

**Introduction to European Ecumenism**  
**(Concept paper and draft programme of the Youth Pre-Assembly preceding the**  
**15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches)**  
**29-31 May, 2018, Novi Sad, Serbia**

**Project Overview**

Introduction to European Ecumenism is a training and community-building programme designed for young adults between 18-30 years of age participating in the 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches. The event will bring together young adults who will take part in the Assembly as stewards, advisors and delegates.

The main objectives of the Youth Assembly are:

- **to provide a general overview** of the development of ecumenical relations in Europe, and **practical information** on the life and running of the General Assembly that will **ensure efficient participation** of young adults,
- **to provide space and time for young adults to engage** in the discourses of the General Assembly through introducing its goals and themes and providing **possibilities for interaction** in working sessions and social events,
- **to enrich the discussions of the General Assembly** with perspectives of different generations on relevant issues of the GA Agenda.

**We plan to use the following methods** for the programme, which intends to bring together young adults from a wide variety of Christian expressions from across Europe:

- building trust and developing the sense of community by enhancing intercultural and ecumenical communication,
- familiarizing participants with the history of ecumenism in Europe, opportunities and concerns,
- developing respect and appreciation for the diverse spiritualities and theological expressions in Europe,
- listening to and articulating fresh perspectives on witness, justice and hospitality in Europe today.

***Planned Advisory Team to the Youth Assembly: Natia Tsintsadze, Regional Secretary WSCF-E, Christophe Luyten, General Secretary EYCE, Stanislau Paulu, University of Göttingen, Rev. Dr. Benjamin Simon, Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Katerina Pekridou, CEC***

***Steward Programme Coordinator: Maria Mountraki, University of Helsinki, Finland***

## **PROGRAMME**

**28 May 2018**

**Arrivals**

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**29 May 2018**

**9:00-10:30**

- **Opening Prayer**
- **Welcome by Fr Heikki Huttunen, General Secretary of CEC**
- **Round of introductions**

**10:30-11:00 Coffee Break**

**11:00-12:30**

**The Conference of European Churches: History and Strategic Partners**

Rt. Rev. Christopher Hill, President of CEC; Very Rev. Karin Burstrand, Vice-President of CEC; His Eminence Metropolitan Emmanuel of France, Vice-President of CEC

Moderator: Jean Fischer, former General Secretary of CEC

*The session aims at familiarizing participants with the theological, political, and historical foundations of the Conference of European Churches and locating its foundation within the framework of the wider ecumenical movement in Europe and beyond. Participants will be exposed to main partners historically and at present, the areas of programmatic work of the Conference of European Churches. Further, the session will inform participants about the purpose, overall running and content of the General Assembly and enable them to be actively involved in its life.*

**12:30-14:00**

**Lunch**

**14:00-15:30**

**Icebreakers – getting to know each-other**

*Icebreakers are designed to create a safe and supportive environment in which participants can reflect and express freely, share their cultural and religious experiences, understand the limitations of their own perspectives and choices, and are enabled to respond positively and constructively to diverse views. This part of the programme will set the rules for the group which will allow participants to build trust and engage with cultural, religious and other diversity. Further, it will discuss sexual and other harassment policy.*

**15:30-17:00**

**Introduction to Serbia and to the Orthodox Church**

**Facilitators: Dr Elizabeta Kitanovic, Executive Secretary of CEC, Dr Julija Vidovic, Governing Board Member of CEC**

*This session is going to introduce participants to the unique context of the country of Serbia, and the province of Vojvodina, where the 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches will be hosted. It will also provide participants with a general overview of the history and spirituality of the Serbian Orthodox Church as well as ecumenical relations in the area.*

**17:00-17:30**

**Coffee Break**

**17:30-19:30**

**Building relationships in ecumenical networking in an era of rapidly changing communication and social media technologies.**

**Presentation by communication expert followed by discussion in small groups**

*The session aims at facilitating conversation over new ways of communication, especially among young generations, and how they affect the ways young adults relate to faith. It also explores the way new technologies and means of communication shape ecumenical relations today.*

**20:00-21:00**

**Dinner**

**21:00**

- **Evening Prayer with candles in the yard of Villa Park**
- **Open Air Zurka time in Villa Park with local guitar music!**

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**30 May 2018**

**9:00-10:30**

**Morning Prayer**

**Group A - Stewards' training**

*Facilitator: Marc-Henri Heiniger, Conference Expert, World Council of Churches*

**Group B - Delegates' introduction to General Assembly processes**

*Facilitator: Andreas Henriksen Aarflot, Governing Board Member, CEC*

**10:30-11:00**

**Coffee break**

**11:00-12:30**

**Group A - Training continued**

**Group B - Preparation for Panel to provide input to the GA**

**12:30-14:00**

**Lunch**

**14:00-17:00**

**Ecumenical learning and the future framework of the ecumenical movement**

*Facilitators: Dr. Sara Gehlin, PhD at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, University of Lund, Lisa Schneider, EYCE Chair*

**17:00-17:30**

**Coffee Break**

**17:30-19:30**

**What Future For Europe? - Witnessing Christ**

*Facilitator: Alison McDonald, CEC Governing Board Member*

*The purpose of the "What future for Europe?" sessions is to open up discussions for young people in relevant topics of recent and future challenges and possibilities in their European environment. They can exchange their views taking into consideration the main themes of the Assembly and thus they can be prepared to express their opinions in the ecumenical community of the Assembly in a more visible way. Experienced moderators will guide young participants in re-understanding the phenomenon of witnessing, the theological and social elements of justice and the Christian responsibility in hospitality.*

**19:30-20:30**

**Dinner**

**Evening Prayer and discovering the city centre of Novi Sad**

**31 May 2018**

**9:00-10:30**

**Morning Prayer**

**What Future For Europe? - Advocating for Justice**

*Facilitators: Eva Guldanova, TRG on Ecclesiology & Theological Dialogue, Co-President, Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women, **Torill Edøy**, Coordinator for Europe, Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network, Norwegian Church Council*

**10:30-11:00**

**Coffee break**

**11:00-12:30**

**What Future For Europe? - Demonstrating Hospitality**

*Facilitators: Doris Peschke CCME, Sotiris Boukis, youth pastor of the Evangelical Church in Greece*

**12:30-14:00**

**Lunch**

**14:00-16:30**

**Preparing input for “Focus on Youth” Plenary for the General Assembly**

*The aim of this session is to come to conclusion of the previous discussions in a form that can be presented during the General Assembly in order to secure a meaningful contribution to the discussions of the member churches and delegates.*

**Evaluation and Closing of the Youth Pre-Assembly**

**18:00**

**Visiting the Opening Worship of the 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of CEC**

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