



**International Association  
for  
Christian Education**



**Intereuropean Commission on  
Church and School**

# newsletter

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**December 2013, No. 4**

## **Editorial**

We have already mentioned the importance of the coming elections to the European Parliament (May 2014) in the last issue of the Newsletter, and the public debate about programmes and candidates is still not very obvious. The exception to this, however, is right-wing parties and anti-European movements who have started to collaborate and have already launched an election campaign. It would be fatal if the parliament who has gained so many rights in the context of the European integration would become a strong national oriented parliamentary group with their demands against Europe and against migration. This situation has to be dealt with in educational initiatives.

In his State of the Union speech at the European Parliament on September 11 the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso has warned rightly against seeing Europe primarily as an economic project. The basis of Europe is built on common values. Also, churches have started activities to advocate a democratic, just, social and participative Europe. We do not need to fall back into national daydreams of sovereignty but rather we need continued efforts towards making a common Europe, based on solidarity, tolerance, and respect.

Educational projects presented in this Newsletter are crucial in this context. A democratic Europe needs active citizens who want to actively participate and advocate common values. We need also responsible educators in school and adult education. We need a more intense dialogue and exchange between religious and secular perspectives. IV and ICCS want to take part in such initiatives and promote the belief in making the case for Europe because it is about us.

We wish all readers at the end of a very busy year a period of leisure  
and good perspectives for 2014.

Dr Tania ap Sîon and Dr Peter Schreiner (ICCS)  
Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer and Dr Wim Kuiper (IV)

## Information from IV and ICCS

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### IV: Board meetings 13/14 June 2013 (Soesterberg) and 19/20 September 2013 (Hannover)

At each board meeting items discussed are the finances of the association, communication with member organisations, contacts with potential new members, evaluation and planning of events and seminars, further development of current projects, and reports about events of organisations in partnership, where board members have attended.

The meeting in June was dedicated to the preparation of the CoGREE conference in November, held at the same time as the General Assembly. The involvement of Dr Peter Schreiner (ICCS) was important for this event and also for other projects run in collaboration with ICCS. Another guest at the board was Dr Izabela Gáal, representing the Hungarian Reformed Teacher Association and involved in the preparation of the General Assembly in 2014.

The increasing involvement of the association in the project "500 Protestant Schools Worldwide Celebrate 500 Years of Reformation" includes the application for and management of funds, which is an extensive undertaking. The board is responsible for careful and transparent budget management. Furthermore, there are new contacts of the association that extend beyond the existing area of concern, such as the United Kingdom and African countries. The meeting in September was enriched by the attendance of the Director of the education department of the office of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Mrs Sendler Koschel. The board commissioned the secretary to coordinate the project on behalf of IV and authorized him for that role.

### IV: General Assembly on 21/22 November in Soesterberg (the Netherlands)

The conference hotel "Kontakt der Kontinenten", once built for a missionary order, was the venue for the General Assembly in 2013. Several parts of the programme were also part of the CoGREE "Religion in schools in secular Europe?" (see separate report).

As host, the president of IV, Dr Wim Kuiper welcomed the participants and spoke also on behalf of the Besturenraad, where he is the Chair. After a festive dinner, the delegates and guests received a presentation about the education system and the outstanding role of Christian schools in the Netherlands.

The morning programme was dedicated to the main theme, "Religion and pastoral care in schools", which was also the topic last year. Pastoral care workers from the centre for vocational training at Alfa College were invited to run a workshop on "Pastoral Care in Schools" and they also presented an exhibition on the theme. Following that Prof James Kennedy (University of Amsterdam) delivered a keynote on "The role of religion in the public sphere and Christian education – trends and challenges."

In the statutory part of the General Assembly, delegates adopted the budget and the reports of the board. They agreed to a change in the constitution about the periods of office for board members, and confirmed Bertrand Knobel as treasurer and Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer as secretary for a term of another four years.

## IV: Planned activities in 2014

### *IV-General Assembly 2014*

The two Hungarian member organisations of IV, the Reformed Teacher Association (ORTE) and the teacher section of the Martin-Luther-Bund (MLST), will play host to the General Assembly in 2014. The meeting will be held in the traditional “school town“ of Pápa, in the west of Hungary, where a church education centre exists that includes education departments of both confessions. The date of the General Assembly will be in November.

## ICCS: Planned activities in 2014

### *Meeting of ICCS Correspondents*

ICCS invites its network of national correspondents for a consultation on 28 to 30 of April 2014 in Klingenthal near Strasbourg. The aim of the meeting is to work out and confirm issues in the field of church and school that are under discussion in the various national contexts and also to identify common issues for ICCS activities for the next few years. This includes a possible revision of methods of cooperation among correspondents and the board. As preparation for the consultation, the correspondents were asked to fill in a questionnaire for a more systematic analysis of the situation. ICCS has a network of about 40 correspondents in European countries.

### *Klingenthal Colloquy*

The Sixth Klingenthal Colloquy of ICCS and CoGREE will take place from 6 to 10 October 2014. Current developments in the field of education and intercultural dialogue at the Council of Europe will be discussed as well as national developments in religion and education. The detailed programme will be available in spring 2014, but pre-booking is possible via [iccs@comenius.de](mailto:iccs@comenius.de)

## Teacher in-service training in the Lebanon

An in-service-training course for Lebanese and Syrian religious education teachers of the rum-orthodox church took place in the first week of September in Balamand/Lebanon. The hosting organisation, the theological faculty of the University of Balamand, welcomed 30 participants, including teachers and priests (due to the difficult political situation just a few participants could come from Damascus). Alongside Bishop Ghattas Hazim, the abbot of the monastery of Balamand, representatives of different faculties took responsibility for the seminar: Abouna Bassam Nassif (theology), Nayla Nahas (psychology) and Imad Rubeiz (education). The only Protestant lecturer at the meeting was Petra Hilger (Pedagogical-theological institute PTI in Marburg/Germany), who presented specific teaching examples and worked with participants. The theme was the “theophany“, the baptism of Jesus.

After the morning prayer, a speaker from the Lebanese context introduced the chosen age group for the day. In a second step the consequences of that were discussed for teaching and this led then to practical examples in the classroom. The afternoon was dedicated to workshops (theatre, making video clips, and work with pictures/texts related to theophany etc.) All participants were actively involved and used new methods in a constructive way.

The Protestant Church of Kurhessen-Waldeck maintains an official partnership with the “Rum-Orthodox Patriarchate of Antiochia and All the East“. The church is based on the antiochian tradition (see Acts 11:26) and is directly linked to the apostles Peter and Paul. The context of this partnership and the positive mutual experiences have encouraged the invitation to the di-

rector of studies to join the conference in the Lebanon. (Petra Hilger, lecturer, Pedagogical-Theological Institute PTI Marburg)

### IV & ICCS: Project: 500 Protestant Schools Worldwide Celebrate 500 Years of Reformation (2012-2017)



A project was initiated by the department for education of the office of the Evangelical Church in Germany and the faculty of education of Bamberg university (Prof Scheunpflug) to promote worldwide networking of Protestant schools. The reason given was the 500 Years Jubilee of Reformation that should encourage schools to work on issues of reformation and to facilitate various activities.

Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer, secretary of IV and Dr Peter Schreiner on behalf of ICCS and the Comenius-Institute are members of the steering group. A website ([www.schools500reformation.net](http://www.schools500reformation.net)) supports connecting activities of participating schools and enables exchange about activities, events and material. By the middle of December 2013 more than 50 schools and supporting organisations have already registered. The theme of the year 2014 is: "Rediscover roots in Reformation worldwide."

### IV: AEED-Assembly of delegates from 8 to 10 November 2013 in Mainz

"Protestant religion in the Southwest": this was the headline of a report of superior church councilor Thomas Niederberger at the beginning of the conference of the Association of Protestant Teachers and Educators (AEED) about Protestant religious education (RE) in the Palatinate and of the Saarland. He mentioned big differences between rural areas and cities, although the situation of religious socialization is stable according to Niederberger. Also solid, but at a different level, is the situation of RE in Saxonia according to a report of the AEED Commission for RE. About 1/3 of all young people attend RE, but 50% of them are not members of a church. This fact does not need a different set of methodologies, according to the observations of the Commission.

Another issue of the conference was youth protection in media. Thomas Salzmann, working at the Federal Review Board for Media Harmful to Minors, delivered a report. As guests, the Director of the Comenius-Institut, Volker Eisenbast and the secretary of IV, Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer gave reports about the work of their institutions.

### IV: ORTE-Conference in Nagvárad/Oradea (Romania), 13–15 September 2013

The Hungarian Reformed teacher Association (ORTE) held its annual meeting in Transylvania, a region with a high percentage of Hungarians in the population. It was hosted by the Christian University of Partium in Grosswardein/Nagyvárad/Oradea that is founded by the Reformed Church. One of the aims of the conference was to learn about the attractive town and the traditional Hungarian villages along the river of Ért(er) with its old churches and its special civilization. Presentations of the work of different youth organisations in schools and parishes of the Hungarian-reformed tradition on both sides of the border shaped the pedagogical part of the meeting. The main theme concerning school politics was the introduction of a chamber system, obligatory for state teachers in Hungary. ORTE will act as the representative of teachers at

church schools – following the wish of the Reformed Church – side by side with this new system. Dr. Bálint Korsós (Debrecen) was elected as president.

IV-secretary thanked for the invitation and underlined in his words of greetings the need for European collaboration, especially in a situation shaped by so many critical voices.

#### **IV: Seminar of the European Association for Education and Science (EBB)**

The 14th European teacher seminar of the European Association for Education and Science (EBB) took place in October at the general secondary school in Ortenburg (Germany). On behalf of IV board member, Rita Révész attended. The theme was: Europe at its borders? Perspectives and Crisis – Consequences for education. It was a colourful international group that came together, including participants from Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Germany, and Luxembourg. Key lectures on the first two days introduced the crisis of Europe, such as migration, increasing financial and cultural differences, and the “fortress” Europe with a view to Lampedusa. Two examples of practice documented sustainable perspectives. The first example was the ELICIT-Project (European Literacy and Citizenship Education) for head teachers and teachers, aimed at promoting an awareness of belonging, based on a common European culture and collective values. As a second example, the cooperation between a Danish and a German school was presented. The last day included a presentation of the 110 year-old gymnasium (former German k. u. k. state gymnasium) in Budweis (České Budějovice) and the evaluation of the conference. (Rita Révész)

## **CoGREE and member organisations**

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### **New Secretary of CoGREE and meeting of the CoGREE steering group**

The steering group of CoGREE met in June in Soesterberg, the Netherlands. They warmly welcomed Lesley Prior as new CoGREE secretary. Lesley Prior is an experienced RE teacher and teacher trainer, with a particular commitment to developing the subject in different European settings. She has been a part-time Senior Lecturer in RE at the University of Roehampton since 2009 after nine years at The Institute of Education, University of London. She also worked as RE Adviser to schools in the London Borough of Hounslow from 1992 to 2010 and continues to support the subject in a variety of other contexts across London and beyond. In the UK, Lesley is a member of the Shap Working Party on Religions in Education and Chair of the National Association of Standing Advisory Councils on RE (NASACRE). She represents England on both the Executive and the Board of The European Forum of Teachers of RE (EFTRE) and became Chair in of EFTRE 2013. The steering group is pleased that they have again a professional CoGREE secretary after Elza Kuyk has left this position. The main point of the meeting was the preparation of the November conference.

### **CoGREE Conference on “Religion in School in secular Europe?”**

The conference "Religion in schools in secular Europe? Perspectives from research, politics and practice" of the Coordinating Group for Religion in Education in Europe (CoGREE) took place from 20 to 22 November 2013 in Soesterberg, the Netherlands. It was organized in coop-

eration with the Besturenraad, the organisation for Christian schools in the Netherlands, the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Amsterdam and Groningen, as well as the theological faculty of the Free University Amsterdam. Key lectures were given by Professor Ben Vermeulen, member of the Council of State in the Netherlands who spoke about legal frameworks for religion in schools and by Dr Rebecca Nye who spoke about a research project in an English primary school on RE and spiritual development. From the ICCS board Kaarina Lyhykainen offered a workshop on “Orthodox Religious Education in European countries” and on the Lautsi-case at the European Court of Human Rights (together with Ben Vermeulen) and Dr Peter Schreiner offered a workshop on “Religion in the Context of a Europeanisation of Education”. Other workshops were organised on pilgrim schools (Dr Hans Hisch and Guido de Bruin), on rituals in schools (Dr Harmjan Dam), and on religious education in Poland (Prof Elzbieta Osewska), about the method “Godly Play” (Dr Rebecca Nye) and on the school’s responsibility for the spiritual formation of the child (Jos de Kock and Toke Elshof). The final part of the programme included a lecture by Professor James Kennedy, on “The role of religion in the public sphere and Christian education – trends and challenges.” Lectures and reports are available at [www.cogree.com](http://www.cogree.com).

### **EFTRE: Conference in Malmö**

In August the European conference of the European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education in Europe (EFTRE) took place. The theme was: “Religions and Relationships – Dealing with Diversity.” More than 70 participants gathered in Malmö, Sweden. Contributions and information about the conference are available at [www.eftre.org](http://www.eftre.org). EFTRE consists of RE teacher associations and teacher training institutes from all over Europe.

### **EuFRES: Conference 2014**

The European Forum for Religious Education in Schools (EuFRES), a network of Catholic experts in RE, will hold their next conference from 23 to 27 April 2014 in Prague (Czech Republic). The conference will deal with the theme: “Departure on the Periphery of Christianity. Religious Education as an Invitation.” The Coordinating Group for Religion in Education in Europe (CoGREE), of which EuFRES is a member as well as ICCS and IV, will be represented by a member of the steering group, as always, to underline the fact of ‘belonging’ beyond confessional limitations.

### **KAICIID Forum “Image of the Other” in Vienna**

The King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, in short KAICIID, was founded in 2011 and named after the founder, the King and prime minister of Saudi Arabia, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques of Islam, Makkah and Medina. The governments of Austria and Spain also signed the agreement for the establishment of the centre, and the Holy See supports the agreement. After a series of regional conferences and meetings that were attended by representatives of religions, NGOs and governments in different regions of the world to work out contributions for interreligious and intercultural dialogue and understanding, the centre organised a global forum on “The Image of the Other. Interreligious and Intercultural Education.” It took place on 18 and 19 November in Vienna. Dr Wim Kuiper, on behalf of IV, and Dr Peter Schreiner, on behalf of ICCS, participated. Contributions and results of this remarkable event are available at [www.kaiciid.org](http://www.kaiciid.org). For IV and ICCS this was an excellent opportunity to make or to renew contacts and to contribute their perspective on

interreligious and intercultural learning in the European context. In particular, the so-called “dialogue experiment” part of the programme provided space and time for a vivid exchange, for example, about the relationship between civic education and religious education in different regions of the world.

### **Réseau International de l'Enseignement protestant (RIEP)**

After several meetings of those responsible for Protestant schools in the French speaking world (organised by Défap – Service protestant de mission) the collaboration has achieved a new distinction. The different francophone school associations from Europe, Africa, Madagascar, Oceania and the Caribbean have come together to form an international network for Protestant education (Réseau International de l'Enseignement Protestant, in short RIEP). During 2014 the structures shall be consolidated and further developed so that from 2015 common educational projects can be organised on the basis of attracting funding.

Board members of IV have regularly attended activities of Défap – also through presentations. Défap was represented at the international conference of the project on reformation. The board of IV shares the wish of an ongoing collaboration with the new network.



## **Conference of European Churches (CEC) and Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)**

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### **KEK: General Assembly und follow up**

The adoption of a new constitution was the main purpose of the 14th General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches held from 3 to 8 July 2013 in Budapest. After long and complicated discussions, the delegates adopted a new constitution. An evaluation of results is part of a report written by Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer and Dr Peter Schreiner, who represented IV and ICCS at this conference, which is available at:

[http://www.cimuenster.de/themen/Evangelische-Bildungsverantwortung-in-Europa/Vollversammlung\\_Konferenz\\_Europaeischer\\_Kirchen2013.php?bl=849](http://www.cimuenster.de/themen/Evangelische-Bildungsverantwortung-in-Europa/Vollversammlung_Konferenz_Europaeischer_Kirchen2013.php?bl=849)

The location of the headquarters will move from Geneva to Brussels, the office in Strasbourg will remain, especially to continue the contacts with the Council of Europe. Former associated organisations such as IV and ICCS will become “Organisations in Partnership” with CEC. The new Governing Board will work out and propose rights and obligations of Organisations in Partnership. The future relationship of the new CEC structure with the Church and Society Commission (CSC) and the Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) will be negotiated by a mandated group until the end of 2014. By the end of 2015 the transformation process should be completed. It is not clear how the work with issues will be structured in the new CEC.

### **CEC/CSC: Working group “education“ proposes project for the European Parliament elections**

The working group “Education“ of CEC has held its first meeting after the General Assembly in November 2013 in Strasbourg. The mandate of the group is extended until the end of the transformation process. A central topic at the meeting was the preparation of a project linked to the coming European Parliament elections in May 2014. Under the motto “Imagine Your Europe“, eight crucial demands for further European integration will be published, each accompanied by a related quote from the Bible. This project supplements the leaflet as well as an ecumenical guide of CEC that will be published in collaboration with other ecumenical organisations in Brussels. The aim of the project is to raise awareness inside and outside the member churches of CEC about the crucial importance of the coming elections.

### **CPCE: Preparation of a project on education**

The expert group, mandated by the Council of CPCE, came together at the end of November to prepare the adopted project on education and Europe. Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer, on behalf of IV, and Dr Peter Schreiner, on behalf of ICCS, attended. It was agreed that a programme would be prepared with the title, “The Contribution of education from a Protestant perspective for the development of a European civil society“ for the established “Forum Education“ of CPCE that will take place from 27 to 29 October 2014 at the Protestant Academy of Tutzing. The working title for the planned conference is: “It’s about Europe – It’s about Education. Contributions of Protestant Churches for a European Civil Society.“ The focus of the working plan is the issue how human beings can contribute to shaping a European Civil Society and how education from a Protestant perspective can support and enable them for this purpose. After a next meeting planned for February 2014, an invitation and programme will be distributed.

### **CEC/CSC: Churches’ Voice on Human Rights, Training on Social, Economic and Cultural rights In the Euro-Mediterranean Region, Palermo 30 Oct to 1 Nov 2013**

When the Church and Society Commission of CEC offered training on Human Rights (HR) in the Euro-Mediterranean region experts and participants from all over Europe and Africa met in Palermo, Sicily, from 30 Oct to 1 Nov 2013 to discuss the question of HR mainly in the context of the Lampedusa tragedy and the situation of undocumented migrants. Attention was also focused on the situation of Protestant churches in Spain suffering from unjust treatment, as representatives put it, and on the situation in Greece where people encounter the rule of the Troika as violations of their HR. An additional aspect was contributed by representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church drawing attention to the often desolate situation of handicapped people.

Participants learnt that a huge range of HR instruments has been established by international organisations and that there are various ways to approach complaint mechanisms if HR are violated. In this context churches were asked to make more use of the complaint mechanisms in the interest of people suffering violation of their rights. The message was that this can be a promising and rewarding engagement of churches in the modern world. Of course, HR questions are an apt means of educational endeavours to lead young people into taking responsibility for our future world and at the same time to make them experience their churches as a stronghold for a better world.

A highly rewarding Human Rights Manual for Churches was edited by Mag. Elizabeta Kitanovic and was published by the Church and Society Commission of CEC in July 2012 under the title



“European churches engaging in human rights – Present challenges and training material” (ISBN No. 2-88070-131-7). It's worth reading also for educational staff in schools and elsewhere. (Michael Otte)

## Council of Europe and European Union

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### EU: Erasmus+ Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sports adopted

The European Commission welcomes the Council's adoption of Erasmus+, the EU's new programme for education, training, youth and sport, with a budget of €14.7 billion over the next seven years – 40% higher than current levels. The Council adoption follows the European Parliament's overwhelming vote in favour of the new programme on 19 November and fully endorses the text voted by it.

Erasmus+ is aimed at three main targets: Two-thirds of the budget is dedicated to mobility of individuals, inside the EU and also in other regions; the remaining sum serves projects of cooperation and exchange of good practice of educational institutions, youth organisations, companies, local and regional public authorities as well as NGOs and for promoting support for policy reforms for modernisation of education and training, entrepreneurship and employability.

The new Erasmus+ programme includes now all existing programmes in the field of education and training, Youth and Sport, among them the Lifelong Learning Programme (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig), the Youth in Action Programme and five international programmes of cooperation (Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and Programmes of cooperation with industrialized countries in the field of higher education. Applicants will find it more transparent to see the range of options and also the modalities of making an application.

The Programme Guide (264 pages) with guidelines for the single programmes as part of Erasmus+ is published and online available at: [https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3501/erasmus-plus-programme-guide\\_en.pdf](https://www.jugendfuereuropa.de/downloads/4-20-3501/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf)

or at [http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20131212\\_de.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/20131212_de.htm). German and other translations of the Guide are expected for February 2014. The first deadline for applications is 17 March 2014.

### Council of Europe: EWC Statement on democracy and diversity

The European Wergeland Centre in Oslo, a common project of the Norwegian government and the Council of Europe works under the motto: “Promoting education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural understanding“. One of the instruments of the website is the so called “EWC Statement series“. The aim is to highlight recent and ongoing research activities. Scholars and other education professionals are invited to publish their views on current research topics and scholarly debates.

In October a statement by Professor Audrey Osler was published with the title: “Democracy and diversity in schools: recognising political realities and re-imagining the nation“. The text is available at:

<http://www.theewc.org/statement/democracy.and.diversity.in.schools.recognising.political.realities.and.re.imagining.the.nation>

## Council of Europe: No Hate Speech Movement Campaign

The Campaign is part of the project: “Young People Combating Hate Speech Online”, running between 2012 and 2014. The project stands for equality, dignity, human rights and diversity. It is a project against hate speech, racism and discrimination in their online expression.



The working methods are awareness raising, advocacy, and it also seeks creative solutions. It is a project for action and intervention. The project equips young people and youth organisations with the competences necessary to recognise and act against such human rights violations.

The whole project is a tribute to youth participation and co-management. It was born from a proposal of the youth representatives of the Advisory Council on Youth and was endorsed by the joint Council on

Youth, which brings together the members of the Advisory Council on Youth and the government youth representatives of the European Steering Committee on Youth. More information about the project is available at the website of the project:

[www.nohatespeechmovement.org](http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org).

### Colofon

This Newsletter is edited under the responsibility of the Board of the Intereuropean Commission on Church and School and the Board of the International Association for Christian Education.

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