



MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE OF EMMAÜS EUROPE

26/9/23 – Videoconference

emmaüs

EUROPE

PRESENT

Carina Aaltonen (president), Aurore Querel (secretary), Jean-Philippe Légaut (treasurer), Leila Thouret, Eduardo Sanchez, and Sabina Arnaut-Jahic.

EUROPE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

Eve Poulteau (chief executive), Emmanuel Rabourdin (solidarity coordinator), Marie Tixier (events coordinator), Théo Robin (General Assembly organisation officer), Manon Gaham (awareness raising and advocacy officer), and Véronica Acevedo-Caro (accounting assistant).

Preamble	
AGENDA ITEM	
1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS	<p>No comments were made about the minutes of the last EE Regional Executive held on 19 June in Paris. The minutes of the last regional executive were unanimously approved.</p>
2. General Assembly	<p>The electronic and paper copies of the GA documents have been sent out. Eve and Théo presented the GA sessions.</p> <p>The exec members will share out the topics to be presented at the activity report presentation. The PowerPoint could help them. Prioritise illustrations with lots of images, and not too much written text (translations). The team must choose what they will speak about, as it would be impossible to tackle everything from the past four years.</p> <p>a) President's report: Carina b) Activity report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchanges of practices. - Advocacy and awareness raising (two people): migration, poverty and reuse. - Solidarity (two people): focus on Ukraine and the solidarity programmes. - Football tournament for peace and human rights: Leïla/Sabina - Financial report: Jean-Philippe. <p>c) Presentation of the strategic plan – 90 minutes</p> <p>Four sections: Peace / Green revolution / Solidarity-based society/ Recruiting new members. Eduardo: Recruiting new members. Aurore: Solidarity-based society. Leïla: is leaving us 😞 Jean-Philippe/Sabina: Peace Carina: Environment</p> <p>End: A look at the European Parliament elections, specifically focusing on social issues, migration and reuse, which are all issues directly affected by these elections.</p> <p>Proposal to get in touch with national organisations and countries interested in getting involved in this European Parliament elections campaign: a four-page advocacy document to be sent to the prospective MEPs, and that interested groups may use when hosting prospective MEPs. Proposals to support the groups with this initiative.</p>

70th anniversary of the 1954 appeal: Write to the MEPs about what outrages us in Europe in 2024.

Also, check the feasibility of an initiative at the Parliament: around 5 February, during the Strasbourg session, in front of the Parliament? Small Emmaus living room setup, offer people a hot drink, and showcase Emmaus' proposals for the European Parliament elections.

These elections remain very important, even though not all the EE countries are EU Member States. Therefore, it is important that the national organisations have noted this election on their calendars and that they take it on board.

Strategic plan voting arrangements: an amendment needs to be voted on.

- ➔ Get the assembly to vote on the whole document, without Part II (covered by the amendment), and then get the assembly to vote on the amendment, so that what delegates are voting on is clear.

2) GA Logistics

Figures: 130 groups in attendance and 250 participants.

Quorum: Achieved via proxy votes, requiring telephone reminders.

Monday 17:30 – 19:00: Information meeting for workshop facilitators, and then general information meeting for the exec members, and other facilitators.

3) Workshop facilitation

Proposed outline:

- 1) Introductory roundtable
- 2) Explain the workshop subject matter: issue being tackled, and why?
- 3) Overview of the issues and difficulties encountered by the participants (Exchange of Practices type session).
- 4) Sharing of successful experiences (by the facilitators, who have experience in this area).
- 5) Start a discussion with the participants: difficulties encountered and experiences presented.

Deliverable: (Short) document listing three important issues: ideas, discussion points, common features...

This will enable the workshop to be summarised, and give ideas for next steps (exchange of practices, joint initiative undertaken by the groups etc).

Announcement of the election results

Silvana and presentation of the new elected representatives.

Representatives remaining in post thank the outgoing representatives.

Closing session:

- + Open-mic session for all participants.
- + Gelu's musicians – music to bring the session to a close.

Two requests for membership dues exemption

- Lisbon: Catch up using staggered payments + reduced payments. *They will owe €2,750 if they have to catch up: they have suggested paying €1,250 by the end of 2023, i.e. a difference of €1,500. They would only have to pay €800 if they were placed in the next category down.*
→ Suggest a payment between the two scales.
 - Glasgow: The group has been exempted by Emmaus UK from paying 2019 dues: is this also valid for EE?
- The exec members agreed to the two proposals.

Eduardo raised the issue of a **protocol on gender-based violence and harassment**.

The suggestion is to have such a protocol for our GA, following email discussion with the RCEE.

The EI protocol is perhaps overly simplistic. The issue needs to be raised right from the start of the GA, and maybe create a considerate behaviour and peace of mind charter, add a contact number, and explain the procedure, and who to contact if need be. A proper EF team of seven to eight people was appointed and they wore yellow bracelets for easy identification at the “people’s universities” in Toulouse. We could contact them to discuss the matter.

→ The secretariat will put forward proposed arrangements with the help of Nina Nyman, a specialist in this area.

3. Nasha Khata's trial membership and continuation of solidarity

Emmanuel delivered a presentation of Nasha Khata's situation. NK has been a trial member for over four years.

Relations with the group are complex. The following was suggested:

- End their trial membership, no further action taken.
- End their trial membership, and suggest a “friend of Emmaus” status.
- Extend the trial membership by one year, and appoint a mentor group.

All of the exec members agreed that a hybrid status could set a precedent, and would boil down to the group enjoying the benefits (funding, connections etc) without having the “downsides” of having any obligations towards the Emmaus Movement. It would also create a confusing situation, which would not help the organisation to take decisions about its future. Caritas' involvement should guarantee that the organisation can continue to grow.

	<p>Some members stressed that the idea of organisations that are “friends of Emmaus” could be worth exploring in greater depth in the future, with a clear written statute. However, this is not relevant to the current situation with NK.</p> <p>→ The exec proposed ending NK’s trial membership, with the RCEE taking the decision.</p> <p>Regarding funding, the secretariat will come back with proposals that would not see the group abandoned all of a sudden, while gradually tapering off the monthly and financial support. An initial idea of ending financial support at the end of winter 2024 was felt to be appropriate and worthy of further exploration.</p>
<p>4. Exchange of practices Erasmus+</p>	<p>Erasmus +: The idea was to get the Exchanges of Practices co-funded by EU funding. However, there has been a discouraging meeting with the Erasmus+ project officers. Nevertheless, EF seems keen to try this out at the French level, focusing on Europe. We will remain supportive if they want to test the waters. To be continued!</p> <p>RREUSE: To date, EE has been an associate member but now, after over two years, we must become a full (effective) member, which involves paying higher membership fees. The effective membership fee could be high, but we will request that it is limited to €1,000 if possible.</p> <p>The project on the challenges of the digital era for social enterprises in which EE is involved with RREUSE is going to get underway in November, and the European Emmaus groups will be invited to take part.</p> <p>Green Friday: in association with RREUSE to counteract Black Friday. This initiative was not a great success last year. The idea would be to allocate less time to it this year, and simply coordinate the groups wanting to do it and pass on the information to the interested groups.</p> <p>The exec agreed.</p> <p>Exchange of practices on wood in Krakow</p> <p>This exchange of practices brought together around 15 participants from six groups. It went very well, and we received positive feedback (particularly from Romania and the UK). The Brat Albert and Rzeszów Emmaus groups got back in touch with Saint-Étienne (France) on this occasion. The French group was the first Emmaus group that Brat Albert met before joining our movement.</p> <p>However, there could have been more concrete exchanges of practices. The gathering was really more of a demonstration of practices than actual exchanges. The programme was maybe a little lightweight. To be improved for the next exchanges.</p>

<p>5. Football and Peace</p>	<p>A quick look back at the football tournament for peace and human rights by Sabina and Emmanuel, who stressed that it was not just a chance to play football (parallel activity), but that the football attracted people to join us. What people took away was a lot more worthwhile, the workshops on peace, the cross-cultural exchanges etc. Focus on important issues. Issues addressed by the movement.</p> <p>In light of the success of the first-ever tournament, notably in terms of companion participation, and positive feedback from the participants, a decision was taken for the movement to offer more events of this kind, combining fun/sporting activities and core issues/workshops/conferences.</p> <p>→ The executive agreed on the following points for the future:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Emmaus Europe is working on the assumption that this event could be held every two years in Srebrenica, because of the weight of history and the premises (facilities), both of which are conducive to real exchanges and long-lasting memories, or alternating with another country in Europe, if a place of remembrance is found to talk about peace and human rights. 2) Emmaus Europe could approach other national organisations (France, Ukraine one day, another) to co-organise an event of this kind in 2025, which would enable, in France's case, undocumented companions, who were unable to travel abroad to attend this event, to be involved second time round. 3) In the meantime, ideas could be considered to maintain the links forged between Emmaus-ISF and the European groups, by supporting/passing on information about other Srebrenica-related events: Peace March, summer camp etc
<p>6. Programme</p>	<p><u>Planned travel</u> Carina: UK GA, 8-9 October Eve and Manon: Migreurop GA, Marseille, 6-8 October Eduardo/Eve /Manon /Yvette: RREUSE GA and social economy in San Sebastian in November.</p> <p>Make arrangements for the next exec meeting – suggest the week of 8-10 January for the handover between the execs.</p>
<p>7. Pay issues and HR</p>	<p>Answer to the pay issues raised by the Emmaus Europe staff team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The idea of index-linking pay twice a year, based on inflation. To date, we have voted at the start of the calendar year to raise pay in line with the previous year's inflation. On the other hand, Emmaus International increases pay twice a year, in July and January.

Decision: suggest a one-off intermediate 2% increase starting from September 2023, and let the next exec decide if it wishes to switch to index-linking pay once or twice a year in the future.

2. The “13th month” request

Emmaus International pays a “13th month” pay cheque (equivalent to a median salary). This employee benefit would equate to a sharp increase of over 8% of the wage bill, and, in the Exec’s view, an “automatic” 13th month pay cheque disconnects pay from the work done, new skills acquired, and everyone’s level of commitment.

Decision: Do not grant a 13th month but recommend that the new exec updates the EE pay scale to take into account the inflation-linked pay rises since 2021 and ensure that (excluding the 13th month) there is not too big a discrepancy with the EI staff members holding equivalent posts.

3. Review of the pay scale to take into consideration seniority

The last scale was designed to have two levels: entry level and +3 years of experience, depending on quality of work and if new skills have been acquired.

A decision was therefore made not to focus on seniority as such, but rather on employee “performance”.

Decision: Maintain the same approach

- Open up the possibility of progressing to an intermediate level (after 18 or 24 months) to motivate staff.
- Do not include seniority as a pay scale criterion beyond this period of getting to grips with the post.

Apart from the requests made by the staff team, here are a few proposals to be discussed together:

4. Pay rise for Emmanuel

Emmanuel has only been in post for almost two years, but this last year he has really developed new skills and demonstrated that he is able to adapt to new situations. He is to be commended for conscientiously keeping tabs on the solidarity for Ukraine and organising the Emmaus football tournament.

Eve is therefore suggesting that his pay is increased to an intermediate level to take into account and value this development, he still has some way to go to fully get to grips with solidarity issues, but considerable progress has already been made. I support this proposal and wish to discuss it with you.

If he were in Year 3 of employment and had an excellent grasp of the responsibilities inherent to his post, he would receive a pay rise of €4,000 gross per year (based on the EI senior officer pay scale).

Decision

- Give Emmanuel a €2,000 gross annual pay rise, starting in late September.

5. Véronica wants to go back full-time

The exec recorded that an amendment will be added to Véronica’s employment contract to switch to full-time employment from October.

6. GA bonuses

At the last general assemblies, the exec awarded a bonus to the employees in late November to recognise their efforts organising the assembly and successfully rolling out the event.

The bonus was €500 in 2019.

Decision

- *Award a bonus of €500 to the employees who have been involved in preparing for the GA for several months.*
- *If Marie returns full time in October and takes part in the GA, award her a 40% bonus (€200).*

7. Bonus for replacing Marie

Furthermore, following Véronica's maternity leave, Marie requested that the employees who had to cover some of Véronica's workload in her absence received a bonus. A €200 bonus was therefore awarded to Marie and Eve for the six-month maternity leave, for which plenty of advance notice was given, with Véronica being replaced by Sandrine. This year, Marie has been on sick leave (full time for seven months and part time for five months).

Decision

- *Award a bonus to Eve and Véronica for undertaking Marie's tasks (amount to be discussed at the exec).*

General comment on pay and bonuses

The staff team must not forget that pay is funded by the grassroots Emmaus groups, and even though the fact that they live in Paris and their qualifications need to be taken into account, their pay should not differ too much from that of community leaders, for instance, who hold major responsibilities and sometimes have a similar level of qualifications. Bonuses should remain exceptional payments and should not be taken for granted. For instance, the organisation of the GA is included on each employee's job description as a period when they take part in the running of the governing bodies. Volunteers, elected representatives and employees take part and the bonuses awarded over the last few years in GA years stem from the elected representatives wanting to thank the employees, as a one-off, for the job done. Working for Emmaus should remain an activist role, even if it must be fairly paid.

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