



ISSUE 15 · MARCH 2024

NEWSLETTER

European Committee for Catholic Education

EDITORIAL

LOUIS-MARIE PIRON, SECRETARY GENERAL

The reality of Catholic education in Europe differs widely from country to country. The number of schools varies greatly from one place to another, depending on history. The relationship between religion, schools and society also varies from culture to culture. This diversity can be a real source of richness if we are willing to really try to get to know and understand what is happening in the different regions.

The work we are in the process of finalising on the comparative study of the specific training of teachers and school heads in Catholic education is very revealing of the specific nature of what is experienced in the different countries. The document completing this study will be presented at the General Assembly to be held in Bergen, Norway, at the end of April. It will mark the end of four years of analysis and exchange. This will also be the last General Assembly for Géraldine Vallée, our Office Manager, who will be working on new projects from the end of the school year. We would like to take this time to thank her for all she has done for us.

A new page is about to open that will enable us to reflect together on the specific role that Catholic schools can play in Europe. With a new parliament due to be elected in a few months' time, Catholic education intends to take up the major issues facing society in order to make its contribution to the debate on the future of Europe.

CONTENT

EDITORIAL

[PAGE 01](#)

CEEC ACTIVITIES

[Our meetings](#)

[Our actions](#)

PAGES 02-03

NEWS

[In Europe](#)

[Worldwide](#)

PAGES 03-04

CALLS & INFOS

[Appointment](#)

PAGE 04

CALENDAR

[PAGE 04](#)

CEEC ACTIVITIES

OUR MEETINGS

The CEEC Executive Board met on 21 February. The members warmly welcomed Marie-Theres IGREC, Marie-Caroline HAMONT-VINET and Pedro HUERTA NUÑO, who attended the meeting for the first time following the renewal of the Executive Board last October.

During the meeting, members prepared for the next General Assembly, which will be held on 26 and 27 April in Bergen, Norway. The main event of the day was the election of the Association's Vice-President and Treasurer. Titus FRANKEMÖLLE was re-elected to a 4-year term as Vice-President, while Marc VAN DEN BRANDE took over as Treasurer from Paul MEANY, who was recently elected President of the association (to find out more, see " Meeting the Vice-President and Treasurer of the CEEC "). Finally, in the run-up to the European elections in June 2024, the Executive Board decided to draft a text for the attention of political leaders. This document will be presented at the next General Assembly in Bergen.

MEETING THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND TREASURER OF THE CEEC



Titus FRANKEMÖLLE is a deacon in the diocese of Breda and has been president of the Dutch Council of Catholic Schools since 2016. For 25 years, he has managed secondary school as a headmaster.

He is currently upper school rector of three secondary schools in the West Brabant region

and a member of two supervisory boards. He studied Germanic philology at Utrecht University, where he obtained a doctorate. Later, he studied for six years at the seminary in Bovendonk, in the diocese of Breda. It was here that he received his spiritual, pastoral and doctrinal training and was ordained a deacon by the Bishop of Breda.



Marc VAN DEN BRANDE has been active in Catholic education in Flanders for over 30 years (including as director of the pedagogical office and as secretary general for Catholic primary

schools). In recent years, he has been an education policy adviser to the Vice-Minister-President of Flanders. Marc holds a master's degree in education science from the Catholic University of Leuven. He has published books on education-related topics: Shadow Education; The financing of education; The teacher as researcher; Textbooks and teaching materials; Administrative burden in education.

OUR ACTIONS, PROJECTS AND INTERNAL NEWS

A REVIEW OF FATHER YOUSSEF NASR'S INTERVENTION AT THE MADRID GA, OCTOBER 2023

At the last meeting of the CEEC General Assembly, Father Youssef NASR, Secretary General of the Lebanese schools and OIEC Regional Secretary for the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa), spoke about his participation in the "Rencontres Méditerranées" organised in September 2023 in Marseille.

This event, in which Pope Francis took part, followed on from the meetings organised for the bishops of the Mediterranean in Bari in 2020 and Florence in 2022.

On the one hand, the choice to hold these meetings in Marseilles was symbolic, as the city is a real "gateway to the world" where different peoples, identities and cultures live together. Several workshops were organised, including one bringing together representatives of Catholic education. This group worked on a common educational challenge, namely "education for all in the Mediterranean basin".

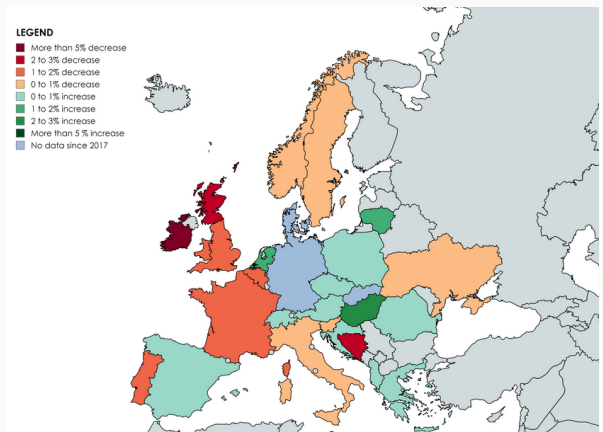
These discussions resulted in a final text which was read to everyone by Jacques LELOUP, the diocesan director of catholic education in Marseille. In his speech, he emphasised that the fundamental paradigm of education is "educating for relationships". This pedagogy of dialogue is a way of educating our pupils to listen, to discern, to share experiences, to live together and to coexist, with a view to promoting a civilisation of love and a conviviality of humanity based on art and creativity. Finally, the Papal Mass brought together some 60,000 people from 29 Mediterranean countries. Pope Francis chose the Gospel according to Saint Luke, which focuses on the encounter: "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit". In his homily, he emphasised that the Mediterranean Sea is a sea of good, a door of welcome and a lighthouse of peace. The Pope invited the assembly to be witnesses and guarantors of such a perspective.

More information is available on [the website](#).

CEEC PUBLICATION: SCHOOL POPULATION STATISTICS 2023

In 2023, the CEEC collected school population data from its 29 member associations. The aim was to count the number of pupils enrolled in Catholic schools in each country, as well as the number of Catholic schools, in order to compare these data on a national scale and to identify the decreases and increases in enrolments in Catholic education in Europe.

Overall, there has been an increase in the number of pupils enrolled in Catholic education in 13 member countries, and a decrease in 12 member countries.



Geographically, most of the increase in pupil numbers is in Eastern Europe. The situation in the countries of Southern Europe is more mixed. Some countries close to the Balkans are seeing an increase in their numbers, as are Switzerland and Spain, while southern countries such as Italy, Portugal and Bosnia-Herzegovina are seeing a decrease. In the Mediterranean basin, there has also been a significant increase in Malta. On the other hand, in the countries of Northern and Western Europe, the decline is more marked, especially in Ireland. The Netherlands stands out for a slight increase. Further information is available in the full report, which can be accessed via [this link](#).

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

IN EUROPE

In the run-up to the European elections, several member associations are publishing documents aimed at elected politicians.

In Belgium, the federal and European elections will be held at the same time, providing an opportunity for SeGEC and Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen to publish their memorandum for political parties. In France, the SGEC recently published a document entitled "L'école catholique et vous: liberté scolaire ensemble, prenons nos responsabilités".

WORLDWIDE

During the meeting in Rome on 16 February 2024 between Father FORTUNATO and the representatives of the OIEC, the latter were able to discuss the first World Children's Day launched by Pope Francis on 25 and 26 May.

This event, with which the OIEC will be associated, represents a key moment for young people. A number of points to help CEEC members understand this important event are set out below:

- Angelus of Pope Francis for Friday 8 December 2023.
- Letter from Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça
- Programme and registration details : Letter from Father Enzo Fortunato
- The website



The OIEC strongly invites CEEC members to register their schools. If you register, please send a copy to the OIEC so that the organisation can bring all the OIEC schools together in the same place (during the event on 25 May at the Olympic Stadium).

CALLS, INVITATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION

APPOINTMENT

The CEEC reiterates its warm congratulations to Mgr Giovanni PAGAZZI, Secretary of the Dicastery for Culture and Education since September 2022 and who was appointed and consecrated titular Archbishop of Belcastro last February.

CALENDAR

25 and 26 April 2024: Seminar in Bergen (Norway) entitled "What is a human being? The importance of a Christian humanism for education" - Registration in February 2024

26 and 27 April 2024: 102nd meeting of the General Assembly in Bergen (Norway)

13 to 17 November 2024: 50th anniversary of the CEEC and 103rd meeting of the General Assembly in Strasbourg (France).

Spring 2025: 104th meeting of the General Assembly - venue to be decided

Autumn 2025: 105th meeting of the General Assembly in London (United Kingdom).

THE CEEC SECRETARIAT
WISHES YOU A HAPPY
PALM SUNDAY



Resp. Publisher: Louis-Marie Piron - Secretary General
Editorial team : Géraldine Vallée - Office manager
European Committee for Catholic Education
Avenue E. Mounier 100
1200 Brussels
Phone +32 486 60 73 20
ceec@ceec.be / www.ceec.be
Layout: : www.canva.com
Royalty-free image (Pixabay)