
Jesuits: Province of Central Europe founded, bringing together 34 communities from Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Today is the official establishment of the new Province “Jesuits in Central Europe”, which brings together Jesuit communities from Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The Archdiocese of Riga explains on its website that the move “is a response to changes”. The reorganisation process, started by former Superior General of the Jesuits, Father Adolfo Nicholas (who died in Tokyo in 2020), aims to “better respond to the needs of society and the objectives of the Jesuits’ mission, to boost presence and effectiveness” despite a drop in vocations and ageing. Indeed, there is a need to ensure that schools and universities “can continue even without the Jesuit presence”, the portal reads; one way is to build on synergies between communication, resources, experiences, knowledge. Mergers such as that of Central Europe are taking place all over the world: there have been five Provinces in Spain so far, but now there is only one. Even in Italy and in the United States, Provinces are being merged, even if the Province of Central Europe is the first merger of communities rooted in different countries. The central house of the new Province, made up of 34 communities and 442 religious, will be in Munich, Bavaria. It will be run by Austrian Provincial Bernhard Burgler, aided by advisers from the former Provinces.

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