



JESUIT EUROPEAN SOCIAL CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2016



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Foreword

There is no doubt that 2016 was a dark year for the European Union. The Brussels terrorist attacks in March brought blind violence and death to many civilians close to the very centre of the European institutions. In the June referendum, the United Kingdom voted with a slight margin to leave the European Union – a disastrous decision for the European Project. In November the election of Donald Trump came as a rude awakening for many in Europe.

The European Union is generally weakened by populism and many unresolved problems. The refugee crisis has undermined the common position of member states, and also within European churches. Despite never-ending appeals from Pope Francis, the inward-looking positions and lack of courage shown by certain governments are influencing the reactions of some of the local churches.

In the midst of this multifold crisis JESC intends with its partners, to keep alive the vision of a Europe of peace, justice and solidarity, based on the Gospel and the orientations of previous general congregations of the Society of Jesus. It draws inspiration from the speech Pope Francis gave when he was awarded the Charlemagne Prize in June in which he develops a new European humanism based on the capacity for integration, dialogue and generation.

Over the course of 2016, JESC has organized a number of conferences and talks. These included an event entitled “Putting Europe back on its feet” introduced by the former minister president of Baden-Württemberg, Erwin Teufel. Another successful event was a panel discussion on “Poland, Hungary and European values” with György Schöpflin MEP, Henryk Wozniakowski, Hans Schelkshorn and Michael Kuhn. Another important aspect of our work is our contribution to the editorials and articles of *europeinfos*, which we edit together with the COMECE, the secretariat of the Bishops of the European Union in Brussels.

The EU legislation process on conflict minerals is coming to an end. JESC has been heavily involved in this process, and led by its advocacy officer Emmanuelle Devuyst, has participated in a civil society network of campaigning groups on this issue. In the January edition of *europeinfos*, Emmanuelle assesses the mixed results of the proposed legislation. JESC will continue its commitment on natural resources, with a focus on palm oil and

business and Human Rights. During 2016, JESC also continued its coordinating commitment with GIAN – Ecology, an international network of Jesuit institutions involved in environmental issues. In particular it has been involved in the online journal *Ecojesuit*.

This year has seen major changes in the team of JESC. After leading JESC from 2009 to 2016 José Ignacio García became the new regional director of JRS Europe, the Brussels office of the Jesuit Refugee Service. José Ignacio conducted thoroughly and successfully, the transformation process from the former OCIPE to JESC. The focus areas of his work were research and advocacy on migration, climate change and social justice. During this mandate José Ignacio also coordinated the work of the Jesuit Social Ministry in Europe, assisting and promoting the many Jesuit charities and organisations seeking to help vulnerable and marginalized people. He was a delegate at the two last General Congregations of the Society in Jesus in 2008 and 2016. José Ignacio left a deep sense of gratitude for his humanity, his friendship and his servant leadership. Martin Maier took up the charge of acting director until a new director will be appointed.

In October JESC welcomed Henry Longbottom as a new team member. He is a British Jesuit and has come to JESC for a few years before priesthood ordination. A lawyer by training he has experience both environmental regulations and advocacy work (London Mining Network). He will be specially committed in the area of Natural Resources Advocacy.

General Affairs

1. Staff

Claude Debbichi - *Administration, Accounts*

Emmanuelle Devuyst - *Advocacy Officer*

José Ignacio García SJ – *Director*

Henry Longbottom SJ (Since October 2016) – *Advocacy Adviser*

Martin Maier SJ – *Secretary, European Affairs*

Paula Sendin – *Communications Officer*

European Affairs

1. Focus Areas

1. Pope Francis' Encyclical *Laudato si*

An ongoing central focus for JESC in 2016 was the dissemination of the encyclical *Laudato si*. Martin Maier gave several conferences and workshops on the encyclical, he participated in a theological working group of CIDSE and he was member of a group of experts of UCSIA to prepare a workshop on Eco-theology in Antwerp in December.

2. Economics and Christian Social Teaching

Martin Maier continued to participate in the meetings of a group of economists from the European Commission to reflect on faith issues in relation to their work.

3. Rethinking the European Project

JESC was invited by several groups and institutions to participate in rethinking the European project. The speech of pope Francis for the Charlemagne Award in June 2016 proved to be an important source of inspiration.

4. Archbishop Oscar Romero

Due to his long personal association with El Salvador, Martin Maier was asked for many articles, interviews and conferences on Oscar Romero. His book on "Oscar Romero – Prophet einer Kirche der Armen" was translated into French.

2. Partnerships and Networks

1. EU institutions

- a. Martin Maier attended the "Intergroup on Poverty and Human Rights" which unites political groups across much of the political spectrum on this theme.
- b. Martin Maier participated in a conference on "Interreligious dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution and reconciliation" in the European Parliament.
- c. Martin Maier met MEPs Klaus Buchner, Andreas Schwab and Daniel Caspary to discuss the issues of TTIP and conflict minerals.
- d. Martin Maier participated in a Dialogue seminar on "Migration: Mapping and addressing fear" convened by the European Commission.
- e. We maintain personal contacts that go beyond business meetings, bridging the intellectual and pastoral dimensions. These contacts are intrinsic to our mission of supporting politically engaged Christians integrating their faith with their political responsibilities.

2. COMECE (Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the EU)

JESC and COMECE work together in several ways, most visibly through the online monthly journal [europeinfos](#). Together with Johanna Touzel from COMECE Martin Maier is co-editor. Henry Longbottom is doing the editing work of the English articles. The editorial is written alternatively by a member of COMECE and Martin Maier. JESC members contribute regularly to *europeinfos*.

3. Caritas Europe and CIDSE

These two networks represent Catholic lay organizations active in the field of social justice. Whereas Caritas Europe focuses both on poverty within Europe and on development and assistance in other continents, CIDSE is an umbrella organization of Catholic agencies which work specifically on international development and solidarity.

Martin Maier worked frequently with both organizations as a consultant: with CIDSE in the theological working group on *Laudato si* and with Caritas Europe on Oscar Romero – a reference for Caritas Advocacy work.

In January he celebrated a Eucharist for the 50th Anniversary of CIDSE in the Chapel of Resurrection.

José Ignacio Garcia was involved in the Caritas Advocacy Learning Path by moderating a special session on Catholic social teaching, in January. He gave also the key-note speech during the Caritas Europa Academy in Madrid (11-14 April).

4. Initiative of Christians for Europe (IXE)

Martin Maier is a member of this network of Catholic European lay organizations and acts as spiritual consultant and as contributor to the website "[The Europe Experience](#)" which establishes a dialogue between Christian Social Teaching and the EU.

5. European Schools

Martin Maier celebrated a Eucharist and a retreat day with religion teachers of the European Schools. In the future, a collaboration on the issue of conflict minerals is envisioned.

6. Sessions-Rencontres Socrate Saint Paul hors les murs

In January Martin Maier gave a lecture at Centre Sèvres in Paris on "Après la COP 21 et *Laudato si'*: comment passer de la conscience à l'action".

3. Programmes /Events

1. Panel discussion on "Brexit – a Christian Perspective" with Sylvie Goulard MEP, Frank Turner SJ, Heather Roy, April
2. Retreat day for a group of the Order of Malta on the Year of Mercy, April (Martin Maier)
3. Lecture on *Écologie et théologie : "Laudato si'". Écologie intégrale... oui, mais comment ?* in the IET, Brussels (Martin Maier)
4. Meeting with a group of the European Youth Council on Migration in Europe, June
5. Panel discussion on "Poland, Hungary and European Values" with György Schöpflin MEP, Hans Schelkshorn, Henryk Wozniakowski, Michael Kuhn in the Chapel of Resurrection, June
6. Classes and seminar on Archbishop Romero and liberation theology at the Central American University in San Salvador, August/September (Martin Maier)
7. Meeting with Ambassador Jaume Seguro Sosa at the Delegation of the EU in San Salvador (Martin Maier)
8. Participation in the meeting of the Intergroup on poverty and human rights in the European Parliament in Brussels. Brief contact with Emmanuel Macron, October (Martin Maier)

9. Meeting with Prof. José Casanova and Prof. Thomas Banchoff of the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs at Georgetown University about future cooperation with JESC, November (Martin Maier)
10. Conference with a talk by former minister president of Baden-Württemberg Erwin Teufel on "Putting Europe back on its feet" in the Chapel of Resurrection, November
11. Co-organising and participating in the workshop on "Sustainable Development and the Contribution of Church Communities" by UCSIA, Antwerp, December (Martin Maier)

4. Communications/Publications

1. Books

Martin Maier, *Pedro Arrupe (1907-1991) – Un supérieur général témoin et prophète*, Editions Jésuites, Paris, 2016.

Martin Maier, *Oscar Romero – Prophète d'une Église des pauvres*, Paris, Éditions Vie chrétienne, 2016

2. Articles

Befreiungstheologie zwischen christlicher Hoffnung und ideologischer Utopie – Arme, Bedrängte und Leidende als Konkretisierung neuen kirchlichen Selbstverständnisses, in: P. Bsteh, B. Proksch (Hg.), *Die Dynamik des Anfangs im Paradigmenwechsel zur Moderne*, Wien 2016, S. 111-121.

Die Zivilisation der Armut und die globalen Herausforderungen heute, In: Sebastian Pittl/Gunter-Prüller Jagenteufel (Hg.), *Unterwegs zu einer neuen „Zivilisation geteilter Genügsamkeit“*. Perspektiven utopischen Denkens 25 Jahre nach dem Tod Ignacio Ellacurías, Vienna University Press 2016, pp. 71-83.

Media	Title	Date	Issue	Author
europainfos	Edito : Human values across the globe	January	189	MM

<i>europeinfos</i>	Edito : Dialogue, a vital issue for the Church and for Europe	March	191	MM
<i>europeinfos</i>	Edito : Pope Francis and the compassion of the Europeans	May	193	MM
<i>europeinfos</i>	Edito: Brexit - a schism for Europe	July/Aug	195	MM
<i>europeinfos</i>	Edito : Uprooted children	October	197	MM
<i>europeinfos</i>	Brexit and its impact on environmental policy	November	198	PS
<i>europeinfos</i>	The US elections, a rude awakening in Europe	December	199	MM

Interviews

<i>Aleteia</i>	r.aleteia.org/2016/12/20/mgr-oscar-romero-pretre-assassine-en-pleine-messe-pour-avoir-defendu-les-plus-pauvres/	20/12/2016		MM
<i>Radio Chrétienne Francophone</i>	On Oscar Romero https://rcf.fr/spiritualite/temoins-de-la-foi/oscar-romero-leveque-et-martyr-qui-inspire-le-pape-francois	12/12/2016		MM

Advocacy and Projects – Natural Resources

1. Focus Areas

1. Conflict Minerals

With regards to the European political agenda, the period covered by this report was still mainly devoted to advocacy work surrounding the EU Conflict Minerals Initiative in collaboration with several of our partner networks.

JESC, as part of the *ad hoc* European Civil Society Coalition on Conflict Minerals, has been involved in the last part of the legislative process of the trilogue between the three European Institutions. After the victory

of the EU Parliament's vote in May 2015, negotiations with the Council of the EU have been much more difficult to influence because of the lack of transparency in the discussions and the impact of the Member States' policies.

Last June, a political agreement had been reached under the Dutch Presidency. Its content was quite weak and therefore disappointing, but we decided to see it as a first step in a process to cut the link between exploitation of natural resources and human rights violations. The following discussions have been quite technical but as the "Devil hides in details", the efficacy of the regulation will depend on the thresholds involved.

In 2016, to broaden our perspective on the dossier, we have been in touch with the European Federation of Geologists for their expertise on the technical aspects of the supply chain of the targeted minerals. We attended the IPIS conference on armed groups' involvement in mineral exploitation in eastern DRC to update our data and to follow up this highly volatile sector. We also took part in the ICGLR/OECD Forum on responsible sourcing and in the Belgian Roundtable on Responsible Supply Chain of Minerals from Conflict and High-Risk areas to understand better the industry and International positions on the draft European Regulation.

The final text will be adopted in 2017 but the content is already known. Our first impressions are set out in an article published in the February 2017 issue of *europainfos* under the title "Mixed results for legislation on conflict minerals".

It will be crucial to stay vigilant in the coming year on this issue, to keep supporting the affected communities, to watch the way Member States will be implementing the regulation, and to lobby the Commission and the European External Affairs Service on the accompanying measures. There is also still a lot of work in relation to raising awareness to inform and sensitize European citizens on the impact of their consumption on Global South populations. It is something we are planning to develop with our European Jesuit colleagues in the future.

2. Human rights and Business :

The conflict minerals issue is an integral part of the broader recommendations on Business and Human Rights. On this crucial

question JESC is also progressively more involved, namely through the European Coalition for Corporate Justice whose workshop on Human Rights Due Diligence gave us the opportunity to become a member of their working group on the issue. We have also been attending the Final Conference of Human Rights in Business on the removal of barriers to access to remedy for corporate related Human Rights abuses.

3. Great Lakes Region:

Due to our connections in the region, we pay particular attention to the Democratic Republic of Congo and its neighbouring countries. The worrying electoral situation in DRC has been a particular topic of interest these last months and we have been participating in a Civil Society meeting on the Electoral Process in the DRC and EURAC Conference 'Thinking EU-Central Africa relations beyond the Great Lakes. Challenges and opportunities of extending EurAc's geographical scope'. We have also had a visit from our partner Christian Bwenda from the Congolese civil society to hear one internal voice recognised for his expertise in the mining sector in DRC.

2. Partnerships and Networks

1. Justice in Mining - A Global Ignatian advocacy network on governance of natural resources.

JESC is part of JiM and collaborates more closely with the Jesuit European Organisations ALBOAN and Jesuit Missions on conflict minerals. This year we have been supported by our colleagues from other European Jesuit Social Centres in lobbying Member States with regards to Conflict Minerals.

2. [Ad Hoc European Coalition on Conflict Minerals](#) – Core Group

The coalition includes namely the following organizations: Justice and Peace Belgium, EurAc, JESC, Global Witness, Pax, Amnesty Europe, SOMO, Christian Aid, MVO Platform, CORE, Amnesty International, PowerShift, EVB, CCFD, ALBOAN. We coordinate joint work, positioning, and advocacy in relation to the proposal of the Commission on Responsible Sourcing so the European civil society can speak with one voice.

3. EurAc – [European network of NGOs active in Central Africa](#) EURAC platform is focusing on Central Africa.

4. RBRN - [Réseau Belge Ressources Naturelles](#)
The Belgian Network on Natural Resources has been deeply involved in the Conflict Minerals file and has been reflecting at the end of 2016 to select a new advocacy project for the future on Palm Oil and related issues as land grabbing, land rights, food rights.
5. ECCJ - [European Coalition for Corporate Justice](#)
ECCJ is the platform where we work on Business and Human Rights and more specifically on Human Rights Due Diligence.

3. Programs/Events

1. Workshop on Human Rights Due Diligence: "New momentum towards mandatory HRDD". Working with and for HRDD, ECCJ/CIDSE/AI, January
2. Meeting with members of the European Federation of geologists , January
3. Common project on funding two field research projects in mining in Africa, AEFJN-JESC, January
4. Mapping project with ESADE: catholic NGOs working on natural resources, March
5. InfoPoint Lunchtime Conference: "Congo's conflict mines armed groups' involvement in mineral exploitation in eastern DRC", General Directorate Development, European Commission, March
6. CSO meetings to discuss the Electoral process in the DRC, OSEPI, March
7. Information sharing event with indigenous and communities on the impacts of palm oil supply chains, OXFAM International, April
8. 10th Forum on responsible mineral supply chains, OECD, Paris, May
9. European Development Days, June
10. Human Rights In Business: Final Conference: "The removal of barriers to access to justice in the EU", Brussels, September
11. "Thinking EU-Central Africa relations beyond the Great Lakes. Challenges and opportunities of extending EurAc's geographical scope", EURAC, October

12. Seminar on "Le Sahara occidental devant les juridictions de l'Union européenne" , ULB-CDI, Brussels, October
13. Roundtable on Responsible Supply Chain of Minerals from Conflict and High-Risk areas, FPS Economy Belgium, Brussels, October
14. Symposium : "Comment mesurer les performances sociales?", Les Petits Riens, Brussels, November

4. Communication / Publications

Media	Title	Date/N°	Author
<i>Europeinfos</i>	<u>An electoral year without an election in the Democratic Republic of Congo</u>	November/198	ED
JESC website	<u>Poor agreement on the European Regulation of Responsible Sourcing</u>	08.07.2016	ED
JESC website	<u>Press release : EU : Conflict Minerals agreement reached</u>	23.11.2016	JESC and 27 other society groups

Advocacy and Projects – Ecology

1. Focus areas

1. Communication and awareness. Our main engagement in Ecology is the publication of Ecojesuit (www.ecojesuit.com), a bimonthly newsletter produced jointly with the ESSC (Philippines) offering stories on ecology and environmental challenges.
2. *Laudato si'*. The encyclical about the care of “our common home” has occupied many of the efforts by our team, both inside and outside the Church. We have been invited to participate at seminars, conferences and retreats in order to spread the message of *Laudato si'*. The voice of pope Francis has resonated strongly among those looking for environmental justice.

2. Partnerships and Networks

GIAN – Ecology: this is an international network of Jesuit institutions involved in environmental issues. JESC is the Coordinator.

3. Programmes / Events

1. Participation in the panel “The impact of *Laudato Si'* in business”, 2016 Doing good doing well conference on “Innovative Business models that create meaningful impact”, IESE, Barcelone, February (José Ignacio García)
2. Public conferences on *Laudato Si'* and meeting with the Ignatian network, Gijon and Oviedo, March. A second series took place in May. (José Ignacio García)
3. Public conferences and seminar on *Laudato Si'*, Tenerife and Canarian Islands, April. A conference was also given for the diocesan seminar (Tenerife). (José Ignacio García)

4. Session on Ecology with the social centres in Brussels. "Ecology and spirituality. Negotiations on Climate Change", June. Presentation of Ignatian Spirituality by Jose Ignacio Garcia.

5. Seminar on *Laudato Si'* for the Theresian Institute, San Sebastian, Augustus. (José Ignacio García)

4. Communications / Publications

Media	Title	Date/Issue	Author
<i>Ecojesuit News</i>	<u>Promoting spirituality as a sustainable action / interview by Paula Sendín</u>	31.05.2016	PS
	<u>Collaboration through networking : learnings from the social apostolate in Europe</u>	15.07.2016	JIG
	<u>A renewed imagination in meeting our mission</u>	31.07.2016	JIG
<i>Ecojesuit News</i>	<u>Season of Creation 2016: Mercy and care for our common home -15.09</u>	15.09.2016	PS
	<u>CERED: Contributing to research for sustainable development in DR Congo</u>	30.09.2016	PS
	<u>The entry into force of the Paris Agreement in COP22 Marrakech</u>	15.10.2016	PS
<i>Website</i>	<u>Responding through reconciliation</u>	30.11.2016	JIG
	<u>Paris agreement marches forward towards implementation</u>	07.06.2016	JIG
	<u>Energy mix in the EU after COP21</u>	26.07.2016	PS
	<u>Binding greenhouse gas emission reductions for Member States (2021-</u>	31.07.2016	JESC

2030)

	<u>Brexit and its impacts on environmental policy</u>	17.11.2016	PS
<i>europe infos</i>	<u>COP21, the long way from enthusiasm to implementation</u>	January/189	JIG
	<u>Paris agreement marches forward towards implementation</u>	June/194	JIG
	<u>Energy mix in the EU after COP21</u>	July-August 195	PS
	<u>Brexit and its impacts on environmental policy</u>	November/ 198	PS

1. Focus Areas

Social Centres

A new dynamic of collaboration has been established among the social centres, after a meeting of the Directors held in Brussels, 14th January, 2016. It was decided to organize twice every year, a one-day meeting for the staff of the Social Centres addressing topics of special interest. With a twofold objective: to increase the collaboration between the centres through the mutual knowledge of the staff and to focus in a concrete topic of interest for our work. Two topics were decided for 2016: ecology and migrations, and the venues proposed were Brussels and Madrid.

2. Partnerships and networks

1. The Social Delegates from the Jesuit European Provinces
2. The Xavier Network: Jesuit Mission offices and Development NGOs in Europe.
3. The Jesuit Social Centres in Europe

3. Programmes / Events

1. Meeting of the European Social Delegates. The meeting took place in CERAS, the French Social Center, and we had the opportunity to visit the social works of the Jesuits in Saint Denis. Paris, April.
2. Working seminar for the Jesuit European Social Centers : "One year after Laudato Si". A meeting on "Ecology and Spirituality", Brussels, June.

3. Meeting of the Jesuit European Social Centers, "Reflecting on Migrations", Madrid, November.

The Jesuit European Social Centre (JESC) is a work of the European
Conference of Jesuit Provincials.

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