

REPORT

Migration and Human Trafficking Collective meeting



24-25 June 2016, Krefeld (Germany)

Participants

Cristian Bazavan, companion at Emmaus Satu Mare (Romania) ; Bernard Bonnifay, leader of Emmaus Longjumeau (France) ; Bernard Courteuille, president of Emmaus Glageon (France) ; Willi Does, leader of Emmaus Cologne (Germany) ; Marine Dori, volunteer at Emmaus Iasi (Romania) ; Pierre Dubois, Emmaus Annemasse (France) ; Lucie Jeanjean, volunteer at Emmaus Palermo (Italy) ; Elisabeth Kreul, leader at Emmaus Krefeld (Germany) ; Jean-Philippe Legaut, president at Emmaus Satu Mare ; Philippe Lequenne, leader at Emmaus Glageon ; Nathalie Martz, manager at Emmaus Solidarité, France ; Stéphane Melchiorri, Policy and Campaigns Manager, Emmaus International ; Julien Kalimira Mzee Murhula, vice-president of GTU (Denmark) ; Jacques Naessens, Aida (France) ; Silvana Nogarole, leader at Emmaus Villafranca (Italy) ; Fredy Ouari, companion at Emmaus Rédéne (France) ; Laure Pavesi, co-leader at Emmaus Rédéne ; Nathalie Péré-Marzano, Emmaus International Chief Executive ; Anne Saingier, leader at Emmaus La Halte Saint Jean (France) ; Thomas Tardy, community service at Emmaus Iasi ; Nicola Teresi, leader of Emmaus Palermo (Italy) ; Maria Verdes, companion at Emmaus Satu Mare ; Charly Viguier, volunteer at Emmaus Satu Mare

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Gabriela Martin, Emmaus Europe coordinator ; Marie Tixier, Emmaus Europe events assistant ; Lola Poisson, European commitment intern at Emmaus Europe.

Excused participants Patrick Atohoun, president of Emmaus International; Tony Ferrier, chief executive of Emmaus St Albans (UK), Shirley Ferrier, volunteer at Emmaus St Albans (UK), Gelu Nichitel, director of Emmaus Iasi.

Speakers

Willi Does, president of Emmaus Europe ; Xavier Vandromme, former Collective representative ; Nathalie Martz, Jean-Philippe Legaut and Julien Kalimira Mzee Murhula, Collective representatives

Guest participants

Christoph Bönders, board member of Krefeld "Council for Refugees" (volunteer association that accompanies refugees for 20 years); Damien Carême, Mayor of Grande Synthe (France) ; Inge Krämer, volunteer at the refugee center; Mrs. Meyerhofer, social worker at the refugee center; Karin Meincke, deputy mayor of Krefeld; Dr. Rehbein, responsible for coordinating volunteer helping refugees for the city of Krefeld ; Sayhan Yilmaz, municipal councilor and president of the "Integration Council" of the city of Krefeld

A big thanks to all our guests for the time they have dedicated to this event!

Excused guests

MEPs Reinhard Bütikofer (Germany, Greens); Michel Dantin (France, PPE); Karl-Heinz Florenz (Germany, PPE); Ana Gomes (Portugal, S&D); Nathalie Griesbeck (France, ALDE); Sylvie Guillaume (France, S&D, vice-president of the European Parliament); Martin Häusling (Germany, Greens); Dennis de Jong (Netherlands, GUE/NGL); Dieter-Lebrecht Koch (Germany, PPE); Dietmar Köster (Germany, S&D); Cécile Kashetu Kyenge (Italy, S&D); Jean Lambert (UK, Greens); Maria Noichl (Germany, S&D); Christine Revault D'allonnes Bonnefoy (France, S&D); Robert Rochefort (France, Alde); Birgit Sippel (Germany, S&D); Renate Sommer (Germany, PPE); Axel Voss (Germany, PPE); Gabriele Zimmer (Germany, GUE/NGL)

French MPs Erwann Binet (PS MP); Michel Boutant (PS senator); François-Noël Buffet (LR senator); Marie-Anne Chapdelaine (PS MP); René Danesi (LR senator); Jacky Deromedi (LR MP); Gaetan Gorce (PS MP); Philippe Kaltenbach (PS senator); Marietta Karamanli (PS MP); Claude Kern (UDI senator); Pierre-Yves Le Borgn' (PS MP); Jacques Legendre (LR senator); Didier Marie (PS senator); Sandrine Mazetier (PS MP and vice-president of France's Parliament); Michel Voisin (LR MP)

Others: Nicolas Hulot (French environmentalist and politician, the founder of the Nicolas Hulot Foundation for Nature and Humankind); Alain-Paul Lebeau-pin (Apostolic nuncio to the European Community).

Subjects addressed at the meeting

- 1) European migration / human trafficking collective review
- 2) The German example: meeting at the refugee centre and round-table discussion with stakeholders from Krefeld (Germany).
- 3) The example of a humanitarian camp in France: Damien Carême, mayor of Grande-Synthe (France), tells the meeting his story and makes some recommendations.
- 4) Grassroots experience of shelter and support and the tendency to cling to cultural identities: the Emmaus groups speak out.
- 5) Recommendations about possible action to be taken by Emmaus Europe.

1) European migration / human trafficking collective review

Xavier Vandromme, the former collective representative, presented the collective and its work to the meeting. He reminded the participants that when work on migration started in Emmaus Europe, the groups did not work with migrants at all or only to a very limited extent. The work was pioneering and the groups were reluctant. However, things have changed, and the Collective's meetings are valued and its documents and recommendations are read by the groups.

Since the collective's last meeting, the Manchester Regional Assembly of Emmaus Europe (RAEE) has produced an action plan and the collective's work fits particularly well with two of its strategic areas:

- Strategic area 1: Step up our European Union lobbying work on the issues that affect us by drawing on the groups' day-to-day initiatives.
- Strategic area 3: Campaign against current European migration policy in order to champion freedom of movement in conjunction with Emmaus International and the Emmaus Movement's national organisations (referring to article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Convention).

Following the RAEE, a motion on migration was approved in a vote and a letter sent to the presidents of the Member States, the EU Council and Parliament, calling on them to adopt a different kind of migration policy.

A message from the Italian MEP Cécile Kashetu Kyenge was screened. She was unable to attend because of her professional commitments but did send us a video. She expressed her support for Emmaus' efforts to integrate migrants and for a fairer and more socially-responsible society, and stressed our social inclusion achievements. *The video can be viewed by going to the Migration section in the members' area of the Emmaus Europe website:* <http://emmaus-europe.org/espace-membre/les-axes-de-travail/asile-et-migrations>

2) The German example: meeting at the refugee centre and round-table discussion with stakeholders from Krefeld (Germany)

The Migration and Human Trafficking Collective had the opportunity to meet various stakeholders involved in working with refugees in Krefeld: local councillors, town hall and refugee centre staff, volunteers and refugees.

Germany Germany is taking in over one million refugees. Roughly half of them intend to settle in the country. There are rules governing the sharing out of refugees between the Länders (provinces).

Germany is playing an important role in the migration crisis and its commitment to taking in refugees has been criticized, while in fact other countries should have followed its example. Taking in migrants makes the country stronger.

The situation in Krefeld Krefeld has a tradition of welcoming refugees. This town of 230,000 residents has taken in 4,000 refugees since 2015 from over 51 countries of origin (particularly Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Syria). The population has increased by 1.5% with the influx of migrants. 80% of those arriving are under the age of 35 and 30% are under-18s. The council wants to meet the basic needs of the new arrivals: food, accommodation and health insurance.

Public support Several services have been set up with the help of volunteers: over 1,000 people from Krefeld are involved and the council has recruited 600 social workers. Round-table discussions were arranged in the local neighbourhoods and help ensure the public's backing. An integration council has also been created. Civil society helps links to be forged.

Accommodation Accommodation quickly became an issue. Schools and gyms were requisitioned and tents were put up. Around 1,700 refugees were housed in decent flats but 2,000 are living in makeshift and insecure housing, which is not acceptable in the long term. All of the shelters are full and housing is being built, but this will take time. Wherever possible, families are housed together but there is a general lack of privacy.

Learning the language and integration Learning the language is also an issue. A special programme was going to be set up for people with refugee status, but the programme has never been implemented because of administrative red tape. However, it is vital that refugees learn German, integrate into society and understand German culture.

Registering asylum applications The state was responsible for registering asylum applications at the national level but was quickly overwhelmed. It is taking a long time to process applications, which can make life difficult for refugees.

Work and training Migrants' qualifications and diplomas are not recognized in Germany. It takes almost 15 months for a migrant to be able to work and the employer must prove that they have been unable to find a German citizen to fill the post. The council has set up training for manual professions for which there is a shortage of local workers (restaurant and hotel industries etc).

People clinging to cultural identities Support for extreme parties is growing in Germany and some of the public are opposed to taking in refugees. There have been arson attacks on some refugee centres (although not in Krefeld). The events in Cologne (migrants assaulting women) conveyed a very negative image of migrants. The towns with the most migrants experience the fewest problems. Racism is more of an issue in towns hosting fewer migrants.

Dialogue between the State, local councils, citizens and refugees is vital, even though it can be complex because of cultural differences and administrative hurdles. People need to meet and communicate in order to understand each other.

3) The example of a humanitarian camp in France: Damien Carême, mayor of Grande-Synthe (France), tells the meeting his story and makes some recommendations.

We were delighted that the mayor of Grande-Synthe was able to attend the whole meeting. He took part in the meetings with the German politicians and participated in our discussions on offering shelter and support to refugees. He provided the meeting with a detailed explanation about the situation in Grande-Synthe.

Grande Synthe The context is different. Unlike the migrants who come to Krefeld, those in Northern France are not looking to settle there but instead want to travel to the UK. Most of them are brought to the town by people smugglers. Some migrants have been living in Grande-Synthe since 2006 and they try to board trucks heading for the UK at local petrol stations.

The old camp 2,000 migrants arrived in a very short space of time due to the migration crisis. They were mostly Kurds from Iraq. There were 2,800 migrants living in an illegal camp by the end of 2015. Toilets and showers were added to slightly improve the conditions, but it was not sustainable. *Médecins sans frontières* (MSF) stated that the health conditions in the camp were the worst they had encountered anywhere in the world. Grande-Synthe Council needed to find a quick solution in response to inhumane and degrading living conditions and with winter on the way.

The creation of the humanitarian camp The first attempt to set up a camp saw 150 tents being erected but a storm blew them down. MSF then put forward the idea of bungalows which could house roughly five people in order to recreate the family unit. Wooden shelters were installed. The council had little choice when selecting a plot for the new camp: if the plot was not near the motorway, where migrants try to board vehicles to travel to the UK, the migrants would not have accepted this change. The voluntary move took three days and took place in March 2016.

In the first instance, central government did not authorize the camp. As the plot of land belonged to the council, the council was able to build the camp without central government authorization. Indeed, central government opposed it due to the lack of smoke detectors. A few weeks later, central government announced that it would cover the cost of the camp. It will cost €3.9 million a year to run. The new camp has capacity for up to 1,400 refugees. However, in June 2016, there were only 820 people living there.

Cooperation with non-profits has been a key factor. They include *Médecins sans frontières*, *Médecins du monde*, *Red Cross*, *Gynécologie Sans Frontières*, and *Dentistes sans frontières*, and in total 52 non-profits help the camp to operate on a day-to-day basis. An information centre has been set up with staff from the *French Office for Immigration and Integration*, the *French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People* and lawyers, meaning that access to rights has been improved.

There are no barbed wire fences or entrance checks at the camp and music is allowed and even encouraged. There are children's areas and a playground donated by British people will soon be installed.

Public support Communication with the public and presenting a positive message are key if citizens are to understand and accept the choices being made. Media coverage of the initiative was positive and the French National Front fared badly in Grande-Synthe at the last elections.

Many local people volunteer at the camp. Other volunteers have arrived from further afield. In addition, 40 jobs have been created as a result of the camp being set up, which is not negligible in a district with a 25% unemployment rate.

Integration Social integration would be an issue if the migrants were intending to settle in the area, but at the present time only a few migrants do stay, with many managing to cross the English Channel. The mayor reiterated that migrant integration is a priority in the urban programme for sustainable towns.

People smugglers and human trafficking In the old camp, the people smugglers had closed the showers installed by the council and were charging people to use them. A manager is present 24/7 to keep an eye on them in the new camp. It is not easy to create discussion groups with the migrants as some of them are in fact people smugglers, although it is hard to identify them. How can spokespeople be named? However, cooperation with the police and prefecture is invaluable and has helped 21 networks to be dismantled.

Prospects Paris City Council has announced the opening of a humanitarian camp and now Damien Carême and Anne Hidalgo (the mayor of Paris) are working together to try to convince other French mayors to follow their example.

Three key components are needed to ensure that this sort of initiative is a success: political courage, positive media coverage and the local community's backing.

4) Grassroots experience of shelter and support and the tendency to cling to cultural identities: the Emmaus groups speak out.

Emmaus Rédéné (France) Emmaus Rédéné has been taking in migrants for over four years and the community has been open to families for two years, which has changed its makeup.

The arrival of migrants from Eastern Europe, with their own cultures has caused difficulties, particularly with regard to group cohesion and the group's ability to live together. The group is trying to address people's tendency to cling to their cultural identities by organizing social events, such as themed meals (country/culture theme).

The community is part of a collective (*Cent pour un toit*) of grassroots organizations (*Ligue des droits de l'homme, Cimade, Fondation Abbé Pierre, etc.*) They lobby the local authorities and collect contributions from citizens to pay rents. As a result, the collective is looking after over eight families living in six local districts.

Emmaus Longjumeau (France)

Emmaus Longjumeau has been taking in migrants for years due to the community's close proximity to Paris and Orly. This has never been an issue and the community has tried to take in as many migrants as possible. However: "Although shelter and support should be unconditional, it needs to be well thought-out."

Nevertheless, to safeguard their income-generating activity, the community does need people with driving licences valid in France. However, this has never been a pre-requisite for joining the community.

We need to remember:

"Taking in migrants isn't a crime...
but it is criminal to turn a blind eye to their distress."

Emmaus Glageon (France) 70% of the community's residents are undocumented migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe. The group stated that many local people, mayors and some media outlets are opposed to their approach.

Diversity can be a problem, for example at mealtimes, with Ramadan and Halal dietary requirements.

A lamentable situation: a climate of radicalisation is taking root, even in the communities. Some of the residents are intolerant, despite being highly educated in some cases.

Emmaus AIDA (Supporting asylum seeker social inclusion- France) The association is based in a very disadvantaged area caught between political (the National Front) and religious extremes (Islamisation) and has a very important role to play. Emmaus AIDA arranges cultural activities, visits to Lille (museums and concerts), offers meals and literacy classes, and helps asylum seekers with the administrative formalities. The group advocates bringing local residents and migrants together.

Emmaus La Halte Saint Jean (France) Almost 90% of the community's residents are migrants. Sustaining a classic Emmaus income-generating activity has become impossible.

The local council is against taking in migrants and the group's neighbours also reject it.

The Emmaus Movement is not sufficiently mobilized to make unconditional shelter and support work in practice. The communities do not work together and stumbling blocks exist.

Cultural issues arise, especially with regard to food: community members are intolerant about other members' meals. People make their own food and only the children attend the few joint meals. Migrants give up on trying to speak French and recreate their home countries in the community.

A feeling of failure. Living together does not 'come naturally' and is increasingly difficult.

Emmaus Bourg-en-Bresse (France) The community is home to seven families, i.e. roughly 30 people, 14 of whom have had their asylum applications turned down. The group is currently discussing how to offer the best possible shelter and support. The premises are dilapidated and can we really provide shelter and support in substandard housing? What kind of support could be offered?

A solidarity collective has been set up. Collective action is often more effective.

Emmaus Annemasse (France) Providing migrants with shelter and support is an issue for the community but at the present time there is a balance in the group and its members are able to live together successfully.

Cultural differences, which are particularly visible during Ramadan, have given rise to enriching discussions and conversations.

Emmaus Villafranca (Italy) The community is home to a family but its limited capacity prevents it from taking in more migrants.

Shelter and support should not be unconditional but instead should be non-discriminatory.

The group took part in an event in Verona on World Refugee Day and wishes to take action on several fronts: campaigning so that the Ministry of Defence has fewer powers, withdrawing money from banks which support the arms trade, opening up humanitarian corridors. Concrete proposals need to be developed.

Emmaus Palermo (Italy) The community is relatively new and does not yet number any migrants among its ranks but it is getting ready to receive two people. Sicily is a very poor region and is hard-hit by migration and by rising intolerance. The local people feel overwhelmed by the mass arrival of migrants and are unable to receive them in an appropriate manner. The mafia is also taking advantage of migration, which is now more profitable than the drugs trade, according to mafia sources. However, local people are joining forces once again to protest and some instruments, which have

worked against the mafia, could also be used to combat human trafficking.
It is important to educate people, visit schools to convey a positive message and talk about the importance of championing and respecting basic rights.

Emmaus Satu Mare and Iasi (Romania) The only migrants in these communities are the European volunteers.
The Romanian people strongly reject migrants. The authorities maintain that there are no migrants and that the population should not be worried about the issue.
Romania is more affected by the scourge of trafficking.

Emmaus GTU (Denmark) Danish immigration policy is highly restrictive and there is a negative view of migration.
Emmaus could potentially help Denmark in this area and help to change mentalities.

Emmaus in Poland Just like in Romania, in Poland there are no migrants living in the communities.
The authorities maintain that migration is not an issue. However, the crisis in Ukraine raises issues about the presence of refugees from that country.

Emmaus Solidarité (France) Shelters for migrants have been set up in Paris. Emmaus Solidarité is working with OFII and OFPRA (the French Office for Immigration and Integration and French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People) which is speeding up the asylum application process. Migrants are also given help and support when seeking work. Joint working with several non-profits was also highlighted.

5) Recommendations about possible action to be taken by Emmaus Europe.

Workshops discussed three issues:

- What shared message(s) do we wish to convey in the current context?
- Which institutions/authorities do we wish to lobby?
- Which initiative(s) do we wish to run with civil society?

The proposals made during these workshops and debated by the participants can be summarized as follows:

Messages

Non-discriminatory
shelter and support

Deconstruct falsehoods.
Be supportive of others

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| Freedom of movement | Campaign for the Dublin system to be abolished. |
| | Promote social policies to combat poverty Promote article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). |
| Proposed pilot initiatives | Tourist visas for economic migrants Humanitarian corridors |
| Institutions and authorities | |
| Lobby the international authorities/institutions | <i>Why?</i> Migration is a global phenomenon and is not the sole preserve of Europe (one million refugees have come to Europe but there are 60 million migrants worldwide). |
| | <i>Who?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United Nations • International Organisation for Migration • UN Refugee agency. |
| Lobbying the European institutions | <i>Why?</i> Ensure the continuity of Emmaus' presence. |
| | <i>Who?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slovakia (presidency of the EU Council). • European Commission • European Parliament • European Court of Justice • Council of Europe • European Court of Human Rights |
| Initiatives | |
| Campaigning | Lodge a complaint against the EU (possibly together with other European associations) Hunger strikes in the groups Make a shared declaration to the media about Article 13 |
| Raising the awareness of civil society | Draft a charter with articles designed to deconstruct prejudices against migrants, and get people visiting our charity shops to sign it Create a meeting space in the shops Arrange a cross-Europe walk between |

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| | communities (the “Emmaus Route”, maybe travel by truck?) and raise awareness about Article 13. |
| | Convey simple messages |
| | Awaken people’s generosity |
| | Education and social networks |
| | Mobilize using petitions, lectures, seminars and circles of silence. |
| Other ideas | |
| | Found an Emmaus community in Greece. |
| | Ethical banks |
| | Convey Abbé Pierre’s ideas. |

Two complementary visions co-exist: one favours lobbying politicians and national, European and international authorities/institutions, while the other focuses on mobilizing civil society. These two approaches are not mutually exclusive and could be developed at the same time, albeit at a different pace. The debate on the actions to initiate will continue, and we will get back to you if necessary. Do not hesitate to send us your feedback!

Finally, all participants at the meeting of the Collective are thankful to the Krefeld community for the warm welcome!