



Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe

Commission des Eglises auprès des Migrants en Europe

Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa

CCME 1964 - 2004

Facts and figures

of 40 years

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Introduction

In 2004, CCME, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, celebrates its 40th anniversary, an opportunity to look back on people and events that have influenced the Commission and made it what it is today.

It is the aim of this small brochure to do that: It offers insights into 40 years of history, reminds us of names, places and dates and points out important decisions and changes.

There are many things to discover: The Commission has changed its name several times, has concentrated on ever new areas of work, has undertaken a wide range of projects, it has moved offices twice. Every change also brought about a different image, focus and new guidelines for the work.

Even a small detail of the Commission's presentation like its logo, which makes letters, documents and publications clearly recognizable, reflects these developments.



In 1964, the Commission takes up its work with the traditional logo of the WCC in its letterhead. CCME is firmly rooted in the ecumenical movement. It is founded in 1964 at the suggestion of an international conference organised by the WCC, its seat and offices are at the ecumenical centre in Geneva. For a long time, the commission works under the sign and symbol of the traditional ship of the ecumenical fellowship, and, as it is reasonable to do, it leans on the already existent ecumenical and international structure. CCME becomes established under the logo of the WCC, and without this organisation, it would be hard to imagine CCME today. It was only several years later that the Commission decided to have its own distinctive symbol but maintaining the ship as common ecumenical symbol.





CCME has grown, one could even say "grown up" and is now independent, having moved, in 1977, to the "European capital", Brussels. And now, in 1990, it finally has its own logo. Its scope has become much broader and Europe as a political entity has come to be a principal contact, which is also expressed geographically in the logo. Besides the cross and the ecumenical ship, a map of the European continent as part of the globe has been included in the design. Like an arrow, the ship's sail is pointing towards it.



Just 10 years later, the Commission adopts another new logo. The map of Europe has disappeared again, but work in a European context is now represented by four stars suggestive of the European flag. This common flag represents the unity of the European countries, an attachment to each other that is more than simple geographical neighbourhood. The ecumenical ship with its sail and mast designed to represent a cross is more immediately connected to the sea. Under full sail, the ship faces the waves of time and life, the troubled waters of politics and history. The new logo has a modern and dynamic look and it tells us that CCME is and remains up-to-date.

40 years of CCME - Enjoy this journey through time.

Robert Mathes
September 2003

Doris Peschke
October 2004

The brochure has been compiled until September 2003, some information has been added in October 2004 with the final editing.



About CCME

The Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe is an ecumenical agency on migration and integration, refugees and asylum and anti-racism and anti-discrimination in Europe. The aim of CCME is to develop in the churches throughout Europe a due sense of responsibility towards the situation of migrants, refugees and minority ethnic people. Churches in Europe share the same convictions based on the common biblical heritage. "For I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (MT 25:35) is challenging Christians and churches to work for a community and society to welcome persons of different culture and origin in their midst. CCME encourages and initiates appropriate measures on the part of the churches, which promote and enhance the rights of these people and defend them against discrimination.

Founded in 1964, CCME is an organization of churches and ecumenical councils as well as church-related agencies from Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Ireland. CCME cooperates with the Conference of European Churches and the World Council of Churches.

It holds official observer status with the Council of Europe and observes the Migration Committee of the Council of Ministers. It maintains a wide network of contacts with the European Commission and the European Parliament in various departments and committees. This enables CCME to monitor European policy-making in the migration, integration, asylum and anti-discrimination spheres and to present the concerns of the churches to the relevant institutions.

CCME works closely with other Christian organizations active on migration and asylum in Brussels, e.g. the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community, Caritas Europe, the International Catholic Migration Commission, the Jesuit Refugee Service Europe, the Quaker Council for European Affairs. With the other organisations in the Ecumenical Center in Brussels, e.g. the Church and Society Commission of CEC, Euro diakonia, APRODEV, concerns are shared and activities are jointly planned and undertaken. Interregional cooperation has been established with the Amman Process of exchange on migration and refugees in the Mediterranean region with the Middle East Council of Churches. CCME is also active in the Platform of NGOs on Migration and Asylum hosted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Brussels, and as a founding member it participates in the work of the European Network Against Racism and the European Coordination for Foreigners' Right to Family Life. CCME represents CEC in the European Council on Refugees and Exiles ECRE.



CCME serves the member churches with information and exchange on European policies, formulates common European ecumenical positions on the specific issues of migration, asylum and racism and brings them to the knowledge of the European institutions. It represents its members as appropriate in international organisations and at meetings and conferences on relevant issues.

CCME stimulates the churches with documentation, information and eventually training to become active at a national level and supports and coordinates efforts and initiatives undertaken by churches and other bodies in this field. It organizes consultations encouraging co-operation, identifies projects and programmes and assists churches to implement them.

CCME promotes awareness-raising on issues of racism and xenophobia within the churches and in society, it conducts studies of the situation of migrants, refugees and minority ethnic people at local, national and international level.

Its General Assembly meets every three years to review and further develop its programme of action. Between these Assemblies the Executive Committee functions as the governing body. It is mandated to establish working groups to cover the main areas of the work programme.

CCME communicates with its members through circular letters approximately twice a year. The Conference of European Churches in its "Monitor" regularly reports on CCME events and news and has provided space on its website for CCME information, documents and reports (www.cec-kek.org).

CCME's Mission Statement

CCME is an ecumenical organisation that serves the churches in their commitment to strangers, responding to the message of the Bible which insists on the dignity of every human being, in order to promote an inclusive policy at European and national level for migrants, refugees and minority groups.

The objectives of CCME are:

- a. to monitor European and national migration, refugee and anti-discrimination policy, to inform the churches about these policies;
- b. to support and serve the churches in their advocacy;
- c. to challenge the European institutions to act in accordance with human rights and international obligations;
- d. to strengthen on a global, European, national and regional level the cooperation of churches, NGO's and others in this field;



- e. to support and challenge churches to include migrants (churches, groups or individuals) in the communion of churches;
- f. to address fears in societies around migration and facilitate churches' initiatives on finding ways to peaceful living.



Doris Peschke (General Secretary, Annemarie Dupré (Moderator) and Martin Affolderbach (previous Moderator) at Aegina Assembly 2002

“Several million migrant workers are at present living in the industrial countries of Western Europe. Most of them did not go to other countries of their own free will. They are victims of a bad economic or political situation at home and often of exaggerated hopes of false promises in their new surroundings. Although working abroad means a higher wage for the foreign worker, he pays dearly for it because he is always at the mercy of “the market” and has to accept all the disadvantages of being uprooted.

The Churches should recognize the migration movement and all its associated manifestations as a widespread problem which will remain with us probably permanently. Irrespective of party political or other vested interests the Churches should urge those with political, economic and social power to reach just solutions. One of the great needs is for an international migration policy which takes due account of the interests of all concerned, and which eliminates each discrimination against the migrant as exists today.

The Christian response to the problem of migration must take the form of specific social and political projects which, guided by the conviction that the task of the Churches must go further than personal care for immigrant workers, are directed towards a social and economic order based on justice.

It is never easy for a foreigner in another country - from political customs and social behaviour to eating habits; a still more important factor is that every community tends to distrust the foreigner and close its ranks against him.

Christians cannot remain indifferent and passive in this situation. The justice which springs from faith in Jesus Christ compels them to support the rights of others. We therefore appeal to you in your local churches to welcome foreigners in your midst as people like yourselves, and not to treat them as aliens. Help them to adapt themselves to life in the new environment, without forcing your own way of life upon them. We appeal to you to seek new ways whereby attitudes may be changed and the environment influenced so that the human dignity and the rights of the migrant workers become fully recognized.”

And as an appendix to this collection of pamphlets there was a list called “Some practical suggestions for local groups”:

1. *To promote better and cheaper housing accommodation.*
2. *To promote social assistance to the migrant workers by authorities and churches.*



3. *To promote a better understanding of the social and cultural background of the migrant workers.*
4. *To send people to the countries of origin of migrant workers to learn the language and the milieu of migrants.*
5. *To inform migrants about the political, social and economic situations in the country to which they have come.*
6. *To promote the reunion of the migrant workers' families, if they wish such a reunion.*
7. *To organize meetings with the local population to promote a better understanding of the problems of the migrant workers by the local people, e.g. with regard to*
 - a. *the attitude of migrant workers towards women in industrialized countries*
 - b. *the reaction by migrant workers to national customs*
 - c. *mixed marriages*
8. *To establish language clubs if possible together with migrant workers.*
9. *To organize visits to lodgings where migrant workers are living and to hospitals and prisons.*
10. *To stimulate the establishment of centres where migrant workers can meet.*
11. *To organize lecture centres with books, weeklies, monthlies in the migrants' languages and books on the migrants' countries for nationals. Centres like these could be extended to become information and counselling centres. They should give special attention to migrant workers returning to their home country.*
12. *To organize cooking-courses in order to learn dishes from migrants' countries. In these courses the migrants should be included.*
13. *To organize sport events with the migrants as well as evenings with pictures in the migrants' languages.*
14. *To organize welcome evenings for new arrivals.*
15. *To organize excursions.*
16. *To stimulate and organize language courses, driving courses, vocational training courses and to organize professional education in preparation for sharing in a technological industrial society.*

On **April 15 – 16 1972** a Consultation of Migrant Workers was held in the Ecumenical Centre tackling the question: “How can we best work together to achieve our rights?” CCMWE proposed this meeting because it believed it had no authority to speak on behalf of migrant workers unless it first of all tried to hear what these migrant workers themselves had to say. So this was a Consultation of migrant workers, not one about them, and it brought together fifty migrant workers working in Western Europe coming from twelve different countries. The part of CCMWE was to initiate the idea and to make available to the members of the Consultation the resources and facilities to make it possible.

A number of resolutions were approved, one of them was the

“Resolution on

Organisation of the Migrants in the Receiving Country:

The migrants must organize themselves. The basic feature should be that these are genuine organizations of the working class. Each national group should set up its own organization of this character, but efforts should be made to relate together these organizations in each country. This cooperation should be realized not only at the top level, but also on local level and around practical problems common to all migrants. These organizations should be independent from the various embassies and consulates. We reaffirm at the same time the need to realize and to maintain the unity between the migrants and the indigenous working class. This unity should be achieved within the context of the struggle of the proletariat.”

At the **1. Assembly in Geneva (Ecumenical Centre, June 4-8 1973)** the Committee adopted new Articles of Association and a new name:

- Chuches’ Committee on Migrant Workers (CCMW)
- Comité des églises auprès des Travailleurs migrants (CETMI)
- Ausschuss der Kirchen für Fragen ausländischer Arbeitnehmer (AKFA)

An interesting passage on the political dimension of migration is to be found in the preface of the “Report of the Special Sessions” of this first Assembly:

“(...) We have repeatedly done our utmost to make the churches realize that migration is not a natural but a contrived, and therefore political, phenomenon and that it is imperative to fight it, at least in part, by choosing the alternative of transferring capital to the countries of origin, which is likewise a political issue.

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Our exhortations had little effect.

European societies, and with them also the churches, have in fact been inclined to think of migration either as a curse or a blessing, but in both cases they have to some extent held it to be inevitable and treated it as a sort of misfortune or the price to be paid for progress. This being so, the most they could do would be to try to deal with the worst of its outward forms.

Two events brought the Churches' Committee to feel that the time for issuing warnings had passed and that was needed now was a clear statement of principle leaving no possible doubt about our radical criticism of the present situation.

The first of these two events was the Consultation of Migrant Workers held last year in Geneva under the auspices of the Churches' Committee. The migrant workers stated very clearly that their prime concern was the causes of migration, not the manifestations of it.

The second was the launching of the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism. Here too the debate continues especially with reference to the universal nature of the problem. But it is another example of the effort to get beyond the symptoms and come to grips with the causes.

This is why we decided that the time was ripe to confront the churches and the general public with their real responsibilities. (...)"

Some characteristic activities and studies of the first ten years

- 1964 - 1966 and 1968 - 1972: Studies on the legal and actual situation of migrant workers' in Western Europe, in cooperation with ICMC.
- May / June 1965: Ecumenical consultation on migrant workers in Western Europe in Bossey / Switzerland under the joint auspices of the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey and CCMWE.
- 1965 - 1967: Studies on the problems of Muslim migrants.
- 1965: Studies on school problems of migrant children.
- 1965 and 1968: Conferences for lay and clergy working daily and professionally amongst migrants, in cooperation with WCC.
- 1967: Studies on the situation of migrant workers in a period of economic recession.



- 1968 - 1971: Studies on the relation between migration and development.
- May 1968: Second consultation on migrant workers in Western Europe in Bossey.
- 1969: CCMWE published a set of pamphlets called: "Migrant workers in Western Europe. What local churches in receiving countries can do."
- May 1970: Conference for Committee members and experts on the relationship between migration and development in St. Pölten, Austria.
- 1972 - 1973: Studies on the political dimension of migration.
- April 1972: Consultation of Migrant Workers in the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva .

Throughout the time, CCME cooperates with and participates in the work of others actors (Council of Europe, European Community EC, International Catholic Migration Commission ICMC, Conference of European Churches CEC, ...).

The Committee always sought to find criteria for actions and guidelines especially for the Churches with regard to its concerns.



1974 - 1983

The **2. Assembly in Geneva (Ecumenical Centre, April 30 - May 3 1974)** focussed its attention on three important subjects from the general theme of emigration as it is documented in the "Report of the Special Sessions" of this Assembly:

"(...) In the first place, clandestine emigration. Here we have an example of a subject which is not new but, despite all efforts, continues to exist, bringing with it a whole series of painful aspects which, as always, must be borne by the emigrant. Is it really his fault? After all, who are the clandestine emigrants? Why does clandestine emigration exist? What steps should be taken? What can, and should, the churches do? (...)"

In second place, the emigration of women has always been given secondary consideration, perhaps because it concerns women... Without a doubt, our attention has been directed more toward men, and occasionally toward children, while the woman migrant had not received the attention she deserves. That woman is also wife and mother, a homemaker with responsibility for the nurture of the children, and often one who must work to help support the family. What is her place in society? What is her place in the work milieu? (...)"

And thirdly, the effects of the world energy crises on migration policies. Here we are confronted and alarmed by the social, economical, political and psychological repercussions emerging from this crisis. (...)"

In October 1975, after the **3. Assembly in the Netherlands (Noordwijkerhout, May 5 - 9 1975)** David Mason, Chairman of the Committee, wrote in a letter "to the Members and Representatives of Member Churches at the Assembly 1975" what has happened at this Assembly:

"(...) The Third Assembly was a faithful reflection of the current situation. Thus it devoted a considerable part of its agenda to the migration of women. It looked at the phenomenon of racism. It sought to express solidarity to migrant workers, as exemplified in the bible studies. But on the last day of its meeting it did something different and this vital new move is the real motivation of this letter. The Third Assembly decided to place more emphasis on action and less on study and reflection. To that end it agreed to meet less frequently, perhaps every two or three years. When such meetings do take place, they should be strictly a working occasion and their purpose in order to take decisions. In between these central meetings every two or three years, there would be a number of working parties with very precise terms of

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reference, such as the European Community and concrete action, presentation of material and information through the media, etc. In other words, the preliminary hard work would be done before an Assembly meeting, so that any future Assembly would be presented with a number of choices for decision and action. The emphasis has shifted from general resolutions and statements to more precise action programmes worked out at a local level. (...)"

These decisions led to some suggestions by the officers and to the adoption of guidelines for the future work on the therefore important **4. Assembly in Belgium (Overijse, November 10 – 12 1976).**

Suggestions by the officers of CCMW for the 4. Assembly:

New strategy:

- main interlocuteur: the EC
- priorities: issues of the return of migrant workers; the migration of women; human rights
- General principle: emphasis on action as against study or reflection

For this new strategy a new location is needed:

- Amplification of relationships with the EC and with the National Committees
- Relationship but autonomy with the "Ecumenical Centre on Church and Society" and the "Commission of the Churches of the European Community"
- taking into account what is already existing in Brussels (Ecumenical Centre on Church and Society, etc.)

Adopted guidelines:

Priority objectives:

- To lobby for migrant workers for equal treatment with natives
- To support the self-organisation of migrant workers
- To continue work regarding the situation of migrant women
- To deal with pastoral tasks regarding the employment of migrants, religious and cultural problems; meeting with non-Christians

Future strategy:

- To strengthen cooperation with migrants, their organizations and their countries of origin

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- creation of awareness for equal treatment of migrant and native workers
- To lobby the EC and other European institutions for the benefit of non-EC Member States
- To strengthen cooperation with the Roman-Catholic Church on European level
- To lay emphasis on actions, studies must be action-orientated.
- To motivate national committees to set themselves objectives concerning the whole European Area

As a result Brussels became the new location of the Committee in 1977. The new address was Centre Oecumenique, 23 Avenue Auderghem, 1040 Brussels.

In 1977 the Committee was again renamed. Having started with the idea of a "Churches' Committee on West European Migration" in 1963, the first official name 1964 was "Churches' Committee on Migrant Workers in Western Europe". It was changed in 1973 to "Churches Committee on Migrant Workers", and in 1977 the words "in Europe" were added.

So it was made clear, that the Committee was dealing with the matters of migrant workers all over Europe, not only of its Western or Eastern part, and also not only regarding the European Community or one single state.

Important topics on the **5. Assembly in Belgium (Brussels, May 9 - 12 1978)** had been the Human Rights of Working Migrants, the Multi-cultural Society in Europe and the Dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

The adopted future working programme stressed among other things the following points:

- In line with the efforts made for the enforcement of human rights, the Committee should deal in an intensive way with the situation of migrant workers and their families. Equality of treatment between foreign and home workers should become the main objective.
- More emphasis should be placed on the pastoral care of foreigners.
- The Committee should support the Christian - Muslim Dialogue.
- The officers were requested to give more serious consideration to the subject of xenophobia and racism.



The “Report of the **6. Assembly**” in Portugal (Figuera da Foz, May 2 – 9 1980) contains the programme of action adopted by the Assembly, with some very impressive words in the preamble:

“For more than 15 Years the Churches’ Committee on Migrant Workers in Europe has been confronted with the phenomenon of migration of workers within Europe and the Mediterranean area.

This type of immigration is fundamentally based on a socio-economic inequality between the countries and regions. The economic system of the free market enterprise that dominates the whole area creates and strengthens this inequality and reduces human beings to purely economic beings. (...)

This type of migration alienates man from himself. It has no real benefits, neither for the worker, nor for the sending countries or regions. All that can be said is that the receiving countries, in the short run, earn a good profit.

This conclusion can be argued and illustrated by many experiences gained during the life and work of the Churches’ Committee.

The Committee therefore condemns this phenomenon and the economic structures that caused this kind of migration to exist. It is the ultimate aim of this Committee to combat this migration and its causes in the context of the ecumenical struggle for a just, participatory and sustainable society. (...)”

Future priorities should be

- Political rights of migrants
- Returning migrants
- Pastoral care
- Enlargement of the European Community
- Migrant women
- Christian minorities of Turkey
- Dialogue with Muslims

Activities should be developed according to the Programme of Priorities agreed upon at the meeting.

The main theme of the **7. Assembly in Greece (Salonica, May 7 – 14 1982)** was “Returning Migrants and Regional Development”.



The Assembly reconfirmed the principles as set out in the preamble to the programme 1980/1981 and made some general remarks to the new programme of action:

"The priorities of programme and action arises not only from our general commitment to the issues related to migrants but also from specific situations to be found in Europe today, namely:

The rising rate of unemployment in both North and South;

The deliberate use of clandestine labour to support the present economic systems;

The influx of migrants and refugees from outside Europe;

The unwillingness of receiving countries to accept immigrants as permanent residents and the reluctance to accept the development of a multi-cultural society;

The urgent need to oppose and counteract government policies and social pressures leading to emigration."

The priorities of the next two years should be:

- Political rights of immigrants
- Combating racism in Europe
- Documentation and research
- Pastoral concerns
- Returning migrants
- Disabled migrant workers
- Migrant women
- Christian minorities in Turkey and the Middle East
- Islam

Some characteristic activities

- 1977: Protest against a directive on school matters of children of migrant workers adopted by the Council in July 1977, which said that only foreign children of a EC Member State were offered free introductory lessons and instructions in their native language and native regional studies.



- November 1977: Participation in the first European meeting of pastors responsible for foreigners in the Federal Republic of Germany.
- March 1978: First European consultation on problems of Christian minorities formerly living in Turkey, now residing in Central Europe.
- 1979: the Working Group on Christian Minorities in Turkey had been involved in several consultations in Europe, the Middle East and the USA.
- August 1979: Officers of the Committee visited Sweden to look into the situation of migrants in the Scandinavian countries. Meetings with Syrian Orthodox Christians from Turkey, with representatives of Protestant, Roman Catholic, Muslim and Jewish parishes and representatives of the Swedish government took place.
- 1979 and 1980 contacts have been established with “umbrella organisations” of migrant workers and immigrants’ associations in Belgium, Germany (Fed. Rep.), Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Contacts with several individual migrant workers associations in France and Switzerland have been developed as well.
- 1980: An information system has been set up by the secretariat, consisting of 6-months’ progress reports (published in December 1980, May and November 1981) and a monthly newssheet, published under “The Early Warning System of the Ecumenical Commission”. This newssheet was launched in January 1981; seven issues were distributed in that year. 1982 there were some 100 subscribers; most of them individuals or representatives of agencies dealing with migrant workers’ issues in particular, and the interest is steadily increasing.
- 1981: A European Conference on “The Multicultural Society – a Challenge for the Churches?” took place in Germany sponsored by the Committee.



1984 - 1993

The **8. Assembly in France (Strasbourg, October 21 – 26 1984)** included a seminar on the “Right of Permanent Residence of Migrant Workers” and a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Committee.

In their “Report of the Officers of the CCMWE on the activities of the Committee 1982 – 1984” the Officers stressed in a few words the situation of migrants and the future role of the churches and the Committee:

“(...) In evaluating the period of their mandate, the Officers have come to the conclusion that, with the economic recession affecting the lives of the weaker ones in society in particular, the situation of migrant workers / immigrants and their families in receiving countries in Europe has, on the whole, not improved. Return Migration cannot be – and will not be – the answer to their problems because of the lack of perspective for a better life in the countries of origin.

In all countries, minorities are hardest hit by unemployment. The legal protection of aliens is, in many respects, utterly insufficient. Better and more effective measures are needed to combat discrimination and racism. Basic human rights and the very principles of our democratic societies are at stake

In the ecumenical struggle for a just, participatory and sustainable society the churches have a major role to play. Therefore the CCMWE should, with more vigour than ever before, continue its work by alerting the churches to new developments and new problems in the field of migration, and seek to motivate them to be increasingly involved, both on the national and the international level. (...)”

At the **9. Assembly in Sicily (Palermo, May 3 – 8 1987)** it was decided that in the name of the Committee the word “workers” should be dropped. Thus, the Assembly was reflecting one of the major changes taking place in Europe: Europe had taken on a pluri-ethnic, pluri-cultural, pluri-religious and pluri-coloured identity. However, along with this new enrichment of European society, growing levels of intolerance, discrimination, xenophobia and racism were recognised. So the focus would no longer only be migrant workers but also migrants permanently residing in Europe with their families.

So the new name was:

- Churches’ Committee for Migrants in Europe
- Comité des églises auprès des migrants
- Ausschuss der Kirchen für Ausländerfragen

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In the framework of its Assembly, CCME organized an “International Seminar on Undocumented Migrants in the European Labour Market” on May 4 - 5 1987 in Palermo. The objectives of the seminar were to provide background information, to outline the way it is being approached by national and intergovernmental authorities and to examine the role of the churches and to study models for dealing with clandestine migration.

The “Programme of Action 1987-1990” adopted by the Assembly started with a short preamble expressing some fundamental facts and tasks of the Committee:

“In our Committee the position of migrants should be paramount. We should recognize the existence of migrant churches in our structures and, in dealing of the work of the Committee, establish working contacts with migrant workers’ organisations.

Our Working Groups have an inter-connectedness and this important fact should be recognised in the work of the Committee. Everything done in our working groups should be done from the angle of women, men and youth.

The position of women and of youth should be strengthened at every level in the structure of the Committee. Their position should serve as an underlying factor in all the thinking that is generated in all the groups.

As for its involvement, the Committee must not forget that it is a Committee of the churches and that it has a task towards the churches. It should work closely with the Roman Catholic Church and always along the principle, which encourages the Churches never to do anything alone which they can do together.

As it is a committee for migrants, the Committee’s work must focus on their needs and be on their side.

As an international, non-governmental organisation, it should present itself to other European non-governmental organisations and to European governmental organisations and institutions.”



Ecumenical Centre, 174 rue Joseph II, 1000 Brussels



In 1988 the Committee together with the European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society (EECCS) and the European Ecumenical Commission on Development (EECOD) acquired two buildings located at nos. 172 and 174, rue Joseph II, Brussels, close to the buildings of the institutions of the European Community. The three organisations founded an association of owners. The new office offers the opportunity of meeting the demands for the Committee to work as an international agency.

At the invitation of its Swedish members, CCME held its **10. Assembly in Sweden (Soedertaelje, June 29 – July 6 1990)**. It started with a public seminar on “Justice and Peace in a Multi-Cultural Europe: A Challenge to the Church” (June 29 – July 1) focussing on racism in Europe and strategies to combat racism. The seminar also offered the opportunity to exchange views with the Swedish Minister of Immigration.

The Officers and the Executive Secretary presented their report covering the period from the 9th to the 10th assembly ending with a paragraph called “The Future”:

“Europe is changing rapidly. The European Community is a challenging process of further integration (the 1992 operation). Walls dividing East and West have tumbled down and this has started a discussion on a common European home. Some Eastern European countries have applied for membership with the Council of Europe



What will this mean for the migrants in Europe? Will it offer better possibilities to give them equal rights? Will it mean an end to discrimination, xenophobia and racism? Some fear that this will not be the case while others are more optimistic and see possibilities of changing the attitude of the native population towards migrants of changing government policies.

The Churches' Committee for Migrants in Europe is an issue-oriented agency of the churches. It means that it monitors the developments in every part of Europe as far as migration is concerned.

(...) The Committee will foster its contacts with the member churches, notably those which have migrants as members.

(...) Furthermore the Committee will extend its working relationship with ecumenical organisations.

(...) Finally, the Committee is well aware of the fact that the European intergovernmental bodies are playing an increasing role in the preparation of migration policies. For that reason the Committee will profit from its position as an international organisation. It will represent the churches' concern at the various international and governmental institutions."



An impression of the Assembly in Soedertaelje

CCME's 11. Assembly took place in Schloss Hüningen, Switzerland (June 26 – 30 1993) and adopted a "Programme of Action" for the next years showing the main topics and the style of work of the Committee in that time.

There should be four priority areas:

- Anti-discrimination and equality initiatives;
- Promotion of an immigration policy which fully respect human rights in accordance with international conventions;
- Promotion of specific black and migrant group issues: women, the elderly, youth;
- Establishment of working relationships with churches in Central, Eastern and South Europe to enable them to participate fully in the work of CCME.

These areas should be addressed by:

- Monitoring and analysis
- Information sharing
- Campaigning and advocacy
- Support and networking for the empowering of constituencies

Action on these areas should be carried out through

- Holding of seminars and meetings
- Resource documents
- Task groups
- Network and constituency empowerment

The General Secretary in his Assembly Report stressed the need of NGOs working more and more on European level:

"(...) On the national level NGOs have considerable experience in defining and defending the rights of migrants and refugees. NGOs realize that their national advocacy work must be complemented by advocacy on the European level. Based on experiences over the last three years and visits to fraternal organizations in Washington, the following can be said. (...)"

And then he pointed to the needs of effective advocacy:

- A true understanding of the political system of the various European institutions.

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- The ability to monitor policy developments and summarize them for advocacy purposes.
- The capacity to prioritise.
- The capacity to make alternative proposals.
- The capacity to form an international network that can lobby simultaneously on a national and European level.
- The ability to organize support for these proposals and also include unexpected allies in the campaign.

“Given the fact that in some European countries the word committee does not reflect the actual status of CCME, it can be considered to change the word Committee to Commission.”, the Assembly decided to do so. CCME was called from then on

- Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe
- Commission des Eglises auprès des Migrants en Europe
- Kommission der Kirchen für Migranten in Europa

Some characteristic activities

- 12 - 18 August 1984: an “International Conference on Emigrants” took place in Figueira da Foz in Portugal organized by the CCME’s Expert Group on Returning Migrants together with the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches; Portuguese emigrants and return migrants actively participated. The main themes of the conference were emigration, integration and returning migrants.
- 1985: From 1985 onwards CCME published the “Migration News Sheet” as a monthly bulletin with articles on migration in Western Europe. It was launched 1980, at that time published under The Early Warning System of the Ecumenical Commission. 1989 the number of subscribers stood at about 500.
- October 1985: The CCME Expert Group on Christian Minorities in Turkey and the Middle East held a consultation in Rheinfelden (Federal Republic of Germany) which brought together a group of people working on the refugee issue in the churches with participants from North America and Australia. A feature of this consultation was the strong participation of Roman Catholic partners.



- November 1985: Members of the Working Group on Defence of Migrant Workers' Rights held common meetings with a number of the political groups of the European Parliament. The main concern was to promote the right of permanent residence. As a result of these discussions, a number of members of the European Parliament from various political parties agreed to table a resolution calling for community legislation on the right of permanent residence and consequent rights.
- February 1986: In close co-operation with the Programme to Combat Racism of the World Council of Churches, the Working Group on Racism in Europe held a week-long consultation meeting at the Protestant Academy of Tutzing in the Federal Republic of Germany. The consultation was followed by a conference attended by 82 participants at which the tasks involved in overcoming racism in Europe were discussed with representatives of the churches, trade unions, politics and European institutions.
- May 1986: A meeting was held at Velletry in Italy involving representatives of the Comité Espagnol de Cooperación entre las Iglesias, the Conselho Português de Igrejas Cristãs and the Federazione delle Chiese Evangeliche in Italia. The Executive Secretary and the Secretary of CCME also attended the meeting, and the Evangelical Church of Greece was invited to participate as an observer. It was an opportunity to the Churches from Southern European countries to explore their common concerns and to give expression to the issues, which they considered to be of particular importance to them.
- May 1987: CCME has maintained and built up its strong links with the Council of Europe and its institutions. In May 1987 the Committee has been invited for the first time to participate as an observer in the Conference of Ministers concerned with migration issues in Oporto, Portugal.
- May 1987: After four years of studying the Expert Group on Islam submitted its final report "Islamic law and its significance for the situation of Muslim minorities in Europe" to the 9. Assembly of CCME. A copy of the report was sent to all member churches and later it was published in three official versions, in English, French and German.
- 1988: Although the Committee is an offspring of the World Council of Churches, it became an independent organisation of European churches. 1988 the Committee gained observer status with the



World Council, which means that the Committee may send representative to the Central Committee Meetings and Assemblies.

- June 1988 and November 1989: The Expert Group on Islam organized two international seminars exploring some of the issues relating to various aspects of Muslim life and European law. The first one in 1988 on “Family, Religion and the State” in Birmingham, Great Britain, and the second one in November 1989 in Driebergen, Netherlands on “Education, Religion and the State”. Both were attended by Christians and Muslims as well as by equal numbers of women and men.
- February 1989: The first “Racism Consciousness-Raising Programme” started in Germany organized by the Working Group on Racism. The objective of consciousness-raising programmes is promoting the understanding in the majority society of how racism, especially institutional racism, works, and how individual white people, often unconsciously, are involved in it. In 1990 a programme in Sweden followed.
- May 1989: In Agape, Italy, the Working Group on Migrant Women organized a workshop on the position of migrant women in the labour market and their situation as far as health is concerned. Participants came from Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Eritrea, Ethiopia, France, Italy, the Philippines, Iran, Ghana, Mali, Portugal Somalia and Timor, representing the work of 22 self-help groups and migrants’ organizations.
- October 1989: On the occasion of its 25th birthday, the opening of a new office and the change of the Executive Secretary (Pieter Muller was succeeded by Dr. Jan Niessen), the Committee organized a round-table discussion on “Europe and the position of Migrants from EC States and Third Countries and of Refugees and Asylum Seekers” and a reception to which member churches, migrants’ associations and representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations were invited.
- 1991: The Starting Line Group was formed as an informal network of persons from non-governmental organisations, institutions and independent experts. The Group aimed at raising awareness on racial discrimination in the member states of the European Union and at promoting legal measures to combat it. It was formed on the initiative of the British Commission for Racial Equality, the Dutch National Bureau against Racism and the Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe.



- 1992: Together with the other Strasbourg/Brussels based ecumenical organizations CCME organized a one-day seminar for church press officers and in doing so establishing contacts with them for mutual information exchange.
- 1992: With the Catholic Commission on Justice and Peace CCME formed a working group on Europe 1992, leading to the publication of the booklet “The Challenge of 1992 and Migration” (published in French, Spanish, Portuguese and English).
- March 1992: CCME co-sponsored a European conference on “Anti-Discrimination Legislation” organized by the Evangelische Akademie Tutzing (Germany).
- May 1992: The Federation of Protestant Churches in France and Cimade hosted CCME’s seminar on Racial Discrimination in France.
- May 1992: In Portugal CCME organized a seminar on European Migration Policies together with the Portuguese Council of Churches and other organizations.
- December 1992: A delegation of the South African Council of Churches with, among other persons, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Rev Frank Chikane and Rev Beyers Naudé, visited the Ecumenical Centre in Brussels. CCME informed the delegation about racism in Europe and the response of the churches.
- 1993: This year there are about 600 English and 200 French subscriptions for the “Migration News Sheet”. From 1985 - 1991 CCME was its only publisher, since 1991 the responsibility for the publication is shared with other organization in a newly founded European Information Network (EIN), an international association under Belgian law. The aims of EIN were to share responsibility and to get financial support from the European Commission.
- March 1993: Together with the European Ecumenical Commission on Development (EECOD) CCME organized a seminar in Brussels on “Migratory Movements and European Policies” leading to further activities in this field.
- March 1993: The Working Group on Migrant Women organized a conference in Bad Boll (Germany) on Black/Migrant Women and Health in Europe with about 60 participants from 14 European countries.
- September 1993: CCME is one of the founders of the “International Migrants Rights Watch Committee”. Together with the WCC Migration Secretariat and the Quaker United Nations Office in New



York, CCME has worked for a number of years to create this committee, which should promote the ratification and implementation of the UN Convention. The first full meeting of the Committee was held in Cairo in September 1993, at the same time as the UN World Conference on Population Development.

- November 1993: Under the patronage of the General Secretary of the Council of Europe, CCME and the International Movement against all forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) organised a seminar in Strasbourg on “The Use of International Instruments to Protect the Rights of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities”.



1994 – 2003

The **12. Assembly** met at the Morgenländische Frauenmission in Berlin (Germany, June 10 – 13 1995); theme of the whole meeting was “Partnership in Diversity”.

One of the resolutions adopted in Berlin concerns the foundation of a new organisation:

“Migration Policy Group

- The income of CCME is not expected to increase; indeed there is a possibility that it will decrease. At the same time, the work of CCME is highly valued. There are good possibilities of obtaining financial support for projects that CCME has initiated (Migration News Sheet, the Starting Line and the project on societal integration). In order to secure the continuation of this work an organisation could be created which would continue to carry out these projects and obtain the necessary financial resources.

- The new organisation is in no way a competitor of the CCME, both in terms of mandate and fundraising. Churches will need to keep up their membership fees in order to guarantee the continuation of CCME, whereas the Migration Policy Group would obtain financial support from foundations, which only sponsor neutral organisations. (...)”

Other reasons for the creation of this daughter organisation were two-fold: to focus more on policy analysis and research to complement the advocacy work of CCME, and to become involved in projects beyond Europe’s borders, which fall outside CCME’s specific mandate.

In July 1995, CCME established the Migration Policy Group, MPG.

The **13. Assembly** took place in Italy (Santa Severa, October 11 – 13 1997) at the invitation of the Federazione delle Chiese Evangeliche in Italy in the Centro Evangelico “Villagio della Gioventù”, that *“proved to be a congenial venue for the deliberations which took place in a true spirit of fellowship”*.

The introduction to the adopted “CCME Programme of Action 1997-1999” described in a few words the situation of migration and the position of the churches in the previous and the coming years:

“Migration comprises an integral part of Europe’s history and an important dimension of its current reality. European citizens continue to emigrate from or move within Europe, while migrants and refugees from other parts of the world arrive to build new lives in a European home. Although there are challenges associated with the settlement of



newcomers and long-term residents in Europe, such individuals widely contribute to Europe's economic well-being and serve to further enrich its diverse cultures.

Europe's tradition of protecting human rights, integrating migrants and refugees and cherishing cultural diversity is, however, currently under strain. By vocation, churches are well positioned to promote mutual understanding and acceptance between various communities and play an active part in the building of a just society of cultural, racial and religious diversity.

As a European ecumenical agency, CCME recognises itself as a part of a global Christian movement in solidarity with immigrants, refugees and uprooted people. (...)"

In view of the changes of the political landscape in Europe - end of Cold War, increasing integration in Europe both within and outside the EU - the Assembly felt the growing necessity to reinforce co-operation between churches and church-related organisation on the European level, for CCME especially in the field of migration and related issues.

This led to the adoption of a mandate for the ExCom to enter into negotiations with CEC and WCC regarding the restructuring of the church-related European agencies, including CCME, the European Churches' Working Group on Asylum and Refugees (ECWGAR) and the European Churches' Working Group on Racism and Xenophobia (ECWGRX), in the related but distinct fields of migration and integration, refugees and asylum, racism and xenophobia. The Assembly believed that these matters would be carried out best in a visible and distinct entity and proposed to place this future entity into the framework of CEC. The aims and objectives of CCME, however, should be retained and its specific profile and style of work upheld and enhanced.

It was clear, however, that this was only the start of a possible integration process to find a suitable and effective solution for the churches' work on migration in Europe.

The **14. Assembly** came together at the Institute for Advanced Training of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland in **Järvenpää (Finland) from 2 to 4 October 1999**. The main topics of the assembly were the enlargement of the European Union and the consequences for migration and asylum policy in the Central and Eastern European countries and the expansion of the CCME mandate to cover the whole area of migration and integration, refugees and asylum, racism and xenophobia as a result of the negotiations between CCME, the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

.....

Due to this expanded mandate, the Assembly decided to add a subtitle to CCME's name:

Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe - Ecumenical Agency on Migration, Asylum and Antiracism

The Assembly adopted a statement referring to the Action Plan of the European Council and Commission "Towards an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice" stressing the following:

"(...) The General Assembly believes that these values of freedom, security and justice should be available to all who live in the European Union and all who seek entry to its member states. It is concerned, that in practice, more emphasis is being placed on the efficiency and effectiveness of border controls – a demand which it believed was also being overemphasized in the negotiations for the enlargement of the European Union towards Central and Eastern Europe.

Assembly delegates from Italy and Greece and a speaker from Central Europe emphasized the effects of measures being introduced to control the external borders of the European Union more effectively. The execution of these measures has lead to the drowning of innocent and desperate people. In this situation criminal organisations are now organising border crossings on their conditions and a new trade of human beings is developing as a result. Women are especially victims of this situation.

The General Assembly heard disturbing reports about the ways in which refugees are still being shifted from country to country without any effective possibility to apply for asylum. (...)"

Therefore, the Assembly urges the summit of the heads of government of the EU to take measures:

"(...) To ensure the possibility for people to enter the European Union in a decent way.

To take effective legal measures against racial discrimination in the European Union in the light of article 13 of the European Community Treaty.

To treat third-country nationals who have resided in a member state for more than five years equally with European Union citizens in matters such as the free movement of workers.

To harmonize asylum procedures in such a way that a refugee has an effective possibility to apply for asylum in full respect of the Geneva Convention on refugees (1951).



To incorporate into European community policy the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers. (...)"

The **15. Assembly (Greece, October 31 – November 4 2002)** started with a public conference on “Irregular Migration: a Challenge to European Migration and Asylum Policies” on 1. November in Athens which was jointly organised with the Church of Greece and addressed by His Beatitude Archbishop Christodoulos and the Greek Minister of Interior Mr Skandalidis. After the conference, the participants of the General Assembly proceeded to **Aegina Island**, where the business sessions were held.

The Nieuwsbrief of the Samen Kerk in Nederland (8^e jaargang, no.3) published a summary of the assembly by C. T. Tabuga:

“The Churches’ Commission for Migrants (CCME) held its 15th General Assembly in Aegina Island, Greece last 31 October - 4 November 2002. The assembly adopted a programme of action for 2003 - 2005, approved its budget, approved vital documents on the issue of migration and refugees and elected its new set of officers. Annemarie Dupré of the Migrant/Refugee programme of the Federation of Italian Protestant Churches was elected as the new moderator. Ms. Doris Peschke continues to be the general secretary.

The CCME discussed and approved its policy paper on European Migration Policy -Trends and Challenges. Among others, the paper called for the churches to advance its work for the protection of human rights, support of anti-discrimination measures and legislation, protecting family rights, and building a common base for diversity. The paper identified the challenges to the churches and indicated ways towards the churches’ contribution. Another paper was on Anti-racism and Anti-Discrimination. The assembly adopted concrete measures to advance its working relations with migrant churches.

(...)

The general assembly affirmed its working relations with the Council of European Churches (CEC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC). The assembly held in the island of Aegina ended with a night of Greek music dancing and wine.”





The Assembly in Aegina 2003

Some characteristic activities

- January 1994: CCME was among the organisers of a “Seminar on Judicial and Parliamentary Control of European Rules Concerning Refugee and Immigration Law”. It took place in Brussels and was attended by approximately 40 people.
- June 1994: The General Secretary gave a presentation at the “Conference on Immigration and the European Union: Building on a Comprehensive Approach” in Athens on invitation of the Greek Presidency of the European Union.
- June 1994: CCME was actively involved in the seminar “Immigrant Women and Integration” in Strasbourg.
- July 1994: After years of campaigning for anti-discrimination legislation and equal treatment, CCME had come to the conclusion that one reason for the difficulties arriving at a joint strategy was that governments were claiming that political cultures and histories between countries would be too divers to have joint strategies at the European level. Therefore it was

necessary to listen to what the governments were saying, and CCME began the project "Comparative Approaches to Societal Integration: Philosophy, Policy and Practice". National round tables were organised between February and June 1995 in Sweden, Norway, Germany, the UK, France and Italy. CCME learned why governments conduct certain policies, what the basic tenants are and how governmental officials perceive the results of their policies. The whole Societal Integration Project had four components: national Round Tables in Europe, a review of the Council of Europe's Community Relations report, a European Level Round Table, and national Round Tables in North America - managed in cooperation with MPG.

- December 1994: CCME was invited to introduce the issue of migrant women at a meeting of the Sub-committee for Migration of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Paris.
- April/May 1995: CCME together with the Starting Line Group organized one day seminars in Sweden, Finland and Spain to inform churches and NGOs on the forthcoming "Intergovernmental Conference 1996" (IGC 1996) on the revision of the Treaty on European Union.
- October 1995: Together with Caritas Europe, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles, the Dutch Centre for Immigrants and in collaboration with UNHCR, CCME organized a European seminar on the IGC in Stuttgart, Germany.
- November 1995: Under the patronage of the General Secretary of the Council of Europe and together with the Ecumenical Council of the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Romanian trade union CCME held a seminar in Strasbourg on the use of international instruments to protect the rights of migrants and minorities.
- 1996: The European Information Network (EIN), publisher of the "Migration Newssheet", met with serious difficulties. The Migration Policy Group assumed the responsibility for the publication.
- 1996: The Starting Line Group organised national seminars with the support of local organisations in Athens (April), Dublin and Belfast (May).
- 1996: The first meeting of exchange on migratory movements in the Mediterranean region between Southern European member churches of CCME and WCC and the Middle East Council of Churches took place in Amman, Jordan. Annual meetings were agreed.
- June 1996: As one of very few NGOs, CCME has been invited to attend the "VI Conference of Ministers responsible for Migration" of the Council of Europe in Warsaw.



- 1997: The year 1997 has been designated as the “European Year against Racism”. Commissioner P. Flynn, responsible for integration and anti-discrimination, invited the General Secretary Jan Niessen to become a member of a group of independent experts advising the Commission on the year.
- March 1997: WCC, ECWGAR and CCME convened the “European Launch of the Year of the Uprooted People” in London. This first pan-European conference of church agencies and representatives on migration and asylum matters attracted over 100 participants from across Europe.
- April 1997: CCME organised an “International Seminar on Migration and European Mediterranean Policies” at the Ecumenical Centre in Brussels.
- June 1997: The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and CCME organized an “Experts’ meeting on Black and Migrant Women in Europe: Access and Mobility within the Labour Market and in Decision-Making Structures” in Brussels.
- October 1997: A Briefing Meeting on the EU Mediterranean policies took place in Brussels attended by the World Council of Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), EECCS, the Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organisations in Europe (APRODEV), CCME’s southern member churches and CCME’s staff. The European Parliaments rapporteur on the EU Mediterranean policies and the European Commission presented the work of the Parliament and the Commission.
- 1998: As a follow-up to the European Year against Racism, the European Commission decided to facilitate the establishment of a European structure for co-ordination between NGOs. CCME’s General Secretary was asked to write a feasibility study. Following a series of Round Tables in the Member States in preparation of such a structure, the European Network against Racism ENAR was founded.
- 1998: EECCS was integrated with CEC and became the “Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches”.
- June 1998: After the Amsterdam Treaty was signed in October 1997, which conferred powers to the European Union to act on discrimination on many grounds including race, ethnic origin and religion and belief, the Starting Line Group convened a number of meetings with legal experts on the basis of which the group drafted new proposals for legislative measures to combat racial and religious discrimination and to promote equal treatment. They were presented at a conference in June 1998 organised by the British EU Presidency in Manchester and received support of many NGOs and institutions.



- November 1998: The Council of Europe invited CCME to participate in its “Seminar on Religion and the Integration of Immigrants” in Strasbourg.
- June 1999: Parallel and joint meetings of ECWGAR, ECWGRX and CCME ExCom were held in Geneva to discuss plans for closer cooperation. An agreement of cooperation between CCME, CEC and WCC was drafted here, which, after consultation and decisions in the assembly of CCME and the Central Committee of CEC, was signed in January 2000.
- October 1999: In the process of preparation for a legislative proposal concerning entry and residence on territory of the Member States of family members of third-country nationals for family reunification, the EU Commission had started a series of consultations in which CCME also participated.
- October 1999: The Amman-Process annual meeting took place in Santa Severa. The "Amman Process" is a co-operation and exchange programme on migration between CCME and the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC).
- March 2000: CCME, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), Caritas Europe and the Commission of the Bishop’s Conferences of the EC (COMECE) issued a common position paper on the “EU Commission Proposal for a Council Directive on the right to family reunification”. This first joint reaction of different Christian organisations, which are active in the field of migration, refugees and asylum, to the legislative process of the EU in 2000 had set a good example. It became a well-established and common practice that these Christian organisations issue joint comments on EU legislation proposals and follow the process in a joint effort. Later, this Christian group was joined by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and the Quaker Council for European Affairs. The Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions, Eurodiakonia and other organisations cooperate from time to time.
- October 2000: CCME participated in the preparations for and in the “European Conference against Racism: All Different- All Equal” in Strasbourg jointly with CEC and WCC.
- January 2001: Meeting of the Amman Process in Beirut.
- May 2001: Jointly with CEC, CCME organised a consultation in Bratislava, Slovakia on Roma in Central Europe: “Living in Community – towards equal opportunities and overcoming discrimination. The situation of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe”.
- September 2001: The “World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance” was held in Durban,



Synod of the Church of Greece organised a conference on “Irregular Migration: a Challenge to European Migration and Asylum Policies” in Athens.

- December 2002: The CAT project (Christian Action and networking against Trafficking in women) was launched by CCME and Caritas Europe. The project brings together activities in churches and church-related organisations from all over Europe including exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practice to combat trafficking in women. It is carried out with the financial support of the EU-STOP-Programme against trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children.
- March 2003: CCME attended the meeting of the International Network Forum on Multicultural Ministry in Singapore organised by WCC.
- May 2003: The annual meeting of the Amman Process took place in Beirut.
- June 2003: CEC - Assembly in Trondheim, Norway. CCME organised two hearings for the assembly programme, on “Migration in Europe - churches involvement in migration and integration, asylum and refugee protection and against racism and discrimination vis-à-vis a common European policy” and, “Healing of Memories - an ongoing task - Roma and the Nordic Churches”. The Roma from Finland, Norway and Sweden handed a statement to the General Secretary of CEC reiterating the need of continuous work of churches with Roma. The CEC Assembly received reports on CCME’s work and mandate as well as on the negotiations for a closer cooperation and possible integration between CCME and CEC. The Assembly decided on the necessary constitutional requirements for a separate commission parallel to the Church and Society Commission of CEC and adopted a resolution for strengthening the cooperation also in terms of necessary resource for this process.
- December 2003: The first project of the Christian Action and Networking against Trafficking in Women is closed with the launch of the booklet “Action Oriented Guide for Awareness-Raising and Social Assistance” in the European Parliament. The recommendations were translated into more than 8 languages and widely distributed also through the website of “Christian Organisations Against Trafficking in Women” coordinated by Caritas Europe, www.coatnet.org.
- March 2004: The second CAT project starts with a conference in the European Parliament “18 months after the Brussels Declaration against Trafficking in Human Beings” to take stock of developments in the work against trafficking at the various levels of policy and legal developments,



protection, assistance and prevention. The second project expands the CAT network geographically as well as institutionally.

- March 2004: The 4th European conference on black and migrant churches in Europe is organised by the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy and CCME at Ciampino, Italy. More than 120 persons, more than half from black and migrant churches participate in the deliberations on the theme “Uniting in Diversity - Being Church Together”.
- April 2004: CCME organises a European consultation “Making Refugee Resettlement Work” with support of the European Refugee Fund. A brochure with recommendations for a European policy on refugee resettlement is published in July 2004.
- May 2004: CCME participates in the Consultation of the Churches of the Rhine and the Fellowship of Protestant Churches in Europe on “The Challenges of Migration and Asylum”. The conference adopts the Liebfrauenberg Declaration, highlighting churches concerns, expectations and recommendations
- September 2004: The Amman Process meets in Lisbon on the invitation of the Church and Society Group in Portugal. The thematic focus of this meeting is on interreligious dialogue, with a wide participation of persons from Portuguese religious organisations.



CCME at Work

CCME Work Programme 2003 - 2005

This Work Programme was adopted at the Assembly in Greece 2002. It stresses the following topics:

Migration, Globalisation and Integration

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimated in 2000 that around 150 million people worldwide are migrants. CCME jointly with other Christian organisations supports the idea of creating a European observatory on migration and will try to improve the understanding of the relationship between globalisation and migration. If funding can be secured it will carry out a project on migration counselling for this could lead to more informed decisions for persons to migrate. At the same time CCME and its members will continue to work for welcoming societies and strive for inclusive policies which respect different cultures and religions. It will continue to lobby for the right to family life of nationals of third countries for it is a fundamental right and a major integration factor.

Refugees, Smuggling of People and Resettlement of Refugees

UNHCR reckons that there are around 12 million refugees seeking protection in other countries, and in addition 10 million displaced persons in need of protection. Within the next years the European Union looks for agreements on common minimum standards for asylum procedures, a common definition of a refugee status and a common procedure to determine the country responsible for examining an asylum application. Jointly with other organisations CCME is active in lobbying for high common standards at the level of the European Parliament and the Council.

Access to safety has become a predominant issue as the European Union is striving towards more intensive common border controls. As an effect, many refugees have become entirely dependent on criminal organisations of smugglers, sometimes also falling into the hands of traffickers, to enter Europe. Churches consider it as their duty to protect people in need. All over Europe, Christians are actively involved in reception of refugees. CCME will support this attitude and present the concerns of the churches to the European institutions.

Resettlement has to be understood as an additional instrument providing access to safety for refugees, and to make this a real option work will have to be done on criteria, procedures, selection etc. This must be developed in close operation with UNHCR. Jointly with the International Catholic Migration Commission ICMC, CCME will collect background information on existing



resettlement policies and make this information available to churches and church related agencies.

Migrants in Irregular Situations

Many more people than anticipated in earlier years live and work in Europe in irregular situations. No reliable data are available and as this migrants face deportation when uncovered, they try to be as invisible as possible. CCME will advocate that irregular migrants are treated with dignity; fundamental rights must be respected including access to health care and education for children.

Trafficking in Human Beings

This has become an extremely profitable business. Trafficking is a severe crime, but legislative development has long overlooked it. CCME lobbies for a severe sentence for traffickers as well as compensation for victims. It will promote networking and exchange of best practice for victim protection, legal requirements and prevention measures.

Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination

CCME will encourage churches and ecumenical organisations to reflect in their own members, leadership and employment policies the ethnic diversity of European communities and countries. It will follow up on the action plan of the European and World Conference against Racism in 2000 and 2001 and will encourage exchange of education material to address these issues.

Black and Migrant Churches

As more migrants will come to Europe in the coming years and black and migrant congregations and churches are extremely important in community building, it will continue to facilitate exchange and work among and with black and migrant churches in Europe.



An example of best practice: The CAT Project

Christian Action and Networking against Trafficking in Women (CAT¹) and Christian Organisations Against Trafficking – COATnet

Over the last years Churches and related agencies in Europe have not only become more aware of the phenomenon of Trafficking. In many locations, they have already started to combat Trafficking. Activities include awareness-raising among persons potentially affected by Trafficking, public statements condemning Trafficking, concrete assistance to trafficked persons and lobbying for trafficked persons' right. In the context of these activities it has become more and more clear that a response to an international phenomenon like Trafficking must also be an international one.

It was against this background that European Churches and related organisations have started to launch Europe-wide networking activities against Trafficking. The Conference of European Churches had organised a conference on trafficking in women in Driebergen, Netherlands, in December 1999 and followed up with a working group.

In 2001, members of Caritas Europa started the Coatnet initiative. Coatnet, which in the beginning stood for "Catholic Organisations against Trafficking in Women", is an internet-based communication platform. The Coatnet includes a website, through which information on trafficking is publicly displayed and provides links to national websites on Trafficking. It includes a secured extranet, in which information of a more internal, sometimes confidential, nature can be exchanged between different organisations working in assistance or prevention. The extranet also hosts fora for thematic discussion on Trafficking, it provides internal working papers on the issue and a search database for missing persons.

During the year 2002, the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) decided to launch a network of different Christian organisations, which are active in combating Trafficking. With the involvement of CCME member organisations as well as Caritas Europa and several of its member organisations, the project "Christian Action and Networking against Trafficking in Women" (CAT) was started. Participating organisations come from Belgium, France, Italy, Greece, Germany, the Czech Republic, Romania, Russia and Lithuania. The Conference of European Churches is also involved. During the project a "core group" of assistance organisation has started to visit one another to learn how the different organisations are active in combating Trafficking. In two workshops, the organisations exchange their

¹ The CAT project should not be confused with the US-based CATW network.



best practices to combat Trafficking, to assist trafficked persons and further develop resource materials for awareness raising. The project is co-funded by the European Union under the STOP II programme.

The project has created a strong dynamic of mutual enrichment, advice and empowerment. Thematic foci of the work are, among others, the cooperation with authorities, working within the church, work in prevention and standards for victims assistance. Results and hints for practical work are summarised in a brochure, which is launched in December 2003. This brochure enables other Churches and NGOs to understand and address the problem of Trafficking.

The project is enlarged to a number of additional countries in phase II, which is started in December 2003. As a result of the increasing ecumenical cooperation against Trafficking, the Coatnet has been re-launched as the net of "Christian Organisations against Trafficking" and is open to all organisations involved in the CAT project. Other NGO's are invited to join the Coatnet. Members of CAT and Coatnet have created regular channels of cooperation with other NGOs both on national as well as international level.

CCME and Caritas Europa connect their concrete networking activities with advocacy work on EU level on the issue of Trafficking. This advocacy includes initiatives for promoting the human rights of trafficked persons and lobbying for financial and legal provisions, which allow assistance organisations to carry out their work for trafficked persons under acceptable circumstances. CCME and Caritas have also repeatedly expressed concern about the return of trafficked persons. Both organisations underlined that a careful assessment of each individual situation is needed. In their statement to the international STOP/IOM conference on Trafficking in September 2002 they underlined: "We believe the best solution for trafficked persons would include giving them the power of decision-making whether or not to return and when". CCME and Caritas in this context support legal provisions in countries of destination, which open up the possibility for a long-term residence permit for trafficked person. Upon suggestion of CCME, Martina Liebsch, the founder of the "Coatnet" has been appointed member of the EU experts group on Trafficking in Human Beings.

In general, CCME and Caritas believe that a coordinated European immigration policy, easier and transparent visa procedures and comprehensive information on legal job opportunities in various European countries could significantly reduce the number of people at risk of being trafficked.. Both organisations work into the direction of achieving corresponding policies on national and European level.

Dr. Torsten Moritz
CCME Project Secretary



Members of CCME

Constituent meeting May 1964

Belgian Federation of Protestant Churches
British Council of Churches
French Protestant Federation
Evangelical Church in Germany
Greek Orthodox Church
Italian Federal Council of Evangelical Churches
The Ecumenical Council in the Netherlands
Portuguese Inter-ecclesiastical Commission
Spanish Evangelical Council
Swedish Ecumenical Council
Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

1. Assembly 1973

Belgian Federation of Protestant Churches
British Council of Churches
French Protestant Federation
Evangelical Church in Germany
Greek Orthodox Church
Italian Federation of Evangelical Churches
Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Portuguese Council of Christian Churches
Serbian Orthodox Church
Spanish Committee for the Cooperation between Churches /
Swedish Ecumenical Council
Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



Romanian Forum for Refugees and Migrants / ARCA
Spanish Committee for the Cooperation between Churches
Church of Sweden
Christian Council of Sweden
Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches
Churches' Commission for Racial Justice (United Kingdom)
Methodist Church of Great Britain
Council of African and Caribbean Churches (United Kingdom)
Join Council for Anglo Caribbean Churches (United Kingdom)



CCME – General Assemblies

1	Ecumenical Centre Geneva	June 4 – 8 1973
2	Ecumenical Centre Geneva	April 30 – May 3 1974
3	Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands	May 5 – 9 1975
4	Overijse, Belgium	Nov. 10 –12 1976
5	Brussels, Belgium	May 9 – 12 1978
6	Figueira da Foz, Portugal	May 2 – 9 1980
7	Salonica, Greece	May 7 – 14 1982
8	Strasbourg, France	Oct. 21 – 26 1984
9	Palermo, Sicily	May 3-8 1987
10	Soedertaelje, Sweden	June 29 – July 6 1990
11	Schloss Hünigen, Switzerland	June 26 – 30 1993
12	Berlin, Germany	June 10 – 13 1995
13	Santa Severa, Italy	Oct. 11 – 13 1997
14	Järvenpää, Finland	Oct. 2 – 4 1999
15	Aegina, Greece	Oct. 31 – Nov. 4 2002



Executive Committee, General Secretary and Staff

Executive Committees since the first Assembly in 1973:

1973

Chairman	Rev. David Mason, British Council of Churches
Vice-Chair.	Metrop. Emilianos of Calabria, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople
Secretary	Pastor Pierluigi Jalla, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Treasurer	Drs Jan van Veen, Council of Churches in the Netherlands

1974

Chairman	Rev. David Mason, British Council of Churches
Vice-Chair.	Bishop Lavrentije, Serbian Orthodox Church
Vice- Chair.	Metrop. Emilianos of Calabria, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Costantinople
Secretary	Pastor Pierluigi Jalla, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Treasurer	Drs Jan van Veen, Council of Churches in the Netherlands

1975

Chairman	Rev. David Mason, British Council of Churches
Vice-Chair.	Bishop Lavrentije, Serbian Orthodox Church
Vice Chair.	Henriette Tourne, Belgian Federation of Protestant Churches
Secretary	Rev. José Leite, Portuguese Council of Christian Churches
Treasurer	Drs Jan van Veen, Council of Churches in the Netherlands

1976

Chairman	Elliott Kendall, British Council of Churches
Vice-Chair.	Bishop Augoustinos of Elaia, Greek Orthodox Church
Vice-Chair.	Daniel Perren, World Council of Churches
Secretary	Dr. Jürgen Micksch, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer	Drs Jan van Veen, Council of Churches in the Netherlands

1978

Chairman	Daniel Perren, World Council of Churches
Secretary	Dr. Jürgen Micksch, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer	Drs Jan van Veen, Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Member	Marc Lenders, Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society



1980

Chairman	Elliott Kendall, British Council of Churches
Vice-Chair.	Bishop Augoustinos of Elaia, Greek Orthodox Church
Vice-Chair.	Rev. Sitta Campi, Italian Federation of Evangelical Churches
Secretary	Dr. Jürgen Micksch, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer	Pieter Bouman, United Protestant Church in Belgium
Member	Desmond Carragher, Swedish Council of Free Churches
Member	Marc Lenders, Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society

1982

Chairman	Desmond Carragher, Swedish Council of Free Churches
Vice-Chair.	Rev. Sitta Campi, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Vice-Chair.	Dr. Antonios Papantoniou, Greek Orthodox Church
Secretary	Dr. Jürgen Micksch, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer	Rev. Jaakko Launikari, Evang. Lutheran Church of Finland
Member	Marc Lenders, Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society
Member	Jan Niessen, Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Member	Rev. Ireneu da Silva Cunha, Portuguese Council of Christian Churches
Member	Keith Jenkins, British Council of Churches

1984

Chairman	Desmond Carragher, Swedish Council of Free Churches
Vice-Chair.	Canon Ivor Smith Cameron, British Council of Churches
Vice Chair.	Rev. Bruno Tron, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Secretary	Keith Jenkins, British Council of Churches
Treasurer	Rev. Jaako Launikari, Evang. Lutheran Church of Finland
Member	Bishop Lavrentije, Serbian Orthodox Church
Member	Gilbert Jaeger, Expert, UNHCR

1987

Moderator	Canon Ivor Smith Cameron, British Council of Churches
Vice-Mod.	Anita Anderson, Swedish Ecumenical Council
Vice-Mod.	Rev. Bruno Tron, Italian Federation of Evangelical Churches
Secretary	Rev. Michael Mildenerger, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer	Urban Gibson, Church of Sweden
Member	Gilbert Jaeger, Expert, UNHCR



Member Bishop Lavrentije, Serbian Orthodox Church
Member Rev. Kennedy Bedford, British Council of Churches

1990

Moderator Rev. Jean-Yves Thobois, French Protestant Federation
Vice-Mod. Dr. Annemarie Dupré, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Vice-Mod. Rev. Theo Samuel, British Council of Churches
Secretary Rev. Michael Mildenberger, Evangelical Church in Germany,
1992 replaced by Einar Vetvik, Church of Norway
Treasurer Urban Gibson, Church of Sweden
Member Doreen Hazel, Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Member Gilbert Jaeger, Expert, UNHCR
Member Mukamie McCrum, Churches' Commission for Racial Justice
Member Rev. Constantin Miron, Griech.-Orth. Metropolie in
Deutschland

1993

Moderator Rev. Jean-Yves Thobois, French Protestant Federation
Vice-Mod. Dr. Annemarie Dupre, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Vice Mod. Mukami McCrum, Churches' Commission for Racial Justice
Secretary Martin Schindehuette, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer Leena Bjoerstedt, Church of Sweden
Member Thanasis Apostolou, Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Member Tetty Rooze, Belgian Federation of Protestant Churches
Member Einar Vetvik, Church of Norway

1995

Moderator Thanasis Apostolou, Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Vice- Mod. Glynne Gordon- Carter, Church of England
Vice-Mod. Rev. Anna Maffei, Italian Federation of Evangelical Churches
Secretary Dr. Martin Affolderbach, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer Leena Bjoerstedt, Church of Sweden
Member Brigitte Heckendorn, Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches
Member Rev. Luis Ruiz Poveda, Spanish Committee for the Cooperation between
Churches
Member Tetty Rooze, Belgian Federation of Protestant Churches
Member Einar Vetvik, Church of Norway



1997

Moderator	Thanasis Apostolou, Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Vice- Mod.	Rev. Theo Samuel, British Council of Churches
Secretary	Dr. Martin Affolderbach, Evangelical Church in Germany
Treasurer	Leena Björstedt, Church of Sweden
Member	Brigitte Heckendorn, Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches
Member	Tetty Rooze, Belgian Federation of Protestant Churches
Member	Joël Le Billan, French Protestant Federation

1999

Moderator	Dr.Martin Affolderbach, Evangelical Church in Germany
Vice-Mod.	Dr. Annemarie Dupré, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Vice Mod.	Pat White, Churches' Commission for Racial Justice
Treasurer	Simo Repo, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Member	Duca E. de Bruijn, Uniting Protestant Churches in the Netherlands
Member	Joël Le Billan, French Protestant Federation/CIMADE
Member	Dr. Antonios K. Papantoniou, Church of Greece
Member	Dr. Elizabeth Ferris, World Council of Churches
Member	Cristian Popescu, Conference of European Churches

2002

Moderator	Dr. Annemarie Dupré, Italian Federation of Evang. Churches
Vice-Mod.	Dr. Ralf Geisler, Evangelical Church of Germany
Vice-Mod.	Pat White, Churches' Commission for Racial Justice
Treasurer	Dr. Goos Mindermann, Council of Chuches in the Netherlands
Member	Marja-Liisa Laihia, Evangelical Lutheran Chuches of Finland
Member	Prof. Dr. Benz H. R. Schaer, Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches
Member	Dr. Antonios K. Papantoniou, Church of Greece
Member	Dragan Makojevic, World Council of Churches
Member	Christian Popescu, Conference of European Churches



General Secretaries (since 1980)

1980 – 1989	Pieter Muller
1989 – 1998	Dr. Jan Niessen
Jan-Oct. 1999	Arriën Kruyt (interim)
since September 1999	Doris Peschke

Staff September 2004

Doris Peschke	General Secretary
Dr. Torsten Moritz	Project Secretary
Emmanuel Kabalisa	Assistant

The Protestant Church of Baden/Germany supports CCME by delegating pastors after the completion of their training in Germany for one year service in the CCME Secretariat since 2001. These liaison officers have been:

Dr. Heike Vierling-Ihrig	September 2001-August 2002
Robert Mathes	September 2002- August 2003
Michael Donner	as of September 2004 – August 2005



A Selection of Publications

Migration Newsheet

The Migration Newsheet, a monthly bulletin on migration in Western Europe, was launched 1981, first published as the Early Warning System of the Ecumenical Commission and from 1985 onwards by CCME. 1991 the responsibility for the Newsheet was shared by other organisations in the European Information Network, and since 1996 it is published by the Migration Policy Group.

Briefing Papers

From 1990 to 1995 22 Briefing Papers were published. These briefing papers were addressed to those active in the field of migration and racial justice to provide them with updated information on specific matters of current events to assist them in developing present or future initiatives.

Books and Booklets

M. Lenders	Economic structures and racism (Brussels 1982)
S. Charles	Institutional racism. A reflection from Britain (Brussels 1982)
CCMWE (ed.)	A European right of permanent residence for migrant workers (Brussels 1985)
M. Thero	Report on the CCMWE Consultancy on pastoral concerns (Brussels 1985)
CCMWE (ed.)	Migrant women. A report about the situation of migrant women in Italy, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland (Brussels 1987)
H. Glimmerveen	Migrants in irregular situation in Europe (Brussels 1989)
W. Just	Municipal voting rights for migrants. Facts and experiences within a European context (Brussels 1989)
J. Niessen	Migrants' rights in Europe, (Maastricht 1990)
CCME (ed.)	European Community competence in the field of migration (Brussels 1991)
CCME (ed.)	Combating discrimination and racism; promoting equality of treatment. Report of a CCME Consultation (Brussels 1992)
J.Niessen (ed.)	A churches' guide to European institutions (Brussels 1992)
CCME (ed.)	Seminar on migratory movements and European policies in Brussels 5-6 March 1993 (Brussels 1993)
CCME (ed.)	Proposals for comprehensive European immigration policies (CCME position paper, Brussels 1994)



- A. Cruz Carrier's liability in the Member States of the European Union. A comparative analysis (Brussels 1994)
- CCME a.o. (ed.) Seminar on judicial and parliamentary control of European rules concerning refugee and immigration law in Brussels, 14 January 1994 (Brussels 1994)
- J. Cator, J. Niessen (ed.) The use of international conventions to protect the rights of migrants and ethnic minorities (Strasbourg 1994)
- CCME a.o. (ed.) Migratory movements within, towards and from Central and Eastern Europe (Strasbourg 1995)
- S. Hix, J. Niessen Reconsidering European migration policies. The 1996 Intergovernmental Conference and the reform of the Maastricht Treaty (Brussels 1996)
- T. Iark, J. Niessen Equal rights and non-citizens in Europe and America: the promise, the practice and some remaining issues (Utrecht 1996)
- J. Niessen, F. Mochel EU external relations and international migration (Brussels 1999)
- R. Scheunpflug, L. Tan Impact of EU enlargement on migration and asylum in Central and Eastern Europe (Brussels 2000)
- CCME a.o. (ed.) Voices from the shadows (Brussels 2001)
- M. Affolderbach, H. Vierling-Ihrig (ed.) Culture divides - the Gospel unites? Migrant churches in European countries (Brussels 2002)
- CCME (ed.) Report on the conference "Irregular migration: a challenge to European migration and asylum policies", 1 November 2002 Athens, Greece (Brussels 2003)
- H. Vierling-Ihrig, D. Peschke Churches and Christian Organisations in Europe on Migration and Asylum, compilation of comments on European migration and asylum policies (updated March 2004)



Joint comments, positions, letters, contributions

Since 2000, Christian organisations in Brussels have jointly commented on proposals for action and legislation on EU level. Caritas Europa, CCME, COMECE, ICMC, JRS-Europe and the Quaker Council for European Affairs also have joint initiatives on the basis of these comments with the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU as well as with the European Union Economic and Social Committee.

The most recent, not yet part of the compilation which was last updated in March 2004:

- Comments on the Communication from the European Commission on Immigration, Integration and Employment (COM (2003) 336 final), April 2004
- Letter to the Irish Presidency of the EU concerning the EU Directive on Minimum Standards for Member States' Procedures for Granting and Withdrawing Refugee Status (COM 2002/326 final/2), Justice and Home Affairs Council, 29 April 2004
- Comments on the Communication from the European Commission to the Council and the European Parliament Creating an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Assessment of the Tampere programme and future orientations COM (2004) 401 final, 31 August 2004
- Comments on the Communication from the European Commission, Study on the Links between legal and illegal Migration (COM (2004) 412 final), September 2004
- Towards a Balanced Approach in EU Migration and Asylum Policy, 12 Recommendations, October 2004



Biblical-Theological Backgrounds

Migration, emigration and being a foreigner or a refugee are not passing phenomena of our time. In this world they are and still remain basic elements of life. So it is necessary to know: "The acceptance of the message of the Bible in the awareness and practice of Christian congregations and the Churches requires an ever-new and deepened return to the Word of God. It will then become apparent that the message of the Bible may not be limited to or misunderstood as moral appeal; rather it encourages us to realize comprehensively the human in our world. From the message of the kingdom of God and his will to save humanity there comes a biblical ethos which calls humans to responsibility. The Word of God demonstrates that human beings must be accorded dignity and met responsibly and with justice."²

Reflection on the message of the Old Testament:

- "You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien for you were aliens in the land of Egypt" (Ex 23,9). – Israel can appreciate the feelings of aliens. The experiences of Israel in Egypt are the reason that aliens stand under God's unconditional protection.
- "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; you shall have no other Gods before me." (Ex 20,2.3) – God liberates from slavery and oppression! Therefore aliens move to the centre of God's protective commandments. This commandment – to protect aliens – is running through several commandments of the Old Testament.
- "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." (Lev 19,33f) – Israel's identity is founded in the liberation from Egypt and God's covenant with them and includes protection and love of aliens and hospitality.
- Existence and continuation of life have their basis in God. God creates, desires and sustains life. Of all life God is the origin and aim. This is also true for human life. Man was created "in God's image". This is stated in the first report of the creation (Gen 1,26f). Israel confesses: "God created humankind in His image" (Gen 1,27), every human person.

² "... and the stranger, who is at your door". Joint Statement of the Churches Regarding the Challenges of Migration and Displacement. Declaration of the Evangelical Church of Germany and the German Bishops' Conference. Bonn, Frankfurt, Hanover 1997, p.34.

Reflection on the message of the New Testament:

The "attitude towards immigrants, insofar as they are in need socially marginalised, stands fundamentally in the tradition of Israel in the actions of Jesus and his disciples and is rooted in the teaching of universal love for the neighbour."³ (Lev 19,18)

- Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10,25-27) – The love of the neighbour is elevated in the New Testament to the commandment which transcends borders. An unknown person is made a neighbour.
- "There is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female; all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (Gal 3,28) – The communion in Christ Jesus makes the different separations in a congregation less important.
- "The vision of God's kingdom, which transcends all national borders, is especially impressive in the story of Pentecost in Acts. God's Spirit enables the most different people to hear the message of the dawning of a new time in their respective language and thus grow together into a unity in diversity (Acts 2,1-14). This shows clearly that Christians from the very beginning felt called to make real the unity of people in their own community. Because God does not look on the individual, but calls men and women from all peoples to his kingdom (Acts 10,34; Rom 2,10f; Gal 2,6) a worldwide force can spread out from the Christian community, which also grips other parts of society and dissolves narrow thought and action limited by nationality."⁴
- In the New Testament the alien ist rather the guest in which Jesus himself is present (Eph 2,11f.19; Mt 25,31-36).
- Paul interprets the Christian existence theologically as an existence of strangers who are far from home. Meaning far from the final communion with God (2 Cor 5,6).
- The first letter of Peter (1 Peter 1,1) addresses the Christians as exiles in the various Roman provinces and as "aliens and exiles" in this world (1 Peter 2,11).

Dr. Heike Vierling-Ihrig
Liasion Officer of the Badische Landeskirche, Germany, 2001 -
2002.

³ Ibid., p. 36.

⁴ Ibid., p. 36f.

Abbreviations

AKFA	Ausschuss der Kirchen für Fragen ausländischer Arbeitnehmer
APRODEV	Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organisations
CAT	Christian Action and Networking against Trafficking in Women
CCME	Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe
CCMW(E)	Churches' Commission for Migrant Workers (in Europe)
CEC	Conference of European Churches
CETMI	Comité des Eglises auprès des travailleurs migrants
COATNET	Christian Organisations against Trafficking Internet network
COMECE	Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community
Commission Justice and Peace	Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions
CSC	Church and Society Commission of CEC
EC	European Community
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exile
ECWGAR	European Churches' Working Group on Asylum and Refugees
ECWGRX	European Churches' Working Group on Racism and Xenophobia
EECCS	European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society
EECOD	European Ecumenical Commission on Development
EIN	European Information Network
ENAR	European Network Against Racism
EU	European Union
EXCOM	Executive Committee
GEN	Global Ecumenical Network on Uprooted People (WCC)
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICMC	International Catholic Migration Commission
IGC	Inter-Governmental Conference
IMADR	International Movement against all forms of Discrimination and Racism
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JRS-Europe	Jesuit Refugee Service Europe
MECC	Middle East Council of Churches
MPG	Migration Policy Group
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation



QCEA	Quaker Council for European Affairs
UN	United Nations
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WCC	World Council of Churches

