

newsletter

December 2018, No. 12

Editorial

At the end of the year we want to call your attention to a significant event in May 2019. The result of the election of the European parliament will give distinct indications of the political future of Europe. After Great Britain leaving the EU in March 2019, the elections will set further pivotal political markers for the future of living together in Europe. The Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) underlined the importance of European cooperation in a resolution at its meeting in November. The text of the resolution is as follows:

The Synod asks the EKD Council, the member churches as well as the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and the Conference of European Churches,

- 1. to actively take part in the debates about the future of the EU and to create space inside the churches for discussions about the question, what kind of Europe we want against the backdrop of Christian core beliefs,*
- 2. to incorporate ecumenical partnerships and transnational networks, to overcome divisions and to firmly counter nationalism and extremism,*
- 3. to build awareness of the European elections in May 2019 and to call joining the election as well as*
- 4. to specifically motivate young people to go voting for the first time.*

The significance of Churches, their European associations and transnational networks such as IV and ICCS is being underlined. What kind of Europe do we want? In which direction do our Christian core beliefs lead us? How can we encourage young people in using their right to vote? How can Churches contribute to peace, justice and reconciliation in Europe and worldwide? These are questions that challenge us as European-oriented citizens and which we want to continue to work on.

We wish all readers a peaceful and blessed turn of the year and lots of energy and vigour for upcoming tasks and the fulfillment of wishes for the New Year 2019.

Michael Jacobs and Piet Jansen (IV)

Dr Tania ap Sîon und Dr Peter Schreiner (ICCS)

Information from IV and ICCS

IV: Board meeting July in Düsseldorf

The board of IV met on 13/14 July at the school of the new secretary Michael Jacobs in Düsseldorf-Kaiserswerth. The budget of 2017 was confirmed and information was shared about the budget for 2018. There was a discussion about changing the name of the association on the basis of a proposal made at the general assembly in Dublin in 2017. The board worked out a proposal for the coming annual general meeting in Tallinn. Furthermore, the future of the European teacher seminars, organized so far in Bad Wildbad, was discussed. Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer gave a report about the General Assembly of CEC in Novi Sad and Dr Peter Schreiner introduced the current status of cooperation with ICCS and planned activities of CoGREE. Also the preparation of the AGM in Tallinn was on the agenda. Dr Wim Kuiper, participating as a guest, was warmly thanked for his work and commitment as president of IV during the last years.

Just before the annual general meeting in Tallinn another board meeting took place on 23 November. Piet Jansen, designated new president of IV, could participate there.

IV: General Assembly 2018

Invited by the Union of Private Protestant Schools in Estonia, the annual general assembly of IV took place from 23 to 24 November in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. A warm reception by the hosting organisation included a word of welcome by the Archbishop of the Lutheran Church of Estonia, Urmas Vilmas. This created a very communicative setting for the 35 participants from 12 countries. Dr Jacomijn van der Kooij in her presentation introduced from a Dutch perspective "Contributions of Christian Schools to Solidarity in Society" and encouraged a rich debate. Dr Peter Schreiner mentioned in his contribution crucial elements of the cooperation between IV and ICCS, e.g. the common commitment to a European integration and the promotion of a horizontal-based Europeanisation through cooperation and exchange of experts in Christian-based education. School visits to a Protestant and to an Orthodox primary school as well as a guided city tour with a lot of historical and political information enriched the programme.

At the statutory part of the general assembly the proposed change to the name did not find a sufficient majority. So the well-known name and the acronym "IV" stays. The Protestant School Association A.B. Vienna, sponsoring association of nine different schools, was accepted as a new member and welcomed.

IV: New President elected

The general assembly of IV elected a new president of IV. Piet Jansen (63) is chairman of the board of SCOPE school group and of the Catholic Foundation Ashram College. SCOPE school group is a foundation for (Protestant) Christian primary, special and secondary education with 21 schools and over 6000 pupils. The Catholic foundation Ashram College provides secondary education for about 2000 students at two schools. The board has the task of realising a merger between the two foundations in the next two years. Both organisations are members of Verus, the Association for Catholic and Christian Education in the Netherlands.

IV: GPEN conference in Arusha

From 22 to 25 November the first assembly of GPEN ambassadors happened in Arusha, Tanzania. At the conference in Kigali, Ruanda in 2017, “peace education” and “quality of education” were accepted as central themes of GPENreformation. For the promotion and processing steps of the themes at a global level as well as at a regional level, the network ambassadors (just under 40 in number) play a decisive role. They came together to discuss their role, tasks and ways of communication among themselves (more information through www.gpenreformation.org).

ICCS: Re-orientation planned

The board of IV started an initiative to re-organise the work of the organisation. The relation of Church and School has changed in many contexts, this means mainly a larger distance between the two perspectives and a growing secularisation of public education in several countries. Contrasting examples of this trend are the implementation of Religious Education as an ordinary school subject in Hungary or the reinforcement of cooperation between public schools and Church parishes in the Netherlands. ICCS wants to facilitate via new communication tools the exchange about these kinds of developments and to work together on shared challenges. This should happen in close cooperation with IV and CoGREE.

ICCS: Meeting of trustees

The trustees of ICCS, a charitable foundation in British law, made use of the meeting of the International Seminar for Religious Education and Values (ISREV) in July/August 2018 in Nuremberg to talk about future perspectives of the work of ICCS. The goal of ICCS, to facilitate exchange and joint initiatives in the field of Church and School in Europe, needs new instruments and a direction that meets the needs of the new conditions in the relationship of Church and School in many countries in Europe.

ICCS: Consultation planned for May 2019

The board of ICCS is planning a consultation on future perspectives of the organisation on 17/18 May 2019 in Quarteiro, Portugal. On the basis of an already existing proposal, new working methods for future projects and activities will be discussed, especially that social media should play a crucial role for exchanges about current developments in education policy related to church and school. The aim is to connect national developments and mirror their importance in the light of transnational European developments and challenges.

ICCS/CoGREE: Klingenthal Colloquy October 2018

A rich exchange about hate speech on the world wide web and about different national projects that act against this took place at the 8th Klingenthal Colloquy from 1 to 5 October 2018. More than 25 participants from all over Europe came together to discuss current developments and initiatives. Also, the newly elected president of CEC, the Revd Christian Krieger and the CEC executive secretary the Revd Sören Lenz, responsible for bioethics and education and representing CEC at the Council of Europe, came to talk to the participants. A visit to the European Parliament, including a meeting with MEP Julie Ward, was part of the programme. Planning and realisation of the event were in the hands of CoGREE secretary Lesley Prior, as well as Janika Olschewski and Dr Peter Schreiner.



CoGREE and member organisations

CoGREE: Steering group meeting in Nuremberg and in Augsburg

On 9 June the steering group of the Coordinating Group for Religion in Education in Europe (CoGREE) met in Nuremberg. As new members of the group, Dr Margaretha Hackermeier, representing the (Catholic) European Forum for Religious Education in Schools (EuFRES), and Mag. Michael Holzwieser, representing PILGRIM, International network, were welcomed. Janika Olschewski introduced the new website (<https://cogree.org>). Also the Klingenthal Colloquy (1 to 5 October) with the title "Let's talk about Religion and Education – Dialogue, Values and European Integration" was prepared. Another meeting took place on 7 to 8 December in Augsburg. Christine Mann, president of the Comité Européen pour l'Enseignement Catholique (CEEC), attended and announced a future membership of CEEC at CoGREE.

EFTRE: Executive in Bucharest November 2018

On 3 November the executive of EFTRE met in Bucharest (Romania). Points on the agenda were issues of membership and public relations as well as the Newsletter and the website. It was decided that articles and news would no longer be published in a Newsletter but would be included instead on the website (www.eftre.net). The focus of the meeting was on the preparation of the coming European conference in summer 2019 in Dublin. Therefore, Dr Sandra Cullen (representative of Ireland) and Dr Norman Richardson (representing Northern Ireland) were invited. The programme was discussed and processes fixed. Registration will be possible soon through the website.

EFTRE: Conference in Dublin 2019

The next EFTRE Conference will take place from 28 to 31 August 2019. It will be organised in collaboration with CoGREE. "Reconciling Realities in Religious Education" is the theme of the conference and RE teachers, education experts and multipliers [I don't know what 'multipliers' are, but a different word would be helpful] from all over Europe are invited to attend, listening to key lectures, attending workshops and following signs of (religious) reconciliation in Dublin. Information about the conference and also registration are available and possible through the website: <http://eftre.weebly.com/conference-2019.html>.

PILGRIM: "So that the earth can catch its breath again"

This was the motto of the Pilgrim Climate Summit of the Youth of Europe from 23 to 25 November 2018 in Katowice. More than 200 young people from seven countries (Austria, Poland, Ukraine etc.) and 126 institutions wished to make a strong statement two weeks before

the UN Climate Summit to set a dynamic sign for the preservation of creation. At information and discussion meetings, planned by the Theological Faculty of the Silesian University and organised at a bi-lingual school in Katowice, ideas were developed as a starting point for further activities. A manifesto, written by the young people was presented to leading representatives of the Church, scientists and politicians. The young people expect from the responsables of the COP 24 a binding agreement on climate targets as well as their implementation, to make life still possible on earth.

The following organisations expressed the invitation for the Katowice Pilgrim Climate Summit of Youth: the education authority and the Theological Faculty in Katowice, the Kirchlich-Pädagogische Hochschule kph Vienna/Krems as well as the international education network PILGRIM (both in Austria based). Besides a public rally, a church service took place in a closed coal mine 160m underground.

READY: Final publication of the project

A final publication of the READY project with a rich collection of results and contributions is available now. The project was sponsored by the European Union through the Erasmus+ programme. It organised exchange among future religious education teachers from different countries, especially concerning successful approaches to religious education that deal constructively with increasing cultural and religious diversity. The book includes reports and testimonies at the many national and international expert meetings events as well as findings and insights made by the consortium of the project. The book is edited by Dr Peter Schreiner on behalf of the project consortium. Universities of London, Aberdeen and Karlstad/Sweden participated in the project as well as the die Kirchlich-Pädagogische Hochschule Wien/Krems, the Staatl. Seminar für Didaktik und Lehrerbildung (Gymnasium) in Tübingen and the Comenius-Institut. The title of the book is: Are you READY? – Diversity and Religious Education across Europe – the Story of the READY Project, 134 pages, Münster: Waxmann, 29,90€





CEC and CPCE

CEC: Key issues for the coming years

The board of CEC assembled for the first time on 22 to 24 November after the general assembly in Novi Sad. At the meeting the thematic themes, adopted at the general assembly were confirmed. CEC will work on peace, justice and reconciliation in Europe, and render the community of churches in Europe audible to the European institutions.

CEC: General Assembly 2018 in Novi Sad (Serbia)

In 2013 the Conference of European Churches adopted a new constitution at the general assembly in Budapest. Five years later the first general assembly in accordance with the new constitution took place. Nearly 200 delegates from the member churches and some hundred representatives of partnership organisations and guests came together in Novi Sad / Serbia from 31 May to 6 June. The CoGREE member organisations IV and ICCS are organisations in partnership with CEC. They were represented at the meeting by the acting IV president Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer.

“You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8) was the theme of this large ecumenical gathering. The programme included plenary sessions on the chief themes “hospitality”, “justice” and “hope” and the work on strategic statements on migration, climate and environment, peace and human rights. The overall aims were to develop a vision for the future of Europe and to work on opportunities for action of the churches.

In an ecumenical spirit the different “confession families” such as Protestants, Anglicans, Orthodox and Oriental churches celebrated common worship and a peace prayer at the banks of the Danube, where the bridges were destroyed a few decades ago during the Kosovo war. Thematic work was done in 15 working groups. One of them was prepared by the thematic reference group “Education for Democratic Citizenship” in which ICCS and IV are represented. The title of the workshop was: “Democracy and Populism: the role of Education and of CEC”.

More information about the general assembly 2018 is available at:

<https://assembly2018.ceceurope.org/>.

CPCE: General Assembly accepts education report

The regional group southeast Europe of CPCE has presented a study on education activities of the Protestant churches in South, Central and Eastern Europe at the 8th general assembly in Bale/Switzerland (13 to 18 September 2018). This substantial study's aim is to promote a theological and educational dialogue about a Gospel-oriented understanding of education that corresponds with current theories of education. A proposal, expressed in the study, is to establish a “circle of education experts” with the mandate “to identify the subject of education as a dimension of many other topics in the CPCE communication processes, to contribute to a

common theological understanding of education within the CPCE, to reflect on the development of European framework conditions in education and science policy in their significance for church educational activity, and to advise the Council on all education–relevant questions” (p. 84). For networking among those responsible for education in the CPCE member churches the ‘forum Bildung Europa’ could continue.

More information about the general assembly is available at: <https://cpce-assembly.eu>

Council of Europe and European Union



Council of Europe: “Better Education for Better Democracies”

This is the motto of education activities of the Council of Europe for 2018/2019. The issues are introduced in a colourful brochure (<https://rm.coe.int/prems-051418-gbr-2008-brochure-education-21x21-bat-web/16808b39cb>). The following themes and issues are presented:

- Competences for Life in Democracy
- Inclusive Approaches in Education
- Campaign “Free to speak, safe to learn: Democratic schools for all”
- Ethics and Integrity in Education.

Furthermore, you find information about the Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE) and pieces of information about specific projects and campaign’s websites.

EU: Programme guide for ERASMUS+ 2019 published

The European Commission published its 2019 call for proposals and the programme guide for the ERASMUS+ programme. ERASMUS+ is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. Its aim is to strengthen institutions as well as individuals active in different fields of education.

Also in 2019 it will be possible to apply for grants for exchanges, internships, hospitality or the participation in seminars and courses in other European countries (mobility projects). This is directed towards young people, volunteers as well as professionals in different education fields and administrative staff.

In 2019 the total budget of Erasmus+ is about 2,7 billion Euro.

Council of Europe: New education campaign has started

The Council of Europe has launched a new education campaign in November 2018 in Oslo. "Free to Speak, Safe to Learn – Democratic Schools for All". The aim of the campaign is to provide safe spaces at schools, where controversial themes and issues can be discussed openly and freely. The intention is to prevent violent extremism. The campaign, launched at the 10th anniversary of the European Wergeland Centre in Oslo, is planned for four years and includes six campaign themes: addressing controversial issues, making children's and students' voices heard, preventing violence and bullying, dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news, improving wellbeing at school, tackling discrimination. More information is available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn> (in English and French).

Legal Notice

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