

[View this email in your browser](#)

November 2024

Emmaus in Europe



Dear all,

"Hope is the only thing stronger than fear." This quote from the book Hunger Games reminds the readers that even in the darkest times, hope can prevail against fear. But I must admit that these days I am both terrified and depressed when thinking of the future and what we are doing to Mother Earth and to all of us living on this planet.

In Europe, we can clearly see the effects of climate change. August 2024 was Europe's – and the world's – warmest on record. Also, global carbon emissions are expected to continue to rise in 2024, setting a new record. The tragedy with the floodings in Spain in the Valencia region a few weeks ago caused hundreds of deaths. This tragedy follows quickly from the other climatic disasters Europe suffered this summer and autumn in Austria, Germany, Romania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Portugal. These disasters should be a real wake-up call for solid actions by governments to limit climate change and protect the poorest people, who are and will be the first victims.

But «Drill, baby, drill!»), said the newly elected President of America. With this attitude and his new administration, we will have a real backlash when it comes to green transition and stopping the climate crisis. Most likely, the US again will leave the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty on climate change. The UN Climate Change Conference, COP29, took place last week in Baku, Azerbaijan, and the key issue was climate finance. It's about moving from the current target of \$100 billion a year from rich countries to ten times more for the poorest countries in the world. But the EU, the US and other rich countries are putting the brakes on.

As I see it, we will never be able to achieve the Paris Agreement goals as long as economic growth is the only driving force for governments and politicians. We should measure the Human Development Index instead of the economic GDP, which says nothing about the situation of the people in a country. We need to rethink and reevaluate what's essential in life. People are biological, social, and cultural creatures, and our lives should be about friendship, love, living well together and doing good for others.

That's why in a world of fear, our Emmaus values and our way of living and acting are the beacons of my hope. Let's continue our work and inspire others.. Emmaus gives us hope. Yours,

Carina Aaltonen,
Chair of Emmaus Europe

Summary

- [News from Ukraine](#)
- [The 2nd Emmaus Europe Football Tournament for Peace and Human Rights will be held in 2025!](#)
- [European Action](#)
- [Emmaus Movement Solidarity](#)

Spotlight on...

News from Ukraine



Oleksandr and Serhiy, companions from the Oselya community in July 2024. - Credit: Emmanuel Rabourdin.

Over 1000 days on since the start of the large-scale conflict on 24 February 2022, we bring you an update on the actions taken by Emmaus Oselya (Lviv). The group continues to run projects to assist the most vulnerable thanks to their determination and the support of all the Emmaus groups through the Ukraine Fund, managed by Emmaus Europe.

Since the start of the conflict, Emmaus Oselya has been there to help different groups of extremely vulnerable people. This includes homeless people, who have increased in number since 2022, and people from the east of Ukraine, displaced persons and families from conflict zones.

Every Thursday, the group distributes hot meals (soup, tea, bread) to around one hundred people. The number of people who come every day to the social support centre is constantly on the rise. At the centre, they can find something to eat, have a shower, talk to the organisation's psychologist or see a doctor. They can also get a haircut or find warm clothes for the winter.

This centre, which is one of a kind in Ukraine and was financed to the tune of €285,000 by Emmaus Europe via the Ukraine Fund when it was built in 2022, has become a benchmark praised by the public authorities. Some doctors come from Kyiv to provide free treatment at the centre. Every week, some twenty families take part in workshops set up by the organisation's psychologists to address the trauma caused by the conflict.

Lastly, the organisation still needs to make more room to welcome companions forced to flee the conflict. There were 15 in 2020, 30 in 2022 and the community is now home to 36 companions.

[Read more...](#)

Meeting with Natalya and Grigory
Emmaus Europe will organise an online meeting in February 2025 with Natalya Sanotska, the group director, and Grigory Semenchuk, national delegate for Ukraine. This meeting will be open to everyone in the movement so that we can hear about the reality on the ground, the situation in Lviv and Emmaus Oselya's needs. We will provide more information in December.

Save the date

The 2nd Emmaus Europe Football Tournament for Peace and Human Rights will be held in 2025!



Harma and Abdul, during the first Emmaus Football Tournament for Peace and Human Rights. Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. - Credit: IFS-Emmaus.

The tournament will take place in Dijon, France, on **22 and 23 July 2025**. Two full days dedicated to football, along with personal first-hand accounts and accessible training sessions for everyone on peace in Europe, non-violence and human rights.

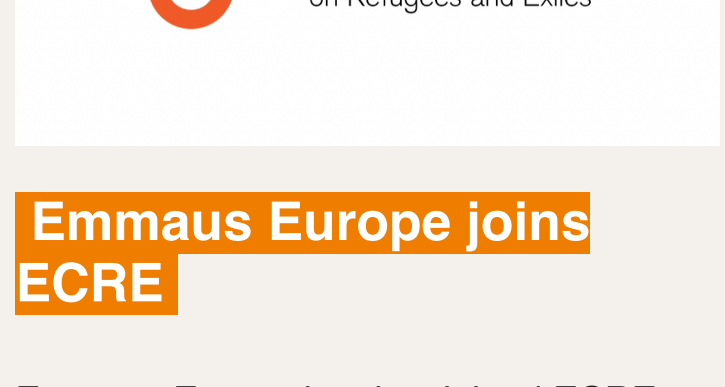
At a time when the war in Ukraine is no longer making headlines, despite the very complex situation, and tensions in the Balkans are reappearing, it is urgent for us to discuss these subjects to better understand our struggles and the ways we can resist.

We hope to see many of you at this celebratory event in the spirit of resistance! The programme will be finetuned over the coming months. If you are hoping to attend, please plan to arrive on the evening of 21 July and travel home on 24 July so that you don't miss a thing!

In the meantime, you can [read the feedback shared by participants at the first football tournament](#).

We would like to thank the Dijon-Norges community together with whom we will be working on this project.

European Action



Twenty years of Frontex: An agency on the borders of inhumanity

Emmaus Europe joins ECRE

FRONTEX has now been the European border and coast guard agency operating on Europe's borders for the last twenty years. Twenty years of repeated human rights violations of migrants and the militarisation of borders. Twenty years during which the agency has constantly grown stronger with a budget that increased from 6 to 845 million euros between 2005 and 2023, along with the allocation of a permanent reserve of armed border guards (with a target of 30,000 officers by 2029).

Emmaus Europe has just joined ECRE (European Council for Refugees and Exiles) in order to have a greater impact on European migration policies. ECRE is an alliance of 127 NGOs in 40 countries, created in 1974 to promote the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe.

For 20 years, alongside Migreurop, Emmaus has been fighting Frontex and its practices that encapsulate making people feel unwelcome. To mark this sad occasion, Migreurop published a press release, along with a calendar that sums up 20 years of initiatives and struggle against this agency. You can read these publications by clicking on [this link](#).

Thanks to its three key areas of action – European advocacy, legal and litigation support, along with communication and raising awareness about the rights of exiles – ECRE will be a key partner for Emmaus Europe. This collaboration will strengthen our activism and advocacy campaigns to offer a more dignified welcome to migrants and refugees in Europe. Furthermore, the legal support and litigation team could provide invaluable help to Emmaus groups who wish to get involved or who need assistance on issues related to the rights of people welcomed into the group, along with any other legal dispute which you may be faced with.

Together, let's continue to combat the tightening of European borders and the violation of human rights!

We would encourage all groups who are interested to contact Emmaus Europe ([contact Marion](#)).

Campaigning for an emergency textile plan and against overproduction!

In our previous newsletter, we highlighted that the European textile recycling sector is experiencing an unprecedented crisis. For several months, the entire second-hand textile distribution network in Europe has been at saturation point. There are many reasons for this bottleneck, but the main cause is the constant mass influx of new, low-quality clothing.



Emmaus Europe is taking action to shake things up in Europe. As a member of RREUSE (the European recycling network) and together with Zero Waste Europe and a network of cities, we have just published a letter to the European Commission drawing attention to this issue and urging decision makers to react quickly and decisively. We are calling for tangible actions to combat this situation on a long-term basis, particularly by bolstering support for social and solidarity economy (SSE) actors, as well as by imposing severe restrictions on the marketing of fast-fashion products that are stifling our groups.

Furthermore, within the context of the Parliament hearings of the new commissioner responsible for the circular economy, we asked MEPs to ensure that his vision of the circular economy is not an alibi for continued overproduction and ongoing use of natural resources.

[READ THE LETTER TO THE MEPs](#)

[READ THE LETTER ON TEXTILE](#)

To find out more information about European advocacy and awareness-raising, please contact [Marion](#).

Emmaus Movement Solidarity

Help finance Emmaus groups' eco-friendly projects!



Installing photovoltaic panels at the Brat Albert community in Krakow, Poland. - Credit: Emmaus Brat Albert.

The hike in energy prices in Europe has created an urgent need to better insulate, to spend less and spend better: this is what the green transition fund is all about, enabling groups from Eastern Europe to reduce their climate impact, energy consumption and monthly bills!

From improving insulation to installing solar panels and heat pumps, considerable work was carried out in 2022 and 2023, however the needs are still huge.

You can top up this transition fund managed by Emmaus Europe. Your donations will make it possible to fund renovation work for groups in Poland, Romania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia.

You can find an overview of the first six projects financed by the Green Transition Fund here ➔ [our 2024 solidarity brochure](#).
As a reminder, we are also appealing to your generosity to support Emmaus Piacena (Italy) with the renovation of their warehouse.

How can we help?

- ➔ Bank transfer: to the Emmaus Europe account, clearly stating "FTE" (for the green transition fund) or "Piacena"
- ➔ By cheque: clearly stating "FTE" or "Piacena"

Solidarity with Spain

The Spanish Emmaus groups asked us to thank all of you who expressed your concern and your willingness to help the victims of the disaster in the Valencia region.

The Spanish groups have responded to the general appeal for solidarity by delivering equipment to the area, and they have now informed us that the rescue teams have all the necessary equipment (food, hygiene, clothing, first-aid equipment, etc.).

There are no additional requirements for the time being. We will let you know if the situation changes.

For more information about European solidarity, please contact [Emmanuel](#).

