
ATTENTION! NEW ADDRESS!

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**Annual Report for the period September 2009 to August 2010 for the 55th Annual Conference of Oikosnet Europe from September 8th to 12th, 2010
at the Seurakuntaopisto/Church Training College in Järvenpää/Finland**

1. Looking back: The Annual Conference 2009

From September 9th to 12th, 2009 about 40 participants from 16 countries gathered at the **Inter-Orthodox Centre of the Church of Greece** in Pendéli near Athens for the 54th Annual Conference of Oikosnet Europe. Important issues and highlights of the conference were discussions about the situation in the centres and countries represented at the conference, as well as visiting groups in Athens and a brief meeting with the Archbishop.

2. Board meeting in Loccum from January 28th to 30th, 2009

The board met from January 22nd to 25th, 2010 at the **Seurakuntaopisto/Church Training College** in Järvenpää/Finland, the venue of the Annual Conference 2010 and a longstanding member of Oikosnet Europe. The minutes of the meeting are available on the IntraNet web pages under:

<http://oikosneteurope.sharepointhosting.ch/ac-2010/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Unexpectedly, our **President** Laszlo Kallay moved to the United States with his American wife and started a new job there. This did have an impact on the work of the board in the past year.

3. Members

At the Annual Conference 2009 we welcomed **Lux Mundi** (Spain/Catholic) and the **Suprasl Academy** (Poland/Orthodox) as new members.

Unfortunately, our French member centre **Le CART/Sommières** and our Hungarian member centre **Tahi** chose to leave the association, both because of a changed profile and focus of activities.

We have some centres on our list as interested in becoming a member (**Cyprus, Hungary, UK**), but they will not yet be present at the 2010 conference.

4. Contacts with member centres

In preparation for the board meeting, the General Secretary met with the President in **Budapest** from November 24th to 26th, 2009.

From October 9th to 11th, 2009 (30 Years of Plädoyer für eine Ökumenische Entwicklung) and from December 11th to 13th (Conference on the occasion of the retirement of Fritz Erich Anhelm) the General Secretary visited the academy in **Loccum**.

The **Swiss association (OEVTS)** held its annual gathering on March 9th to 10th, 2010 at Hof de Planis (Stels). The General Secretary attended this meeting, as in previous years, a good opportunity to learn about the challenges that our member centres are facing and to bring experience from other centres to their deliberations.

On June 28th, the General Secretary visited the **Mission Academy** in Hamburg for a discussion with the director and staff about their participation in the association.

5. Finance & Funding

The year 2009 closed with a **deficit of about 9.200 Euros**. The report of the Treasurer will explain the situation in greater detail.

In the beginning of 2010, Oikosnet learned that its main funder, the Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (**EED/Bonn**) cancelled completely its grant for 2010, and announced that this was the end of their funding for Oikosnet. Out of this grant (total application for Oikosnet globally was 230.000 Euros), Oikosnet Europe would have got about 22.000 Euros. Logically, it fell onto Oikosnet Europe (the General Secretary and Treasurer) to organise a lobby campaign for continued funding, albeit so far without measureable success. Fortunately, **EKD** kept its promise to double their grant from 10 to 20.000 Euros, but due to the effects of the financial crisis they took back their promise to raise it further in 2011. It will remain on the level of 2010.

First steps for implementing the **funding strategy** outlined by the board were taken in 2010. A more detailed report will be given at the conference.

6. Office

On February 1st, 2010 **the office moved**, as the General Secretary moved house in Solingen. Due to the critical development of the funding situation, the position of the **assistant** was kept vacant during the report period, which limited the scope of activities.

7. Contacts with churches

The General Secretary routinely took part in the meetings of the Eastern Europe and the ecumenical officers of the Protestant churches in Germany and the **EKD** on December 12th, 2008, April 27th to 28th, 2010, and May 19th to 20th, 2010 in Hannover.

8. Common programming and Visiting Communities

As a follow-up of the Jerusalem trip in 2009, the **Sigtuna Foundation** (Sweden) and the **Evangelische Akademie der Pfalz** (Germany) jointly organised a second trip to Israel/Palestine, titled "**Retreats in Space and Time**" from March 13th to 21st, 2010. An important focus was exploring the UN-sponsored project "Abraham Path". A report (by Georg Wenz, in German) is available on the conference web pages).

The **Women's Network**, together with other organisations, jointly organised a forum on the 2nd Ecumenical Kirchentag in Munich from May 12th to 16th, 2009 under the title "**Grenzgängerinnen – Women Crossing Borders**", which found much interest.

Prior to the Annual Conference 2010, the Women's Network will hold its **pre-conference** in Järvenpää, dealing with the impact of 20 years of female pastors in the Finnish Lutheran Church, work with the Roma minority and the work of the Järvenpää centre with families with disabilities.

Following the Egyptian-German-Dialogue from 2003 to 2009 the **Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services** is now developing an **Arab-European-Dialogue-Project** including countries like Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Tunisia as well as Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, Swiss, Great Britain and Sweden (Coordinator: Fritz Erich Anhelm). A first meeting at the **Orthodox Academy of Crete** from Feb. 21 to 25 (in which also the **Sigtuna Foundation** took part) showed the potential, which can be mobilized to carry out the idea to look at the processes of modernisation and transformation in Arabic and European societies and ask how they can be organized in a peaceful way. What does that mean for education, for media and other fields of common concern? Which role have organisations in civil society to play and what should be the contribution of religions? Meanwhile a small group also has met representatives from EU and CEC to find out about possible funding resources (May 7 to 9). An application will be worked out. The first conference is planned late spring 2011 at Crete. Danmission will help to make it possible. Member centres of Oikosnet Europe are invited to take part in the process and the conferences planned. Coordinating partner on the European side will be the Association of Protestant Academies in Germany. Nov. 8 to 10 a meeting of CEOSS and EAD in Berlin is planned to work out this cooperation and to prepare a first draft for an EU-Application. A more detailed project outline is available on the conference web pages.

A Visiting Community "**Italia – A Waldensian Perspective**" (March 17th to 21st, 2010), offered by **Casa Cares**, did not find enough participants to take place.

For 2011 and 2012, the **Sigtuna Foundation** proposes a common project in the field of religion, media, and culture under the title "**Religion and modernity in Europe: A civil society response to the mediatization of religion and its implications for the development of a modern, pluralistic and democratic European Union**". A draft project description is available on the conference web pages.

9. Oikosnet

Oikosnet activities were – as in the past years – also a prominent part in the reporting period, again featuring both very encouraging and very problematic experiences.

From November 8th to 20th, 2009 a global **Course for Leadership in Lay Training** (CLLT) under the theme “**Other Worlds Are Possible**” took place in Bangkok and Pattaya/Thailand. The course included a full DPC facilitator training of five days (trained by Jaap van der Sar and trainers from the Philippines and Northern Ireland), a three day training in scenario development, a three day training in advanced electronic communication tools (both trained by Wolfgang Lenz), as well as group visits to various local projects and initiatives. The group of about twenty people came from Africa, Asia, North America, and the Middle East. Unfortunately the only European participant (from Romania) had to cancel due to unforeseen developments back home. A report by an Africa colleague is available on the conference web pages.

Due to the financial crisis regarding EED funding, the Oikos board ad hoc changed plans for its **board meeting** from Buenos Aires to Munich, and meet during the days before the Kirchentag (May 10th to 12th, 2010). Taking part in the Kirchentag afterwards was a fascinating experience for the Oikosnet colleagues from abroad and a welcome opportunity for meeting many people and lobbying for Oikosnet. The Kirchentag supported the logistics of the meeting in a very effective and generous way.

From September 14th to 18th, 2010 the **Executive of the global Oikosnet board** will meet in Solingen/Germany and have a meeting with EED representatives as well as leading staff of the Rhineland church.

10. Dialogue for Peaceful Change project (DPC)

In the report period, **10 official trainings** took place in Thailand, Israel, Northern Ireland, England, Canada, Netherlands, and the USA. Financial limitations made it difficult to organize trainings in Africa - although the need is expressed. The same applies to e.g. Pakistan. In the USA, the cooperation with the Youth Intervention Network (YIN) in Antioch/CA received an important **award from the Department of Justice** (July 2010). As a consequence quite some new requests for cooperation as well as for trainings appeared. One High School (Antioch) adopted the YIN-model as the approach for gang violence and its prevention. In this model, DPC is integrated with the vision of HPC (High Performing Community). Staff, leadership, and teachers buy into this approach. We have a waiting list for the training there. Globally, we now have more than 550 DPC facilitators trained.

General funding for the project will be a challenge - especially for overhead aspects. In fact, the challenge is whether we can work completely with a 'for-profit-approach'. Hopefully, we can avoid it. A more detailed report will be given by the project coordinator, Jaap van der Sar, at the Annual Conference in Finland.

11. Church & Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches (CEC)

From May 28th to 31st, 2010 the Church & Society Commission of CEC (CSC-CEC) met in **Hague-nau/France** near Strasbourg. The General Secretary took part in this meeting, which always is an excellent opportunity to be in contact with those representatives of church from all over Europe who are responsible for the church and society field.

The last Annual Report stated: "CEC embarked on a journey towards a new way of working, new structures and new objectives for the future ... So there is an open window for reforming CEC and bringing it up-to-date with the 21st century context it has to function in ... Supporting this process in a constructive way may be a meaningful task for some of our member centres in various countries. Since as a part of this process, the question of different types of membership in CEC will need to be tackled, it is also directly relevant to our association, being an extraordinary member of CEC as well as of CSC-CEC." Along this line, the board encouraged the General Secretary to explore having a **consultation of the associated members of CEC**. They have been contacted, a consultation at the Orthodox Academy of Crete has been suggested, and the difficult process of finding a common date is presently under way.

12. Kirchentag

From May 12th to 16th, the **2nd Ecumenical Kirchentag** took place in Munich. As already mentioned above, the **Women's Network** organised a well-received forum on "Women Crossing Borders".

As already mentioned above, the **global Oikosnet board** met prior to the Kirchentag and then took part in the event.

Traditionally, the General Secretary is a member of the **Standing International Committee** of the German Kirchentag, as well as a number of colleagues from our network who are the national links for the Kirchentag in their respective countries (Anne Tveiteberg for Norway, Waltraut Kovacic for Austria, and Walter Lüssi for Switzerland). The committee met from September 2nd to 4th, 2010 in **Dresden**, the location for the next Protestant Kirchentag in 2011 (June 1st to 5th). The Kirchentag staff has made a number of visits to other countries, which in the cases of Switzerland and Austria resulted in written agreements with national liaison committees, in both of which our colleagues are involved.

Wolfgang Lenz
General Secretary

September 2010

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Note: Additional documents are available on the IntraNet webpage for the Annual Conference. In Järvenpää, we will have the possibility to project documents during the meeting as needed. If you wish to work with paper copies, PLEASE PRINT OUT THE DOCUMENTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE ON PAPER BEFORE COMING TO GREECE.

<http://oikosneteuropa.sharepointhosting.ch/ac-2010/default.aspx>