



International Association for Christian Education
Internationaler Verband Evangelischer Erzieher
Fédération Internationale Protestante de l'Enseignement
Internationaal Verband van Organisaties voor
Christelijke Opvoeding en Onderwijs

(You'll find a new logo at the top of our next newsletter)

Newsletter 1/2010

At the beginning of 2010, I wish all members, friends and supporters of IV - also on behalf of the board - God's blessing, good health, happiness and success. May the reform of the European Union finally accomplished in 2009, bring new courage and optimism to our old continent!

The "International Association for Christian Education" links national organizations of different European countries. Based on a Christian-protestant tradition, it aims to bring forward Christian education, to sustain Christian schools and to promote Christian values. It facilitates encounter and exchange of views between Christian teachers in Europe, coordinates the needs of Christian schools and Christian teachers in the European educational systems, gives them a face and a voice within and vis-a-vis to the churches in Europe and the European institutions (e.g. the Council of Europe and the European Union) and takes care of the organizational conditions which are necessary to achieve these targets (*quoted from the Statutes*)

From within Association's Life

Two important steps have stamped the Association's life in 2009: the realization of its own office in Hanover and the new Statutes, voted by the General Assembly of Members. While The Hague in the Netherlands remains the official seat of the Association, administration is now centred in Hanover, where Mrs. Kerstin Wiechmann takes care of the whole logistic. Ever since also Board Meetings regularly take place there. The General Assembly of Members 2009, held in Amersfoort (NL) from 17th to 18th September decided on the new Statutes and Rules of Administration. The German name of the association is now "Internationaler Verband für christliche Erziehung und Bildung", because the word "Erzieher" is no longer used in the same sense as before and leads to misunderstandings.

Members of the Association, according to the new statutes, are Teachers' Federations, School Leagues and Networks of Schools as well as Universities and their associations.

Individuals, schools and supporting organizations can be admitted as extraordinary members. Actually, the Board discusses the question, if - according to the aims of the association - Christian Parents' Associations should also be admitted. A copy of Statutes and Rules of Administration will be sent to all members shortly. Those who are not yet members can get them on demand (see address below) or find them soon on our website www.Int-V.com.

As new members the Protestant University of Applied Sciences of Freiburg/Germany (Evangelische Hochschule Freiburg) and the Forum of Protestant Schools of Bern/ Switzerland (Forum evangelischer Schulen Berns) were admitted. Three other appliances of membership from France and Germany were received in the meantime.

Association's Board is now constituted by Swier Frouws (NL) as president, Nanne Sluijs (NL) as treasurer, Gerhard Pfeiffer (D) as secretary, Bertrand Knobel (CH) and Sándor Szécsi (H). L'uba Slaboňová (SK), the former president, was discharged by the Board's president with hearty thanks for her many years of service. Next General Assembly of Members will take place on 28th October 2010 in Hanover. Those organizations or individuals who are interested on becoming a member are invited on request.

Co-operations

The International Association maintains a close co-operation with the Inter European Commission on Church and School (ICCS). Every Board meeting held by the two organizations is attended by a board member of the partner organization.

A common task force is co-ordinating the contacts with European institutions and church organizations as well as the contributions to publications, and is organizing common conferences. Peter Schreiner, president of ICCS, represented last year repeatedly the IV at meetings of the Church and Society Commission (CSC) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC). A CSC-brainstorming group on education drafted in June 2009 a proposal for a rolling Agenda for CSC involvement in Religion in Education in Europe. The paper contains intentions like the critique of education and limited concepts of knowledge and qualification from a Christian perspective, networking in order to bring together what already exists in resources and activities in religion and education or establishing a task force to deal with educational issues.

Swier Frouws represented IV at the 13th CEC Assembly from 15th to 21st July 2009 in Lyon. Together with Peter Schreiner, the representative of ICCS, he encouraged churches through conversations, public statements and written information to perceive the situation of education in Europe and to exercise their responsibilities in this field. The handout they distributed to this end can be sent to those who are interested on request.

The Coordinating Group for Religion in Education in Europe (CoGREE) enables its members to share the experiences of other organizations working in the field of Christian education. CoGREE is in close relationship to the Council of Europe and organizes regularly colloquies about religious and inter-cultural education in Europe (for further information see www.cogree.com.) IV sustains these activities through its co-operation in the steering group, who met for the last time in Vienna 19th September 2009. Next meeting will be in Oslo 13th March 2010.

Projects, Seminars and Conferences

The General Assembly of Members is our most important platform for exchanging experiences. At the 2009 meeting, four organizations presented themselves to the delegates: the Polish Protestant Teachers' Union (PL), the School of Education Hogeschool Windesheim (NL), the Forum of Protestant Schools of Bern (CH) and the Christian Parents' Association Ouders en COO (NL). Within a half-day excursion the members could get acquainted with the Christelijke Hogeschool Ede, a protestant university offering inter alia several curricula of teacher training.

Like in the past, IV and the Ministry of Education of Baden-Wuerttemberg will invite to a seminar for teachers and school leaders from all Europe at Bad Wildbad (D) every two years. The next one, which will take place from 26th to 29th April 2011, is planned actually. The seminar will treat the issue European Citizenship Education and the importance of religion.

CoGREE plans a colloquy on the situation of Religion(s) in Europe and its educational consequences at Klingenthal (F) from 4th to 8th October 2010. Invitation will be sent also to IV members. The number of places available is limited.

At the beginning of July 2011, IV and ICCS will hold a conference in Prague (CZ) on the subject of : „Education between employability and personal development“ (provisional formulation).

Unfortunately, we are not able to implement the project „European Competences for Christian Teachers and Teachers Development“, which was at study for quite a long time and was shaped with the view to obtaining funding from the European Union. It was seen finally as beyond the capacity of work and financial means of IV. A planning group discussed alternatives on 6th November 2009 in Amersfoort. The discussion resulted in four smaller projects appropriate to implement our goals within the next years:

- A. Building of a network of Christian Teacher Training Institutes. As a point of departure, IV could organize a conference, in close co-operation with its two members Besturenraad and University of Windesheim.
- B. Encounter Days for Teachers, following the model of Bad Wildbad (see below)
- C. Publication on the Christian Contribution to European Citizenship
- D. Activities for School Leaders with scopes like the Christian teacher as a role model, changes in the world and their consequences for education, quality and quality accountability of school leaders. These activities can get the shape of exchange and focussing on the achievements and problems of one school or one country, e. g. an excursion to UK to study the proficiency of Anglican schools.

For all these activities we need to enlarge considerably the number of our members and to bring in those countries too, who could not accept the Association's offers until now because of the German language normally used in IV activities. The Association, therefore, will use increasingly the English language, both in written and oral communications. We invite all those, who are interested in the work of IV, to accept this offer and to get in contact with the Board.

Personalia

This newsletter is the first one written by the new IV secretary, who would like to introduce himself as follows: Gerhard Pfeiffer, Dr. phil., born 1941, Grammar School Teacher (German, Latin, French), from 1983 to 2002 Head of (protestant) Laurentius-Gymnasium at Neuendettelsau (D), from 2002 to 2006 Project Leader for School Quality Development at the Foundation for Protestant Schools in Bavaria and Representative of the Evangelic-Lutheran Church in Bavaria for International Relations in School Affairs, IV-Delegate to the 3rd European Ecumenical Assembly 2007 in Sibiu.

Contact:

Dr. Gerhard Pfeiffer, Karwendelstr.10, D-86399 Bobingen

E-Mail: gerhard.pfeiffer@fen-net.de

Tel. +49 (0)8234-966660

mobil +49 (0)171-474 8132