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The year 2007 saw notable developments in Europe, both for the Church and for the political institutions. The year started with the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to EU membership – both countries with a large Orthodox Christian majority. The third European Ecumenical Assembly was held in Sibiu, Romania, 4-9 September 2007. The Church and Society Commission of CEC was fully involved, especially in the Forums on Europe, Creation, Justice and Peace. The presence of EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso and Commissioners Jan Figel’ and Leonard Orban, as well as René van der Linden, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, highlight the importance of ongoing relationships between Europe’s churches and the political institutions; their contributions are discussed in this Annual Report.

2008 has been designated the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue; the churches’ contribution to intercultural dialogue in Europe is now a major issue for the CSC. The annual plenary meeting of the CSC was held in Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia, in June 2007. This opportunity to meet in Armenia was a very valuable one, given that the connection between religion, society and identity in Armenia is extremely close.

Following the rejection of the European Constitutional Treaty, the signing of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2007 marks a new stage in Europe’s political cohesion. Article 16 c of the new Treaty provides for an “open, regular and transparent dialogue” between churches and the EU institutions; we look forward to continuing fruitful dialogue. We very much hope that all Member States will ratify the Treaty in 2008.

Apart from the major events, the CSC has a considerable amount of ongoing work, particularly in monitoring the European political institutions. Some of the other events have included the annual gathering of Church and Society Secretaries from Europe’s churches (in Leuven, Belgium, in October), a meeting in March of experts from CEC and the Russian Orthodox Church to discuss Human Rights issues and a meeting in January with the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, representing the German Presidency of the EU.

Following Sibiu, we now look forward to the next CEC Assembly, which will be held in Lyon, France, 15-21 July 2009. It will set the overall framework for the CSC’s work for the next six years. This Assembly will also mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of CEC in 1959, when Cold War divisions scarred Europe. Appropriately, the theme of this Assembly will be “Called to one hope in Christ”. With this thought, we wish to commend to you this Annual Report.
Religion in the Public Sphere

Annuar e Report

and Society Commission

of the Church

Rev. Rüdiger Noll

CSC Director and Associate General Secretary of CEC

"R anever-growing number of people inside and outside Europe is at stake, neglected and where the integrity of God’s creation is at risk, the churches must raise their ‘prophetic voice’ and contribute where policies are shaped and implemented. The newly appointed contact person for religions at the EU’s Bureau of European Policy Advisers, Jorge César das Neves highlighted this in one of his early statements in his new post, when he said that religions cannot be limited to the private sphere. They are a special entity in the public sphere, where they have a role to play.

Where the life in all its fullness for an ever-growing number of people inside and outside Europe is at stake, where the human dignity of people is neglected and where the integrity of the Church and Society Commission monitors this public debate very carefully and contributes to it.

Several CSC meetings in the course of 2007/2008 discussed the role of religion in the public sphere, for instance, the meeting of the Church and Society Secretaries of European Churches. The meeting included a discussion with officials from the European Commission, on the implementation of what now has become article 16 of the Lisbon Treaty and which commits the European Union to an ‘open, transparent and regular dialogue’ with churches, religions and communities of conviction. The basis for the discussion at the Secretaries’ Meeting was laid by a draft study on the dialogue between the churches and the European Institutions since the then President of the European Commission Jacques Delors asked the churches to contribute to ‘giving a Soul to Europe’. The study, conducted by Laurens Hogebrink, will be published in 2008.

On several occasions in 2007, the Church and Society Commission went public and presented the common voice of CEC member churches in public statements, policy documents and contributions to consultation processes of the European institutions. This Annual Report presents some of the key areas. More and detailed information can be found on CEC’s website: www.ceckek.org.

Bringing the common voice of European churches into the public debate and to the attention of the European institutions is just but one side of the work of the Church and Society Commission.

The other side is informing and supporting CEC member churches on European developments. To this effect, the now frequently published CSC “Updates” complemented by Briefing Papers on specific issues play an important role as the ever-increasing list of subscribers shows.

As on previous occasions, we want to thank CEC member churches for their ongoing commitment to the work of CEC and its Church and Society Commission. There is an ongoing dialogue, not only between the European institutions and the churches, but also among the churches and between the churches and the Church and Society Commission. We want to express our gratitude to all who have contributed as members of the Commission, its Executive Committee, Working Groups, Task Forces and Think Tanks, but also those who have shared their churches’ opinion and involvement in European issues with the CSC in order to make it an effective instrument of European churches in the public sphere and especially vis-à-vis the European institutions.

The Charta Oecumenica says, as churches we are committed “to seek agreement with one another on the substance and goals of our social responsibility, and to represent in concert, as far as possible, the concerns and visions of the churches vis-à-vis the secular European institutions.”

Finally, a special word of thanks should be expressed to the Swiss Protestant Federation and its member churches for seconding Mìs Carla Maurer as a new Executive Secretary to the Church and Society Commission. As the first months following her appointment already show, her work strengthens the role and the visibility of the CSC, especially vis-à-vis the European institutions in Strasbourg.

"The European Commission has always been attentive to the engagement of the Christian churches, and in particular to the Conference of European Churches, which since the beginning have accompanied and encouraged the big adventure of the European construction”
José Manuel Barroso

recognised the role churches have played in the European integration process: "The European Commission has always been attentive to the engagement of the Christian churches, and in particular to the Conference of European Churches, which since the beginning have accompanied and encouraged the big adventure of the European construction. (...) My participation in this gathering, upon invitation of the Conference of European Churches and the Council of European Bishops’ Conferences is part of a long process of listening and mutual respect between the [European] Commission and the main religions in Europe.”

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Religion in the public sphere

The role of religion in public life is at present an issue of an extensive debate, José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, told the participants of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in an over-crowded Assembly tent in Sibiu, Romania. There can be no doubt that religion and religious issues hit the headlines of Europe's newspapers and magazines in recent years more often than before. But the headlines were not always positive. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, of Madrid and London as well as the atrocities following the caricatures published in Danish newspapers and magazines in recent years more often than before.

On the other hand, according to the latest European Value Study from 1999/2000, religion remains an important factor in peoples' lives, including in public. "Christianity cannot be disconnected from European history; it forms a substantial part of our cultural heritage and identity. ... Christianity, which became [the] major religion in European history, is together with other religious and humanist traditions also today a source of many values which Europeans embrace as theirs," Jan Figel, EU Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth emphasized in his speech at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly. The churches' support for the poor, marginalised and vulnerable in societies, as service providers in the health, social and educational sectors as well as the churches as contributors to the European integration process and advocates for a just, participatory and sustainable world are just but some examples to underline the important role of religions and churches in the public sphere.

It is this positive role of churches and religions which made President Barroso emphasize the ongoing dialogue between religion and politics, between the European Commission and the churches on the occasion of the EEA3 in Sibiu. "The European Commission always maintained a fruitful dialogue with all churches. ... If we assume that politics is inseparably linked with ethics, it is necessary to listen with interest to the message of the religions within an institutional framework which pays attention to all sectors in society."

*Article 16c of the Lisbon Treaty* adopted in 2007, which recognises the "identity" and the "special contribution" of the communities of faith and conviction and commits the European Institutions to an "open, transparent and regular dialogue" with them, is one result of the fruitful dialogue.

One of the main questions for the months to come is how to implement the "open, transparent and regular dialogue" between the churches and the European institutions, in order for the dialogue to be a dialogue for change and not just a window-dressing exercise. Besides the high-level meetings between religious leaders and the Institutions', Presidents and the thematic dialogue seminars, besides meetings between the EU Presidencies and the churches and contacts on the working level, is there a need for more structured instruments and mechanisms? To launch the debate on these and related issues, the CSC commissioned a study on relations between the churches and the European Institutions. The study by Laurens Hogebrink will be published in 2008. But draft versions have already served as a useful background for discussions in the CSC as well as between the CSC and the European Commission.

Equally, the Council of Europe began to recognize the public role of religion in fostering inter-cultural dialogue. Its White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, to be published in 2008, will contain a chapter on religions. For the Council of Europe it is evident that all dialogue partners must adhere to the fundamental values of the Council: democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

"The role of religion in the public sphere" is one of the main themes for the Church and Society Commission in the years 2007/2008. Following the discussions at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu and based on the European Value Study as well as experiences in the different European countries, the Church and Society Secretaries of European churches began the debate at their annual meeting in 2007. The debate on the sociological and theological aspects will continue and it will be followed-up in 2008 by a CSC consultation for church lawyers on the legal aspects of religion in the public sphere and church-state relations.
The year 2007 saw intercultural dialogue (ICD) become a highly topical expression in European debates. Whereas the Council of Europe held a wide consultation to explore the different facets and concrete examples of such dialogue, the EU decided to make it a festive theme for 2008.

The CSC, together with CCME, took part in the Council of Europe process towards a White Paper on ICD. The results of their joint internal consultation process – close to 70 responses – indicated how seriously intercultural dialogue is taken within their constituencies. The activities include, inter alia, work with migrants and minorities, reconciliation projects between the East and the West, projects to strengthen the role of women, and training of intercultural competencies.

The CSC Plenary Meeting held in Armenia addressed the issue of intercultural dialogue. Mr Ulrich Bunjes, co-ordinator of the Council of Europe’s Office for Intercultural Dialogue, joined the meeting and delivered a speech responding to the joint CSC-CCME consultation process. (The CSC-CCME response to the CEE White Paper consultation, members’ individual contributions as well as the speech of Mr Bunjes are available on the CEC website.)

For churches, the commitment to foster intercultural dialogue arises from Christian anthropology and the church’s pastoral mission, which emphasises openness and care for the other. Intercultural dialogue serves to overcome stereotypes and this, as the Slovenian EU Presidency programme maintains, is vital for areas such as migration and the fight against organised crime and terrorism. Ecumenism as a form of intercultural dialogue tempers fundamentalism. However, beyond its merit in addressing problems, intercultural dialogue is important in itself. Dialogue is about exploring commonalities and differences. Dialogue may change the perception of the other but also one’s self-perception. The fundamental factors, which enable good dialogue, are openness towards the other, willingness to listen, to exchange ideas and to learn from the other. While valuing all aspects (non-formal education, gender equality, human rights, etc.) of intercultural dialogue, religious communities have a special responsibility regarding inter-religious dialogue. Religion is more than a mere element of culture.

Religion contributes to people’s faith, values and identity and addresses existential questions of life. Inter-religious dialogue can address elements that are not described by the discourse of cultural sociology such as ‘transcendence’, ‘the divine’, or ‘sacrament’. Religion shapes culture. Influences by faith and religious life are visible in art, music, architecture and languages. Similarly, culture influences religion.

One of the most important achievements of the ecumenical movement is the Charter Oecumenica. This document – signed by the Council of European Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE) and by the Conference of European Churches in April 2001 – provides guidelines for cooperation among the churches in Europe.

The churches declare that “they must strive to overcome the divisions still existing” among them. But they also commit themselves to intensifying dialogue with Jews and Muslims.

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 provides a good framework to foster intercultural and inter-religious dialogue at the European level. Even if the current leadership of the EU
There is a strong need to rediscover the interdependence between generations and to reinforce their links in many ways. Elderly people need the younger as the young need the old.

In the context of the 2007 European Year for Equal Opportunities for All, which aimed to make people in the European Union more aware of their rights to equal treatment and to a life free of discrimination, the CSC adopted a Position Paper on Ageing and Care for the Elderly, prepared by its Working Group on Bioethics and Biotechnology. The topic is also high on the agenda of the Council of Europe (CoE), which continues to strive for more social cohesion and to consolidate the ethical and human rights perspective on all aspects of life throughout the whole continent.

The proportion of people over 65 years old is growing in Europe. A generation ago, it was less than 3%. By 2030, it could be 20%. Such changes bring new questions such as “How should we view old age? What is the status of the elderly in our societies? How do we care for their needs?”

The Paper touches upon a range of aspects but focuses on an ethical perspective grounded in biblical reflections and Christian traditions. In its conclusion, it states “we are critical of contemporary trends to value people primarily for their youth, attractiveness, health, economic productivity and independence. These trends lead to concerns expressed by the term ‘ageism’. We think that all people and our societal institutions should work to oppose those trends, and to be active in asserting that every phase of life has its own value.

There is a strong need to rediscover the interdependence between generations and to reinforce their links in many ways. Elderly people need the younger as the young need the old. Above all, we underline the strength and wisdom given to elderly by their faith, as an encouragement to younger people to face the challenges of life, until the end when time comes to learn to give up in gratefulness, peace and hope.”

The same Working Group is finalising a Position Paper on Euthanasia and End of Life, in which it develops its 2004 contribution to the debate in the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE. This memorandum summarised various opinions about euthanasia drawn from documents from several CEC member churches from the Orthodox and Protestant traditions.

This more expanded Paper will give some definitions (euthanasia, assisted suicide, palliative care and terminal sedation) to clarify a sometimes confusing debate. It proposes some theological considerations on concepts such as: life as a gift from God, the fifth commandment, human dignity, human autonomy, compassion, pastoral care and resurrection.

The Paper should conclude that there is no need for legislation on euthanasia. Killing a patient should remain punishable. Terminal sedation may shorten life, but should not be seen as euthanasia or killing, because the aim is not to put an end to a patient’s life but to relieve unbearable suffering. However, because there may exist a grey zone between euthanasia and terminal sedation, it would be wise for the medical occupations to clarify when terminal sedation could be seen as good medical practice.
The Lisbon Treaty (Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union) refers to the rights and freedoms contained in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which was signed and proclaimed in the year 2000, as legally binding.

The Church and Society Commission, which supported the development of an EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, welcomes its inclusion in the Lisbon Treaty as well as the establishment of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. First contacts with the Agency have been established and will hopefully lead to a fruitful dialogue in the future.

The promotion and implementation of human rights have been a priority for the Conference of European Churches and the overwhelming majority of its member churches since a long time. The establishment of a desk for Justice, Peace and Human Rights in CEC dates back to 1988. As churches believe that every person is created in the image of God, no human being can be deprived of his/her human dignity. Churches, therefore, promote policies and standards which respect and advance every person’s God-given dignity.

It seems, however, that the process of globalisation has fostered a new debate on the universality of human rights and the relationship between human rights and specific traditions. This new debate also involves faith-based communities and churches. The question brought forward by some churches is how do human rights, Christian values and the moral teachings of churches relate to each other.

These are questions also posed by the Russian Orthodox Church, which is in the process of adopting a statement of principles on human rights. The CSC engaged in a dialogue with the Russian Orthodox Church, which resulted in a meeting in Moscow in March 2007 between human rights experts of CEC member churches and representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church who are involved in the drafting process. As the final communiqué of that encounter states: “The two delegations agreed that the result of the present debate on human rights within the Russian Orthodox Church and among European churches will be to strengthen the churches’ commitment to human rights as laid down, for instance, in the UN Bill of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights...” The full communiqué and press release can be found on CEC’s website: www.cec-kek.org.

Following the meeting in Moscow, the CSC engaged in an overall study on the approach and initiatives of CEC member churches in the field of human rights. The results will feed into a human rights manual for churches, which is under preparation. The manual is to respond to the new challenges churches face in strengthening and promoting human rights. It will also offer resources for human rights education and programmes.

The work of the CSC in the field of human rights is carried out in dialogue with the European institutions as well as in close cooperation with ecumenical partners and human rights organisations. In order to intensify the cooperation with other NGOs, the CSC has joined the Brussels-based Human Rights and Democracy Network and relations to other NGOs in participatory status with the Council of Europe.

In view of these recent developments in the field, the CSC is happy to have been able to fill the rather long vacancy at its human rights desk and welcomes Ms Elizabeta Kitanovic as the newly appointed Human Rights Secretary.
EU - Commissioner and Reiner Hoffmann, Kirchentag in Cologne

Deputy General Angel at the 31st admire the European Religion in the Public Sphere and Society Commission Co-operation in the Ecumenical gelical Kirchentag.

The “Deutscher Evangelischer was one of the major issues at In Brief

APRODEV is an association of 17 ecumenical development and humanitarian aid organisations in Europe. The main tasks of APRODEV is to do advocacy work, establish European Union institutions with regard to development-related policies. The European Union and its Member States are among the major donors of development assistance and humanitarian aid. It is important that both the quality and the quantity of this aid meet the highest possible standards and are oriented towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

It is also important that European Union policies in other areas are coherent with the overall objective of combating poverty. In this context, we can think of the trade, agricultural and fisheries policies. Sometimes, the left hand of development assistance does not know what the right hand of other policies is doing. The export of frozen chicken parts to countries in West Africa is a case in point. The best parts of the chicken are kept in Europe while the leftovers are frozen and exported at dumping prices to West Africa, destroying the livelihoods of farmers in that region. It is important to compete with these low-priced imports. In addition, the products present a health hazard because they cannot be kept in Europe at the correct temperature.

In 2007, one of APRODEV’s main food was the trade negotiations between the EU and the ACP countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Everyone knows that more and better trade does not automatically lead to less poverty. Therefore, APRODEV advocated for the introduction of development benchmarks in the trade negotiations.

The “Deutscher Evangelischer was supported by the CEC which adopted a resolution on this topic at their Central Committee meeting. The General Secretary of CEC also co-signed – together with his counterparts of the AEC and the Roman Catholic COMECE and CEAM – an appeal to the negotiators to make the trade deals an instrument for poverty reduction. On issues such as these ecumenical co-operation is a great asset.

The Intereurope Commission on Church and School (ICCS), and the International Association for Christian Education (IV) have taken initiatives in 2007 as an instrument of CEC. Some of these activities are made instead of having a permanent working group of CEC on education. ICCS and IV were present at the Third Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu. The activities in the “Europe Hall” ended with a huge birthday party celebrating the 50th anniversary of the European Union.

The Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu - a contribution to dialogue between churches and politics. In recent years, the continuing process of European integration has experienced great successes in overcoming divisions and improving the lives of people throughout the continent. The European Ecumenical Assembly was a natural place for a broad discussion on the theme of Europe and the role of Christians in shaping the continent.

The importance of dialogue between religions and politics in the European construction was underlined by the extent and scope of many discussions at the Assembly, as well as by the presence of prominent representatives of the European political institutions.

The President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso and the President of the Council of Europe Parlia- mental Assembly René van der Linden both stressed in their contributions to the Assembly the “vital and vibrant role” played by religion and religious organisations in society. René van der Linden added that “through their profound respect for individual human dignity, they [religions] are indispensable to advancing peace and justice in the world... politicians must recognize this and strengthen the role of churches and religious organisations in society.” Churches and confessional communities can contribute, and are indeed contributing, to a better understanding amongst peoples by promoting mutual respect in a framework of shared fundamental values. Elaborating on this statement the President of the European Commission confessed, “if one considers that politics is inseparable from ethics... the institutional framework attentive to all the components in society must listen carefully to the message of the religions.”

Jan Figel’, the EU Commissioner responsible for education and culture, in his presenta- tion at the Assembly’s Forum on Europe turned his attention to concrete areas in which dialogue between religions and politics can bring positive outcomes for society in the whole continent. Europe is increasingly multicultural and therefore the question of identity is of rising relevance. In discussing various aspects of identity, the role of religion has a particular significance. Out of it stems also confidence un- derlining the role and presence of Christian faith and churches in European society. Commis- sioner Figel’ stressed the “strength of Christians in history was actually never in their numbers but in their inspiration and commitment”.

His inspiration and commitment was manifested in several places at the Assembly. The Assembly’s call for a proper action of Christians in Europe in addressing a need for Care for Creation is one of the concrete outcomes of the gathering. “In the words of the final message, “Concerned about God’s creation, we pray for a greater sensitivity and respect for its wonderful diversity. We work against its shameful ex- ploitation, from which the Whole creation awaits its re- demption” (Rom 8:22) and commit ourselves to working for reconciliation between hu- manity and nature,” are one part of the formulation, a signifi- cant indication of the di- rection in which the social en- gagement of the churches, also including dialogue between the churches and politics, may find its viral expression in the post-Assembly period.

The CCCS Update. The new monthly CCCS Update on Euro- pean Affairs (abbreviated as Europe Updates) provides a channel to inform CCCS mem- bers on ongoing developments and the related CCCS activities and, at the same time, seeks to engage members in these. Churchers are encour- aged to read the CCCS Updates to pass information about their own Europe-relat- ed initiatives (statements, conferences, etc) and to share their best practices. To subscribe, please contact ccss@cec-kek.org.

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In October 2007, Jorge Cézar das Neves (picture) joined the Bureau of European Policy Advisers as a new contact person for religions, churches and communities of conviction. He succeeds Ambassador Michael Weininger, who has returned to serve in the Austrian Foreign Ministry. ICCS and IV contributed with a joint statement about theirownEurope-relat- ed initiatives (statements, con- firmations, etc) and to share their best practices. To subscribe, please contact ccss@cec-kek.org.

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Welcome to Elizabetha Kitanovic and Carla Maurer

Two Executive Secretaries joined the CSC staff in October 2007. Ms Elizabetha Kitanovic took over the responsibilities from Donatella Rostagno, who left the CSC in December 2006, in the field of human rights and communication. Both of her working areas include huge tasks, especially after a multi too long staff vacancy. Ms Carla Maurer is seconded to the Church and Society Commission by the Swiss Protestant Federation to a newly-established post. As a colleague to Richard Fischer in the Strasbourg office, she will focus on issues related to intercultural dialogue, gender issues and the sub-regional cooperation of the churches with regard to the European institutions.

Elizabetha is member of the Serbian Orthodox Church. She graduating from the theological faculty of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Diplomatic Academy of the Serbian Foreign Ministry. Before joining the CSC staff, she worked for the External Relations Department of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Serbian Ministry for Religious Affairs as PR and Advisor for inter-religious affairs. She was nominated to her new position from among a wide range of applicants by the Central Committee of CEC upon the recommendation of a nomination committee.

Carla also studied theology (in Berne and Heidelberg) and brings to her new position the experience of working as a TV journalist. During her studies and during her political work in Switzerland, Carla was already committed to bringing churches in dialogue with politics and the economy. Carla will strengthen the Strasbourg CSC team in monitoring the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Besides working for the CSC, Carla will keep in close touch with the Swiss Protestant Federation and its member churches in order to support them in addressing European issues.

The Church and Society

The Commission

Rev. Alfredo Abad Heras
Spanish Evangelical Church
Rev. Dr Zoltan Bona
Reformed Church in Hungary
Kirchenrat Joachim Brandt
Strasbourg Beirat
Ms Anthea Cox*
Evangelical Church in Germany (co-moderator)
Rev. Fr Hovakim Manukyan Vardges
Evangelical Church HC in Austria
Rev. Fr Hovakim Manukyan Vardges
 Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church
Rev. Dr Lennart Molin
Mission Covenant Church of Sweden/Christian Council of Sweden
Rev. Evert Overeem
Protestant Church in the Netherlands
Ms Lidia Palac
Evangelical Church AC in Poland
Rev. Tony Peck
European Baptist Federation
Ms Françoise Prager-Bouyala
French Protestant Federation
Dr Charles Reed
Church of England
Fr Georges (Kiybykh)*
Russian Orthodox Church
Rev. Dr David Sinclair
Church of Scotland
Rev. Iona Toncarova
Czechoslovak Hussite Church
LKR Hermann Wischmann
Evangelical Church in Germany
* Members of the Executive Committee

Strasbourg Beirat

President Claudia Bandixen
Reformed Church of Aargau
Kirchenrat Joachim Brandt
Strasbourg Beirat
President Jean-François Collange
Church of the Augsburg Confession in Alsace and Lorraine
Dean Rudolf Ehrmantraut
Church of Palatinate
Rev. Serge Fornerod
Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
Ms Andrea Häuser
Interim, Strasbourg
Rev. Dr Dieter Heidtmann
Executive Secretary, Brussels
Ms Elizabetha Kitanovic (as of October)
Executive Secretary, Brussels
Ms Luis Hough-Stewart
Support Staff, Brussels
Ms Marie-Madeleine Link
Support Staff, Strasbourg
Ms Carla Maurer (as of October)
Executive Secretary, Strasbourg
Rev. John Murray
Associated Staff, Anglican Chaplaincy, Strasbourg, France
Rev. Dr Peter Pavlovic
Study Secretary, Brussels
Rev. Matthew Ross
Vikar Martin Schuster
Intern, Brussels
Ms Charlotte Vander Borght
Accountant, Brussels
OKR’in Sabine von Zanthier
Associated Staff, EKD Office Brussels

Staff

Rev. Rüdiger Noll
Director, Brussels
Ms Véronique Desart
Support Staff, Brussels
Ms Elina Eklund
Executive Secretary, Brussels
Ms Véronique Engels
Support Staff, Brussels
Rev. Richard Fischer
Executive Secretary, Strasbourg
Ms Andrea häuser
Intern, Strasbourg
Rev. Dr Dieter Heidtmann
Executive Secretary, Brussels
Ms Elizabetha Kitanovic (as of October)
Executive Secretary, Brussels
Ms Luis Hough-Stewart
Support Staff, Brussels
Ms Marie-Madeleine Link
Support Staff, Strasbourg

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Ms Charlotte Vander Borght
Accountant, Brussels
OKR’in Sabine von Zanthier
Associated Staff, EKD Office Brussels

The Church and Society Commission of CEC
Working Groups and working group members

**Working Group on Bioethics and Biotechnology**
Rev. Kirsti Aalto  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland  
Prof. Svend Andersen  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Denmark  
Prof. Stavros Vlayannis  
Church of Greece  
Dr Donald Bruce  
Church of Scotland until mid-2007  
Dr Andrea Dörries  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Rev. Anton Iljin  
Russian Orthodox Church  
Dr Mireille Jenelina  
Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches  
Prof. Karsten Lehmkühler  
Church of the Augsburg Confession in Alsace and Lorraine  
Prof. Dr Elena Masarovicova  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Slovak Republic  
Prof. Anna Rallier  
Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy  
Prof. Egbert Schreuten (moderator)  
Protestant Church in the Netherlands  
Dr Stefan-Ioan Stratul  
Romanian Orthodox Church

**Working Group on EU legislation**
Dr. Sophie van Bijsterveld  
Protestant Church in the Netherlands  
Dr Lisbet Christoffersen  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Denmark  
Dr Albana Filas  
Greek Evangelical Church  
Rev. Gunnar Grönblom  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland  
Prof. Dr Petter Kresak  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Slovak Republic  
Prof. Gianni Long  
Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy  
Ms Maria Lundqvist-Nolting  
Church of Sweden  
Prof. David McClellan (moderator)  
Church of England  
Dr Joanna Mieczala  
Evangelical-Reformed Church in Poland  
Prof. Dr Gerhard Röhrs  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Prof. Dr Rüdiger Storz  
Evangelical Church in Germany

**Working Group on Human Rights and Religious Freedom**
Rev. Peter Ciaccio  
World Student Christian Federation  
Mr Kirill Frolov  
Russian Orthodox Church  
Rev. Prof. Alexandre Gabriel Gherasim  
Romanian Union of Protestant Churches  
Mr Ebbie Holon (co-moderator)  
Baptist Union of Denmark  
Prof. George Krippas  
Church of Greece  
Dr Peter Krömer  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria  
Ms Anne Lagerstedt  
Eccumenical Forum of European Christian Women  
Rev. Tony Peck  
European Baptist Federation  
Ms Ingvild Thorson Plesner  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia  
Rev. OKR’in Cornelia Coenen-Marx  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Rev. Prof. OKR Prof. Anders Böe  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Rev. Peter Southcombe  
United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom  
Dr George Tzeti (co-moderator)  
Eccumenical Patriarchate  
Rev. Andrzej Wojtowicz  
Church of Sweden  
Ms Jitka Klabalova  
Eccumenical Council of Churches in the Czech Republic

**Working Group on European Integration**
Rev. Dr Zoltán Bona  
Reformed Church in Hungary  
Rev. Elfriede Dör  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania  
Rev. Sergei Berner  
Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches  
OKR Dr David Gill  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Mr William Jourdan  
Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches  
Rev. Peter Southcombe  
United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom  
Fr Dr George Tzeti (co-moderator)  
Eccumenical Patriarchate  
Rev. Andrzej Wojtowicz  
Polish Orthodox Church

**Working Group on Peace, Security and Reconciliation**
Rev. Dr Donald Watts (moderator)  
Presbyterian Church in Ireland  
Ms Rita Bravura  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia  
Rev. OKR Cornelia Coenen-Marx  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Rev. Jac Franken  
Kerkinactie, the Netherlands  
Ms Laura Jones  
Eurodiaconia  
Major Göran Larsson  
Salvation Army, Europe Zone  
Mr Olle Melgård  
Kofodsk Skole, Denmark  
Mag. Martin Schenk  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria  
Dr Stephanie Scholz  
Diakonisches Werk der EKD, Germany  
Rev. Dr David Sinclair  
Church of Scotland  
Prof. Christina Vayas  
Church of Greece  
Rektor Einar Vetriv  
Diakoniehjemmet University College, Norway

**CSC-Europa Diaconia Joint Working Group on Social Issues**
Ms Rita Bravura  
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia  
Rev. OKR Cornelia Coenen-Marx  
Evangelical Church in Germany  
Rev. Jac Franken  
Kerkinactie, the Netherlands  
Ms Laura Jones  
Eurodiaconia  
Major Göran Larsson  
Salvation Army, Europe Zone  
Mr Olle Melgård  
Kofodsk Skole, Denmark  
Mag. Martin Schenk  
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria  
Dr Stephanie Scholz  
Diakonisches Werk der EKD, Germany  
Rev. Dr David Sinclair  
Church of Scotland  
Prof. Christina Vayas  
Church of Greece
The Church and Society Commission accounts for 2007 are very similar to the previous year. We would like to thank all who have financially supported the work of the Commission.

The entire staff of the Commission fully participated in the preparation and smooth conduct of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly (EEA3) which is not reflected in the charts illustrating this article.

The Church and Society Commission in partnership with the Orthodox Archbishopric of Sibiu, Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe, Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland and the Commission of Bishops’ Conferences in the European Community has applied and has been selected for financial support of the “EuropeDay” at EEA3. The accounts relating to this grant have not yet been finalized and the promised amount is yet to be received; accordingly, these figures will be included in the 2008 accounts.

The work required for EEA3 was in addition to other meetings. These meetings were however achieved with lower costs in comparison to the previous years. Numerous programmatic activities have been financed by member churches; without this support such activities would not have been possible. The position of Executive Secretary for Human Rights was vacant for much of 2007; the saving in direct staff costs has been compensated by the increased level of staff seconded by the member churches (see below). Travel, office and rental expenses have slightly increased with the corresponding higher levels of staffing. The CSC is especially grateful to the member churches and church-related agencies for their financial contributions, which have greatly increased the CSC’s ability to undertake additional activities. The 2007 annual plenary meeting took place in Etchmiadzin (Armenia), where we were generously hosted by the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church.

Finally, the CSC would like to record its thanks to those churches that are supporting its work by delegating or appointing additional staff. Some appointments are longstanding, others more recent, but all are valued. These include: Eglise de la Confession d’Augsbourg d’Alsace et de Lorraine, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church in Great Britain, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Salvation Army (UK/Ireland), Evangelische Landeskirche in Württemberg, Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, Church of Sweden, Federation of Protestant Churches in Switzerland.

The 2007 Plenary of the Church and Society Commission met from 15-19 June 2007 at the invitation of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church at the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia.

As usual, the 24 members of the Commission supported by representatives of associated organisations reviewed the work done by the Commission in the previous year and adopted a work programme for the following year. In addition, the Commission sent a solidarity address to the churches and ecumenical partners in the Middle East and addressed the European Council (jointly with Eurodiacena) on the eve of its meeting on social rights to be emphasized and protected in the European Treaty.

The main theme of the Plenary was "Intercultural dialogue". This theme was not only introduced and discussed through presentations and plenary debates (cf. article on Intercultural Dialogue in this Annual Report). "The context, in which the meeting took place, was probably the best introduction to the main theme of this year’s Plenary meeting," the CSC Director stated afterwards. "We are grateful to the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church and its Head His Holiness Karekin II of all Armenians, who have invited us to the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. Here it becomes evident how much the culture and history of the country is connected to the witness and life of the church."

The participants visited monasteries, an Armenian factory and several sites connected to the Armenian history and culture. Most impressive were the visit and prayer at the Memorial commemorating the genocide of the Armenian people at the beginning of the 20th century and the following participation in the Holy Liturgy at the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

The CSC moderators thanked H. H. Karekin II, our hosts, Archbishop Petrossian, member of the CEC Central Committee, and Commission member Fr. Hovakim Manukyan for their hospitality. "It was with great pleasure that the Church and Society Commission received such a rich introduction to the life of the church and people of our host country", they said. "The hospitality, the interest in Europe and the ecumenical commitment of the Armenian people were very impressive and instructive for us."
CEC Member Churches & Associated Organisations

Albania
Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania

Armenia
Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church

Austria
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria
Evangelical Church of the Helvetic Confession in Austria
Evangelical Methodist Church in Austria
Old Catholic Church in Austria

Belgium
United Protestant Church in Belgium

Bulgaria
Baptist Union of Bulgaria
Evangelical Methodist Church in Bulgaria
Pentecostal Assemblies of Bulgaria

Croatia
Baptist Union of Croatia
Church of God in Croatia
Evangelical Church in the Republic of Croatia
Evangelical Pentecostal Church in Croatia
Reformed Christian Church in Croatia

Cyprus
Church of Cyprus

Czech Republic
Czechoslovak Hussite Church
Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren
Evangelical Methodist Church in the Czech Republic
Moravian Church in the Czech Republic
Old Catholic Church in the Czech Republic
Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovak Republic
Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Czech Republic

Denmark
Baptist Union of Denmark
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Denmark

Estonia
Estonian Evangelical-Lutheran Church
Estonian Evangelical-Lutheran Church Abroad
Estonian Methodist Church

Finland
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland
Orthodox Church in Finland

France
Church of the Augsburg Confession in Alsace and Lorraine
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of France Federation of Evangelical-Baptist Churches of France
French Reformed Church
Malagasy Protestant Church in France
Reformed Church of Alsace-Lorraine

Georgia
Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia

Germany
Catholic Diocese of the Old-Catholics in Germany
Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD)
Union of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany (Baptists)
United Methodist Church in Germany

Great Britain
Baptist Union of Great Britain
The Methodist Church of Great Britain
Church in Wales
Church of England
Church of Scotland
Congregational Federation of the United Kingdom
Council of African and Caribbean Churches
Presbyterian Church of Wales
Salvation Army - UK Territory/Ireland
Scottish Episcopal Church
Shibul United Church of Christ
Apostolic Worldwide
United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom

Greece
Greek Evangelical Church
Church of Greece

Hungary
Baptist Union of Hungary
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Hungary
Evangelical Methodist Church in Hungary
Reformed Church in Hungary

Iceland
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Iceland

Ireland
Church of Ireland
Methodist Church in Ireland
Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Italy
Baptist Union of Italy
Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Italy
Evangelical-METHODIST Church in Italy
Waldensian Church

Latvia
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Latvia
Latvian Evangelical-Lutheran Church Abroad

Liechtenstein
Evangelical Church in the Principality of Liechtenstein

Lithuania
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Lithuania
Lithuanian Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Germany

Luxembourg
Alliance of Protestant Churches of Luxembourg

Netherlands
Mennonite Church in the Netherlands
Old Catholic Church of the Netherlands
Protestant Church in the Netherlands
Remonstrant Brotherhood

Norway
Church of Norway

Poland
Baptist Union of Poland
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland
Evangelical-Reformed Church in Poland
Old Catholic Maranite Church in Poland
Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church
Polish Catholic Church (Old-Catholic)
United Methodist Church in Poland

Portugal
Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church
Methodist Church of Portugal
Presbyterian Church in Portugal

Romania
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania
Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Romania
Reformed Church in Romania

Russia
Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Ingria

Serbia/Montenegro
Evangelical-Methodist Church in Serbia

Slovak Republic
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Slovak Republic

Spain
Spanish Evangelical Church
Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church

Sweden
Baptist Union of Sweden
Church of Sweden
Mission Covenant Church of Sweden
United Methodist Church of Sweden

Switzerland
Federation of the Swiss Protestant Churches
Old-Catholic Church of Switzerland
United Methodist Church in Switzerland

Ukraine
Trans-Carpathian Reformed Church

International Areas
Eccumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
European Continental Province of the Roman Catholic Church
Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Russia and Other States
Salvation Army International Headquarters Europe Zone
United Methodist Church - Nordic and Baltic Area
United Methodist Church - Central and Southern Europe Area

Cec Associated Organisations
Council of Churches Together in Scotland
Christian Council of Sweden
Church and Peace
Church Mission Society
Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe
Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Churches Together in Wales
Conference of European Pastors’ Associations
Conference of European Universities
Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Eccumenical Association of Academies
and Laity Centres in Europe
Eccumenical Association of Churches in Romania/ADROM
Eccumenical Association for Adult Education in Europe
Eccumenical Council of Churches in Hungary
Eccumenical Council of Churches in the Slovak Republic
Eccumenical Forum of European Christian Women
Eccumenical Institute for the Nordic Region
Eccumenical Youth Council in Europe
Estonian Council of Churches
Eurodiaconia / European Federation for Diaconia
European Alliance of YMCAs
European Baptist Federation
European Contact Group
European Forum of Christian Men
European YWCA
Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy
Finnish Ecumenical Council
French Protestant Federation
Gustav Adolf Foundation
Interreligious Commission on Church and School
International Association for Christian Education
International Prison Chaplains’ Association/Europe
Irish Council of Churches
Portuguese Council of Christian Churches
Spanish Committee on Cooperation between the Churches
Union of Evangelical Free Churches in Germany
World Student Christian Federation (Europe)
Who we are

The Church and Society Commission is one of the commissions of the Conference of European Churches (CEC). The CSC links CEC’s 125 member churches from all over Europe and its associated organisations with the European Union institutions, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, NATO and the UN (on European matters). It engages its member churches and associated organisations in studies and projects relevant to church and society and thus supports and strengthens the common witness of European churches vis-à-vis the European Institutions and in the respective European societies.

The CSC was established in 1999 as a result of an integration process between CEC and the European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society (EECCS), both of which had a long-standing record of working in the field of church and society.

CEC was founded in 1959 as a bridge-building organisation between the churches in Eastern and Western Europe. 1979 can be regarded as the founding date for EECCS, which was established as a representation of churches vis-à-vis the European institutions.

Following this integration process, the CSC received a special status within CEC. Its work programme as well as its working mechanisms and methods are determined by a 24-person Commission in agreement with CEC’s Central Committee. The Commission Plenary meets once a year, and elects the CSC Executive Committee. In consultation with the General Secretary of CEC it can make public statements on issues within its remit. The CSC has secretariats in Brussels and Strasbourg and maintains strong links with the CEC headquarters in Geneva. The Directorate of the CSC is based in Brussels.

Mandate and Methods

Our mandate
• To encourage and sustain
• To create a space for
• To create a space for
• To encourage and sustain

How we work
• The Church and Society Commission (CSC) monitors developments in the

European Institutions and makes inputs to the institutions on behalf of its member churches. CSC acts through its working groups which study church and society issues and engages member churches in consultations and projects on specific topics. The CSC closely cooperates with other church-related organisations and NGOs such as CCME, EUrodiaconia, APRODEV and COMECE. The CSC bases its actions on its work programme through flexible and ad hoc working mechanisms and methods.

More information on
http://www.cec-kek.org

in the implementation of its agenda, regular communication between CSC and its member churches and the institutions are of crucial importance.

Long term working groups have been established for the following priority areas of the 2004-2009 work programme:

• European Integration
• EU Legislation
• Peace, Security and Reconciliation
• Bioethics and Biotechnology
• Human rights and Religious Freedom
• Social Issues (a joint Working Group with EUrodiaconia)

The CSC also addresses:
the following themes with appropriate working mechanisms:

• Globalisation
• Sustainable Development
• Environmental Issues
• Agriculture and Rural Life
• Gender Equality
• Education
• Inter-religious Dialogue

Acronyms

ACAC African Conference of Churches
AFCED African Federation of Christian Development Organisations in Europe
APRODEV Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organisations in Europe
CEC Council of European Churches
COMECE Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community
CSC Church and Society Commission
DG Directorate-General
ENA European Christian Environmental Network
ECG European Contact Group
ECEN European Christian Environmental Network
ECO European Christian Federation of Catholic Church
ECM European Commission on Human Rights
EPP European People’s Party
EPP european Parliament
EPOR European Parliament
ENAR European Network Against Racism
ENDEP European Dialogue of People’s Movements
EPOR European Parliament
EPOR European Parliament
ECW European Christian Women’s Federation
ICD Intercultural Dialogue
OSCE Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
ODIHR Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
CCME Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe
COMECE Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community
APRDEV Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organisations in Europe