

# NEWSLETTER

European Committee for Catholic Education

## EDITORIAL

LOUIS-MARIE PIRON, GENERAL SECRETARY

The elections to the European Parliament held at the beginning of June did not really change the political balance of the Parliament. On the other hand, in some of our countries there have been significant changes. However, although these results are sometimes interpreted at national level, it is at European level that they should be considered.

Education is not directly a competence of the European Union, although it does offer operating frameworks such as the CEFR or ECTS and mobility programs such as Erasmus +, which help to facilitate and strengthen education in the European area.

Catholic schools offer their pupils the benefit of these frameworks and programs and thus play a major role in promoting Europe as a common space to live in together. It is with this in mind that the European Committee of Catholic Education wishes to conduct its reflection in the coming years by carrying out prospective work. This work was launched at the Bergen General Assembly and will continue at future meetings.

## CEEC ACTIVITIES

### OUR MEETINGS

The 102nd meeting of the CEEC's General Assembly was held in Bergen in April. Our Norwegian host member organized the stay and the cultural activities magnificently. The visit began with a tour of the traces of ecclesiastical life and medieval culture in Bergen. The first meeting of the General Assembly was opened by a prayer, followed by a speech by the Episcopal Vicar, Mgr Torbjørn Olsen, on behalf of the Bishop of Oslo, Can.Reg Bernt I. Eidsvi, Bishop of Oslo.

## CONTENT

**EDITORIAL**  
PAGE 01

**CEEC  
ACTIVITIES**  
PAGE 01

**OUR ACTIONS,  
PROJECTS,  
NEWS**  
PAGES 03 04

**NEWS FROM  
OUR MEMBERS  
IN EUROPE**  
PAGES 04 05

**OTHER  
INFORMATION**  
PAGES 05

**CALENDAR**  
PAGE 05



Our biannual meeting was the occasion for a presentation of the Norwegian education system and Catholic schools by the Acting Secretary General of the Kristne Friskolers Forbund, Helge Vatne. The situation in the other member countries regarding their specific activities and realities was also presented during a round table discussion.

This 102nd meeting of the CEEC was marked by the presentation of the document which concludes the CEEC's 4 years of work on the theme of "Towards specific training for headteachers and teachers in Catholic schools in Europe" (see "Publication of the CEEC"). The meetings also provided an opportunity for discussion in working groups around the question "If Catholic education did not exist, what would be missing?" The aim of this first stage of the work was to choose and specify the next working theme on which the CEEC will work for the next four years.

Our activity report was presented by our President, Paul Meany, and our General Secretary, Louis-Marie Piron.

At international level, Mr. Ignasi Gruau (Director General) also presented to our Assembly the current work of the International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEL). Information on the work and international representations of the OIEC was also presented by Mr Michel Bertet, OIEC representative for Mr. Hervé Lecomte.

Finally, the financial and statutory issues of our organization were discussed, including the approval of the accounts for 2023, the CEEC's budget outlook and a follow-up on the statutes and election of the organization's Vice-President and Treasurer. In addition to these various points, the General Assembly meeting was a real opportunity for our members to meet, share information and exchange views on the situation of Catholic schools in their countries.

### MEET THE CEEC'S NEW OFFICE MANAGER

Géraldine Vallée has left her position as Office Manager at the CEEC to pursue other personal and professional projects. The General Meeting in April was an opportunity to thank her for her valuable work and for her investment in our organization. Camille Chantrain took over from Géraldine at the beginning of June. She had the opportunity to introduce herself to the members present at the last General Meeting in Bergen.

Camille is well acquainted with the higher education landscape in Belgium and has just left the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels, where she was responsible for coordinating teaching and academic and administrative management.





She holds a Master's degree in modern languages and literature and in human resources, as well as a teaching qualification in modern languages. Camille would particularly like to thank Paul Meany, Louis- Marie Piron, Marc Van den Brande, Géraldine Vallée and all the members and partners of the CEEC for the warm welcome she received.

## OUR ACTIONS, PROJECTS AND NEWS

### MEETING WITH HERVÉ LECOMTE



Hervé Lecomte, President of International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC), Mr. Étienne Michel (Catholic Education Representative for French- and German-speaking Belgium) and the General Secretary of the CEEC Mr. Louis-Marie Piron met on Tuesday 4 June in Brussels at the offices of the Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique (SeGEC) to discuss their collaboration and the management of the archives linking our organizations.

### CEEC PUBLICATION

#### "Towards specific training for headteachers and teachers in Catholic schools in Europe".

The work is a comparative study of the specific features of our member countries in relation to the training of headteachers and teachers.

Over the last few years, CEEC General Assemblies have been the forum for many discussions on the measures needed to ensure the future of Catholic education in today's ever-changing European society, particularly through the question of formation.

The preparation of teachers and school leaders in Europe's Catholic schools involves a multifaceted approach that blends academic study, practical experience and spiritual formation. In an increasingly secular and diverse society, balancing academic rigor with religious education, meeting the needs of diverse student populations and navigating complex ethical and moral issues present constant challenges for those involved in education.

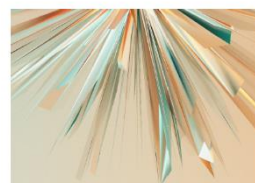
These different challenges also provide opportunities for innovation, collaboration and renewal as Catholic schools seek to adapt to the changing needs of their communities while remaining true to their core mission and identity.

These are the various issues addressed in this work. In this context, the CEEC network has been an important center through which our various associations have been able to share their knowledge, experience and projects.



TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND HEADTEACHERS IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN EUROPE:

A CONTRIBUTION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION



APRIL 2024



The document was written by Mr Paul Meany (President), Mr Louis-Marie Piron (General Secretary), Professor Theo Van Der Zee (representative of the Dutch organization of Catholic and Christian schools at the CEEC) and Géraldine Vallée (former office manager). The CEEC would like to thank our former President, Brother José Maria Alvira, and our former Secretary General, Guy Selderslagh, for their vision and collaboration. The full document is available [in English](#) and [French](#) via these links.

The funds raised will also be used for teacher training. The full appeal for donations is available [here](#). Contributions are welcome on account UA59325365000000260080031858 (BIC :WUCBUA2X) with the reference "Lessons of Resistance fundraising + NAME OF COUNTRY".

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS IN EUROPE

### SOLIDARITY WITH UKRAINIAN SCHOOLS



### PUBLICATION: "Awaken the Awareness of Transcendence: New Strategies for Catholic Schools in the Netherlands to Deal with Secularization".

Theo Van der Zee, our member representing the Dutch organization of Catholic and Christian schools on the CEEC, recently published an article related in particular to the research question of the training of CEEC teachers and headteachers. The article describes how the phenomenon of secularization is challenging religiously affiliated schools. It then aims to explore new ways of overcoming these challenges. Finally, new strategies for educational endeavor are presented both at the community level of Catholic schools and at the individual level of teachers, school leaders and governors to promote openness to reception new perspectives and unexpected possibilities. The article is available [in English](#) and [French](#).

At the General Assembly in Bergen, Father Petro Maiba, CEEC representative for Ukrainian Catholic schools and Head of the Education Department of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, described the terrible impact of the war on schools, young people and educational teams in Ukraine. Even today, and as an extension of the solidarity action launched in 2023, the CEEC wishes to relay and promote the new "Lessons of Resistance" fundraising campaign, which will be used specifically for the creation and distribution of school textbooks in Ukrainian schools.

### DEPARTURE OF LIEVEN BOEVE





Lieven Boeve, the CEEC representative for Catholic education in Dutch-speaking Belgium, announced his resignation from the CEEC at the general Assembly in Bergen. Lieven Boeve is a professor at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) and current Director General of Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen (the Flemish secretariat of Catholic Education in Belgium). A warm speech was given to him by Paul Meany, who spoke on behalf of the CEEC to thank him for his work within our organization.

## CALLS, INVITATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

### OIDEL SUMMER UNIVERSITY

OIDEL is organizing its Summer University on "Human rights, Education and Sustainability" from Tuesday 18 to Friday 21 June in Geneva. Among a wide range of speakers, Ignasi Gruau (Director General), who attended our last General Assembly, gave a presentation on the role of parents in children's education.

## CALENDAR

- 18 September 2024:** Executive Board meeting in Brussels.
- 13 to 17 November 2024:** 50 years of the CEEC and 103rd meeting of the General Assembly in Strasbourg (France).
- 21 - 22 March 2025:** 104th meeting of the General Assembly in Albania
- Autumn 2025:** 105th meeting of the General Assembly in London (United Kingdom).

### SeGEC SUMMER UNIVERSITY

As it does every year, the Secrétariat Général de l'Enseignement Catholique de Belgique francophone et germanophone is organizing its Summer University on 21 August. The program for this day of reflection, training and exchange will be based on the theme "At the school of thought - Thinking today to invent tomorrow".

As school is one of the cradles for the transmission of culture, the development of personal thought and the building of young people as individuals with a place in society, it is this theme of thought in all its forms that the SeGEC will be exploring during the day.

This year's event is doubly special. It will be a n opportunity to celebrate the 30 years of the SeGEC and it will also be the last summer university under the direction of Mr. Étienne Michel, director of the SeGEC since 2003 and representative of Catholic education for French- and German-speaking Belgium within the CEEC.

**THE CEEC SECRETARIAT  
WISHES YOU A WONDERFUL  
SUMMER VACATION**



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