

13 APRIL 2026

ELECTIVE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

EMMAUS EUROPE



emmaus

EUROPE

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

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Dear Emmaus Europe member groups,

For the first time ever, we will hold an Elective Assembly of Emmaus Europe on the opening day of this year's World Assembly! We will meet on **Monday, 13 April 2026**, from **10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** in Someren, the Netherlands, just before the official start of the World Assembly, to elect our future representatives.

Holding this Elective General Assembly separately from the Strategic Policy Assembly is a completely new approach. Until now, elections for the CEI Board members representing Europe took place at the Emmaus Europe General Assembly one year before the World Assembly. As a result, European representatives could not begin their mandates on the Emmaus International (EI) Board and the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe at the same time as representatives from other regions. This new arrangement finally resolves that time lag.

During the Elective Assembly, you will elect **Emmaus Europe new Chair** (himself/herself CEI Board member). The standard term of office for the Chair is four years, renewable once. This mandate will therefore cover the **period 2026–2029**.

You will also elect **11 additional CEI Board members**, who will serve as your representatives on both the Emmaus Europe Board (Regional Council) and the Emmaus International Board for the same four-year term. In addition, the European region must propose a candidate for the Wise Persons Committee; this candidate will be presented to you during the Assembly.

The Assembly will also give us the opportunity to approve the moral report and the financial report, which will review the past three years, and to decide on an adjustment of the membership fees—an important step to ensure we can continue delivering high quality work at the European level.

As my current mandate comes to an end, I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude for the years we have shared. It has been an honour to serve as Chair of Emmaus Europe, and I am deeply thankful for the commitment, solidarity, and hard work shown by all our member groups across the region. A special thank you to all members of the Board for their collaboration, wisdom, and steadfast dedication throughout these years. I also want to warmly thank the staff of the Emmaus Europe Secretariat—your professionalism, support, and tireless effort have been essential to everything we have accomplished together. Working alongside you all has been a privilege.

I am very much looking forward to seeing you all there!

**Warm greetings,**

*Carina Aaltonen*  
*Chair of Emmaus Europe*

## PRESIDENCY

### 1 POST TO BE FILLED

The Chair of Emmaus Europe is responsible for carrying out the decisions of the General Assembly, Regional Council and Regional Executive. She/he chairs these bodies. The Chair represents Emmaus Europe from a legal perspective, in front of third parties and in legal proceedings within Europe.

### HOW TO ELECT THE CHAIR?

The regional assembly elects the Chair of Emmaus Europe with a two-thirds majority of the member organisations in attendance or duly represented in the first round of voting and a simple majority in the second round.

On your ballot paper, in the Presidency section, you have to vote for only one candidate among the three candidates standing.

Please note that the Chair of Emmaus Europe holds one of the twelve CEI Board members posts. Your vote for one candidate as Chair will also be counted as a vote cast for them as CEI Board member.

Please do not vote for this candidate a second time in the CEI section of your ballot paper, otherwise only one of the two votes will be counted.

## CEI BOARD MEMBERS

### 12 POSTS TO BE FILLED

The Councillors of Emmaus International (CEI) are members of both their region's Regional Council and members of Emmaus International's Board. CEI Board members need to have knowledge of the life of the groups, but must also have a vision of European and world issues and the challenges that Emmaus must face in the future.

### HOW TO ELECT THE CEI BOARD MEMBERS?

The number of CEI Board members for the Europe region is set at twelve. These twelve CEI Board members are the eleven candidates who receive the most votes by simple majority, plus the elected Chair.

On your ballot paper, you must therefore tick up to eleven candidates from the 16 candidates standing. Bear in mind your vote for the Chair grants one vote to that candidate as CEI Board members, so please give your 11 votes to other candidates.

You may vote here for a candidate as CEI Board members even if you have not selected them for the Presidency.

Candidates who are not elected to serve as CEI Board members but have an absolute majority of the votes may be replacements and asked to fill the post if an elected representative leaves their post during their term of office.

*NB: There can be no more than four CEIs (Chair included) representing the groups from any single country in order to ensure equitable geographical representation.*

## APPLICATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENCY

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF

### EMMAUS EUROPE

**Three candidates** are standing for the presidency of Emmaus Europe at the 2026 Elective General Assembly:

- **Jean-Philippe Légaut**, Emmaus Satu-Mare (Romania)
- **Duncan Lewis**, Emmaus Hertfordshire (United Kingdom)
- **Fatima Parret-Bezli**, Emmaus Bussièrès et Pruns - CADA (France)

Their knowledge of the movement, their experience within our groups and their vision for the future are an strong asset for our region.

Each of them is also standing as Councillor for Emmaus International (CEI) Board member, so that their skills and experience can benefit Emmaus Europe regardless of who is elected Chair.

We invite you to discover their backgrounds, their vision and their motivations in the following pages.

In accordance with Regulation 11 and 18 of the Emmaus Europe Internal Regulations, the candidates presented in this booklet have provided all the necessary documents for their application. You can find these documents online in the Emmaus Europe member area, accessible via the QR code opposite or the following link: [emmaus-europe.org/language/en/elective-general-assembly-2026/](https://emmaus-europe.org/language/en/elective-general-assembly-2026/)





## JEAN-PHILIPPE LÉGAUD

### Emmaus Satu Mare - Romania

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*I believe that now is the time to join forces  
to remain faithful to our values.*



#### LETTER OF MOTIVATION

Since 2010, I have been involved in my group in Satu Mare, Romania and since 2015, I have held various positions within the movement, as an EI Board member and then Treasurer of Emmaus Europe. My group, Satu Mare, is a residential community, it runs an integration scheme and also provides dedicated social support to young adults who were in care under the child protection system. I believe that this position, at the heart of the movement's three branches<sup>1</sup>, enables me to understand the diversity of the operating methods of the groups in Europe.

In my role as Treasurer of Emmaus Europe since 2019, aside from sending you the traditional annual appeal for subscriptions, I have had the opportunity to discover, during our numerous board meetings, the reality of our groups in Europe, the local and national contexts in which they operate, the challenges they face, and their resilience in the face of adversity.

Today, I am presenting my application for the role of Chair in order to put this experience to good use for the movement. The challenges that we are facing as citizens, groups and as a movement are numerous and times are tough: the rise of extremism and populism, war returning to the European continent, international rules being trampled on, the welfare state being undermined, environmental issues being sidelined from public priorities... Unfortunately, the list goes on and on! Even though it is tempting, in times of turmoil, to shut oneself away and withdraw, I believe that now is the time to join forces to remain faithful to our values.

Solidarity is at the heart of our movement, whether in the form of solidarity between groups or through European or international programmes. It is part of our identity and it keeps us alive as a movement. In addition to the

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<sup>1</sup> In France, Emmaus is structured around three branches, each one related to a type of activity: the community branch for community groups, the social action and housing branch and the solidarity economy and integration branch.

traditional forms that are so important for the most fragile groups (transported goods, financial solidarity, such as the Ukraine Fund and Green Transition Fund), over the last two terms of office, we have developed other types of exchanges that I feel are important to pursue: exchanges of practices, along with work on empowering groups, as was the case during the recent Poland-Ukraine-Georgia-Romania collectives.

At a time when the revelations about abbé Pierre have shaken the movement, we must continue to align our practices with our ideals. Social and environmental justice, human dignity and respect for rights underpin our commitments, and we must strive to set high standards in implementing these values on a daily basis, within our groups and in our governing bodies. Several national organisations have, for example, developed quality standards for welcoming people, such as companions, employees on reintegration schemes, beneficiaries of social support. These tools could be discussed and tailored by groups to national and local contexts. Gender equality is also a key issue and I would like us to continue the female leadership programme initiated by Carina in 2025 to enable everyone to play their part in our movement. Furthermore, I feel that we must focus on training and integrating new generations, including in positions of responsibility, to ensure the long-term sustainability of our movement.

We need a political and regulatory framework that recognises our role and our work so that we can continue to carry out our daily work. As the manager of a Romanian group, operating for a long time in a political context marked by instability and mistrust of civil society, I believe that Emmaus Europe must continue to defend the unique nature of our work through advocacy efforts that ensure we can continue to make a living from our work and live by our values. Emmaus Europe does not have the resources to carry out this work alone, which is why we made a decision several years ago to join several European networks. They campaign on issues that matter greatly to us, such as RREUSE on the circular economy or EAPN on the fight against poverty. All of us - elected representatives and secretariat staff - need to continue to exert our influence within these networks to make our voices heard.

Lastly, I believe that Emmaus Europe must stay faithful to the model that gave rise to its creation: a flexible organisation, modest in its budget and the size of its secretariat, but always attentive to groups, promoting their aspirations and enabling them to work together for a better future.

*Jean-Philippe Légaud*

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR EXPERIENCE

#### National and international networks

Since 2024 - **Secretary** – Romanian Social Economy Network (RISE România)

Since 2024 - **Vice-Chair** – Emmaus Romania

Since 2019 - **Treasurer** – Emmaus Europe

2015 – 2019 - **CEI Board member** – Emmaus International

#### Emmaus Satu Mare (Romania)

Since 2013 - **Community Manager of Emmaus Satu Mare:** coordination of welcome and socio-educational activities, financial and legal oversight, development of a protected unit.

2006 – 2009 - **Founder and manager of an integration programme** for young adults leaving the child protection system.

#### “Hors la Rue” organisation (Montreuil, France)

2012 – 2013 - **Acting Director:** coordination of European projects and a pilot project combatting human trafficking.

2009 – 2011 - **Street educator:** Implementing a programme to care for minors engaged in prostitution.

2007 – 2009 - **Completion of a study** on the repatriation of Romanian minors from France.

### EDUCATION

2016 - **PhD in Contemporary History:** “Protect or condemn. A history of “Romanian orphans” under Nicolae Ceausescu and up to the European Union (1965-2007)”, coord. Marie-Pierre Rey, University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

2005 - Admission to the **École Normale Supérieure (ENS)** in Paris.

2002 - **Literary Baccalaureate**, Reims, France.  
**German Baccalaureate** (“Abitur”).

### SKILLS

#### Languages

- Romanian: Certified translator since 2018.
- German: B1
- English: B1

#### IT Skills:

- Pack Office

#### PUBLICATIONS

- “Enfants perdus de Roumanie, Histoire des orphelinats de Ceausescu [*Romania's Lost Children, A History of Ceausescu's Orphanages*]”, published by Editions Vendémiaire, Paris, 2019. Romanian translation: Meteor Press, Bucarest, 2020.
- “Les actions pour les enfants en situation de rue en France. L'émergence d'une nouvelle professionnalisation ? [*Actions for street children in France. The emergence of a new wave of professionalism?*]”, in collaboration with CERA and LERP, ONED, 2011.
- “Les pouponnières de Ceausescu, l'institutionnalisation de la petite enfance dans la Roumanie de Ceausescu [*Ceausescu's nurseries, the institutionnalisation of early childhood in Ceausescu's Romania*]”, Revista arhivelor naționale, Bucharest, no.2, 2009.
- “Retours au pays de mineurs isolés roumains... avant un nouveau départ ? [*The return of unaccompanied Romanian minors to their home country... before a new departure?*]”, <http://www.horslarue.org>, 2009.
- “Les enfants de l'Etat, Histoire d'un orphelinat roumain sous Ceausescu” [*The Children of the State, Story of a Romanian Orphanage under Ceausescu*], Bulletin de l'Institut Pierre Renouvin no.29, Printemps 2009.



## DUNCAN LEWIS

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*It is on the ground, in our communities that the passion which unites us and the energy that drives us are generated.*



### LETTER OF MOTIVATION

I am incredibly fortunate and incredibly proud to be part of Emmaus – an organisation which does so much good work to help those in greatest need. An organisation that can deliver aid on the ground in Gaza while so much of the world just stands and watches in horror. An organisation that helps rescue and protect the most vulnerable victims (often children) of people trafficking. An organisation that sees homeless people as humans who need support to achieve their potential. An organisation with a clear voice, campaigning consistently for a more peaceful and sustainable world in which climate, economic and social justice prevail.

All these things and much more happen because of the unrelenting work of the tens of thousands of people involved in the organisation – staff, volunteers and companions, all of whom work every day to make the world a better place. Emmaus, more than most organisations, is truly built from the bottom-up and it is on the ground, in our communities that the passion which unites us and the energy that drives us are generated.

This means the role of a European board must adapt to the scale and diversity of the organisation. There is a role for leadership, but it must be supportive, enabling and empowering, it must harness rather than shackle our collective strengths, bring focus and clarity to our work and our voice, and guard the key assets – our values, our experience and our reputation, which form the foundations on which everything else is built.

In Emmaus it must be true that 'to lead is to serve' and we are a democratic organisation so our agenda and priorities will be set by you, but there are some key themes which, if I am elected, I will be asking the board, the secretariat and the wider organisation to work towards. These are less about what we do – the key aims of our current strategic plan ('act for peace, for an eco-revolution, for a solidarity-based society and to make new from old') can and should remain because there

is much work still to be done on all of them. Instead they are more about how we should work together to ensure that we make the greatest impact.

These priorities are...

- The need to focus. We must be clear about where and how we can make the most difference and understand when and why our voice carries the most weight. There is much that is wrong and unjust in the world and we can and should have a position on many topics, but at European and international level we are an organisation with a wide footprint and relatively limited resources, so we need to be idealistic in thought but pragmatic in action. Realistically our best chance of achieving lasting change is to focus on fewer issues, those where we have the most experience and expertise and have therefore earned the greatest credibility.
- The need to be relevant and appealing to a younger audience. This is essential if we are to have a future! For too long we have looked back to our founding story for inspiration, now we must shine the light more brightly on the work we do today. Our core values will endure but our brand, our messaging, the media we use to deliver it and our work must all be evolved to appeal more to young people who can take the organisation further in the future.
- The need to build capability. Across much of Europe we need to strengthen and grow national organisations so that they can encourage the establishment of more communities to do more good work, and so that we can maintain our standards and protect our reputation. When they work well in places like France and the UK National Organisations enable us to maximise the benefits of having global reach but local presence – establishing and safeguarding an appropriate level of quality and consistency when necessary, while also recognising and adapting to specific and different local circumstances.
- The need to shout louder about what we do and the impact it has. We must champion the good work that we do and tell our story with passion, conviction and evidence-based credibility. Whoever is in the role of Chair needs to be a figurehead for the organisation and able to speak confidently to the media when required, but they need to be more than just a spokesperson, they need to lead by example and within the organisation they must be prepared to listen as much as to speak.
- The need to ensure that we 'punch our weight' (or above our weight!) when we campaign and influence. This applies both internally, where Europe should work more closely and proactively on key issues with Emmaus International, and externally where we must develop closer ties with organisations such as the UN. We need to continue to build, develop and leverage stakeholder networks which will help make our campaigning as effective as possible. Our own resources are limited, but the careful forging of alliances can amplify our voice and increase the reach of our key messages.

Whenever there is an Emmaus gathering, I am always amazed, impressed and humbled by the energy in the room and by how great the collective desire is to change the world for the better. I think the best way to harness that energy is to

develop Emmaus Europe so that it can continue to support, guide and facilitate everything that everyone involved in Emmaus across Europe does. Under Carina's leadership much good progress has already been made during the last mandate and there is now a great opportunity to build on that with real purpose and momentum.

If I am elected, then my promise is that I will do my best to deliver the priorities set out in this letter. I will travel to meet as many of you as possible, I will listen to your issues and challenges, do my best to answer your questions, help you celebrate and communicate your successes and learn the lessons of experience with you.

I know that over my career to date in a range of commercial, charitable and social-enterprise based organisations I have been able to acquire the skills and experience to deliver on my promises and I hope you can see that for yourselves in my CV. For this role the most important experience I have gained has been the last two years on the Boards of Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International and the Executive Committee of Emmaus Europe. In that time, I have visited communities across Europe to see the work they do and the challenges they face, been able to understand the different issues which impact us across the region and to see how we contribute to the wider work of Emmaus International.

The most important truth, though, is that the success of whoever is elected over the next four years will be determined not by what they themselves do but by what they enable all of you to do.

I very much hope to have the chance to work with you all, but either way in my capacity today as a CEI I want to thank you all for all you have done and continue to do to make Emmaus the unique and truly impressive organisation it is today.

*Duncan Lewis*

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### ABOUT ME

A highly experienced and successful CEO and non-executive Chair, who has held senior roles in a variety of international, charitable, business and sports organisations. Core marketing, commercial and fundraising skills are reinforced by experience of strategy development and operational delivery to provide genuine breadth. A track-record of delivering cultural evolution and organisational growth through complex stakeholder landscapes and building and leading highly effective teams to deliver significant, positive social impact.

### CAREER HISTORY

#### Emmaus Hertfordshire

##### **May 2021 to present - CEO**

CEO of a £1 million turnover charitable social enterprise which offers a home and meaningful work experience to up to 39 formerly homeless 'companions' while helping them regain their independence. 75% of the community running costs are raised by sales of recycled and upcycled furniture online and through a network of 5 shops and a house clearance business.

- Increased occupancy and grew trading and fundraising income year on year;
- Restructured the staff team and created a new strategy to better balance the twin priorities of profits and people;
- Developed a plan to tackle a historic building maintenance backlog which was threatening the long-term viability of the community and successfully raised significant sums to enable repair work to start;
- Significantly raised the profile of the organisation with key local and national stakeholders, including hosting a royal visit in summer 2022;
- Elected to the Emmaus UK Federation Committee and to the boards of Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International which oversee the work of more than 450 Emmaus Communities in more than 40 countries around the world.

#### Libraries for Life

##### **Appointed April 2020 - Chief Executive**

Appointed to run the charitable public service mutual which won the contract to run 46 libraries across Hertfordshire. Responsible for 500 staff 1500 volunteers and income of £15million. Start date for this role was repeatedly postponed due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### The Lord's Taverners

##### **August 2014 to April 2019 - Director of Fundraising and Marketing**

Led a team of 14 responsible for all income-generation and marketing activity for the charity that spends over £4 million annually to help improve the lives of over 180,000 disabled or disadvantaged young people by giving them access to sport and recreational activity:

- Secured new or improved partnership deals with organisations including Berkley Homes, BT, Seven IM, Sky Sports and Ford. These partnerships total over £500K;
- Refreshed an events calendar which generated over £1 million, launching new national events and updating existing formats;
- Delivered and took part in a £300K corporate cycle challenge with Investec in 2015, which also generated more than £500K worth of positive PR coverage;
- Secured a new £300K grant from People's Postcode Lottery which grew to £800K;
- Managed celebrity cricket XI fundraising tours to Antigua (2015) and Hong Kong (2018).

## **Consultancy**

### **January 2013 to July 2014 - Marketing and Fundraising Consultant**

Undertaking a range of assignments including:

- Development and roll-out of a new high net worth fundraising strategy for Commonwealth Games England;
- Developing corporate partnerships and fundraising strategy for the Lord's Taverners;
- Development of a marketing strategy for mobile telephony firm Cycell;
- Advising Blackbaud (a CRM software supplier) on their positioning in the UK market.

## **Age UK**

### **June 2010 - November 2012 - Group Marketing and Development Director**

Age UK has 2,500 staff, 500 shops and income of over £170 million. Activity includes charitable service delivery, fundraising, research, campaigning and commercial sales.

- Built total awareness of the new Age UK brand to 81% in two years;
- Oversaw the development of a website voted best in the sector by Third Sector magazine and a large and rapidly growing social media presence;
- Drove successful adoption of the brand on and offline by 170 local Age UK partners;
- Built a previously diverse team of over 100 into a centre of excellence for brand, digital, CRM and business-development activity with marketing spend of over £30 million;

- Launched the Age International brand and visited projects in Haiti, Gaza and India.

## **Commonwealth Games England**

### **July 2009 to October 2010 - Marketing Director** *(part-time from June 2010)*

Leading the Marketing, Commercial and Communications function for Commonwealth Games England in the lead-in to the Delhi 2010 Games.

- Developed and launched the new 'We are England' brand and completely overhauled the sponsorship proposition, successfully introducing a package targeting SMEs;
- Secured sponsorship deals from adidas, New Balance, Biersdorf and G4S;
- Generated significant PR coverage from a very limited budget and undertook successful 'crisis management' when UK media ran inaccurate stories on security at the Games.

## **Land Securities**

### **September 2006 - April 2009 - Group Marketing Director**

Overseeing corporate, development and consumer marketing, for the UK's largest commercial property company. Leading a function of 40, with spend of over £25 million.

- Established the new role of Group Marketing Director, unifying disparate teams and successfully launched a new visual identity and brand positioning;
- Delivered award-winning campaigns for the group and oversaw the successful sponsorship of 'Global Cities' at Tate Modern;
- Completely overhauled marketing processes and supplier base, introducing more integrated planning and achieving significant savings by consolidating media-buying.

## **British Olympic Association - BOA (Association olympique britannique)**

### **October 2008 - January 2009 - Operations Director - Olympic Coaching Academy**

On secondment to the BOA, working with Sir Clive Woodward and the BOA senior management team on planning and launching the Olympic Coaching Academy.

- Prepared and presented plans and updates to the BOA board, led consultation with National Governing Bodies, developed brand strategy and pitched to sponsors.

## **Barclays Bank (1999 - 2006)**

### **2005 - 2006 - Head of Marketing then Marketing Director, Premier Banking**

Led a team of 20 and managed budgets in excess of £11 million, delivering all marketing activity for a business generating £300 million income and £70 million profit per annum.

- Introduced fewer, longer, promotional cycles. Drove year-on-year income up by 12% and generated new record highs for customer recruitment (4x previous weekly rates);
- Produced a rolling 3-year business plan and led delivery of all communications;
- Conducted insight-driven segmentation of the market, identifying key growth opportunities.

#### **2004 - Associate Director, Group Strategy and Planning**

Successfully completed a range of assignments as an internal consultant.

- Reviewed the marketing effectiveness and brand positioning of the secured lending subsidiary, Firstplus, redeploying budget into a more effective mix of channels;
- Reviewed the top twelve global projects for a PLC Group Board strategy update;
- Health-checked the implementation of CRM in Barclaycard call-centres.

#### **2002- 2003 - Head of Channel Development and Client Experience, Private Clients**

Set channel strategy and drove the client experience improvement agenda.

- Implemented a hotspots programme to find and fix ten key client issues across five strategic business units and commissioned research to benchmark the client experience;
- Recruited and led a multi-location team of 11 and managed investment spend of £90 million;
- Selected as part of a team that designed sales and service processes, multi-channel distribution strategy and target operating model for the UK bank.

#### **1992 - 2002 - Head of Brand Communications, Stockbrokers, then Private Clients**

- Successfully rolled out a new global visual identity across multiple businesses;
- Established a proactive, full-service marketing department for Barclays Stockbrokers;
- Specified user requirements for and promoted the online dealing service from launch in March 1999 with an integrated campaign (including TV). By end 2000 it accounted for 50% of execution-only business (3000 deals a day) with 150,000 registered users.

#### **Carlson Worldchoice**

##### **1996 - 1998 - Head of Marketing**

Recruited and led a marketing team of six supporting the retail and direct sell businesses.

- Managed the £10 million rebranding of AT Mays/ARTAC under the Worldchoice identity. The launch saw volumes increase 20% year on year, against a market 5% down.

Early career roles included Market Development Manager, Resort Condominiums International (RCI) Europe and Marketing Executive, then Product Manager, Thomson Tour Operations.

#### **ADDITIONAL ROLES**

##### **2011 - 2020 - Trustee, then Chair (from January 2015) - Sports Leaders UK**

Sports Leaders is an educational charity that encourages young volunteers into sport.

##### **2007 - 2013 - Non-executive Director - The British Volleyball Federation**

#### **QUALIFICATIONS**

**A Chartered Marketer**, having passed the CIM post-graduate Diploma in June 2002. Keble College Oxford - 2nd Class Honours in English.

#### **OTHER SKILLS AND INTERESTS**

French (fluent), German (basic conversational), Spanish (basic conversational) Holder of a full, clean driving licence. Qualified first-aider. RFU level two coach (youth rugby). Club cricket for Harpenden Dolphins. Recreational football, basketball, tennis, table tennis and golf. Keeping fit through weight training, swimming, cycling and Pilates.



## FATIMA PARRET-BEZLI

Emmaus Bussières-et-Pruns - CADA  
- France

 fparret.emmaus@gmail.com

“ *Emmaus is not a neutral movement: it embodies a vision, a set of ethical principles and, therefore, political responsibility.* ”

### LETTER OF MOTIVATION

Dear members of Emmaus, group representatives, Board members, volunteers, companions and employees,

My name is Fatima Parret-Bezli. I am the director of Emmaus Bussières-et-Pruns, located in Puy-de-Dôme, in a rural area between Vichy and Clermont-Ferrand.

This organisation runs a centre welcoming asylum seekers [known as CADA for its acronym in French] and has been developing social, cultural and human welcoming and development initiatives for 30 years, working with numerous local, institutional, social and community stakeholders.

For over fourteen years, I have held the position of Director, spearheading this ambitious non-profit project. With the active and moral support of the whole team at Emmaus Bussières-et-Pruns, I am deeply committed to putting Emmaus' values into practice on a daily basis, working on the ground with the most vulnerable people and maintaining close ties with our local community.

Since I took on this role, I have been working on developing our activities, with a keen focus at all times on the wellbeing of everyone involved (beneficiaries, volunteers and staff members), and on how we coexist, and the bonds we need to build and strengthen between people in exile, those living in our rural area, and local stakeholders.

**Being rooted in the local community is central to my commitment and my vision of Emmaus' work. In my view, it is at the very heart of my decision to run for Chair of Emmaus Europe.**

I was born in Algeria almost 48 years ago and my personal story and journey are inherently intertwined with migration, borders, socio-economic inequalities and North-South power relations.

I came to France as a teenager and very quickly felt the need to get involved in community life. I wanted to “take action”, without fully grasping its meaning at the time, for greater social justice, dignity and equality, particularly between men and women. School was also a key factor in my empowerment and in my desire to help improve the lives of those around me.

**I understood very early on that political and economic decisions and legal frameworks have a direct impact on people's lives. My commitment was built around a very simple belief: dignity, access to fundamental rights, education and housing, should never be conditional.**

My studies at university in foreign languages and economics of countries in the Southern Hemisphere, enabled me to develop critical thinking about dominant models. My extensive experiences in Latin America, India and Africa strengthened my conviction that credible alternatives exist to the current economic model - alternatives based on solidarity, cooperation and respect for people and territories. Later, in my work, I focused on nonprofit organisations, foundations, and NGOs, rejecting an exclusively market-driven approach to the economy. In my opinion, the latter can and must be social, supportive, socially innovative, and meaningful.

Before joining Emmaus, I held many roles in non-profit organisations: setting up a cultural development organisation in a rural areas, investing in organisations that provide assistance to people with disabilities, and subsequently working for five years at an Inter-Service Migrants organisation located on the outskirts of Clermont-Ferrand. It was during this period that I co-founded a forum theatre organisation with other social stakeholders to raise awareness about the issues found in so-called “sensitive” neighbourhoods (domestic violence, equal opportunities, etc.).

I also decided to become actively involved in politics with the Green Party in France, which led me to serve several terms as a regional representative, promoting social and environmental issues and the fight against discrimination within this institution. This experience enabled me to understand political power relations, how local, national and European institutions function, along with their limits and contradictions.

#### **Then I found Emmaus.**

I knew the name, but once I got involved, I discovered its richness, diversity, and collective strength. I found a movement which offers a strong link between tangible action, political engagement and alternative proposals. A movement that does not merely repair the damage, but resists, sometimes disobeys, challenges, and puts forward solutions. I discovered a movement which is deeply political, even when it does not claim to be so in certain countries. Indeed, I believe that Emmaus is not a neutral movement: it embodies a vision, a set of ethical principles and, therefore, political responsibility. As such, I started becoming actively involved in regional and national governing bodies, convinced that internal democracy, debate and the exchange of ideas are our strengths.

Since taking up my position at Bussières-et-Pruns, I have visited other Emmaus groups and become involved at a regional level in France by joining the Central

Region and then the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes team. I attended the Regional Assemblies, the branch Assises<sup>2</sup> and the Emmaus France General Assemblies. Followed by the assemblies held by Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International. I have always viewed these events as an activist duty and a vital space for encounters and mutual enrichment. However, I chose to prioritise local and regional commitment, in order to remain as close as possible to the realities on the ground, favouring exchanges and cross-disciplinary approaches at regional level, convinced that it is at the grassroots level that solid and credible responses are developed.

For some fifteen years, I have been involved in both community and political work, always in a clear and consistent manner, without ever confusing the two roles, but allowing each commitment to feed into the other.

However, Emmaus remains my main commitment, through the development of CADA initiatives, in addition to creating a social integration project based on reuse five years ago, in order to provide our region with tangible ways to support people in extremely precarious situations who are really struggling to find employment, offering them real prospects for social and professional integration.

**The time has come for me to get involved in a governing body that addresses the core issues that are so close to my heart: the environment, particularly through the development of a circular economy, social and professional integration of the most vulnerable, migration and international solidarity. Emmaus Europe strikes me as the right place to draw on my extensive experience and ability to connect people, groups and territories, to help bring about joint, constructive projects and boost networking, which is so essential to our movement.**

I would like to hear from groups from all countries to create alliances between them and with the regional bodies within the countries, to link their struggle with that of social movements and other actors in the social and solidarity economy. I would like to help them to increase their visibility and action. The networking that I will develop, fostering connections and cooperation, remains, in my view, one of the major drivers of transformation at European level.

Today Europe is facing a particularly challenging period. The tightening of migration policies, backsliding of fundamental rights, the rise of the far right, the normalisation of hate speech, exacerbation of social inequalities and the climate crisis, along with pitting the poorest people against each other, all pose a direct threat to the values we uphold.

Against this backdrop, Emmaus Europe, in addition to playing a coordinating role, is also a civil society actor capable of voicing a clear, strong, independent, and deeply human message.

In addition, Emmaus Europe is wholeheartedly embracing the circular economy, with most of its groups working in the field of reuse, but also on food projects (market gardening, organic and local food production). It reaffirms to European

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<sup>2</sup> In France, Emmaus is structured around three branches, each one related to a type of activity. Branch Assises (conferences) correspond to branch annual general meetings; they bring together groups belonging to the same branch.

leaders its support for the development of sectors and an economy that protect people and the environment. Together with other partners, it is leading a noble campaign against overproduction and economic deregulation within European political bodies. It is a leading player capable of engaging in dialogue with institutions but also challenging them when decisions are made that stray from environmental protection, social justice, and human dignity principles. Emmaus Europe is capable exerting greater influence in European debates, based on the legitimacy of its work at grassroots level and the strength of its values.

**My candidacy is in line with this requirement. I would like to continue making Emmaus Europe a space for active advocacy work, capable of exerting influence on European debates on migration, social and solidarity economy, climate and social justice. These issues are deeply intertwined: environmental crises fuel migration, economic inequalities feed into identity-based divisions, and security policies exacerbate social divisions.**

As I am fluent in Arabic, French, English, and Spanish, I can communicate and directly represent Emmaus in discussions with European institutions, international partners, and citizen movements. My knowledge of the legislative frameworks, public policies and institutional mechanisms strengthens my ability to convey our ideas, negotiate, and persuade, and is an asset for demanding, credible, and determined advocacy in support of our causes and values and for the well-being of the people we support.

I am fully aware of the responsibility that this role requires. I thought long and hard before submitting my application, conscious of the background and commitment of many people within the movement and fully aware of the responsibility that it entails. Nevertheless, I am convinced that my personal journey, experiences, and struggles have prepared me for this role.

Over thirty years of constant engagement at grassroots level and in institutions have prepared me to assume this responsibility. I am ready to meet with European institutions, political leaders, and partners to defend the public interest and convince them that another world, one that is fairer and more united at the European level, is possible.

I am prepared to resolutely convey to them what we stand for:

- unconditional welcome of people in exile,
- freedom of movement and of settlement,
- the right to dignified living conditions, housing, education, and work,
- maintaining and strengthening budgets for inclusion and solidarity,
- a grassroots, social, and inclusive approach to the environment,
- and full recognition of the social and solidarity economy as an alternative to the dominant model.

Lastly, I am eager to meet all the people involved in our groups - companions, volunteers, employees, and beneficiaries of our social programmes. I am aware of the realities on the ground, the struggles led in communities, shelters, solidarity

economy projects, together with people experiencing homelessness, families, children affected by conflict, in Europe and beyond.

I am committed to listening to and humbly learning from the many different European groups, and I also want to be able to represent their voices, struggles, and hopes with strength, clarity, and determination.

I am convinced that we are right to resist, right to disobey when the laws are unjust, and right to believe that another Europe is possible: a Europe based on solidarity, dignity and humanity. I know that our struggles are fair and that we have the collective strength required to wage them.

I am a committed, determined, passionate woman, curious about the world and other people, and deeply attached to the values of Emmaus, which I have made my own. As I approach 50, I am keen to invest my energy in a strong vision for the movement at the European level.

**It is with this firm conviction—which is political, responsible, humanistic, and deeply rooted in the work we do—that I am today presenting my application to become Chair of Emmaus Europe.**

*Fatima Parret-Bezli*

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### CURRENT ROLES

#### Emmaus Bussières-et-Pruns – CADA [Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers] + Solidarity actions

Since January 2012 - **Director**

(100 residents, 30 volunteers, 12 employees)

- Establishment and management of an **ACI Integration Project** (2020-2025).
- Responsibilities: Administrative and financial management of CADA and ACI project, management of teams and coordination of volunteers (Mobile grocery shop, French lessons, homework support, parenting, activities, etc.).
- Setting up projects & developing partnerships.
- **Involvement in Emmaus regional governing bodies.**

#### Regional Representative for Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region

Since 2010 - Committees: professional training and learning; sport, youth and community life. Equality and combatting discrimination team (2010- 2015).

### Interpreter and translator

- Arabic↔French interpreter and translator (certified by the Court of Appeal of Riom 2009-2020)
- Spanish interpreter

### ACQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Connecting organisations and projects;
- Development and implementation of projects plans (of action and training), events;
- Recruiting and supporting the inclusion of new employees and/or volunteers; overseeing behaviour, motivating, supervising, encouraging commitment, supporting, evaluating, incentivising, caring;
- Analysing needs, drawing up projects, responding to tenders, developing partnerships, funding research;
- Public speaking;
- Negotiating, budget management, monitoring, developing;
- Providing interpreting and translation services;
- Supporting people in vulnerable situations, facilitating access to rights, providing guidance;
- Organising and running meetings, note taking, implementing decisions, etc.;
- Creating simple communication tools;
- Connecting users, anticipating and resolving conflicts, organising conditions for fulfilling everyday life. Listening, helping, comforting.

### REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES

- 2011 - 2014 - Assisting with the creation of several films on “Emmaus”, our activities our functioning, our residents  
Speaker at the University Blaise Pascal (“Intercultural” module, “Linguistic” module)
- 2009-2011 - **SAMA Association** - Migrant Support Auvergne - Administrator and then President
- 2005-2009 - **CLISMA Association** - Migrant Support and Translation - Partnership Manager
- 2006-2012 - **Ficelle Association** - Forum theatre, founding member and spect.-actor (equality theme)
- 2006-2016 - **Trêves africaines Association**: trips to Africa for mentally disabled persons, President)
- 7 months in 2003 - **Fondation Comparte** (Chile), fairtrade
- 5 months in 2002 - **AFIP Association** (Mali), promoting women’s initiatives for peace





**SABINA ARNAUT-JAHIC**  
**IFS-EMMAUS**  
**- Bosnia and Herzegovina**

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**WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?**

The power of the roles within the Movement to raise the voice for those who are not heard loud enough, is the most motivational for me.

**SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

As a former National Delegate (2015 – 2024), I've been involved in numerous actions and projects in cooperation with Emmaus Europe, Emmaus International, and Emmaus groups across Europe and Africa. In the process of strengthening and expanding the Movement at national and international levels, I was responsible for coordinating actions, procedures, communication, and meetings between IFS-EMMAUS, trial members, and the Secretariats of Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International. As a former member of the Executive Committee of Emmaus Europe, I contributed to strategic processes and further development of the Movement, especially at the region of South-East Europe.

**SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

Extensive experience as a trainer in the fields of non-violent communication and conflict resolution. Established cooperation with local and regional organizations, as well as delivering capacity-building and training programs for professionals in the area of trauma-informed and trauma pedagogy approaches.

**WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?**

Holding the position of CEI Board member provides an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the Movement and to engage in discussions on fundamental human values at the international level. From the CEI Board member perspective, the challenges faced by individual groups become more manageable and are enriched through the exchange of experience and knowledge shared by groups from different regions. Be a part of the Movement is the experience that we are all touched on our deepest level. Giving the contribution and the energy to your own group is fulfilling but since we are social beings our needs and goals are increasing, and you feel that you need wide your borders, the strength, your experience.



**REBECCA COTTAM-JONES**  
**Emmaus Mossley - United Kingdom**

 rebecca.cottam-jones@emmaus.org.uk

**WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?**

The power of the roles within the Movement to raise the voice for those who are not heard loud enough, is the most motivational for me.

Taking part in an empowering and uplifting Women in Leadership training programme with Emmaus Europe and learning the true value of many strong, inspiring leaders.

**SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

My Emmaus experience has been life changing. It has opened my mind and my heart to what's possible through human connection and solidarity. I have never felt so much compassion, commitment and spirit than during my time with Emmaus. I have learned that building relationships and community hold the highest value and have the greatest impact on people's lives. Witnessing individuals who are less fortunate find true value in a sense of purpose has inspired me to apply for CEI Board member.

**SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

My core value has always been kindness, and I have an abounding passion to make a difference and inspire real, positive change. My personal experience with mental health, neurodiversity and motherhood have created tenacity and resilience within me which will aid me in this role. My strong sense of compassion led me to study counselling which enhanced my ability to actively listen and communicate well with others. I thoroughly enjoy bringing people together and truly understand the power in 'people'.

**WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?**

I am motivated by building effective relationships with others, to combine our compassion and represent those less fortunate. I want to be a strong, contributing voice and advocate for people, particularly those who need it most. I will continue to share and promote solidarity as I currently do through the International Peer Group, creating awareness and encouraging benevolence through the movement and beyond. Working together to inspire positive change, through empathy, courage and determination, helping to shape a better future.



## JOSÉ MARÍA GARCÍA BRESÓ

### Emmaus Navarre - Spain



josema@emausnavarra.org

#### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

Given the current situation, I feel motivated to offer my experience and time to contribute to developing the principles and values of Emmaus.

#### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

- Founder and manager of the Emmaus Community in Pamplona (since 1978)
- Regional Representative for the Central-Southern Europe Region 1999-2003.
- Board member 1999-2003.
- National Delegate for Emmaus Spain at different times.
- President of Emmaus Spain 2012-2021.
- Current member of the management team of Emmaus Navarre, comprising 325 people.
- Visiting and creating links with different groups in the Americas region and participation at various training day.

#### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

- Participated in the initial forms of “Social and Solidarity Economy” in Spain.
- Took part in various campaigns concerning “positive discrimination in legislation for the most disadvantaged groups” (current provision in public administration contracts in Spain).
- Participated in the creation of AERESS (Spanish association of social and solidarity economy recyclers).
- Assessor of international cooperation projects at the UNESCO Office in Navarre (2005-2013)
- Member of the collective for “*Degrowth*” in Pamplona.
- Member of the collective for the “*Division of Labour*”.

#### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

- Conscious of the challenges ahead, I feel motivated to participate actively and willingly in discussions, dialogues, and tasks aimed at finding answers that will make us more credible and robust, in line with the values that have guided us throughout Emmaus’ long history.
- In light of the global situation, marked by politics that promote exclusion and inequality, my motivation is to contribute to analysing and developing credible and consistent alternatives so that we can care for Mother Earth and her Peoples.



## AURÉLIE GILLMANN-RIGNAULT

Emmaus Salbris - France

 aureliegill@yahoo.com

### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

The international aspect is an asset that we must maintain and develop in coordination with the different levels of the Movement (regional, national, European, international).

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I found Emmaus through books, as I ran the bookshop at my Emmaus Friends' Committee for seven years. I quickly became interested in the Movement in all its diversity, first in the Centre-Val de Loire region and at the College of Regions for four years, then at Emmaus Europe, and finally on the Board of my national organisation, Emmaus France, starting this year. I am currently the President of a textile recycling platform, and as such the textile sector is also an issue that is close to my heart.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

My literary and linguistic studies, over twenty spent abroad, three sons born on three different continents, a variety of activities (employee, self-employed, volunteer), places, cultures and context have given me versatility and adaptability that serve me well every day. This diversity, which I cherish in life, is something I find at Emmaus and this is why I am so happy to be part of this Movement and to be able to do my bit for this wonderful project.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I would like to work to ensure that each Emmaus group is involved and active at all levels of the Movement (regional, national, European and international). I want to ensure that these different levels work well together, interact better, contribute more.

I also want to help raise awareness of textiles, which is crucial to Emmaus and you feel that you need wide your borders, the strength, your experience.



## VERA KORPISALO

Emmaus Swallows - Finland

 verakorpisalo@outlook.com

### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

I want to be part of building a strong, interconnected Emmaus-movement that dares to influence and defend a more solidary, fairer Europe together.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I have been involved in the movement since 2021 in development cooperation, advocacy and board positions. I am responsible for the sponsorship cooperation and annual monitoring of the psychosocial work in Peru. I have volunteered in an environmental project from Sri Lanka, served on the boards of Swallows Finland and Emmaus Finland. I have participated in Emmaus Europe events, represented Finland in France, and collaborated with educational institutions to support a sustainable future and the first internships of young refugees.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I am a psychosocial specialist to empower the most vulnerable. I am a mental health lecturer, trauma therapist and psychiatric nurse. I am currently a specialist with young substance users in a street work project. I have worked in health promotion in Peru, Colombia, Poland and Ethiopia in the most fragile communities. My personal calling in life is to bring the voices of those who are marginalized in society to the fore, and in my free time I mentor young people with refugee backgrounds.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I am running because I want to strengthen Emmaus' international advocacy work and cooperation between groups. In a time when the far right is gaining strength and conflicts are increasing, Emmaus has an important role to play as a defender of justice, solidarity and humanity. I want to bring Emmaus groups closer together, strengthen the exchange of knowledge and experiences, and act as a bridge builder. Together we can learn from each other and build an even stronger, more influential movement.



## **JEAN-PHILIPPE LÉGAUD**

### **Emmaus Satu Mare - Romania**

 [jplegaut@gmail.com](mailto:jplegaut@gmail.com)

#### **WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?**

I want to continue my involvement in a Movement that I believe in and that is strong thanks to its grassroots groups.

#### **SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

I have been involved in Satu Mare in Romania since 2010. My group is a residential community, it runs an integration scheme and also provides dedicated social support to young adults who were in care under the child protection system. As an EI Board member between 2015 and 2019, and Treasurer of Emmaus Europe since 2019, I have had the chance to be part of various governing bodies within the Movement, discovering our groups' different realities both in Europe and in other regions of our Movement.

#### **SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

I studied history and completed my PhD on Romanian orphanages under Ceausescu leading up to Romania's accession to the European Union. At the same time, I worked as an educator for unaccompanied foreign minors in the Paris region, before getting involved full time in my group in Satu Mare. I am also active in a Romanian social and solidarity economy network.

#### **WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?**

In these challenging times, I believe we must avoid closing ourselves off and instead stand together to remain true to our values. This means keeping solidarity at the heart of our Movement, while working to empower groups. We must continue to align our practices with our values and ideals, both in our groups and our governing bodies, and work together towards a fairer world.



## **DUNCAN LEWIS**

### **Emmaus Hertfordshire - United Kingdom**

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#### **WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?**

A burning desire to build on my experience gained in a range of leadership roles, including the past two years as a CEI, to enable Emmaus to achieve its potential and help more of those in greatest need.

#### **SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

I have been the 'responsible' (we use 'CEO' to mean the same thing in the UK) at the Emmaus Hertfordshire community for the past 5 years and a CEI and member of the Emmaus Europe Executive Committee for the past two years. In the UK I am the Chair of the Southeast Region of Emmaus Communities and represent that region at Emmaus UK Federation Committee meetings.

#### **SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:**

I have held several board level roles in large, national and international charitable organisations, one of which (Age UK) had a similar, federated structure to Emmaus. I have worked as the chair of trustees of a social-enterprise based youth development charity so understand the role of a board and the need for close collaboration with the wider organisation it serves. I have worked for global organisations so also have experience of operating across a range of cultures and languages.

#### **WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?**

The opportunity to bring my leadership skills and experience to bear to enable huge potential of Emmaus to be fulfilled. The structure of our organisation means that those who lead it at European level must understand that 'to lead is to serve' and that our role is to protect and enable the incredible work which happens in individual communities. I want to help us all to do more and better, because the need for our organisation has never been greater.



## JERRY MARGUERITTE

Emmaus Servas - France

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### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

My motivation for standing for election is my desire to put my experience to good use for the Emmaus Movement and continue to be actively involved.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

As a companion for over forty years, I have been very involved in many struggles waged by the Movement, particularly in favour of migrants' rights. As such, I worked at Sangatte, in Grande-Synthe, at Maison Sésame. I was also Chair of the regional collège for the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region.

During this term, I joined the Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International Boards. Additionally, I performed the duties of community assistant.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

At the same time, I served as a volunteer officer in the 3<sup>rd</sup> RPIMA<sup>3</sup> in Carcassonne, holding the rank of lieutenant, and took part in several missions in Africa. I also worked at Bouygues BTP intermittently, as agreed with the community.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I would like to get involved in new initiatives aimed at defending the right to healthcare, particularly through the international development of the Emmaus mutual health organisations. I would also like to promote equal representation within the Movement's governing bodies and contribute to developing European meetings between companions in order to promote closer ties and cooperation between communities.

<sup>3</sup> RPIMA stands for: Premier Régiment de Parachutistes d'Infanterie de Marine [First Regiment of Marine Infantry Paratroopers].



## CÉDRIC MARREC

Emmaus Rzeszów - Poland

 cedromarrec@gmail.com

### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

I was enthusiastic during the first term to work together with other Board members and the team from Emmaus International Secretariat.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Twenty years in the Movement, with various roles from being a companion to a staff member, then a Board member. It is a form of gratitude for me to be able to work within Emmaus International, to contribute to the greater good by making important decisions that enable the Movement to carry on helping those who are most in need.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Studies in accounting, sales and marketing.

My professional experience has largely focussed on the area of transport and logistics, which are areas that I really enjoy. Along with contact with people.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I would like to continue in this role as there are still issues and decisions pending, to enhance my work within the Movement and honour the commitments that this work entails. I would like to get involved in helping the Emmaus communities that are struggling the most.



## RENÉ MÉRIAUX

Emmaus Alençon - France

 rene.meriaux2@gmail.com

### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

Following three consecutive terms on the Emmaus France governing bodies (Board of the Community Branch), I would like to continue my commitment at the international level of the Movement.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

As a companion for twenty years, I am currently retired outside of the community and sit on the board of the Alençon community. I have participated in many convoys of lorries, particularly to Bosnia, taken part in salons, I am very aware of migration issues and offering welcome to migrants (member of the Article 13 steering committee, present in Grande Synthe, Briançon, La Roya, Palermo). I also participated in the EI work camp in Benin. Many other actions have marked my life as a companion on a daily basis, which for me are just as important.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Since 2020, I have been an elected representative of my town council and part of a delegation on the social and solidarity economy and local solidarity. I help to coordinate food distribution at the municipal social services centre. I am also an administrator of the same centre on behalf of the Emmaus Alençon community. As Treasurer of the Afghan Women of France organisation, I am committed to supporting women's independence and independent living conditions, both in France and Afghanistan (monthly food distribution in Kabul). I am Vice-Chair of the intercultural organisation "Fête d'ici et d'ailleurs" comprising around forty activist organisations and people from different backgrounds.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

The key motivation for me is to be able to continue what I started twenty years ago in all humility. In other words, to contribute my support and loyal commitment to our shared values and guiding principles as we face a challenge to our civilisation, in line with the three struggles identified at the 2016 World Assembly in Jesolo, which unfortunately, or rather sadly, are still relevant today. We need to bolster our efforts to take action as we face social, political and environmental challenges. More than ever, we need to work together to combat the intolerable in a manner that is contagious by involving and engaging all actors within the Movement and beyond.



## CHANTAL NIALA KASINGA

Emmaus Trappes - France

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### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

I would like to promote the values of the Emmaus Movement, contribute to strategic decisions and put my skills to good use for the Movement for sustainable collective development.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I joined the Emmaus Trappes Community in October 2021 as a companion. I tutored several companions as part of a French literacy course and carried out sorting, sales, cashier and receptionist duties. I subsequently managed the online shop and became a member of the Board. I also completed several training courses in textiles sales, cooking, label école, obtaining a certificate. I also attended the Assises meetings. Currently I am the Community Assistant Manager.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Outside of the movement, I sang in the choir and ran activities at church in my country of origin. I have provided prayer and assistance to people who are ill or in difficulty. I was a mathematics teacher, then an executive secretary at a secondary school. I was also head of a polling station and counting centre during presidential and parliamentary elections in my country of origin.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

My commitment is motivated by a deep-rooted belief in the values of dignity, social justice and human rights. I aim to contribute to strategic guidelines, promote the voice of the most excluded in decision-making bodies and strengthen international actions. I would like to participate in making decisions for the movement, acquire professional experience in line with the Board's duties. I firmly believe in the Movement's values and work.



## HANNA-LEENA NUUTINEN

Emmaus Helsinki - Finland

 hannaleena.nuutinen@icloud.com

### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

Wish to support and develop the work of Emmaus in Europe and globally, because the values of Emmaus are very important in today's world.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Got to know Emmaus Helsinki in 1977 when participating a project of helping the homeless. Since then I have been more or less active. During the working years I kept in contact with the group and especially with the responsible persons Father Guy Barbier and Elisabeth de Godzinsky. Learned a lot from them. In the last 4 years I have been more active again and a member of the Emmaus Helsinki Board. I participated the World Forum of Alternatives in 2024.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I have worked as a nurse and a teacher of nursing. After that for more than 20 years I worked in the administration of the Public Social and Health Services in Helsinki. The work as a Senior Planning Officer consisted of f.ex. strategic planning, auditing and documentation and gave a wide perspective to the social and health challenges of the inhabitants, especially of the poorest, marginalized and immigrants. I have international experience through study visits, NGOs and volunteering.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I find all the missions mentioned (1-9) very important and motivating. I could imagine that I could best support these: 'Implementing the aims and objectives, proposals and decisions adopted by the General Assembly' and 'Leading and coordinating discussions to promote the defence of the rights of the poorest people around the world'. I am also interested in promoting the equality processes and the implementation of the 'Charter on Respect and Community' inside the Emmaus Movement.



## CHRISTOPHE PARINELLO

Emmaus Fougères - France

 Parinello.christophe@gmail.com

### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

I am convinced that together we can join forces for a better future and provide solutions to help the Emmaus groups in difficulty.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I have been part of the Movement for over twenty years, primarily as a driver and manager of a partnership with Laval and Fougères for Burkina Faso (SEMU) by shipping containers by sea. On an annual basis, I attend container meetings through Emmaus International. I have also participated in the last two World Assemblies (Jesolo, Uruguay). I took part in a knowledge exchange project with the Lambayeque community in Peru in 2013, attended the World Forum of Alternatives in Poitiers in 2024, and I am currently a training facilitator for Emmaus International.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I am a volunteer for an organisation called LE SON DE VIE which organises large sporting events for children with genetic diseases. I take part in the telethon voluntarily and I am an ambassador for the cultural centre of Fougères. Through the shipment of goods, I support an organisation in Burkina Faso that assists people with disabilities.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I would like to share my experience as someone involved in the Emmaus for over 20 years and I am convinced that we can join forces to combat inequalities and difficulties faced by some Emmaus groups around the world. We can strengthen our cohesion by creating collectives or partnerships to be able to better assist isolated groups that are unable to receive help. I would also like to support advocacy work to combat the rise of far-right forces and imperialism.



## FATIMA PARRET-BEZLI

**Emmaus Bussières-et-Pruns - CADA  
- France**



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### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

After extensive experience within the Movement, strong investment at regional level, and with a command of several languages, I would like to get involved at an international level.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

As director of an Emmaus group since 2012, I have been committed to:

1. Developing our work:
  - a. Extending the CADA (reception centre for asylum seekers) - from 50 to 100 places
  - b. Developing an Emmaus grocery store (more opening days, distribution service)
  - c. Creating an insertion scheme (reuse sector)
2. Participating in the life of the Movement:
  - a. Regional team member/Regional delegate
  - b. Participation in the meetings of branches (2 and 3), Regional Assemblies, General Assembly of Emmaus France, Europe and Emmaus International, Emmaus France universities (welcome team for 3rd edition), Emmaus Struggles, C Pas Du Luxe, etc.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Outside the Movement, I have been involved in two fields:

- Voluntary sector organisations:
  - ▶ Providing assistance to new arrivals: translation of documents (English, Arabic, Spanish), administrative/linguistic support;
  - ▶ Forum theatre: awareness about issues of poverty, inequalities, violence against women;
  - ▶ Trips for adults with mental disabilities;
  - ▶ Culture in rural areas.

- Political field: Green Party regional representative since 2010 (will not be renewed if I am elected to the EI Board). Expertise: training, youth, sport, community life, combatting discrimination.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I would like to contribute my experience and energy, but also gain knowledge on migration issues (exile, the European pact, welcoming migrants into our groups) and environmental issues (reuse, overproduction, the circular economy), both within our groups and, above all, with political bodies and local authorities. I would also like to contribute my perspective and help develop solidarity between our federations and groups, as well as between the groups themselves and other partner organisations.



## XAVIER RENARD

Emmaus Angoulême - France

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### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

Emmaus International is the global space for sharing ideas, struggles and resources. All of this underpins my commitment to promoting and defending the values of the Movement's four regions.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I joined the Movement as a manager in 1999 and I am still there today. Creating a harmonious Emmaus community is a challenge that I was keen to take on in Angoulême! Faced with new realities, communities must adapt while retaining their character and values of solidarity and welcoming others. I am currently an elected EI Board member, member of the EI Executive Committee and Treasurer since 2023. With this wealth of experience, I wish to continue my commitment and put my experience to work for the International Movement.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Three years of experience in Africa at the age of 25 opened my eyes to the injustices of this world. I was active in international aid organisations alongside my work, but this did not allow me to pursue strong political and social commitments. I chose to join Emmaus in 1999 to tackle the causes of deeply rooted injustice through concrete actions. In 2016, the housing crisis spurred me to set up an association to welcome families into various properties around Angoulême.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

The global political situation is showing very worrying signs of increasing authoritarianism and backsliding on fundamental rights. I wish to strengthen the Movement and its struggles by pooling our strengths and experiences. On the Emmaus International Board, I would like to work as a team to promote training and strengthen member groups so that Emmaus International can take strong political stances and act decisively in order to speak out against and curb this rollback of freedoms in favour of money and power.



## NICK THOMPSON

Emmaus Merseyside  
- United Kingdom

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### WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE POST OF CEI BOARD MEMBER?

Having been a member of the Regional Council for the last two years I am very keen to stand for a further four years. I believe that I have made a valuable contribution to the Emmaus worldwide movement through my contribution to both Emmaus Europe and Emmaus International Councils.

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE IN THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

Since I joined Emmaus Merseyside as a trustee in 2015, I have been directly involved in the creation and growth of an amazingly effective Emmaus group that has improved the lives of all most of the companions who have lived, worked, and been supported by our team.

Since I joined the boards of EE and EI in 2024, I have used my skills and knowledge to be a part of the governing bodies that work to implement our founding value "to serve the weakest members of our society and to raise awareness of poverty".

### SUMMARISE YOUR EXPERIENCE OUTSIDE THE EMMAUS MOVEMENT:

I began my career in London as a probation officer working with and supporting offenders to change their lives. I spent the rest of the first part of my working career in 5 different local authority social services departments. After taking early retirement as a Director of Social Services, I worked with several NGOs in various Eastern European countries developing community-based children and family services as an alternative to large orphanages.

### WHICH ASPECTS OF THE ROLE MOTIVATE YOU?

I feel very privileged to be able to represent the needs, challenges and frustrations of our companions in Liverpool. I try to ensure that we focus on those matters that are of direct relevance to them by reflecting on their experiences rather than what I might assume to be relevant. I feel very fortunate to be able to meet with so many people from other countries and learn about the political and social challenges facing our movement across Europe and the rest of the world.

**WISE PERSONS' COMMITTEE**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF**  
**EMMAUS EUROPE**

The Wise Persons' Committee was established following the revision of Emmaus International's statutes in 2003. Its members are elected at each World Assembly. Each region must propose one candidate.

**Statutes of Emmaus International – Art. 53 – Definition**

The members of the Wise Persons' Committee are tasked with contributing, through their experience and abilities, to the smooth running of the movement.

The members of the Wise Persons' Committee may be called upon during their term of office, collectively or individually, by the Executive Committee to provide advice, support or mediation.

**Maria Luisa Testori** has been appointed by the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe to represent Europe on the Wise Persons' Committee of Emmaus International.



**MARIA LUISA TESTORI**

**Emmaus Piadena - Italy**



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Maria Luisa Testori has been involved in the Emmaus Movement since 2003. For 12 years she was head of the community in Erba in northern Italy.

She served as CEI Board member for two terms and as Italy's National Delegate on the Regional Council of Emmaus Europe for four years. These roles have given her a good understanding of the development of our statutes and the changing challenges facing our movement.

Maria Luisa is deeply committed to Emmaus' values, particularly that of adapting our activities to the potential of the people we welcome, rather than the other way around. Now a young retiree, she continues to volunteer in the Piadena community and is very involved in international solidarity projects.

## PROPOSAL TO INCREASE EMMAUS EUROPE MEMBERSHIP FEES FROM 2027 ONWARDS

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF EMMAUS EUROPE

Note approved by the Regional Council on 5 March 2026.

Emmaus Europe aims to remain a modest part of our movement, with only five employees working to liaise between the nearly 400 groups in 20 countries, organise solidarity and support for groups in need, and represent Emmaus to European institutions.

**Find our activity reports for the last four years in the members' area of the Emmaus Europe website.**

However, our projected budget for 2026 is in deficit, and we believe that in order to maintain the efficiency of our work, it is now necessary to increase membership fees.

### WHY?

- Membership fees have not increased since 2015
  - ▶ Since then, inflation has risen by more than 17% in France, which has had an impact on salaries and the various costs associated with our operations.
- In recent years, Emmaus Europe has significantly increased its activities:
  - ▶ Creation of exchanges of practices between groups and between national organisations,
  - ▶ Development of European advocacy:
    1. By joining European networks as an active member on issues of poverty, migration and reuse,
    2. And by creating a position dedicated to advocacy in addition to the CEO work on this issue.
  - ▶ Creation of awareness and communication campaigns for the use of the groups, with tools translated into the languages of each country (welcoming exiles, quality of donations),
- We have also had to incur additional costs to ensure the continuation of functions that were previously carried out entirely on a voluntary basis:
  - ▶ Compensation for volunteer interpreters who enable our movement to understand each other,
  - ▶ Possible compensation for the group from which the president of Emmaus Europe comes, so that their absence does not overly disrupt the functioning of the group if it does not have the means to replace them during their absence.

## THE PROPOSAL PUT TO THE VOTE



To enable us to remain financially stable in the coming years without compromising the quality of our actions.

### CURRENT MEMBERSHIP FEES

Sales revenue...	of less than €50,000	Subscription rate: €55
	between €50,000 and €100,000	Subscription rate: €165
	between €100,000 and €200,000	Subscription rate: €550
	between €200,000 and €300,000	Subscription rate: €1,100
	between €300,000 and €500,000	Subscription rate: €1,650
	between €500,000 and €1,000,000	Subscription rate: €2,200
	over €1,000,000	Subscription rate: €3,300

*For groups with no financial resources of their own/no sales activities, a voluntary contribution is proposed, with the amount left to the group's discretion.*

### PROPOSAL FROM 2027 (no increase for the lowest bracket)

Sales revenue...	of less than €50,000	Subscription rate: €55
	between €50,000 and €100,000	Subscription rate: €185
	between €100,000 and €200,000	Subscription rate: €620
	between €200,000 and €300,000	Subscription rate: €1,250
	between €300,000 and €500,000	Subscription rate: €1,850
	between €500,000 and €1,000,000	Subscription rate: €2,500
	over €1,000,000	Subscription rate: €3,700

*For groups with no financial resources of their own/no sales activities, a voluntary contribution is proposed, with the amount left to the group's discretion.*

**These new amounts correspond to a 12% increase in contributions, i.e. 1% per year over the last 12 years.**

You may contact Eve Poulteau at [eve.poulteau@emmaus-europe.org](mailto:eve.poulteau@emmaus-europe.org) if you have any questions about this election.



EMMAUS

EUROPE

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE

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Emmaus Europe is the decentralised organisation of Emmaus International in Europe.