



## STUDY SESSION REPORT:

# “Inclusion and access to education”

EYC Strasbourg,  
10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**all different**  
**all equal**

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**Reference:** DJS/S (2006)6

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## Executive summary:

In 2005, the Board of OBESSU applied for this study session to the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport, with the idea to explore the social aspect of schooling, and inequalities in its system that kept many young people from benefiting of their right to education. The project had been validated, and took place in the European Youth Centre of Strasbourg in September 2006. It has been mostly successful.

The fundamental belief of OBESSU is a free and equal school for everybody. We see the results of this study session as an important part of the ideas we have on achieving this and building a peaceful society based on tolerance and respect through education. Every school-student will profit from more heterogeneous groups in school-classes, thus learning from different cultures, different needs and different points of view.

The Study session aimed to address the following questions:

- Is mainstreaming important in schools and why?
- How and why are people being excluded?
- Who are the people that get excluded from education?
- What are the effects of an exclusive school on society and vice versa?
- What social skills do we acquire through school and how is the "hidden curricula" versus the official curricula affecting this?

The event itself was a success, for both the participants<sup>1</sup> and the team. Both felt the event was very successful, and had largely met the expected goals in all possible ways.

All the participants went back home "more motivated", "more inspired" or "with plenty of ideas"<sup>2</sup>, and all the team members felt they did a good job in fostering vast amounts of motivation and energy to work on the topic of social exclusion. The upcoming follow-up campaign, *Too Cool For School?*, will be taken over by a present OBESSU Board member, and aim to disseminate the study session results Europe-wide through a website and the publication of postcards and posters on the theme of social exclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Overall, 86.3 % of the participants were "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied". Only 3.67 % were "Dissatisfied" or "Very dissatisfied", and 10 % rated the overall activity as "Fine".

<sup>2</sup> As they expressed in their own words in the feedback questionnaires filled in at the end of the event.

*The Course director gratefully acknowledges the invaluable help of Iris BAWIDAMANN (Council of Europe's Educational advisor) and Derry HANNAM (Expert on democratic education) in fostering the participants' interest in the field of social inclusion.*

## DAILY REPORTS:

### 11<sup>th</sup> of September:

Welcome done by the course director Bruno Selun. Short introduction of what will be happening during the morning session was given in the same time. Introduction of the team members was made. The alcohol policy towards minors of the Youth Center was presented.

Presentation of OBESSU through a quiz was made. Participants were divided into 4 different groups and were asked different questions about OBESSU.

Iris Bawidamann as educational advisor presented the Council of Europe and the "All Different-All Equal" campaign.

Tina Mulcahy from the EYC presented the building and its facilities to the participants.

Then there was a treasure hunt, and participants were asked to find different places in the building following the photos they were given. At each of the indicated locations there was part of a sentence for the participants to put together. The sentences were all education related:

1. Students in all countries – Unite
2. Education is not for sale
3. I have a dream
4. Nothing about us without us

Bruno on behalf of the team made an introduction to the week's agenda for the study session. He explained in detail the different activities that will take place. The Agenda is enclosed in an Annex of this report. The members and moderators of the Evaluation groups were also presented.

Lunch

The participants were divided into 4 different groups to discuss the question of: What social exclusion is?

There were 5 questions that the groups were given. Each question was discussed for 30 min, and then the participants were given the next questions.

The presentation of the discussions of the groups was made in the plenary. Each group presented one question, and the other groups were adding if there was anything else they discussed.

### ***What is education?***

Education is: learning (academic), knowledge, life, interaction, conversation/communication, self-development, development of skills, learning by doing, being an active citizen.

Definition of the different types of education: the formal, informal and non-formal education was made.

- Learning by doing is important process of educating the individual.
- Education is a formation and an investment for the future.
- Education is a process that is integral part of the life-long learning context.
- Education is a Human right.

### ***What is social Exclusion?***

Excluding someone from something because of his/hers: social situation; background; state; look; sexual attitude; gender; culture; religion; origin; language etc

- Discrimination, bullying, racism, sexism, different phobias, etc manifest the social exclusion.
- The social exclusion takes place everywhere. It starts from prejudices and is the tool to reproduce them and transforms them into dogmas.
- The social exclusion divides society and makes a dialogue impossible. It is a kind of a vicious circle.
- It produces anger and fear. It stops your own personality. You are forced to be something different. It also produces inequality and unequal treatment.
- In order to prevent exclusion, an improvement of the social dialogue is necessary.
- Social exclusion can be also developed by different legislation and by teachers inside schools.

### ***What does equal access to education mean?***

- Right to access high-quality education not dependent of skin color, origin, culture, socio-economic background, sexual attitude, religion, gender etc.
- Possibility for one to choose in accordance to hers/his personal interests.
- Equal access to education means possibility to access education free of charge.
- The equal access to education prevents social exclusion.
- The means to provide equal access are: governmental funding for compulsory education, support, providing tolerant and social environment.

### ***Why it is important to work with social inclusion?***

- Nobody has an influence on how or where one has been born.
- Nobody has the right to decide for others what is normal and what is not.
- Everyone should have equal rights.

- The aim of the society is not to consist of groups fighting each other but to have a peaceful atmosphere with respect and understanding
- We represent the school students and thereby we are obliged to work with the issue.

**Link social inclusion to the school student unions:**

- Students of today are the society of tomorrow. The society and attitudes need to start changing now. There is hardly any inclusion of e.g. handicapped people in our organisations.
- Social inclusion or exclusion mainly takes place in schools and that is the field of our work.
- School students unions should be the ones stating loud the problems the school students face in schools, and seek for measures to overcome those.

**Evaluation groups:**

In the light of the end of the day, evaluation groups met. The evaluation groups were composed of participants and one member of the prep-team who informally discussed activities that took place during that day. This helped the prep-team members to have better overview of the needs and expectations of the participants and act to fulfill those.

**12<sup>th</sup> of September 2006**

Donde te posicionas?

The team members responsible for the exercise gave different statement to the participants. They were asked to take a stand and stay on either a 'yes' or a 'no' side of the room, or stay in between if undecided whether they agree or disagree with a given statement!

The first statement given was:

**IN MOST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS ROMA PEOPLE CAN NOT BENEFIT FROM SCHOOLING**

YES

- Roma people often do not have the financial means to send their children to school
- The state should guarantee free schooling for everybody not letting any minority outside educational patterns.
- Addressing the problem of inclusion of Roma in educational system does often not happen. There should be an effort made in recognizing the right of education of Roma children.

- School is not only knowledge, but it also is living in society. If one cannot learn to live in a society, if one goes to school 3 months a year, the person is socially excluded.
- In many countries parents often force children to work on streets instead of attending school. Raising awareness of educational needs and opportunities must be prioritized.
- 
- Everyone should have the possibility to obtain basic education.

NO

- You cannot develop school that would be following their life-style.
- They are not traveling together; it is their responsibility to provide schooling. They have to know that their way of living prevents their children from getting education. In some countries they are not moving, but they do live in poverty and lack the knowledge of the official languages.

**IN SOME COUNTRIES RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS ARE FORBIDDEN IN SCHOOLS – is it socially excluding?**

YES

- By taking these symbols away you make people not attend schools.
- The symbols are a way of life too. They should not be forbidden in schools.
- It is a violation of the right of expression.

MIDDLE

- It can be a good thing that the children do not bully each other because of religious beliefs, but in the same time it is social exclusion to take the signs away.
- Its particular social exclusion, but it is bad to take someone's possibility to choose.
- It is both inclusion and exclusion, people have to accept you for what you are but if you cannot go to school because of that, it is exclusion.

NO

- I do not know how many people choose for themselves.
- The school as institution must not have religious symbols, but the personal display of symbols is something different. No symbols in classroom no symbols from the teachers.
- It is not a social exclusion if the symbols are excluded. School should be free of that
- Students should be allowed to wear them.



## **IN SOME EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS LESS-ABLED PEOPLE ARE EDUCATED IN SEPARATE SCHOOLS (is it social exclusion)**

### **YES**

- To put less-abled people in regular class can make them work better
- Special needs have also special/different abilities. In separate schools they will lose this abilities and the rest of the population does not come in contact with them. There has to be change of attitudes.
- They have specialists in regular schools but they are integrated. It is also good for the others to learn how to live well with them also from teachers side.
- You should have the choice between regular and special schools. It is not right to put them away, they will not be included in future in society as a consequence.
- Education must not be limited to pure knowledge only.

### **MIDDLE**

- If you just put the less-abled in a special school not to slow the others down, that is social exclusion. If you give the less-abled the adequate resources it is not.
- Less-abled people should be included, but we should evaluate it from case to case. Not to be scared of the concept of separate schools.
- They become ostracized by the class.
- Special schools can help minimizing the diseases effects.

## **THE SCHOOL CALENDAR IS BASED ON THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR (Is it social exclusion)**

### **YES**

- School should be non-religious.

### **MIDDLE**

- It is for that some students have more religious holidays than others.

### **NO**

- Christians are the majority, but we should make rules in schools to allow other religions to be absent on the occasions of their festivities.
- It is not social exclusion, if you are in a Christian country, of course the calendar is based on the Christian religion.

- There has to be a convention. Everyone must live in the same year. It is cultural and not religious.
- It means something to you to have a day off because of your religion. You should be allowed to.

**IN SOME SCHOOLS, PEOPLE HAVE TO WEAR UNIFORMS. (Is it social exclusion?)**

**YES**

- I do not think that the uniform can solve social problems. The problem has to be solved at the basis.
- It is someone outside making a rule that says that you cannot express what you really are and pinpoint your way of being.

**MIDDLE**

- On one-side uniforms make everybody feels equal, on the same level even if one does not have expensive clothes. On the other hand it is taking the personality away.

**NO**

- Uniforms do not change personality.
- Uniforms equalize people, and consequently less bullying takes place in the classrooms.
- If they can choose if they want to do that in school it is not SE.

**IS HAVING QUOTAS FOR TEACHING STAFF BASED ON GENDER A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION?**

**YES**

- It depends from the gender because it gives you a role in society.
- The situation nowadays is that women earn less than man for the same work. Quotas can be a way of social inclusion, but it is just a temporary thing until balance is reached.
- The schools should be mirrors of society.
- The teaching staff should be a school role-model.
- There is no difference.

**MIDDLE**

This is not a way to change attitudes in the society. Quotas are socially excluding.

We cannot limit this to the gender. We should value capability rather than quality.

NO

- Inclusion or exclusion does not depend on the gender but on the personality.
- What if we do not have qualified people to reach the balance? The best thing for students is to have qualified teachers regardless of their gender.

DEBRIEFING:

**Question: IN MOST EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS ROMA PEOPLE CAN NOT BENEFIT FROM SCHOOLING**

Nobody changed position.

The life-style choice mattered in your evaluation>

- It is a circle – regular schools – build their schools
- No difference at all
- Hard to put myself in the situation
- General discussion on migrants in regular classes

**Question: IN SOME COUNTRIES RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS ARE FORBIDDEN IN SCHOOLS – is it socially excluding?**

Primarily thinking about:

- hard to put myself in the situation
- it opened my mind

**Question: IN SOME EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS LESS-ABLED PEOPLE ARE EDUCATED IN SEPARATE SCHOOLS (is it social exclusion)**

- real life influenced my answer
- side of less-abled – regular students
- include the ones means to exclude the others
- regular – other schools

**Question: THE SCHOOL CALENDAR IS BASED ON THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR (Is it social exclusion)**

- Never had this question, it surprised me

**Question: IN SOME SCHOOLS, PEOPLE HAVE TO WEAR UNIFORMS. (Is it social exclusion?)**

- Issue right to express yourself as you want/stereotyping

- Problems with the social climate will not be solved by uniforms
- Right to decide

**Question: IS HAVING QUOTAS FOR TEACHING STAFF BASED ON GENDER A TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION?**

Are quotas important?

- not familiar with the problem
- school as a mirror of society-equality between genders
- way to encourage men to apply-no tool for social inclusion

**Why social exclusion?**

Karl-Friedrich Bopp expert from DG 3 of the Council of Europe, was invited guest speaker.

The guest has worked in the CoE for the last 15 years. 3-rd Youth summit in Warsaw have enforced the social aspect in the work of the CoE. He is social policy department member.

Social inclusion and social exclusion is it something new that we deal now?

There is nothing new at all. There have been people excluded from society since forever. Back to Roman and Greek society questions of this kind arouse. There was no system available to tackle the issue. In the middle age it started changing. Than it developed in a social issue as the society started developing. The next big step was the start of the industrialization, when the negative impact of it was creating social unrest. As a consequence the first insurance against different illnesses were set in this period and they were valid without big changes until WW2.

After the WW2 and with the welfare states which started developing, issues dealt by churches or groups, became responsibility of the state. In this time the upcoming European cooperation developed number of legal instruments that are still valid today such as: European Social Charter; Report on access to social rights in Europe; Report on obstacles to access to Social Protection in EU report II (rev).

This worked 45-75 in the so-called Golden Years, as the use of the instruments became hard to continue. Changes occurred in the economy. Unemployment issues raised. Democratic changes took place. The global issues made the world became a village. All those challenged the social guarantees. There is lot of debate and reforms undergoing in different states, trying to adopt society to the new challenges. There is temptation to adopt the social issues offer less big priority and offer minimum standards. Should other models be introduced or to maintain the European standard of social policy. Council of Europe is in favor of the minimum standards.

The council of Europe had introduced Strategy for social cohesion. Participants will be distributed one.

In Council of Europe view Social cohesion is defined as the capacity of society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimizing disparities and avoiding polarization. A

cohesive society is a mutually supportive community of free individuals pursuing these common goals by democratic means.

Minimum of social protection will ensure social stability.

The participants than if there were any guidelines from the COE to tackle the issue, which would influence impact on the social reality in Europe. The security code and the social charter were referred to as existing legal mechanisms towards which the COE member states are obliged to report on the way they bring to life the different paragraphs addressing the different social issues. Association are also able to make cases over the implementation of the social charter.

The social cohesion directorate is working with specialized groups: Roma, disabled etc. offering guidelines on how to develop initiatives. The sad part is that financial wise the COE has very limited possibilities.

The DG3 is trying through different measures to ensure the application of the different commitments.

Despite the commitments in participants view the reality was different as they mentioned many laws conflicting with the charter and the guarantee of social security. The COE discusses initiatives for laws only, in terms of developing ideas of implementing the charter in the national laws. There are fields where legislation goes directly against the principles. Member states are directly addressed.

There are nice values on European level, to be implemented or adopted, but they vary from country to country tremendously. It is impossible to go directly to member states. It is though possible that the disadvantaged groups and those concerned make their voices heard and mainstream the problems. Roma's have acted strong. There is Roma forum in the COE. They make sure that the values of COE towards Roma are implemented and taken care of on National level.

There are number of recommendations that the Charter addresses education, though which member states are requested to ensure the access to education for Roma population for example.

After the input of the COE representatives the participants discussed the following questions:

*Ways of preventing social exclusion?*

- If it was as easy, there would not have been exclusion at all. There are lots of discussions whether people with disabilities should be included in schools.
- In Denmark the DGS is trying to give the support for less-abled to get all the necessary support in order to be part of regular schools. The government proposed that 95% of young people should get secondary education, which is a problem because they do not want to invest in full for the education of special groups in regular schools.

- In Slovakia the less-able students are obliged to go to special schools, and there very few schools of this kind. Students, which are less-abled, are obliged sometimes to even move in other towns to obtain their education.
- In France each school has to have access for handicapped students.
- The question of mainstream is also rising. It is good schools have the facilities for handicapped people to access them and be included?
- In Britain all the funding for special schools is to be cut.
- We have been discussing exclusion from schools for certain groups, but yet there are many exclusions which take place in schools that we need to tackle.
- There are different campaigns started on COE level to address those problems and exclusion in schools.

*Why exclusion takes place in schools? What are the reasons?*

- In Macedonia, very much the teachers encourage nationalistic views. The families as well influence the attitude of the students.
- The narrow view of education has an impact. Reasons as well are the pedagogical methods, school books, attitude of teachers. The lack of interaction and information and the non-inclusive curriculum are also part of the reasons for the social exclusion to take place in schools.
- School student unions must be promoters of the campaign in the schools.
- There are tools we know that are working, that we need to ensure that the circle is broken. Schools must work with different methods, our organisations as well.
- There has to be links. Education must ensure not to be isolated.
- The evaluation of performances is also a reason for social exclusion. The lack of inclusive policies in schools and documents explaining the values of education are part of the problem. Additionally the curriculum not promoting human-rights education, not ensuring there is civic education within the curriculum.
- We should state loud that changes in education must be made, and ensure that we work on student empowerment is there.
- Education for teachers and those becoming teachers on inclusion is necessary in order to ensure that the teacher's attitudes are changed.

**Your diversity!**

Participants were given different materials from which they were asked to develop a poster that for them represents the diversity in school.

It was interesting that all the posters were very different.

Diversity has to be understood as an opportunity.

It would have been another picture if people were asked to put on a poster what the situation is like in schools today. Some of the posters made by the different groups are below:



### Take a step forward!

Participants were given a role to take on in order to understand different situations linked to people's life. Participants were asked to stand in line on the grass in front of

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the EYC. They were then asked different questions, and according to whether it applied to their character or not they were asked to take respectively a step forward or backward. In the front were trees that represented access to education. After all the questions were asked, the participants were asked to run for free access to education, and thus experience the fact that because of their position in life, accessing education would be harder or easier for them.

The roles given to the participants were the following:

- Academically educated young woman who is unemployed
- You are president of a party political youth organisation (whose “mother” party is now in power)
- You are the son of a Chinese immigrant who runs a successful fast food business
- You are the daughter of the local bank manager. You study economics at university
- You are an Arab Muslim girl living with your parents who are devoutly religious people
- You are a soldier in the army, doing compulsory military service
- You are girlfriend of a young artist who is addicted to heroin
- You are a 17 year old Roma (Gypsy) girl who never finished primary school
- You are an HIV positive young woman
- You are a 22 year old lesbian
- You are a young fashion model of African origin
- You are a homeless young man 27 years old
- You are the 19 years old son of a farmer in a remote village in the mountains
- You are an illegal immigrant from Mali
- You have 2 part time jobs to afford your studies
- Disabled young man in a wheel-chair
- You are 16 year old boy who left your parents live in the country side, because they reject your homosexuality

The statements:

- You have never encountered any serious financial difficulty
- You have decent housing with a telephone line and television
- You feel your language, religion and culture are respected in the society where you live
- You feel that your opinion on social and political issues matters and your views are listened to
- You are not afraid of being stopped by the police
- You know where to turn for advice and help if you need it
- You have never felt discriminated against because of your origin
- You have adequate social and medical protection for your needs
- You can invite friends for dinner at home
- You are positive about your future
- You feel you can study and follow the profession of your choice
- You are not afraid of being harassed or attacked in the streets
- You can vote in the national and local elections
- You can celebrate the most important religious festivals with your relatives and close friends
- You can participate in an international seminar abroad
- You can go to cinema or theatre at least once a week
- You can fall in love with the person of your choice



- You can use and benefit from the internet
- You can sufficiently & positively pictured by the media
- You feel that your gender has been obstacle
- You feel that education you have received has improved your life situation

## Debriefing

They made relations to their country, but however very much in the role of the person they were supposed to be.

*Were you affected by the questions? Did anything strong happen?*

- Even educated it sometimes feels hard to get access to social support
- The future is very much different in the perspective of your origin and place of residence as well
- Afraid in the beginning, those things would make reproduction of stereotypes.
- Confused where to locate the person
- Very much connected with the role, and helped to see world from the perspective of the discriminated in many areas of life
- It felt bad to be in the backside
- You could really feel what it like is to be left out of society
- Some questions were hard to answer, due to the fact that there are many aspects to put into consideration.

*How did it feel to have to be in the front?*

- Scary to see the backside, and how many people are left behind and you do not notice
- People seemed invisible, as they very often are in society
- It was awkward to put yourself in the situation of the ones that were in the back

*Was the basic right to education affected?*

- Not many schools have the facilities for young people with disabilities for example
- Being soldier was a bit different in this regard
- It was good to be in someone else's world for a while in order to understand the other person better

*Who would have run for access to education?*

Mainly people who were in the front would run for free access to education. The possibilities and starting points were the things that mattered. In some cases people would run for education, but however expressing their own identity could have potentially open grounds for bullying and discrimination.

*Is it representative for the society? Whether those people we were representing would have stood on the same position as we did.*

They would have.

*Whether there was link between reality and the role-play?*

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It was definitely showing the reality. The people in the front do not see how different society is and they do not try to support those in the very back.

*It is realistic and applicable for each country? What changed in the views?*

- Deeply moved, about the gypsy girl, realizing how blind we can be sometimes.
- The exercise makes you want to move something. Very good in affecting you to think how it is to be in someone else's skin.

**13<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

The morning session started with an exercise on homophobia.

Participants were divided in pairs according to their gender (same-gender pairs only), and the pairs were asked to discuss the questions given by the team on a sheet of paper. To ease the debriefing, it was done in non-mixed gender groups.

The questions the pairs were asked to answer were the following:

What do you think has caused your heterosexuality?

When and how did you decide that you are heterosexual?

Do you think your heterosexuality might be only a temporary phase in your life?

Do you think your heterosexuality might be caused by the fear of your own sex?

Who did you first tell about your heterosexual tendencies?

How did they react?

Why do you think heterosexual people feel motivated to seduce others into embracing their lifestyle?

Why do you have to publicly show your heterosexuality? Can't you just be what you are, and be quiet about it?

Would you like your children to become heterosexual, although you know what challenges and problems they would face?

A majority of the people subjecting children to sexual harassment are heterosexual.

Do you think that children are in safe hands with heterosexual teachers?

**Debriefing:**

- It was hard to discuss questions you have never even thought of before. Realizing that it is hard to ask others those questions and you understand how it is to be asked them in the same time.

- You expect that homosexual person would be able to answer them, but you are not able to answer them yourselves.
- Heterosexuality is not something one chooses but it is something developed under the pressure of the customs, environment, society etc
- Homo/heterosexuality is in the DNA of people.
- Heterosexuals usually do put normatively
- You cannot say you are 100% attracted to man or woman.
- People must feel awful when they are asked those questions.
- There are some people think that every one is bisexual on a different percentage
- The exercise helped to understand how forgotten exclusion homosexuality it is. To understand how ridiculous it is to pose those questions and everyone expects the homosexual to be able to understand them. If you can't answer those questions and you are homosexual you are not taken seriously

*Why do you think people have hard time to express their sexuality openly? It is still taboo in many countries. Homosexuality is considered behavior that people consequently loose their jobs for. It is considered illness and that homosexuals would influence your sexuality if in their company.*

- In many languages gay used as word for something that is lower.
- There are the traditional manners that influence the approaches. Media has influence on creating stereotypes.
- Legislation is heavy and is creating hetero-normativity.
- In England speaking of homosexuality in sex education is banned.

*Did you experience homophobia in schools?*

- There is and it is always connected to bullying.
- Schoolbooks in sex education are very hetero-normative. In sex education you speak about boyfriends and girlfriends, and not about partners.

- When discussing homosexuality you most of the time refer to man. Lesbians have hard time in being accepted.
- All the schoolbooks have role-clichés.
- Teachers very often promote and encourage hetero-normative attitudes

After the debriefing was over another exercise followed.

### **Variety in Exclusion!**

The groups were asked to discuss in group different examples of the exclusions that take place in schools.

### **Discrimination because of language:**

- Negative propaganda affects the attitudes of students
- Minorities often excluding themselves by forming communities
- Publications of different kind are being published in different languages by the member organisations
- 
- Education in mother language should be offered to the students of immigrant background
- Immigrants especially older ones have hard time to learn the new language (they do not have school books in their mother language)
- Minorities do not have the same possibilities (fewer schoolbooks options, more expensive)
- Too difficult language during the lessons excludes the ones not knowing the language so well
- The official language is always the norm
- Language is a tool to create dialogue between groups in society
- Dialects
- Separate schools to learn the language creates exclusion
- 
- Native languages are not taught as foreign languages (they are not given the same clarification)
- Not speaking the language of the country leads to isolation and loss of self worth

Tools: Teachers with heritage – Mirror citizenship class debate

### **SEXISM:**

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- Girls are considered better students
- Pre-lined professions (hairdresser, technician)
- Girls using female weapons to get grades (mini-skirts)
- Sports classes are often encouraging sexism
- Defining subjects or professions as male and female typical
- Unfair to always assume that girls mean something like that by the way she dresses
- There are stereotypes for girls and boys
- Male teachers making sexist jokes, setting role models for the boys.
- The girls are not encouraged to speak up (it's a joke, you cant be offended)
- In puberty many girls feel uncomfortable with boys touching and staring at them, but the teachers tell them it is just a phase, hormones, boys are boys
- Divided groups in sports. Not by interest but by gender. It helps strengthen the stereotypes
- Divided on male and female sports.
- Most of the principles are man.
- In the group leader is male and he is chosen by a male teacher
- Available subject (cooking for woman)
- History is focused on man
- Gender divided schools
- When girls get good marks, guy think it is just because of their looks.

**Discrimination because of economical background:**

Reasons:

- Clothes
- Books
- Internet/computer access
- Social activities (school dances, trips, sports, cluture, institutions)
- Food support
- Private school

- No choice of school
- Part time jobs
- Prejudice because of higher economical status
- Transportation
- Asylum seekers/financial support benefits
- Being too rich
- Economic background - having certain area - could lead of discrimination/stereotyping
- May mean have to work instead of continuing study
- May not be able to support oneself
- Not equal chances for mobility

#### Consequences:

- Dropouts - university provides you no stable future, the mafia gives you a sure income
- Skip university: the family needs you to work asap or you cannot afford it
- Hard to get support from the state
- To get scholarships you must be very good as studying
- If you got lots of money you might not feel a need to study
- The more well-educated your parents are, the better educated you will be
- Student support should not be dependent on academic performance but on family income.

#### **RACISM/XENOPHOBIA**

- Mohamed crisis in Denmark due to lack of knowledge
- Prejudices against minorities
- Prejudices towards Roma people
- Teachers assuming that immigrant pupils are only to be temporary and do not wish to achieve a higher education so they do not give them proper attention
- Asylum seekers and financial support beneficiaries discriminated on the basis of national majority perceive it to be unjust that they are given many
- Ghetto schools

- Bad Image from Maclia
- National parties influence
- Separate classes for schools
- Bullying
- Influence on opinion / family, teachers friends
- Hidden attitude/jokes
- Lack of knowledge
- Influence of Media
- Fear of unemployment
- Fear of the country being taken over by immigrants
- Exclusion from cultural environment
- Neonazism
- Historical reasons
- Jewish people are capitalists.

After the session ended the participants had lunch and than a free afternoon. The dinner was in town organized by the CoE.

#### **14<sup>th</sup> of September 2006**

Participants were divided into 4 different groups, gender and geographically balanced.

Derry Hannam was invited expert to carry out the session.

He started with several definitions and empirical ideas.

*Power is behind exclusion. To have control over people.*

*Absolute power corrupts aposolutely - British Historian Lord Acton*

*School student organisations provide platform for privileged children, which create the privilege generation.*

*Temptation to abuse power is far too often.*

**Democracy:** *The sharing of power between the people in a nation/community/group through open access to information and direct or representative participation in decision-making.*

*Everyone needs to take responsibility in sharing power.*

Derry referred to the USA, and small town still taking decision where everyone can participate.

It was perfect democracy in Athens, just that they forgot to include 2 groups, women and children.

Democracy on its own is not enough. Democracy needs to go in deep commitment with Human Rights. If the partnership exists than there is the protection for the individual.

When there is good social climate in schools than everyone is learning. Both students and teachers experiences new perspectives in the learning process.

In some countries school student organisations make impact on policies making for example:

In Norway it is crime if the head teacher is aware of bullying and does nothing about. If head teacher does not listen to the school students additionally.

*8% in England go the private schools. The question Derry raised was how to make an impact?*

Ghetto schools start to be more and more reality. Government does nothing to promote school diversity. They have formed instead, private school where businesses invest.

Systems separating one from other are source for exclusion.

More and more faith schools, segregating school students on the basis of religion are being created.

Mixed schools are only schools where you learn to understand each other. School student organisations can engage themselves in ensuring that diverse schools exist.

Reference to the Swedish school system was made as In Sweden private companies can buy schools. Many of those schools get better results than the public schools. School students are in favor of these schools, EOS is as well supporting those. They get agreements that it is easier to get employed after finishing. Everyone can establish schools; it is just that they need to prove that they follow the national curriculum.

To get inclusive schools, there has to be a system that speaks of democracy and Human Rights. You have to have the courage to stand up and say what you stand for.

For the Human rights, the references are: the UN Convention of rights of the child, the UN Convention of Human rights and the European convention.

## **THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

Participation rights for children are guaranteed through:

Articles 12 and 13 – the right to have and freely express their own views in all matters affecting the child the views being given due weigh in accordance with the age and maturity of the child



Article 14 the Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 15 the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly

### **SCHOOL RESEARCH ON SOCIAL INCLUSION:**

In England there is a tendency for head teachers to concentrate on the students who can achieve high grades in the GCSE examination because of the pressure to perform well in the league tables of school achievement. This can have a strongly socially exclusive effect on the less academic students.

In 2001 the UK government sponsored some research by Derry Hannam to see if there was an association between schools that were more democratic than most other schools, or 'more participative than most' schools, and lower student exclusions for anti-social behaviour, better attendance by students from all social backgrounds, and better academic achievement. He found that there was such an association. In the more than usually participative schools there were fewer exclusions, better attendance by students from all social backgrounds, and better examination results from all students but especially from those from poorer social backgrounds. He was careful only to compare each of the 12 schools in the study with the average results for all other schools from similar social environments. His conclusion was that democratic and participative approaches to school environment had a positive effect in reducing social exclusion in schools.

### **Students' Responses Differentiated by Gender**

#### **ALL ACTIVITIES, ALL SCHOOLS, ALL INTERVIEWED STUDENTS, DIFFERENTIATED BY GENDER, % (BOYS in BOLD, GIRLS in *italics*)**

Has your involvement with this activity affected you in any of the following ways. Please tick the box that best describes your feelings.

	A lot	Quite a lot	Not much	Not at all
1 Made school a more interesting place to be?	34 <b>33</b>	42 <b>57</b>	21 <b>9</b>	2 <b>1</b>
2 Helped you feel more confident in school?	31 <b>48</b>	51 <b>38</b>	18 <b>12</b>	0 <b>2</b>
3 Helped you to concentrate better in lessons?	10 <b>11</b>	50 <b>43</b>	38 <b>34</b>	2 <b>12</b>
4 Helped you to learn more in lessons?	16 <b>15</b>	41 <b>43</b>	36 <b>31</b>	6 <b>11</b>
5 Helped you to work with others?	59 <b>78</b>	36 <b>20</b>	5 <b>2</b>	0 <b>0</b>
6 Taken too much time from other learning?	1	1	48	50

	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>58</i>
<b>7 Worried your parents about other schoolwork?</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>99</b>
	<i>0</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>80</i>
<b>8 Made you feel proud of your achievements?</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
	<i>64</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>
<b>9 Helped you to get on better with teachers?</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>
	<i>43</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>3</i>
<b>10 Caused teachers to say you are falling behind?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>83</b>
	<i>0</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>86</i>
<b>11 Made you more interested in the world generally?</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>
	<i>30</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>12 Made you feel that you can improve things?</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>
	<i>53</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>
<b>13 Helped you to express yourself more clearly?</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>
	<i>50</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>14 Made you feel more independent, trusted and responsible?</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>
	<i>68</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>

A brainstorming through an exercise followed the presentation of the results. The brainstorming tackled the question how social exclusion can be prevented through school student participation. The participants were firstly discussing the issue in plenary and then continued the discussion in smaller working groups.

- meetings in school
- students represented in adult committees
- Students as researchers
- Student Action team
- Community service groups
- using minority students
- Peer teaching
- Peer Mediation/Counseling
- Student as governors
- Students choosing new teachers
- Student subject committees

- Student environment group
- Student event committee
- Student radio/TV/newspapers
- Mini-enterprises
- Executive program
- DEMOCRATIC AUDIT

The participants were then asked in their groups to discuss the ideal for a school.

### **Our super-democratic school**

Board: Balance students – teachers  
 Specific decision-making department  
 Representatives from the community  
 Event committee

- The Student council: Right to a class/school meetings/referendum
- Monitoring committee on the application of the declaration of student rights
- Teacher evaluation body
- Subject commission: Students chose subjects/schoolbooks “active citizenship” training different methods
- Social insurance/ground income
- Less-abled students/special needs
- Everything is free
- Gender-balanced/intercultural schoolbooks
- All schools work together to provide everything
- All are equal – All students can choose
- Collective school

### **“The OBESSU European school for inclusion, democracy, human rights and courage”**

Suburban/Ghetto area

Size: 250 students

Classes of: 15-20

Age: 7-18/20

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(Both primary and secondary)

- Divided in age classes
- Lots of projects between the classes
- 40-50 staff,
- Board: Principle, students, teachers, staff, local politician, meeting once a month
- All school plenary once a week – the student committees
- Flat hierarchy – equal
- Student influence in curriculum
- Inspiration boxes
- Intercultural events – lot of peer teaching
- Seminars
- Free afternoon every week 12-15 o'clock
- Coordination board

### **The OBESSU School**

Size: 300 students

Classes of: 15-20 students

- The head-teacher executing the decisions of the Board
- Board: Weekly assembly – all students, teachers & staff
- 1 vote/person
- Possible for everybody to attend and have the speaking right
- Different committees preparing (open to all)

### **Our school**

Classes of: 20-22 students

Size: 150 students

- Every student has one voice at school meetings where everyone is represented
- The students are divided into working groups
- The students choose teachers & classes/subjects

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- Decentralized
- Assemblies for different subjects
- Working groups staff and students

### **Best practices in dealing with social exclusion by school student organizations:**

Participants were divided in different groups to discuss good practices they have in their organizations in tackling social exclusion in schools. They were asked to put those practices on paper and those were later put on the wall in the plenary.

### **XHENOPHOBIA & RACISM**

- Seminars on Racism & Sexism - DGS
- Flyer against xenophobia in school – USO
- Anti racism campaign with business teachers – LH
- Seminar on xenophobia – FSS
- Anti racism peers – AKS
- Estonian – Russian integration project – ESCU
- Campaigns (homophobia, racism, sexism, social exclusion, exclusion by economic background) – AKS
- Permanent sub-committees (e.g. on racism, homophobia, women network, gender group) – AKS

### **SEXISM & HOMOPHOBIA**

- LGBT meetings organized by school student unions – FSS
- Translation of documents in different languages – USO
- Seminar gender-equality – FSS
- Gender-neutral terminology – FSS/ESCU/SUS/USO
- Group called “Peer activists” provides sexual education for the young students – SUS
- Brochures (Anti racism, sexism) – AKS
- Working in schools – AKS

### **SOCIAL EXCLUSION BASED ON LANGUAGE & CULTURAL MINORITIES**

- Harmonize the educational system – USO

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- Seminar on bilingual situation in Finland – FSS
- Right for everyone to express him/herself in mother tongue – USM
- Intercultural youth clubs in the schools – USM

#### **SOCIAL EXCLUSION BASED ON DISABILITIES**

- Researches for how accessible schools are for handicapped students – USM
- Presentations for physical challenged in cooperation with an NGO that works with physically challenged people – USM
- Action “72 hours” for social work – USO

#### **SOCIAL INCLUSION BASED ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND**

- “Project partnership” – SUS
- Higher grants for students – DGS
- Action against the removal of financial support as consequence of 10% absence in a month
- Exchange students from poor ghetto schools to the rich ghetto – DGS
- Studie-rabatten.dk – Discount website with special offers for students (all) – LH
- Organize events for people living in the countryside – HV
- Encouraging students in gymnasiums and vocational schools to work together – SUS
- Project exchange in Slovakia – SUS
- Offer books at good price – USO
- Operation Dayswork – DGS, FSS

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

- Seminar on Human Rights Education – FSS
- Connivance plan – solve problems peacefully and in agreement with implicated persons
- Peer mediation training – AKS
- Training students to communicate with decision-makers effectively – ESSA
- DISKO in Finland- FSS

## DISCRIMINATIONS IN GENERAL

- Articles in newspaper of the organization - FSS
- Support political science - USO
- Support building student organization on school level
- Published a free catalogue of courses that are available in the union (a lot of them about social environment). Those are meant for schools, school student councils and for the regions - LH
- Helping students with their exam assignment - DGS
- Business school of the Year - nominated by the students themselves - LH
- Offer standard statutes to upcoming reform of student councils. Courses for the councils in work and rights - LH
- Courses in different topics - CANAE
- The good school - EEO and LH
- Role-plays and games. Know how the excluded feel like - CANAE
- Open group meeting after school
- A brochure where freshmen express their opinion on the school and the social life, comes out every month
- Documents/Questionnaires sent out to the schools - FSS
- Press-releases on different subjects of discrimination - USO/FSS
- Reivindicative documents - CANAE
- Campaign "The year of social environment in business schools in Denmark" - LH

### Expert - Education of Roma

Dominique Steinberger from the NGO, A.R.P.O.M.T was invited to speak about education of Roma children through NGO's as educational providers.

The Association was established in 1997. In Strasbourg there are many Roma. The situation in which they were living was not well. The organization aimed at developing their lifestyle and educating them in the same time. If the people who are traveling are not majority in the organization, than the organization should be dissolved the organization had to get a European recognition.

The examples of the work that are presented below were also presented to the participants and show how to find the methods to educate children.

### **1<sup>st</sup> project – Schooling of Roma children from itinerary school**

Since educational system in France wouldn't allow Roma children to come to school, school had to come to them. The organization has faced many obstacles from the side of the Ministry of education of France. This project has started in 1995, with a non-roma teacher who worked with Roma children for 5 years. The project has directly reached 250 kids.

Scholar results have been extremely positive.

However Dominique mentioned that, only 8 kids could enter in the caravan at a time for practical reasons, security reasons imposed on to them by the education ministry. Some battles with the ministry were tough because of those security reasons. He also mentioned that there was lack of pedagogical and human interest towards the project.

The difficulty they had was the possibility to welcome only 8 out of 60 kids, and the project then evolved to take on board animators for the kids to run activities in addition to the schooling itself. Rotation system every hour, while some learning read/write/maths, some doing sports, some other activities was done.

The project was at the end shut by the Ministry under the motivation that it ghettoized the kids, but the organization itself kept running.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> project – Schooling of Roma children from itinerary school**

Work on break areas along the roads for Roma people. Any village of 5000+ people has to have welcome areas for roma people by the French law today.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> project – Schooling of Roma children from itinerary school**

Since French administration considered gypsies as homeless in 1990 the organization created a social centre to provide an administrative address to 6000 Roma people.

The participants were able to discuss with Dominique the issues further.

They were curious about the costs which Dominique explained were of two kinds: first one is to pay the teacher provided by the ministry (paid by the ministry itself); the second cost is for all activities and animations that take place. All in all 10 000 euro per year were given as approximate reference to the participants.

The participants were also interested in the reasoning for the closure of one of the projects they had. It was explained that the project closing was done as per decision of school inspector without further research on the quality or assessment of the impact. The organization nevertheless worked on ensuring that there is understanding and view of the right to schooling as important (or universal) Human right.

Dominique mentioned that Roma people's schooling rate in Europe is catastrophic; there is a generalized schooling problem with Roma children, and any project that would allow children to be schooled should be supported at any cost.



Dominique also expressed concern in the efforts to emerge Roma kids in regular schools which raised an interesting point for discussion for the participants in a sense that, it's not the children or the Roma community who has to adapt to the system, but the other way round, in order not to destroy the culture and the identity of the community. Dominique then referred to the perception of **school is the transfer of knowledge with pedagogy, no more**, and that four walls are not necessarily needed to educate people. The difficult socio-economic context in which the community is living was also addressed as potential factor for the difficulties in educating Roma children.

Speaking of dialogue about education Dominique mentioned that the view that it only takes place in schools is potentially dangerous. Moreover he reflected that school is not the only way to integrate people and bring education to people, there are many other ways and possibilities one should look at.

He also historically approached the issue and mentioned that since centuries and centuries, persecution and discrimination exists towards Roma population and that even today they live in the margins of society. This he said affects education as well. The danger for our societies, to live in such a state that requires its people to live according to the majority's standards make schools exclusive institution. It is in the interest of getting of society to get people, to mutually enjoy diversity.

At the end of the discussion schools were reflected as wrong and destructive for many children, not only Roma children, and that all school student unions are working together to stop that and the study sessions is one of this moments for reflection for better school.

It was concluded that it is a key period of the story of education of children in general. Everyone can make contribution in this evolution by being more sensitive to the difficulties immigrants or Roma people face every day. It seems extremely important, as today's children are tomorrow's citizens, that there is a possibility to take an active role in their societies, and discern good from evil.

Evaluation groups were organized after the discussion with Dominique.

Traditionally for OBESSU events in the evening an intercultural evening was organized where participants were able to present their countries, cultures and traditions they have.

## 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2006

### *Educational Stakeholders:*

The workshop was introduced by discussing the meaning of the word stakeholder. Who can be defined as stakeholder in education?

- STUDENTS - have say on the pedagogical methods, curriculum, school environment
- TEACHERS - curriculum,
- PARENTS - wanting to improve the physical environment, however should only have supporting role and not interfere especially in upper secondary schools, the link between home and school, they are not part of the everyday school life, parents should be involved in school but not in school-decision making as they

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- do not participate in daily school life, home and school cooperation can be developed in the cases of immigrant families
- SCHOOL STAFF – in the Board of the school, very often invisible, however their presence can improve the environment
  - TRADE UNIONS (vocational schools) – often not very good idea to have them included but not in the decision-making process. They should work together with the students on how the job market is functioning. Institutions whose goal is to make profit from education should not be allowed to participate in schools
  - LOCAL AUTHORITIES
  - POLICY MAKERS-THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION

Then, the participants, were given different roles that they were supposed to develop for the upcoming simulation of the work of a school council. They were given background information for the meeting they were support to act, as well as the agenda of the meeting and question helping them to develop positions and plan their work.

The roles were: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching school staff, local neighbour, school inspector, NGO representative, Education Ministry representative, and school treasurer.

Each team member 'trained' a group of stakeholders, one the parents, one the teachers, one the students, etc. The headteacher was chosen by the group pf teachers among themselves. The following clusters were not given to the participants, but to the team members/trainers to help them train the role-players (except for the two first clusters, Agenda and Your Schools, which were used as transparents during the meeting). Each group were aware of their interests, but not of those of other groups, so the surprise and reality were maximised

## **AGENDA**

---

1. Opening of the meeting.....Head-teacher
2. Election of the chairperson
3. Motions and new orders
4. Projects for social inclusion
5. Any other business
6. Closing of the meeting

## **YOUR SCHOOL**

---

School Council meeting

**Invitation sent to:**

All students;  
All school staff;  
All parents;  
Mr. Hannam, Inspector;  
External stakeholders.

**Briefing keypoints**

---

- Keep the roles at all times — including coffee break!
- Keep the interests in mind
- Try to be realistic, but not over-acting;
- Dgh

**Teachers' interests**

---

- Good teaching conditions (time for teaching, and keep getting money for their activities)
- Discipline
- Respect and recognition of their role (**they** are the ones who know)

**Head-teachers' interests**

---

- Discipline, smooth (trouble-less) running of the school
- Good results at national exams (school rank)
- Try not to give too much money away (teachers or students)

**Students' interests**

---

- Their voices heard (nothing about them without them)
- Democratic functioning of the school
- Good social climate/learning climate

## **Parents' interests**

---

- Well-being of their children (or what they think is “for their own good”)
- Nothing too expensive for them

## **Welcome speech by the head-teacher**

---

- Welcome everyone and thank them for coming;
- In the last school council meeting 2 weeks ago, the assembly decided to invite external stakeholders;
- Mr. Hannam, school inspector, is present;
- Madame Boulanger, our next-door neighbour, is present as well on her request;
- The most important point today is the project for social inclusion
- → Propose the election of the chairperson, who wants to run (open to every person), quick vote for each candidate (1 person = 1 vote), and change places.  
(If no one runs or is elected, the head-teacher chairs the meeting.)

## **Chairperson guide sheet**

---

- Try to keep your other role in mind; your character also has an opinion, and you have one vote;
- If someone doubts the counting of the votes, you can invite them to come near you and count the votes together;
- No secret vote;
- Be careful with the speaking time; if needed, set a limit (2 min.), or don't hesitate to make a sign to the speakers if they are too long;
- If you need help, try to get a team member to help you.

## **Questions**

---

- How old are you ?
- What is your gender ?
- Single/married/partnered/divorced ?
- Children ? How many ? How old (which class ?)
- Your profession?
- Your socio-economical background?
- Are you a native or a foreigner?
- What are your political opinions?
- Are you part of a union for your role? (teachers', students', parents' union)

The simulation started with the official opening of the council by the head-teacher. The head-teacher opened the meeting asking who would like to candidate for chairing the meeting.

The representative of the students was elected as chairperson.

The NGO representative requested round of introduction and minutes from the meeting to be taken.

**Motions and new orders:**

- Proposal from the parents, that the chairperson should be re-voted.
- Mme Boulanger, neighbor living nearby the school raised the issue of smoking in the school premises.
- Proposal for topic on the agenda, how projects between the NGO and the school can be developed – Marriana from the NGO Equal.
- Ms Houver – Raise a discussion on the rising the problem of drug abuse and security in the school.
- Barbara- girls always in a class with 2 years younger boys, to keep balance.
- Inspector Hannam – Improve the result from the examination which failed to reach the minimum set by the local government
- Proposal from students for Project on social inclusion.

Voting whether the examination performance should be taken before the projects. 8 in favour, 11 against.

### Meeting opened:

The students started the presentation of the project. A teacher was fired on the grounds that he was homosexual. Students feel they there is a need to fight homophobia. They proposed a campaign week against homophobia. They would like to get classes from teachers who are homosexuals in order to understand how it is to be homosexual in the educational system. They planed to also have demonstration and party. They also planned to project documentaries on homosexuality. Week will be called "stop homophobia". They need 5000 EUR for the project.

The teacher who is lesbian proposed that she can organize the campaign.

The teacher of English expressed concern that it takes place during the week which distracts the focus of the students from the curriculum.

The parents expressed concern of the expenses and in addition of the fact that a campaign is organized by the students.

The cleaning personnel expressed concern on who would be cleaning after the party.

The local resident Ms. Boulanger expressed concern that the project will bring a lot of homosexual people in the area that would affect the children.

The students stated that they would organize the project under any circumstances.

The NGO stated the need for work on human rights education in the school. It can be related to the recent campaign by the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry is able to support work against social exclusion. There are grants available in the commission working against sexism and homophobia.

One of the parents mentioned that the school environment as important aspect of education, and they would personally support the project with her husband with 1000 EUR.

Ms. Hover, expressed concerns with the fact that the project goes against discipline and moral values.

The treasurer mentioned that knowing the budget of the school, the school will not be able to invest more than 1000 EUR.

Giovanni Bordello also gave support to the students of 2000 EUR to organize their project.

A comment from the NGO that the school is public and non-catholic in order to put in focus those values enforced by the parents.

Its not financial problem only, but 20 hours of learning being lost – concern from the teachers.

Students expressed believe that the week will be an addition to their education. It would be a beneficial different experience from any other they had before.

Students compromised that instead of a week they will make the project last 3 days.

24 votes were present. The project would need 13 votes to pass. 19 votes in favor. The other points will be moved to the next meeting.

The head-teacher thanked the attendance.

Ms. Hover presented an initiative to inform the Vatican of the events taking place in the school.

The students thanked for the support.

#### **DEBRIEFING:**

*How did you feel with your character?*

**The cleaning personnel:** Not much to say.

**Student:** a bit exaggeration. Interesting to see how the others got into their roles. It was easy to get into a role fighting for something while not being fully opened why you take an action.

**Parent:** a role that is not you is easy to take. The participants said that they have faced similar example of stubborn parents whatsoever.

**Teachers:** had possibility to express their role where they are not convinced in student initiatives. It was an interesting experience, hard not to be reasonable though. None of the teachers was on the side of the students.

**Head-teacher:** Nice experience.

**Policy-maker:** Try to express what the experience meeting policy maker is like.

**NGO's:** normally not included though the most experience came from the NGO's.

**The local resident:** not much to say about.

*Did the characters achieve their goals? And if the proportions of the different groups were even?*

**NGO:** Had chance to talk. Good that invited. But persons would not really use the resources and work together.

**Inspector:** Good compromises.

**Parents:** Students loud but in the backside

Questioning if the parents at all should be included. The roles were extreme. Some of the discussions went on and on, and not really leading to the point. Students were very thankful, even though the others should be thankful at them. Parents and teachers should not really have a role.

Parents were harder to convince in the idea than the government or the other parties. The proportions were not inappropriate.

The student opinion is really important, and not always is on first place.

Students should not be aggressive, but very much aware of the rights and possibilities for influence.

Expected it to be harder for students to get through their opinions.

The setting as it was would have never happened in most cases.

Quiet radical in the characters that stole time from negotiation.

In real life students do not have the right to vote in many countries.

Represented perspective of teachers from own school.

Parents focus so much on their own children.

*Was it realistic? Will it help once you are back?*

The characters were realistic, but it is good to analyze the opponents. The parents had so much influence and it is good to fight the parents.

The parents bullied the head-teacher.

The methods that are used should be also reconsidered. First small meeting before the general meetings are necessary.

The influence is not equal. Students are too often suppressed.

If the project for social inclusion of the school students was not brought up, there was a great risk of discussing academic performance, discipline, issues mainly put forward by parents and teachers.

#### **INCLUSIVE CRITERIA:**

The participants were divided into 4 different groups to discuss inclusive criteria for schools and for school student organizations. After they had the discussion in the groups, they met in plenary to discuss what they identify as the inclusive criteria's for the schools and school student organizations that care must be taken of.

#### **INCLUSIVE CRITERIA FOR SCHOOLS**

- Schools are easily accessible + adapted for wheelchairs and other special needs (Braille, no obstacles, lights, big letters)
- School books and meals are available for free for the students
- School students get grants they can live from, independent of parent's income or marks
- Inclusive sexual education is in place
- Teachers follow regular trainings on up-to-date issues
- Students have a vote in the school board

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- Democratic elections for student representatives are in place
- Gender-neutral language is used
- A mentorship for students with special requirements is in place
- Minorities are free to choose if they want to go to your/our/my school
- Free transportation for students is available
- Library buses are traveling through the countryside
- Distance learning is possible and the necessary facilities are available
- Students are being taught in their mother tongues
- Books in different languages are available in the school libraries
- Lessons covering different religions + cultures are given, but no single-religion education is allowed
- Candies are shared
- Objective/independent support/advices for younger and new students is provided
- Sport lessons take place in interest (not-gender) groups
- Critical thinking on gender issues is promoted
- Student card (discounts %)

#### INCLUSIVE CRITERIA FOR ORGANISATIONS

- Translation and right to use mother tongue
- Gender neutral terminology and politically correct language (inclusive language)
- Sensitive language needs to be taken care of (e.g. jokes)
- Decentralization of events
- Gender balanced experts
- Geographical balance
- Minimum fees for participation at conferences and different courses
- Accessible facilities
- “Rules” agreed with the participants
- make use of the Compass for Human Rights education
- “Inclusive” food (vegetarians, religions dietary needs...)
- Gender-balanced participation (encouraging..) – make use of statistics for the speaking time, attendants etc
- Female + Male rooms

These lists will be used as a base to check against schools' or organisations' practices, and see whether they are appropriately inclusive.

**16<sup>th</sup> of September 2006:**

**FOLLOW-UP:**

**Too cool for school??**

On the OBESSU general assembly this July in Macedonia it was decided to run a common European OBESSU campaign about social inclusion as a follow-up of the study session on “Social Inclusion and access to education”. The campaign was named “Too cool for school?”

The “Too cool for school?” campaign will be a poster and postcard campaign launched in the beginning of 2007. The campaign will be run under the Council of Europe campaign “All different – All Equal”.

The overall layout and content will be made by a working group that unfortunately would not have the possibility to meet face to face, so all of the work will be done through email, msn's, telephone, skype, etc. If you are interested in working in this working group, it's very important that you have regular access to internet.

The working group will be working both with the layout and content, but also a lot with the distribution of the campaign. If this campaign is to be a common European campaign, it's very important that the group manages to have contact with the different student organisation in Europe, so the campaign can be spread out easily. Therefore being a working group member also means to be ready to take care of the communication between the working group and different student organisations. Therefore we will also try to create a group consisting of people from different regions of Europe.

After being explained the background and concept of the campaign the participants were asked to develop ideas for the posters and the cards.



Presented was than made on how the "All different - All Equal" campaign can be used for actions promoting diversity that will be taken by the member organisations.

Schools can also be labeled as ADAE schools, activities of members as well. They can be registered on the official campaign website. There are the national committees which can be contacted and worked with in promoting the campaign.

Presentation on the EVS program was made through reference on its main elements:

- 6-12 months
- Environment, arts and culture, activities with children, young people or the elderly, heritage, or sports and leisure
- 18-25 years
- You need: a volunteer – a sending organization, a hosting organization
- 1 of the countries involved must be an EU member state
- [www.eu.int](http://www.eu.int)

2005- the European year of citizenship through education  
- Cooperation in the field of education for citizenship and democracy  
- [www.coe.int/edc](http://www.coe.int/edc)

#### USEFUL LINKS:

[www.coe.int/compass](http://www.coe.int/compass)  
[www.coe.int/youth](http://www.coe.int/youth)

European Student Card enforced by the 1<sup>st</sup> European School Student Convention. The card differs from other cards, as it is not based on age but on the social status of a student. It enables students to get discounts in cultural institutions, libraries, etc.

Manual for school student organization, meant for different levels for school student work and school student activities.

COMPASS is not meant for children, and the COE is working on COMPASSITO that is meant for work with children. In Austria there is also a school COMPASS which includes exercises suitable for use in school.

#### References for training materials used:

COMPASS, the Educational Pack, Domino and T-Kits

#### National level FOLLOW-UP

In the follow-up the participants were asked in delegations to reflect upon the actions they want to take on national level, inspired by the Study session. They were asked to put those in 3 steps. One month after the study session the steps were sent them by post as a way of reminding them of the commitments they have set for themselves and the unions they work in.

#### The 3 steps for USO:

- Looking for other NGO's, (challenged people, commission against racism) to set up a study at Swiss schools and seminars on this subject
- Implementing the "Too cool for school campaign in our work and e.g. certificate schools in being "All different-All equal"
- Exploring local school student unions about social inclusion and how to work on this in a tool book – Lobby for partners to build up a pilot school with democratic and inclusive structure

#### The 3 steps for USM:

Ivana:

- Keep showing the presentations in the secondary schools and several workshops on social inclusion on school level

- Briefly report from the Study Session to the school students representative of the soonest meetings and opening discussions
- Looking forward to implementing the campaign “All different-All Equal” on national level and the region
- Cooperation with Roma organisations

Gogo:

- Try to organize some kind of seminar in the region with Montenegro and the local office of OBESSU for South-East Europe can help
- Make cooperation with local organization or experts in issues like: racism, sexism and everything connected with social inclusion
- Give all the information to the people in my organization and try to do something including as many students as possible

### **The 3 steps for LH:**

Katrine:

- Make the Board implement actions on social inclusion in the proposed for the workplan 06/07
- Making the GA implement the proposal from the Board
- Being a resource person to whatever project the next Board chooses

Nasma:

- Going home and reporting to LH
- Report to our GA in Nov so that the new Board can consider working with SI for the year 2006/2007, and get on the new board
- Working on SI in my school. Hope that I am in the new Board so that I can keep on working on Social inclusion

### **The 3 steps for FSS:**

Malou:

- Continue the DISCO (a project with FSS – the students, teachers, Board of Education, Hem & Skola /parents)
- FSS is the headman
- Finding pilot schools into which we dive deeper
- Finding new democracy methods, making everyone in the schools participate

- Continuous training courses
- Project leader available full-time
- Get more and more schools to join
- Spread the ideas and methods
- Long-term: active citizenship, happy & healthy environment
- Interest and will to be in decision-making
- Organise a seminar/event on the topic of social exclusion (and inclusion)
- Invite different stakeholders to discuss Finnish and the European (and global) issues
- Press-releases & campaigns with the NSN (Nordic Student Network)
- Start a closer cooperation with the Finnish ADAE
- Label FSS ADAE in connection to our theme of the year 06-07 "Diversity and well-being"

### **The 3 steps of ESCU:**

Karin:

- Report the Board about this study session and acknowledge them the problem of social exclusion all over Europe (world)
- Organize a workshop/seminar for ESCU members to discuss the problem of Social exclusion and think of possible actions taken
- Make a research among students to find exact problems in Estonia and possible ways to solve the problems

### **The 3 steps of ESSA:**

Sara:

- Ensure ESSA itself is SI in terms of website, literature, access and outreach and election process
- Consider ways to work in SU in our student training
- Report to ESSA council on SI so they can consider ways forward e.g. ADAE

### **The 3 steps of CANAE:**

Antonio:

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- Create a workgroups with students from all regions
- This workgroups should coordinate the development of the campaign
- And their components should bring real examples (making a report)
- The workgroup will meet with local/regional/national government to present the campaign
- This presentation will be covered by TV, radio and press
- After media presentation, the campaign should be useful, so workgroup will organize conferences in schools
- The conference should be realised with a lot of games (non-formal education)

### **The 3 steps of SUS:**

Tomas:

- Organize workshop for young students dealing with the issue how the students councils work
- Spread Roma issue/education/living together/ especially in places with Roma population
- Fight against homophobia using methods and tests picked up here
- Brona:
- Post question from homophobic questionnaire around the school
- Research the Roma question homophobic question
- Organize organisation's meeting and prepare a workshop of what we have done here

### **The 3 steps of MNE:**

- Try to organize as many projects as necessary to remind people on human rights through education
- Inform people from my organization about the seminar and prepare workshop about social inclusion
- Try to make connections with similar organisations from near countries in order to do something together
- Try to inform school students about "All different - All equal" campaign

### **The 3 steps of DGS:**

- Introduce the ADAE & TCFS campaign  
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- Present what we have learned in this study session for the national Board
- Integrate the ADAE in DGS
- Implement the data's in the DGS integration campaigns

### **The 3 steps of EEO:**

- Make a presentation for the Board
- Make a report for the future EEO
- My own student council implements it in my school
- All different all equal

### **EVALUATION OF THE STUDY SESSION:**

The evaluation was carried in three steps; first, the participants were asked to identify with one of several cartoon characters acting differently around a tree. They were asked to reflect on the following points:

- The knowledge they gained;
- The ideas they will bring to their organisations;
- Whether their perspective on diversity and/or social inclusion changed; and
- Anything else that had a positive or negative impact on them.

The general comments were as follows:

- "The event made me realize that I wasn't seeing some problems in my country, such as homophobia and romaphobia, it did open my mind."
- "I have learnt many things here, I have so many ideas on how to make things change and will come back to my organization to convince them to take up the *All Different - All Equal* European campaign, as well as the *Too Cool For School?* OBESSU campaign. It opened my mind on gender issues, for example."
- "The prep-team made our work very easy and interesting, it was very motivating to work here and on this topic, they did a great job. I'll go back to my organization very motivated."
- "Some discussions were really good, some slightly less, but hopefully we found the middle. I gained much knowledge, and now have clear ideas of how to work on this topic."
- "This event (the first of this kind for me) opened my eyes on problems such as homophobia, racism, Roma-related issues... I can't explain how much knowledge I gained, but would like to thank everybody for taking part to this event."
- "This week allowed me to see where I stand myself on social inclusion matters, and gave me the tools to be a better person in general; hopefully I'll be able to keep spreading this. This week has been fantastic!"
- "It allowed me to get a huge amount of great ideas, it has opened my mind and I'm looking forward to the next event of this kind."

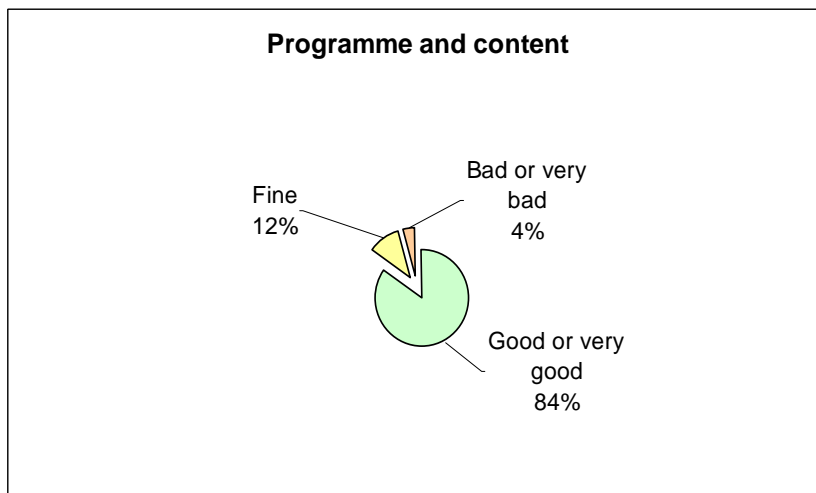
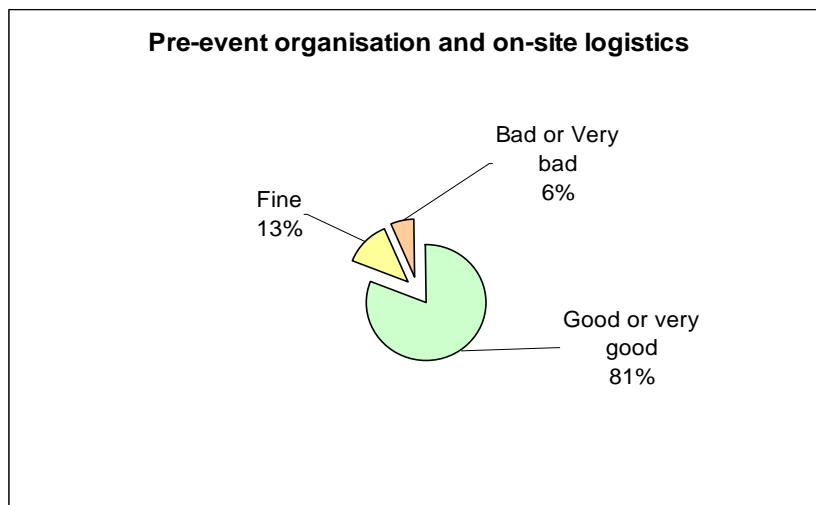
- "I saw the very last steps that need to be taken in my organization. Some things worked better than others, on the one hand some discussions were very vague but on the other hand, all the others were very powerful and intense. I liked the approach of rather looking at social inclusion, as opposed to the social exclusion; it allowed me to see the solutions, rather than the problems."
- "I'm looking forward to going back home, in order to apply a lot of what I heard and learnt about at this event."
- "I used to feel impeached to realize my dreams and what I believe in, but now that I gained so much knowledge and experience, I feel like I have a bigger future than I ever had before. I also learned that I should be more open-minded, and that I perhaps should try to change myself instead of everybody else. OBESSU has been a really great experience to empower young people! I think we should be proud of ourselves."
- "The most important thing I've learnt here is that people can really make a difference. I'm going to try to participate in this myself, and without waiting for a whole campaign, one person can have a lot of influence at their own level."
- "I discovered new ways of working, and other issues than just working on gender and sexual orientation issues."
- TM "I'm relieved that you all go back to your homes and organisations with so many concrete ideas and the motivation to put them into action. This was the aim of the event."
- "I thought that I knew a lot about social inclusion and exclusion, and I might even have considered myself an expert, but I really have to say that this was a really good experience for me, as it allowed me to change some views, or strengthen some others. It gave me the opportunity to re-think about many issues."
- TM "I first felt lost in the beginning, but then everything fell into place, and as we progressed throughout the week. And the participants often forget that not only the preparatory team gives a lot to the event and the participants, but they most often work even harder for themselves! I also appreciated the French expert on Roma people's intervention, it was shattering, and it was good to re-consider the role of school in our society."
- TM "Although sometimes we were lost, and sometimes feeling secure in our beliefs, we all progressed. I feel the inspiration from this event, and practical democracy felt very good. I also realized the value of a good debriefing, a good debate, I think it is essential in democracy and in schools, and it gives me even more motivation to change the educational system."
- TM "We have been able to help each other when we were in difficulty, so thanks for doing such a good job."
- OBESSU staff "Although I only had an observer role in this event, but I can say that you have done a very good job through the debates. I just want to say that I'm very glad I spent a period of my life in OBESSU, because OBESSU is the power, and the knowledge of today, not of tomorrow."
- TM "At the beginning of the week I had much reflection on these topics, and these past three days I felt more like taking action, and that's thanks to you [the participants], to all the work you did that made this possible."
- COE staff "I really enjoyed being with you, although I had an advisory/observant role to play."
- OBESSU staff "I've spent 5 years in OBESSU, and it is amazing to see how big the impact of OBESSU events is in the life people and organisations. I will remain amazed by the energy you brought to this event, and by the energy put into it by the CoE's Educational Advisor. The prep-team also did an amazing job, and this makes me proud for you, you've proven very committed and took care of

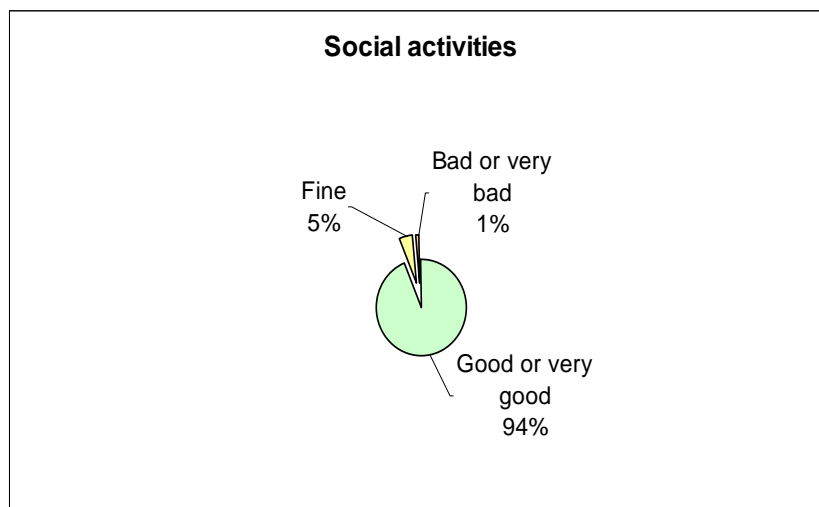


- everything, from the programme to making sure that everybody felt good, without exception.”
- “This was my first event, and exploring this whole new world gives me the courage to put everything into action, to fight for social inclusion. I’d love to work more with some of you in the future, it was really constructive. I feel like I’ve been hit by this full-of-books box, falling from the sky, and now I feel that I can go back to Estonia with the understanding of these issues.”

The second method used was a target divided in study session segments and in accordance to how satisfied the participants were they were asked to put signs more towards the center if satisfied and more towards the outer sections if not.

The last method used was the written forms for evaluation. We developed charts on the basis of the answers that can be found below:





### Outcomes:

As a direct outcome of this study session OBESSU decided to organise a European-wide poster and postcard campaign on Inclusion in education called “Too cool for school”. The campaign is taking place under the framework of the “All Different – All Equal” campaign of human rights, diversity and participation and is involving the school student unions that are members in OBESSU. The involvement of OBESSU in the campaign has also been maintained through the joint project with the COE on labeling schools across Europe “All Different – All Equal”. As of the school year 2007-2008 school student unions will actively work in encouraging schools to develop ways to promote participation, human rights and diversity.

The work on inclusion and access to education is among the strongest points of political commitment for OBESSU. A priori to the study session OBESSU approved a European School Student Rights Charter to ensure that the rights of students that are within or are accessing the educational systems in Europe are safeguarded. The charter is a document the Board of OBESSU committed itself to promote towards national governments and on European level. The work on this document will continue throughout the next years. On the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2007, the international day of student action, OBESSU will claim student participation and student rights in the main demands in order to ensure that students are treated equally everywhere!

Additional follow-up of this study session is the cooperation between OBESSU and IGLYO in organizing a joint study session on the topic of understanding, developing and implementing LGBT inclusive policies in the educational systems in Europe, for the inclusion of LGBT issues in the school reality in April 2007.



