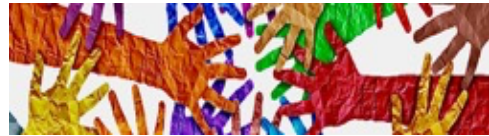


Activity report Council of Europe

April 2025 – April 2026

EBU-Representatives: Gabriela Frey & Dr. Thea Mohr



Committee for Interreligious and Interconvictional Dialogue (CIRID) at the Conference of INGOs (CINGO) at the Council of Europe

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/committee-for-interreligious-interconvictional-dialogue>

Composition of the Committee:

- Co-Chairs of the Committee: Gabriela Frey (EBU) & Lilia Bensedrine Thabet (GERFEC)
- Moderator of the committee's Webinars: Dr. Thea Mohr
- An enlarged board with Delegates of different faith based INGOs at the CINGO
- Alongside the EBU, a further 23 faiths based INGOs with participatory status are members of the Committee. More information on: <https://niric-dialogue.eu/about/>

OBJECTIVES:

1. The committee aims to contribute to the implementation of the **Parliamentary Assembly's REC-2080 (2015)** entitled "Religious freedom and coexistence in a democratic society" and in particular point 3 aimed at creating **a permanent platform for dialogue** between representatives of religions and philosophical and non-confessional organisations within the Council of Europe.
2. Adding the dimension of interreligious & interconvictional dialogue to the **New European Pact for Europe**, www.coe.int/en/web/new-democratic-pact-for-europe/learn-and-practice-democracy
3. Further development of our **NIRIC-Dialogue Network** for InterReligious and InterConvictional Dialogue & Initiatives <https://niric-dialogue.eu/>
4. Organisation of **webinars** with speakers from various religious backgrounds and compilation of booklets summarising the findings: <https://niric-dialogue.eu/webinars-conferences-workshops-trainings/>
5. **Establishment of a sub-committee** attached to the Committee for Interreligious and inter-convictional dialogue '**Education for dialogue, democratic values and living together**'. Education is inseparable from interreligious dialogue.

Activities of the committee and its members

5 December 2024: Meeting with the **President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities**, Marc Cools, and the Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Mathieu Mori as well as with Maren Lambrecht, Secretary of the Social Affairs Committee.

28 January 2025 Side Event: Towards the implementation of the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) recommendation REC-20280/2015 of a permanent platform for interreligious & interconvictional dialogue at the CoE with: Frank Schwabe (PACE), Gusty Gras (PACE), Marc Cools (Congress), Michael O'Flaherty (Commissaire Human Rights), Alexander Guessel (Special Representative of the Council of Europe Secretary General on antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, and all forms of religious intolerance).



13 March 2025: meeting with the office of **Commissioner for Human Rights M O'Flaherty, Mr. Ozgur Derman and Mrs. Patricia Ötvös.**

13 September 2025: **IARF-EME** Int. Conference in Offenbach, The Limits of Religious Freedom and Tolerance. Address by Gabriela Frey: Interreligious and Interconvictional Dialogue at European Level.

24 November 2025 Meeting with Bjorn Berge, Deputy Secretary General of the CoE, followed by a discussion with Irene Kitsou-Milonas. Topic: State, civil society and the Church: the challenges faced by democracy today, with Mrs. Rita Famos, President of the CEPE, and Sibylle Klumpp

25 November 2025: European Parliament in Strasbourg – Round table organized by MEP Lukas Mandl. Address by Gabriela Frey: Interreligious and inter-conviction dialogue at the Council of Europe.

20 January 2026, UNESCO, Paris, Conference-debate organized by the CCIC (International Catholic Centre for Cooperation with UNESCO). Alfonso Zardi on 'The Art of Peace' alongside Bertrand Badie.

21 January 2026: University of Strasbourg, Event on **Nostra Aetate**, sixty years on. Presentation by Gabriela Frey and Lilia Bensedrine-Thabet: Interreligious dialogue at European level.

26 January 2026: Meeting with **Senator Olivier Bitz of the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE**, to ensure further support for the dialogue platform.

2-3 February 2026, participating in the International Conference, **Shaping democratic renewal: civic space and the path to a New Democratic Pact for Europe** www.coe.int/en/web/new-democratic-pact-for-europe/home

10 February 2026: MJLC Event, Strasbourg. Shared responsibilities; religious authorities and European policy in support of inclusive societies. Theme: **"From dialogue to local action: strengthening cooperation with cities"**. Presentation by Gabriela Frey: Introduction to the Committee for Interreligious and Interconvictional Dialogue of the CINGO of the Council of Europe

09 mars 2026 : UNESCO, Paris, Conference, Panel 1 : Barriers and Bridges, A story of women in interfaith dialogue. Presentation given by Gabriela Frey: Towards a permanent platform for Interreligious and interconvictional Dialogue. Alongside meeting with the board of the World Fellowship of Buddhists.

13 April 2026 meeting with **Mrs. Maren Lambrecht, Secretary of Social Inclusion Committee**, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities to discuss, Collaboration on a survey of best dialogue practices is being explored.



14 April 2026 meeting with **Mrs. Irène Kitsou Milonas**, New Special Representative of the Council of Europe Secretary General on antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, and all forms of religious intolerance.

16. April 2026 Presentation of the **Committee's biennial report** at the CINGO General Meeting; the report was **adopted unopposed**. <https://rm.coe.int/report-of-the-committee-for-interreligious-and-interconvictional-dialo/48802b446c>

21 April 2026: adoption of the **PACE-Report: Countering discrimination based on religion and protecting freedom of religion or belief** – Rapporteur: Francesco Verducci. <https://pace.coe.int/pdf/74f4db5a76dcacc3dd8459e7351a4bdb759f96902a706a7c63b98a1b782e0f77/doc.%2016373.pdf> – in which members of our committee has contributed.

Further activities: Members of our committee are **regularly invited by the EPP Group for Interreligious Dialogue** <https://www.eppgroup.eu/newsroom/20-years-of-interreligious-dialogue>

WEBINARS: The topics for the webinars are decided by the committee, and speakers are selected by its members. In charge of the preparation and moderation is Dr. Thea Mohr.

- 27 April 2026: Religions and politics, the dangers of instrumentalization
- 10 February 2026: Safer & Stronger Communities in Europe (SASCE)
- 27 October 2025: Democracy at risk: How religious pluralism strengthens its resilience?
- 15 April 2025: Youth for Peace Initiatives in Inter-religious & Inter-convictional context
- 18 Nov. 2024: Peace-making activities of faith based civil society actors

Following each webinar, a booklet with the speakers' texts are produced and is available on:

<https://niric-dialogue.eu/webinars-conferences-workshops-trainings/>



Setting up a Subcommittee 'Education for dialogue, democratic values and living together'

At the spring session of 2026 of the Conference of INGOS (CINGOs), our committee decided to start setting up a subcommittee on the topic of 'Education through Dialogue'. The urgent need for dialogue skills and training was emphasized by many delegates. The focus must now lie on practical

implementation. Education is inextricably linked to interreligious and interconvictional dialogue. The aim is to network educational tools and practices in order to strengthen the promotion of mutual understanding of religions, beliefs and traditions, critical thinking and active democratic citizenship.

NIRIC-DIALOGUE - Network for the Inter-Religious and Inter-Convictional Dialogue & Initiatives www.niric-dialogue.eu

A large part of the work consisted in the development of our Network and its website: it highlights dialogue initiatives in the fields of education, communication, culture, peace-building, training etc, as well as resources and practical steps. It aims to be a source of inspiration to enrich the permanent dialogue platform at the CoE.

This Network gathers a growing number of European civil society initiatives for interreligious & interconvictional dialogue, identify existing projects, integrate them into a network, recognize complementarities and identify gaps to be filled, in order to create a resource for public authorities and civil society organisations looking for transferable practices.

The legal owner is the conference of INGOs association "OING-Service" in order to guarantee continuity and impartiality.

INGO-SERVICE: www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/ingo-service

The association INGO-Service was set up to receive voluntary financial contributions from the INGOs - "The purpose of the association is to promote the functioning and the activities of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe by collecting and making available the necessary means". Each INGO is supposed to pay yearly fee.

Thea Mohr is elected treasurer of INGO-Service

Activity Report Network BUDDHIST WOMEN 2025 - 2026

Network coordinator Gabriela Frey

The network of Buddhist women in Europe consists of active members of Sakyadhita France, Germany, Great Britain and other countries within the frame of the European Buddhist Union (EBU). One of the fields of activity of our network concerns interreligious dialogue and in particular the exchange with women of other religions on the subject of equal rights.

We are preparing the 20th anniversary of Sakyadhita France in 2026.

- We held a first online conference with Sakyadhita Germany in autumn 2025
- The **Anniversary-Conference will take place on Sunday 8th of November 2026** with renowned speakers on relevant topics and under the patronage of the EBU, UBF and DBU and with the kind technical support of the Ekayana Institute

To make Sakyadhita more widely known, we are currently translating the **Book of Ven. Karma Lekshe Tsomo: Women in Buddhist Traditions** (ISBN: 978-1479803422) ...with the kind help of members of Sakyadhita Germany, Sakyadhita France and the Brambosch-Schaelen-Foundation, which has a new website: <https://brambosch-schaelen-stiftung.de/>

in German: Frauen in Buddhistischen Traditionen, ISBN: 978-3-944885-40-7

in French: Les femmes dans les traditions Bouddhistes (available soon)

Both books are available via the **Buddhist Editor NORBU VERLAG:**

<https://norbu-verlag.de> We thank Tilmann Lhündrup Borghardt and the Ekayana Institute Team for their very kind support!

The networks website www.buddhistwomen.eu is still in use, but a bit outdated.

Therefore, thanks to the voluntary support of two young people, we have now a **new website:** <https://sakyadhitafrance.org/>

