In 2016 roughly a century of existence of the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction, ICMI, has passed since its establishment in Rome in 1908. This talk concentrates on the last five decades of that period.

During the years 1966-2016, ICMI has witnessed and taken note of marked trends and developments in mathematics teaching and learning around the world, both in terms of the socio-economic and institutional boundary conditions, and of the diverse and multi-faceted practices of mathematics education. This half century is also the one in which mathematics education as a scholarly and scientific discipline has come of age and has matured. ICMI as an organisation has not only observed these developments but has also been a key player in charting and analysing them, as well as in fostering and facilitating (some of) them, for instance by way of conferences, studies, etc.

It has been our privilege to occupy leading positions in the Executive Committee of ICMI for roughly half the period of time under consideration. This has provided us with a unique platform from which we can identify and reflect on the main trends and developments of the relationship between ICMI and mathematics education from two insiders’ perspectives. Our lecture will thus offer observations, analyses and reflections on key issues in mathematics education as perceived through, and influenced by, ICMI.