

## Conference of European Churches

### Governing Board

Brussels, 22-24 November 2018

2018 Novi Sad General Assembly, Evaluation by staff

#### I. STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

##### A. Overall impressions

The assembly staff enjoyed the most the overall atmosphere and feeling of the General Assembly. They appreciated the meeting other people, as well as the good team spirit and team work that was present during the event. They enjoyed making a contribution to the work of CEC and the General Assembly.

The things they dislike most was the fact that there was little time for content discussions, related to the tight schedule and the long days (both for participants and staff). Also, they could notice a difference of engagement within the CEC staff: "the impression that CEC staff are not all engaged in the same way", "inequality in personal commitment within the staff".

The venues, board and lodging were good to most of them. Some remarks were made that it could have been easier if there weren't so many hotels, venues and if we had chosen a city with an airport. For the participants' team, transportation was a big issue, that took the time of many people when it could have been useful at other tasks.

Otherwise, they qualified the practical organisation as extraordinary.

##### B. Programme

Regarding the different themes, speakers and other parts of the event, they thought it was mostly good. They noted the very good quality of the worship life.

Many were not happy about the business plenaries, impacted by the late arrival of the documents and that the agenda was too full, limiting the discussion time. Also, "a lot of time was spent in procedural issues", and the fact that legal advisors were given too much power. Someone noted the drop out of main speakers, questioning: "CEC are not important/relevant enough?".

##### C. Communication

The communication (press release, social media, website, etc.) was described as poor before the GA, very good during the GA and mostly good after. The assembly website was criticised by many, as not ready on time, not user friendly for the participants. They would have appreciated if the results, documents and decisions of the GA could have been spread more widely amongst the participants after the event.

##### D. Youth

The youth pre-assembly was saluted for its success, good atmosphere and for the opportunity it was for youth to engage before the GA. The training with the stewards was good, even though some team would have required more time (30 min wasn't enough). Everyone enjoyed working with them, even though some team (such as registration) needed them since day 1, when registration was taking place, instead of day 4, when it was almost over.

They noted that the youth involvement was very encouraging and important, that they were taken more seriously than the past years. However, some still found that there was not enough space to hear their ideas in discussions.

#### E. Personal involvement

Most of them felt good about the amount of work they've had, even though some thought it was too much or not balanced.

They also noted the importance of free time as staff: "It was a pity that I could only have 1 free hour to go in the city during the 12 days that I was in Novi Sad".

They enjoyed their role, and "having more responsibilities". They evaluated their involvement before the GA has not so much involved and very involved during the GA.

Suggestions were made on a better communication in advance (briefing of team), but also less lectures and more participatory work methods. It is important, for the next assembly to make sure that we all know who is doing what so people can address them directly. It would also be good to "make it clear whether executive staff are supposed to help with all organisational tasks or are supposed to network. In the second case, have more field people to help administrative staff with organisational tasks."

They also noted that the work of the committees need to be planned differently.

## II. STAFF RETREAT COMMENTS

### a. Planning Process

On the documentation process, documents should be available 6 months ahead. It is important that deadlines should be kept. In this case only a paperless assembly is a possible option. A functioning and user-friendly website is necessary, as well as a concrete plan for communication.

Professional agencies are necessary for some parts of the organisation. We should be able to outsource to event professionals. Practicalities needs to be taken into account, such as an airport close by, training of stewards.

Timing of the agenda is crucial, we need to have enough time for the Committees and to provide with a framework. Also, it is relevant to have binding documents on what the APC and the staff have to deliver.

"Let's start the next General Assembly right now."