

Conference of European Churches
Governing Board

Brussels, 20 – 22 November 2019

<u>Doc N°:</u>	2GB2019_Doc15a
<u>Topic:</u>	7th Summer School on Human Rights
<u>Agenda Item:</u>	15
Staff in charge:	Elizabeta Kitanovic
<u>Recommendation:</u>	For approval
<u>Annex:</u>	Not applicable
<u>Earlier docs:</u>	Not applicable

Conference of European Churches

Project Description

1. Title of Project (Working Title)

Religious Freedom and the Public Sphere: Fostering Tolerance – Combating Populism

2. Kind of Project

7th Summer School on Human Rights

3. Responsible Staff CEC Human Rights Secretary Dr Elizabeta Kitanovic

4. Introduction

Human Rights, when they were developed, protected citizens from unnecessary interference by the state in their private and social life. As a result, they created a personal sphere of freedom against public power. This was particularly relevant for Freedom of Religion or Belief, as most states had official religions and people easily got in conflict with the guardians of the official faith of the land. To be able to adhere to one's own beliefs and convictions was an important objective for many people in the early days of the Human Rights movement.

Today, however, states are not only called to guarantee and protect Human Rights to allow for the personal freedom of their citizens. The modern, democratic and pluralistic state – which is the ideal for European societies – depends on citizens actively exercising and promoting Human Rights, and therefore needs to encourage and support activities related to Human Rights practice. Striving for equality, making use of freedom of expression, of conscience, of religion or belief, using and creating media, forming trade unions or political parties – all of these activities are the foundation on which European democracies are built upon. Each fulfils an important function for our societies: in the case of religions, it is their contribution to personal identity, ethical thought, diaconal service and cultural richness.

Yet, while it has become widely accepted that the public sphere is no more dominated by one party or one political conviction, by one set of values or one opinion on social or ethical questions, the diversity and plurality of religious convictions still seems to be perceived as a source of conflict rather than a social normality. Whenever personal expressions of faith or belief become visible in public, some people will perceive them as a threat to social homogeneity and call for a ban of all acts and symbols that show religious diversity.

Examples of such attitudes are manifold. While many relate to the Muslim presence in society, like employers wanting to ban Muslim women from wearing a headscarf or cities wanting to prohibit Mosques from building minarets, others affect even majority religions. This happens, for example, when people try to accommodate pluralism by banning Christian traditions, such as Christmas Markets or the ringing of church bells. In some cases, the showing of one's private religion can even lead to hate crime, such as Jews wearing the Kippa being attacked on the street.

In recent years, populists are making use of religion to strengthen their political narrative of "we" against "them". New nationalist and xenophobic movements discredit the notion of a pluralist society, with different religions and beliefs enjoying equal rights and showing their presence publically. It is, therefore, important for Churches and religious communities to work together to deepen our understanding of pluralism, tolerance and a peaceful living together in our societies. The Summer School offers basic human rights education and practical training for CEC Members and interested partner organisations

5. Aim(s) of the Project

The Summer School will

- a) explore international legal instruments and mechanisms on freedom of religion or belief
- b) Take stock of the current challenges that the CEC Member Churches are facing
- c) Discuss what churches can do to do better advocacy on the rights of religious minorities and majorities

6. Objectives

The CEC Thematic Group will develop a detailed program with the new TG on Human Rights

7. Gender-Related Issues

There should be an equivalent number of male and female speakers.

8. Project Overview and timing

1st half 2020: One-day preparatory meeting with TG

2nd half 2020: 4 days of the Summer School program

9. Potential Participants (Target Group)

The potential participants are representatives of CEC Member Churches dealing with rights of religious minorities and majorities

10. Timing and Venue(s)

7-10 July 2020 Berlin Schwänenwerder – Germany

11. (Potential) Partner Organisations

EKD and OSCE

12. Press and Communication Aspects

The conference will be accompanied by press releases

13. Follow-Up

Still to be discussed

14. Budget

37 606 euros

15. Workload

15 days for Executive Staff and 10 days for admin staff

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES

7TH SUMMER SCHOOL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Freedom of Religion or Belief in the Public Sphere

7-10 July 2020 Berlin Schwanenwerder - Germany

DRAFT PROGRAM

	Tuesday, 7 July 2020 1 st day	Wednesday, 8 July 2020 2 nd day	Thursday, 9 July 2020 3 rd day	Friday, 10 July 2020 4 th day
	Opening	Freedom of Religion or Belief in Multicultural Society	Freedom of Religion or Belief and Rights of the Child	Religious communities as Human Rights Defenders
8:45		PRAYER	PRAYER	PRAYER
9:00-10:15		FoRB and Constitution in Europe ♦ <i>Professor Michael Heinig</i> <i>Moderation: Pamela Slotte</i>	Child rights and FoRB: prayer rooms, headscarf, circumcision... ♦ <i>Patrick Roger Schnabel</i> <i>Moderation: Göran Gunner</i>	Violations of religious freedom or belief – ongoing cases ♦ Members' inputs, 15 minutes each (to be registered in advance) <i>Moderation: Elizabeta Kitanovic</i>
10:15-10:45		COFFEE	COFFEE	COFFEE

10:45-12:15		<p>Sociological perspective: Religion and society in Europe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Professor A. v. Scheliha?</i> <p><i>Moderation: Sabine Dreßler</i></p>	<p>Right to Religious Education in public schools and universities (<i>Different CEC perspectives</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Orthodox</i> ♦ <i>Anglican</i> ♦ <i>Minority Protestant</i> <p><i>Moderation: Sabine Dreßler</i></p>	<p>Rev. Dr Patrick Schnabel, EKD</p> <p>Summing up: What CEC can do to on for its members and vis-à-vis the European Institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg</p>
12:15-12:45		Group work: What have we learned?	Group work: What have we learned?	
12.45-14.00	REGISTRATION	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH / DEPARTURE
14.00-15.30		Visit to: German Parliament	Theological perspective: Teaching religion and/or teaching about religion –	
	<p>Opening</p> <p>Opening remarks: Dr. Elizabeta Kitanovic</p> <p>Greeting of the local church: Bishop EKBO</p> <p>Greeting of academic partner: N.N.</p> <p>Greeting of CEC leadership</p>	<p>Talk with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <u>Markus Grübel MdB</u>, FORB Special Envoy ♦ <u>Committee Chairs Human Rights</u> <p><i>Moderation: Martin Dutzmann</i></p>	<p>needs of religious communities and needs of modern society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Professor Christoph Marksches</i> <p><i>Moderation: TRG</i></p> <p><i>"The role of EKD as an advocate for freedom of religion or belief"</i></p>	

15.30-16.00	COFFEE		COFFEE	
16.00-18.00	<p><i>Moderation: Patrick Roger Schnabel</i></p> <p>Keynote speech: Bishop Bosse-Huber</p>		<p>Work on Right of Child by religious actors: good and bad practices</p> <p>Global perspective (panel): <i>(UNICEF + Save the Children + German Institute for Human Rights)</i></p> <p><i>Moderation: TRG</i></p>	
	PRAYER (Bishop Bosse-Huber)	PRAYER (Martin Dutzmann)	PRAYER (Orthodox)	
	<i>Reception</i>	<p>Public Panel Discussion (if the Französischer Dom is not in use, similar venue):</p> <p><i>"Faith and the City"</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Provost/Bishop of Berlin</i> ♦ <i>Bishop of London</i> ♦ <i>Metropolitan of France</i> ♦ <i>Rabbi Walter Homolka</i> ♦ <i>Imam Sayed Razawi</i> <p>♦ <i>Moderation: Katy Ehrensperger</i></p>	Optional Potsdam Evening	