



GENSEC-2017-058

Brussels, 12 June 2017

Ref.: current stage of the discussion on the Future of Europe and invitation to the next regional consultations

Dear Eminences and Excellences', esteemed Bishops and Church leaders,
Dear colleagues and friends,

The open letter on the Future of Europe issued by the CEC Governing Board in June 2016 received a significant response from CEC Member Churches and Partner Organisations. Concerns outlined in the letter faced by many people in Europe today call on churches to make their voice heard in the discussion on the future on our continent.

Discussion initiated by the letter is part of the preparations for the upcoming CEC Assembly in Novi Sad, which will be the focal point of the process. With this letter, we would like to inform you about the preliminary outcomes and the current stage of the discussion, as well as invite you to contribute to its next steps.

CEC consultation process and responses to the Open letter on Future of Europe

Up to May 2017 CEC received 19 official reactions from CEC Member Churches, National Councils of Churches and Organisations in Partnership. Most of them have been results of an intensive consultation process within the replying church, Council of Churches, or Organisation in Partnership. CEC is thankful for all responses.

We have received a number of constructive proposals, critical comments, as well as contributions addressing some specific issues raised in the letter. The responses reflect the richness and variety of different experiences of churches, theological accents in their work, as well as the variety of socio-political realities churches are living across the continent.

We are committed to keeping the discussion process on the Future of Europe as an open, transparent and participatory activity. Reactions received can be found on <http://www.ceceurope.org/open-letter/>.

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Two regional consultations have already been held. Churches from the Nordic-Baltic region met from 17-18 March in Reykjavik and churches from the UK and Ireland from 6-7 April in Edinburgh. The summary and outcomes of these 2 events are available on the CEC website.

Invitation to the regional consultation on the Future of Europe and the event leading to the CEC Assembly 2018 for churches in the South

Two additional regional events are planned for the second half of 2017. The consultation for churches, National Councils of Churches and CEC partners from the south will take place from **4-6 October 2017 at the Orthodox Academy in Volos (Greece)**. We invite representatives of CEC Member Churches from the region, National Councils of Churches, Organisations in Partnership, as well as members of different CEC working bodies from churches in the region to this consultation. The preliminary timetable of the meeting and the registration form are attached.

Invitation to the regional consultation on the Future of Europe and the event leading to the CEC Assembly 2018 for churches in Central and Eastern Europe

We invite at the same time to the consultation for churches, National Councils of Churches and CEC partners from Central and Eastern Europe. The term Central and Eastern Europe is in this particular case understood in a broad sense and includes a larger European area and countries including Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The consultation for this region will take place from **30 November – 1 December 2017 in Prague (Czech Republic)**. Members of different CEC working bodies from churches in the region are also invited. The preliminary timetable and the registration form are attached.

Both of these events will take place in English.

The agenda of these consultations will be framed by the concerns addressed in the CEC open letter on the Future of Europe. These will be further developed and broadened in two directions: theological and socio-political. As attachment to this letter, you will find a copy of the latest contribution of CEC into this discussion, "Beyond Prosperity) focusing on the theme of economic justice and European economic governance. Paper copies can be ordered from this [link](#).

The core of the meetings will be a discussion in the outlined frame, to which all participants are invited to contribute. Outcomes of the discussion will shape the future work of CEC, and will contribute in particular, to profile the process leading to the next CEC Assembly.

For reasons of timing and capacity we have to limit ourselves to regional meetings as outlined above. We invite CEC Member Churches, Councils of Churches and Organisations in Partnership, in particular those from the regions not covered by the 2 events in the first half of the year, to participate in one of these events. The invitation is, however, extended to all CEC constituencies to participate in this process.

There is an ongoing discussion with CEC Member Churches in Belgium and the Netherlands and we are jointly exploring the possibility for one or two small additional events in these countries.

We are interested to meet representatives of all churches from the respective regions, including small and minority churches. In case you are not able to cover the costs of the conference, please let us know. We are open to discuss available resource for financial support enabling your participation at the conference.

Attached you will find the preliminary programme for both upcoming regional consultations and respective registration forms. Please return the completed forms to Charlotte Belot (cbelot@cec-kek.be) in CEC office **by 15 July 2017**.

In agreement with CEC policy on reducing our impact on climate change, we invite all participants of the consultation to consider ecologically friendly means of transport for travel to the consultation. All participants are invited to contribute an amount of 20€ to the CO² compensation scheme.

Should you have any question related to the consultation, please contact us.

We look forward to meeting you at the conference.

Warm wishes,



Fr Heikki Huttunen
General Secretary

Enclosures:

Programme Volos
Registration Form Volos
Programme Prague
Registration Form Prague
Beyond Prosperity (PDF)