

Oikosnet Europe

General Assembly 2026

Vilnius, 17 – 20 September 2026



Annual Report 2026

Foreword by the President

Another year has passed, bringing with it both challenges and new opportunities. Looking back, I am filled with gratitude for the time we have been given—to create, to grow, to rebuild, to reflect, and to discern new paths forward. Above all, I am grateful that, despite the uncertainties of our times, we have not lost our faith, our hope, or our confidence in the future.

This Annual Report is more than a record of activities. It is a testimony to the resilience of our network and to our shared commitment to continue working for a world shaped by justice, peace, solidarity, and cooperation. It reflects our conviction that dialogue, mutual understanding, and responsible action remain essential foundations for building inclusive and democratic societies.

With a history spanning more than seventy years, Oikosnet Europe continues to bring together over thirty-four Christian academies, institutions, and laity centres across Europe. Every year, thousands of people participate in the conferences, educational programmes, encounters, and community initiatives organised by our members. Together, we create spaces where people can meet across generations, cultures, traditions, and denominations.

In a world increasingly marked by polarisation, conflict, and uncertainty, we are continually called to ask ourselves: *What difference do we make? What is our vocation as Christians in Europe today?* Our response lies not only in the programmes we organise, but in the values that shape them. We seek to welcome every person with dignity and respect, to engage courageously with the social, political, and environmental challenges of our time, and to promote democracy, human rights, and social responsibility. Equally central to our mission are ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, gender equality, and the active participation of young people, whose vision and commitment are indispensable for the future of our communities.

As President, I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have served our network over the decades—from its beginnings as the *Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres* to today's **Oikosnet Europe**. Their dedication, wisdom, and perseverance have built the strong foundation upon which we continue to grow.

This report also reflects the journey of the current Board. Bringing together people with different backgrounds, experiences, and working styles has been both a challenge and a source of enrichment. We have sought to cultivate a spirit of trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility, recognising that our diversity is one of our greatest strengths. Rather than providing a purely chronological account of our work, this Annual Report offers a thematic overview—a mosaic of initiatives, partnerships, and reflections that together illustrate the life of our network and prepare us for this year's General Assembly in Vilnius.

Meeting in Vilnius, hosted by our new member, the *Orthodox Christian Institute for Education and Research*, together with the ecumenical community of the city, is itself a meaningful expression of solidarity. At a time when Europe continues to face profound geopolitical tensions and humanitarian challenges, gathering in this region is both timely and symbolic. It reaffirms our commitment to stand alongside our partners, strengthen our relationships, and listen carefully to the experiences of churches and communities living at Europe's eastern borders.

The theme of this year's General Assembly, *Faith – Identity – Responsibility in Times of Global Tension: Christians in the Borderlands of Central and Eastern Europe*, invites us to reflect on the responsibilities that accompany our faith. It challenges us to consider how Christian communities can contribute to reconciliation, peacebuilding, and democratic resilience in an increasingly fragmented world.

I warmly invite you to explore this Annual Report and to share in the story of our common journey. At the heart of Oikosnet Europe are the encounters that bring people together: young and old, women and men, from across Europe and beyond. In meeting one another, learning from one another, and walking together in faith, we nurture a community founded on mutual respect, trust, and hope.

May this report not only inform you about our work but also encourage you to continue building, together with us, a more just, peaceful, and compassionate Europe.

Katerina Karkala



Katerina Karkala (President) and Veronika Matějková (Vice-President) together with Walter Lüsi, the former President of Oikosnet Europe in Wittenberg, Sept. 2025.

General Secretary's Contribution

Oikosnet.Europe has become a volunteer network since the last part-time General Secretary retired and Sigtuna restructured. My work as General Secretary is made possible by the Evangelical Academy of Berlin, which allows me to carry out this role alongside my regular job. We initially considered a 20% position, but this is unrealistic given the workload of Oikosnet.Europe and the responsibilities of my regular job. Over the next two years, the network will need to discuss the organizational structure and how the work will be distributed.

Previously, the office work was also covered by a regular position at Sigtuna. Now, the office work is done on a part-time basis at the Evangelical Academy of Berlin. This work includes liaising with members, maintaining the website, and writing meeting minutes. The General Secretary also organizes the technical setup for board meetings, organizes working groups, and prepares the general assembly.

The General Secretary's duties also used to be part of a regular job at Sigtuna. A volunteer network thrives on its members' commitment to maintaining a presence and organization within a European context. It also depends on the involvement of dedicated individuals who collaborate effectively. This collaboration is facilitated and simplified by the technological advancements in video conferencing tools. Online meetings enable ongoing collaboration and the completion of necessary tasks.

For fundamental discussions, in-person meetings remain essential. The new board of Oikosnet.Europe has decided to meet in person only once a year, during the general assembly, and for a longer period to allow for the necessary groundwork. In addition, the board will meet monthly to discuss upcoming tasks. For the next two years, the focus will be on developing substantive events throughout the year, alongside organizational collaboration. To achieve this, it is crucial that Oikosnet.Europe member organizations develop event ideas they wish to present within Europe and adapt them for online delivery. And Oikosnet.Europe then promotes the event with its member organizations, participates in it, and may even moderate. For this to happen, the member organizations need to have questions they would like to answer or discuss within a European framework and be willing to prepare them. Everyone must be prepared to promote the event. The fact that Oikosnet.Europe is a self-organized body of academies and does not have a clear mandate from its member organizations allows for considerable freedom in choosing and implementing topics.

We implemented this internally in 2025 using the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as an example. Now it is important to identify more topics that we want to examine from different perspectives and to discover the added value of our collective contribution.

Oikosnet Europe board members

The new board of Oikosnet Europe, was elected during the General Assembly in Wittemberg, September 2025. The members of the new board are:

- Katerina Karkala (President)
- Veronika Matějková (Vice-President)
- Alf Linderman (Treasurer)
- Monika Appmann
- Frank Grimstad

- Géront Meier
 - Catriona Robertson
- and
- Heinz-Joachim Lohmann (General Secretary)
 - Kateryna Stulnikova (assistant to General Secretary)
 - Kjell Riise (External assistant for social media)



Photo of the new board

Resignation of Géront Meier

Géront Meier, one of the newly board members of Oikosnet Europe, has withdrawn from the board as of July 2, 2026. You will find the resignation letter below.

The Protestant Academy in Baden is a long standing member of Oikosnet and Géront Meier was a valued contributor in many ways. He was very important for the new board and therefore we regret his withdrawal, though we respect his decision. We would like to thank him for his cooperation and for the fact that the Protestant Academy in Baden will continue to be a member of Oikosnet.

Géront Meier's Resignation letter, 2nd July, 2026:

"Dear General Assembly: After giving it some thought for quite a while on my part regarding the board: I hereby announce my resignation from the OikosNet board due to personal decisions and differences regarding working practices on 2. July 2026. However, as I continue to regard the cause of OikosNet as important, the Protestant Academy in Baden will continue to support its membership."

Structure of the Annual Report

The Annual Report wants to provide a concise overview of the decisions and the work of the Board throughout the year, having in mind that there were only online meetings, on a monthly basis.

The Timeline of the online Oikosnet Europe Board meetings from September 2025 through September 2026 is the following:

Date	Main focus
26 September 2025	Election of officers, financial signatories, working arrangements, follow-up to the 2025 General Assembly.
28 October 2025	Establishment of working groups, communication, General Assembly 2026 planning, projects.
26 November 2025	General Assembly planning, Erasmus+, Arab-European Dialogue, communication.
28 January 2026	Board procedures, communication strategy, Constitution review, GA preparation.
26 February 2026	Constitution revision, projects, communication, General Assembly preparation.
26 March 2026	Member consultation, communication strategy, General Assembly programme, project development.
30 April 2026	Financial report, membership fees, audit, Constitution Working Group, Vilnius preparations.
26 May 2026	General Assembly Working Group, communication, membership fees, constitutional review, planning future meetings.
20 July 2026	Resignation of Gernot Meier, Annual Report, newsletter, social media coordination, General Assembly Working Group, preparations for the GA.
4 August 2026	Organisational matters, financial report, preparatory meeting before the General Assembly in Vilnius.
8 September 2026	Planned as the last preparatory meeting before the General Assembly in Vilnius.

Summary of Oikosnet Europe Board Minutes (September 2025 – August 2026)

Including Working Group Results and Preparation for the 2026 General Assembly in Vilnius

The board meetings from September 2025 to August 2026 reflect a period of organisational consolidation following the 2025 General Assembly in Wittenberg. The board focused on strengthening governance, improving communication across the network, preparing the 2026 General Assembly in Vilnius, improving financial

sustainability, developing collaborative projects and starting a process of reviewing the Constitution. Throughout the year, several working groups were established to support these priorities.

1. Governance and Board Development

Following the election of the new Board in September 2025, considerable effort was devoted to establishing effective working practices.

The Board agreed to:

- establish monthly online meetings;
- introduce clearer decision-making procedures;
- improve agenda planning through a shared online document;
- circulate minutes in short time after the meeting;
- store official documents in an online storage;
- use email for official decisions and WhatsApp for informal communication;
- clarify responsibilities between the President, Vice-President, General Secretary and Treasurer.

2. Communication and Member Engagement

Communication emerged as one of the Board's highest strategic priorities.

The Board concluded that a network can only remain active through regular communication with its members. Discussions therefore focused on:

- creating a regular newsletter;
- increasing social media activity;
- improving the website;
- strengthening direct contact with member organisations;
- establishing clearer communication responsibilities.

Rather than concentrating primarily on external publicity, the Board agreed that rebuilding communication within the membership should be the first priority. Members were contacted individually to gather expectations for the General Assembly and suggestions for future work.

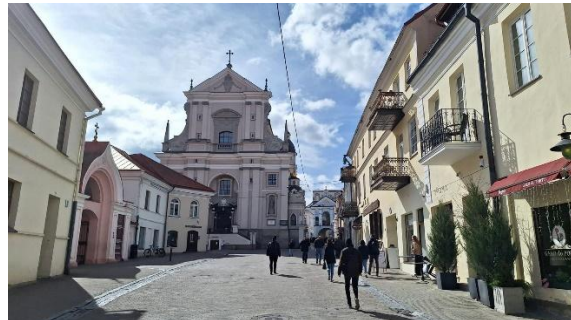
3. Preparation for the 2026 General Assembly in Vilnius

a. Selection of the venue

One of the earliest major decisions was to select **Vilnius** as the venue for the 2026 General Assembly, while confirming the **Orthodox Academy of Crete** as host for 2027 after completion of renovation work.

Vilnius was chosen because of:

- strong local ecumenical partnerships;
- excellent organisational support from the Orthodox Christian Institute for Education & Research;
- opportunities to involve new member organisations;
- the relevance of Lithuania's geopolitical context.





b. Programme planning

Throughout the year the General Assembly Working Group developed the programme.

The agreed structure included:

- **16-17 September** – Board meeting and evening opening;
- **17-18 September** – General Assembly and business sessions;
- **18-19 September** – Study Day;
- **20 September afternoon** – Departures participants and Board meeting;
- **21 September** – Departure board members.

The Board also agreed that members of the Board should arrive earlier to allow strategic planning before the Assembly.

c. Development of the programme

Preparatory visits to Vilnius confirmed venues, accommodation and local partnerships.

The preparation group worked with local hosts to develop:

- the Study Day programme;
- opportunities for thematic workshops;

- dialogue sessions;
- project development groups;
- wider participation through video invitations and social media.

The Lithuanian context was recognised as particularly appropriate for discussions on:

- Christianity and democracy;
- war and peace;
- Russian aggression against Ukraine;
- the role of churches in contemporary Europe.

d. Member consultation

Board members contacted member organisations directly.

Responses showed considerable interest in themes such as:

- Christian nationalism;
- democracy and authoritarianism;
- migration and refugees;
- peace ethics;
- European identity;
- artificial intelligence and technology;
- cooperation between churches and civil society.

These responses became the principal source for shaping the Study Day and General Assembly programme. The Board also agreed that participants should be able to work in thematic groups and develop future collaborative projects during the Assembly.

4. Working Groups

a. General Assembly Working Group

Members

- Veronika Matějková
- Katerina Karkala
- Heinz-Joachim Lohmann
- Catriona Robertson
- Alf Lindermann
- Pr. Gintaras Sungaila
- Pr. George Roi

Main achievements

- selected Vilnius;
- organised preparatory visit;

- developed programme structure;
- organise speakers for the study day;
- coordinated with local hosts;
- incorporated member feedback into planning;
- explored participatory formats and project workshops;
- meetings before and after the Assembly.

b. Membership Fee Working Group

The Board established a Membership Fee Group comprising:

- Monika Appmann
- Veronika Matějková
- Alf Lindermann
- Heinz-Joachim Lohmann

Its mandate was to:

- review the current fee structure;
- improve long-term sustainability;
- prepare proposals for future membership contributions.

c. Communication Working Group

Although not formally constituted as a separate working group, communication responsibilities were shared among Board members together with Kjell Riise and Kateryna Stulnikova.

Achievements included:

- preparation of newsletters;
- development of communication guidelines;
- review of website and social media;
- discussion of a long-term communication strategy;
- clarification of official email procedures.

The board values the contribution of Kjell Riise to the social media channels and the communication structures of Oikosnet.

d. Constitution Working Group

Gernot Meier prepared a comprehensive revised Constitution aimed at modernising governance and aligning Oikosnet Europe with current NGO practice.

Progress included:

- circulation of draft revisions;
- collection of comments;
- continued review by Board members;
- commitment to complete the work through a consultative process rather than rushing adoption.

Members of the Constitution Working Group are:

-Frank Grimsted
 -Katerina Karkala
 -Alf Linderman
 -Hannah Schilling

The Constitution Working Group met once in this constellation on August 20. The results of the WG will be presented at the GA in 2027.

5. Financial Management

Financial reports highlighted several challenges.

The Board reviewed:

- unpaid membership fees;
- higher-than-expected General Assembly expenditure;
- the need to improve budgeting;
- earlier audit preparation;
- sustainable project funding.

A corrected financial report and audit timetable were requested, and discussions emphasised balancing ambitious activities with available resources.

Annual Financial Report 2025 – Introduction



For the last ten years, the finances of Oikosnet Europe have been managed by one of its founding members, Sigtunastiftelsen, in Sweden. I was the Executive Director for this member from 2001 to 2023, and I am still related to this institution. I presently serve as the Treasurer of Oikosnet Europe and work closely with the Head of finances of Sigtunastiftelsen, Maria-Pia Anderloni. Here are some comments to the financial reports for 2025. To make this document relevant but not too extensive, I will only pay attention to the things I find important.

Profit and Loss Statement

Membership fees: This is one of the most important items in the budget of Oikosnet Europe. This is the financial foundation for the association since there are almost no other general income sources. For 2025, we did reach the level we had budgeted for, and for this we are very thankful. As you know, there is a process initiated with the goal of finding a long-needed revision of the system for determining the level of membership fees.

Participation fees: This budget item was also slightly over the budgeted amount.

Secretariat fees: Previously, the Sigtuna office was granted 10K euro yearly for the administration, finance and information work of the association. Part of the work was then transferred to the Evangelical Academy of Berlin, and thus the payment to Sigtuna was cut in half. The agreement with Berlin was however not done at the time when the budget was created. This is the explanation to the difference between the budget and the result.

Board Meetings: The cost for board meetings was higher than budgeted. To reduce the cost, all board meetings after the 2025 General Assembly have been digital except for the meeting that will be held in conjunction with the General Assembly in Vilnius.

Annual Conference/General Assembly: The cost for the General Assembly is the biggest part of the budget and have increased over the years while the budgeted amount has stayed the same. This is one of the most important activities of our association so while we work to find less expensive solutions, the suggested budget for 2027 will have a higher amount to make it more realistic.

Investments in projects: Investments were only 6,5 percent of the budgeted amount. This is sad since we really want to see collaboration among members, but on the other hand this is why the overall deficit was not as dramatic as it could have been. The total result for 2025 was a deficit of around ten thousand euros.



Resultaträkning

Profit and loss statement

	2025	2025	Budget 2025
	SEK*	EURO	EURO
Verksamhetens intäkter/income			
Membership fees	326 444	30 176	30 000
Donations	0	0	0
Participation fees, annual meeting	56 254	5 200	4 550
Other income	0	0	0
<i>Taken from reserves of Oikosnet Europe</i>			<i>19 700</i>
Summa intäkter/Total income	382 698	35 376	54 250
Verksamhetens kostnader/expenses			
Secretariat fees	-108 916	-10 068	-5 000
Conferences and board activities			
<i>Board meetings</i>	<i>-53 506</i>	<i>-4 946</i>	<i>-3 500</i>
<i>Annual conference</i>	<i>-192 463</i>	<i>-17 791</i>	<i>-10 000</i>
<i>Arab-Europe Dialogue</i>	<i>-60 635</i>	<i>-5 605</i>	<i>-5 000</i>
<i>Developing new relationships with possible new members</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-2 000</i>
<i>CEC working group</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-1 000</i>
Total conferences and board activities	-306 604	-28 342	-21 500
Investments in projects	-13 944	-1 289	-20 000
Travel expenses			
<i>Travel cost board</i>	<i>-29 090</i>	<i>-2 689</i>	<i>-2 000</i>
<i>Travel costs others</i>	<i>-15 481</i>	<i>-1 431</i>	<i>-1 500</i>
Total travel expenses	-44 570	-4 120	-3 500
Representation			
Representative expenses	0	0	-500
Ecumenical guests	0	0	-1 500
Total representation	0	0	-2 000
Administration			
Bank cost	-1 179	-109	-250
Foreign exchange loss	0	0	0
Interest	0	0	0
Social media advertisement	-573	-53	-1 000
Total administration	-1 179	-162	-1 250
Other expenses			
Membership fee AISBL	0	0	0
Other costs	-16 400	-1 516	-1 000
Donations	0	0	0
Total other expenses	-16 400	-1 516	-1 000
Summa kostnader/Total expenses	-491 613	-45 497	-54 250
Verksamhetens resultat/Surplus+ / Deficit -	-108 916	-10 121	0



Balansräkning	2025-12-31	2025-12-31
<i>Balance sheet</i>	<i>SEK</i>	<i>EURO</i>
TILLGÅNGAR/assets		
Receivables	36 781	3 400
Bank balance	1 514 931	140 038
Accrued income	0	0
Total current assets	1 551 712	143 438
SUMMA TILLGÅNGAR/total assets	1 551 712	143 438
EGET KAPITAL OCH SKULDER/Equity and liabilities		
Balanserat resultat / Balanced surplus or deficit	1 434 023	132 559
Årets resultat/ Surplus or Deficit	-109 489	-10 121
Summa eget kapital/ Capital of Oikosnet Europe Idelle förening	1 324 534	122 438
Kortfristiga skulder/short term liabilities		
Accrued expenses	129 816	12 000
EAAE	97 362	9 000
Summa kortfristiga skulder/total short term liabilities	227 178	21 000
SUMMA EGET KAPITAL OCH SKULDER/	1 551 712	143 438
Totalt Equity and Liabilities		

* exchange rate 10,818

6. Projects

Two principal initiatives continued throughout the year:

a.Arab-European Citizens' Dialogue

The Board reaffirmed its commitment to this initiative, noting the value of dialogue with partners from the Arab region and opportunities for continued cooperation.

Planning meeting in Berlin, 24.-25.6.2026

The planning committee of the AECD met in Berlin, at the office of Heinz-Joachim Lohmann at the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin. Present were Andrea Zaki, President, and Samira Luka, Director for Dialogue of the Coptic Evangelical Organisation of Social Services/CEOSS in Cairo and Heinz-Joachim Lohmann, Alf Linderman and Katerina Karkala from Oikosnet. The main theme of discussion were the continuing activities in the AECD project for the period 2025-2028, as well as the review of funding opportunities for the project. The next AECD Conference is tentatively planned for **8–11 April 2027** in **Athens**, in cooperation with the Inter-Orthodox Center of the Church of Greece, subject to sufficient funding; Cairo remains

an alternative venue. The proposed conference theme is **"Post-war paradox: Peace & conflict – Living together and learning from each other,"** covering peacebuilding, migration, and socio-political issues. It should be a rather small meeting with approx.. 10 participants from each side. The meeting concluded with agreements on preparing a concept note, budget, participant arrangements, and other organizational details. Participants also attended an EKD reception in Berlin, followed by a brief European coordination meeting on the AECD project.



The coordinating committee of the AECD in Berlin, at the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin.



b. Youth Project

Preparatory work shall continue on a multi-year Erasmus+ proposal starting in 2027.

Partners continued developing the consortium and project design, with submission planned in a later funding round.

Europe's young generation faces uncertainty and the feeling that what's happening in Europe at the moment is worrying: war, economic insecurity, threats to democracy, the climate crisis, fragmentation and extremism.

A meeting of Oikosnet members took place 26-29 March 2025 at Centro Ecumenico Agape, Italy, to plan a series of workcamps for young adults in 2026, 2027 and 2028. This built on the success of previous Youth Dialogues at Agape and at Potsdam, Germany. Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin, Centro Ecumenico Agape and the Iona Community worked together. The title "No Panic – Learning Resilience in a World at Risk" was agreed.

The first Youth Dialogue took place 24-30 May 2026 at Agape, which is a longstanding member of Oikosnet Europe. Young adults were invited to explore possibilities for hope and pathways for socio-ecological transformation and to share examples of encouragement for resistance, resilience and change.

The participants aged 18 to 30 came from Italy, Germany and the UK. The week was intensive. There were three shared meals each day, with workshops in the morning, afternoon and evening. Agape led a hike up into the mountains on one day. All helped with preparing meals and washing up. The accommodation was in shared rooms. Agape is in a beautiful area, surrounded by wildlife and snowy mountains. Most of the workshops took place outside in the sunshine.

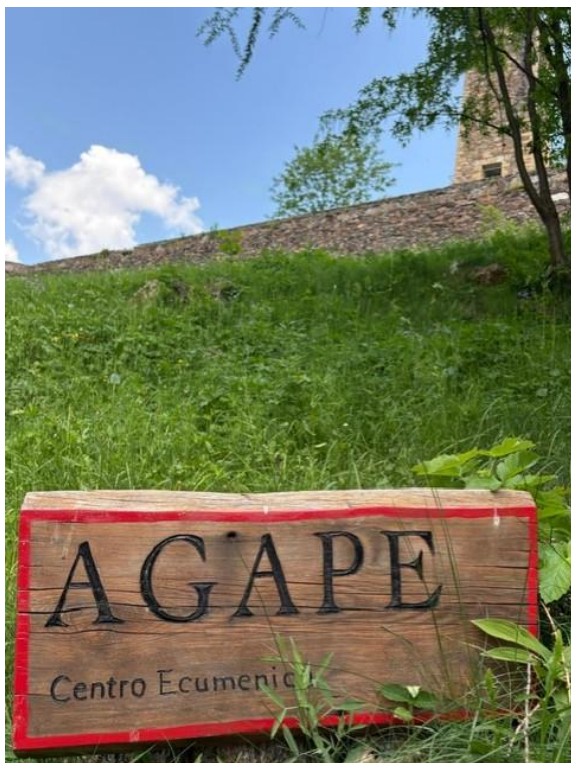
Some of the questions that the young adults asked were:

- Will I survive?
- How do I not panic?
- Am I fighting for the right thing?
- Can I even change something if all of the people on the top do nothing?
- Why do we take too much for ourselves when others don't have enough?
- How to improve communal living in a world that is privatised/isolated?
- How is war still a thing? Why do we invest all of our money in killing people?

The objective of the creative workshops was not only to share ideas, but to develop a shared message of hope for Europe which could be transformed into a design for a symbolic playground structure. It is hoped that this will be built in Agape in the upcoming two years, in collaboration with playground company SIK HOLZ.

The young adults decided on Europe being a place of safety, and that “engaging in community and building a better world, whilst hard work, should ultimately be a process of joy, liberation and creativity that we want to engage in for our own sake.”

Young adults do not feel they are listened to. A Treasure Box of ‘tweets’ – short messages of panic, hope and action – will be available at the General Assembly at Vilnius, so that everyone can read and respond to the messages. Further workcamps are planned for 2027 and 2028.





Main Outcomes of the Year

The Board had achieved several important milestones:

- established clearer governance procedures and responsibilities;
- selected and prepared Vilnius as the venue for the 2026 General Assembly;
- developed a participatory programme based on consultation with members;
- strengthened communication through newsletters and direct engagement;
- initiated constitutional reform;
- improved financial oversight;
- established working groups on the General Assembly, Membership Fees, Communication and Constitution;
- continued strategic projects on youth engagement (Agape) and Arab-European Citizens Dialogue (AECD).

Overall Conclusion

The period from September 2025 to August 2026 was characterised by organisational strengthening and strategic planning. The Board invested significant effort in creating effective governance structures, rebuilding communication within the network, and preparing a participatory and contextually relevant General Assembly in Vilnius. The work of the various working groups provided a solid foundation for the Assembly and positioned Oikosnet Europe to continue developing as a collaborative European ecumenical network.



[Annual Report: Katerina Karkala, 11/08/2026]