

Conference of European Churches
Governing Board

Brussels, 20 – 22 November 2019

<u>Doc N°:</u>	2GB2019_Doc15e
<u>Topic:</u>	European Pre-Assembly Consultation (11 th WCC Assembly)
<u>Agenda Item:</u>	15
Staff in charge:	Katerina Pekridou
<u>Recommendation:</u>	For approval
<u>Annex:</u>	Not applicable
<u>Earlier docs:</u>	Not applicable

Conference of European Churches

Project Description

1. Title

European Pre-Assembly Consultation in view of the 11th WCC Assembly (working title)

2. Kind of project

Consultation

3. Responsible staff

Executive Secretary for Theological Dialogue. All CEC and CCME staff will be involved in developing the content of the meeting. The question of administrative support remains open.

4. Introduction

The 11th WCC General Assembly will take place in Karlsruhe, Germany in 2021. "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity" is the theme used in development of programmes and other preparations. The theme helps to focus on the ecumenical movement as a movement of love, seeking to follow Christ and witness to Christ's love - expressed in the search for justice and peace, and unity based on that, according to WCC General Secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit.

The assembly is the supreme legislative body of the WCC, and meets every eight years. The formal purpose of the assembly is to review programmes and determine the overall policies of the WCC, as well as to elect presidents and appoint a Central Committee which serves as the chief governing body of the WCC until the next Assembly. The Assembly is seen as "a place of listening to each other, building trusted relationships, discerning together the way forward, encouraging each other to work together for change, and celebrating Christ's gift of love with gratitude and joy" (Assembly Planning Committee Report, January 2019).

CEC, as a Regional Ecumenical Organisation related to WCC, will organise a preparatory meeting for European participants to the Assembly which is going to express its distinctive identity and witness in the region. A draft concept proposal for the meeting can be found in Appendix 1.

5. Objectives

- To enable participants to the WCC Assembly to actively engage in the Assembly debates.
- To increase awareness of the urgent questions in Europe and promote the churches' work on these questions.
- To provide a European perspective on global concerns that will be raised during the WCC Assembly.
- To prepare participants for WCC Assembly elections.

6. Outcome

Participants will have a clear understanding of the processes of the General Assembly and of effective ways of participating. They will have engaged in an analysis of the major questions that the Assembly is going to address and will be able to provide suggestions and points of action based on the experiences and expertise of the churches in Europe.

7. Output

- A report/message summarising the findings of the Consultation that will be contributed to the General Assembly material. The document could provide an overview of the situation in the region and highlight burning political, societal and other challenges, and the churches' contribution to overcoming them.
- Contribution to the Statement on Unity.
- Other?

8. Gender-related issues and youth participation

There should be an equal number of male and female speakers. Attention should be given to including young adults.

9. Target group

European participants to WCC General Assembly.

(Delegates, advisors, speakers, facilitators, ENCC representatives, Organisations in Partnership, WCC President for Europe, Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd, Members of the Central Committee and Executive Committee of WCC, WCC staff responsible for Europe?)

10. Dates and venue

18-20 February 2021, Warsaw (precise venue tbc).

11. Partners

Polish Ecumenical Council, Assembly Office/WCC.

12. Press and Communication aspects

Upon approval of the project by the Governing Board, CEC will promote the meeting on social media. The meeting could be used as an opportunity to highlight its importance and role in the region. CEC Communications Task Force should be consulted on the matter.

During the meeting there will be a press release, interviews with European church leaders, and a facebook album will be created. Other aspects of communication will be discussed with CEC Communications.

13. Follow-up

Video clip on the current challenges in Europe and the responses of the churches including material from the meeting.

14. Budget

Draft Budget for 200 participants

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Accommodation (single rooms)	200 x 2 nights x 260 PLN = 104,000 PLN
Self-paying participants	150 x 2 nights x 260 PLN = 78,000 PLN
Conference Hall	11,190 PLN
Lunch	39,000 PLN
Dinner	30,000 PLN
Coffee breaks (3x2)	27,400 PLN
Total board & Lodging	211,590 PLN = 49,786 Euro
Board & Lodging for 50 participants	12,446 Euro
Travel expenses	200 x 300 Euro = 60,000 Euro
Self-paying participants	150 x 300 Euro = 45,000 Euro
Subsidies for Travel	50 x 300 Euro = 15,000 Euro
Local transportation	1000 Euro
Miscellaneous	1000 Euro
Total	111,786 Euro
Amount to be raised	29,446 Euro

Rate: 1 Euro = 4.25 PLN

15. CEC and CCME involvement in the WCC Assembly preparations

- a. Executive Secretary Rev Sören Lenz, Strasbourg office is involved in the following areas:
 - Europe Day in the official delegates program: coordinating the collaboration of WCC with the European Institutions in Strasbourg (Council of Europe, European Court of Human rights, European Parliament).
 - Peace train project from Novi Sad to Strasbourg. An initiative of the Church and Peace Network. Approximately 100 participants from European/international contexts will travel together in a Peace Train for three to five weeks, stopping at European locations to experience strength and pain points in the field of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.
 - Coordinating a “Begegnungsort Europa/Place of encounter Europe” in Karlsruhe during the Assembly.
- b. Executive Secretary Katerina Pekridou is participating in the Assembly Planning Committee.
- c. CCME in its area of expertise is relating to the WCC assembly planning process, so far mainly through WCC staff.

In view of events in Europe since the last WCC assembly, delegates from Europe, but also beyond will be interested to hear about reactions of the churches and ecumenical family in Europe to the migratory events, particularly since 2015.

CCME has suggested several possibilities: one could be that a church leader from the CCME membership would be invited to offer reflections and experiences (EKD chair, Archbishop of Sweden, Archbishop of Athens & all Greece....) in the Europe plenary. Another suggestion was to offer one or several ecumenical conversations on churches and migration, maybe with some more unity/fellowship focus on one, a more *diakonia* focus on the other hand. CCME activities and ideas are coordinated with the EKD migration/human rights desk (Sabine Dressler) as well as with Church of Baden/*Diakonie* Baden (Jürgen Blechinger), both very active with their issues through CCME. Further, the Church of Baden has suggested to have a number of migration themed options for the weekend programme in the host region during the Assembly.

CCME is also involved in reflections within the WCC, if a relaunch of the programme to combat racism as well as some of the WCC CCIA work on pan-Africanism could feature prominently at the WCC 2012 Assembly.