

CCME executive committee convenes to discuss mandates from the 2023 general assembly

By Joy Eva Bohol

The newly elected members of the Executive Committee of the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) convened on 15-16 January 2024 in Brussels to start to implement its mandate from the General Assembly in November 2023, and to propose priorities and strategies for the term 2024-2027.

Together with the General Secretary Dr. Torsten Moritz and CCME staff, the Executive Committee learned about CCME's 60 years history, its membership, and its current role; they revisited the financial standing of the organization: its current finances and forecast, including membership fees and funding from grants; they discussed about the CCME general secretariat personnel and clarified priorities and strategies for the next four years.

"It was a very constructive (first) meeting of the new executive committee members. It was an opportunity for the members to get to know one another and to learn about CCME—its origins and its scope. All of that to inform us of how we can move forward together—we have a very clear mandate from the last (2023) General Assembly. (The meeting allowed us to) talk in a serious way on how we can take our mandate forward. Another thing that excited me was the willingness that I saw on the part of the executive committee members to take responsibility for the different tasks we've identified that needs to be done...so that we are in a good position to speak with the membership and the general assembly in June 2024," CCME Moderator Fiona Kendall said on her impression of their first meeting.

Taking advantage of being in Brussels, the Executive Committee met with a representative from the central-right think-tank of the European Peoples Party EPP, Vit Novotny, senior research officer of the Wilfried Martens Center for European Studies, to speak about the new pact on migration and asylum, including the status of the negotiation process and the political side of it.

Dr. Moritz expressed the importance of the timely meeting of the executive meeting in Brussels. This after a "a political agreement (in December 2023) on major parts of European Union-wide legislation on asylum and migration, legislation that we are not necessarily in favor of." Come June 2024 is the election of the European Parliament, "which would probably not be favorable towards the position of migration that CCME has... In this context, we need to discuss and further develop where we can be of most added value with the possibilities and the resources we have—to help us strategize in this area."

The Executive Committee will meet again in March and April on-line to further develop the outcomes and proposed action plans for the virtual CCME General Assembly in June.