

Oikosnet Europe

General Assembly 2025

**The Protestant Academy
of Wittenberg**

Wittenberg, Germany, 17 – 21 September 2025



Annual Report 2025

Ecumenism in Adult Education

Foreword by the President, Rev. Walter Lüssi

As my presidency of Oikosnet Europe draws to a close, I would like to share a few thoughts that have shaped me during my many years of commitment to church education in the public sphere. This commitment arose from the outset in an ecumenical environment. Growing up as a Reformed Christian in Catholic central Switzerland, my focus was initially on ecumenism on a small scale at the local level, but during my theology studies and through contact with old missionary societies, my horizons soon broadened to include global ecumenism. I have summarised some of my insights in three points. I am passing them on to Oikosnet Europe because I am convinced that faith-based public education that transcends borders and cultures and connects people is urgently needed in today's 'crazy' world. This requires a lot of perseverance, intelligent analysis and – as we have learned from liberation theology – the three steps: See, judge, act! The faith-based education leads to provisional ethical standards and spiritual affirmation that enable us to continually question and challenge our own position.

Let us now turn to the three points:

First: Ecumenical cooperation is not generally based on church decisions and pronouncements, but is first and foremost determined by the attitudes of individuals. These attitudes usually precede official decisions and initiatives, provoking and surpassing them.

My biographical experiences at the grassroots level and my observations of theological debates at the level of so-called top ecumenism have continually deepened my conviction: There is a lot of symbolic politics, including on the part of the churches. Clever, sophisticated and sometimes even casuistic attempts are made to reconcile previously irreconcilable theological positions. At the institutional level, all of this has a certain validity. But the essential steps must first be taken at the grassroots level. And the best statements may make a few headlines and be easy to quote, but they will only be effective when they become part of people's everyday lives and enliven their interactions with one another. Faith-based public education plays an indispensable role here, both as a catalyst and in its implementation in everyday life.

Second: The movement from coexistence to cooperation in ecumenical education requires a third element, something random, something that comes from outside, as it were. It needs a concrete occasion. Theologians call it more appropriately 'the Unapproachable Substance' that which we cannot control and cannot plan, so that something can move in the right direction.

The beginning of the European movement of church and church related academies was marked by the humanitarian, ethical and theological challenges of the post-war period. The shared shock and realisation that peace and reconciliation in Europe required a joint, sustained effort unleashed the necessary energy and led to initiatives that were partly in harmony with the official churches, but partly also in tension with them. Peace and reconciliation are once again highly relevant today. But the challenges are many. As Oikosnet continues on its path, it will be important not to get bogged down, but to persevere in addressing fundamental issues that threaten the dignity of life today.

Third: Joint education in an ecumenical context requires an attitude on the part of those involved, that assumes that the tradition of other denominations opens up a perspective on reality that complements, enriches and makes my own view more meaningful due to my own background.

I fondly remember the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver in 1983. There was talk of a 'conciliar process,' of the churches' path to justice, peace and the integrity of creation. And here, too, there was talk of

the positive assumption contained in my third thesis. However, this requires the strength to live with many unanswered questions at a time characterised by assertions and counter-assertions, and in which some debates are primarily driven by mere excitement management.

For this annual report, finally just this: There are many good reasons to continue developing Oikosnet Europe carefully, courageously, and with confidence and creativity!



Activities of the Management Board

Alf Linderman

Oikosnet Europe Board Meeting in Warsaw, 2024-10-02

Board Members present:

Walter Lüssi, President
Katerina Karkala, Vice President
Lucia Leonardi
Heinz-Joachim Lohmann, Executive Secretary
Kjell Riise

Others present:

Alf Linderman, Treasurer
Kateryna Stulnikova, Administrative assistant in Berlin

Main theme and purpose of the meeting

This was the board meeting on the same day that the 2024 General Assembly was started in the evening, and the sole purpose of the meeting was to finalize the plans for the General Assembly.

Oikosnet Europe Board Meeting on Zoom, 2025-01-27

Board Members present:

Walter Lüssi, President
Lucia Leonardi
Heinz-Joachim Lohmann, Executive Secretary
Kjell Riise

Board Members excused:

Katerina Karkala, Vice President

Others present:

Alf Linderman, Treasurer
Rüdiger Noll, OE consultant
Kateryna Stulnikova, Administrative assistant in Berlin

Main theme and purpose of the meeting

The meeting started with going through what has happened since the Warsaw General Assembly. Among other things, Lucia Leonardi announced that she now has a new job outside the Oikosnet Europe family and that she is leaving her position in the OE board.

At this meeting, it was also recognized that the next General Assembly should take place in Wittenberg 17 to 21 September. There were some issues that had to be dealt with regarding accommodation, but the concrete planning would continue during the spring under the leadership of the Executive Secretary, Heinz-Joachim Lohmann. Based on the discussion at the Warsaw General Assembly, it was decided to organize a Virtual Oikosnet conference on the Israel-Palestine conflict. This conference took place as a virtual meeting in March. Another important element of this meeting was to discuss the progress and continuation of the working group on the future of Oikosnet Europe.

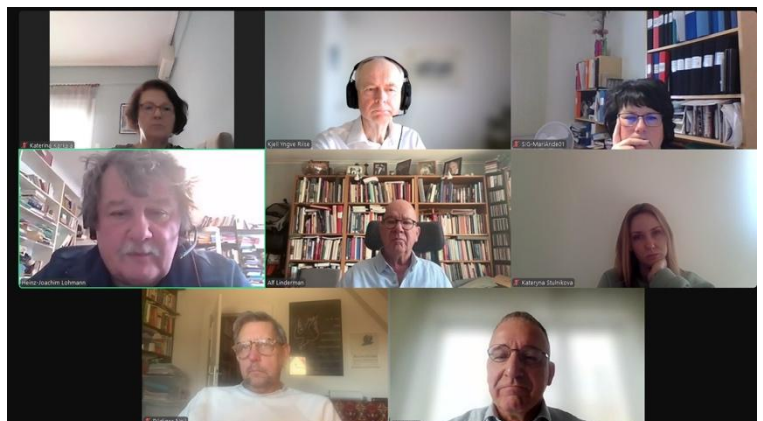
Oikosnet Europe Board Meeting on Zoom, 2025-02-20

Board Members present:

Walter Lüssi, President
Katerina Karkala, Vice President
Heinz-Joachim Lohmann,
Executive Secretary
Kjell Riise

Others present:

Alf Linderman, Treasurer
Kateryna Stulnikova,
Administrative assistant in Berlin
Maria-Pia Anderloni, Head of the Sigtuna Secretariat
Rüdiger Noll, Consultant



Main theme and purpose of the meeting

Preparations for the 2025 General Assembly in Wittenberg are now underway, including a Study Day on *Ways to Peace*. This Study Day is organized together with some churches. Updates from last meeting covered project activities, youth engagement, and improved social media outreach. A virtual conference on the Israel–Palestine conflict will be held in March, with plans for a follow-up

on Palestinian perspectives. Financial reports were still pending, and some topics had to be postponed.

Oikosnet Europe Board Meeting on Zoom, 2025-04-24

Board Members present:

Walter Lüssi, President

Katerina Karkala, Vice President

Heinz-Joachim Lohmann,

Executive Secretary

Kjell Riise

Others present:

Alf Linderman, Treasurer

Rüdiger Noll, Consultant

Kateryna Stulnikova, Administrative assistant in Berlin

Main theme and purpose of the meeting

Recent webinars on the Israel-Palestine conflict were reviewed, with plans for a third seminar. Preparations continue for the June board meeting and the General Assembly in Wittenberg, including Working Group tasks, board nominations, and marking the 70th anniversary. Membership fees remain unchanged, and financial reports will be discussed in June. The board approved funding for Kjell's participation in the INTERFILM Conference, and representatives were confirmed for the Arab-Europe Citizens' Dialogue in Cairo.

Oikosnet Europe Board Meeting in Wittenberg and Berlin, 2025-04-24

Board Members present:

Walter Lüssi, President

Katerina Karkala, Vice President

Heinz-Joachim Lohmann,

Executive Secretary

Kjell Riise



Others present:

Alf Linderman, Treasurer

Rüdiger Noll, Consultant

Kateryna Stulnikova, Administrative assistant in Berlin

Main theme and purpose of the meeting

The Academy in Wittenberg will host the 2025 General Assembly, linked to its annual peace conference, focusing on the role of churches and movements in transformation and peace. This conference will also be the Study Day of the Oikosnet General Assembly. Panels and workshops will address Israel/Palestine, non-violence, and OE's role, with broader representation sought. The board also focused on administrative issues include invitations, registration, accommodation costs, guests, and agenda planning. The Board discussed nominations for the new leadership, Working Group results, and preparations for the anniversary. Concerns were raised about the Arab European Citizens' Dialogue, leading to calls for clearer goals and evaluation. Finances are stable, with high income from fees but unpaid contributions from several academies. The Board welcomed the Tutzing Academy's application to rejoin OE.

Oikosnet Europe Board Meeting on Zoom, 2025-08-21**Board Members present:**

Walter Lüssi, President

Katerina Karkala, Vice President

Heinz-Joachim Lohmann,
Executive Secretary
Kjell Riise

**Others present:**

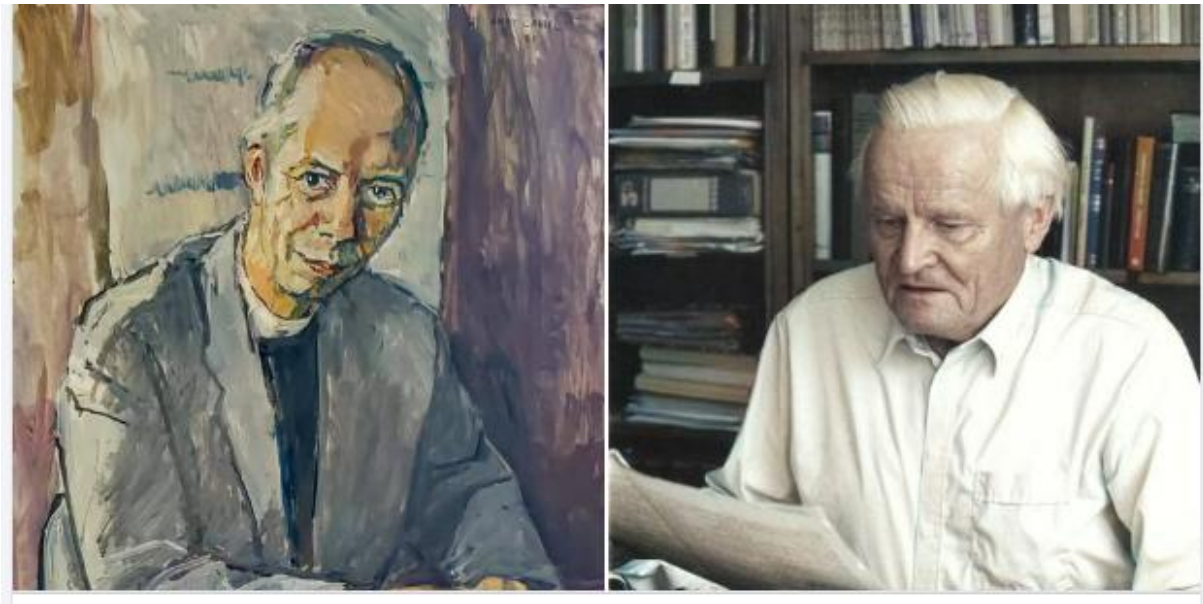
Alf Linderman, Treasurer

Kateryna Stulnikova, Administrative assistant in Berlin

Main theme and purpose of the meeting

The board addressed a formal aspect of the role of the Treasurer. Alf has been the Treasurer for some time but has up to now not formally been a member of the board. Now, it was concluded that he is formally recognized as Treasurer

and board member until the next elections. Updates included nomination procedures for the upcoming GA, issues raised by Gernot Meier, and a report on the Arab European Citizens' Dialogue in Cairo. The Working Group's draft report needs a more concise version, and Kateryna will send an evaluation form. Membership changes were discussed, including a transfer from Belarus to Vilnius and Tutzing Academy's interest in rejoining. Preparations for the GA covered invitations, program, guests, elections, finances, quorum, and anniversary plans. The 70th anniversary will be marked with a smaller event and historical displays.



The Swedish poet and priest Olov Hartman was director of Sigtunastiftelsen. Together with Eberhard Müller from Evangelische Akademie Bad Boll, he initiated The Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres - today Oikosnet Europe. The founding conference was held from 2-5 October 1955.

Activities and considerations of the President

Walter Lüssi

Fewer and fewer people are doing more and more: I say this without accusation. It is simply an observation about our times and a concern for the future of our association. This was not new last year, but due to the many tasks we had set ourselves, it was more noticeable and, as a result, more unsatisfactory. Of course, I know some of the reasons that are partly responsible for this, and although I am a volunteer, I am also affected by it. More on that in the next point.

Although I felt the additional burden this placed on me, I tried to stick to a quote from Alfred Mock from 1948: 'Never be part of the problem, but strive to be part of the solution!', knowing that you can never quite achieve this. But it helped me to see what was still going well. And without wanting to name names here, I am grateful to those who, despite being in a similar situation to many of us, have impressively demonstrated their commitment.

Struggling for money: We will come back to this when we discuss the finances of Oikosnet Europe. And it is also clear from the report of our Executive Secretary: even in countries whose members have been able to pay high membership fees to our association for decades, the good times seem to be over. Here, too, fewer and fewer people with ever-dwindling resources are tending to do more and more. And often, the relationship between the Church as an institution and educational work as a movement is decided unilaterally in challenging times with harsh consequences.

Resignation of Lucia Leonardi: Early in the year, at the online board meeting in January, Lucia announced her resignation with immediate effect. We heard from Lucia that she had taken a new job outside the immediate environment of Oikosnet Europe and had therefore decided to step down from the board. I was very sorry to hear about this unexpected move, because I greatly appreciated Lucia's commitment, not only with regard to the youth project.

New old members: We are delighted to welcome two new, yet already well-known members to Oikosnet at the meeting in Wittenberg. *The Tutzing Academy, Germany*, is rejoining Oikosnet Europe. A warm welcome to you!

In August, Yuri Roi informed me that *the Orthodox Grodno Laity Centre in Belarus* had been forced to cease its activities in Belarus due to political persecution. He emigrated to Lithuania as rector, together with several teachers and students. In the meantime, they have left the Russian Orthodox Church and joined the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. They wish to continue participating in Oikosnet Europe, but now as *the Vilnius Orthodox Christian Institute for Education and Research*. We will have to formally complete this change, but we are already extremely pleased that we can continue this important cooperation for Europe and pursue the goals of our association!

FEECA Symposium from April 2nd to 4th in Zürich: The Catholic European adult education organisation held its annual meeting at the Paulus Academy in Zurich. Within this framework, it also hosted the symposium 'Ecumenism in Adult Education'. As president of the ecumenical umbrella organisation Plusbildung Switzerland and of Oikosnet Europa, I had the honour of giving a presentation

on 'Non-formal education in an ecumenical context' and was involved in exciting discussions about this form of cross-border cooperation in church education and academic work.

Work of the new Executive Secretary

Heinz-Joachim Lohmann

I have been the Executive Secretary of Oikosnet Europe since January 1, 2024. The original plan was for the Evangelical Academy of Berlin to dedicate 20% of my working time to this activity until the General Assembly 2025, without any financial compensation. This arrangement, made in 2023, proved difficult to implement for several reasons. Firstly, the actual time required for the most essential activities exceeds 50% in some months, while in others hardly any work is required. Secondly, at the time the agreement was made, it was not clear that 2024 would bring some dramatic changes that would severely affect the scope of my responsibilities at the Evangelical Academy of Berlin as Deputy Director and Director of Studies for Democratic Culture and Church in Rural Areas. On the one hand, this was the sharp increase of right-wing extremist forces in the Brandenburg parliaments, to which the church had to respond, and on the other, the emerging structural and financial changes in the German academy landscape. These reasons meant that while I was able to manage the most important tasks within the scope of my role as Executive Secretary, no resources remained for member contact, maintenance, and recruitment. The Evangelical Academy of Berlin is willing to make me available for this task until the development of another solution.

During this period, preparations for two General Assemblies took place: one in Warsaw in 2024 and the second in Wittenberg in 2025. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland provided content and logistical support for the preparation and implementation in Warsaw. In Wittenberg, this task was taken over by the Evangelical Academy of Saxony-Anhalt. Preparations for the Ways to Peace Study Day for the 2025 General Assembly began in September 2024, together with the Lothar Kreyssig Peace Center of the Evangelical Church in Central Germany and the Evangelical Women of Central Germany.

In 2024 and 2025, the Working Group for the Implementation of the Action Plan met a total of six times. I was responsible for the planning and implementation

and for presenting its results. She worked on the areas of structure, content, and formats. The results will be presented to the 2025 General Assembly.

In March 2025, a group consisting of the Iona Community, Agape, and the Berlin Academy met in Agape to prepare a new three-year youth project.

Two workshops on the Middle East conflict took place in March and April. One was prepared by the Evangelical Academy of Berlin, the other by the Norwegian Church Academies.

Most of the Board, Working Group, Steering Group, and workshop meetings in 2024 and 2025 took place online. The Executive Secretary was also responsible for the virtual logistics.

Report on the Oikosnet Advisor

Rüdiger Noll

Report on the Oikosnet Consultancy 2024/2025

When Rüdiger Noll retired as Executive Secretary of Oikosnet Europe, the idea arose to keep his expertise, experience and network connections within Oikosnet. Therefore, an agreement was signed between the Oikosnet Board (represented by the President) and Rüdiger Noll to keep him on board as a Consultant. The agreement took effect with June 2024 and was to be evaluated by the end of 2025.

The Board meeting in June 2025 (Wittenberg and Schwanenwerder) made it evident to the consultant in relation to several items on the agenda, that there is no space for a Consultant next to an Executive Secretary. He, therefore, decided to resign from his post with immediate effect.

The agreement foresaw, that the Consultant would advise in relation to Oikosnet Board on all areas of the Oikosnet work with special emphasis recruiting new and involving existing members in the work of the association. He was also mandated to represent Oikosnet Europe in the Arab-European Citizens' Dialogue (AECD). In his capacity, the Consultant attended the GA 2024 (offering on of the Interpellations and writing the minutes of the business sessions) and all but one Board meetings (writing the minutes twice) as well as all but one session of the Working Group. He kept relations with members especially from eastern Europe. It never came to a discussion in the Board on the further role of

the Consultant, not at least to the ongoing process of the Working Group defining again the future of Oikosnet Europe as a whole. Up until June 2025, the Consultant was involved in the planning of the AECD and he attended the 2014 consultation in Cairo. He did not attend the 2025 AECD consultation, due to insecurities related to the overall situation in the Middle East and due to the fact that the meeting was geared towards looking on the future of the AECD process, in which he would not be involved.

The Oikosnet Board meeting in June then made it evident, other Oikosnet members were suggested be involved in the future of the AECD process and the future work of Oikosnet Europe should be a new start, not really drawing on the expertise from the past of the Consultant.

Activities of the Board Members

Kjell Rise

Film work: Many of our Oikosnet Europe members use film in their work in various ways. An organisation that specialises in religious/Christian film in Europe is Interfilm. They present themselves as follows:

INTERFILM is the international network for the dialogue between church and film. It promotes the appreciation of cinema's artistic, spiritual and social significance in the church and calls attention to the relevance of church, theology and religion for cinema. INTERFILM is looking beyond the screen.

INTERFILM acts in an ecumenical context. As film constitutes a global form of expression and communication, so INTERFILM is committed to ecumenism: a mutual understanding beyond the limits of confessions, churches and religions. INTERFILM joins church and cinema, cultures and religions.

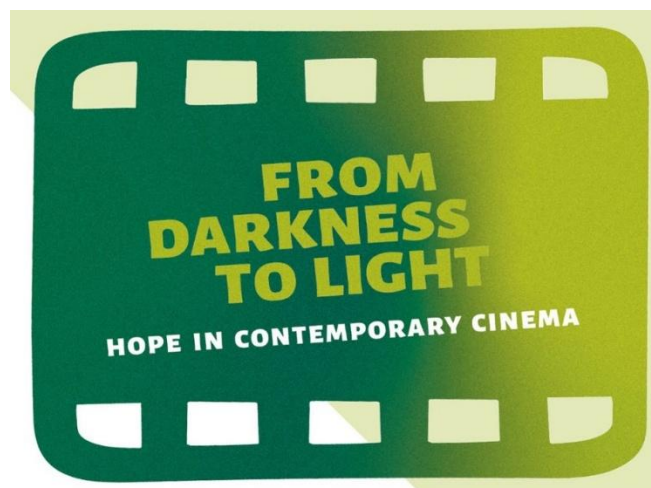
Interfilm collaborates with the Catholic organisation Signis on ecumenical film awards at several film festivals in Europe and on presenting interfaith film awards at certain festivals.

Since 2017, Norwegian church academies have presented the Faith in Film Award at the Tromsø International Film Festival. This is an interreligious award. The coordinator is our board member, Kjell Y. Riise. Interfilm is represented in the jury. The OE board has now granted him financial support to attend

Interfilm's annual meeting in Amsterdam in October, where Aafje van den Boogert is instrumental in planning a seminar on hope in

contemporary cinema, and other members also will join.

We hope that this could stimulate increased cooperation among our members in using cinematic material in their work.



Financial Report

Alf Linderman, Treasurer

Finances and Accounts 2024

Attached below are the final 2024 accounts for Oikosnet Europe. Bookkeeping and financial administration have been managed by the Sigtuna Foundation. I will provide several bullet points pertaining to these accounts; however, there are three key general points I wish to emphasize here.

- Although we have welcomed new members in recent years, unpaid membership fees are threatening our financial stability.
- Member collaboration is also below expectations and budgeted levels.
- However, our substantial reserves allow us to keep working toward a more balanced budget.

Profit and loss statement

	2024 SEK*	2024 EURO	Budget 2024 EURO
<i>Operating income (intäkter)</i>			
Membership fees	302 669	26 350	29 000
Donations	0	0	0
Participation fees, annual meeting	52 264	4 550	5 250
Other income	0	0	0
<i>Taken from reserves of Oikosnet Europe</i>	102 483	8 922	27 000
<i>Total income (summa intäkter)</i>	457 416	39 822	61 250
<i>Operating expenses (kostnader)</i>			
Secretariat fees	-120 849	-10 521	-10 000
<i>Conferences and board activities</i>			
Board meetings	-15 817	-1 377	-2 000
Annual conference	-174 491	-15 191	-10 000

<i>Arab-Europé Dialogue</i>	-27 591	-2 402	-5 000
<i>Developings new relationships with possible new members</i>	0	0	-2 000
<i>CEC working group</i>	-5 858	-510	-2 000
<i>Total conferences and board activities</i>	-223 757	-19 480	-21 000
<i>Investments in projects</i>	-9 499	-827	-25 000
<i>Travel expenses</i>			
<i>Travel cost board</i>	-60 844	-5 297	-1 750
<i>Travel costs others</i>	-873	-76	-1 000
<i>Total travel expenses</i>	-61 717	-5 373	-2 750
<i>Representation</i>			
<i>Representative expenses</i>	0	0	-500
<i>Ecumenical guests</i>	0	0	-1 500
<i>Total representation</i>	0	0	-2 000
<i>Administration</i>			
<i>Bank cost</i>	-5 054	-440	-250
<i>Foreign exchange loss</i>	0	0	0
<i>Interest</i>	8 856	771	0
<i>Total administration</i>	3 802	331	-250
<i>Othes expenses</i>			
<i>Membership fee AISBL</i>	0	0	-250
<i>Other costs</i>	-21 342	-1 858	0
<i>Donations</i>	-24 053	-2 094	0
<i>Total others expenses</i>	-45 395	-3 952	-250
<i>Total expenses (summa kostnader)</i>	-457 415	-39 822	-61 250
Profit for the year (resultat)	0	0	0

- For the calendar year 2024, the total income was EUR 30,900 according to the accounts above. There is, however, one thing that must be added here. Four members still owe in total EUR 7,400 in membership fees for the year despite reminders. *If unpaid, the actual deficit for 2024 will be EUR 16,322!*
- If these fees remain unpaid, we will need to *draw from reserves nearly equal to our membership fee income*. As the 2024 books are closed, this will impact the 2025 accounts.
- In the budget for 2024, there were budgeted to take EUR 27,000 from the reserves. But this budget was motivated by a will from the board to use financial reserves to support collaborative projects. And as is obvious in the accounts, the support requested in 2024 was minimal compared to the budgeted amount for this purpose. As a result, since fewer funds were requested for collaborative projects than anticipated, *the reserves were instead used to compensate for unpaid membership fees*.
- The cost for our General Assemblies has grown over the years. For more than a decade, the participation fee was EUR 350. A small adjustment was

done for 2025, but this still does not seem to cover the actual costs. In the long run, this will be something that has to be subject to consideration.

- It should also be noted that, despite holding fewer physical board meetings — including only one in 2024 in addition to meetings held alongside the General Assembly — the expenses still surpassed the budgeted amount for 2024.

Balance Sheet (balansräkning)

	2024-12-31 SEK	2024-12-31 EURO
ASSETS (tillgångar)		
Receivables	171 149	14 900
Bank balance	1 565 254	136 269
Accrued income	22 548	1 963
Total current assets	1 758 951	153 132
TOTAL ASSETS (summa tillgångar)	1 758 951	153 132
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES (eget kapital o skulder)		
Balanced surplus or deficit (balanserat resultat)	1 595 682	138 918
Result this year (årets resultat)	0	0
Capital of Oikosnet Europe (eget kapital)	1 595 682	138 918
Short term liabilities (kortfristiga skulder)		
Accrued expenses	132 933	11 573
EAEE	30 336	2 641
Oikosnet International	0	0
Total short term liabilities (summa kortfristiga skulder)	163 269	14 214
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	1 758 951	153 132

- Oikosnet Europe has solid financial reserves, but must act to reverse current profit trends to avoid future bankruptcy.

Recommendations: As the Treasurer, I have two recommendations: First, to establish more dialogue with members to identify ways to enhance engagement. This may result in increased financial contributions as well as additional collaborative initiatives. Second, it is suggested to review the current structure of membership fees. At present, there are several different fee levels, but the criteria for these differences are not clearly defined.

Communication Issues (Kjell Riise)

The website <https://www.oikosnet.eu/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/oikosneteuropa/> ...

Instagram: @oikosnet

The work connected to the website is taken over from Sigtuna Foundation, and is now run by the executive secretariat by Kateryna Stulnikova. Five news have been posted, including one newsletter, since last GA. The member list is updated.

Our Facebook page, now with 162 followers, have had about 40 posts since last GA, some of them appears also on our Instagram account. We have spent some money on Facebook advertisements. This certainly increase the numbers, for instance to reach 3.400 individuals on a post concerning the Oikosnet history. However, the reaction did not give any response in terms of historical photos. There is also a difficulty in reaching the target group, which is primarily our members. They are spread all over Europe. How do we reach them?

The Instagram account has been used to some extent as the Facebook account. However, the number of followers is very low.

In 2013, Sofia af Geijerstam and Alf Linderman introduced a Strategic Communication Plan. Here is presented:

Mission statement

- The network of OIKOSNET Europe is a dynamic interface for advocating and promoting the issues of church, society, and culture, translating them into actions from the local context to the global context, and vice versa.
- The network of OIKOSNET Europe members embodies the international commitment of its members as part of the global OIKOSNET, working together to foster dialogue between actors in church, society and culture, peaceful change, sustainability and ecumenical formation.

Vision statement

- The network of OIKOSNET Europe members is a vital community of learning and practise for exchanging visions, ideas and projects that enrich individual members as well as the whole network
- The network of OIKOSNET Europe members as a strategic partner in the ecumenical interfaith area, whose work is recognised by partners in civil society.

They also pointed out

Key messages and primary goals for strategic communication

Important questions that have to be clarified are the key messages of OE and what we are trying to achieve in our communication. To be concrete – what do we want to say and what do we want present member organizations, and potential new members, to know about OE? If our main task is to be a network where we exchange ideas and experiences, what then should be the primary goals for the communication of the association? The

primary goals could be described as follows if we focus on internal communication, and only briefly indicate the second step of communication strategies aiming toward interaction with ecumenical institutions and civil society:

Clarify the identity of OE

- Increase and deepen the knowledge about OE among members
- Encourage “sleeping” members to get more involved in the work of OE
- Get new members in to OE
- Improve the benefits of being member academy by sharing experiences and ideas
- Strengthen members capacity to interact with civil society and other ecumenical and interfaith organizations

And briefly looking toward the second step of communication strategies:

- Increase and deepen the knowledge about OE among ecumenical partners and stakeholders

All these points are important also in today’s situation, and will be essential in many respects, also in a communication perspective.

Further development of projects

Arab-European Citizens Dialogue (AECD) (Katerina Karkala)

The AECD is an ongoing dialogue mainly between with the Coptic Evangelical Organisation on Social Services (CEOSS). Oikosnet Europe has been involved in this dialogue from the beginning (2010), as well as the Sigtuna Foundation, the Academy of Loccum and the Orthodox Academy of Crete.

A mutual understanding, trust and cooperation has been established through all those years with meetings, visits and conferences. Actual problems and crisis could be discussed and further developed. Friends have been gained coming from different backgrounds and tradition. Based on civil society issues the Dialogue is a common cause for Europeans as well as for Arab citizens.

The Dialogue is structured in periods of three years and the last meeting of the AECD took place in June 2025 in Cairo/Egypt. Due to the situation in the Middle East not all participation could be present, so it was a rather reduced meeting, nevertheless, it contributed to a better understanding of the work of CEOSS and the different possibilities of cooperation.

In this meeting were present new members, as well as the Executive Secretary of Oikosnet Europe, Heinz-Joachim Lohmann. The meeting was conceived being very interesting and that it could attract more participants in the future. The project is to

be presented at the upcoming GA. The new board has then to decide how the dialogue will continue in the future.



DpC: Dialog for Peaceful Change (Colin Craig)

The world has become increasingly fractured and fearful. We are collectively facing into both very turbulent and uncertain times. Some have named this a “metacrisis”. The politics of division are on the rise, the ecological crisis increasingly manifests itself across the Earth, economic systems are in increasingly inequitable and unstable and the AI revolution is surging onward.

Perhaps there has never been a time for us needing to re-emphasise the need for us to commit to building up the tools and skills that our future community and social leaders are going to need in order to navigate through these times. The need for networks and their partners like Oikosnet, I think will be all the more needed.

Over the last year, DPC Global and its partners have continued to respond to requests to build out from our core, two-module, Foundation training, “Navigating Conflict and Change”. Alongside these new modules we have also initiated a series of “Community of Practice” webinars that have been deeply appreciated. More information on this can be found through our www.DpCGlobal.org website

Internationally

Sweden: Our organisational partnership with Fryshuset continues to go from strength to strength. As I previously shared, their work on gang and youth violence alongside the

community and political fracturing. Within Fryshuset, DPC functions as a core operational methodology and they now run a range of DpC programmes across the year within their own project initiatives and a number of municipalities as well. Our Swedish based team of Coaches and Trainers work regularly with an ever-expanding cohort of their own fully accredited DpC Trainers.

USA: Over the year, our work with the Presbyterian Church in Baltimore and Washington DC has led to us now having 3 fully accredited DpC trainers and 4 associate Trainers. This allows them to run a range of DpC programmes in the region with our background coaching support. As with Sweden, our broader strategic intention is that they can become a fully functioning DpC partnering organisation.

In a wider USA context, the turbulent reality of the political divisions and budgetary chaos has inevitably meant that some of the ongoing requests to further develop a range of DpC foundation programmes have not yet emerged into actual planned commitments. As you can imagine, while the need for such skills training is increasingly needed, the level of instability across so many sectors makes it very hard for our facilitators working there to become firmed up regarding dates etc. That is often the nature of our work and we will continue to see how we can support them as needed.

Lithuania: Our work with the LCC University based in Klaipeda on the Baltic Coast in Lithuania has continued to consolidate. The University's decision to develop a Peace Centre within the campus continues to evolve. Naomi Enns, the director of the Peace Centre has become an accredited Trainer and is exploring a range of further developments with a number of municipalities in the wider Lithuanian context. For this to develop effectively we will now need to build up the local training capacity within a Lithuanian language format.

Corrymeela: We continue to run, in partnership with Corrymeela, various open DpC Foundation training and workshop programmes. 2025 will also be the 60th Anniversary of Corrymeela's opening and we have been asked to partner with some of the Community members based in Dublin to run a DpC Foundation Facilitator training in November of this year. This will not be an "open" programme but specifically targeted to youth and community leaders who are working directly on some of the increasing community tensions that are building within the Republic over recent years.

Future Programme Development

Given the times we are in, it will not be a surprise to say that our team are in the early process of discussing a range of new capacity and skills building initiatives within the Educational, Social Justice and Faith sectors. As ever, these will take some time to see how they may best move into some new pilots and potential partnerships. We have a new organisational partnership beginning to build with the Ashburnham Centre. They are a Retreat Centre based in the south-east of England. They have a significant volunteer programme and also have a deep commitment to ecological sustainability. We will be running an initial pilot Foundation training programme with them for both staff and volunteers in the early winter period. We are also planning running with a residentially based "Open" programme with them in the spring of 2026.

Organisational Development

Over the last 18 months, we have achieved a major reset of our organisational structures and systems. We have now formally established a new company structure [DpC Global] to oversee the future development of the DpC methodology. With the loss of Jaap and the deepening impact of the wider context of the expanding “metacrisis” it became clear to me that I could not and should not continue to be the future focal point for the future evolution of the DpC methodology. To that end, DpC Global now has 5 new Directors. The future development of our work is now held by a talented group of new leaders to work alongside me as we collectively move forward.

Conclusion

As I conclude this report, it is amazing to think that the original DpC methodology was piloted 20 years ago in Turku Finland. Like any such initiative, we could not have anticipated the journey that would then unfold. That fact remains a tribute to the support that both Oikosnet and, of course, Jaap van der Sar gave to supporting the early phase of that journey. There’s not a week goes by where I do not miss Jaap. Our whole team collectively carries him in our hearts.

The need for our collective commitment to finding pathways to bring forward a more peaceful and equitable world has only grown. The world will increasingly need the inspiration and leadership that networks such as Oikosnet can offer. We are collectively going to be required to support an emerging generation to help build up the vision, resilience and skills to learn how to navigate through these times.

For my own part, I could never have anticipated the over 50-year journey that my own personal and working life took. It was places like Corrymeela that created the space to help call myself and others forward into the learning and exposure that potential leaders need. A priority task for DpC Global will be to help grow a new generation of young leaders. To achieve this, we will need to continue to explore pathways for coherent succession planning. This will need time, investment and support for this multi-generational task to carry forward the task of peace building and social transformation that is so needed.

In our own small way, DpC Global continues to be committed to facing into this task. As ever, if there are ways that we can help with that leadership and capacity building within the wider Oikosnet network, we will be only too happy to explore that with you.