

CALL

EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN
EMPLOYMENT AND
ECONOMY NETWORK

Church
Action on
Labour
and
Life

Newsletter Summer 2011

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CALL is a Europe wide network which seeks to address employment and related economic and social issues from the perspective of Christian theology and a Christian way of life and to promote a Christian perspective in the debates on Europe's economic and social policies.

Our aims are to:

- Campaign on economic and employment issues in Europe
- Network on economic and employment issues in Europe
- Exchange expertise among members
- Empower people on economic and employment issues

Our current projects are:

1. A European citizens' initiative on Sunday Working
2. A working group on precarious work
3. A working group on religion in the workplace
4. A working group on concepts for a sustainable economy
5. Ethical reflections on economic and social issues

For your Diary

9-11 November 2011	Working Group on Precarious Work	Linz, Austria
30 April – 2 May 2012	UK Industrial Mission Association Conference	Birmingham, UK
	Contact Ian Winterbottom call@cec-kek.be	

Please let Alison Jackson call@cec-kek.be know if you would like us to advertise an event here.

From the Coordination Team

Welcome to the Summer 2011 edition of the *CALL* newsletter.

The Coordination Team met after the *CALL* conference in Bucharest to plan how to take forward the work agreed at that Conference. The main content of this Newsletter is the agreed work plan.

The Team has also produced a report of *CALL*'s activities during the past year which can be found on the *CALL* website.

Laura Casorio has left the Coordination Team as she has moved to a different post; she wishes us well for the future. She has been replaced by Davide Rosso ; we look forward to working with him.

If you would like an event or project to be included in future editions of the Newsletter, please email details to call@cec-kek.be . The main language of the Newsletter is English but we are happy to receive contributions from *CALL* members in German and French also.

Please forward this Newsletter to anyone else who might be interested. It is also available on the *CALL* website: <http://csc.ceceurope.org/issues/social-and-economic-issues/call-network/>

CALL Assembly – Empowering People for Participation in Society – 11-13 May 2011 in Bucharest

Pastor Jean Pierre Thévenaz writes:

This year's assembly was hosted by AIDRom, to which the coordination team expressed warm thanks at its final meeting, after noting that these two-and-a-half days together had consolidated the common purpose within the network. Representatives of Churches from across Europe had gathered to find common ground for the development of their working groups and projects on labour and life.

The general line of the Assembly

Linking labour to life means more than getting sufficient income to live from. Participation is at stake, and empowering people for participation requires a set of instruments about which the assembly had to reflect. It also discussed the issues of the 4 *CALL* working groups:

1. the increasing and more widespread problems of **precarious work**, especially in relation to movement of workers and migration;
2. the need for an economically, socially and ecologically **sustainable economy**, especially in relation to the financial crisis in Europe;
3. **work/life balance**, including Sunday protection, especially in the common European directives on labour conditions;
4. the role of **religion in the work place**, especially the recognised chaplaincy functions in different countries and Churches.

Network members believe that Europe will only overcome the ongoing economic crisis if it looks for **joint solutions**, sharing the burdens in closer cooperation among peoples and leading to greater empowerment for individuals and an expanding social economy. At the end of the assembly they urged the European Churches to support more actively common policies promoting an economy that leads to abundance of life for all citizens.

The full report and the communiqué issued by the Assembly are available on the *CALL* website: <http://csc.ceceurope.org/index.php?id=924>

Meeting of the *CALL* Network at the Patriarchate of Romania Thursday, 12th May 2011

During the *CALL* Conference in Bucharest, we were invited for a morning session at the Patriarchate of the Orthodox Church in Romania.

Romania is a country in transition after five decades of communism. It switched at “light speed” from a society of “not enough” to a society of “too much”, from communism to consumerism.

In this context, the Churches – and we were granted the privilege of hearing from Bishop Ciprian the views of the Orthodox Church, which is the Church of the majority of the population in Romania, as well as the views of a minority church, the Evangelical CA Church, represented by Bishop Vicar Daniel Zileki – as part of civil society, do have a specific role to play to help establishing in the country a true social state that still does not exist.

However, this is a joint task for Churches and the State. Hence the importance, the relevance and the need for a structured dialogue between Churches and State. Such a dialogue was impossible under communism – and there are still today some people who are shaped by that mentality believing that to the Church belongs the field of spirituality while to other organisations, associations or institutions belongs the field of social action. Under the new political conditions, it is not only possible but also necessary to get Churches involved to shape a true social State. We heard the example of two concrete actions which illustrate the work Churches do in the social sector: *Ateliere fara frontiere*, to help marginalised people find a job and reinsert them into the work market (vocational training) and *Fundatia Svasta*, promoting Corporate Social Responsibility. We also heard the example of a law that was vetoed by the President of the country which was intended to help structure the action of Churches in the social domain. Even the Orthodox Church – if I understood correctly – thought that the law was not really helpful as it was drafted. That law will now be discussed again.

At the same time; Churches need to become again “a prophetic voice” within society with a view to building:

1. a culture of solidarity: looking outwards to society, and inwards, within the Church where that solidarity is also sometimes badly missing;
2. a culture of balance or equilibrium between the “not enough” and the “too much”, bearing in mind most importantly *environmental issues among many others*;
3. a culture of work, where one must combat the lack of motivation of young people, coming from the culture of wealth gained by speculation or theft rather than honest work;
4. a culture of life, because a sustainable demography is required for a sustainable and vital society.

Altogether, to sum up, there are at present two main challenges in Romania: 1. to develop entrepreneurship, and 2. to build a social state. Churches believe that they have a crucial role to play in that process and they are looking forward to installing a structured dialogue with the State, in relationship with other partners of the civil society, with a final aim: to make Romania, which is currently a rich country with poor people, a social state based on the principles of a more equitable social economy.

Hervé Pierre Guillot SJ
Jesuit European Office (OCIPE)

Precarious Work

The Working Group will:

- Finalise the results of the questionnaire
- Produce a paper summarising the results of the questionnaire
- Agree a definition of precarious work
- Create a booklet with concrete information about sources of help and advice which can be used as a tool for advice centres.
- Work towards a campaign on the theme of “No future without good work”

If you have questions or are interested in participating in the working group, please contact the moderator Klaus-Peter Spohn-Logé at call@cec-kek.be

Concepts for a Sustainable Economy

The Working Group will

- Circulate a consultation document to all members of CEC, asking for responses in the Autumn
- Will prepare a paper setting out the results by Christmas
- Will organise a workshop early in 2012 to finalise their conclusions and agree the way forward
- Will meet MEPs and the Commission to present their findings.

If you have any questions or are interested in participating in this working group, please get in touch with the moderator, Alison Jackson at call@cec-kek.be

Religion in the Workplace

The Working Group will:

- Produce a final paper setting out the various forms of Workplace Chaplaincy in Europe.
- Produce a document describing how religion can be a unifying force in the workplace.

If you are interested in contributing to these papers, please get in touch with Ian Winterbottom at call@cec-kek.be

Sunday Working

CALL is working with the European Sunday Alliance, which was launched in Brussels on 20 June. Their website says:

“On 20 June, some 65 civil society organisations, trade unions and Churches launched the European Sunday Alliance at an event held in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels. In their Founding Statement “Together for decent working hours” the signatories commit to safeguard and promote work-free Sundays and decent working hours throughout Europe. The launch was part of an expert conference on the impact of Sunday work on the health, safety and social integration of workers.”

For more details see www.europeansundayalliance.eu

Please watch this Newsletter for more details of *CALL*'s participation as events unfold. If you have any questions or would like to be involved, please contact Laurence Flachon at call@cec-kek.be

Ethical Reflection

The European Citizens' Initiative: the corner stone of a European Public Sphere?

The Regulation adopted by the European Parliament on 15th December 2010 establishes the procedures and conditions required to organise a European Citizens' Initiative. Its implementation will still take some more time.

A "milestone". A "breakthrough". Parliamentarians and NGOs did not spare hyperbole when, on 15th December 2010, the European Parliament (EP) approved the Regulation which sets the legal framework for organising a "European Citizens' Initiative" (ECI). True, it is the first time in world history that a "direct cross-border, transnational democratic procedure"¹ is about to become reality. However, expectations about the nature of the measure, and its implications for "participatory democracy" should be prudently controlled.

The aim of this article is therefore to give our readers an insight on what an ECI more precisely is and what can realistically be expected from it by the EU citizens for whom it is intended

This is the introduction to an article by Hervé Pierre Guillot published in *EuropeInfos*, the magazine co-edited by COMECE and JEO-OCIFE. It presents the European Citizens Initiative in broad terms, setting out what it is, what it is not, what may be expected from it, and what should not be expected from it.

The whole article is available on the CALL website at: <http://csc.ceceurope.org/index.php?id=924>

Contact CALL

Please get in touch if you are interested in taking part either electronically or directly in any of the activities of CALL.

Website - <http://csc.ceceurope.org/index.php?id=924>

Email address for all contacts: call@cec-kek.be *Please put the name of the person to whom your email is addressed in the email subject box*

Coordinators	Dieter Heidtmann Alison Jackson
European Sunday Alliance	Laurence Flachon
Precarious Work	Klaus-Peter Spohn-Logé
Religion in the Workplace	Ian Winterbottom
Concepts for a Sustainable Economy	Alison Jackson
Comments on or contributions to the Ethical Reflection	Jean-Pierre Thévenaz
Newsletter Editor	Alison Jackson