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Update for the working group on Bioethics

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Update for the working group on Bioethics

1. Date of the latest meeting : 25 and 26 October 2002

Date of the next meeting (last one before the CEC Assembly in Trondheim) : 28 February-1st March 2003

2. Ongoing work
 1. Genetics and predictive medicine

The group hopes to be able to decide on the final version at the next meeting. It should allow its discussion by the Executive Committee of the Church and Society Commission at its March session. The document will mainly deal with genetic tests according to two categories :

- prenatal and pre-implantation (embryos)
- pre-symptomatic and predictive (grown ups and children).

A glossary for specialised terms should be prepared, as well as a theological and ethical part. The glossary will also include a reminder on the three aims of medicine :

- treat the illnesses and cure the patients
- relieve the suffering
- take care of the dying.

1. Ageing

This document will not be finalised before the Assembly.

In its first part, it will concentrate on a certain number of problems, particularly important from a Christian point of view such as "ageing and human dignity" and "integration of elderly people in society".

A second part will deal with "Bible and Christian ethics" and a third one with "To act when facing ageing".

2. Hearing at Trondheim

Members of the group are ready to take part in the hearing suggested by the Church of Scotland during the Assembly. It could deal with questions linked to biomedicine : stem cells, "therapeutical" cloning, research on embryos, genetics.

3. Miscellaneous

- 2 members of the group will take part in a conference organised by the European Commission on "sustainable agriculture in developing countries"
- one or two members take part, with the Strasbourg Executive Secretary, to the two annual meetings of the Steering Committee on Bioethics at the Council of Europe (one week). On the agenda : protocol on medical research, reflection on euthanasia, protocol on the protection of the human embryo and foetus, psychiatry and Human Rights.