

HEADING FOR THE HAGUE

The European Committee for Catholic Education invites you to discover the highlights of its 106th General Assembly

17 APRIL
18 2026



European Committee for Catholic Education

Comité Européen pour l'Enseignement Catholique

Europees Comité voor het Katholiek Onderwijs

Our General Assembly promises to be a rich and eventful occasion! From all the items on the agenda, we have chosen to highlight three key moments.

We would like to thank our hosts, the Catholic Education team in the Netherlands, for their warm welcome and organisation. We look forward to hearing from Titus Frankemölle, our representative from the Netherlands, and Mark Buck, President of VERUS, who will open our General Assembly.



GUESTS AND PRESENTATION *SPIRITUS PROGRAMME*

Mr Peter Woods – Director of Teacher Formation, ACU La Salle Academy, Father Friedrich Bechina, FSO – former Undersecretary of the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education (2013–2022) and Professor Brother David Hall FMS – Dean, ACU La Salle Academy, will be honouring us with their presence at our next General Assembly to present the 'Spiritus' programme.

Spiritus is a dynamic training programme that enables teachers and leaders in Catholic schools to embrace their mission with clarity and determination, deepen their faith, and lead formation with confidence within their communities. Through a rich combination of theological input, retreat experiences and practical applications, Spiritus equips participants to renew and strengthen the evangelising culture of their school.

The programme will be presented to our members during an inspiring time conducive to the exchange of best practices between our countries and continents.

ROUND TABLE: A HIGHLIGHT OF OUR GENERAL ASSEMBLIES

Every meeting of our network is marked by a moment that everyone eagerly awaits: our collective exchange. Much more than a simple discussion, it is a real highlight, a special space where experiences intersect, ideas are exchanged and voices unite around shared concerns. It is here that the network that brings us together is, in concrete terms, built.

Over time, we have sought to develop this session to make it even more dynamic and meaningful. From now on, the round table will focus on two major themes, allowing everyone to express themselves in a more targeted way whilst enriching the collective discussion. This change has already borne fruit: in London, our discussions centred on two key issues — the shortage of teachers and Catholic identity — sparking rich and engaged debates. In the same vein, the upcoming General Assembly in The Hague promises to be just as promising. The topics addressed will be selected based on our members' responses to a comprehensive questionnaire on the current state of Catholic education and schools in their respective countries. An event not to be missed, where everyone contributes to fostering a collective intelligence in the service of our shared mission.

SURVEY ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN EUROPE

Preliminary survey results presented in London and further discussions at the General Assembly in The Hague



ENSEIGNEMENT CATHOLIQUE
SECRETARIAT GENERAL

Last October, the initial findings of the 'Catholic Education: Diagnosis' survey were presented in London. This study, conducted by Etienne Michel, former Secretary General, and the research department of the General Secretariat for Catholic Education in French- and German-speaking Belgium, in collaboration with the CEEC, draws on work initially carried out within the framework of the African Education Pact.

An approach to assessing the current state of Catholic education

The aim of this survey is to assess the current state of Catholic education. This initial phase of reflection forms the basis for a broader project: to develop forward-looking scenarios to envision and shape the future of our education system.

During his presentation in London, Etienne Michel explained: "The idea is that Catholic education is defined both by its educational mission and by its organisational model. If we are to envisage the future of Catholic education on a European scale, we need to engage in forward-looking reflection on educational projects and on organisational models. But before reaching this forward-looking stage, we started from a hypothesis proposed by a French Jesuit, Father Paul Valadier. His point was that to envisage the future of Catholic education, we must begin with an analysis of contemporary cultural and religious developments."

Two key hypotheses

The survey is based on two key assumptions: Catholic education is defined both by its educational mission and its organisational model. To envisage its future, it is necessary to begin with an analysis of religious, cultural and societal changes to identify the challenges facing schools.

A two-part questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of two main parts. The educational mission: this examines religious, cultural and societal changes, as well as their impact on schools' educational missions. The aim is to identify various possible scenarios for the future of Catholic education. Organisational models: this examines four areas of development — the relationship between schools and the Church, the relationship between schools and the State, the relationship with civil society, and finally the internal challenges facing the organisation of Catholic schools.

Towards a link between educational vision and organisational model

In conclusion, Etienne Michel emphasised the importance of coherence between educational and organisational scenarios: “Not all educational projects are compatible with all organisational models. Thinking about the future of Catholic education therefore involves finding a compatibility between these two dimensions.”

Significant European participation

The survey was circulated among CEEC members and received 16 responses. At this preliminary stage, one representative per country contributed to the data collection. Whilst the sample is not yet exhaustive, it already provides a snapshot of the diversity of approaches across Europe.

A fruitful initial exchange in London and a second working session in The Hague

The initial findings were at the heart of a key discussion during the CEEC’s latest biannual meeting. The CEEC’s networking provided real added value to this comparison of survey responses, enabling each national representative to compare their perspectives and refine the collective thinking behind the survey. The results of the second phase of the survey conducted by the SeGEC will be presented and discussed at our next General Assembly on 18 April in The Hague.

We look forward to seeing you all in The Hague to share our experiences, unite our voices and work together to shape the future of Catholic education in Europe!

