



Saksbehandler: Beate Fagerli

Saksdokumenter:

Information on the Future of Nordic Ecumenical Cooperation

Saker i de økumeniske organisasjonene

Økumenisk samarbeid i Norden

Ekumenik i Norden (EIN) er nå lagt ned. Ansvar for nordisk samarbeid tilfaller nå de kristne rådene i Norden og deres medlemskirker. Koordinering av nordisk økumenisk samarbeid vil skje på de årlige nordisk-baltiske sekretærmøtene.

Forslag til vedtak

Mellomkirkelig råd tar informasjonen om den framtidige organiseringen av det nordiske økumeniske samarbeidet til orientering.

Information on the Future of Nordic Ecumenical Cooperation

To Nordic Churches and Christian Councils

On 27th June 2012 the interim steering group of EIN (Ecumenism in the Nordic Region) sent you final recommendations for its future. This was the result of a long process including general discussion at various times and eventually a proposal for a new form for Nordic ecumenical cooperation to replace the current organization EIN. This proposal had been sent to you for comment during the spring of 2012 before the final recommendations were formulated. The recommendations were:

- EIN should be turned into a network with the primary function of sharing information. A new name could be adopted.
- The various ecumenical networks that EIN has served should be responsible for their own activities and cover their costs, whilst the new network could help with information about these activities.
- The annual meeting of the Nordic ecumenical secretaries should be the main forum for coordinating Nordic cooperation, and the meetings should be prepared by the general secretaries of the Nordic Christian Councils and organized by the hosting Christian council and church of the particular year according to a rota.
- The network should be staffed by a 40% post attached to one of the Christian councils with the possibility of a five year rotation system. After each period this should be evaluated.
- The budget including staff costs was calculated at 40000 euros per annum, and the financial responsibility should be truly a shared Nordic concern, ie. the main cost of 36000 euros to be shared equally by the four national churches and the remainder provided by other churches and the Christian councils according to resources.
- The steering group of the network should be the general secretaries of the Nordic Christian councils, whilst the daily management would be the responsibility of the council to which the post is attached.

The Nordic churches and Christian councils previously involved in EIN were asked to give their final decision about this proposal by 14th September 2012. The interim steering group met on 24th September to review the reactions. The proposal for the form and functioning of such a network as that proposed received favorable responses. However, only two of the national churches were able to share the financial responsibility in the way proposed. Since shared Nordic responsibility was a key issue in the whole process and a precondition of the final proposal, the interim steering group has had to draw the conclusion that a structured

and financed form for Nordic ecumenical cooperation will not be possible. In other words, EIN is hereby terminated and the proposed network will not be initiated.

Despite this the interim steering group is convinced that Nordic ecumenical cooperation will continue to be important and that it will be natural for the churches and councils to make sure that it continues within the normal work of these various bodies. With a view to this we suggest the following:

- The general secretaries of the Nordic Baltic Christian councils are an important group for coordinating Nordic ecumenical collaboration in the future .
- The Nordic Baltic Ecumenical Officers Meeting continues. The Christian council and the main church(es) of the hosting country could take responsibility for invitations, program and practical administration.
- A working model for the ecumenical networks is that they run themselves, but arrange their conferences and other activities in cooperation with the main church(es) and the Christian council of the hosting country, on a self-financing basis (ie. conference fees).
- The Forum for Ecumenical Ideas could be a form for future meetings when there is an interesting topic for such a Nordic ecumenical meeting. The Sigtuna foundation has indicated the possibility that it could still be a venue for such meetings, if desired.
- With regard to the question of smaller churches that might have limited financial possibilities without an organization like EIN to participate in Nordic ecumenical meetings, we recommend that the larger churches or those who are organizing meetings make it possible for them to participate.

The archives of the forerunners of EIN are apparently housed in the archives of the Church of Sweden. This will be confirmed. The current archives are at the Christian Council of Sweden. The possibility of moving them also to the archives of the Church of Sweden so that the Nordic ecumenical archives are kept together in one location will be negotiated.

There is at the Christian Council of Sweden a sizeable depot of publications produced through the years in *Nordisk ekumenisk skriftserie*. The council will offer the churches, other councils and certain institutions the possibility of acquiring a certain number of each publication if desired.

The remaining account of EIN is small and there is still some expected expenditure. If the money should not be sufficient to cover these costs, the Evangelical Church of Finland will provide some extra money from its budget for Nordic ecumenism.

With this letter the interim steering group signals the end of EIN, hereby considers its mandate complete and recommends the future of Nordic ecumenical cooperation to the care of the churches and Christian councils.

Christopher Meakin (chairman for the interim steering group of EIN)
15th October 2012