



COMECE Presidency to be received by Pope Leo XIV on Friday, 23 May. A meeting with the press will follow the audience

The members of the Presidency of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) will be received in audience by the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, on Friday, 23 May 2025 at 9:00 A.M. The audience will take place at the Vatican. A meeting with the press will follow the audience.

The COMECE delegation will be composed as follows:

- Mgr. Mariano Crociata (President)
- Mgr. Bernardito Cleopas Auza (Apostolic Nuncio to the European Union)
- Mgr. Antoine Hérouard (First Vice-President)
- Mgr. Rimantas Norvila (Vice-President)
- Mgr. Nuno Brás da Silva Martins (Vice-President)
- Mgr. Czesław Kozon (Vice-President)
- Fr. Manuel Barrios Prieto (General Secretary of COMECE)
- Alessandro Calcagno (Assistant General Secretary of COMECE)

This audience with Pope Leo XIV will mark the first meeting between the new Pontiff and the Presidency of COMECE, as well as the first official meeting of Mgr. Bernardito Cleopas Auza in his role as Apostolic Nuncio to the EU. Although not formally a member of COMECE, the Apostolic Nuncio to the European Union participates in the meetings of the Standing Committee of COMECE.

The audience will provide an opportunity to reflect on the current state of the European integration process and to discuss the EU's role in promoting peace and integral development in an uncertain and rapidly changing world. Among other topics to be addressed are migration, environmental sustainability and artificial intelligence.

On the day of Pope Leo XIV's election, in a statement released by COMECE, Mgr. Crociata wrote: *"We look forward with hope and confidence to the opportunity to meet the Holy Father, to receive from him encouragement and guidance in our mission of dialogue with the institutions of the European Union. In an international context marked by a plurality of crises and common challenges, our desire is to walk a common path, to journey together, supporting the Pontiff in his work."*

A meeting with the press will follow the audience. This meeting will take place at Salone San Pio X (Via dell'Ospedale, 1 - Rome) at 11:00 AM.

ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE

Journalists and media operators who wish to participate in the meeting with the press must apply, no less than 24 hours before the event, through the Holy See Press Office online Accreditation System available at: press.vatican.va/accreditamenti

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