

the Hope-for-Europe Research Network “emRG”

emRG, the “European Missions Research Group”, is the research network of the “Hope for Europe” network family. It aims to positively impact Europe’s future through contributing substantially to the multiplication of believing fellowships across the continent. As such it is closely aligned with the missions related HfE networks, such as the Church Planting Network.

emRG (pronounce: “e-merge”) is dedicated to **exploring novel ways** and parameters of missions research in order to most effectively support the missions task faced in a time of major paradigm shifts in Europe. It is a **collaborative learning network for missions researchers** to “jointly gather and effectively communicate accurate, relevant research in order to catalyze the multiplication of believing fellowships throughout Europe”. To the individual missions researcher emRG offers encouragement and support

1. to do missions-relevant research,
2. to do it better and
3. to do it together with others.

Long-term internal collaboration and external cooperation are at the heart of emRG in order to

- initiate a researchers movement mobilising “the whole church for the whole research”
- to continually provide increasingly relevant information for church multiplication
- to **jointly paint the big picture of missions in Europe.**

In order to fulfil its mission emRG is working on the following levels:

- **Networking:** We collaborate in an open, moderated learning community. We share resources, knowledge, and tools to avoid duplication of efforts and to mutually enhance competences and improve methodology.
- **Knowledge:** We contribute to the creation of standards in missions research focusing on comparability, compatibility and transparency, reproducibility. We gather existing research and produce new strategic research in dedicated projects. A whole research spectre is covered including sociological trends, cultural characteristics, church mapping, church planting dynamics and emerging spiritual trends.
- **Product:** We work towards a cooperative result: an open-source presentation of a continually advancing European research. We envision a web-based platform where every researcher can directly contribute to the resulting picture, and propose ways of forcefully visualizing research results.
- **Services:** We offer research training and mentoring to multiply researchers as well as research consultancy to help church planting strategists and practitioners to apply research in prayer, action and decision making.

Since its inception emRG has seen a considerable amount of time and efforts invested into its various fields of activity. **Results** so far include:

- **Conception and prototype of the emRG Product:** A “state-of-the-art” analysis of existing research approaches has been performed evaluating seven major research models currently connected with church planting in Europe (like DAWN-type national church census, City Reaching and Spiritual Mapping approaches et.al.) Out of these overlapping approaches a core set of research categories of shared interest has been

extracted to provide a primary focus for future data gathering within emRG.¹ The prototype of a web-based environment for data collection and retrieval - open yet secure - has been designed. Various research visualisation approaches have been provided suggesting ways to enhance the impact of research communication through mapping, satellite imagery and other tools. More details here: [//emrg.dzubinski.com/](http://emrg.dzubinski.com/)

- **Practice Validation of the emRG Product:** emRG is committed to catalyze research that really serves the needs of church planting practitioners. To make sure the prototype is in line with their needs, emRG has run a series of Focus Groups among church planters and invited their feedback to the present design. Feedback so far has been very encouraging, but also highlighting where practitioners' needs differ from those of the strategist. emRG is committed to serve both user groups.
- **Europe Survey 2005 launched:** emRG has launched its first continental survey gathering subjective estimates about the spiritual condition of each European region including the number and activity of churches and the population's receptiveness.² Take the survey here: [//emrg.friderich.net/](http://emrg.friderich.net/)

Other surveys, regular newsletters and research trainings are in the planning. International networking and bi-annual research consultations are ongoing.

emRG is close to the EEA, the EEMA, and the HfE Round-table, and maintains good working **relations** with various national Evangelical Alliances, mission organisations and global research agencies, especially Operation World, the Lausanne Research Network, and the International Mission Board. It is a fully independent relational network, supported and resourced by its core partner organisations DAWN, GEM, and the former ASCP. It aims to serve all users of strategic missions information who share the vision of church multiplication in Europe.

The **history** of emRG is that of a network of friends developing around the discovery of a shared vision. Its about ambitious dreams of what the "ideal missions research" would look like today.

It was in September 2004 that the network was finally launched by an international and interorganisational group of eleven researchers, research facilitators and prayer mobilisers – still under the provisional name "European Missions Researchers' Round-Table". On the basis of the purpose statement crafted there, ongoing online collaboration was started. Soon a Core Team emerged which would drive the network's development through weekly and at times daily chat communication. An open-source approach was devised from the outset to allow for broad participation with individually defined time-investment. In order to play its role in the global Body of Christ, emRG strives to cultivate a collaboration culture which is marked by passionate quality, continuous learning, and humble trustworthiness.

The experience so far of the synergy resulting from the **complementary expertise** of its different contributors is highly encouraging. The network includes missionaries, social researchers, business professionals, IT specialists, knowledge managers, network facilitators and committed research practitioners.

As an open network emRG encourages broad-scale cooperation on various levels:

¹ "Toward an Open Research Model and a Secure Environment that can Serve Church Planting Needs across Europe" by Paul Dzubinski, emRG Core Team

² by Scott Friderich, emRG Core Team

- as an active **emRG Member** who invests time and energy into ongoing online collaboration and bi-annual consultations
- as a **Cooperation Partner** who shares research results and approaches (e.g. as national or denominational researcher) or engages in limited emRG research projects as part of the growing task-force of European mission researchers (e.g. as a dissertating student of various disciplines)
- as **emRG Friend** who is sympathetic for our work and ready to support emRG with feedback, knowledge and contacts
- as **emRG User** who is interested in our results or services
- as **emRG Sponsor** who has a desire to see the emRG vision realized.

If missions research is part of your passion we would be happy to hear from you!

emRG links:

- emRG main page: www.emrg.eu (planned from April 2006 on)
- emRG as Hope for Europe network:
http://www.hfe.org/networks/network.php?network_id=39
- temporary links:
 - [//emrg.dzubinski.com](http://emrg.dzubinski.com)
 - [//emrg.friderich.net](http://emrg.friderich.net)
 - www.dawneurope.net/research
- **Email:** research@hfe.org (or [mailto: andreas@dawneurope.net](mailto:andreas@dawneurope.net))