

Oikosnet Europe



To

- Oikosnet Members,
- Participants of Previous Annual Conferences,
- Invited Guests

**Invitation to the Oikosnet Europe Annual Conference 2018
in the Orthodox Academy of Crete**

Sigtuna/Kolympari, May, 2018

Dear Members and Friends of Oikosnet Europe,

On behalf of the Board of Oikosnet Europe and on behalf of the Orthodox Academy of Crete it is our pleasure to invite you to the next Annual Conference (AC) of Oikosnet Europe (OE). The AC is scheduled to take place

**from 5 to 9 September 2018
in the Orthodox Academy of Crete
73006 Kolympari/Chania**

Its main theme will be:

Europe with different eyes: The case of Greece for example

The AC will begin at 19h00 on the 5th with an opening worship to be followed by a festive dinner at the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Academy. The AC will end with breakfast and departures on 9 September. Please plan your travels accordingly in order not to miss the festive dinner to which some eminent people from around the Academy are invited.

The Orthodox Academy of Crete (OAC) is beautifully located at the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, next to the Gonia-Monastery. As beautiful and as significant this place is today, it was also the venue of serious and enormous atrocities during World War II. No wonder, therefore, that the OAC was established as an institution for peace and reconciliation. This is one of its key issues until today. Being located at a crossroad between many different cultures, the OAC is known for fostering dialogue between people of different cultures and different walks of life. Consultations in the Arab-European Dialogue, for instance, were often hosted in the OAC. In addition, the OAC has a long-standing record of addressing environmental issues and interpreting the Orthodox faith to people of other confessions and religions or to people of other life stances. The OAC is well-rooted in the life of Crete and its people. Earlier initiatives of the Academy for the people of Crete have already become legendary. Today many school pupils and students visit the Academy for educational courses. While

we are there, we should not miss to visit the icon painting workshop. – In short: there is much to discover at the OAC as an inspiration for our own work!

Besides the study day and an excursion under the main theme, we will also engage in some important business issues related to the future of our network. Among other issues will have to elect a new Vice-President and/or new Board members. In the last AC's, many Oikosnet members attended and profited from the networking. We will continue this process in the AC 2018 and will reflect on appropriate methods for networking and sharing among Oikosnet members.

Europe with different eyes: The Board of Oikosnet Europe released in March 2017 a public statement on the Future of Europe called "For a Europe in Conviviality – A Europe of and for the people – Just and Participatory". Europe was and is in focus. Many of our members deal with the European question. As a European association, we are affected by related developments and it is our responsibility to contribute to constructive responses through our expertise and with other civil society actors. If we put the issue of Europe to the forefront, then we want Oikosnet to be more focused on specific themes, more thematic and topics treated over several years. We are interested in how our members deal with the European issue, and we want to connect the different perspectives and initiatives. We are pursuing the following objectives that we can discuss at our annual meeting in Greece: to strengthen the European dimension; qualification and profiling of members on the topic of Europe; contribute to the networking of members with each other and with other social actors; from own expertise contribute to current discourses and initiate discourses together with other actors.

Some practical information:

- Registration

The registration for the AC is done online through our website www.oikosnet.eu. Please contact the secretariat of OE if you have any questions about your registration: office@oikosnet.eu [Sigtuna to check data]

Deadline for registration is **22 August, 2018**, but if possible, please, register earlier.

- Travel Instructions

The closest airports to the venue is Chania. From there it takes almost an hour to get to the Academy, including luggage claim etc. Please, plan your arrival times in order to arrive at the Academy in due time for the opening worship and the festive banquet. As September is still counted as holiday season, you might well want to look for Charter Flights to Chania. We will provide you in due time with further travel instructions. Your travel agent might also offer you Heraklion as a flight destination. But expect a much longer time for travel to the Academy and a price well above 50 Euro for a taxi.

- Conference Language

The conference language for all events will be English only. Some consecutive translation on a voluntary basis might be possible, but a sufficient knowledge of English (active and passive) is required, at least desired.

- Costs

The conference fee remains at the level of previous years: **350€** for the AC (Board, Lodging, Conference Fee, Excursion). Participants are expected to cover their own travel costs. According to our agreed policy and given the difficult financial situation of some of our members, we want to state that the lack of resources should, however, not be an obstacle for members to attend the AC. There is a limited budget for supporting members in need of financial support to attend the AC, which will be distributed, in principle, on a "first come –

first served” basis. If you are in need of support, please contact our Treasurer Mrs. Nicola Murray at nicolamurray@corrymeela.org or our President at walter.luessi@zh.ref.ch . This also applies to guests.

- Agenda

If you have any issues, projects etc. which you want to discuss at the AC or if you have any special contribution to make, please get in touch with Executive Secretary Rüdiger Noll (noll@evangelische-akademien.de).

In any case, we will provide you with further documents and practical details in due time before the meeting.

- Proxies

In case that an Oikosnet member will not be able to attend the AC 2018 (we hope this to be a most unlikely scenario), we would still like to hear from you. And do not forget to transfer your voting rights to another Oikosnet member. A form sheet to nominate proxies will be available from the Oikosnet Secretary (noll@evangelische-akademien.de).

We are very much looking forward to welcoming you at the AC 2018 in Flehingen. In case you have any further questions, please, do not hesitate to contact us. For the time being, we remain

With every good wish,

Walter Lüssi
Oikosnet Europe
President

Dr Konstantinos Zormpas
Orthodox Academy of Crete
Director