The image shows the interior of a large Gothic cathedral, likely a European one, with high vaulted ceilings and rows of wooden pews. A semi-transparent blue overlay covers the top half of the image, where the title text is placed. The architecture features pointed arches and ribbed vaulting. The lighting is somewhat dim, highlighting the stone and wood textures.

# THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL CHURCH MINISTRY IN EUROPE

# A message from Paul Trementozzi

---



PAUL & ANGELA TREMENTOZZI  
EUROPE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

There is much talk these days about “fake news” that lends itself to an overall skepticism when it comes to reporting events. Of course, virtually everything written has bias, and that should always be considered as we look for an honest assessment of the realities we read about. This is also an important conversation for our missionary family as we share the “news” of what is happening around us.

Today Europe finds itself in a constant barrage of political and social discourses, all of which are designed to win an argument or validate someone’s worldview and politics. This should be an uncomfortable dance for the narrative our missionary family should be having. We desperately need a Spirit-anointed message that cuts through the “fake” and accentuates the truth of Christ.

In this report, I have chosen to highlight international churches in Europe, because they are a perfect example of the Church interacting with the complexities of the confusing global narrative, all the while sharing the love and compassion of Jesus. I am convinced that we in Europe are living in a “God moment” where His favor is being revealed through planting churches among international communities to impact indigenous communities and the world.

I asked missionary Larry Henderson, pastor of the international church in Vienna, Austria (Vienna Christian Center), and part of the Europe Leadership Team addressing revitalization, to investigate several questions in order to highlight the hand of God among the international community in Europe. They are:

- *Can you connect the history of FEIC (Fellowship of European International Churches) to the present anointed positioning of the Spirit for Europe?*
- *Why do we believe this is indeed a God moment for the international churches of Europe?*
- *Can you highlight some concrete examples of how international churches are impacting Europe, especially through ministry to the marginalized?*
- *In light of all that is taking place, what is the vision for the near future of Europe’s international churches?*

I trust that as you read of our exploration into these questions, the narrative will become clear and the testimony integral and encouraging as the good news is still vibrant and growing in Europe.

Trustworthy,

Paul

# The Impact of International Church Ministry in Europe

Larry Henderson

*Give a brief overview of FEIC and international church ministry in general.*

## FELLOWSHIP OF EUROPEAN INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES

Fellowship of European International Churches (FEIC) works in cooperation with AGWM, Pentecostal European Fellowship (PEF), and national church partners to spread the gospel among Europe's international population. Its threefold commitment is to plant churches, position churches to develop, and partner with churches for international ministry. As a network, it supports meaningful relationships, shares resources for international ministry, and offers opportunities for church renewal and leadership development.

In 2003 we were given a mandate during a meeting in Bled, Slovenia, to move toward developing an international church network. AG leadership launched the FEIC network in 2004 with 12

churches. As of May 2018 FEIC has 82 churches in 38 nations, 23 of which are pastored by AG missionaries, with the others led by international pastors and their teams. As we enter our thirteenth year, we are strategically engaging time and resources to church planting and revitalization so we can respond to the opportunities of today's Europe.

Some of the internal nomenclature we use to describe FEIC includes the following:

- We're intentional, inviting, and inclusive.
- We don't celebrate culture; we celebrate diversity.
- We use the metaphor of a tapestry of languages, cultures, and people groups.
- Diversity surrendered becomes supernatural!

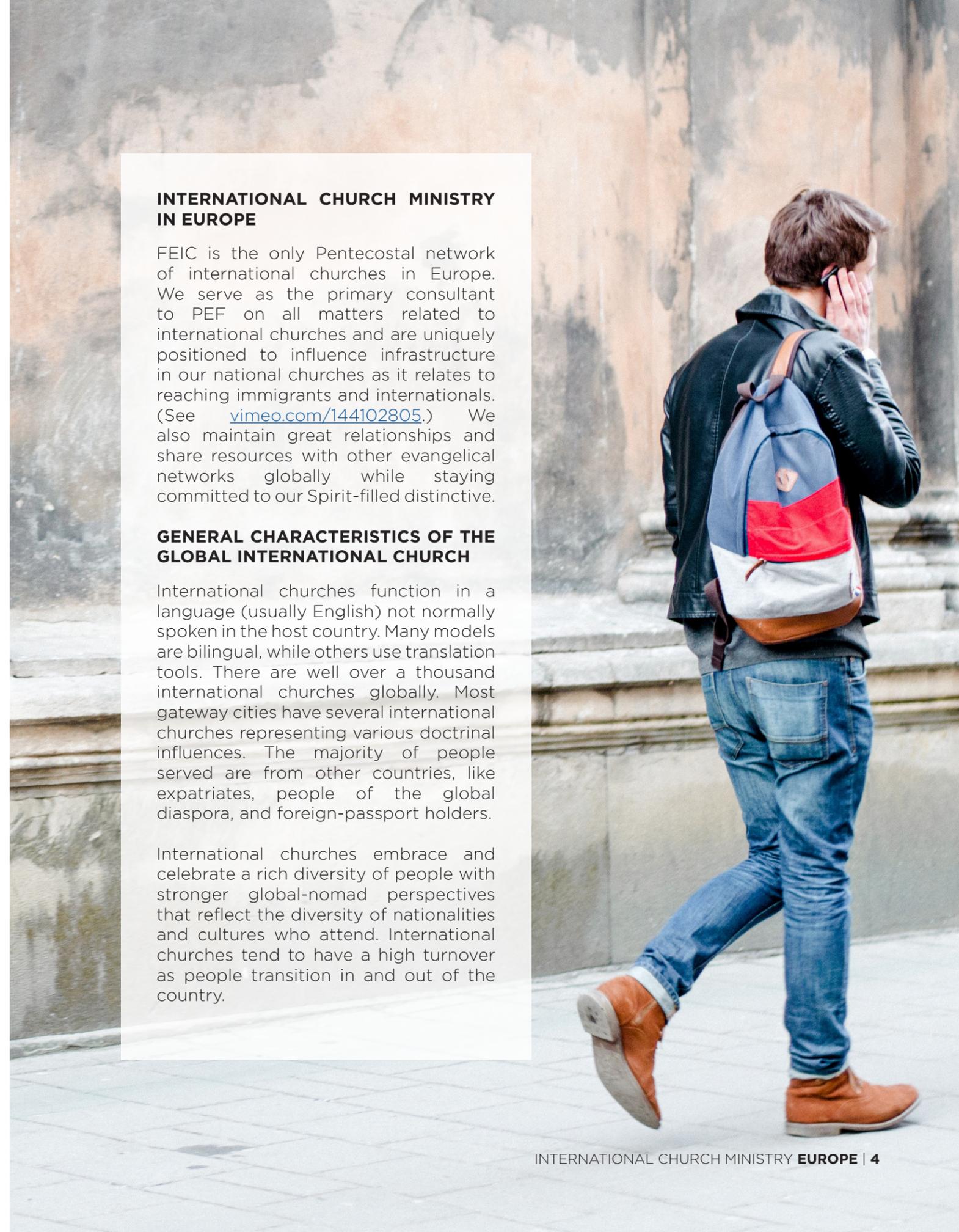
## INTERNATIONAL CHURCH MINISTRY IN EUROPE

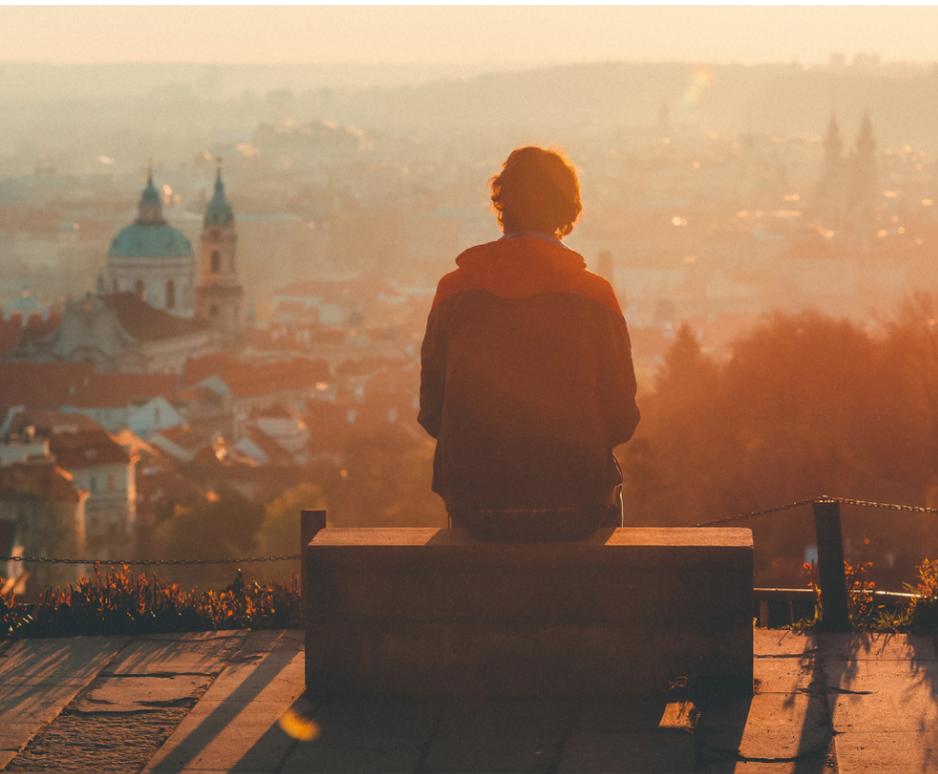
FEIC is the only Pentecostal network of international churches in Europe. We serve as the primary consultant to PEF on all matters related to international churches and are uniquely positioned to influence infrastructure in our national churches as it relates to reaching immigrants and internationals. (See [vimeo.com/144102805](https://vimeo.com/144102805).) We also maintain great relationships and share resources with other evangelical networks globally while staying committed to our Spirit-filled distinctive.

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GLOBAL INTERNATIONAL CHURCH

International churches function in a language (usually English) not normally spoken in the host country. Many models are bilingual, while others use translation tools. There are well over a thousand international churches globally. Most gateway cities have several international churches representing various doctrinal influences. The majority of people served are from other countries, like expatriates, people of the global diaspora, and foreign-passport holders.

International churches embrace and celebrate a rich diversity of people with stronger global-nomad perspectives that reflect the diversity of nationalities and cultures who attend. International churches tend to have a high turnover as people transition in and out of the country.





**Talk about the potential for growth and why now is a God moment.**

Many contributing factors clearly demonstrate the potential growth for international churches and why God is working through these movements. The most obvious factors are the exponential growth of urban centers, the internationalized influence upon Europeans, as well as the Europeanization of internationals.

According to a world mayors' association, over 400 cities in the world have an urban area greater than 1 million people. Most of those cities can support and also need an international church to serve its diverse population.

Globalization is not a new phenomenon, but its footprint is larger than ever. Unprecedented migration is a global reality of the twenty-first century. Joseph Stiglitz defines it simply as “the closer integration of the countries and

people of the world.” Globalization is both the cause and effect. It is spurred by consumer demands, economic liberalization, technological innovation, and cultural shifts, which all provide international churches as communities of faith with unique opportunities to share the gospel.

Another contributing factor is the growing numbers of European nationals who have been internationalized through substantial overseas experience. Culture influences these internationals and, most importantly, their children.

With open borders throughout most of the European Union (EU), countries have had to transition from a nationalistic mind-set to an international mind-set. At the same time, internationals coming to Europe as refugees, students, business expats, diplomats,

and domestic workers have had to work to embrace a European mind-set and adapt to European culture. This unusual convergence has created a demand for international churches—a third culture where nationals and internationals can meet to share life, faith, and culture together.

In some major cities, the growing number of nationals who have been internationalized has resulted in the planting of an international church with a majority of nationals who are culturally more at home there than in the national church.

Europe is full of cultural and political tensions right now. The rise in extremist terrorism has fueled fear. Great Britain's voter mandate to leave the European Union (Brexit) signaled that some EU nations are not content to lose their national identity for the sake of Europe nor to fund the poorer nations. The vast number of refugees coming in from the Middle East (mainly Syria, Iran,

Afghanistan, and Iraq) has many EU countries deeply concerned about the challenge to integrate these massive numbers of refugees without losing their jobs, altering the national identity, and importing more terrorism.

These political and social challenges create an unprecedented opportunity for international churches to make a major spiritual and social impact. We are positioned to share faith, to provide a safe “third culture” for the displaced and marginalized, and to invite dialogue that centers on tangible solutions. International churches often provide a safe environment in regions where people might not feel accepted by nationals. They provide a place where people can feel accepted and valued for who they are as a person and not judged by their passport or the circumstances that brought them.

These are God moments that create bridges for us to share faith and make a major spiritual impact in Europe.

## Can you highlight and give examples of how several international churches are impacting our mandate of reaching the marginalized, engaging the secularist, and inspiring revitalization?

While our Europe missionary body has embraced our mandate of standing with the marginalized, engaging the secularized, and inspiring revitalization, these mandates are already a natural part of the life and ministry of our international churches across Europe. We are uniquely positioned and equipped to fulfill these mandates both to nationals and internationals who live within the continent's borders.

Our international churches partner with missionaries and national movements to serve refugees, victims of human trafficking, and those marginalized by society. Those same partnerships strengthen our efforts to engage with the secular European on university campuses or specifically with those who have lost credibility in the traditional church. We have intentionally worked to inspire revitalization efforts with tools, assessments, and systems that have produced healthy churches as well as a strong wave of new church planting. Three specific examples follow below.

### ICF ATHENS

International Christian Fellowship (ICF) of Athens has served on the front lines of the latest refugee challenge

and opportunities. They have touched thousands of refugees in the last 18 months to meet compassion needs with food, water, clothes, hygiene, and baby items. They have been given favor with the government and NGOs to work on the front lines in Lesbos as refugees arrive in their rafts.

Pastors Pat and Brenda Mahar, along with their international team from ICF, have established a ministry center in the heart of Athens to feed the hungry and clothe the poor while sharing the gospel. Their investment in people to value them, listen to their stories, and help them on their journey of faith as they begin a new life in Europe has opened the hearts of many refugees who receive Jesus in the months to follow.

Through their outreach, ICF Athens has engaged the secular Greek with the gospel through partnerships of compassion and ministries of serving. These opportunities open conversations with secularists and give meaning to their response of compassion.

### BRUSSELS CHRISTIAN CENTER

Brussels Christian Center has been reaching out to refugees in Lille,

France every week for the last year by mobilizing internationals to distribute food and clothes while sharing faith in Jesus. Many refugees arrived with hearts full of fear, but these acts of kindness testify that perfect love casts out fear. Many received Jesus because they met other internationals with similar spiritual journeys and saw the difference God has made in their lives.

Brussels Christian Center is a great example of an international church that was positioned for opportunity when the last wave of refugees came, where others described the movement as a crisis. Each divine opportunity represents a moment that has changed hundreds of lives both socially and spiritually.

### VIENNA CHRISTIAN CENTER

Vienna Christian Center has been working in asylum homes for the last five years, which also opened many doors with the government to fast-track ministry to refugees. We have worked in partnership with Samaritan's Purse to open The Meeting Place, a ministry center next to the main train station in Vienna where refugees can find food, clothes, and professional legal advice;

take English, German, and cultural classes; use the internet and charge their cell phones; and meet other people from the country they came from.

Over the last 18 months Vienna Christian Center has distributed 3600 Bibles and seen over 650 Muslims receive Jesus. Although many were relocated to other countries, those who stayed in Vienna have become evangelists serving in The Meeting Place and leading new refugees to Jesus.

Vienna Christian Center implemented the concept of faith promises six years ago and continues to see an increase each year in missions giving. The majority of these funds are invested in church planting and revitalization. They have planted five churches in the last five years with international leadership from within Vienna Christian Center and support many other plants financially or by sending teams. The church works closely with the Austrian national church to help with revitalization and to initiate ministry to internationals that have moved into Austria. (See [vimeo.com/180495468](https://vimeo.com/180495468).)



*Can you give us a view of your vision for the future of international churches?*

International churches are serving a part of God's global purposes around the world by making a major spiritual impact in the lives of individuals, cities, and many of the world's least-reached people groups. As we minister in a world becoming increasingly global and urban, we want to be intentionally engaged to share the gospel in a climate of seismic cultural shifts. We deeply believe that God has positioned the international church to make a global impact through a commitment to local ministry opportunities within our gateway cities.

We are committed to revitalization and planting healthy churches that reproduce healthy followers of Christ. Our church plants are not driven by a number, but rather a natural multiplication of leadership that is called to contextualize ministry and preach the gospel in today's Europe. As God enables us, we believe He will help us steward these opportunities to be a part of a move of the Spirit Europe so desperately needs.



europ**e**  
DO JUSTLY • LOVE MERCY • WALK HUMBL**Y**