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            Saksdokumenter.   a Minutes Oikosnet Europe General
                                     Assembly 2025

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Minutes of the Oikosnet Europe – General Assembly 2025

Date: 17.09. 2025 – 21.09.2025

Location: Lutherstadt Wittenberg , Germany

Prepared by: Kateryna Stulnikova (administrative assistant)

Participants & Attendance

A full register of participants, proxies and guests is kept in the official attendance list. For the business sessions the quorum was confirmed with 28 voting representatives present.

At the opening of the Assembly, 16 voting representatives were present and 12 proxies had been received, resulting in a total of 28 voting representatives. According to the statutes, the quorum was met.

Voting Representatives (present in person):
- Monika Appmann – Ev. Akademie Bad Boll, DE
- Helge Bezold – Evangelische Akademie Frankfurt, DE
- Adriana Florea – Agape Centro Ecumenico, IT
- Katerina Karkala – Orthodox Academy of Crete, GR (Oikosnet Vice Pres.)
- Alf Linderman – Sigtunastiftelsen, SE (Oikosnet Treasurer)
- Gernot Meier – Evangelische Landeskirche in Baden, DE
- Frank Grimstad – Norske kirkeakademier, NO
- Catriona Robertson – Iona Community, UK
- Hannah Schilling – Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin, DE
- Daniel Schmid Holz – plusbildung ökumenische Bildungslandschaft Schweiz, CH
- Heike Witzel – Evangelische Erwachsenenbildung – Bundesverband, DE
- Sergios Voilas – Interorthodox Centre of the Church of Greece, GR
- Yuri Roi – Vilnius Orthodox Christian Institute for Education and Research, LT
- Veronika Matějková – Hussite Theological Faculty of Charles University, CZ
- Christoph Maier – Evangelische Akademie Sachsen-Anhalt, DE
- Sebastian Kranich – Evangelische Akademie Thüringen, DE
- Henning Theissen - Evangelische Akademie der Nordkirche, DE

Proxies:

- Thomas Bachofner – tecum, Zentrum für Spiritualität, Bildung und Gemeindebau & Monoszloi Erdei Iskola (MEilK), proxy to Walter Lüssi

- Frank Vogelsang – Evangelische Akademie Rheinland, proxy to Heinz-Joachim Lohmann Christoph Picker – Evangelische Akademie Pfalz & Oliver Emde – Evangelische Akademie Hofgeismar, proxy to Helge Bezold
- Kerstin Gralher – Evangelische Akademie Villigst, proxy to Monika Appmann
- Alex Wimberley – Corrymeela Centre, proxy to Catriona Robertson
- Alexei Bodrov – St Andrew's Biblical Theological Institute & Aafje van den Boogert – Arminius Instituut, Faculteit Religie en Theologie, proxy to Gernot Meier
- Ilkka Mattila – KIRKKOPALVELUT RY, proxy to Alf Linderman
- Hege Irene Fossum – Christian Association for Adult Education in Norway, proxy to Frank Grimstad

Additional Guests / Speakers – Non-Voting:
- Samira Luka, CEOSS
- Andrea Zaki, CEOSS
- Harald Skarsaune, Christian Association for Adult Education in Norway
- Colin Craig, Corrymeela Centre
- Hubert Petrasch, FEECA
- Fr. Gintaras Saungailo, Vilnius Orthodox Christian Institute for Education and Research

Ex Officio Participants:
- Walter Lüssi, Board of Oikosnet Europe (President)
- Heinz-Joachim Lohmann, Executive Secretary, Oikosnet Europe
- Kjell Yngve Riise, Board of Oikosnet Europe
- Kateryna Stulnikova, Staff, Oikosnet Europe

1. Opening and Welcome
The President of Oikosnet Europe, Walter Lüssi, opened the business sessions and welcomed all participants. Opening worship and greetings from local churches marked the formal beginning of the Assembly. The President recalled the organisation's historical roots, highlighted its mission of peace and reconciliation, and thanked the hosting institution and

staff for their support.

2. Roll Call, Quorum, Proxies (decision)

The President of Oikosnet Europe Walter Lüssi and The Executive Secretary Heinz-Joachim Lohmann conducted the roll call. The official attendance register recorded 28 voting representatives present (including proxies transferred). According to the statutes a quorum was met and confirmed.

3. Adoption of the Agenda (decision)

The draft agenda circulated prior to the meeting was put to the Assembly. The agenda was adopted unanimously without amendment.

4. Election of the Co-Signer(s) of the Minutes (decision)

The minutes of the General Assembly 2025 were signed by Heinz-Joachim Lohmann and Alf Linderman.

The minutes were taken by Kateryna Stulnikova.

5. Adoption of the Minutes of Last Meeting (decision)

The minutes of the General Assembly 2024 (Warsaw) were presented and adopted unanimously without changes.

6. Election of new Member(s) / Change of Places

6.1 Transfer of membership: The Assembly considered the transfer of membership from the Orthodox Grodno Laity Center (Belarus) to the Vilnius Orthodox Christian Institute for Education and Research. The transfer was explained by representatives and the Assembly approved the transfer unanimously.

6.2 Election of the Academy of Tutzing: The Academy of Tutzing, previously a member until 2016, presented their application for re-admission. Members discussed the academic value and the question of fees. The Assembly approved re-admission of the Academy of Tutzing. Decision: Academy of Tutzing re-admitted; noted as a transitional arrangement pending clarification of the membership fee system.

7. Presentation and Discussion of the Annual Report

The President Walter Lüssi and Executive Secretary Heinz-Joachim Lohmann presented the Annual Report section by section. Debate focused on projects and thematic activities, notably: the Arab–European Citizens Dialogue (AECD), the Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DpC), and the Oikosnet Youth Project. Members commented positively on the scope of activities but raised concerns on coordination, sustainability and financial transparency.

Key discussion points included:
- AECD: greater European ownership and clearer coordination with partners in the Arab region;
- Youth activities: more active engagement from member organisations and clearer pathways for youth participation in governance;
- Communications: need for improved social media and newsletter strategy to increase visibility and member engagement.

Following discussion the Annual Report was received by the Assembly (unanimous).

8. Finances

8.1 Annual Accounts 2024
The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2024. Summary figures presented to the meeting: Income €19,884; Expenditure €45,201. The Treasurer explained that not all membership contributions had been received and that the Association needed to draw on reserves.

Current reserves were reported at approximately €130,000. Members expressed concern about sustainability if the current balance of income/expenditure continued.

Decision: The accounts for 2024 were adopted (with three abstentions).

8.2 Auditors' Report
The auditors reported their findings; matters raised were noted and will be addressed by the Treasurer and the incoming Board.

8.3 Budget 2026
The Treasurer, Alf Linderman, introduced the proposed budget for 2026 (income and expenditure approx. €41,750). The discussion focused on budget transparency, the 'investments in projects' line, and the necessity of a five-year financial plan. It was recommended that the Board develop a long-term budgeting framework.

Decision: Budget 2026 adopted (with one abstention).

8.4 Membership Fees
The participants discussed the largely unchanged membership fee structure since 2008 and identified inequities. Suggestions included tying fees to academic scale, creating a solidarity fund for members in need, and ensuring simplicity and transparency.

Decision: The Assembly mandated the new Board to develop a revised membership fee system, ensuring fairness, transparency and sustainability.

9. Elections

9.1 Report of the Nominations Committee
The Nominations Committee presented the list of candidates and explained the procedure.

Corrections to the circulated candidate list were made during the session. The Committee had sought volunteers for the various offices and provided written presentations of candidates in advance.

9.2 Election Procedure
The Assembly agreed the following procedure: secret ballots would be used for elections to the Presidency, Vice-Presidency and Board members. Counting officers were appointed: Kjell Riise and Harald Skarsaune. Voting papers were prepared according to the voting power of each representative. Candidates were permitted a brief opportunity to respond to questions from the floor prior to voting.

9.3 Candidate Presentations – Summary (selected interventions)
Katerina Karkala (candidate for President) emphasised teamwork, openness to change, and the need to develop joint projects at European and bilateral levels. She highlighted the importance of supporting the Executive Secretary and strengthening institutional cooperation.

Veronika Matejkova (candidate for Vice-President) stressed care for members, outreach to new members and supporting applications for financial projects. She underlined the importance of practical cooperation and focusing on shared work rather than rigid structures.

Other candidates for board positions outlined a range of priorities including bringing energy from member institutions, strengthening networks in Scandinavia, and supporting youth engagement and communications.

9.4 Final Results (confirmed)
Quorum: 28 voting representatives present.

President
Katerina Karkala — 16 votes (elected).

Vice-President
Veronika Matejkova — 27 votes (elected).

Treasurer
Alf Linderman — 23 votes (elected).

Members of the Board
Catriona Robertson — 26 votes (elected).
Monika Appmann — 24 votes (elected). Gérnot
Meier — 24 votes (elected).
Frank Grimstad — 20 votes (elected).

Auditors
Daniel Schmid Holz — elected.
Adriana Florea — elected.

Nominations Committee Aafje

van den Boogert — elected. Heike
Witzel — elected.
Sergios Voilas — elected.

Remarks: The Assembly agreed that, given the present circumstances, multiple Board members would be elected in this round to ensure adequate capacity. The new Board will convene promptly after the Assembly to begin work on organisational priorities.

10. Oikosnet Europe's Action Plan (About Us / Action Plan)

10.1 'About Us' – Revised Draft
A working group presented a revised draft of the 'About Us' text. Two minor textual changes were adopted and members discussed thematic additions. A key addition agreed in principle was a sentence clarifying the role of the General Assembly: 'The General Assembly convenes to foster dialogue, to discuss important issues, common activities and to make decisions.'

Members debated the placement and prominence of references to 'Christian perspective' and 'democratic education'. Some delegates proposed 'Christian perspective' be explicitly named as an underlying value. Others suggested that democratic education be included as a discrete field of activity. It was agreed that the draft should be refined by an editorial group for clarity and then presented in revised form.

Decision: The Assembly accepted the revised draft as a working basis and mandated an editorial group (including the President and delegates who spoke during the debate) to prepare a polished English version for final review.

10.2 Organisational Development / Executive Secretary
The Assembly discussed the evolving role of the Executive Secretary and the workload involved. Five core tasks were identified for the Executive Secretary: organisation of Board meetings; organisation of the General Assembly; communication with members and outreach to new members; coordination of programme content between Assemblies; and external representation.

Members recognised that the workload is excessive for a single volunteer post and explored models to share responsibilities across Board members and member institutions. Three broad approaches were discussed: (1) structured five-year transition to a leaner network model; (2) electing a new Board first and tasking them with planning structural change; (3) delegating organisational development to the new Board with clear guidelines from the Assembly.

Decision: The Assembly mandated the incoming Board to lead organisational development work, including proposals for task-sharing and any necessary changes to the Executive Secretary's remit.

11. Reports from Projects / Common Activities

11.1 Arab–European Citizens' Dialogue (AECD)

Representatives from CEOSS (Cairo) and the OE representatives in the project organizing committee presented the history, aims and recent achievements of AECD. Discussion highlighted the importance of trust-building, the value of small-group face-to-face encounters in addition to larger conferences, and the need for clearer European member

participation and ownership.

CEOSS confirmed secured three-year funding from Bread for the World on the Arab side. The Assembly considered how Oikosnet Europe might formally continue partnership and noted the complexity of coordination with other parallel initiatives.

Decision: No final decision at this session; the Assembly agreed to reflect and return the following day to confirm whether Oikosnet will commit to continuing partnership for the next three years. Board to follow up.

11.2 Youth Project / Intergenerational Exchange

European Arab Dialogue visits al Azhar University

Samira Luka, Bishop Dr. Andrea Zaki, Walter Lüssi

The Youth Project team presented a three-year plan including symbolic installations, intergenerational activities and proposals to integrate youth into future Assemblies. A proposal to host an intergenerational General Assembly at Agape in 2028 was noted and received positive reactions. Registration details for upcoming youth gatherings were announced.

Decision: Strong support expressed for the intergenerational approach. Planning to continue and coordinate with member organisations.

11.3 Dialogue for Peaceful Change (DpC)

Colin Craig provided a report on DpC's activities, emphasising conflict transformation practice and training for younger leaders. The Assembly welcomed DpC workshops and noted the relevance of these methodologies for Oikosnet's mission.

Decision: DpC to run a practical workshop during the Study Day; further cooperation to be developed by the Board.

12. Dates and Venues of Future General Assemblies

The Assembly discussed options for future venues and dates. Possible hosts mentioned include institutions in Germany, Athens and Crete, and delegations encouraged consideration of Eastern European venues to strengthen regional balance.

Decision: The Assembly noted the provisional dates for GA 2026 as 16–20 September 2026. The exact venue remains to be confirmed; the incoming Board was mandated to finalise venue arrangements and communicate the decision to members by the end of 2025.

Annex A – Workshops & Study Day

Conflict Resolution Workshop (Dialogue for Peaceful Change) – Summary:
- Facilitator: Colin Craig
- Focus: conflict dynamics, iceberg model, emotional responses (fight/flight/freeze/fawn), and practical tools for preventing escalation.

- Key outcomes: recognition that organisational culture and 'tyranny of politeness' can hinder honest dialogue; need for capacity-building in conflict navigation; intergenerational leadership and concrete practices to ground 'hope' in realistic steps.
Participants appreciated the practical insights and requested follow-up training modules.

Action Items (Summary)

- New Board: Prepare an organisational development plan (including task-sharing, Executive Secretary remit, and membership fee revision). Deadline: initial proposals by end of 2025.

- Editorial Group (appointed by President): Refine the 'About Us' text and submit polished English version for review. Responsible: Walter + nominated editors. Deadline: next GA session for final approval.

- Treasurer (Alf Linderman): Draft a five-year financial plan and provide clearer breakdown of budget lines including 'investments in projects'.

- Board + AECD partners: Confirm whether Oikosnet commits to the AECD three-year partnership and outline funding/coordination arrangements.

- Youth Project Team: Continue planning intergenerational activities; circulate registration details for the next youth gathering (24–29 May).

- Nominations Committee: Complete handover and documentation for elected members; support the new Board in onboarding.

- Secretariat (Executive Secretary): Keep attendance register and annex it to the final minutes; coordinate logistics for GA 2026 dates/venue inquiries.

Closing

The outgoing President thanked participants for their contributions and formally handed over responsibilities to the newly elected President and Board. The business sessions concluded, and the Assembly proceeded to closing worship. The Assembly expressed appreciation to the hosts and organisers.

About us: OIKOSNET EUROPE

Oikosnet Europe is an ecumenical network of lay academies, spiritual communities and other institutions of Christian education across Europe

Who we are

The network of Oikosnet Europe members is a dynamic interface for advocating and promoting the issues of church, society and culture, translating them into actions, from the local context to the global context, and vice versa.

The association of Oikosnet Europe embodies the commitment of its members to a wide range of educational work. They work together to promote dialogue between actors in church, society and culture, peaceful change, sustainability and ecumenical education. The General Assembly convenes to foster dialogue, to discuss important issues, common activities and to make decisions. It forms a living community of learning and practice for visions, ideas, projects and spirituality that enrich both the individual members and the network as a whole.

Where we come from

The history of the organisation dates back to 1955 when Olov Hartman, the director of the Sigtuna Foundation in Sweden and Eberhard Müller, the director of Bad Boll in Germany came up with the idea to establish a European Association of Christian Academies and Laity Centres, EAALCE (The Ecumenical Association of Academies and Laity Centres). The name was later changed into Oikosnet Europe. The longing for peace and reconciliation after World War II and at the beginning of the Cold War created the DNA of the association, which today comprises 33 member organisations in 15 European countries. They represent Churches of the Reformation, Catholic and Orthodox confessions. Since 2017 the association's seat has been located at the Sigtuna Foundation in Sweden, after having been in Germany since the beginning.

In recent years there have been some important changes in the composition of the members. The biggest change concerns the integration of members of the former network for Adult Education in Europe, the European Protestant and Anglican Network for life-long learning (EAEE). Added to this was the membership of the Iona Community as an international, ecumenical Christian movement working for justice and peace, the rebuilding of community and the renewal of worship. Oikosnet Europe now also counts theological faculties and training centres among its members.

What we stand for

As different as the centres, academies and movements might be today, they are all joined in their belief that as a faith based organisation there is a need to act out responsibility for society and living together peacefully and that real and deep exchanges and education in different ways is important to achieve this.

The basic values that these members of Oikosnet Europe share and how they treat each other and other partners are

Equality in diversity – We ensure that everyone receives their share of opportunities by promoting equitable distribution so that the specific needs of the individual are met. We therefore welcome all.

Solidarity – We exercise solidarity by acting in a comprehensive manner, embracing the causes, interests and needs of the vulnerable people and communities as our own.

Accountability – We value our stakeholders and we are committed to managing our programmes and resources in an ethical and accountable manner.

Transparency – We are committed to being as transparent and open as possible by disclosing information regarding projects, programme evaluations and audits.

Sustainability – We are committed to sustainable development that enhances the capacity of individuals and communities to determine their own future and to tap into the local financial and human resources available.

How we act

We experience our different theological and differentiated understanding of education as an enrichment and as a joint examination of reality from different perspectives. We are challenged to continually develop new forms of religious learning for adults in the areas of Christian living, (church) political commitment and spiritual practice.

Faith Education: Faith Education promotes the ability to talk to other people about their faith, to express themselves and to understand others in their faith. Celebrating church services, listening to the gospel, celebrating communion, praying, religious art and religious rituals as well as friendly conversations in everyday situations all help to achieve this. Faith Education (teaching in religion) should not be confused with learning about faith. It is about becoming capable of speaking, reflecting and confessing. This is a contribution to the education of theological and ecclesiastical identity.

Religious Education: Religious Education (teaching about religion) imparts knowledge about religions and enables encounters in interreligious dialogue. Empathy for different religious interpretations of life and the mutual interpenetration of the familiar and the unfamiliar are helpful for this. Religious education is part of general school education and lifelong in pluralistic societies. Religious education understood in this sense strengthens interreligious competence.

Theological and Ethical Education: Theological and Ethical Education enables adults to form opinions and act responsibly in their personal lives, in the church and in society. It supports people who shape their own lives. The Christian tradition is often opened up anew and experiences of faith are made possible. This socialises people with the church community.

Theological Education in connection with Arts and Culture: Theological Education in connection with Arts and Culture is dealing with the crucial role arts plays in forming and expressing cultural identity. Arts captures the essence of community's beliefs,

traditions and experiences. Through visual storytelling, arts and culture becomes a matter of theological reflexion.

Spiritual Education: Spiritual Education practices and lifestyles helps people to live their lives in everyday life. Education and understanding are not just intellectual processes. Understanding is also linked to experience and to a practice that is carried out regularly.

Civic education from a Christian perspective: Civic education comprises the opening of a space for discussion and for learning about personal and societal challenges and issues, from a standpoint as Christians and grounded in Christian values. It allows for changing of perspectives and learning to deal with conflicts and differences. It means to invite to engage with the question of living together and has as an aim to strengthening capacities to take responsibility as citizen.

Together, we are looking for new working formats to achieve a positive impact in our societies and to engage in current challenges. It is important for us that education includes democratic values as an inclusive approach, develops critical thinking and community living to embody Christian values, lifestyle and hope. We support each other in advocacy work and continue to campaign for peace and justice. We are interested in joint projects that cross cultures and borders. We work together with civil society partner organisations that challenge and complement us on our common path. We also seek to involve people from younger generations in order to learn from them and support them in shaping the future. We work for raising awareness and empowering people for the fundamental questions of life.

19 September 2025, General Assembly of Oikosnet Europe in Wittenberg, Germany

(Walter Lüssi, Katerina Karkala-Zormpa, Veronika Matějková, Knut Refsdal)