



Oikosnet Europe
Oikosnet Europe Ideell Förening 802505-2674
General Assembly 2023
Mission 21, Basel, Switzerland
October 6th and 7th, 2023

All Participants at the Basel Event

Members of Oikosnet Europe

Centro Ecumenico Agape
Ecumenical Academy Prague
Ev. Akademie Baden
Ev. Akademie Bad-Boll
Ev. Akademie Frankfurt
Ev. Akademie zu Berlin
Ev. Akademie Wien
Iona Community
Lux Mundi
Monoszlói Erdei Iskola és Inf. Közp.
Norske Kirkeakademier
Orth. Academy of Crete
Plusbidung
Sigtunastiftelsen
St Andrew's Biblical Theol. Sem.
Tecum – Zentr. für Spirit. u. Bildung

Representative(s) (One vote per member)

Adriana Florea/Lucia Leonardo (emerita, board member)
Jiří Silný
Gernot Meier
Monika Appmann
Annegreth Schilling
Heinz-Joachim Lohmann/Hannah Schilling
Anna Smolzer
Catriona Robertson
Gloria Uribe
Arokhati Asuzsanna
Kjell Riise/Frank Grimstad
Antonis Kalogerakis
Nicole Awais/Csongor Kozma/Walter Lüssi
Alf Linderman
Alexei Bodrov
Thomas Bachofner

New Member Accepted during the General Assembly

Arminius Instituut – Remonstrants Goos Minderman

Staff

The Executive Secretary, Rüdiger Noll

Guest from EAD (Evangelische Akademien in Deutschland)

Hanna Lorenzen

Guest from FEECA (Fédération Européenne pour l'Éducation Catholique des Adultes)

Hupert Petrasch

Guests from EAEE (Protestant and Anglican Network for life-long Learning)

Veronika Matějková (President), Heike Witzel, Gabriella Béni, Hege-Irene Fossum, Ragnhild Knotten, Sonja Leirvik, Pavla Rupcová, Harald Skarsaune, Anna Smolzer, Christel Zogning.

Guests attending the Study Day:

Education on the Net – Ethics and the Image of Man, AI and Metaverse

Tünde Basler-Zsebesi, Thorsten Dietz, Rita Famos, Bruno Fluder, Martin Föhn, Katharina Gisin, Cynthia Guinard, Didier Halter, Michael Hartlieb, Regina Hauenstein, Jasmine Hieronymi Suhner, Monika Korba, Andreas Loos, Paula-Jane Martin, Claudia Mohr, Ulli Naefken, Sylvi Nicolai, Manuela Portmann, Saska Richter, Stucki Thomas, Carsten Wolfers.



Minutes of the Business Sessions

1. Opening and Welcome

The President of Oikosnet Europe, Walter Lüssi, welcomed all participants and opened the first part of the Business session.

2. Roll Call, Quorum, Proxies

Walter Lüssi gave the word over to Executive Secretary Rüdiger Noll to present the situation as to the Quorum. Oikosnet Europe has 33 members (34 after item 6 below). According to the Constitution, 1/3 of the members plus one member present in person or via proxy are required to fulfill the quorum, i.e., in total 12 members. The members present at the 2023 General Assembly are listed above. In addition to the members present at the General Assembly, the following members were represented by proxy.

Member Proxies	Vote Transferred to
Ev. Akademie der Pfalz	Gernot Meier
Grodno Educational Institute	Alexei Bodrov
Corrymeela	Catriona Robertson

With 16 members represented in person by a staff member, 17 after agenda item 6 below, and with the 3 proxies mentioned above, the quorum was fulfilled with 19 (20) out of 33 (34) members represented.

3. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

4. Election of the co-signers of the Minutes

Gernot Meier and Gloria Uribe was elected as the co-signers of the Minutes.

5. Adoption of the Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the 2022 General Assembly at Luz Mundi in Malaga were adopted.

6. Elections of New Member(s)

Arminius Institute/Remonstrants has applied to become a member of Oikosnet Europe. Professor Dr. Goos Minderman gave a presentation of this institution including its background and establishment. Arminius Instituut is an independent seminary associated with the Remonstrants. It is housed within the Faculty of Religion and Theology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. There are currently 18 students studying to become ministers. The unanimous decision was to welcome this institution as a member of Oikosnet Europe.

7. Presentation and Discussion of the Annual Report

Walter Lüssi presented the Annual Report by going through it step by step giving everyone an opportunity to comment and to ask questions. There were no comments or remarks as to the Annual Report.



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Walter then asked Alf Linderman to give some additional information regarding the Arab-European Citizens' Dialogue (AECD) project. Alf gave a more in-depth presentation of the project. This covered both the historical background and the present situation. Rüdger Noll, who together with Alf and Katerina Karkala constitute the European planning committee on behalf of Oikosnet Europe, added some complementary information. Some questions were asked, and it was recognized that this project should be addressed in the two-year process that Oikosnet Europe is now entering with the aim of exploring the most promising way forward for the organization (cf. agenda item no. 10 below).

Walter also pointed out that we had the Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DPC) as a separate item on the agenda at our last General Assembly. Since then, two Oikosnet Europe representatives, Lucia Leonardo from Agape and Vilma Luostarinen from Sigtuna, both attended a training program managed by Colin Craig at Corrymeela during the spring of 2023. As a complement to the reports by Vilma, Lucia and Colin included in the Annual Report, Lucia was given the possibility to give a verbal report about this experience.

Based on this presentation of the Annual Report and the additional information, the Annual Report was adopted by the General Assembly.

At this point in the Agenda of the Business Session, Walter also gave the opportunity to Lucia to present the so-called Agape-project which is a collaborative effort established by Centro Ecumenico Agape, Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin, and Ecumenical Academy Prague. The focus of this project is how can we shape a more sustainable society in ecological, social, political, and economic terms, how can we respond to the rise of right-wing populism in Europe, and how can we stand up for more equality and fight against racism. Young adults from the three Oikosnet Europe academies, together with participants from Slovakia and Nigeria, have met for a workshop at Agape to discuss these issues. The result was a reflection paper on how to strengthen solidarity and coexistence in Europe.

8. Finances

8.1 Accounts

Walter Lüssi here gave the word over to the treasurer, Alf Linderman. Alf first presented the result for the previous fiscal year; 2022. The result for 2022 was a deficit of EUR 6 244:-. The reason for this negative result is that not all members have paid their membership fees. The reason for this is different for different members, but many academies presently must struggle with a difficult financial situation. This deficit is not a threat to the financial stability of the association in a short perspective. The balance sheet shows reserves of around EUR 150 000:-. In a longer perspective however, it of course must be the ambition to reach a balanced economy. Based on Alf's presentation, the accounts for 2022 were adopted.

According to the document that had been sent out before the meeting, the result for this year, 2023, up to September 5 is a small surplus. However, since this year is not over Alf stated that it is likely that there will be a deficit also for 2023 before the year ends. The reason for this expected negative result is the same as for the previous year; not all members pay their membership fees.



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8.2 Budget 2024

Alf presented the budget for 2024 that had been sent out before the General Assembly. In general, it is very much in line with previous budgets. We still have expectancy in the budget that all members will pay their membership fees, and there are still funds available to support collaborative projects among members of the association. Parallel to working with this budget, the board will continue to explore the reasons why some members do not pay their fees. The budget for 2024 was adopted.

9. Elections

9.1 Report of the Nomination Committee

Alexei Bodrov, the head of the Nomination Committee, gave a presentation on the discussions that have taken place in the committee and between the committee, the president, and the board. The outcome of all these different conversations was a recommendation by the Nominations Committee to postpone all elections for two years. The background to this conclusion is the ongoing attempt to work for two years to form a strategy for the future for Oikosnet Europe and the so-called Action Plan (this endeavor was presented and discussed in more detail in a separate session Friday morning, and decisions were taken under agenda item 10 below). The Nominations Committee's proposition was adopted – but this decision was taken after agenda item no. 10.

9.2 Election Process

The decision under 9.1 made this agenda item obsolete.

10. The Future of Oikosnet Europe

The Action Plan had been presented and discussed in the morning session on Friday. At this point, Walter Lüssi presented the motions the board propose to be accepted by the participants of the General Assembly. The board proposes the following three motions:

1. Implementation of the action plan

The General Assembly mandates the Board of Oikosnet Europe to continue to work on the Action Plan in the spirit of the discussion and to implement it together with the members of Oikosnet Europe.

2. Process Planning

The General Assembly takes note of and approves the process planning presented.

3. Confirmation of the current Board for another two years and scheduling of ordinary elections at the General Assembly 2025.

This motion can only be of a recommendatory nature, as the Board is not authorized to submit it directly to the Assembly. It is therefore a proposal for the attention of the Nomination Committee, which can only be presented as a motion to the General Assembly by the latter.

All three motions were adopted as was the description of the Action Plan. There was one abstention in this vote: Evangelische Akademie Baden/Gernot Meier.



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11. Oikosnet Executive Secretary

Rüdiger Noll will retire from his present position in which he also has been able to serve as the Executive Secretary for Oikosnet Europe. Walter Lüssi informed about the decision by the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin to allocate 20 percent of the working time of Heinz-Joachim Lohmann as the Executive Secretary of Oikosnet. This was welcomed by the General Assembly with great gratitude. Rüdiger will continue to serve as a resource person on a voluntary basis.

12. Involvement of (future) Central and Eastern European Members

Heinz-Joachim Lohmann gave a short presentation of the steps taken by the board to strengthen the engagement of Central and Eastern members in the work of and interaction within Oikosnet Europe.

13. OE Priority themes: Digitalization, Green Deal, Education

Walter Lüssi shortly recapitulated the history behind the selection of these three themes and in what way these themes have been addressed over the last few years. Digitalization was a key theme at the Study Day of this General Assembly in Basel. The theme Green Deal was the responsibility of one board member who was not able to organize anything this person has now left the board. There is a network that continues to talk about the theme of Education, and since this discussion has not come to an end the outcome of this process is not yet clear.

14. Future Relationships with EAEE

Veronika Matějková (President) and Heike Witzel, with significant support by Pavla Rupcová, gave a presentation of EAEE – European Protestant and Anglican Network for life-long Learning and answered questions from participants. EAEE is a non-profit European association and network. The focus is on Christian adult education, and the network is open to institutions, organizations, associations, and individuals. EAEE works to strengthen Protestant and Anglican adult education in Europe, to encourage cooperation at the European level and to affirm European identity. This is expressed by valuing the rich plurality of regional identities and contexts, and through our common commitment to education, empowerment, intercultural awareness and by improving mutual understanding.

The presentation was followed by a long discussion around the issue on how EAEE and Oikosnet Europe could cooperate in the best possible manner. One option would be for all members of EAEE to apply for individual membership in Oikosnet Europe. Pros and cons of this was discussed as was the issue of on what grounds they could be accepted as members by Oikosnet Europe. It was concluded that it is up to EAEE to decide upon the next step, but it was made very clear in the discussion that there was a strong will among the present Oikosnet Europe members to welcome EAEE network members as members in Oikosnet Europe should they decide to apply.



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15. Reports from Projects/Common Activities within OE

15.1 Arab-European Citizens' Dialogue

15.2 DPC

All ongoing projects had already been presented in the context of the Annual Report, cf. agenda item no. 7 above.

16. Relationships

16.1 Conference of European Churches/Community of Protestant Churches in Europe

Oikosnet Europe took part in the KEK General Assembly as an Organization in Partnership, as described in the Annual Report. It is still to see how the KEK leadership will respond to our wish of contact with KEK.

16.2 Ecumenical Bible Weeks

In EKD, the Ecumenical Bible Weeks has been a big venture, in economic terms. It is not clear how this will go on in the future. Heinz-Joachim Lohmann in the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin pointed out that this has been an event which has connected churches in Eastern and Western Europe.

17. Dates and Venues of future Oikosnet General Assemblies

The next GA will take place from the 2nd to the 6th of October 2024, preferably in Eastern Europe. A proposal to include younger people in a special session was discussed and this was wanted by the participants. Preferably also with online sessions in advance.

Minutes by *Alf Linderman* (item 15 to 17 with help from Kjell Riise) _____

Co-signer *Gloria Uribe* _____

Co-signer *Gernot Meier* _____