



TOGETHER, MORE THAN EVER,  
LET'S FIGHT TO CHANGE THE WORLD!

# MIGRATION: WHAT ARE OUR FUTURE ACTIONS AND DEMANDS?



## I. WHY AND HOW WAS THIS DOCUMENT DRAWN UP?

The Board met online on several occasions between January and October 2021 and held regular discussions. This provided an opportunity to discuss the analysis of the situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequences of this crisis. One of these meetings focused on how our movement can amplify and make its voice heard on our understanding of migration issues, our demand for dignified welcoming of exiled people all over the world, and our refusal of migration policies that are increasingly inhumane and do not respond to the challenges of migration in the 21st century.

This reference document is the summary of the Board's debate, which was launched on the basis of a preparatory document that provided a non-exhaustive overview of the initiatives carried out in our various regions.

## II. WHICH WORLD ASSEMBLY DEBATE DOES THIS REFER TO?

This document is intended to help you prepare for the following debate, as set out in the 2021-2025 Guidance Report that you have received:

### Subject 4:

Why and how can we take action and speak out together?

How have our joint initiatives helped us to tackle the causes of poverty?

How can we go further and make our demands known?

What struggles should the movement engage in for the future, given the democratic and ecological challenges, and faced by the worsening inequalities and forms of racism directed at migrants in particular?

## III. PRESENTATION OF THE DOCUMENT

This note presents the results of our current assessment of the migration issue, which is linked to our struggle for "Peace and freedom of movement and of residence for universal citizenship", as well as some proposals.

### Analysis

Our movement's historical involvement in matters of migration is mainly due to one of our founding values: unconditional welcome. Furthermore, the Emmaus movement has always defended the idea





of a universal citizenship which would guarantee equal rights and opportunities for all. The Emmaus groups regularly work with the most excluded and are, therefore, directly involved in issues related to migration. From the 1990s onwards, the Emmaus groups in various countries started to welcome more and more migrants, no matter their immigration status, into their communities.

In addition to welcoming to these people, the groups started to organise on the local, national, and international levels to defend the rights of migrant persons.

Since the turn of the century, Emmaus International has been more formally involved in political campaigning work. The different initiatives have covered various topics but they have all been linked to the rights of migrant persons:

- **2003–2007:** a campaign to support Emmaus groups hosting victims of human trafficking
- **2007:** a campaign to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families
- **2008:** involvement in the ‘Des ponts pas des murs’ (Bridges, Not Walls) network, contributing to civil society’s response to agreements between France and various African countries on the topic of migration flows
- **2009:** launch of the ‘A Visa for the World’ campaign. The aim of this campaign was to highlight the need for a change of course on migration and to explain Emmaus’ demand for true and effective freedom of movement
- **2011-2013:** involvement in various world social forum events which highlight the need to call for an international conference on the topic of freedom of movement
- **2013:** creation of the Organisation for Universal Citizenship (OUC) in order to promote freedom of movement and of residence and to build a network of local authorities that are committed to providing a dignified welcome to exiled persons
- **2014:** the Emmaus movement, the OUC and several other associations co-organised a demonstration against the “wall of shame” in Calais
- **2016:** the movement voted to focus on the struggle for “peace and freedom of movement and of residence for universal citizenship”.
- **2019:** the OUC is launched with ANVITA (National Association of Welcoming Cities and Territories, a coalition of dozens of cities and territories in France), the Migration Alliance, which aims to show, on the basis of existing dignified welcoming practices in territories around the world, that other migration policies are possible, and that a multi-stakeholder international governance of international migration is necessary.

A second meeting of this Migration Alliance is planned for the second half of 2022.

Today, our Global Report outlines a demand: “welcoming the most vulnerable with dignity, no matter their suffering”. This demand ties into the founding, historic values of our movement, as well as the Migration Alliance campaign, which aims to promote dignified welcoming practices across the globe and to show that a more humane, fraternal alternative to current migration policy is possible.



The initiatives led in each region are quite different and are closely connected to the local situations regarding migration.

Africa region	Americas region
<p>The activities led by the groups in Africa are mainly focused on supporting and welcoming migrant persons (mainly people who are migrating within the region), especially young people and children. An example initiative concerns awareness raising on the dangers involved in migration. The region has not adopted a specific stance on this topic.</p>	<p>Migration in the Americas mainly involves people moving within the continent itself, especially young people looking for work in other countries. The main countries involved are Peru (migrants from Haiti or Venezuela), Chile and Colombia (exiled persons). The region has not adopted a specific stance on this topic.</p>

Asia region	Europe region
<p>The situation regarding migration in this region varies widely from one country to another, given the differences between countries such as India and Lebanon, for example. In India, the main challenges are related to internal migration and a widespread exodus from rural areas. A lot of migrant workers are vulnerable in India because they work in the informal sector. The groups take action whenever they identify a specific unmet need but they do not have a specific political stance on this topic. The region has, however, taken a clear stance on the matter of Rohingya refugees as seen in the political statement “Emmaus Asia condemns the cruelty and human rights violations committed by the Myanmar Government against the Rohingya population”. The situation is very different in Lebanon, which has welcomed over 1.5 million refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria over the past few years.</p>	<p>The range of activities launched in the Europe region is vast. Many of the groups lead activities in the most popular transit/destination countries for migrant peoples (Croatia, Bosnia, Italy, Germany, UK, Spain, France, etc.). The European groups regularly welcome migrant persons. They also offer support with paperwork and help these people to learn the local language. Such activities can be linked to our lobbying initiatives or to demands being made of political decision makers. Some groups (such as the French and Italian groups during the Article 13 campaign) join up with other associations who are committed to this struggle (Emmaus Italy partnering with SOS Méditerranée) or with the local authorities. Emmaus Europe is a member of a European and African network, Migreurop, whose aim is to raise awareness of and denounce the policies of segregating migrants, in particular detention in camps, various forms of deportation, the closure of borders and the externalisation of migration controls by the European Union and its member states.</p>

This assessment has identified three main areas of focus on migration by the Emmaus movement:

- **Providing dignified welcomed to exiled persons across the globe**
- **Defending freedom of movement, notably thanks to the work done by the Organisation for Universal Citizenship**
- **Fighting to ensure that laws, conventions, and treaties and, therefore, the rights of migrant persons are also respected**



## Migration: what are the actions and demands for the future?

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We must accept, however, that despite Emmaus International's efforts as part of several campaigns, the situation for migrant persons across the globe has not improved of late, quite the opposite. More and more states flout the various treaties and conventions on the rights of migrant persons. Their reception policies are not at all welcoming, they allow people to die trying to cross borders. Freedom of movement and of residence seems like a pipedream when you look at the current policies of detention, deportation and the closing of migration routes.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made migrant populations even more vulnerable and has led to countries setting up online procedures for requesting asylum, which will make it even more difficult for migrant persons to have access to this right over the coming years.

The recent war in Ukraine has revealed several things. On the one hand, European states have suddenly and unanimously agreed on the establishment of reception mechanisms such as the 2001 European directive on temporary protection - repeatedly called for by civil society for other groups of people fleeing war but never implemented. This mobilisation and the welcoming discourse of these states show that it is entirely possible to welcome people who are fleeing their country and that it is a question of political will.

However, this war has also brought to light the hypocrisy and racial bias of migration and reception policies: states cannot practice two-tiered hospitality and deny the rights of people in the global South. They must fulfil their legal responsibilities, among others. This event is in any case an important opportunity to call for other migration and reception policies from our governments.

### Proposals

At this World Assembly, we need to consider the future initiatives and campaigns that our movement would like to lead. What common strategies can we develop to give shape to the principle of freedom of movement and to promote universal citizenship? At what levels can we effectively take action and fight against the violation of exiled people's human rights?

#### Initial proposals made by the Executive Committee and the Emmaus International Board:

- ⇒ **The movement's groups should get involved in and sustain the Migration Alliance, which the movement has been committed to since 2019.**
- ⇒ In addition to this alliance, where Emmaus International is just one of many stakeholders involved, the movement could work on **launching a campaign on the two founding principles** of the movement, which can be found in the **Global Report: unconditional welcome and universal citizenship**.

And current events require us more than ever to make the link between our demands for unconditional welcome, universal citizenship and the challenge of building peace.

