

Education Newsletter



Editorial

The first decade of the 21st century has proved to be a time of great upheaval, a trend that has accelerated over the past two or three years. Technological progress aside, some developments, such as quests for democracy and increased social awareness and solidarity among people, have been for the better, whereas others which unfortunately spring all too easily to mind, such as bad debts, wild and arrogant financial markets and growing intolerance and selfishness, or terrorist attacks have been detrimental and damaging to say the least.

Like many other organisations, the Council of Europe has taken steps to respond to societal change by reviewing its role and seeking to improve the pertinence and effectiveness of its work in the defence and promotion of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The structural reform required to accompany this reassertion of the Council's relevance and rationalise the Secretariat's work began on 1st October and will be completed by the end of the year.

Under this reform, the former Education and Youth Directorates have been brought together as Departments in a new Directorate for Democratic Citizenship and Participation, which is in turn part of a new Directorate General of Democracy (DG II). This is a logical move to improve co-operation, as both departments have focused extensively on citizenship and human rights education, in a non-formal setting in the youth sector and more on the formal primary and secondary classroom and higher education contexts in the education sector. There is perhaps a lot more in common between non-formal and formal education than one might think: non-formal methods have greatly inspired education over the last few years and joining forces should be beneficial to all involved and strengthen the impact of our work.

Another aspect of the reform is that from 2012 on, all activities will be conducted as part of a biennial programme. The activities of the Education and Youth Departments are covered by the programme on democratic citizenship through education, culture and youth policies, which aims to promote Council of Europe standards and values, focusing on citizenship and human rights education, the right to quality education and language policies. Our work will,



High-Level Forum on "Education systems in Europe in the 21st century", Kyiv, 22 and 23 September 2011. From l. to r.: Ólaf Ólafsdóttir, Mykola Azarov, Prime Minister of Ukraine, Dmytro Tabachnik, Minister of Education and Science, Youth and Sports of Ukraine, Mady Delvaux-Stehres, Minister of National Education and Vocational Training of Luxembourg



Contents

	pages
Editorial	1 and 2
Building a culture of "living together" through education: High-Level Education Forum, Kyiv, 22-23 September 2011	3
Recommendation on Intercultural Dialogue and the Image of the Other in History Teaching	4
A new interactive tool for history teaching – A look at our past	4 to 6
New joint European Union/Council of Europe project on Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education launched in Turkey	6 and 7
Interculturalism and the Bologna Process: Joint European Union/Council of Europe support for the modernisation of the education system in Kosovo ¹	7 and 8
Closing conference of the 3rd programme of activities of the European Centre for Modern Languages	8 and 9
Reimagining Democratic Societies	9 and 10
Seven theses on teacher education and the purpose of education	10 to 12
New website for the European Language Portfolio (ELP).....	13 and 14
South-Eastern Europe: developing qualifications frameworks	14
European Training Programme for Roma Mediators - ROMED A Joint Council of Europe/ European Commission Action	15
Calendar of events	16
How to contact us	16

Editorial (continued)

of course, continue to include major projects such as history teaching and the Pestalozzi programme, as well as the development of intercultural competences, and will involve partnerships and co-operation with, in particular, the European Union and the European Wergeland Centre.

All these activities will be overseen by a Steering Committee for Education Policies and Practice which will replace the Steering Committees for Education (CDED) and Higher Education (CDESR). The new committee will therefore deal with the full spectrum of education from pre-school to lifelong learning.

The events of this summer clearly show that the need for work in all these areas is pressing. The urban riots that erupted in one of the Council of Europe's member states could have hit a number of other European countries. Riots lead to a breakdown in dialogue, which in turn undermines the ability and will to communicate. The ability to speak and listen was certainly lacking in those who instigated the riots or took advantage of them, but that ability is also required of those parts of society against whom such anger is directed and of the public authorities themselves. Education must be a key part of the response to the unrest itself and of the measures taken to prevent further outbreaks.

The reaction that followed the dramatic attacks in Norway have rightly inspired widespread respect. Instead of succumbing to the temptation to withdraw into a protective cocoon, the Norwegian authorities and people reasserted their commitment to an open and democratic society. Such a reaction would not have been possible without an education system that instils values and an appreciation of long-term priorities.

A High-Level Education Forum on Education Systems in Europe in the 21st Century was held in Kyiv, Ukraine, on 22 and 23 September as part of the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. At the close of this forum, the participants issued a Communiqué recognising the challenges our changing societies are facing and affirming that 'education for a Europe of knowledge ensures sustainable democratic societies and largely contributes to the well-being of all citizens.' Our new structure is designed to take up those challenges and defend and strengthen the role of education in a context where short-term solutions are enticing. We want to build a society of tolerance and respect for others, where all citizens can fulfil themselves while contributing to the overall good and participating actively at local, regional, national and European level. It is a political goal and yes, an ideology, but it is our belief that it is our duty to strive for the right of everyone to enjoy the benefits of living in a peaceful democratic society, and to ensure that our children will be fully informed to choose the society that they want to build and to participate in its construction.

Ólöf Ólafsdóttir

Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation

1. The project activities are performed in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Building a culture of “living together” through education: High-Level Education Forum, Kyiv, 22-23 September 2011

This summer we were all reminded of how fragile and vulnerable democratic societies in Europe are. Dramatic events in Oslo and shocking incidents in the United Kingdom brought each of us to ask ourselves, whether we are doing everything we can to sustain open democratic societies in Europe. One can seek an answer to this question in the realms of political and social life. However, in the Council of Europe we strongly believe that an educational response is also needed.



What can be improved in our education systems to reduce threats and increase commitment to democracy? What is the best way to prepare our pupils and students for life as active citizens in democratic societies? How can education contribute to developing the kind of society in which we wish to live, a society based on fundamental values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, built on respect for diversity and freedom?

These and other questions were debated by high-level representatives of the Ministries of Education from thirty-five European countries, which gathered in Kyiv on 22 and 23 September at the High-Level Forum “Education systems in Europe in the 21st century”.

This Forum, initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sport of Ukraine and organised under the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe gave an excellent opportunity to discuss these issues and consider, more specifically, the role of education in

finding viable solutions to the main challenges facing European societies.

There was a clear sense among many participants in this Forum that our education environment, the societal and economic context in which our school and higher education institutions operate is changing rapidly and profoundly. As Ms Olöf Olafsdóttir, Director of Education and Languages of the Council of Europe pointed out ‘an increasing democratisation

of all spheres of society demands better-informed and educated citizens’.

In the last two decades there has been a revived interest in the concept of citizenship in many parts of the world and the development of democratic citizenship education as an educational objective, an idea of which the Council of Europe is a strong advocate, has been gaining momentum. The highlight of its work was the adoption of the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in May 2010.

There was a strong appreciation in this Forum that transversal competences for life in democratic societies in the 21st century are needed both for learners and educators. Central to the idea of education for sustainable democratic societies is the understanding that democratic values cannot be acquired through transfer of knowledge alone, but need to be practised. They

are acquired through a holistic “learning by doing” approach based on experience.

Forum participants agreed that communities of practice make it possible to share ideas, best practices and common learning. In the early nineties the idea of a “common European house of education”² was elaborated and translated into policy contexts. The best known example of these efforts was the Bologna Process, which led to the establishment of the European Higher Education Area in 2010.

The Kyiv Communiqué adopted at the Forum emphasised the importance of building co-operation across educational levels through “supporting the establishment of a common European education area, which encompasses universities and schools and which will be founded upon social inclusion, personal development and employability”. To this end, participants “advocate closer co-operation among all stakeholders represented within the Council of Europe”.

Good policy statements become invaluable when transformed into action. Mr Dmytro Tabachnik, Minister of Education and Science, Youth and Sport of Ukraine, reminded participants that the goal of the Forum was to go beyond statements to concrete objectives and actions. The Kyiv Communiqué gave a strong impetus to develop projects on intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity in all sectors of education in Europe.



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² Carneiro, Roberto. *Towards a common home for education in Europe. – Conference of Ministers of Education of the EU member states and the PHARE countries. Warsaw, 20-22 April 1997.* (24pp.).

Recommendation on Intercultural Dialogue and the Image of the Other in History Teaching

On 6 July 2011, the Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec (2011) 6 on Intercultural Dialogue and the Image of the Other in History Teaching. The Recommendation is the end result of the Project “Intercultural Dialogue and the Image of the Other in History Teaching”, which was conducted from 2006 to 2010. It follows on from Recommendation Rec (2001) 15 on History Teaching in 21st-century Europe and takes account of the overall trends in European societies and worldwide political concerns relating to cultural diversity and the dialogue between cultures.

The text underlines the contribution that history teaching can make to raising awareness of the interactions and exchanges that have always marked the development of cultures throughout the world, and particularly in Europe. Whatever the conflicts or the tensions which may have existed between the states, the cultures of each one have always drawn their energy and creativity from exchange and dialogue.

On the basis of work undertaken in the context of bilateral or regional co-operation with regard to support for reforms in the field of history teaching, the Recommendation also draws attention to the role played by history teaching in

post-conflict situations in rebuilding a society in which people can live together and work towards a common future.

Other salient points of the Recommendation include the need to seek a balance between the acquisition of knowledge and the acquisition of competences and intercultural attitudes; the importance of developing media education and training history teachers to fulfil their new roles.

Lastly, the Recommendation underlines one of the main conclusions of the Project, which is the need to develop partnerships between schools and the other partners in history learning, such as museums, arts centres, the various media and the relevant departments of local or regional authorities.



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A new interactive tool for history teaching – A look at our past

Teacher-training activities organised in Cyprus by the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR), a unique, multi-communal non-governmental body, and with the strong support of teacher trade unions from all parts of Cyprus since 2004, have resulted in the publication of a set of supplementary, interactive pedagogical materials on the non-political history of Cyprus entitled *A look at our past*. It has demonstrated, for the first time, the possibility of achieving a consensus on the past shared by all Cypriot communities and concludes an important period of long-term co-operation.

This is the third publication to appear in the three languages English, Greek

and Turkish. The first, *Multiperspectivity in Teaching and Learning History*, was published in 2005 and the second, *The use of sources in teaching and learning history*, appeared in 2009. The main aim of all these publications was to respond to the most urgent methodological needs of teachers by collecting examples of innovative approaches and sharing experiences between local educators and their colleagues from other European countries.

A look at our past is the result of the collective work of Cypriot educators from all communities, developed in the framework of the CoE activities held in Cyprus, which have provided training for about 700 specialists. Each activity had its own emphasis while building upon a

common basis that primarily addressed the multicultural Cypriot teaching community as a whole. This training programme was developed in accordance with the Action Plan adopted at the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government (Warsaw, May 2005) which stated that *the Council of Europe will enhance all opportunities for the training of educators, in the fields of education for democratic citizenship, human rights, history and intercultural education*.

The idea for the preparation of this pedagogical tool came from Cypriot educators who appreciated the CoE experience gained within regional projects, such as the Black Sea Initiative, and stressed that it would be useful to have similar supplementary materials for Cypriot schools.

When developing the project, the CoE wanted to meet its commitments by providing continuity in the work, an equal standing for all the participants, full transparency of co-operation and a wide forum for discussion using multiperspectivity. In these ways the Council sought to ensure a strong basis for mutual confidence and trust.

The materials consist of a variety of sources collected by the participants, suggestions for teachers and activities for pupils developed within the seminars. They aim to develop interactive methods when teaching about cultural diversity through school history, to enable pupils to acquire skills such as critical thinking and the ability to reach independent conclusions, and to present diversity as an enriching factor. Special attention was paid to promoting a culture of living together, strengthening the conflict transformation process and preventing violence. The experience gained within this programme served as the basis for Recommendation 1880 on *Teaching history in conflict and post-conflict areas* adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council

of Europe in 2009. This document affirms that history teaching can be a tool to support peace and reconciliation in sensitive contexts.

It was not by chance that the main focus of the CoE activities in Cyprus was on teacher training. Our work in different regions has clearly shown that teachers can play a crucial role in the processes of reconciliation and conflict transformation. A history teacher today is not just a professional who is well-versed in history and child psychology, but also someone who is responsible for harmonising human relationships. Therefore, there is a growing need to give history teachers support and supply them with efficient training and innovative pedagogical instruments, thereby helping them to acquire competences of intercultural communication as reflected in *Recommendation (2001)15 on teaching history in twenty-first-century Europe*, *Recommendation (2011)6 on Intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in history teaching and the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living Together As Equals in Dignity"* adopted by all CoE member states. Using these documents



as a foundation, the CoE has embarked on the challenging task of finding a basis for consolidation and joint action in a situation of growing diversity in its new intergovernmental project on *Shared histories for a Europe without dividing lines*, launched in 2010. The activities developed in Cyprus will provide valuable input into the development of this project.

A look at our past was introduced on 6 May 2011 at the inauguration ceremony of the Home for Co-operation in the buffer zone in Nicosia, which was



Inauguration ceremony of the Home for Co-operation, Nicosia, Cyprus

attended by President Demetris Christofias and Dr Derviş Eroğlu and brought together about 100 participants from different Cypriot communities and international delegations. The Home for Co-operation is the first educational centre in Cyprus aimed at providing co-operation on a permanent basis between educators from all Cypriot communities with a view to strengthening peace building. The grant received from the EEA and Norway Grants

enabled the purchase and refurbishment of a building located in the UN buffer zone. The initiative for this scheme came from the AHDR and has been strongly supported by the CoE, which considers education to be crucial in transforming conflict into peace and co-operation. One of the main areas of the Home for Co-operation's activities will be linked to teaching and learning history with a view to strengthening the reconciliation process in Cyprus. On

18 and 19 November 2011 the Centre opened its doors for a CoE workshop to present the new publication to a wide audience of Cypriot educators.

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New joint European Union/Council of Europe project on Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education launched in Turkey

As with the careful restoration of historical landmarks in Europe – whether it be an amphitheatre, a cathedral or mosque – the process of reforming an education system can seem both daunting and painfully slow. Yet, with will and perseverance, the results can be splendid and inspiring.

Many if not all 47 member states of the Council of Europe are putting a particular emphasis on promoting a culture of democracy and human rights in their education systems. From greater student participation in school life to additional courses, such as civic or human rights education, or partnerships with the local community, educators and parents are seeing at first hand the benefit of supporting these values in schools for future generations.

Such developments were crystallised in May 2010 when the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers adopted the *Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship*

*and Human Rights Education*³. Since then, many countries, such as Finland and Turkey, have based their reforms on the principles of the *Charter*. Two years ago, discussions started between the Council of Europe, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), including the Board of Education, and the European Union (EU) Delegation in Ankara on how support could be given to Turkey through funds available from the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), the financial instrument for the EU pre-accession process. The political will in Turkey for such reforms was clear from the very beginning.

On 1 June 2011, negotiations resulted in the signing of a three-year joint EU/CoE project entitled "Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education". Bringing together funding from all three partners (mainly the EU) for a total of 6.1 million Euros, the project sets out ambitious objectives to accelerate the reforms already started in Turkey. From producing new educational materials on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) for pilot schools, increasing the basic skills and knowledge of MoNE personnel and concerned groups through awareness-raising and training activities, to developing and revising regulations and curricula on EDC/HRE in primary and secondary education and promoting a democratic school culture, the project aims to foster a more democratic society by strengthening democratic citizenship and human rights education.



The Council of Europe team in Ankara

3. Adopted on 11 May 2010 in the framework of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states.

An additional grant scheme managed by the MoNE and the Central Finance and Contract Unit (CFCU) will also provide three million Euros to strengthen the level of awareness of and build skills for democratic citizenship among all stakeholders (schools, families, teachers, etc.) to complement this joint programme. The grant scheme is designed for 40-50 projects run by various NGOs, universities and schools.

To make this project become a reality, a dedicated team has been hired in the Council of Europe Projects Office in Ankara. Our new colleagues work in close co-operation with the MoNE and the Board of Education as well as staff in Strasbourg, who advise both on policy and the intergovernmental work of the Council of Europe. It is planned to hold

a high-level launching conference before the end of the year and activities will continue until May 2014.

It is hoped that through this partnership between the Turkish authorities, the EU and the CoE, a deeper rooting of democracy and human rights in schools will further stimulate and energise the education system in Turkey. And, like the renovation of cultural heritage sites, it may take time, but will be well worth the effort.

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Interculturalism and the Bologna Process : Joint European Union/Council of Europe support for the modernisation of the education system in Kosovo⁴

The joint EU/CoE project “Education in Kosovo: Inter-culturalism and the Bologna Process” (IBP), is in the final stage of assisting in the modernisation of education in the whole territory of Kosovo.

The project focuses on seven fields of the education reform process. They include assistance in drafting education legislation, training of curriculum developers and textbook authors, teachers and school directors in Education for

Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, history teaching, language policies, teaching multiculturalism, assisting in the education of minorities, particularly Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, and supporting Bologna Process reforms among universities operating in all languages used in Kosovo.

Through its developed standards, inter-governmental approach and monitoring mechanisms, the CoE is in a unique

position to support these reforms. The Project has involved all parts of the CoE’s Directorate of Education and Languages, as well as close co-operation with international partners, who all strive towards a common goal.

Working in a demanding atmosphere, the project team reports a considerable number of successfully completed activities throughout the Project’s duration, resulting in the involvement of more than 3 500 local teachers, ministry officials and NGO representatives. Materials were also developed by the Project, including a manual for history teachers entitled *History Teaching Today – Approaches and Methods*. This manual, along with more than fifteen Council of Europe publications, translated and adapted for use in schools in Kosovo, will be among the sustainable legacies of the Project.

The final training seminar in Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights in a series organised by the joint



The final training seminar in Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights in a series organised by the joint programme IBP on 8th November 2011 in Kлина.

4. The project activities are performed in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

programme IBP on 8th November 2011 in Klina.

A sustainable impact is, in fact, what this project, and others like it, aims to achieve. Not just a high volume of activities, but real, meaningful impact. Changes that will live on after the life of the project. We see this in what has been concretely achieved – from publications to legislation – but also in changes in attitudes of the many practitioners who were involved in this project. For instance, in the final session of the teacher-training component – notably held with speakers of all the languages

present in Kosovo – some participants reflected that these training events ‘have changed the way they teach’. This is encouraging news. Perhaps even more importantly, there is also evidence of a deeper sensitivity towards multicultural values and attitudes. Such seeds planted by this project will, we hope, help Kosovo society to prosper.

The Final Conference was held on 16 November in Pristina. More information about the project and its results, as well as copies of CoE publications in Albanian and Serbian, can be found at the project website www.ibp-kosovo.org.

A daily overview of news on the project can be found on the Facebook group: Interculturalism and the Bologna process.



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Closing conference of the 3rd programme of activities of the European Centre for Modern Languages

Over 200 language education specialists from all over Europe and Canada participated in the closing conference of the *Empowering Language Professionals* programme of activities (2008-2011) co-ordinated by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz.

The conference presented the results of 23 projects supporting member states in promoting and disseminating innovation and good practice in the learning and teaching of modern languages. Over 400 events directly involving 4 000 participants in 40 states in

Europe and beyond, contributions to over 300 conferences, seminars and workshops worldwide, 23 sets of publications made available to language professionals – this is the impressive balance of the activities coordinated by the ECML over the last four years.

In her opening address, Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, Director of Education and Languages representing the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, congratulated the Centre and thanked all those who contributed to its success: the many European experts involved in the Centre’s project activities and the representatives of the ECML member states which oversee, support and disseminate the results of the Centre’s work. Referring to the current economic and budgetary crisis in Europe, which places significant pressure on many member states to examine their level of contribution towards international co-operation, she stressed that their efforts to sustain this co-operation are to be valued today more than ever. She added that the most efficient way of dealing with the crisis in the contemporary globalised

world is precisely through solidarity and co-operation at international and inter-governmental level. Her special thanks went to the Austrian authorities for their longstanding commitment and generous support –the Austrian Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, the Austrian Ministry of Science and Research, the authorities of the Province of Styria and the City of Graz, and to the Austrian ECML Association which manages this support.

Teresa Condeço of the Multilingualism Policy Unit of the European Commission highlighted the need for continued co-operation between the Commission and the Council of Europe in the area of languages. In this, she referred to the joint Declaration signed by Commissioner Vassiliou and Secretary General Jagland to mark the 10th anniversary of the European Day of Languages on 26 September 2011.

Keynote speeches were given by Anne Brasseur, Member for Luxembourg of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and Jim Cummins of the University of Toronto, Canada.



Anne Brasseur, Member for Luxembourg of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, Director of Education and Languages, Council of Europe



The conference concluded with the launch of the next (4th) ECML programme *Learning Through Languages – Promoting inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural education* (2012-15), featuring innovative approaches to language education, mediation (dissemination of developments and dialogue with stakeholders) and targeted support for the ECML member states.

For more details see:
www.ecml.at

In a session chaired by Thomas Hajnoczi, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Austria to the Council of Europe, the Canadian Commissioner of Official Languages Graham Fraser gave a speech on bilingualism and multilingualism, Ana Perona-Fjeldstad, Executive Director of the European

Wergeland Centre (EWC) in Oslo, indicated possible areas for co-operation between the EWC and the ECML, and Johanna Panthier of the Language Policy Division provided an overview of the Council of Europe's work in support of languages in and for education.



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Reimagining Democratic Societies

On 27 – 29 June, the Council of Europe co-organised an international conference on “Reimagining Democratic Societies: A New Era of Personal and Social Responsibility” with the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, the International Association of Universities (IAU), the European Wergeland Centre and the University of Oslo. The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research provided support for the conference, which was part of the 200th anniversary celebrations of the University of Oslo, and was opened by, among others, the Norwegian Minister of Higher Education and Research, Dr Tora Aasland, and the Rector of the University of Oslo, Professor Ole Petter Ottersen.

The conference gathered 140 higher education leaders and representatives of public authorities from the United States and Europe as well as a number of other countries and was part of an ongoing co-operation to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law as well as social cohesion and intercultural dialogue through higher education. The conference focused on three main issues:

1. What does a democratic university look like?

2. What ways are particularly effective in deepening students' education for globally responsible democratic citizenship?

3. What kind of partnerships between higher education institutions and local, national, and/or global communities promote democratic commitments and cultures?

Although answers to these questions varied, there was widespread agreement that higher education has an essential role to play in the development of genuinely democratic schools, communities and societies. In the words of Sjur Bergan, Head of the Council of Europe's Department of Higher Education and History Teaching: “The question is not *whether* higher education should contribute to developing democratic societies but *how*. This is a practical question as well as a philosophical one. Reimagining society is something our forebears did on several occasions. Today it is our turn ... to imagine what we must do today to give our children the kind of society in which we would like them to live tomorrow.” Ira Harkavy, Chair of the US Steering Committee and Associate Vice President and Director of the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania, followed up by saying: “If human beings hope to maintain and develop a particular type of society, they must develop and maintain the

particular type of education system conducive to it. To cut to the chase, no effective democratic schooling system, no democratic society". Hilligje van't Land, Director of Programmes and Membership at the IAU, made a similar point: "The more we agree that democracy is impossible to achieve without democratic participation of all citizens in society, the better we understand why democracy is, or is to become, a key issue of education – and of higher education".

Less than a month after the conference, the city that hosted it – as well as a youth camp at Utøya – saw the worst terror acts perpetrated in Norway since the Second World War. The impressive political and public reaction to these acts dramatically underscored the importance of education in developing the democratic culture without which democratic societies cannot thrive.

The interest and engagement in the conference resulted in an agreement to produce a volume in the Council of Europe

Higher Education Series, foster ongoing communication and involve additional partners, develop research projects, and generally to work to promote sustained partnerships among higher education, schools, and communities. More information on the Conference is available online:

Conference website :

<http://www.theewc.org/news/view/reimagining democratic societies/>

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Seven theses on teacher education and the purpose of education⁵

Every truth has four corners: as a teacher I give you one corner, and it is for you to find the other three. *Confucius*

1 - Vision

Education must be guided by the vision of society we want our children to live in. It is roughly in these words that the Chilean sociologist Eugenio Tironi⁶ describes the "raison d'être" and guiding principle of education. I can only agree. Education does not happen in a vacuum: both education policy makers and education practitioners are anchored in a society and in views about what is and what it is not desirable for the present and for the future of that society (whether they say so or not). To dissociate values from actions, in our case

actions in education, despite being widespread practice, is neither ethically acceptable nor helpful for living together in this society in the medium and long term.

2 - Choices

The biggest challenge we are facing today is to ensure that our societies can further develop globally, maintaining and improving the living conditions and well-being of all the citizens of this world.

We must make a choice regarding the future of society. Do we imagine a world that is governed by the myth of eternal economic growth, which by its mode of production and reproduction depletes and destroys natural resources and people's health? Where well-being is chiefly

counted in material belongings and where a small proportion of the world's population thrives at the cost of the continued poverty or near-poverty of the majority? And where such gaps in justice and wealth foster ideas of vengeance and revenge, preparing the ground for further conflicts, for totalitarian ideologies and regimes?

Or do we imagine a different society on a global scale? Do we imagine a society, based on democracy, human rights and the rule of law, a society, which is economically, environmentally, societally and politically sustainable? If we do, then we need education that mobilises the intellectual and emotional potential of every citizen, so that each can contribute to making this vision become a reality.

⁵ This article was previously published on the website of the European Wergeland Centre in its *Research & Development series* (July 2011).

⁶ Tironi, Eugenio. *El sueño chileno*. Santiago. Aguilar Chilena de Ediciones. 2005

3 - Purpose

If we agree that the vision of a desirable society shall serve as a guiding principle for education, we can turn to the question of purpose. Paraphrasing the discussions at the second meeting of the Magna Charta Taskforce on the Idea of the University of the Future (Luxembourg, 2006) we can postulate a three-fold purpose: reproduction of the existing, critique of the existing, and expanding the understanding of the existing.

Education today seems to be governed mainly by the first consideration, reproduction of the existing, and to a smaller extent the third, expanding our knowledge. However, if we are to face the challenges of the global world today, we will need a good balance of all three purposes. Remaining under the primacy of reproduction and pushing the critique, the questioning of the existing, into the background, we may not find the answers our world urgently needs. For this we need to build on creativity and innovation, on unconventional enquiry and thinking, things which are not developed by the transmission of a set of received knowledge items and static skills.

The Council of Europe proposes to look at the purpose of education from a slightly different angle by maintaining that: "... the full range of purposes of education" need to be addressed⁷:

- Preparation for the labour market
- Preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies
- Personal development
- Development and maintenance of a broad knowledge base

Again, the importance lies in the balance, a horizontal balance, of the different purposes, which need to be developed equally for everyone and not vertically, in the sense that for some

7. Final Declaration of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education "Building a more humane and inclusive Europe: role of education policies", Turkey, 2007

people it could be enough to just develop one or the other, or perhaps two out of the four.

4 - The three "Ps"

Our vision of a desirable future for society defines the purposes of our educational action. However, for "purpose" to become reality we need two more "Ps": 'policy' and 'practice' or rather those who make the policy and those who make the practice. In other words, we also need a fourth 'P', we also need 'people'. We need the policy makers and practitioners who share a view of the purpose of education and whose actions are guided by this same purpose. Both groups have a vital role to play, and while being complementary it must be clear that policy makers are there to support practitioners so that the latter are able to create a practice which reflects the values and principles that underpin the choice made earlier: the society we desire and want our children to live in.

5 - Purpose and its effects

Everything downstream in education will be influenced by the purpose for which it is undertaken: how education is organised, which educational offer is proposed, the curriculum, what is taught and how it is taught, how teachers are trained – or educated – before they enter practice and how they are trained while in service. It will even influence what we think about education and knowledge and about how learning is taking place. And it will influence the way we think about the quality of education and how we attempt to measure it.

If we choose reproduction of the existing as the major purpose for our educational action, a big part of our educational system and practice will be dedicated to the transmission of a set of received knowledge. Teaching practices which focus on an efficient transmission will be highly favoured and taught in pre- and in-service training

to the expense of educational practices more focused, for example, on the development of the personality, or on critical thinking and self-directed learning.

Practices and policies, which favour the efficient and effective transmission of – unquestioned – knowledge will be highly valued, and our instruments of measurement will target precisely that efficient transmission of canonised knowledge, thereby closing the circle of self-fulfilling prophecies.

The development of transversal, soft skills and attitudes, such as the ability and disposition to act in a democratic way, to think critically, to accept and open up to diversity, creativity and problem-solving skills, etc., will continue to have a marginal existence. It matters little whether these transversal skills and attitudes may find their place in policy discourse or not, for as long as they are not fully integrated in the common view of what education is for, they will not influence the practice of education sufficiently to make a difference.

6 - From teaching to learning

Taking the vision of a sustainable democratic society as the guiding principle for the purposes education shall serve in a balanced manner, and the implications this decision has for the practice of education and the expected outcomes for the individual learners, we are forced to accept a paradigm shift in educational policy and, above all, educational practice. We need to worry less about the *Great Didactica* than about the *Matetica*, as Comenius⁸ called the art of learning. We need to move towards a pedagogy, which builds on learning as a process of interaction, on collaborative knowledge construction, on a holistic view of the learner, not any longer divided into their cognitive, pragmatic and affective dimensions, a pedagogy which leads to empowerment and not just

8. Johann Amos Comenius, *Didactica magna in Opera didactica omnia* (1657)

to the reproduction of existing knowledge items and practices. In short, we need a pedagogy that looks more towards learning than towards being taught.

We need a pedagogy which takes account of the individual as a whole, and which develops the individual's awareness, his or her knowledge and understanding, as well as their practice as a person and as a social actor. A pedagogy which challenges the views of the learner, which offers new experiences and above all the opportunity to think about it and reflect on it together with peers. Last but not least, a pedagogy which understands itself as a facilitation of learning rather than a highly structured transmission of knowledge: interactive by doing and by doing things with others. To quote Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1991)⁹: "Learning is a social process that occurs through interpersonal interaction within a co-operative context. Individuals, working together, construct shared understandings and knowledge." An interesting and informative overview of the thinking about learning can be found in the online library of "infed", the encyclopaedia of informal education <http://www.infed.org>.

It goes without saying that if we want teachers to develop that kind of pedagogy and educational action they will need to experience it themselves beforehand.

They need to experience the mutual support they can gain from peers, challenging their own and their peers' ideas, learning about different ways of doing and getting the chance to reflect on their actions, their practices and values together with others. This is why networking takes on such importance. Technology has moved forward since Ivan Illich spoke of "learning webs" back in 1973.¹⁰ Today, websites and blogs,

9. David Johnson, Roger Johnson and Karl Smith, *Active Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom*, Edina, MN: Interaction Book Co., 1991.

10. Illich, Ivan (1973a) *Deschooling Society*, Harmondsworth: Penguin. 116 pages; and also <http://www.preservenet.com/theory/Illich.html>

online databases and the like, targeting education professionals, abound. They are either for teachers of a particular discipline offering lesson plans and other resources, or they seek to offer a space to discuss more general issues teachers face, such as the best use of technology, sharing of teaching resources across the curriculum, a space to partake in debates on ongoing issues practitioners may face¹¹.

The Pestalozzi Programme of the Council of Europe and the European Wergeland Centre, established by the Norwegian authorities in co-operation with the Council of Europe, are currently working on a networking platform to support a growing Community of Practice of education professionals across the wider Europe. Education professionals who believe that a change of paradigm in educational practice becomes necessary when you transpose the vision, the values and principles of the Council of Europe – democracy, human rights and the rule of law – into educational practice.

This is also reflected in the recent publication of the Pestalozzi Programme "Teacher education for change" which is intended as a contribution to the ongoing debate - more necessary than ever - on the role of teachers and teacher education in the broader context of teaching and learning for a sustainable democratic society.¹²

7 - Obstacles

As always there are obstacles. There is no need to mention here the general resistance to change and all the possible causes for this, but I would like to highlight just two obstacles that, in my eyes, are particularly important. The first is an obstacle closely related to education: a resistance to learning, or, as Thomas Szasz puts it, "Every act of conscious

11. For example <http://www1.teachertube.com/>; <http://teachersteachingteachers.org/>

12. Huber, Josef, Mompoint, Pascale (eds), *Teacher education for change: The theory behind the Council of Europe Pestalozzi Programme*, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg, 2011.

learning requires the willingness to suffer an injury to one's self-esteem. That is why young children, before they are aware of their own self-importance learn so easily; and why older persons, especially if vain or important, cannot learn at all."¹³

It is not always easy to let go of what one esteems to know, of certainties and convictions, results of previous learning processes. It needs a readiness to question what has served us (well) in various ways up to now. This is the true challenge hiding behind the widely-used term and concept of lifelong learning: Are we still ready to learn?

The second obstacle relates to concepts themselves and the way we use them or the place they take in our action.

Of course, there is the power of the individual to define the meaning of the terms and concepts they use. How they perceive education, knowledge and teaching. Many will feel that the notion of teaching contains, of course and by definition, the notion of learning as a central element. But is it so? And if yes, in which way is it so? Do we conceive of learning as a result of teaching only or do we understand that learning is something the learner is doing by actively engaging in the process? What are the main conscious and unconscious connotations our use of the notions of learning and of teaching transports, and what's more, which are reflected in our day-to-day educational practice? That is where the power that definitions of terms and concepts have over us comes into play, as well as the fact that they - sometimes insidiously - transport a meaning we thought we had left behind a long time ago.

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13. Thomas Szasz, 1973, psychiatrist, author and Professor Emeritus in Psychiatry at the State University of New York

New website for the European Language Portfolio (ELP)

26 September 2011 was the 10th anniversary of the European Day of Languages, which was first held during the European Year of Languages 2001. That year also saw the launch of two major instruments by the Language Policy Division: the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which is now used throughout the world and has been translated into 37 languages, and the European Language Portfolio (ELP). It is therefore entirely appropriate that this triple anniversary should be the occasion for the ELP project to enter a new phase with the opening of a completely redesigned website.

What exactly is the European Language Portfolio?

The ELP was developed by the Language Policy Division as one of the Council of Europe projects designed to validate linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe through education and to disseminate European goals, values, concepts and principles. It is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language - whether at school or outside school - can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences. Its main aims are:

- to motivate learners by acknowledging their efforts to extend and diversify their language skills at all levels
- to provide a record of the linguistic and cultural skills they have acquired (to be consulted, for example, when they are moving to a higher learning level or seeking employment at home or abroad)
- to help learners give shape and coherence to their experience of learning and using languages other than their first language

The ELP is linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and conforms to a common set of Principles and Guidelines that have been approved in a Recommendation by the Committee of Ministers to Member States concerning Modern Languages (see Recommendation N° R (98) 6).

There is abundant evidence to show that the ELP has had a major impact, indirectly as well as directly, on language learning and teaching in a variety of educational contexts. Even in contexts where the ELP itself is not well known, ELP processes (e.g. self-assessment) are much more widespread than previously. By the time the validation process came to an end in December 2010 (see Education Newsletter No.29),

the development, analysis, revision, validation and accreditation of 118 ELP models had provided a firm foundation for the future of the ELP.



Why a new website?

The Council of Europe's Language Policy Division working together with the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz, Austria, wishes to promote the continuing implementation of the ELP in educational contexts across Europe. Ten years' experience of validation has made it possible to develop a set of templates and resources that facilitates the compilation of ELP models to meet the needs of a wide range of learners, and a number of projects have supported ELP use in varying education contexts.

The new ELP website enables visitors to find out more about developing and registering ELP models and their implementation. The development and registration section includes documents on the origins of and principles behind the ELP, reports on international seminars, lists of registered and accredited ELP models, and a guide to compiling an ELP model along with various templates and resources, including a new interactive Language Passport. The procedure for registering an ELP model, which has replaced validation and accreditation and is based on the principle of self-declaration, is contained in this part of the website.

The section on ELP use offers support for introducing an ELP into a school system, an educational sector, a school, or a class. It contains ideas and tools for teacher education, models and case studies of the ELP being used in different educational contexts and projects run by the Council of Europe's European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz to support the use of the ELP.

Educational authorities, schools and teachers are encouraged to use the new site to explore the use of the ELP and observe

its impact on learning. It is also important for the continued success of the ELP project that experience gained in developing and implementing ELP models is shared. Registration is one way in which interested parties can find out what new models have been developed and where the ELP is being used.

We hope that language professionals and language learners alike will enjoy the website and exploit its various resources.

ELP website: www.coe.int/portfolio

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South-Eastern Europe: developing qualifications frameworks

The development of qualifications frameworks, as part of the Bologna process, is one of the key elements of the reform of higher education in Europe. All the countries engaged in this process have undertaken to describe their education, including higher education, systems in terms of learning outcomes as a means of ensuring the transparency of each system and its comparability with those of other countries. They have even set a deadline, so that by 2012 every country must have started the process. Some have already self-certified their qualifications framework, while others have presented their report for their EQF Lifelong Learning referencing.

In 2008, the Council of Europe sponsored the establishment of a network of South-Eastern European countries for the development of qualifications frameworks. The network held its fourth meeting on 15 and 16 September this year, in Istanbul. Eight countries from the region described the state of progress of their qualifications framework. Some have already reached the self-certification (Romania) or joint referencing and self-certification (Croatia) stage, while others have just started the process.



The Bosphorus Bridge, Istanbul, Turkey.

The countries of the region face a number of challenges in developing their qualifications frameworks, though these are certainly not unique to South-Eastern Europe. They include the following:

- At what level should the qualifications for access to higher education be set?
- How should learning outcomes acquired in the course of a lifelong learning process involving non-formal or informal education be assessed?
- How should qualifications awarded before the Bologna process reforms be recognised and at what level in the qualifications frameworks? (this point is particularly important for the countries of former Yugoslavia)

At the network's first meetings, the various countries were at very different stages. Some of them still had to incorporate the very basic concepts of qualifications frameworks. The Istanbul meeting, however, showed that the network had achieved a real dynamic. In other words, while the eight countries concerned are still at very different stages of development of their qualifications frameworks, they share the same conceptual approach. The meeting was thus seen to be very positive, offering as it did a valuable meeting point where those concerned could exchange and share their ideas on common issues.

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European Training Programme for Roma Mediators – ROMED

A Joint Council of Europe/European Commission Action

The ROMED programme was launched in January 2011 as part of the implementation of the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma. It is a joint Council of Europe/European Commission action aimed at enhancing the quality and the effectiveness of the work of mediators, assistants and facilitators by providing additional skills, tools and approaches to complement existing national and European training provisions.

Mediation is one of the measures used across Europe to tackle the inequalities which Roma¹⁴ face in terms of access to employment, healthcare services and good quality education. It consists in employing people with a Roma background, from local Roma communities, or with a good knowledge of Roma issues, to act as mediators between the Roma and public institutions.

The first training sessions took place in the first semester of this year in the 15 countries participating in the programme – including the Republic of Serbia – and were attended by more than 400 mediators, school assistants and facilitators. During the last day of the training, representatives of national and local authorities and NGOs active in this field have been invited.



Training seminar for teachers and school mediators, Pristina, 2010.

The ROMED programme is not replacing or duplicating existing training programmes at local or national levels, but is complementing them, providing additional tools and methodologies, and contributing to the development of the core competencies that all mediators need. The ROMED programme will also assist some countries in setting up training programmes.

¹⁴ The term «Roma» used at the Council of Europe refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as «Gypsies».



The main features of the Romed Programme are:

A Framework Curriculum

Training will rely on a curriculum with a strong focus on practice, and which is adaptable to the specific training needs of mediators working in different contexts and with different institutions and Roma communities.

A European Code of Ethics for Mediators

A set of core principles and norms to guide the work of mediators has been identified as a key tool for protecting the mediator against abuse and for enhancing the quality of the services provided. A first draft, inspired by experiences in various countries, has been drawn up and will be submitted for feedback to mediators attending the training sessions.

A Pool of Trainers and European Networking

A first group of trainers, selected on the basis of an open call, was trained in Strasbourg from 26 to 29 January 2011. A Focal Point has been identified in each country (wherever possible, a Roma organisation with experience of working with mediators). Networking and peer learning will be stimulated via an online platform.

The first group of beneficiary countries includes Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Turkey and Ukraine. The Programme will be expanded to other countries, and additional training delivered in the first group of countries, if additional resources become available.

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Calendar of events

October

- 4 – 7, Oslo, Norway
4th European Seminar / Think-Tank: „Schools as intercultural communities: Towards indicators for successful intercultural education“
Contact: Josef Huber
- 10 – 14, Bad Wildbad, Germany
132nd European Seminar: *Teaching history in a changing world** / *تدريس التاريخ في عالم متغير*
Contact: Josef Huber
- 11 – 13, Helsinki, Finland
Democratic School: Children's rights and participation in basic education*
Contact: Josef Huber
- 11 – 14, Cyprus
Promoting effective learning: Collaborative teaching methods, explorative, problem and task based teaching and learning*
Contact: Josef Huber
- 13-14, Krakow, Poland
Bologna Follow-Up Group
Contact: Sjur Bergan
- 20-21, Strasbourg, France
CDESR Bureau
Contact: Katia Dolgova
- 27-28, Strasbourg, France
Project "Shared Histories for a Europe without Dividing Lines": Seminar on *The consequences of the industrial revolution on European societies*
Contact: Jean-Pierre Titz

November

- 2, Strasbourg, France
Bologna Working Group on qualification frameworks
Contact: Sjur Bergan
- 8, Klina, Kosovo
Final training seminar in Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights (EDC/HRE)
Contact: Sarah Keating/Emir Adzovic
- 10, Warsaw, Poland
Second Joint seminar of the Network of National correspondents (QF-EHEA) and National Coordination Points (EQF)
Contact: Jean-Philippe Restoueix
- 18-19, Home for Co-operation Nicosia, Cyprus
Seminar on "A look at our past – developing channels of intercultural communication"
Contact: Tatiana Milko
- 24-25, European Court of Human Rights, Strasbourg, France
Human rights in education
Contact: Villano Qiriaz

December

- 8-9, Tsakhnadzor, Armenia
Bologna Seminar on Student participation in Higher Education Governance
Contact: Katia Dolgova

*The titles of the European Workshops/Seminars held under the "Pestalozzi" Programme are given in the language in which the seminars are conducted

**Seminar organised by the Language Policy Division:
Meeting the challenge of multilingual classrooms:
exploiting plurilingual repertoires, managing transitions and
developing proficiency in the language(s) of schooling**

Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 7-8 March 2012

How to contact us

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