

Emmaus in Europe



Dear members of Emmaus Europe,

Now that spring is here, we feel despair that it is not the democratic spring that we were calling for, and that the Ukraine war is not over, to speak only of Europe.

However, we are delighted about the events that will soon bring us together! These events will enable us to build our nonviolent resistance capacity at the 2nd Emmaus football cup for peace and human rights, and build the capacity to act of women in our movement, through the Women's Leadership Programme set to take place in the autumn (dates to be arranged), and which may enable us to train our future president.

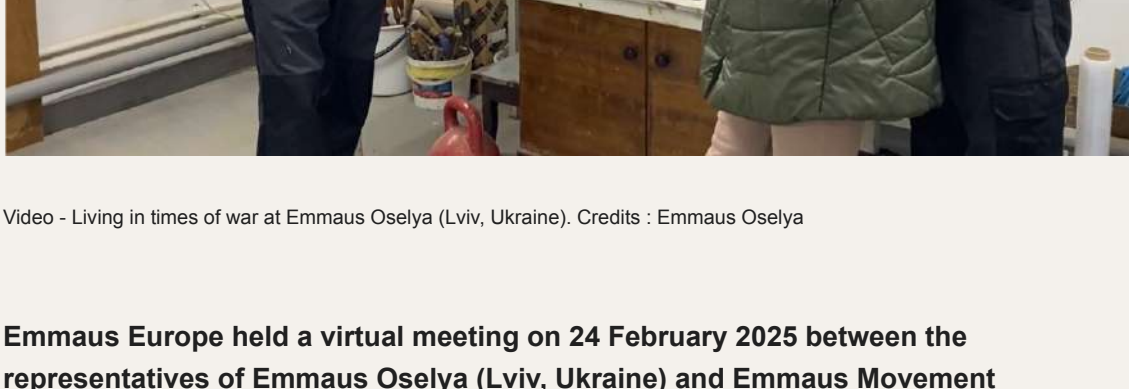
The Emmaus Europe team

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A meeting to underline our support for Ukraine



Video - Living in times of war at Emmaus Oselya (Lviv, Ukraine). Credits : Emmaus Oselya

Emmaus Europe held a virtual meeting on 24 February 2025 between the representatives of Emmaus Oselya (Lviv, Ukraine) and Emmaus Movement stakeholders who wanted to hear news of the group, and gain a better understanding of the reality of daily life in Ukraine.

How do people keep going mentally and physically, when there are nightly air raid warnings? How do people keep living their lives when they have a loved one on the frontline? How do people remain hopeful, when those negotiating peace do not view Ukraine as a major player?

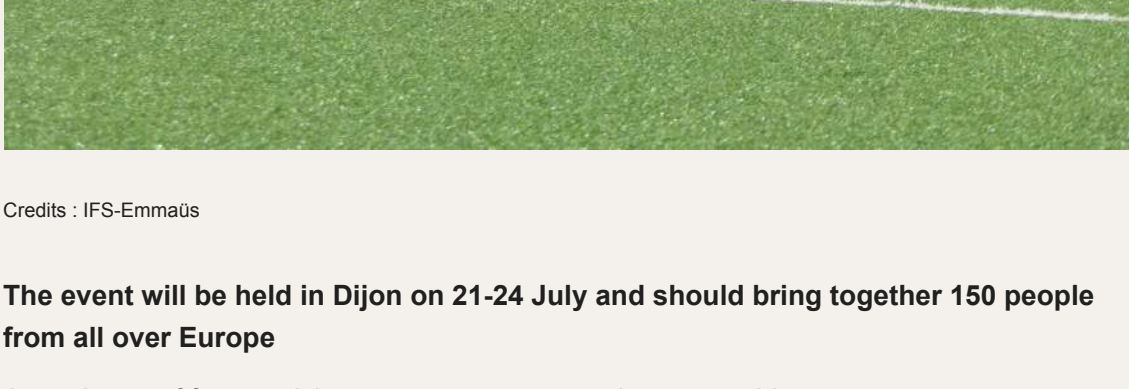
And turning our attention to Oselya, how are they managing to properly accommodate and support companions? How are they meeting the needs of vulnerable people, who are bearing the brunt of the war? Where do they find the strength and resources needed to improve things?

All of these questions were discussed during the meeting, which attracted around 60 people from around 10 European countries. Natalia and Konstantyn, who are companions at Emmaus Oselya, shared their story of exile, of being torn from their land and family connections, just like for six million Ukrainians since 2022, while acknowledging that they have received mutual support and solidarity at Oselya.

Natalia Sanotska, the director of Oselya and a tireless project lead when the intention is to secure the long-term future of the community's activities, reminded us that Ukraine has always been a peaceful country, from the 2004 Orange Revolution to the 2014 Maidan Revolution, and that Ukrainian society believed in peace until the eve of the conflict. Nowadays *"Putin is killing us, and the only solution we can see is to take up arms and resist."*

[Read more...](#)

The Emmaus Europe football cup for peace and human rights : sign up for the second edition of the tournament!



Credits : FFS-Emmaus

The event will be held in Dijon on 21-24 July and should bring together 150 people from all over Europe

A maximum of four participants per group can register to enable as many groups as possible to take part. The registration fee is €100 per person as a contribution towards the cost of the tournament (three nights in a hotel, meals etc).

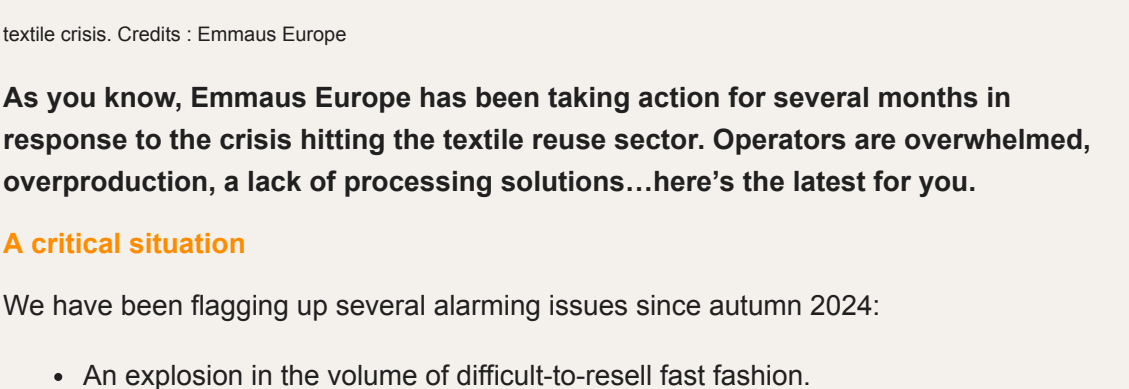
The teams will be put together once we arrive and will be a mix of ages, nationalities and genders. It is important to us that everyone takes part, regardless of age, gender or footballing ability. In 2023, the oldest player was a 74-year-old woman, but this did not prevent her from covering every blade of grass on the pitch!

In addition to the football and moments of relaxation, Emmaus Europe is planning a programme of workshops and gatherings to build our capacity to take action in favour of peace and human rights. The workshops will focus on combating fake news, communication and nonviolent action, and so on. We will also be joined by speakers from within and outside the Emmaus Movement. More information to follow!

Sign up for the Emmaus Europe football tournament

European action

Crisis in the textile sector - what's the latest?



Emmaus Europe and our partners staged a demonstration outside the European Parliament in Brussels to draw attention to the textile crisis. Credits : Emmaus Europe

As you know, Emmaus Europe has been taking action for several months in response to the crisis hitting the textile reuse sector. Operators are overwhelmed, overproduction, a lack of processing solutions...here's the latest for you.

A critical situation

We have been flagging up several alarming issues since autumn 2024:

- An explosion in the volume of difficult-to-resell fast fashion.
- Mandatory textile collection throughout Europe since 1 January 2025, without a suitable processing system in many countries.
- A lack of effective Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes for textile manufacturers in most European countries.
- A worrying delay to the revision of the waste framework directive.

Outcome

The outcome is that even the reuse pioneers, social enterprises, are experiencing difficulties.

Our initiatives over the past eight months

Over the past eight months, we have stepped up warnings to the European institutions. Working with RREUSE – the European reuse network of which we are members – we have:

- Sent several warning letters to the European Commission.
- Obtained meetings with the Environment, Employment, Regional and Urban Policy, and Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Directorates- General, and the personal offices of the employment and circular economy commissioners.
- Conveyed a clear message: Support social economy organisations and address textile overproduction.
- On 30 January, we staged a hard-hitting demonstration in front of the European Parliament, with several tonnes of textiles being dumped outside to raise the MEPs' awareness about the grassroots situation. A large number of MEPs came to chat to us.

What's the latest?

Some EU countries, such as Estonia and the Netherlands, are gradually setting up an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) system. However, this takes time, and many States are struggling to set up a tangible system.

In countries where a textile EPR scheme already exists, talks between the State and the eco-organisation tasked with scheme implementation have often been long and complex. Of course, progress has been made (such as dedicated storage areas in Belgium, and a slight increase in the budget per tonne in France), but we are still a long way from a model that is truly viable for our organisations, a model that covers our actual costs and secures the long-term future of our income-generating activities.

Finally, the European waste directive should be approved in a vote next month. The Member States will then have 20 months to transpose it into their legislation, and 30 months to apply it. The draft directive is going in the right direction, but still falls short of grassroots requirements. RREUSE's assessment can be found [here](#).

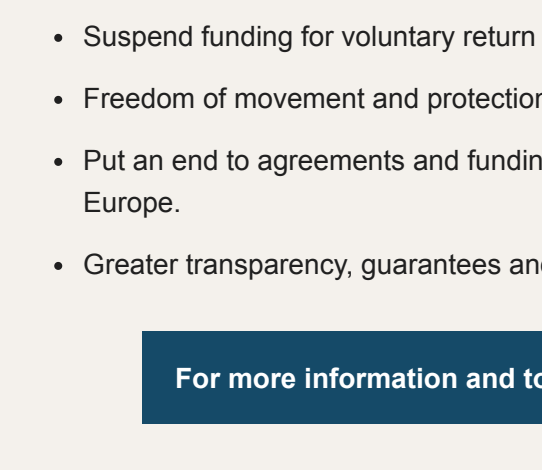
And we are not stopping there...

Emmaus Europe is continuing to invest its time in strong advocacy in favour of a social, solidarity-based and sustainable reuse model. We are working with MEPs and the European Commission to change future policies: eco-design, end-of-waste criteria, circular economy law...

- We will convey our ideas on 23 May at a bilateral meeting with the Commissioner for the circular economy in Europe, who is spearheading an action plan for the circular economy. The struggle continues, we will keep you posted.

Migration

Let's put an end to "voluntary" return programmes from transit countries



In a campaign manifesto published a few days ago, the European Migreurop Network (of which EE is a member) and other organisations denounced the misuse and misapplication of assisted voluntary returns from transit countries like Libya and Tunisia where the fundamental rights of migrants are systematically violated.

Deportations are dressed up as voluntary returns in these contexts. The EU and its Member States fund programmes that deport people to the countries they originally fled, exposing them to violence and discrimination once again.

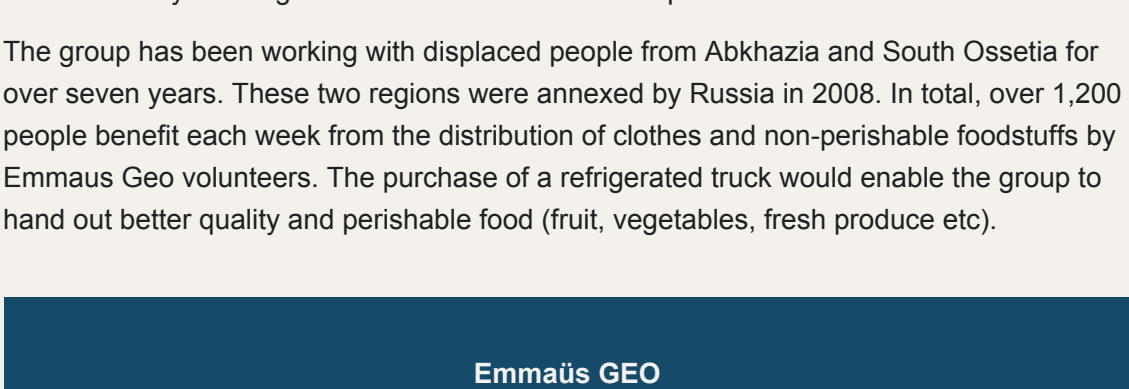
The campaign is making the following clear demands:

- Suspend funding for voluntary return programmes from transit countries.
- Freedom of movement and protection policies, with no outsourcing.
- Put an end to agreements and funding designed to prevent migrants from reaching Europe.
- Greater transparency, guarantees and a human rights monitoring mechanism.

For more information and to read the manifesto, click here.

Solidarity

A project needing support in Georgia



An Emmaus Geo beneficiary at a clothing distribution session in Tbilisi. Credits : Emmanuel Rabourdin

Emmaus Europe is offering you the chance to help fund the project submitted by Emmaus GEO (Georgia)

The group wants to purchase a refrigerated van to hand out fresh food to people displaced by the war being waged by Russia since 2008. Funding requirement: €13,500. This project is endorsed by the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe.

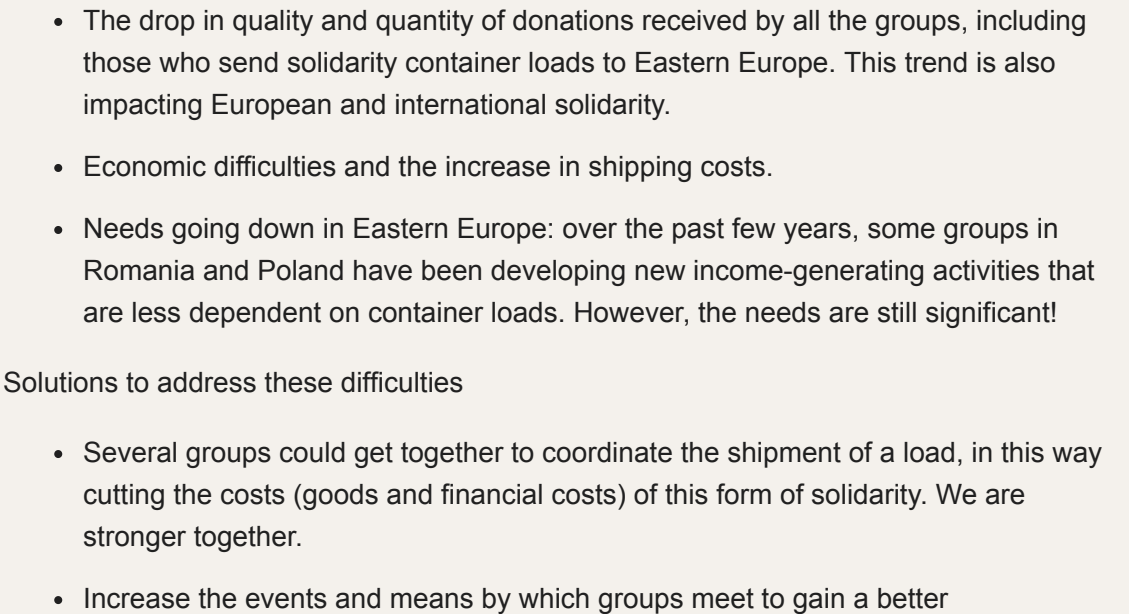
The group has been working with displaced people from Abkhazia and South Ossetia for over seven years. These two regions were annexed by Russia in 2008. In total, over 1,200 people benefit each week from the distribution of clothes and non-perishable foodstuffs by Emmaus Geo volunteers. The purchase of a refrigerated truck would enable the group to hand out better quality and perishable food (fruit, vegetables, fresh produce etc).

Emmaüs GEO

Emmaüs Geo is based in Tbilisi (the country's capital) and Kvareli (140km from Tbilisi). The group is home to four companions who run a self-catering holiday property in Kvareli. Every week, the group supports over 430 households living in makeshift camps across four sites in Tbilisi, handing out clothing, school supplies and non-perishable foodstuffs. At the same time, Emmaus Geo manages two second-hand stores, located in Tbilisi and Kvareli. Bolstered by a very active network of volunteers, the group is in touch with a large number of public stakeholders (French embassy, French school in Tbilisi) and third sector organisations (Caritas and the Red Cross).

To support this work, you can contact [Emmanuel](#), or make a transfer to Emmaus Europe, clearly stating that it is for "Emmaus Geo". Thank you so much for your support!

In 2024, fewer solidarity container loads, but greater needs



Number of solidarity container loads sent to Eastern Europe over the 2018-2024 period

The number of solidarity container loads shipped in Europe dropped to 72 in 2024, a historically low level. Emmaus Europe is making a general solidarity appeal to help the groups in Eastern Europe to cope and continue their work with vulnerable people.

Several factors could explain this trend...

- The drop in quality and quantity of donations received by all the groups, including those who send solidarity container loads to Eastern Europe. This trend is also impacting European and international solidarity.
- Economic difficulties and the increase in shipping costs.
- Needs going down in Eastern Europe: over the past few years, some groups in Romania and Poland have been developing new income-generating activities that are less dependent on container loads. However, the needs are still significant!

Solutions to address these difficulties

- Several groups could get together to coordinate the shipment of a load, in this way cutting the costs (goods and financial costs) of this form of solidarity. We are stronger together.
- Increase the events and means by which groups meet to gain a better understanding of needs, and put faces to this practical form of solidarity: video calls, group visits, hosting companions...these connections enable us to build the movement.

Emmanuel is here to help groups and regions wishing to coordinate the sending of container loads. Emmanuel.rabourdin@emmaus-europe.org

List of items required in Eastern Europe

