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Spring greetings from the Regional Office!

Regional News:

Call for Applications – Office and Publications Intern:

WSCF-E seeks a motivated person for the position of Office and Publications Intern to work in the Regional Office in Budapest, Hungary for two years starting in September 2009. The intern will receive a monthly stipend to cover the costs of living in Budapest. The deadline for applications is **31 May**. For more information, visit our webpage at wscf-europe.org.

Lingua Franca Training – Call for Applications: A Lingua Franca language and leadership training, on the theme *Religious Freedom as a Human Right* will be held in Lviv, Ukraine from 25-30 May. Even today, in practice and legislation, religious

freedom, an essential human right, is not respected in many societies, throughout the world and in Europe. What is the responsibility of students in response to this violation of human rights? Participants will identify current violations and will study how to work and campaign for the observance of this essential human right. This training seeks to promote not only feelings but actions of solidarity crossing national lines, challenging students to work and campaign for religious freedom for themselves and their neighbours, and thus working for a more peaceful and just Europe and world. The deadline for applications is **10 April**. View the invitation and download the forms on our website at wscf-europe.org.



Some members of the European Regional committee (ERC) during an excursion at the ERC meeting in Trieste

Culture and Higher Education Conference: The next thematic conference of WSCF-E will be in Tulln, Austria from 29 April to 5 May on the theme *Art and Spirituality – Building up Intercultural Identity*. Art provides a medium and voice to examine European society, as well as to appreciate the beauty of the variety in this multinational continent. Artists cannot be indifferent to the world around them; their task is to question, to search for the answers to various phenomena in society. Society cannot be indifferent to art, because it is an integral part of heritage, culture, and identity. Examining the variety of cultural influences and expressions within Europe, the conference aims to promote intercultural dialogue and appreciation of diversity among young people in Europe, and to empower students to raise their own views through artistic mediums in society.

Upcoming Senior Friends Meeting: Were you involved in WSCF Europe in the past? Would you like to stay involved, renew connections, support and join in the work of the region? Running parallel to the WSCF-E thematic conference, a WSCF Europe Senior friends meeting will be held from 30 April to 3 May in Tulln, Austria. The meeting will have its own programme, but will also join with the students in the thematic seminar some of the time. View the invitation and registration by clicking on the Senior Friends tool bar on the left side of our webpage.

ERC Meeting: The first meeting of the European Regional Committee in 2009 was held in Trieste, Italy. In addition to evaluating the past year and planning for future programmes, the ERC met with local students to strengthen connections in the area. The next ERC meeting will be held immediately before the European Regional Assembly, in October, and a new ERC will be elected at the Assembly. See below for more information.

Staff Meeting: SCM staff members and volunteers from across Europe gathered in Prague from 19-22 March for the annual European regional staff meeting. Staff reported on their events, exchanged ideas of best practice, and brainstormed together about the future. The thematic portion of the meeting focused on the Interregional theme for 2009 “Identity, Diversity, and Dialogue” and all participated in a training session about facilitating dialogue.

Global News:

For recent news from WSCF Global, please visit wscfglobal.org.

Mark Your Calenders:

July – August: The summer meeting of the Nordic Cooperation Council will be hosted by SCM Sweden and will be a pilgrimage to Trondheim, Norway. The Central European Subregion's summer seminar will be in August in Hungary. The Western Subregion will organise a trip to Taize. More information on these events will be available soon.



From the staff meeting in Prague

26 July – 1 August: Lingua Franca is now in the second year of its 3 year project, *Stop Being Silent!* Further exploring methods of overcoming domestic violence in society from last year's training, the second seminar will be held in Novi Sad, Serbia in late July. How can we prevent the cycle of abuse that permeates our society? What effect does the post-war climate of the Balkans have on the issues of domestic violence in the region? How do gender roles affect mentalities that lead to domestic violence? What can students and young people do to prevent domestic violence? In what forums and spaces can we speak out to raise awareness in our societies, churches and schools?

3-10, 11-18 August: The **Agape Theological Camp**, on the theme, *Apocalypse: a world of fears and dreams or an encounter with reality?*, will be from 3-10 August, and the **Agape Political Camp**, *Without Borders?*, will be from 11-18 August. Each camp hosts sixty to eighty people from around the world, and the working languages are English, Italian, Spanish, French and German. We will spend a week living as a community, engaging in discussions, creativity, fun and moments of worship for those who wish to take part, as well as meeting people from many different backgrounds. The effects of these camps do not end after a week but continue on through the relationships established, through lasting political commitment which gives birth to activism, and through individual transformation fueled by meeting together in Agape. For more information, visit the Agape website: www.agapecentroecumenico.org.

6-11 October 2009: The fall thematic conference will be in October, in Romania, on the theme **Gender, society and religion – Exploring Diversity in Expanding Europe**. Issues of gender and gender equality touch us at the very core of our existence as gendered beings. Our daily lives, identities and social structures, with their possibilities and limits, are all shaped by our conception of gender. As a result of migration and globalisation, Europe is becoming more heterogeneous, multi-religious and multi-cultural. Traditional conceptions of gender roles are in flux. This conference will create a forum to dialogue about this situation, which brings both great challenge and promise for European citizens, communities, churches and institutions, examining how all can live together in peace, respect, and dignity.

11-13 October 2009: The **European Regional Assembly (ERA)** is the highest decision-making body of the European Region. At the assembly, the activities of the Europe region for the past 2 years will be evaluated and the activities and vision for the next 2 years will be planned and a new European Regional Committee (ERC) will be elected. The positions of the thematic coordinators (gender, theology, solidarity and culture and higher education) will be open as well as the positions of the links coordinator and chair. All SCMs should send 2 delegates to participate, and all should consider candidates for positions on the European Regional Committee. For more information contact the regional office at regionaloffice@wscf-europe.org.
