



MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF EMMAÜS EUROPE 3-5 April 2024 – PARIS, FRANCE

emmaüs

EUROPE

PRESENT

Carina Aaltonen (president), Aurore Querel (secretary), Joël Yssele, Nina Nyman, Thierry Klatovsky, Vincent Chapuis, Sonia Hurcet, Xavier Renard, Maria-Luisa Testori, Nika Siprak Wendling, Tony Ferrier, Cédric Marrec, Herbert Bitter, Yvette Gumbs, Ellie Kreul, Paco Lopez, Mazdak Pilevar, Anouk Mevillot and François Malaise.

EUROPE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

Eve Poulteau (CEO), Manon Gaham (advocacy and awareness raising officer), Emmanuel Rabourdin (solidarity coordinator), Marie Tixier (events coordinator) and Véronica Acevedo Caro (admin-finance assistant).

APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Jean-Philippe Légaut (treasurer), Robert Opoka, Grigory Semenchuk, Duncan Lewis and Sabina Arnaut-Jahic.

Preamble	<p>Carina opened the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.</p> <p>New national delegates (NDs) were in attendance, in addition to the new CEI elected at the GA: Mazdak Pilevar is the new Finnish national delegate.</p> <p>Paco, the leader of Emmaus Murcia, is Spain's new national delegate. He is interested in companion wellbeing and quality of life.</p> <p>Anouk is the new ND for Switzerland. As Switzerland is very decentralised, she wants to make more of the movement.</p> <p>Elli is the new ND for Germany. She wants to set up a national organisation. She is interested in companion engagement and democratisation.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION / DEBATE	CONCLUSIONS DECISIONS
1. Word of welcome and approval of the minutes from the last meeting	<p><u>Approval of the October 2023 meeting minutes – held in Iasi, Romania</u></p> <p>None of the participants wished to make any additions, remarks or oppose the minutes of the October 2023 Regional Council.</p>	The minutes of the previous RCEE were unanimously approved.
2. Approval of the minutes of the last regional assembly	<p><u>Approval of the October 2023 Regional Assembly minutes (OGA/EGA) – held in Iasi, Romania</u></p> <p>None of the participants wished to make any additions, remarks or oppose the minutes of the October 2023 Regional Assembly.</p>	The minutes of the previous RAEE were unanimously approved.
3. Approval of the 2023 accounts	<p><u>Presentation of the accounts for the year ending 31 December 2023</u></p> <p><u>Reading of the treasurer's report by Aurore Querel in Jean-Philippe Légaut's absence</u></p> <p>Significant events in 2023 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European groups' continued commitment to supporting the Emmaus groups in Ukraine. • The recruitment of a fifth member of staff, an advocacy officer (70th anniversary of Abbé Pierre's appeal at the European Parliament in 2024, preparing for the 2024 European elections). • The holding of the Regional Assembly in Iasi in October 2023, a key moment in the life of the region. • A significant amount of membership dues collected. • <u>Operating costs</u> <p><u>Financial result</u></p> <p>Our total expenditure was €857,616, and our income totalled €904,147, making for a surplus of €46,531.</p> <p><u>Income</u></p> <p>Income comprises:</p>	<p>The 2023 accounts and treasurer's report were unanimously approved by the Regional Council.</p> <p>The Regional Council unanimously approved the allocation of the 2023 financial year surplus of €46,531 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - €40K allocated as a reserve earmarked for the next GA. - €6,531 allocated to the association's funds.

- Membership dues totalling €428,127, of which €299,451.49 was for 2023, and €128,620.69 was late payments for previous years. We also received a bank transfer of €55 for 2024.
- Emmaus International funding This year we requested funding of €50,000 for decentralised regional coordination, of which €14,300 was used to organise the Regional Assembly.

Expenditure

We kept to the initial budget in its different aspects.

- **Loans**

The following loans are outstanding:

- 2016: Emmaus Rzeszow – €25K. Loan settled.
- 2018: Nova Generacija – €25K. Repayment began in February 2019 (€12,472 balance).
- 2018: Villafranca – €35K. Repayment began in January 2020 (€14,000 balance).
- 2019: Emmaus Satu Mare – €30K. Repayment began in January 2020 (€19,500 balance, following adjustment at the start of 2023 for 2022).
- 2023: Loan extended to one of the Emmaus Europe staff team for €1,100. (Repayment began in January 2024.)

- **Cash and investments**

Crédit Coopératif – We closed the CC account in December 2023 so that we only bank with one bank to facilitate transactions with the European groups.

Livret A – This savings account with the CC was also closed down.

Crédit Mutuel – We have a balance of €573,628.46.

Banca Etica – We have €194,561.49 in this account. The account closing procedure was undertaken in December 2023, the account is yet to be closed because of Italian administrative reasons, but the closure will take place and will be confirmed in 2024.

Banca Etica ethical fund - €70,000 is currently invested with Banca Etica in the EI Ethical Fund to guarantee current loans.

- **Solidarity**

European solidarity in 2023 took the form of:

- The Ukraine Fund for a total of €212,615.78.
- The Green Transition Fund, worth €20,000.30, helping two groups.
- Other general solidarity amounts: €8,440.

Emmaus Europe's dedicated funds were as follows, as of 31 December 2023:

- Dedicated solidarity programme funds per country: €22,505.40.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Green transition dedicated fund</u>: €102,201 (dedicated but not allocated solidarity funds) • <u>General solidarity fund</u>: €30,359. • <u>Dedicated funds – Ukraine Emergency</u>: €256,249 • <u>Dedicated funds – Saarbrücken solidarity</u>: €7,900. • <u>Total dedicated funds in 2023: €419,234.32</u> <p><u>Reading of the auditor’s general report by Eve Poulteau, as apologies had been received from the auditor, Jorge Da Cunha.</u></p> <p>Reading of the auditor's special report on the agreements referred to in article L612-5 of the French commercial code.</p>	
<p>4. Solidarity funding developments and Ukraine Fund –</p>	<p><u>Solidarity – changes to funding and the Ukraine Fund</u></p> <p>Eve and Emmanuel reminded the meeting about attempts to harmonise the European and international solidarity programmes begun in early 2023. This harmonisation has enabled an additional appeal to be made for the projects approved by the regions but not suitable for funding under the solidarity budget. Following consultation, this additional appeal will only cover the Europe Region this year, although this could change in subsequent years.</p> <p>Emmanuel explained the Annual Solidarity Programme project approval process to the elected representatives, and presented the table developed by EI, enabling projects to be objectively ranked and prioritised.</p> <p>Process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Initial approval by the EE Regional Executive. Option of ruling out a project. 2) RCEE representatives prioritise the projects, based on work done previously by the secretariat, with the help of elected representatives. 3) Final approval of projects by the CEI on the EI Board. <p>A number of elected representatives requested a written summary of these explanations: the project submission schedule, the selection process, and what is expected of elected representatives.</p> <p>The suggested system is new, which is why it still needs work. This first year will enable it to be adjusted for the future.</p> <p>The elected representatives agreed that projects should be prioritised not solely based on a project’s overall score, but taking into account circumstances, such as the degree of urgency. A certain amount of flexibility is needed. The table provided by EI is the basis for discussion.</p> <p>The elected representatives suggested adding two columns to the table, with a mark out of five:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project sustainability - Urgency <p><u>Emergency Fund</u></p>	

	<p>Emergencies are handled by EI, as the organisation has an emergency fund. This can be done in conjunction with the regions, who can pass on emergency appeals, or raise funds for emergency situations, when the timescale allows.</p> <p><u>Ukraine Fund</u> Monthly expenditure is gradually going down. The emergency phase from February 2022 to January 2023 enabled the three Polish groups and two Ukrainian groups to be supported, and also provided funding for large-scale projects in Croatia, Romania and Georgia.</p> <p>The situation subsequently stabilised, and expenditure has been going down since mid-2023. In 2024, we are continuing to reduce monthly funding (ending of monthly funding for Nasha Khata, desire to reduce Brat Albert's monthly funding, end of the emergency situation etc).</p> <p>A discussion got underway about how to use the Ukraine Fund in the future: emergency situations may still arise because the war is ongoing. The elected representatives were not against the idea of making further solidarity appeals, even though they are aware that the issue is no longer foremost in people's minds, and the level of support could well be lower.</p> <p>Emmanuel Cochon reminded the participants that the movement is able to respond to some emergency situations, and that the annual solidarity sales and membership dues are often enough to respond to these emergencies.</p>	
<p>5. Solidarity – 2024 solidarity programmes</p>	<p>Emmanuel R presented the emergency situation faced by Emmaus Iasi, following various inspections of their facilities conducted by the authorities. A solidarity appeal has been made to help the group get back on its feet. Emmanuel will keep informed the elected representatives and NDs.</p> <p>The situation for groups in Romania is very challenging. They are always having to comply with more and more standards, and are negatively impacted by the authorities' intransigence.</p> <p>Emmanuel presented the three solidarity projects selected by the EE Regional Executive. The EE executive turned down Targu Jiu's project in January because it lacked the necessary guarantees. See the project presentation PDF and the groups' presentation memo.</p> <p>The RCEE prioritised the projects as follows: 1/ Satu Mare 2/ Iasi 3/ Piadena</p> <p>The meeting discussed the overall budget and the amount requested from the ASP. It reflects the different economic situations across the world's regions. Each region can choose to add a criterion setting an upper limit, but this is very difficult for the Europe Region.</p>	<p>The RCEE approved running a solidarity appeal to help Emmaus Iasi deal with this emergency. The RCEE approved the option of lobbying the Romanian government about the groups' difficulties.</p> <p>The RCEE approved the ranking submitted by EE, with two abstentions and no votes against. The ranking is as follows: 1) Satu Mare 2) Iasi 3) Piadena</p>

	Emmanuel C and Patrick reminded the meeting that the EI solidarity budget, estimated at €450K, can be amended in line with project relevance and urgency.	
<p>6. Solidarity - Fondation Abbé Pierre (FAP)</p>	<p>Emmanuel presented the Housing Programme run jointly by FAP and EI in conjunction with the regions.</p> <p>The overall international funding available is €275,775. The FAP takes the final decision. A project approved by the EI Board is not necessarily rubberstamped by FAP, even if FAP tends to follow EI's recommendations.</p> <p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mid-May: EI takes a decision. EE gives it approval before this date (and ranks in order of priority). - June: EI solidarity committee - July: FAP executive takes the final decision. - August: first tranche of funding paid out. <p>The programme supports the building or renovation of residential buildings, housing or accommodation, including living rooms, dining rooms, bathrooms, etc. It does not cover the building/refurbishment of income-generating activity premises. Emmanuel did not go into detail about each project. The EE exec will take a decision on ranking the eight projects submitted to the Housing Programme on behalf of the Europe Region. The eight projects cannot be approved by the EI Board.</p> <p>A proposal made to place the projects into three categories was approved by the RCEE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Priority projects - Projects requiring further development - Ineligible projects <p>For subsequent years, the Europe Region will ask the national organisations for an advisory opinion about the projects/groups submitting applications.</p>	
<p>7. European elections</p>	<p>Introduction with a reminder about how the European institutions work.</p> <p>Presentation of EE's detailed proposals for the European elections and discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Reuse, social and solidarity economy</u> <p>The EU has a remit for reuse, waste management and recycling. This is why EE undertakes advocacy at the European level on these subjects, in conjunction with our partner RREUSE.</p> <p>We have suggested joining the RREUSE board, which would involve attending two meetings a year.</p>	<p>The proposal to join the RREUSE Board was approved.</p> <p>The RCEE approved the detailed document of our proposals for the European elections.</p>

Although Switzerland is not an EU Member State, it is affected by EU legislation, as is the UK. Emmaus Jura is a recognised “circular economy specialist” thanks to RREUSE’s reuse support.

In Belgium, the Emmaus groups are also involved through TESS and RESSOURCES. François offered to liaise with these organisations if necessary (Yann for TESS and Jean-Marc for RESSOURCES).

In 2025, a European directive on separate textile collection will come into force in all the European countries. It is important that the Emmaus groups are ready for it.

- Manon and Eve are willing to arrange meetings on the topic with interested groups.
Combatting poverty

Things are moving forward with the creation of the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness, so it is worth getting involved.

We are considering rejoining FEANTSA in the future.

NB: In our English documents, it would be better to use the term “decent wage” rather than “living wage,” which is used by business in the UK.

- The threat of the rise of the far right

Apart from their opposition to migrants’ rights, which in itself is a cause for concern about the rise of the far right in Europe, our observation at the European level is that far-right parties do not take part in the debates about poverty and the social economy. They are not allies, they have no interest in these subjects, despite their rhetoric about fighting on behalf of those excluded from society.

This is also borne out by the far right’s opposition to the debate about Abbé Pierre’s 70th anniversary. All of those who voted against holding the debate were very right wing and far right.

This could be utilised by the groups to show the extent to which the far right goes against Emmaus’ ideas.

We want to create a short resource for the groups reminding them about the importance of the European elections, organise events, and send out an issue of the newsletter on this topic.

	<p>We also want to make videos of volunteer groups' first-hand accounts of one of our campaign issues (migration, reuse, combatting poverty) so that we can post them on our social media.</p> <p>The document comprises 12 pages in booklet format.</p> <p>During the RCEE's discussions, a proposal was also made to make first-person account videos of those supported by the groups, but time was lacking and we only managed to make two themed videos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Feedback from the RCEE about the detailed proposals</u> <p>Vote: The document was approved in its present state. No need to remove content, but for it to be a local or national success, each group will need to select the content that seems most relevant to its local work.</p> <p>These assertions are the proposals that we will be championing over the next period of office. This constitutes some of the information we need for the next five years. The work will not end on 9 June, we could use this document and the first-person accounts collected in the next phases.</p>	
<p>8. War and Peace</p>	<p>We chose "working for peace" as one of our priority areas for the coming years at the EE GA. How can we implement our proposals? And how can we tackle this issue at a time when the war in Ukraine, which is arousing fear of a further Russian invasion of numerous countries in Eastern Europe, makes it difficult to talk about peace in this time of war.</p> <p>→ Disconnect it from the conflict in Ukraine today. Talk about how to build peace in different ways across Europe.</p> <p>The goal for the future of Emmaus is to improve our capacity, build trust between communities, and also talk about climate issues. Let's go back to basics, address the root of the problem: what caused the war.</p> <p>→ Encourage meetings and coordination at the regional, inter-regional and international levels</p> <p>The issue of peace could also be the topic of the international work camp that the Europe Region is scheduled to arrange in 2025 with testimony from European groups, such as those located in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who continue to rebuild peace in their country, as well as groups in Lebanon and Africa.</p> <p>Develop learning resources so that participants can return home with these resources.</p> <p>In this work camp and more generally we could cross reference peace issues with migration and the environment, as they are linked in every way – both causes and consequences.</p>	

	<p>Football tournament for peace and human rights: run again in two years' time in France so that undocumented companions who were unable to leave France can attend, also in a place symbolic of peace or a place of resistance, and run an international work camp to get a global overview of these issues.</p> <p>See if we can galvanise people to take part in the 6-10 July Peace March in Srebrenica given that the tournament will not be held in Srebrenica in 2025.</p> <p>→ In our strategic plan we have stated that we want to develop links with pacifist networks See what is happening at the European level but be mindful about what makes Emmaus special with regard to the issues on which we are taking a stance, even if we would like to do it all, particularly raise the awareness of future generations.</p> <p>→ Another priority area is working in our groups.</p> <p>Continue supporting Oselya to develop its activities. This could also involve creating new shelters, distribution hubs, and support those who are suffering. Emmaus has often played a post-war role.</p> <p>Take action in our groups by developing internal democracy and fostering gender equality. To what extent can we work for a fairer and more equitable society, better income distribution, how we treat the companions, the respect we show them etc. Our influence on peace around the world stems from what we do in Emmaus.</p> <p>→ Continue political literacy training: arrange an online meeting with researchers on the issues of peace and the causes of wars, and/or with Emmaus witnesses.</p>	
<p>9. 2023-2026 Action plan</p>	<p>Additional proposals for exchanges of practices</p> <p>Food (with the environmental dimension of reducing waste and the environmental impact of our food, but also pleasure: we could organise an exchange of recipes between Emmaus cooks and publish an Emmaus recipe book: tasty, healthy and affordable recipes).</p> <p>Energy saving: how to practically reduce group expenditure on energy? (See Emmaus Angers: geothermal energy, stop using gas and oil).</p> <p>Textiles: Blend of training and exchange of practices, work together on separate collection, soon to be compulsory in Europe. To be done late 2024/early 2025 + traceability.</p> <p>Workshops on Emmaus Åland's climate audit to be recreated as a video conference.</p> <p>Be mindful about laws against destruction in Europe which do not incentivise people to stop overproducing: with these laws we need to be ready for tax exemption requests made by businesses which donate new goods in Europe. Thierry could be the contact person for these issues on which progress has already been made in France.</p>	<p>Overall agreement with the plan's proposals.</p>

	<p>Agreed to an exchange of practices on welcoming new members. (2026)</p> <p>Agreed to tackle the issue of dignity of provision at the first national organisation meeting in June (see below) and at the international work camp in conjunction with the football/peace tournament (see above).</p> <p>General comment about the action plan: Highly ambitious document. We maybe need to reset some of our ambitions to bring them into line with our limited financial and human capacity.</p>	
<p>10. Dignified provision: crisis in several groups in France and first national organisation meeting</p>	<p>Some French Emmaus communities have been in crisis for several months with companion strikes. The companions are complaining about mistreatment. This is particularly an issue in Emmaus communities in Northern France. They refused to obtain OACAS status (French state recognition offering greater protection for companions' labour rights) but the problem is also occurring in other communities. Moreover, media outlets have reported ill treatment and gender-based and sexual violence in several communities.</p> <p>This situation is impacting all the Emmaus groups in France and is highlighting the national federation's difficulties taking action because of the communities' level of autonomy.</p> <p>Emmaus France has suggested acting to guarantee dignity of provision in all the Emmaus groups by putting forward an action plan to be rolled out in 2024 and 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address issues: Action plan on the accommodation emergency with significant funding released to renovate communities. - Audit: audits scheduled of groups offering accommodation and EF federation audit to check shelter and support conditions, quality, health and safety at work, and any procedural dysfunctions. - Transform: community reviews have been started. - Plan to revise the statutes so that it is easier for the federation to take action. - A whistleblowing mechanism is going to be set up to enable people to report noncompliant practices. People can report issues anonymously by telephone. <p>This is not a solely French problem, several countries have encountered these issues, some have overcome them, while others are working on it. This situation is an opportunity to understand our structural issues and address them.</p> <p>The issue stems from the movement's culture. There is a major shortcoming: transparency. We need to foster a culture of transparency in a general sense and work more with other countries to share our problems and solutions. Moreover, rules that are in place must be respected.</p> <p>These issues are on the agenda of the national organisation meeting on 24-5 June in London, and the meeting will constitute a first chance to pool information about these matters in the European countries, the issues arising, and how they should be addressed.</p>	

	<p>A further national organisation meeting could be arranged if this first one goes well. We could review this meeting at the next RCEE and see what could be done at the national, European and international level to supplement its work.</p>	
<p>11. Green transition fund</p>	<p><u>Green transition fund</u> A memo has been sent to the RCEE to provide a recap, show its current state and the development prospects, potentially opening up the fund geographically and to cover different themed areas, and the various funding options.</p> <p>Two new criteria were put forward at the EE GA by the subject-specific working group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The supported projects must have a significant positive impact on the living and/or working conditions of beneficiaries. Particular attention will be paid to the number of beneficiaries impacted by a project. - Supported projects must have a long-term impact and primarily focus on accommodation or income-generating activity premises. <p>Emmanuel presented the memo sent to the elected representatives and the proposal to open up the Green Transition Fund to the other European regions.</p> <p>Following discussion of the fund's objectives and the fact that it is restricted to Europe (awaiting the potential creation of an equivalent global fund, the funds collected for Europe must go to European projects), it was decided that the fund will continue to solely support groups in Eastern Europe.</p> <p>The meeting was unable to discuss the issue of paying into the fund because of a lack of time. It was decided that the groups can choose to pay into this fund if they so wish, without EE heavily promoting it.</p>	<p>The RCEE unanimously approved the addition of two criteria to the Green Transition Fund.</p>
<p>12. World Forum of Alternatives</p>	<p>Adrien and H��l��ne were welcomed for this segment.</p> <p>Adrien presented the World Forum of Alternatives. Webinars presenting the WFA programme will be held on the morning of 26 April and the afternoon of 30 April – EI will be sending out an email about this soon. Pass on information to the groups. The CEI are invited: they are not counted as members of their groups.</p> <p>Patrick: the WFA is for grassroots stakeholders, statutes/governing bodies are set aside, and we talk about the core issues: how are we experiencing different situations with regard to the three selected topics. We need to give the floor to the new generations and grassroots stakeholders.</p> <p>Adrien: Three quick news items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a specific youth programme: they are being invited to contribute to the Emmaus movement. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit the site's Emmaus groups. - Evening event in Poitiers city centre and at Futuroscope. <p>We hope that a delegation will be able to travel to NY for the UN Summit of the Future: big UN discussion forum on the future. We are contributing as an NGO with a seat at the UN.</p> <p>Presentation of the themed collectives.</p> <p>Observation after the first WFA: difficult to foster relationships created with allies at the first WFA. Second forum: fewer guests/allies, but real collective development between Emmaus groups from around the world with feasible and followed-up proposals.</p>
<p>13. New full and trial member groups</p>	<p>Reminder of the Emmaus Movement trial membership/full membership procedure. Reminder: check if the groups are up to date with membership dues, including trial members (for Europe, this is a requirement passed at the last GA).</p> <p><u>Presentation of the trial member groups</u></p> <p>No questions about the groups put forward for trial membership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atelier R-are (B3, France) An association founded in 2019. It reuses building industry timber waste (old doors and wooden window frames etc) which tends to be sent to landfill. The waste is used to make new furniture and street furniture. • Terre de Milpa (France) Founded in 2020, Terre de Milpa wants to set up an agroecological farm in the Plaines Monts d'Or area, working to address injustice and different forms of exclusion, and working for gender equality and to bolster women's position. The project is based around provision for women and anyone facing exclusion and needing a refuge, the opportunity to rebuild their lives, and new prospects provided by agroecology. • Emmaus Suffolk (UK) A UK charity, founded in 2015 and operational in 2016, Emmaus Suffolk works with vulnerable and isolated people, the long-term unemployed, and people at risk of homelessness in Suffolk, and has offered housing since 2020. It aims to provide secure and stepping stone community housing to help foster independence. <p><u>Trial membership period exceeded</u></p>

The RCEE officially recorded the granting of trial membership to: Atelier R-are, Terre de Milpa, and Emmaus Suffolk.

- **Vlora (Albania)**

Following our last visit, it has not been possible to maintain contact with the group, as it never answers emails and does not submit the requested administrative documents. Although the group does excellent local work, it has no interest in taking part in an international movement. Emmaus Vlora will remain a partner of Emmaus Italy.

Closure

- **Vitoria in Spain**

The group had a difficult time and was managed by Emmaus Bilbao and Pamplona for several years, but has now closed down for good.

Membership application

- **SOS Familles Égletons (France)**

SOS Familles Emmaüs in Égletons was founded in late 2021 as a 1901 law non-profit association. The group addresses the issue of serious debt by providing ad hoc financial support to families experiencing financial hardship by means of repayable interest-free loans.

Questions about how the SOS Familles organisations work in France: independent group because they hold associative status, but they are partner groups of an Emmaus committee of friends or community. The latter use some of their income to help families experiencing crippling or serious debt, supported by the SOS Familles volunteers.

- **Emmaüs de l'Aube (France)**

The application is complete and is being processed by EI.

- **Comité d'amis Moutiers (France)**

The committee was for a long time a branch of Emmaus Chambéry. It became the Moutiers Committee of Friends in October 2021. The association was not financially self-sufficient and relied on the community.

- **Vivre au Peux (France)**

The Vivre au Peux association was founded in late December 2014 and began working in January 2015. Its initial aim was to support people who were already at Emmaus Peupins but who, following the creation of the employment access schemes, had lost their jobs because of their age or difficulties preventing them from working on these schemes. The group then extended its scope to include people who are socially excluded.

The RCEE decided to terminate the Albanian group Vlora's trial membership without any further action.

The RCEE officially recorded the closure of Vitoria in Spain.

The RCEE approved membership for six of the seven groups put forward, while awaiting further information about Pages Solidaires.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources d’envol – Ker Madeleine Farm (France) This 1901 law association was founded in April 2018. It is based on Ker Madeleine Farm and is developing an organic farming initiative with live-in employees who are at the end of their prison sentences and want to rebuild their lives. • Pages solidaires (France) Founded in 2019, Pages Solidaires is a collective of employment access schemes from the Emmaus Movement, and the collective aims to train beneficiaries in the logistics and e-commerce industries, reduce waste, increase book reuse as much as possible, and provide access to culture for all. <p>The application is currently incomplete because it is lacking information about the mode of governance. EI will ask for further information at their next Board, so the membership application will be submitted at a later date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environnement 43 (France) • Ferme de Beaudonne (France) <p><u>Simplified membership procedure</u> Over the years in some countries there are groups that joined the movement via their national organisation without joining the international movement. They have been offered a simplified membership procedure if their national organisation guarantees that they are properly run groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emmaus Eemsmond Founded to support Chilean refugees, this group joined Emmaus Netherlands 20 years ago. They have always paid their dues to EI and the national organisation. A well-run group. One of their members sits on the Emmaus Netherlands Board. - Emmaus Gouda They have been members for 10 years and do a very good job. They pay their membership dues. <p>Difficult to vote on approving the applications of groups that have not yet paid their dues. Consequence: if the membership application is not endorsed now, it will be dealt with in six months’ time.</p>	<p>The RCEE approved simplified membership applications from two volunteer groups in the Netherlands (committee of friends type groups) who pay their dues to EI and the national organisation: Emmaus Eemsmond and Emmaus Gouda.</p>
14. 2024 budget	Presentation of the 2024 budget	The Regional Council unanimously approved the 2024 budget.

	<p>In the absence of the treasurer, Jean-Philippe Légaut, Eve Poulteau presented the 2024 budget to the RCEE. Each heading was read out, and she particularly emphasized two budget headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocacy, including a European elections campaign which is underway (the elections are in June). - International events requiring a financial contribution – the EI World Forum of Alternatives to be held in September in Poitiers in France. <p>Questions about the budget presentation. What is going on with the solidarity section of the budget? Why is there nothing there? Eve: We have not put anything in that section for the moment as we do not know how much we will receive. It is better to have an actual figure than a forecast figure. For instance, in 2023 we received funds from a sale put on by Emmaus Krefeld to support the setting-up of an Emmaus group in Germany. We did not know the amount two weeks before the end of our financial year, so the amount now appears as allocated funds in our accounts.</p>	
<p>15. Country news</p>	<p>Presentation of the Dutch Emmaus groups</p> <p>Emmaus Netherlands is a long-standing federation, with the first group being founded in the country in 1949. Today, there are 13 groups, seven of which are communities, and their motto is Live Together, Work Together, Share Together.</p> <p>Positives are as follows: The sizeable number of volunteers: volunteering is well-established in the Netherlands and the groups that run initiatives to recruit volunteers manage to do so.</p> <p>The groups do a lot of solidarity work.</p> <p>Weaknesses and challenges It is difficult to get new people to sit on the federation's board.</p> <p>Community leaders tend to stay in post for their entire working lives, so it is difficult to bring in fresh leaders. This also raises the issue of the companion allowance. When someone has spent their whole life living on the companion allowance, they find it difficult to secure housing outside the community when they retire.</p> <p>Difficulty setting up communities nowadays because property is very expensive and two communities had to close down as they were unable to fund major building work.</p>	
<p>16. Conclusion and proposed</p>	<p>Upcoming European events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26-7 October – Biarritz sale in conjunction with Spain: the European groups are invited to take part. • Emmaus Strasbourg sale on the same weekend, special book sale, discussions and meetings. 	

**schedule for
future meetings**

Upcoming EE meetings:

- Regional Executive meeting: 11-12 July 2024 – Montreuil, France
- Regional Council: examining the option of holding the second RCEE outside France, potentially in Bosnia-Herzegovina, or in Strasbourg in France. The meeting will be held on 9-11 October.

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