

Description of the event

The 3rd European Catholic Social Days will be held in Bratislava, Slovakia, on 17-20 March 2022. The event is organised by the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE), the Council of Bishops' Conferences of Europe (CCEE) and the Slovak Bishops' Conference. The event will be held in collaboration with the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

The main goal of the previous and current European Catholic Social Days is to promote the dialogue on social justice within the Church and among European citizens. The purpose of the 2022 event is to reflect and debate on creative ways to promote a just recovery in Europe and to contribute from a Christian perspective to the rebuilding process of the political, economic and societal systems of our societies - resulted severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The chosen title of the event is "Europe beyond the pandemic: a new beginning". And the under-title is "European societies in Transition: a Christian contribution towards Solidarity and Social justice".

Organizers reiterate the need to connect the debate about Europe with the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, and to promote solidarity and social justice in a Europe in transition. The event represents a unique opportunity for the Church to reflect on its mission to and in contemporary European societies.

Main topics of reflection

Participants will reflect and debate on three main transitions that characterize Europe in this historical moment:

- a) The demographic transition and family life;
- b) The technological and digital transition;
- c) The ecological transition.

Participants

Around 300 people delegated by the Bishops' Conferences of Europe will come together from all over Europe to address and discuss the major issues of concern to the Church, in a context marked by demographic imbalances, technological disruption and ecological injustices. Inspired by the Gospel and the Catholic Social Teaching, participants will contribute to the process of discernment on key social issues in Europe.

Participants of the event will include Church representatives, EU and national politicians, academics, young people and members of Catholic social movements and organisations.

Programme & settings

The event includes three main sessions on: a) demographic transition and family life; b) technological and digital transition; c) ecological transition. Each session foresees a keynote speech, a panel debate followed by a "Question & Answer" time, and a final working group. Working groups will include between 10 and 30 participants, with one moderator and one secretary.

The hope of the organisers is to have a presential event in Bratislava. However, the setting of the event will adapt to anti-COVID-19 measures (limits in physical participation, social distance, facial masks, ventilation of the rooms) that will eventually be taken by the local authorities. In case a presential event will be impossible, the organisers will provide a virtual or hybrid format of participation.

Whatever the format, some parts of the event will be streamed live on the official website of the 3rd European Catholic Social Days.

History

In 2009 COMECE organised the first edition of the European Catholic Social Days, at that time entitled “Catholic Social Days for Europe”. The event took place in Gdansk (Poland) and focused on the following topics: a) solidarity as a grounding value of the EU, b) the human person and his rights, c) families in Europe, d) the European socio-economic model, e) global common good, f) solidarity towards future generation and the role of the EU in the protection of the environment.

In 2014, COMECE, CCEE, along with the Archdiocese of Madrid and with the support of the Spanish Bishops’ Conference, organised in Madrid, Spain, the 2nd Catholic Social Days for Europe. The main theme was “Christian fate and the future of Europe”.



Logo of the 3rd European Catholic Social Days

The logo of the 3rd European Catholic Social Days is representative of the Slovak Bishops’ Conference hosting and co-organising the event. The logo iconography recalls the figure of Saint Martin of Tours and the medieval account on his conversion to Christianity after encountering a half-naked beggar at the gate of the city of Amiens, in northern France. Martin cut his cloak in

half in order to share it with the beggar, who that night appeared to him in a dream-vision and revealed himself to be Christ. Saint Martin of Tours is the patron of Bratislava and the St. Martin’s Cathedral in Bratislava is the largest and one of the oldest churches in Bratislava.

Following, you can see the logos of the previous editions:



Website and social media

The official website of the 3rd European Catholic Social Days is the following: www.catholic-social-days.eu. The website will be updated in view and during the event. Preparatory documents and list of speakers will be available in the next weeks. Journalists and media operators can register through the website. The live streaming of some moments of the event will also be available on the website. The official Twitter account is: @EUCatholicDays

Media coverage

Journalists and media operators who would like to attend and cover the event will be able to register in the next weeks via the website www.catholic-social-days.eu. The event organisers may limit the number of participants according to the eventual anti-COVID-19 measures taken by the local authorities. Confirmed participants will receive an e-mail by the event organisers.

Press Conference

The press conference launching the 3rd European Catholic Social Days will be held in Rome, on Friday 10 December 2021 at 11:30 (CET).

The press conference will be organised by the Press Office of the Holy See and will take place on Via della Conciliazione, 54, Rome.

Participants of the Press Conference include:

- H. Em. Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson, first Prefect of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development
- H. Em. Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich SJ, President of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE)
- H.E. Mgr. Gintaras Grušas, President of the Council of Bishops' Conferences of Europe (CCEE)
- H.E. Mgr. Stanislav Zvolenský, President of the Slovak Bishops' Conference

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