26–30 OCTOBER 2026 | ESCH-SUR-ALZETTE, LUXEMBOURG

Five days of learning, connecting and acting

EHSN Humanist–Existential Care Autumn School 2026 • Existential Care in Times of Global Crisis

5 DAYS	11 COUNTRIES	43
shared learning & practice	represented in our international group	Autumn School registrations

From 26–30 October, humanist practitioners, researchers and organisations met in Luxembourg to ask a practical question: how can humanist-existential care respond to fear, uncertainty and crisis while supporting meaning, dignity and connection? Organised through EHSN and hosted locally by AHA Lëtzebuerg, the week combined plenaries, discussion and hands-on practice.

A look back at the week

MONDAY 26 OCTOBER Facing the challenges of our time

Christian Meyers explored existential fear and how we might respond to the pressures of contemporary life. Greg M. Epstein, Humanist Chaplain at Harvard and MIT, asked why humanist chaplaincy matters amid interconnected global crises. The opening conversations set an ambitious, hopeful tone for the week.

TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER Crisis, moral injury & humanist response

Niels De Nutte reflected on humanism amid polarisation and transnational crises. A panel facilitated by Dr Lindsay de Wal brought together Alexandra Rondas, Ingun Steen Andersen and Yvan Dheur. Workshops with Liz Young and Asbjørn Fretheim moved into accompaniment and staff support; Winnie Belpaeme then guided a fishbowl exercise in which participants practised existential-care conversations together.

WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER Community & collective resilience

Professor Gaby Jacobs explored Humanist-Existential Care as a boundary practice. Niels De Nutte facilitated a conversation with Hans De Ceuster, Birgitte Fredriksen and Gaby, drawing on audience insights into democratic challenges, ecology and collective wellbeing. Afternoon sessions with Ingun Steen Andersen, Liz Young, Niels De Nutte and Winnie Belpaeme connected dialogue, fragile spaces, embodied responses to crisis and practice in Flanders.

THE WEEK CONTINUED

THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER Professional identity, sustainable practice & new connections

Birgitte Fredriksen introduced ecological anxiety, collective fear and meaning-making, drawing on her Natursamtaler work. Workshops with Nikki van Biemen, Audrey Delcourt and Liz Young examined loneliness, heavy emotion and learning from mistakes. At the University of Luxembourg, Prof. Dr Marie Friedel introduced Spirit4Care and prompted a rich exchange about inclusive spiritual and existential care in nursing. Special thanks to local hosts Bob Reuter and Tanja Frank for helping make the visit possible.

FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER Knowledge sharing & what comes next

Lone Ree Milkær and Dr Lindsay de Wal introduced two connected publication routes: a peer-reviewed academic special section in Secular Studies and an accessible EHSN professional stream for case studies, reflections and practice-based learning. Group conversations began shaping a collaborative international book, Humanist–Existential Care: Hope in Times of Transition – A Global Perspective. Lindsay also introduced I-HEC, her digital education and CPD initiative, and the group reflected on priorities for future Autumn Schools.

From conversations to collaboration

The week did more than share ideas. It strengthened an international learning community, helped connect research with practical care, and opened new possibilities for joint writing, professional development and cross-border exchange.

How to stay involved

SHARE A STORY FOR THE BOOK

Whether you joined the Friday discussion or could not attend, you are invited to propose a story or chapter idea for our developing international collection. Please reply with a short outline or bullet points by 20 November 2026. A finished chapter is not needed.

CONTRIBUTE TO RESEARCH OR PROFESSIONAL WRITING

We welcome expressions of interest in the Secular Studies peer-reviewed special section and EHSN's shorter, practice-based publication stream. Contributors can enquire about a suitable route and next steps.

HELP SHAPE WHAT COMES NEXT

Tell us which topics and skills you would like a future Autumn School to explore. We welcome feedback from those who joined for one session, the full week or needed to leave early.

CATCH UP ON THE PLENARIES

Watch Autumn School plenaries and other HEC talks on the EHSN YouTube channel: youtube.com/@EHSN-Humanistservices

Feedback survey: forms.gle/HEKiRF53f8Y6pTfQ8

HEC information and updates: humanistservices.eu/excare/

EHSN YouTube channel: youtube.com/@EHSN-Humanistservices

Thank you to every speaker, participant and organising partner, including AHA Lëtzebuerg, for making this a generous and genuinely international week. If you could not join us, we hope this update gives you a sense of the conversations—and an invitation to be part of what comes next.