

# Europe

**Past, Present & Future**

a Conversation with  
**Greg Mundis**  
Regional Director of Europe



“We do missions best when missionaries are ‘on the ground.’”

**Randy Hurst:** What are the most exciting things you’ve seen happen in Europe in the 10 years you’ve been regional director?

**Greg Mundis:** I’m excited about several things. At the top of the list is the church planting efforts taking place, particularly in Spain, Germany and Romania. I’m also excited that, during the last 10 years, a Master’s Commission Europe ministry has formed and is spreading across the region. We now have about a dozen groups, and they continue to increase. Convoy of Hope Europe has been established and has ministered to hundreds of thousands of people. Also, Continental Theological Seminary has received accreditation and government recognition.

**RH:** What challenges are our missionaries currently facing in light of the strong euro and weak dollar?

**GM:** There’s no question that the devaluation of the dollar, coupled with a high inflation rate, has made life difficult for our missionaries in Europe. Their financial struggles impact their day-to-day lives. It has ramifications on their work budgets and even buying groceries.

Although some planning for inflation and devaluation of the dollar was factored into their budgets, the change has occurred at a much quicker rate than projected. This sudden downturn has made life very difficult. Fortunately, a slight upswing in the last several months has offered somewhat of a reprieve. Nevertheless, the economic forecast for the future warrants continued caution.

Throughout our history, a primary reason for our growth and the Lord’s blessing and anointing is that we have resident personnel who are in place for the long haul. We do missions best when missionaries are “on the ground.” So, our greatest challenge is twofold: an increase in budget and the increased sacrifices it requires.

**RH:** Has this been discouraging for missionaries?

**GM:** A missionary family wrote to tell me that they’ve cut back on expenses as best they can, and they still face a heavy challenge. They can barely pay their utilities and rent. “We cannot keep this up,” they said. “Every month we go further in debt. We know God is faithful and



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that we are in His will, but we also know that we cannot continue to incur debt to do missions work. We may need to return home.” This couple is not alone.

**RH: Explain the challenge of immigration into Europe in the last 10 years.**

**GM:** Actually, the influx of immigrants has been ongoing over the last 20 years, but it has increased markedly in the last decade. A growing consensus among Europeans as well as demographers worldwide is that if present trends continue, Europe as we know it will cease to exist. By 2100, Europeans will practically be a forgotten people.

Researchers say a 2.1 percent birth rate is needed to sustain a population. Among Europeans, the birth rate is about 1.3 percent. The population is declining, and because of this, government leaders are importing huge masses of migrant workers.

Unlike in America, where most immigrants are from Latin America and the Caribbean — where there is a Christian worldview, so to speak — immigrants to Europe are coming from a non-Christian worldview. Largely from North Africa, the Middle East and the Far East, they represent Islamic, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu and atheistic worldviews. This mix adds fuel to the fire of an already post-Christian society that has forgotten the values of the early reformers.

**RH: Is Europe really the first post-Christian society?**

**GM:** Europe’s distinction of being called post-Christian has come about through a matrix of complicated reasons. First, if you go back to the spiritual roots of this region, you’ll find that Europe was never truly evangelical. The individual decision to accept Christ was not a part of its history, except perhaps in a limited number of places. Throughout European history, if a prince, count or king converted to Christianity, then all of the people in his court — servants, soldiers, everyone — converted also. The idea that Europe was a Christian continent is a myth. There’s a huge difference between Christendom and Christianity.

Second, the Reformation, which

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made such a huge and profound difference in the theological world, made a much less dramatic impact in Europe. It was basically confined by a counter-reformation, as a stream of Martin Luther's Protestant faith spread from Germany to the British Isles and Scandinavia. The entire Iberian Peninsula, Southeastern Europe and Southern Europe were largely unaffected.

Third, Europe was highly influenced by the Enlightenment period. Many scientists in Europe, such as Isaac Newton, had a Christian worldview. But during the Enlightenment, scientists basically parenthesized God out and instead put emphasis on the empirical senses. Some Europeans were significantly influenced by New Testament critics who questioned the veracity of Scripture.

Add to this mixture two world wars and the despair Europeans experienced. During this time many people cried out to God for help, yet they didn't really believe help was available.

**RH: What will it take to see a major breakthrough in Europe's spiritual harvest?**

**GM:** We need a sovereign act of God, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a Welsh revival, a Martin Luther-style shaking of theology. These kinds of events are not generated out of a strategy room in some missions agency, but out of the very throne room of God.

A move to shake up Europe must come from God, but man works together with God as He moves. We need a church that is praying, a church that is humble, a church that is repentant, and a church that is reaching beyond its own paradigms and borders to touch the lost.

**RH: How can readers of TPE pray for Europe?**

**GM:** Jesus commanded His disciples to pray for laborers, that they would be thrust forth into the harvest field. I would like to put an addendum on that. As the American church prays for workers,

we must remember that workers come from more places than America. They come from around the world. We must pray that the Lord of the harvest will continue to send harvesters from Africa, Asia and Latin America — as He is already doing. We cannot have the narrow view that only the Ameri-



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can church will work in the harvest fields.

Second, I encourage readers to pray for empowerment for all of the harvesters in Europe — missionaries, national church leaders and believers. Pray that a genuine outpouring of the Holy Spirit would ignite a fire that spreads across the conti-

ment. Pray for a passion for the lost, for conviction of sin, for salvation, and for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Pray that the church in Europe would experience an awakening, a rekindling of the spiritual gifts that Paul talks about.

Third, pray for finances and visas. We are challenged by the financial situation as missionaries raise and maintain support for their work in Europe. By praying in these ways, we can move forward and fulfill our mission, which is to accelerate the spread of the gospel and to model the integrity of New Testament missionaries.

**RH:** Ten years ago, a *TPE World Missions Edition* featured the new Europe region. I've known of people whose call to Europe was confirmed as they read that issue. Perhaps someone is reading this issue and God is dealing with them about a call to Europe. How should they examine their hearts? How can they be effective missionaries despite the great challenges in Europe? What kind of people does Europe need?

**GM:** I think of David's prayer: “Lord, give me a broken and a contrite heart.” We need humble people, people with a servant attitude. I'm not discounting talent, passion or giftings — those are extremely important. But if the Lord is dealing with a reader's heart, I would ask that he or she come with a broken heart, submitted to the Lord. Come with a spirit of humility, ready to be offered on the altar of sacrifice to God.

Europe has a culture and lifestyle that is extremely unlike ours. The values that separate Americans from Europeans are very different. My heart is that we would come in humility and with a dependence on God, saying, “Lord, if You can't help us, then we won't be able to do what You've called us to do.” **tpe**

E-mail your comments to [tpe@ag.org](mailto:tpe@ag.org).

