



Conference of European Churches

Job Description General Secretary

Conference of European Churches

The Conference of European Churches (CEC) is a growing fellowship bringing together 114 churches of Orthodox, Protestant, and Anglican/Old Catholic traditions from all over Europe for dialogue, advocacy, and mutual encouragement.

CEC emerged as a peacebuilding effort in 1959, providing bridges between Eastern and Western Europe during the Cold War. This original mission carries us forward today as we continue to provide bridges between people, churches and European institutions.

CEC offers an international, collaborative and dynamic work and peer environment with a new organisational strategy under implementation. Tasks and portfolio may therefore be subject to change according to organisational needs and a candidate's qualifications.

CEC Mission

CEC's mission is to claim and shape a space for faith, affirming the freedom of religion and belief as a legitimate element in the European social and political context, and to support churches navigating as faith-based actors in this environment (*All One in Christ*, Tallinn, 2023).

Work Location

The Ecumenical Centre, Rue Joseph II, 174, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

Job Title

General Secretary

Reports to

The General Secretary reports to the CEC President.

Job Overview

The General Secretary of CEC provides executive leadership, organisational coordination and focus. This implies implementation and maintenance of the strategic course taken in recent years (*The Call and Witness Strategy*, 2021) while navigating expectations of Member Churches as they are expressed in the CEC Constitution and the reports of the General Assembly in Tallinn, June 2023 (*All One in Christ*, 2023). The General Secretary must provide strong leadership skills to manage a diverse, international and multi-cultural organisation with a wide range of stakeholders. The General Secretary can be lay or ordained and must demonstrate experience of



ecumenical, international and inter-cultural collaboration and dynamics.

Overall tasks

1. Provide executive leadership and strategic focus in implementing the overall strategy (*Call and Witness*) of the Conference of European Churches as agreed by the General Assembly and operationalised by the Governing Board.
2. Manage CEC staff implementing the strategic policy of the Governing Board which is mandated by the General Assembly.
3. Being an effective steward of the resources that CEC has been entrusted with, whilst championing CEC's work to existing and new donors.
4. Be an effective channel of communication with:
 - the Presidency & the Governing Board;
 - Member Churches of CEC;
 - Organisations in Partnership and National Councils of Churches;
 - other ecumenical bodies;
 - European political and social organisations and structures, especially as the Churches' interface with the European political institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg;

Responsibilities and Duties: Internal

- Driving the continued implementation of our strategy, *Call and Witness*, by managing the work of CEC staff and the Secretariat, ensuring that the work of Programme Staff is ordered, timely and effective.
- Ensuring that this strategy, *Call and Witness*, is refined annually and continues to reflect the evolving needs of a Europe in flux and appropriately accommodates the needs of member churches.
- Further ensuring that programmes and partnerships remain continuously aligned with our strategy, *Call and Witness*, and effecting appropriate change whenever this is not the case.
- Reporting regularly and accurately to the Governing Board and its Presidency on the implementation of strategic plans for the growth of our work, in line with pre-agreed aims and objectives and in compliance with relevant policies and legislation.
- Developing a positive, trusting and robust relationship of accountability with the President and Vice Presidents of CEC in all matters of finance, policy and implementation.
- To be responsible to the Governing Board for the overall management of CEC, its staff, Secretariat, and financial resources.
- Working with the Head of Finance, Administration and Payroll and Budget Committee ensuring that all programmes and spending are monitored and reported on effectively for the wise stewardship and use of resources with which it has been entrusted.
- To ensure an effective contribution by Youth to the work of CEC and that gender/lay balances are properly addressed within the whole of CEC.

- To ensure cost effective management of CEC property assets in cooperation with the co-owner, CCME.
- Monitor Belgian association legislation with CEC's legal advisor(s)
- Suggest amendments to CEC's Constitution, Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure
- Ensuring a commitment to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) at all levels of CEC to help inform CEC's strategic growth and development.

Responsibilities and Duties: External

- With Programme Staff maintain and develop the relationship between the Churches and the EU and wider European political institutions in line with CEC's strategy, Call and Witness and Art. 17 (TFEU).
- To help further the cause of ecumenical development through the promotion of inter-church dialogue, understanding, and relationships.
- To ensure that current relationships with CEC Member Churches and other ecumenical bodies are developed and enhanced by attention to their voice and vision.
- To represent and speak on behalf of CEC to Member Churches and other European organisations and institutions as appropriate, in consultation with or at the direction of the Presidency.
- To maintain responsibility for strengthening the overall strategic development and vision of the organisation, ensuring the coherence of CEC's work within a strategic focus.
- To guide and ensure effective communication of CEC's strategy, *Call and Witness*, and work programmes, internally and externally, whilst championing CEC's work to existing and new donors.
- To clearly communicate and advocate CEC's strategy, Call and Witness, and programmes within the various ecumenical organisations and institutions which exist at a national, European and international level, focusing always on the added value only CEC can bring.
- With Communication staff listen, analyse and interpret and articulate the policies and statements of CEC in relation to the policies of the Member Churches
- safeguard and cultivate relationships with CEC Member Churches and ecumenical bodies and promoting inter-church dialogue.

Qualifications and Experience

- Proven management and leadership experience and ability with a Church, faith-based NGO or comparable organisation
- a nuanced appreciation for the cultural, political and religious sensitivities across Europe and an ability to work effectively with a range of churches and partners in this context.
- experience and understanding of the European ecumenical movement and a hopefulness of the positive change ecumenical dialogues can make to wider society.
- Experience of developing strategy in an international context, and a related ability to unite staff in pursuit of strategic goals.

- An understanding of how to develop effective collaborative relationships with a Governing Board and Praesidium which lead to appropriate levels of oversight and accountability.
- Demonstrable success in building partnerships on behalf of a faith based NGO or charitable organisation with a range of potential stakeholders such as major donors.
- An interest or degree in theology, with a particular view to public theology, or political science would be an asset.
- analytic and strategic organisational experience and proficiency
- understanding of financial management, fundraising and project management
- courage to take difficult decisions and to implement them
- networking and outgoing attitude with attention to solutions
- oral and written communication skills and strategic communication experience
- fluent in English language – French and German language skills an asset
- a flexible and robust mindset, with a willingness to travel regularly
- IT literacy within Office 365, Teams and SharePoint software