

CCME 025/012

CCME Members,  
CCME associated and  
partner organisations

24th July 2025

*Unless the lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain. Unless the lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain (Psalm 127:1, NIV)*

### Information and Update

Dear CCME members and friends,

As the summer holiday season is about to start soon or has already started for some, I once again want to inform you of past, present and future themes and activities in the work of CCME.

The first half of 2025 has once again been a busy period for CCME.

### ACTIVITIES IN THE 1st HALF OF 2025

#### 2nd Africa Europe Ecumenical Forum on Migration March 2025 Addis Abeba (ET)

The 2nd Africa Europe Ecumenical Migration Forum took place from March 17 to 21, 2025, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with 40 representatives of African and European churches, convened by the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and CCME. The externalization of European asylum and migration policy and fair labour mobility were particularly important topics of exchange, including in discussions with the African Union Commission. Participants also gained insight into the Ethiopian asylum and migration situation as well as the work of Ethiopian churches on the issue.

The joint final declaration can be found here: <https://ccme.eu/ccme-and-aacc-release-joint-communique-migration>

#### Advocacy training on European laws on asylum and migration, Brussels 11-13 June 2025

The advocacy training for European churches on European asylum and migration policy took place in Brussels from June 11 to 13, 2025, with 20 participants from different European churches.

Participants learned through presentations on the development of EU asylum and migration laws as well as advocacy strategies, practised developing advocacy messages, and then applied them in their interactions with EU asylum and migration policymakers.

A more detailed report can be found here: <https://ccme.eu/ccme-advocacy-training-2025>

If finances allow, the event will become a regular feature in CCME's work.

### **Implementation of EU Asylum & Migration Pact**

As reported, the European Commission had in June 2024 published a communication outlining the measures which the EU member states will have to take to implement the pact by 2026 – grouped into 10 “building blocks”. (see: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0251>

In particular, building block 9 (“New safeguards for applicants for international protection and vulnerable persons, and increased monitoring of fundamental rights”) is, in principle, to be viewed positively.

However, the EU Commission's mid-term report on the implementation of the Pact in June 2025 suggests that implementation is stalling on this point and others. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0319>

It will be essential for the European Commission to obtain significant buy-in by EU member states to the so-called “solidarity” mechanism in the next months. With the mechanism countries with high migratory pressure, such as those at the EU external borders, are expected to be supported by other member states through relocation, financial support or other support measures. Analysing the needs for support and allocating help between member states under the solidarity mechanism by the end of 2025 will be essential for making the so-called asylum and migration management cycle a success. (on the different steps and timeline of the cycle see the graph on: [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum/implementing-pact-migration-and-asylum\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/pact-migration-and-asylum/implementing-pact-migration-and-asylum_en))

### **New legislative proposals**

During the adoption of the EU Asylum and Migration Pact, it was often argued that the pact would end the ongoing debates surrounding EU asylum and migration legislation. Shortly after its adoption, this became apparent: In March 2025, the EU Commission published a proposal for an EU Return System that would significantly tighten the existing EU Return Directive. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025PC0101> CCME is in the context of the

“Christian group” currently finalising a statement on the proposal – largely raising concern and asking if the proposed measures are in any way likely to resolve the issues around return.

In May 2025, the EU Commission published a proposal to amend the Asylum Procedure Regulation adopted as part of the pact in 2024. An expanded concept of so-called “safe third countries” would make it possible to reject asylum applications in the EU and transfer asylum seekers to third countries, where asylum or similar procedures would then be carried out according to local law. These could well include countries with which the asylum seeker has no previous connection. It is noteworthy that the May 2025 proposal concerns a regulation that was not due to be implemented until June 2026.

This example demonstrates the EU Commission's tendency in recent years to pay little attention to the correct implementation of existing legal instruments on asylum. Rather, at the urging of member states, the EU Commission is increasingly proposing to amend existing laws by stripping them of their core content. In addition to raising substantive issues, this approach also calls into question the role of the EU Commission as an institution that, according to the EU treaties, should act independently of member states and be the guardian of EU law.

Furthermore, it is clear that the legislative process has become further politicized. Many proposals from the EU Commission and member states focus on measures intended to demonstrate determination to “be tough on migration”. These are often difficult to implement in practice or require considerable financial or organizational effort, and do not necessarily address the problem they seek to solve (e.g., increased detention of those required to leave the country or so-called “return hubs” in third countries).

### **Ukraine displacement response – trouble on the horizon?**

Regarding the EU response to the largest refugee movement within Europe since World War II, the flight of several million people from Ukraine, a new trend is emerging. Since March 2022, millions of people have been admitted and protected in the EU under the EU Temporary Protection Directive. While this hasn't always gone smoothly, many have noted the advantages which protected Ukrainians have over other persons needing international protection. The directive's application has been extended until March 2027.

In a communication at the beginning of June, the EU Commission stated that other solutions must be found for the period from March 2027 onwards. The member states are called upon to find solutions in this regard. The EU Commission makes

some recommendations as to how national authorities could grant residence permits to the people concerned, but also makes it clear that from 2027 onwards there will be no uniformly binding and EU-wide legal basis for special protection for refugees from Ukraine. The urgent question therefore arises as to how the 4.2 million Ukrainian refugees in the EU are to receive new residence permits in the relatively short period up to March 2027 – if even half of them were to apply for asylum using the usual procedure, there would be a risk that the national asylum authorities would collapse. The EU Commission's proposals, which aim to increase returns to Ukraine, are therefore also cause for concern. So far, the voluntary nature of the return has been emphasized, but given the pressure and encouragement from the Ukrainian government on compatriots to return and the likely chaotic development of the EU's hosting of Ukrainians after March 2027, it is important to remain vigilant.

More detailed information on recent policy developments are contained in the policy brief, which we have shared twice so far and which you ll from now on receive regularly.

### **The EU's Multiannual Financial Framework**

On July 16, 2025, the European Commission proposed a new budget – the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028 to 2034 totalling nearly EUR 2 trillion, representing about 1.26% of the EU's gross national.

This budget proposal has a significant focus on “strengthening security and migration management”. Specifically, EUR 74 billion is allocated to Home Affairs and the Commission is proposing to increase funding for migration and asylum, border management, and internal security. The language used when presenting the budget proposal is of concerns, as it underlines “the importance of strong external borders to manage migration and counter hybrid threats.”

The proposal and additional information can be found at:

[https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/eu-budget-2028-2034\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/eu-budget-2028-2034_en)

The budget proposal will now be discussed between EU member states and the European Parliament – a process estimated to take between 1 ½ and 2 years....it might be useful to talk to your governments what priorities you d like to see financed by the EU budget....

## **CCME General Assembly (virtual) 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

The CCME General Assembly met virtually for its annual meeting.

The Membership Application United Protestant Church of France EPUdF was unanimously approved. The EPUdF was thus accepted as 39th member of CCME. It was noted that Cytun (Churches Together in Wales) had resigned from CCME membership.

It was noted that Angela Canadey had resigned as treasurer and Maria Kjellsdotter Rydinger as ExCom member. Doritt Akinbombola and Katalin Zsoltani had moved from the electoral reserve to be ExCom members and Goos Minderman acted as treasurer ad interim. No additional nominations for vacant posts on the ExCom and electoral reserve had been received.

The GA therefore unanimously affirmed Goos Minderman as treasurer until the next in person GA and Katalin Zsoltani as Vice Moderator

The General Assembly adopted the accounts for the year 2024 and discharged the Executive Committee from their responsibilities for the same period. The decision received unanimous support The CCME budget 2026 proposal was also unanimously adopted

## **CCME activity and financial report 2024**


Both reports are attached.

## **Protecting people more than borders**

The project "protecting people more than borders" continues to work on ideas for an alternative asylum model in Europe.

We have set up a whatsapp group which you can join:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/Kaoy2922bioAFtA844EiCF>

 Or scan the QR code below with your phone:



We encourage you to continue following our social media channel and website, and to share our updates within your networks:

- <https://www.facebook.com/churchescommissionformigrantsineurope1964>
- [www.ccme.eu](http://www.ccme.eu)

### **CCME internal: Staff developments**

There have been some staff developments in CCME in recent months:

The position of Executive secretary Ana Puljiz has been prolonged until at least 30<sup>th</sup> June 2027. The good financial results in 2025 have also allowed to increase her position from 50 % to 70%

Rev Dr Kirk Sims continues to serve as seconded staff, nowadays from Düsseldorf/D on questions of being church together, in particular a “Mapping Migration IV” study. Ms Joy Eva Bohol also works for CCME as seconded staff on communication, working from Geneva. Both are seconded for one day per week by institutions of the United Methodist Church. We are very grateful to both of them and the United Methodist Church for the important support. Joy Eva Bohol will from September to December not be able to work for us – due to a happy reason: she will be on maternity leave – all our best wishes to her !

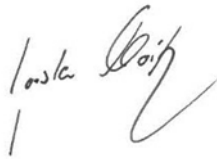
Christine Rugurika continues to serve as office administrator with a position reduced to 4 days/week. I continue in my second term as CCME General Secretary (term until July 2027).

We have despite ongoing effort not managed to bring accountancy/finance management for CCME back into the office with a one day/week position on the staff. We therefore continue to employ an external accountancy firm.

Marie Bischof has from April to June supported the office and brought about many communication ideas – we are very thankful to her for helping us in this!

On behalf of the Executive Committee and the staff of CCME, I wish all of you a good and blessed summertime.

With best regards,  
sincerely yours



Dr Torsten Moritz  
General Secretary