



Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa (GEKE)
Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)
Communion d'Eglises Protestantes en Europe (CEPE)

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Az: GEKE

The future of the CPCE from 2019 – looking for a new general secretary

Dear friends,

as announced in our invitation to the next General Assembly we would like to share some of the CPCE Council's basic thinking and decisions regarding the CPCE's future from 2019.

Structural changes at CPCE

The term of the new post-Assembly Council will involve some changes for the CPCE. Bishop Dr. Michael Bünker will have concluded his term as general secretary. Hitherto the CPCE office has been located at the general secretary's place of work.

The CPCE Council took this as an occasion to ask what challenges are in store for CPCE as of 2019 and how they could be met. In the course of the strategic thinking on future tasks and goals of CPCE, the Council has taken two fundamental decisions:

1. The Council decided to make the position of general secretary a full-time staff position after the 2018 General Assembly.
2. The Council decided to permanently locate the office in Vienna.

Reasons for the structural changes

As the experience of the present general secretary shows, managing the office calls for more resources than in the past. It is hardly possible to manage it in a voluntary capacity any more, particularly when the general secretary is also involved in day-to-day operations.

So far the office has always moved to be near the place of work of general secretary, which has been an honorary position. As of 2019 the office is to be permanently located in Vienna, which is where the next general secretary will have to be based.

Presidium:

Council President Dr. Dr. h.c. Gottfried Locher, Bern
Dr. Klára Tarr Cselovszky, Budapest
Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h.c. Michael Weinrich, Paderborn

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Changes in activities and demands on the CPCE office

In the last few years, more and more member churches have approached the office and the CPCE Council asking for different topics to be dealt with at the level of the CPCE. This is gratifying, as it shows that the churches are increasingly recognizing that there are issues that they cannot work on all by themselves and for which they need to consult with other churches since decisions by individual churches impact on the whole community. Many questions cannot be restricted to single countries but relate to the whole European setting.

At the same time, this has changed the demands made on the office. In the past, its job was mainly to organize the doctrinal conversations, Council meetings and general assemblies. But with time, new areas of work were added. The 5th General Assembly in Belfast in 2001 expressed the wish that the Leuenberg Fellowship be heard as a Protestant voice in Europe and that church fellowship be further deepened, not only through more theological work but also in joint witness and service. Accordingly, social ethical issues and the work in Brussels were added to the work of the CPCE staff.

In the last few years it has also become clear that the theological potential of CPCE's model of unity has not been fully tapped. Church fellowship is a successful model of unity that is lived out not only on different continents and between different churches; church fellowship continues to be the Protestant model of church unity that we also contribute to conversations with other churches. This is shown, for example, by the current serious of consultations with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

CPCE will also face new tasks with the issues concerning all the churches in Europe. One big question is how the churches in Europe are responding to migration. Besides the diaconal challenges for our churches through refugees and migrants, the relations with the migrant churches and the new Christian movements have to be given due theological and ecclesiological consideration. More attention will also have to be given to interfaith issues.

In order to handle all these activities and issues, we need a full-time general secretary.

Attached you will find the job description for the position of CPCE general secretary.

Please pass this advertisement on to suitable candidates and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

With all good wishes



Dr. Gottfried Locher, Council Chair
CPCE President



Bishop Dr. Michael Bünker
CPCE General Secretary