas, has 12 drop-in centres and has helped more than 137,000 people), in 2023 Emmaus Connect decided to explore the possibility of developing this type of activity in Europe, in partnership with Emmaus groups wherever possible.

Lilan, can you tell us how the idea of extending this project to other countries came about, and what steps have been taken?

Over the last ten years, Emmaus Connect has developed expertise in digital inclusion, focusing primarily on the situation in France. Yet given the major challenges in Europe (42% of citizens lack basic digital skills, even though they are essential in over 90% of jobs), we wanted to explore the issue of digital exclusion in other countries.

Moreover, one of the key missions of Emmaus Connect is to help social work services meet the challenges of digital inclusion - in France, we have trained 13,000 social workers and equipped 500 social welfare facilities. We decided to pursue this approach as part of a Europe-wide project.

This is how our partnership project got off the ground at a European level. The aim was to improve our knowledge of the challenges in other countries affected by the digital divide, while meeting actors and drawing inspiration from good practices, along with sharing our experiences.

In 2023, we launched a training project for social workers, with support from the Erasmus+ programme, in collaboration with Emmaus Satu Mare in Romania and Liberittutti, a social cooperative in Italy.

[Read more...](#)

For further information, visit <https://emmaus-connect.org/>.
If you would like to take part in a European project to develop these activities in your country, please contact [Eve](#).

European Action

RREUSE Separate collection of textiles compulsory from 2025

On 14, 15 and 16 November, Emmaus Europe attended the European Conference on Social Economy organised by the Spanish presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) in San Sebastian, along with the general assembly of our partner, RREUSE.



In 2025, major changes await the textile sector in Europe: **separate collection will be mandatory in all EU countries.**

Together with RREUSE, we explored the potential impact on our groups. The ongoing reform of the Waste Framework Directive was at the heart of our discussions. In particular, it aims to put in place common rules called Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for textile manufacturers. You may already be familiar with the EPR systems for managing waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in your country; the way this will be implemented for textiles will be fairly similar.

In specific terms, producers will be responsible for covering the costs of management of textile waste, from production to the end of a product's lifecycle. This includes putting in place

collection, sorting and recycling systems for used textiles throughout the EU. The reform also sets standards to prioritise waste avoidance, reuse and recycling of textiles.

These changes mark a major step forward in the management of used textiles in Europe. Emmaus Europe is fully committed to monitoring this text and is working to secure the best possible conditions for our groups across Europe, but we urge you to find out as soon as possible about what plans are underway in your country.

We will keep you informed of developments and are planning to hold a video conference on this topic in 2024. Please let us know if you are keen to take part.

For more information on our partnership work with RREUSE, contact [Manon](#) and/or [Eve](#).

2024 European elections Take action ahead of the European elections

The European elections will be held between 6 and 9 June next year, depending on the country. This is an opportunity for European Union citizens to shape the political future of Europe.

European policies have a direct impact on the day-to-day life and work of our groups. They affect matters such as social rights, reuse, migration policies, our struggle against poverty and the protection of the most vulnerable.

It is crucial that future MEPs understand the urgent need to help the most disadvantaged and support the work of our groups. We are also concerned by the polls which predict a greater presence of far-right parties, which would pose a threat to our unconditional welcome practices in particular.

To raise MEPs' awareness, Emmaus Europe urges you to invite candidates standing for election to visit your groups. This would be a unique chance to show them your daily work, highlight the issues your group is facing and promote Emmaus' messages.

Emmaus Europe will support you in this process by gradually making a number of tools available to you, such as an invitation template and EE's requests for the elections. This will help you to invite and lobby candidates. These tools are available on the [Member's Area of Emmaus Europe's website](#).

If you have any questions and if we can support you with this initiative, please do not hesitate to contact [Manon](#) and/or [Eve](#).

Abbé Pierre, the film is being exported to Europe!

You will no doubt have heard about the film "Abbé Pierre - A Century of Devotion", directed by Frédéric Tellier which was recently released in French cinemas.

Releases in a number of other European countries are also planned, and some of you are already in contact with distributors in your own countries to organise screenings, meetings and publicity. If necessary, you can find the list of countries and distributors who have purchased the film rights by clicking [here](#).



Emmaus Movement Solidarity

Collectives - Save the date!



In 2024, the geographical collectives organised by Emmaus Europe will take place in spring!

The Polish-Ukrainian Collective will be held at the Annemasse community from Monday 11 to Wednesday 13 March. The meeting will begin on Tuesday morning and conclude at midday on Wednesday. The programme and practical information will be sent out at the start of January.

The Romanian Collective will be held at the Satu Mare group in Romania and the Southeastern European Collective (Croatia - Bosnia and Herzegovina) will take place in Trogir, Croatia. The dates are still being finalised.

Just as a reminder, all members of the movement interested in the issues facing groups in Eastern Europe are invited to take part in the geographical collectives. These meetings serve to get a better sense of the challenges faced by our groups in these European regions and create opportunities where people can get together and support each other.
If you are interested, please contact [Emmanuel](#) to find out more.

Solidarity transport programme - 2024 is a pivotal year

At Emmaus Europe's General Assembly held last October, we discussed solidarity transport and the importance of providing vital material and human support to Eastern European groups, particularly in Romania and Poland, to ensure they can run their groups. A culture of donating items is gradually developing in these European regions.

If your group would like to help a community based in the East by sending a solidarity lorry, please contact [Emmanuel](#). He is closely monitoring the needs of groups and will be able to tell you what the current requirements are.

Please find a [table here summarising all our groups' needs](#) for 2024, as well as the transport of goods planned and/or delivered. This monitoring tool also gives you an overview of the groups' requirements in terms of equipment.

[Download the European container handbook](#)

In 2024, Emmaus Europe will support the groups in developing economic activities that will enable them to reduce their dependence on the solidarity transport programme. However, for the time being, these lorries are still of vital importance to the Eastern European groups. Thank you for your support!

Financial support from France and Germany!

At their general meeting in Strasbourg on 7 December, the French region of Grand-Est presented Emmaus Europe with a cheque for €10,100. This came from the profits made at the regional (and cross-border!) 'salon' organised in Saarbrücken, Germany, in October 2022. This support will fund the movement's solidarity initiatives at the European level in 2023! A second donation of €7,900 from a major solidarity sale organised by the Krefeld group in Germany will be used to support the establishment of an Emmaus group in Saarbrücken, opposite Forbach.



Many thanks for this support, born out of an Emmaus cross-border venture and Franco-German friendship, which will help to spread European solidarity.