



MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF EMMAÜS EUROPE

9-11 October 2024 – Srebrenica – Bosnia-Herzegovina

emmaüs

EUROPE

PRESENT

Carina Aaltonen (president), Nina Nyman, Jean-Philippe Légaut (treasurer), Vincent Chapuis, Xavier Renard, Duncan Lewis, Sabina Arnaut-Jahic, Haris Okanovic, Maria-Luisa Testori, Tony Ferrier, Cédric Marrec, Yvette Gumbs, Anouk Mevillot and François Malaise.

EUROPE REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

Eve Poulteau (chief executive), Emmanuel Rabourdin (solidarity coordinator), Marie Tixier (events coordinator) and Manon Gaham (awareness raising and advocacy officer).

APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Aurore Querel (secretary), Joël Issele, Thierry Klatovsky, Robert Opoka, Grigory Semenchuk, Sonia Hurcet, Nika Siprak Wendling, Herbert Bitter, Ellie Kreul, Paco Lopez and Mazdak Pilevar.

- Preamble	We have experienced some difficult times since our last meeting in March 2024, with the publication of the reports about the sexual abuse perpetrated by Abbé Pierre, the ongoing conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, the European Parliament elections, and the rise of the far right. We need to fight against this upsurge, offer a different vision, and show how we can live in peace and diversity. We are also facing many challenges in our movement in order to remain strong and deal with situations. Thanks to the Emmaus-ISF team for hosting this first RCEE meeting in Srebrenica.
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AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION / DEBATE	CONCLUSIONS DECISIONS
1. Word of welcome and approval of the minutes from the last meeting	Approval of the April 2024 minutes – Paris, France None of the participants wished to make any additions, remarks or oppose the minutes of the April 2024 Regional Council. Election of an interim secretary for this RCEE – Yvette.	The minutes of the previous RCEE were unanimously approved. Yvette acted as interim secretary for this meeting in the absence of Aurore.
2. Nika's decision following the revelations about Abbé Pierre	Nika's group is a relatively new member of the Emmaus movement and works with child victims of abuse. She wanted to stand down from her position as an elected representative because of the affair that has shocked the movement. The group has not taken a final decision and is giving itself time to think. Nika does not know yet whether she is standing down from the Board. Lorène: This is a highly unusual situation and no provision is made for it in the statutes. Adrien asked for written clarification because we would need to arrange a replacement if she left. Carina: They are in a state of shock, CNZD has not taken part in the various Zoom meetings. It is important that we speak to them again about the matter.	The RCEE noted that Nika was standing down as a CEI. CNZD will be asked to provide written clarification.
3. Developments following the revelations about Abbé Pierre	A roundtable discussion of the decisions taken by the countries/groups in attendance. EF has made recommendations to the French groups about removing images of Abbé Pierre from public spaces. Emmaus Europe has adopted the following declaration: “The Regional Council of Emmaus Europe fully supports the efforts to establish the truth and act transparently undertaken by Emmaus International with regard to the sexual abuse perpetrated by Abbé Pierre. The RCEE undertakes to work with EI so that the Emmaus Movement reclaims its history without denying this part of it. From now on, in solidarity with all victims of gender-based and sexual	

	violence Emmaus Europe will no longer use images of Abbé Pierre or his words in its communications documents. The RCEE will continue its work disseminating the Movement's fundamental values espoused by the hundreds of people who have made, continue to make and will make Emmaus in the future. The RCEE reaffirms its commitment to addressing all forms of discrimination and inequality, including gender inequality, and against sexual violence and the oppressive patriarchal system that creates it." Declaration by the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe, Srebrenica, 11 October 2024. This declaration will be sent to the groups and national organisations (via the NDs) who can draw inspiration from it. EI suggested that the process of reflection should be conducted locally and ultimately lead to a joint decision at the GA, when the findings of the work undertaken by the group of historians are available. The group is going to look into how this sexual abuse was able to continue for so long in our movement. The group of historians will be independent and will get in touch with the Catholic Church to work together.	
4. National organisation meeting – next steps	The meeting was held in late June in London. Main topic: How to ensure that we continue to deliver proper provision at the European level. The first national organisation meeting brought together the NDs and the chairs of the EE national organisation boards. Only Germany and Spain did not attend. Conclusions: Work on a common definition of what is done to offer proper provision, referring to existing documents in the various countries, as this would enable us to at least have a shared foundation. Another meeting of the national organisations will be held online in June to review progress and submit the work done. Regarding the main sections suggested at the RCEE and the overall approach: - Best practice - "be mindful of constraints". We must take into account local circumstances. It should not be too weighty. Standards are needed. - Pay attention to the scope of the term "activities" in Point 5. - Suggestion to change the order: Switch points 5 & 3.	

	- Be mindful about the document's scope. Ensure that people understand that it covers all the groups, not just those with companions. - Suggestion to regroup items: Unconditional shelter and support and proper provision. Provide examples of good practice to prevent abuse. - Finland: Have a whistleblowing mechanism in the group to flag up issues in the group. A system is in place, with an external agency setting up the mechanism. - Switzerland: Regular discussion forums at which everyone can speak up. - UK and France: National-level whistleblowing mechanisms. The working group will reorganise the proposals, hand over documents to be shared to the national organisations, and submit the proposals to them so that they can contribute. For the record: EI has set up a working group that is going to focus on strengthening the audit system and exclusion process. Work will be done at the next Board to review the membership and joining criteria. The regions will also be contacted once the work gets underway.	
5. Finance	Presentation of the actual budget as of 30 September, we should manage to balance the budget by end of year. N.B.: <u>Regarding RCEE expenditure</u> Emmaus-ISF is covering the accommodation, meals and travel during the Regional Council meeting. The ensuing savings will be used to enable as many people as possible to take part in the next Emmaus football tournament. <u>Regarding membership dues</u> The UK dues will be transferred at the end of the year. It would be good if Emmaus France could collect all the French dues and then transfer them to us to facilitate monitoring of payment of dues by the French groups: OK to check with EF when and how they would be able to roll out this system. Explanation of how the <i>Foncière Emmaüs</i> (Emmaus property company) works. Proposal to make a symbolic investment of €10K, i.e. the equivalent of 10 shares, to support this initiative to purchase premises for the French groups. If other countries in Europe are planning to set up a similar initiative, we need to envisage making symbolic gestures in all the countries.	The RCEE unanimously approved the decision to invest €10,000 in return for shares in <i>Foncière Emmaüs</i> (Emmaus property company – France).

6. Gender-based and sexual violence

Discussion about the issues and possible ways of continuing our action in this area.

Reminder:

- A charter was created for the GA.
- June 2024: A charter was created and sent to the European groups that host young people. Awaiting feedback, no responses received.

Lessons to be learned following the revelations about Abbé Pierre: focus on specific structures in the movement that could enable the conspiracy of silence to continue.

A structure of silence

Everyone feels that the movement is important, and more important than themselves. If someone does something, nobody speaks up because the person is important in the movement.

We need to demolish our structures of silence so that everyone can speak up.

There is still scope for training/discussions between the generations on these topics. For some groups, it is a question of changing mindsets.

Three different levels:

- Rules
- What to do to prevent things from happening.
- What to do if something happens/what sanctions?

Action to be taken at the European level

- Share what is being done in the countries – share information.
- Discuss a training module for the Emmaus groups with François, JP, Nina, Eve or Carina.
- At the international level: ensure that requirements exceed standards in this area.

Prepare communities that host volunteers.

Make use of the national organisations' resources (encourage them to discuss with each other, particularly regarding training, which is vital) or the resources of groups that host volunteers.

Utilise NG's expertise in this area /CNZD?

At grassroots group level, deliver training for staff and companions/volunteers, have mechanisms in place, and update all of our documents and community rules. How can EI and EE support groups in this area when there is no national organisation?

- Core work - international and European level progress
- Freshen up and improve the letter sent to the groups that host young people.
- Add a charter to sign.
- Offer training to leaders of groups that host young people, and even look into making it compulsory.

7. Proposal to create a female leadership programme in Emmaus Europe	This is a historic time, including for our movement, following the revelations about Abbé Pierre; a time when we need to train women so that they can take on greater responsibility at the local/national/international levels. Everything is harder for women, particularly handing over between generations of leaders and boards. One of the conclusions from the national organisation meeting was the need for leader training. 2025: A pilot programme is being set up solely for women to enable a cohort of women to receive training and develop their role in the movement, with female-to-female mentoring. Where possible, lessons will be learned to enable women to play a greater part in the movement in decision-making roles. 2026: Expand leader training and focus on the issue of gender diversity in our groups in a broader sense.	The RCEE approved the organisation of a female leadership programme set to start in 2025. Budget and details to be provided at the next RCEE.
8. World Forum for Alternatives – next steps	Implementation of the initiatives resulting from the WFA that can be developed at the regional level. These initiatives were developed at the forum’s workshops and will be rolled out at various levels: Board, regions, international level in the collectives, and through the international solidarity volunteers who will be in post for a year (one volunteer per region). The volunteers will be tasked with helping the regions to implement the forum’s initiatives. Emmaus International presented the 16 initiatives from the forum split into three themed areas: education, social and environmental justice, and migration (see the EI doc). Workshop to select initiatives for the region to implement - outcome: • Initiative 13 is the initiative to be coordinated at regional level. A migration awareness-raising initiative to deconstruct prejudices, with the idea of increasing the take-up of this campaign at the country and group levels. • Initiative 10 also stands out. A campaign against global overproduction. Initiative to be developed at the regional and local levels. • Initiative 3 could be rolled out at the regional level. The virtual academy on education to strengthen the Emmaus educational model inhouse. Europe will mobilise its resources even if the initiative is developed at international level. • Initiative 1 Altropia is also suggested for the local level (focus on 14–18-year-olds). EI advises the regions to set up a working group to monitor the implementation of all of these initiatives at the regional and local level, in conjunction with the international solidarity volunteer	

	and, in a more general sense, EI. This also involves monitoring the work done at EI level. => Yvette and Tony offered to join this working group to be organised by EI. EE will get in touch with EI to coordinate the recruitment of the international solidarity volunteer. Jean-Philippe mentioned the volunteer hosted by Satu Mare. She was young and had little experience of the movement. She found herself in the challenging situation of having to deliver training to a longstanding group. Be careful when filling this volunteer role. Lorène: The idea is to involve young people and new generations but it would be better if the person already knew about the movement. The job descriptions will also be sent out.	
9. Donations campaign at Emmaus	Why this campaign? A pressing issue because separate textile collection becomes compulsory throughout Europe in 2025. We need to more effectively showcase our work and what we do thanks to donations. Drop in donation quality because of fast fashion and e-commerce. Following discussion by the executive, we are in favour of a campaign with the following slogan “quality donations make for quality work”. Possible resources - available in all the languages - Four charity shop posters - Stickers (must be environmentally-friendly) - Two leaflets: one on the environmental and social impact of reuse vs recycling, and one on the diversity of social initiatives. - And a “thank you” leaflet for people who donate. - We also want to roll out the campaign on social media and add short videos made by the groups. Run the campaign throughout the year. Presentation of the first draft with artwork. Other potential resources - Customer quiz - Create screen print templates to be printed on second-hand t-shirts. - Guide on how to set up pop-up stores to raise awareness in front of seats of power. - Leaflet or labels to explain the impact of shopping at Emmaus. (Cost in euro, social, economic and environmental benefits). RCEE opinion of the whole proposal	

	A good campaign proposal, generally speaking. It is a good idea to offer a leaflet to customers at Emmaus. In Finland, there are labels that provide information on this topic. The screen printing idea is really good. - It would be good to include the slogan “quality donations make for quality work” in email signatures. We need to check capacity in terms of the budget and available staff. There is also the idea of calling on the national organisations to translate/disseminate the campaign and for EE to work more closely on that with the groups with no national organisation. It would be a good idea to have a list put to the groups in advance so that they can then decide what they want and send them tailored resources, and share ideas from the various countries. In Switzerland, an eco-responsibility certificate was offered for gifts for an additional cost of 2 Francs (CHF). We could also print on bags; this works well in the Netherlands. In France, the “<i>si tu ne le portes pas donne le</i>” campaign has proved to be a great success (Not wearing it? Donate it!). In Poland, there are lots of second-hand stores that pay for items. It is worthwhile letting people know that they are doing something socially beneficial when they donate to Emmaus. We need to talk to Emmaus UK and Emmaus France in order to properly coordinate this campaign with what they have planned. What’s a quality donation for you? Emphasize “Zero holes or stains”. Needs - Beds and mattresses - Furniture - Clothing - Music/books - Bric-a-brac (egg cups, plates etc) - Electronics It could be linked to the international campaign on overproduction/overconsumption.	
10. EI update Group support and training	Reminder of the support circle system - Offer a discussion forum to look at how groups work to help them analyse their strengths and weaknesses. Possibility of group-to-group support. Share technical and human resources in the future. Possibility of getting support and using EI funds. - 16 topics have been identified for this programme.	

	- Based on groups volunteering to self-assess. This tool may become compulsory at some point in the future to enable groups in difficulty to be supported. The topic of “institutional solidarity” needs further clarification in the list of topics. Reminder of the aims of the training circle - Request made by the 2022 WA. EI should have its own international training programme. - Internal training, convey our values, how to champion our struggles. General training (more targeted training should be delivered at the national/regional levels). - A catalogue was produced but needs to be reviewed in order to remove items focusing on AP. - EI is looking for training facilitators. The elected representatives have been asked to become facilitators. We should use the needs of people in different groups as the starting point. The issue of availability of the resources in local languages. There should be a large pool of people available to deliver training in their respective countries. These people would volunteer, although they would not be experts on the subject, they would know about the issues and the movement. There should be the option to deliver online and in-person training. Vincent volunteered to become a trainer. Reminder of the remit of the Commitment, Heritage and Communications Department Develop member groups’ feeling of belonging to the movement and share the movement’s initiatives, history and values. New communications tools have been developed. Next date for the department: presentation of the department’s strategy for 2025-2026 at the October Executive Committee.	
11. Young people	We want to do so many things aimed at young people, but as we have limited human and financial resources, we are endeavouring to suggest a priority from the list of potential priorities for EE. The elected representatives will select the priority for EE. 1. Convey Emmaus’ values to a large number of young people. 2. Retain young leaders so that they stay in the movement. 3. Retain young volunteers so that they stay in the movement. 4. Recruit more young volunteers to work at Emmaus. 5. Encourage young people to sit on the board. Even though we are very aware that everything is interlinked. The elected representatives chose the following as the number one priority: recruit young volunteers. We must differentiate between age groups in order to reach out to young people in the most effective way. Visit graduate schools and universities. There is a need to set up youth delegations, like at the WFA, as much as we can.	

12. European advocacy

Update on the situation in the European institutions.

- **European Parliament**
The right and far right were the big winners at the 2024 European elections. The Greens lost 19 seats and the Liberals 22. From now on, the far right is split into three political parties, making for 187 MEPs out of a total of 720. Despite this, the Centrists and Greens can still have an influence by joining forces.
- **European Commission**
The president was re-elected and appointed the commissioners (one per Member State with a specific portfolio). Nominations must be fully endorsed by the European Parliament. This period of office will probably be in keeping with the previous period with a focus on increasing economic growth. As for social issues, the main portfolio has been divided up and allocated to other commissioners. A massive emphasis on security which appears in all the portfolios. The energy commissioner is also a housing commissioner with a social undertaking, and signs the EU's undertakings on these issues. There is also a competitive circular economy commissioner.

A circular economy law should be developed to foster a demand-driven market for second-hand markets, a single European waste market, create EPR schemes in more sectors, establish a tax to encourage business to use recycled products, and set up a single market for sustainable products. This initiative will be spearheaded by Jessika Roswall, the competitive circular economy commissioner.

Right to repair

Establish a right to repair with the obligation to repair if it costs as much or less, encourage repairability, increase warranty periods. An ambitious project that will be further developed, we will come back to these issues in the near future.

Idea of an agreement for clean industry with tax measures to foster decarbonisation and a framework for state support for social housing.

An interesting agenda for social issues. The social affairs and employment commissioner has been replaced by a Romanian, Roxana Minzatu, who is tasked with developing an anti-poverty strategy, and a European plan for affordable housing (we will be in touch with the FAP to work with them). There is also the idea of putting in place a social economy action plan even if the content is still vague.

The energy and housing commissioner is also responsible for social and sustainability issues. It is a nice surprise that this issue has been taken on board. Carina met the person in question a long time

ago and thinks that it is important to contact these various commissioners. We are going to send them our proposals and suggest a meeting.

Regarding affordable housing, we could draw once again on our stance on empty housing being made available for short-term rental.

In Switzerland, there is enormous potential to renovate buildings. Renovation is much more environmentally friendly than constructing new builds. In any event, this is a framework strategy without any specific legislation.

The European Commission's President has been criticised for the fact that the EU is getting to grips with the issue of housing in Europe when housing is not part of the EU's remit. However, it is one of the core issues that she wishes to address. The fact that this topic has risen to the top of the agenda and become established is a collective advocacy success story.

François spoke about the growth in construction materials reuse. This is one of the new separate collection sectors in operation at the European level and it would be worthwhile getting involved.

Partnership with RREUSE

Work continues with RREUSE on the framework waste directive which notably establishes an ERP scheme and separate textile collection. The aim is to favour reuse over recycling (waste hierarchy) and prioritise social stakeholders. We are at the trilogue phase in order to find a middle ground between the various texts before a vote in Parliament. At the present time, there is no actual quantified reuse target in the text, even if the States can go further and include one. We should have an idea of the final wording by the end of the year or the start of next year.

Work has got underway on WEEE. The Commission is going to put forward a revision of this directive. We must ensure that the social economy is more fully incorporated into it.

For digital and digital issues, a project with RREUSE came to an end with three reports on how social enterprises are taking ownership of digital, the stumbling blocks and opportunities. How consumers use digital tools to access social enterprises.

Migration

Security is a key concern with a desire to strengthen Frontex and recruit 30,000 new agents. This period of office will also see the implementation of the European Pact and transposition into national legislation. There is an idea for a new European visa policy and increasing deportations. There is also a plan to coordinate maritime rescue efforts but information has not yet been provided about its implementation.

The migration commissioner is Austrian and is right wing.

	The Mediterranean commissioner has the goal of putting in place a Mediterranean pact which also covers the issue of migration with border strengthening. The equality commissioner is thought to be developing an anti-racism and minority rights protection strategy. EE continues to work with MIGREUROP. The organisation is running monthly themed or geographical meetings. The idea is to see how we can work with EI too as these topics go beyond Europe's borders, particularly the issue of outsourcing. MIGREUROP does very little advocacy on European legislation so we have decided to join another network: ECRE. ECRE is the European Council on Refugees and Exiles. It is the largest organisation working on these topics. This will enable us to access a number of resources and their support. ECRE has three focus areas: legal support and litigation, advocacy and communication. Duncan: We must not forget European policies that still have an impact on the UK or Switzerland. Would some people like to work on certain topics? Duncan is interested in working on homelessness, Vincent on reuse, Yvette on reuse and migration.	
13. New full and trial member groups	<u>Three French groups</u> - SOS Familles in Forbach (full membership): supports people experiencing crippling or serious debt. - <i>100 pour un toit</i> with Emmaus Saintes (trial membership): several people join together to pool their resources to pay the rent of one or more families. - Simplified membership procedure: enabling groups to join who missed out on becoming members a long time ago. <i>100 pour un</i> connected to Emmaus Angouleme. The RCEE approved the trial and full membership applications made by these groups. <u>Amis 3 visit feedback</u> - An association that works with social services in Latvia. Large stock, lots of items, very well organised. However, structural problems have put the group in a difficult situation. They are reliant on container loads, their board is too small, and there are governance issues. Meeting some of the criteria is a big challenge at the moment. They need to: - o Resolve the governance issue. - o Develop a form of economic independence. - o Work on a plan to develop the involvement of volunteers and others in addition to Solvita who founded the group. - It will take a few years for them to be ready to join the movement.	The RCEE endorsed NG's full membership application. The applications made by <i>100 pour 1</i> Angouleme et SOS Familles Forbach were also approved And trial membership for <i>100 pour 1 Saintes</i>.

- Still trial members, cannot become full members. The group no longer has a supporting group, Lublin is a possibility. The suggestion will be made to them.

Vilnius monitoring visit

- Group that works on human trafficking. They had rented a house for 10 years but the contract was not renewed by the council. They have just found office space in the centre of Vilnius. They provide local services and have other income-generating activities. They do a lot of advocacy in parliament. The handover between the former leader and new leader went smoothly. They are facing the same problem: only three people on the Board. But they are in the process of recruiting more members.
- They could contribute: lobbying skills, safe internet, human trafficking. The group wants to join an international network.
- They will be ready to become full members once the governance issue has been addressed.

Nova Generacija (NG)

- Trial member group, currently led by young psychologists, helps child victims of violence and vulnerable children, notably in the Roma Community. Day centre, homework support, educational support, emergency phoneline for child/teenage victims of violence.
- Another activity: Supporting the Roma Community.
- Parenting courses.
- They are funded by projects, but have lots of funding partners, and having so many funding partners is a form of independence.
- Board has three members, currently seeking two more to have the correct number.
- Young people's circle: a mini organisation within the wider organisation.
- An organisation with incredibly strong human resources.

The RCEE endorsed NG's full membership application. The group does not meet the criteria of five Board members, but the RCEE felt that the group had done enough to join Emmaus.

Discussion about governance

What are we looking for as guarantees of governance? A review of EI's membership process is going to take place shortly and should be finished in April.

The issue of having more members on the Board: this involves amending the statutes of the organisation joining the movement and this is very challenging in some countries. In some countries, the very concept of having a board is not the same and is not understood. In Europe, there are always at least three members sitting on an organisation's board, but the statutes state that organisations should have at least five members, and we have interpreted it as five Board members.

	Belgium: There are only two or three board members in several cases. Adhering too strictly to the statutes on this point is sometimes a barrier. Respect the legal minimum and make provision for a specific governance framework. It might be better to audit regularly rather than being too strict. We also need to limit people holding multiple positions concurrently. The criteria in our statutes do not in any way guarantee good governance as things stand. It is a shame to turn down groups on this basis, when they actually demonstrate good governance. Importance of setting criteria: - Disinterested management. - Code of conduct monitored by another group of people/specifications. - Do not concentrate power in the hands of a single person. Duncan: Be mindful that good governance is good governance. There are rules and we need to adhere to them. An international training course on good governance would be useful. We are still lacking systems offering greater transparency in our movement. The case of NG and the others invites us to have a joint discussion at EI level on the issue of governance criteria.	
14. Solidarity	Ukraine Fund €1,130,000 was collected in total and the fund now has a balance of €201,000. Emergency support has now become longer-term backing, so spending has gone down every year. In 2024, the issue was ending support for Nasha Khata. The last transfer of funding was in March 2024 and the support had gradually been reduced. The Polish groups received significant support at the start of the conflict, particularly for their work hosting refugees. This funding has also been drastically cut with the drop in the number of Ukrainians being hosted (only one group continues to host around 10 refugees). An idea could be to fund the development of integration projects rather than emergency shelter and support. At the last executive meeting, the issue of how to use the remaining sum was raised with the aim of continuing to support Oselya in its work with the homeless (around €4,500 a month) but also supporting Oselya with its core and development projects. The idea is also to approach other organisations in Ukraine to support peacebuilding initiatives. Herbert and Emmanuel travelled to Ukraine last July and observed that it is still difficult to raise the issue of peace and start discussions between organisations on this topic. The visit was an opportunity to meet Lviv's deputy mayor who gained a better understanding of Emmaus' work. They also met with someone who is in the process of creating housing for isolated people. This project has not yet got off the ground.	The RCEE unanimously voted to fund the Uhorska Street building renovation project, subject to guarantees about the lease (e.g. a minimum 10-year lease).

Emmanuel presented Oselya's projects for the coming years.
Three floors of a building are managed by Oselya and need overall renovation work.
Basement: Furniture repair workshop
Ground floor: Shop, educational workshops, counselling sessions.
First floor: Social housing flats (nine adults and three children).
Work on the ground floor has finished with a budget of roughly €17,000. The aim is to continue the renovation work bit by bit, starting with the basement (budget of approximately €18,000). They are requesting funding of €16,500 from Emmaus Europe to be able to undertake the work. They will undoubtedly ask for funding to renovate the first floor (social housing flat) in a second phase.
The discussion then focused on the length of the lease, as the building is being loaned by the council, and the option of submitting an overall funding project for renovating the three floors, in order to leverage funding and seek out donors. At the present time, they have split the renovation of the three floors into three separate projects in order to progress as much possible with the works using the funding already secured.

The executive reiterated that some of the remaining Ukraine Fund funding should be used for peace consolidation projects. An overall strategy is needed for the Ukraine Fund to enable this, select projects to be funded, and ringfence funding for peace work.

Emmaus Iasi

Emmanuel reminded the meeting about Iasi's situation, and the emergency appeal to fund renovation work to bring the community house into line with standards. €85,000 has been raised. €60,000 worth of building work has been started, the last instalment of €5,000 to continue the work in the community house still needs to be transferred. Building work is required in Popesti too for a budget of around €25,000. EE is able to pledge support of around €20,000. The group is going to secure other funding to make up the €5,000 shortfall.

The companions have been rehoused following the decision to close down the community, some in groups in France, others in rented flats in the city. Some have already returned to live in the community house.

2024 solidarity booklet

The 2024 solidarity booklet showcases the year's initiatives still needing funding (Emmaus Piadena) and the GTF (Green Transition Fund). All the other projects have already been fully funded. The booklet was sent out by email and post, but it is important for the elected representatives to spread the word.

Marie (EI) reiterated that the shared international kitty is a good system and enables resources to be fairly distributed, while providing information about the projects that are then funded. The issue is really communication.

	Annual solidarity programme Emmanuel's attendance at the meeting enabled harmonised project rating to be carried out. It could be worthwhile to get two elected representatives to work on each project alongside Emmanuel. However, the elected representatives should not be unduly burdened, as they are already involved in a large number of working groups. The elected representatives felt that the project rating system was good. The only issue raised was the unexpected increase in the amounts allocated to the ASP in 2024 at the EI Board.	
15. Country news	Maria-Luisa presented the challenges facing Emmaus in Italy. <i>"The crucial challenge of humanity on a journey"</i> There are now 15 groups in six regions of Italy. The communities have to be independent of any political or religious movements or institutions, refuse grants and operate by generating an income from their work. They have also committed to setting up an ethical bank. Some 20% of the turnover from the charity shops goes to Emmaus Italy to fund the wages of a leader for each group. The community refunds Emmaus Italy for the wages paid if it has a second leader. Emmaus Italy also funds a part-time post at the federation and a part-time communications role. Emmaus Italy also funds a non-violence and peace training officer who delivers training in universities. The ethical bank (<i>Banca Etica</i>) is a commitment that comes at a major cost because interest rates are higher than in conventional banks. The vast majority of the community buildings are owned by Emmaus Italy. They are involved in promoting peace, proper provision for refugees and migrants, and education. Summer camps are held each year to enable young people to experience and try out the Emmaus values: shelter and support, sharing, solidarity, non-violence. Emmaus Italy has also supported the development of the ISF in Bosnia-Herzegovina and many other groups. Nowadays, some communities are requesting funds from other organisations but there is a need to be sure that these organisations are a perfect fit with Emmaus. This marks a change from the previous generations, who turned down any external funding. The leaders of Emmaus Italy had a strong influence on the movement in the past, but nowadays few Italians are actively involved. What can be done to get members of Emmaus Italy involved once again? Emmaus Italy made a major contribution to the movement's development. Nowadays, some longstanding members are criticising the fact that we did not go to work directly in Ukraine in the conflict zones, in addition to the work of our group in Lviv, but that was how things were in the past, and another way of being Emmaus. No response, but the new generation can carve out its place with its own way of working, this is a necessary change.	

	There are real challenges in terms of governance and board makeup. Boards have little power compared with the power held by leaders. Another important issue is handing over to new generations. Another issue is solidarity because of the major issues in Italy. Three communities have closed down (Rome, Arezzo and Bologna) and two others are up for discussion because they are quite weak. Questions are being raised about the traditional community model in Italy. There are more companions than before when there were very few, but their age and their conditions are an issue. Young people and migrants are not interested in living in a community setting.	
16. Football tournament for peace and human rights	Emmanuel reminded the meeting about the first football tournament which took place in Srebrenica in 2023. For 2025, it would be good to find a venue to which the French undocumented companions could travel without any problems. The issue of the budget was also raised. A tournament in France would inevitably be dearer than one held in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Emmaus Europe has asked the French groups if any of them are willing to host the tournament. If no group has come forward by November, the tournament will be held in Srebrenica. 2025 will be the 30th anniversary of the genocide, and many people will travel to the area for the event. The tournament could be held elsewhere, and return to Srebrenica in 2026.	
17. Proposed schedule and upcoming meetings	EE schedule 19 November - Food exchange of practices 17-18 December - Executive meeting in Montreuil 2025 14 February - Online executive Mid-March - RCEE in Paris April - Exchange of practices May - Female leadership programme? June or July - Executive in Montreuil Late June or July - Online meeting for national organisations Late July - Football tournament Late September - RCEE in Aland (be careful not to overlap with the EI 16-18 September EC) October/November - Geographical collectives	

	Carina: It is important to think about elected representative wellbeing given that the schedules are very busy. We should not add too many meetings. The movement is going to continue, so we must take care of its members.	
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As there were no further items on the agenda, the president closed the meeting.

Carina Aaltonen
President of Emmaus Europe

Yvette GUMBS
Interim secretary of Emmaus Europe