Framework agreement between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and its mission agencies concerning the organization of mission work

1. Parties

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (hereafter, the Church)

Signatory organization:

1. Purpose of the agreement

The church’s mission work is based on the Bible and on the confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. The mission work of the Church is conducted in compliance with the Church’s Global Mission Policy and its policy principles.

The ratification of this agreement is based on the resolution adopted at the Church’s General Synod on 17 May 2018 approving the principles concerning the recognition of a mission agency as a Church’s mission agency.

The purpose of the agreement is to define the principles whereby the signatory organization complies with the implementation of mission work within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. The agreement will not conflict with a contractual organization’s private legal status.

1. Implementation of cooperation

The form and implementation of the parties’ cooperation are approved by the Bishops’ Conference based on a presentation made by the Church’s Committee for Global Mission. The committee is constituted by the Bishops’ Conference. The authorised representative of a signatory party to the framework agreement will have the right to attend and speak at the committee. The representative will have the right to request that their opinion be recorded in the minutes of the committee’s meetings.

The Church undertakes to treat all of its mission agencies on an equal basis. Each contractual organization recognizes the other signatories to the framework agreement as mission agencies of the church and undertakes to cooperate with them.

1. Rights and responsibilities

An organization that is a signatory to the framework agreement will be recognized as a mission agency of the Church.

It is the duty of a contractual organization to comply in its own work with the confession and decisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and to implement the Church’s approved Global Mission Policy and its policy principles.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The signatory organization will collaborate with parishes, dioceses, and the Office for Global Mission in the implementation of the Church’s mission work. The signatory organization will report annually to the Bishops’ Conference concerning its main strategic policies, activities, and finances. In that connection, the Office for Global Mission will annually review, together with each signatory organization, the implementation of the Church’s Global Mission Policy and of the Church’s mission work in the activities of the signatory organizations.

The signatory organization will participate in the deliberations concerning the principles of the Church’s mission work at the Church’s Committee for Global Mission, as constituted by the Bishops’ Conference. The signatory organization will undertake to inform the Bishops’ Conference when

* it is planning significant innovations in its activities in bilateral or multilateral relations and/or networks with cooperation partners;
* it is planning a new cooperation agreement with a foreign church or other partner;
* it intends to renew and to make significant changes to existing cooperation agreements.

The same procedure will apply in the case of other substantial changes to the action plans of a signatory organization and to its links with international ecumenical and mission actors, such as international church bodies.

The signatory organization may benefit from parish collections and budgetary allocations and from voluntary support through the parishes. The signatory organization will undertake to promote the implementation of the Church’s mission also in Finland.

1. Duration of the agreement

This agreement is valid from 14 June 2023 until 13 June 2028.

The Bishops’ Conference will evaluate the implementation of the agreement annually.

1. Termination of the agreement

The signatory organization may terminate the agreement. The termination will be valid when a plenary of the General Synod has been informed about it. The termination must also be delivered to the Bishops’ Conference.

If the Bishops’ Conference considers that the activity of a mission agency of the Church is not in compliance with the confession and decisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and with the Church’s agreed Global Mission Policy and its policy principles, it will consult with the mission agency. If the practices are such that there is no immediate basis for termination of the agreement to be presented by the Bishops’ Conference to the General Synod, the Bishops’ Conference will give reasonable notice to the signatory organization of at least two (2) and not more than four (4) months to repair any inconsistent practices. If the Bishops’ Conference subsequently finds that the issue of compliance has not been satisfactorily addressed, it may propose to the General Synod that the organization’s recognition as a mission agency of the Church be withdrawn. The status of the signatory organization as a mission agency of the Church will expire when a plenary of the General Synod has decided to withdraw that status. On the basis of the decision, the framework agreement will terminate immediately without term of notice.

1. Date and signatories

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

Archbishop Director General

Mission agency NN

1. The provision of this agreement with regard to a mission agency’s confessional status does not apply to the Finnish Bible Society, on the board of which, in addition to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the Orthodox Church of Finland, the Catholic Church in Finland, and the Free Church Council of Finland are represented. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)