WSCF Europe
European Regional Assembly 2019

Information booklet for delegates
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Introduction
Welcome to the information booklet for the WSCF Europe Regional Assembly (ERA) 2017. Many of you will be representing your Student Christian Movement (SCM) at the ERA, which is a very important role, so please read this booklet carefully. It will give you a much better understanding of what will be happening. The ERA is one of the biggest events of WSCF Europe, and it offers an opportunity like no other to enjoy and celebrate the diversity of Europe and the movements we represent.

The ERA is held every two years, and it marks the end and the beginning of WSCF Europe’s two year cycle. It is a time for reflection on the past and the future. What work has been done in the past two years? What work do we want to do in the next two years? What is our vision and our dreams for the future of WSCF Europe?

Things to do before the ERA
We hope you will feel better prepared after reading this booklet. If you have any questions about the ERA, talk to members of the current ERC or any of the WSCF Europe Staff - best to approach Zuzka Babicova, Chairperson of WSCF-E.

There are a few things you need to do before the ERA to make sure you are fully prepared:
• Read Annual reports
• Consider standing for election for the new ERC. Read through the descriptions of the different ERC positions, and let us know if you are interested in standing for any of them. Talk to members of the current ERC if you are interested.
• Contact your SCM or Contact Movement to find out how they want you to represent them at the ERA.
• Read through the WSCF Europe Constitution By-Laws.

Practicalities

WSCF Europe and Vegetarianism

At the ERA in 2011 it was decided by the delegates, that at all WSCF-E events should have vegetarian diet only. This decision reflected concerns about ethical living in today’s world and our responsibility for ecological sustainability.

The rationale behind not eating meat in this context is as follows. The resources of agricultural land and water at our disposal are limited, therefore we have to be mindful in how they are used. The production process for meat, in this context is one step more complex than the one for meat: grain is grown and then fed to animals.

What does this do to our land?
It not only takes much more resources (to produce meat takes 10-20 times more land than to produce grain) but it causes its actual devastation. Meat consumption drives deforestation as forests are cut down to create new space to grow animal fodder as well as new pastures for livestock, especially in South America. Also, according to the 2006 report of the UN Agriculture and Food Organization shows that the livestock sector produces a much larger carbon footprint than all exhaust gases from transportation (cars, air planes etc.) combined. This means that air pollution and the green house
effect are worsened disproportionally by the production of meat.

**What is the impact on water?**
The same UN report shows further that the livestock sector pollutes the water and is "among the most damaging sectors to the earth's increasingly scarce water resources." Apart from the use of large amounts of water to feed them, animals also produce a large amount of waste, which needs to be disposed. This has massive effects on the environment as ground water is polluted in the process, often with an impact on whole communities depending on it.

In this way, meat is environmentally unsustainable compared to a meat-free diet. The resource intensity of the meat production process also means that the level of meat consumption that Europeans enjoy is out of reach for the majority of the world's population. It is too expensive and too resource intense. Therefore our vegetarian policy aims to promote a lifestyle of solidarity with the poor and those suffering most from the effects of environmental degradation.

Thus WSCF-E, through this decision of the ERA 2011, would like to encourage a meat-free diet at its events as well as beyond them. As outlined above this is based on our concern for environmental justice and sustainability. We do respect the fact that meat is a part of all European food cultures and we do not intend to question the legitimacy of anyone's cultural background. Still, we feel that, as Christians, we need to be open to change in order to promote justice and to counter the destruction of creation. Therefore, we would like to offer our events as a space in which to experience and explore, what a vegetarian diet means in practice and that eating less meat (or even none at all) is a sacrifice that is possible and constructive.

**Spiritual Life at the ERA**

Each morning and evening we will have worship. We will be happy to see you contributing to planning a denominational or ecumenical worship with other participants. Please bring any worship material you would like to share and use with other fellows.

**Communication**

WSCF is an international and multilingual federation. The conference and the ERA will be held in English, as this is the most common international language in Europe. As English is a second or third language for many participants, we would like to kindly ask you all that we speak slowly and clearly to each other so that we respect language proficiency differences among us and allow for good conversations happening between us.
WSCF Europe aims to create safe spaces for inter-cultural and ecumenical dialogue, both at our events and at our Regional Assemblies. A safe space is one, where everyone feels respected, and is able to learn by stepping out of their comfort zone. It is an environment where one can express themselves without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, age, physical or mental ability or religion or denomination. It is a space where commonly agreed guidelines protect each person's self-respect and dignity and encourage everyone to respect others. Safe spaces are created together by each of us.

During times of discussion, it is our responsibility to make sure that people around us feel safe. Therefore, please

- Be willing to speak up if you feel unsafe. Chances are someone else feels the same;
- Make sure those around you have the opportunity to speak, while remembering that no one should be forced to share;
- Refrain from judging the individual or from making broad judgemental statements;
- Confidentiality after a discussion is essential;
- Do not reignite a sensitive discussion outside the context of small groups or plenary discussion;
- Please keep in mind that most participants are speaking a second language, so they may express their opinion in a harsher way than they intend.

Please let someone know, ideally our Pastoral Care persons- **Pavlina Manavska** or **Christiane Gebauer** if you feel unsafe for any reason.

Three keys to creating safe space are:

- Respect
- Confidentiality
- Active Listening

Always remember the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Matthew 7:12)

**Respect**

Respect is a regard for the rights, dignity, feelings, wishes, and abilities of others. It is possible (and essential) to respect another person while disagreeing with their point of view.
Confidentiality
To make the ERA a safe space for everyone, we ask you to respect confidentiality at the conference and not to repeat personal details or stories shared by other participants outside the conference.

Active Listening
Active listening helps to create a safe space for dialogue. It is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding.

Active listening means you give your full attention to listening to another person, rather than thinking about how to respond. Once they have finished speaking, it is good to summarise what they have said, and ask questions to make sure you have understood them. Ways to do this are to:

- Look at the speaker directly
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language
- Keep your posture open and inviting
- Allow the speaker to finish
- Summarize the speaker’s comments
- Be candid, open, and honest in your response

Comfort Zone
You are in your comfort zone when you feel physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually comfortable. Your comfort zone is a place you know very well. Sometimes, in order to learn and experience new things, we have to step out of our comfort zone, which is both exciting and frightening.

The comfort zone – what you know and are comfortable with.
The learning zone – challenges you and it takes you out of the known.
The anxiety zone – where you only feel uncomfortable and are no longer learning.

Tips for stepping out of your comfort zone:
- Remember it will feel uncomfortable, be ready for it!
- Learn to recognize the boundaries between comfort and learning, and learning and anxiety
- Do it in a safe space with other people where you can talk to others about it

The European Regional Assembly (ERA)
WSCF Europe is an international organization for Christian students, with member movements (Student Christian Movements/SCMs) in more than 20 countries across Europe. We exist for our member movements, and are governed and managed by representatives from our member movements. As you are attending the ERA, you are one of these representatives!

The ERA is the meeting where our member movements make important decisions about the work of WSCF Europe. It happens every two years, and we invite two representatives from each member movement to represent their movement’s views. You are representing your movement at the ERA – a very important role.

A short history of WSCF and the ERA
WSCF was founded in 1895 in Sweden as a global federation of Student Christian Movements. In 1969, WSCF divided into six regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, Middle East and North America). Each region became responsible for managing its own affairs
through a Regional Committee. In 1989 the first European Regional Assembly was held to provide an opportunity for all SCMs in Europe to have an input into WSCF Europe’s work. The 2019 ERA is the 16th European Regional Assembly since 1989.

**How do I represent my SCM at the ERA?**

You will be representing your SCM’s views at the ERA. It’s very important that you get in touch with the leaders of your SCM before the ERA to find out how they want you to represent your member movement.

**The European Regional Committee (ERC)**

Between ERAs, the European Regional Committee (ERC) manages the work of WSCF Europe. The ERC is made up of representatives from SCMs in Europe who are elected at the ERA. The two Executive Committee members (European representatives on the global board of WSCF) are elected at the General Assembly (GA), however, can be also appointed at the ERA when needed as it will be the case for the assembly in 2019 due to GA in 2020.

This time, the ERA’s role is to:

- Elect ERC members: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, 2 × Exco member, Program Coordinator 2 ×, Regional Links Coordinator, Global Links Coordinator and Fundraising Coordinator
- Make recommendations for the work of the ERC and WSCF Europe staff for the term 2019-2021.
- Vote on suggested changes to the By-laws

The new ERC members are chosen from participants at the ERA and those SCM representatives unable to attend the ERA, who submitted their application beforehand.

**WSCF Europe’s Constitution and By-Laws**

**What do By-laws define?**

WSCF Europe’s constitution and by-laws guide the way we work. For example, the constitution and by-laws define:

- The role of the ERA
- How often an ERA must be held
- The role of the ERC
- How often the ERC must meet
- The role of WSCF Europe staff
- The difference between affiliated and associated SCMs

**How can By-laws be changed?**

Changes to the by-laws must be submitted minimum of 6 weeks before ERA. At ERA they will be discussed and voted on in the following way:

- The chairperson will name the proposed change to be discussed.
- The person or people who proposed the change will very briefly explain the reasons for the proposal.
- There will be space for questions.
- The voting delegates will vote on the proposal. (See below for details of voting.)
- The proposal will be approved or rejected. A two thirds majority is necessary for approval.
Program

1st day of ERA
The first day of the ERA will, among other things, include:

• The possibility to ask out-going ERC candidates questions in regard to their work in the past term;
• A report on WSCF Europe’s finance, events, WSCF global
• Member movements discussions

2nd day of ERA
• Member movements discussions
• A day hosted by the Member movement Denmark YMCA

3rd day of ERA
• Voting on proposed changes to the by-laws (WSCF-E governing regulations)
• Thematic working groups (Each working group will be asked to come up with specific recommendations)

4th day of ERA
• Elections to the new European Regional Committee.
• Policy Papers
• Preparation for WSCF General Assembly 2020

Working groups

Gender and Sexuality
This working group will develop priorities for WSCF Europe’s work related to gender. This working group can make gender issues WSCF Europe should campaign on. It can also make other recommendations related to WSCF Europe's gender work as well as general recommendations to the WSCF Europe's work in regard to gender matters.

Solidarity
This working group will develop priorities for WSCF Europe’s work related to solidarity. This includes potential themes to be addressed by conference, and what solidarity, justice and peace issues WSCF Europe should focus on. It can also make other recommendations related to WSCF Europe's solidarity and campaigning work, including a review of the current policy of vegetarian diet at our events.

Theology and Spirituality
This working group will develop priorities for WSCF Europe’s work related to theology. This includes potential themes to be addressed by the conference, and how WSCF Europe should incorporate theology into its work. The working group can also make other recommendations related to WSCF Europe's approach to theology.
Inter-faith
This working group will develop priorities for WSCF Europe’s work related to inter-faith dialogue & peace building. It can also make other recommendations related to WSCF Europe’s work with culture and higher education.

Regional Networking
This working group will develop a strategy for WSCF Europe to get and maintain better and sustainable connections to SCMs. The working group can also make other recommendations related to WSCF Europe’s links and outreach work.

Global Networking
This group will develop a strategy how to better connect Europe region with other regions. What ways of connecting to use, what themes to work on together, etc. How can SCMers from other regions get to know each other better and visit each others’ regional programmes, participate in online collaboration and share cross regionally.

Following all working groups there will be a plenary discussion about the recommendations made by each working group, and then a vote on the final recommendations.

Elections to the European Regional Committee (ERC)

Could you imagine to be on the European Regional Committee? The ERC manages the work of WSCF Europe. It’s made up of people who care about WSCF and believe in our work. The European Regional Committee (ERC) is a group of volunteers who manage the day-to-day work of WSCF Europe. Don’t worry if you feel you need to learn new skills to be on the ERC – the ERC is all about learning by doing. One of WSCF’s main aims is to train young people to be leaders.

You can stand for election on the ERC if you are from an affiliated or an associated SCM (see our list of SCMs in the Appendix).

If you’re from a contact movement, you can request to be co-opted onto the ERC. The ERC can co-opt one person from a country where there is no affiliated or associated SCM.

Everyone who decides to stand for election to the ERC is asked to prepare a presentation and submit online application.

Voting at the ERA

Who can vote?

- If your SCM is affiliated you can participate in discussions and vote on the final decisions. Each affiliated SCM has up to two voting delegates at the ERA.
- If your SCM is associated, you can participate in discussions and present candidates for elections. Each Associated SCM has only one voting delegate at the ERA. (However, this will not apply for WSCF global assemblies)
- The elected members of the ERC with the right to vote, speak and present recommendations as a committee
- Other delegates and participants are observers and will be invited to participate in
What are conditions for voting at the ERA to be valid?

1. Representatives from at least half of the affiliated active movements must be present at the ERA for voting to take place.
2. At least half of the voting delegates must be present. This is called quorum. (That means that half of the voting members of the ERA must be present in the room for a vote to take place. Who are voting members (affiliated and/or associated members and ERC members) is stated in the WSCF-E By was under section Composition. Before each vote, a roll call will take place to make sure there are enough delegates present.

Public or Secret ballot voting?

Most votes will be public. This allows us to make votes quickly. For public votes, you will hold up a card to indicate whether you are for, against, or in abstention regarding the issue being voted on. On some issues a secret ballot may be suggested. Voting will take place by placing ballot cards in a box: those in favour mark their ballot card “F”; those against mark “A”; those abstaining leave the ballot paper unmarked. The ERC is elected by secret ballot.

How will secret ballot be conducted for ERC candidates?

When electing the ERC, the vote works slightly differently. Write the NAME of your preferred candidate on the card. If you want to abstain, write ABSTENTION on the card. If there is only one candidate and you would like to vote against her or him, write AGAINST. If you think, we should re-open nomination and look for other candidates, write RON (Re-Open-Nomination). The sequence of the voting is: from chairperson, vice chair and then coordinators.

The procedure for voting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ERA able to vote</th>
<th>affiliated movements-½ represented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>½ of all present ERA voting members (quorum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an associated member applicant</td>
<td>A simple majority (A majority in which the highest number of votes cast for any one candidate, issue, or item exceeds the second-highest number, while not constituting an absolute majority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERC candidate</td>
<td>More than 50% of the overall vote. In case that there are several candidates for one position and none of them gains more than 50% of the vote, a second round will take place with the two highest-scoring candidates. If, again, neither of the two gets more than 50% of the overall vote, the ERC is mandated to find another person for the position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amendment to By-laws</td>
<td>(2/3) majority of the voting members members of the ERA. That means 2/3 of the present quorum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Appendices

Appendix I: Student Christian Movements of WSCF Europe

Member movements:

Affiliated Movements:

1. **Austria**: Evangelische Hochschulgemeinde in Österreich (EHGIO)
2. **Belarus**: Center Ecumena
3. **Britain**: Student Christian Movement Great Britain
4. **Czech Republic**: Oikumené - Akademická YMCA/Oikumene - Academic YMCA
5. **Denmark**: Ecumenical Youth - The Danish Student Christian Movement
6. **Finland**: Suomen Kristillinen Yliopilasliitto/Finlands Kristliga Studentförbund (SKY)
7. **Finland**: Orthodox Student Association of Finland, Ortodoksinen Opiskelijalitto (OOL)
8. **France**: Association des Etudiants Protestants de Paris (AEPP)
9. **Georgia**: Young Christians for Peace and Democracy
10. **Germany**: Evangelische StudentInnenzgemeinde in Deutschland (ESG)
11. **Italy**: Federazione Giovane Evangelica Italiana (FGEI)
12. **Ireland**: SCM Ireland
13. **Lithuania**: Vilniaus akademinei evangelikai liuteronų jaunimo draugija (Vilnius Evangelical Lutheran Academic Youth Fellowship)
14. **Netherlands**: Inbetween
15. **Norway**: Norges Kristelige Studentforbund (NKS)
16. **Poland**: Fellowship of Orthodox Youth in Poland
17. **Slovakia**: Ekunet Slovakia
18. **Sweden**: SCM Sweden, KRISS - Kristna Studentrörels i Sverige

Associated Movements

1. **Bulgaria**: Christian Youth Council in Bulgaria /CYCB
2. **Armenia**: Youth Union of Jervezh
3. **Netherlands**: SSRNU

Contact Movements

1. **Netherlands**: Nieuwe Afdeling Utrecht der Societas Studiosorum Reformatorum
2. **Armenia**: St Trinity Youth Organization
3. **Croatia**: STEP - Studentski Evandeoski Pokret, Student Evangelical Movement
4. **Czech Republic**: YWCA v České republice
5. **France**: L’Action Chrétienne des Etudiants Russes - Mouvement de Jeunesse Orthodoxe (ACER-MJO)
6. **Georgia**: Georgian Student Christian Movement
7. **Iceland**: Kristilega Skólahreyfingin – KSH
8. **Macedonia**: Youth group of the United Methodist Church in Skopje
9. **Romania**: Asociația MIRA
10. **Spain**: Cruzada-Milicia de Santa María
11. **Ukraine**: several local Orthodox youth movement