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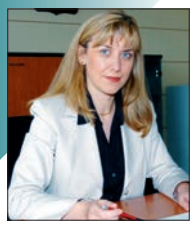
Education Newsletter



Editorial

The aim of this special edition of the Education Newsletter is to provide a good overview of all of the Council of Europe's activities in the Education sector.

This edition is special because it comes at an important time. The Council of Europe will soon embark on its programme of activities for 2014 – 15. We already have good reason to believe that the parts of the programme to which the Directorate General for Democracy (DG II) will make the strongest contribution will focus on three overall priorities:

- *Democratic innovation*
- *Participation*
- *Diversity*

As you will see from the articles in this Newsletter, education will be an important part of all three priorities. There is, therefore, no need for me to go into the details of each activity and priority, but I do want to stress one important point: institutions and laws are absolutely necessary but by themselves they will not ensure democracy. To work in practice they need to be founded on a culture of democracy which needs to be built on and maintained by each successive generation. Education – at all levels and of all kinds – is, of course, essential to this endeavour. Democracy cannot be built on ignorance.

But this Newsletter is also special because it marks the departure of two highly appreciated colleagues.

Ólöf Ólafsdóttir retired on 1 October after many years of service in the Council of Europe. Ólöf's career included work in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities as well as in the Directorate General for Human Rights, more specifically on equality issues to which she was deeply committed. But it is in her years in Education that we particularly felt the benefit of her professional and humanistic qualities: as head of the Division responsible for Education for Democratic Citizenship, as head of one of what were then three Departments in the Directorate of Education and Languages, then as Director of Education and finally, following the reform of the Council of Europe, as Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation. In this position, she took on responsibility not only for Education but also for our Youth sector. She did so brilliantly. Last year she was awarded the Council of Europe's Equality and Diversity Prize for her longstanding commitment to equality and diversity in the Organisation and for being a role model for managers, particularly regarding her respectful and fair treatment of staff and concern for their well-being.

On Ólöf's retirement we lose not only an outstanding Director; I also lose one of my most trusted advisers within DG II. This issue shows how much has been achieved under her leadership. I am particularly grateful to Ólöf for all her achievements in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which are of course at the heart of our programme, as well as in developing Joint Programmes.

Waldemar Martyniuk's five year term as Director of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz (Austria) also ended on 30 September. Waldemar has guided the ECML through a very constructive period and maintained a high-quality programme in spite of the financial difficulties of many member states. He also negotiated an important cooperation agreement with the European Commission, which will now participate in the work of the ECML more strongly than before.

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I therefore thank Ólöf Ólafsdóttir and Waldemar Martyniuk warmly for their work over the years. I believe their example will continue to inspire both our colleagues in the Education Department and the many experts and national representatives who are so important to our programme and, therefore, to building the democratic culture without which our democratic institutions and laws will not function.

Snežana Samardžić-Marković
Director General of Democracy

Time to thank and say goodbye

At the Bureau meeting of the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE) in June we learnt that Dr Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation in the Council of Europe's Directorate General for Democracy, would retire this autumn.

We all know that Ólöf worked for the Council of Europe for many years and in several departments, which means she knows the Organisation and its people remarkably well. She had been working in the Education sector, where I first met her, since 2002. Since then I have had the pleasure of getting to know her and her work quite well. I am certain that all those who know her recognise her professionalism, her huge capacity for work and her substantial knowledge in a wide range of areas. We have learnt to appreciate her friendly personality, her kindness and willingness to help and guide the Committee, its Bureau and all its working groups. We respect her ability to find solutions whenever there are problems or disagreements.

Over the last 11 years the Education sector of the Council of Europe has gained more and more importance, and we know that Ólöf has been one of the key players in this progress. She worked hard in the field of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which became a flagship project, but we also remember her role in many other projects. She played a key part in the establishment of the new Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice which is to serve all areas of education, from primary to higher education. And we all remember her in central roles when important recommendations or charters were elaborated – the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education or the Recommendation on Ensuring Quality Education, to give just two examples.

In her leading position as Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Ólöf Ólafsdóttir was also responsible for the Youth sector. Constant and demanding responsibilities, including the latest reform of the Organisation, no doubt caused a great deal of pressure and many worries, but again, she achieved results that have been welcomed by both the Organisation and the wider audience.

I firmly believe that education has a major role to play in the promotion of the Council of Europe's three main pillars: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Secretariat and the Steering Committee must continue their work bearing in mind what has been accomplished under Ólöf's guidance.

On behalf of the Council of Europe`s Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice, I warmly thank Dr Ólafsdóttir for her professional support and warm and appreciative relationship with the CDPPE as well as the previous committees in the field of education. We wish her all the best and look forward to seeing her – somewhere in Europe. Thank you very much Ólöf.

Jorma Kauppinen
Chair of the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice

Why education?

If you ask this seemingly simple question – why education? – of the proverbial representative sample of people in the street, the answer is likely to be equally simple: to get a good job. This is reinforced by our public education debate, which is almost exclusively focused on economic growth, employability and providing young people with immediately useful skills.

Getting a good job is important, make no mistake about that. We do not need to look far to see that unemployment is not a recipe for a happy life, nor can our societies be based on the assumption that 5, 10 or however many per cent of our adult population do not need to be gainfully employed. However, neither do we need look very far to see that employment alone is not enough to have a happy life or to find counter-arguments to the young sports professional who said he saw no need for an education because he made good money playing soccer.

My answer to the question "Why education?", then, is different. In the short version, the answer is not "to get a good job" but "to lead a good life". That, however, raises some of the same questions. If the first answer leads us to ask what a good job might be, the second leads us to think about what a good life might be.

It is worth underlining that I speak about a good life and not the good life, which –at least in English – might be taken to mean a life of indolent luxury and freedom from work and other obligations. My understanding of what it means to live a good life is closer to that of the Franciscans than to that of playboys. Being meaningfully employed is certainly a part of leading a good life, but in a broader sense, leading a good life is about being useful to others as well as about self-fulfillment. Man does not live on bread alone, nor do we live as islands unto ourselves. We have professional lives but we also have personal lives and lives as members of society.

Purposes of education

In more formal terms, this is reflected in what the Council of Europe has defined as the four major purposes of education[1]:

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

All four purposes are of equal value and they are far from mutually exclusive. On the contrary, many of the competences we need to be employable – such as analytical ability, communication skills and the aptitude to work as part of a group as well as alone – also help make us active citizens in democratic societies and further our personal development. The Manichean divide between useful (read: in the labour market) and less useful competences is therefore artificial.

While the Council of Europe takes a holistic view of education, our programme focuses on two of the four major purposes: education for citizenship and personal development. This is not because we believe the other purposes are less important but because many other actors seem to believe preparation for the labour market is all-important. We therefore focus on the two purposes least dealt with by others.

Informal meeting of the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice, Belgrade, 24-25 October 2013

Quality education

Quality is on everybody's lips when discussing education, and rightly so. No government can seriously aim for less than high-quality education and no school or higher education institution can aim to be second or third rate. The problem with the quality debate is not that it sets high goals, but that it assumes that we know what quality education is – that we are talking about immutable quality divorced from any consideration of what we are trying to achieve in the first place. Quality can be strived for, achieved and measured, but one could be led to believe that quality cannot and should not be questioned. This impression is strengthened by rankings, thanks to which each year we can see which universities are the "best in the world" and whether there have been changes in the pecking order.

Reality is a bit more complicated. Granted, in some cases performance indicators are easy to find. If your purpose is to run 100 metres as fast as possible, the result is easy to measure and the performance criteria relatively easy to establish, depending, of course, on your level of ambition. If you want to qualify for the Olympics, others will

1. Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)6 on the public responsibility for higher education and research.

establish them for you, hopefully with the added requirement that the results should be obtained without recourse to doping. However, athletes with the competences and physical capacities to run the 100 metres in 10 seconds flat will most likely not succeed equally well in a marathon run or a shot put competition.

To return to education, we of course need schools and universities that bring their students to the highest levels of academic standards, as measured by the criteria of each discipline. That includes universities that are world-class research institutions, which is what rankings normally measure (and mostly in natural sciences only). We need these kinds of institutions but we do not need these kinds of institutions only. We also need school and higher education institutions that help students with learning difficulties or from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop their talents and aspirations to the fullest extent possible. We need schools and institutions that work closely with their local communities to help develop the communities as sites of citizenship and living together.

High-quality schools and higher education institutions cannot exist in isolation from society, and their quality is also determined by the degree to which they serve society. Public authorities may emphasise usefulness to society as an important criterion for support. In the age of headlines and deadlines, however, it is worth underlining that serving society is not only – or even primarily – a question of short-term utility. Society needs long-term reflection on principles, values and priorities at least as much as it needs updated computers, and society can have neither without higher education and research. Societal excellence, therefore, cannot be measured only in terms of the short-term employment rate of graduates. It should also – and even more – be judged in terms of whether students gain in maturity and analytical ability, in the will and ability to weigh short-term and long-term benefits and disadvantages, and in their commitment to engaging in the public space.

The Council of Europe has outlined many of these issues in the relatively recent Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 on ensuring quality education. The recommendation outlines a broader understanding of what we mean by quality education than what normally emerges from public debate, and this understanding may be worth quoting in full: "quality education" is understood as "education which:

a. gives access to learning to all pupils and students, particularly those in vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, adapted to their needs as appropriate;

b. provides a secure and non-violent learning environment in which the rights of all are respected;

c. develops each pupil's and student's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential and encourages them to complete the educational programmes in which they enrol;

d. promotes democracy, respect for human rights and social justice in a learning environment which recognises everyone's learning and social needs;

e. enables pupils and students to develop appropriate competences, self-confidence and critical thinking to help them become responsible citizens and improve their employability;

f. passes on universal and local cultural values to pupils and students while equipping them also to make their own decisions;

g. certifies outcomes of formal and non-formal learning in a transparent way based on fair assessment enabling acquired knowledge and competences to be recognised for further study, employment and other purposes;

h. relies on qualified teachers who are committed to continuous professional development;

i. is free of corruption."

Two other points made in the recommendation are also worth drawing particular attention to. On the one hand, ensuring quality education is a public responsibility. The responsibility of public authorities is articulated differently at different levels of education and according to whether provision is public or private. It cannot be exercised in the same way at a higher education institution as in a primary school. It is exercised differently with regard to a private than to a public school or university, but it cannot be abdicated.

The reason is to be found in the second important point made in the recommendation: even if much of the public debate focuses on the quality of individual schools and universities, the quality of education systems is equally important. On the one hand, education systems cannot be good if they do not provide adequate opportunities for all students to realise their potential and aspirations. It can do so through both public and private provision but private schools operate within a framework established by public authorities. If they do not, they no longer belong to the education system for which public authorities carry sole responsibility and their graduates will not earn easily recognised qualifications.

Competences

Seeing education as a process that leads to a set of competences is perhaps a somewhat restricted view of education, but an interesting one nonetheless, especially if competences are not seen too narrowly. Again, many think of competences as "what you know". That is important but it is nevertheless too narrow a view of competences.

The traditional definition of learning outcomes goes an important step further, since it asks not only about what you know but also about what you understand and what you are able to do. Perhaps foreign-language learning can provide a good illustration. If you learn a Slavic language like Serbian or Russian, it is important to know the; persons and tenses of verbs and the cases of nouns and adjectives. It is, however, not enough: you also need to understand how the different tenses and cases function – why you use the accusative in some places and the dative in others. To actually speak and write a language, you need to be able to put your knowledge and understanding into practice.

However, the Council of Europe has come to the conclusion that even the traditional definition of learning outcomes is incomplete. In addition to knowledge, understanding and the ability to do it should include attitudes – the willingness to do or to refrain from doing. Learning how to speak and write a language without developing respect for the speakers of the language and the culture it conveys might be efficient training but it would be an incomplete education. Having the knowledge, understanding and ability to do something does not necessarily mean one should do it: ethical considerations might help us refrain from doing what we are technically able to do but should not. Our history is, alas, full of examples of why attitudes should be considered an integral part of the competences education at all levels should convey. The Holocaust is an extreme example.

If we are serious about making preparation for citizenship as important a mission of education, at all levels, as preparation for employability, we need to be able to say something about what kind of competences for democracy and intercultural dialogue students should develop at different levels of education. This does not mean that these competences can be developed through formal education only, but that they do need to be related to the education system.

Exploring competences for democracy and intercultural language in ways that are not binding for member states but that may help them adapt the competences to the context of each national education system will be an important task for the Council of Europe in our 2014 – 2015 programme. The work will build on the Council of Europe's coherent view of the main purposes of education, our longstanding reflections on the purposes of and public responsibility for education and on the background of solid achievements in areas of education policy and practice as diverse as history teaching and language, education for democratic citizenship and higher education, teaching the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and intercultural education. It will hopefully be the subject of an article in its own right in a future edition of the Education Newsletter.

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Education for democracy and human rights: lessons learned and next steps

What role for the Council of Europe?

Education is the area of competence of national governments, so what does an inter-governmental institution like the Council of Europe have to do with education for democracy and human rights? In actual fact, quite a lot. The Council of Europe was set up in 1949 to prevent the horrors of the 2nd World War from ever being repeated on the European continent. In order for it to fulfil this role, the Organisation was given a mandate by its member states to protect and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law. A number of mechanisms designed for this purpose over the years allow the countries "to keep an eye on each other" and to prevent any single country from becoming authoritarian, repressive towards its own people or aggressive towards other countries. Many things have changed since 1949, but the need to be vigilant is still very present. The Council of Europe strives to adapt to meet new challenges. Today, these include the economic crisis, the dismantling of democratic institutions, a growing sense of insecurity and the proliferation of all sorts of extremism. Education has much to offer in terms of addressing such challenges, and the Council of Europe provides a platform for exchange and co-operation among its member states. In this article we reflect on how it all fits together, what lessons are learned and where we go from here.

Education for democracy and human rights concerns us all

When human rights are violated or used for political ends, when democratic processes are not duly applied or flawed, people tend to become sceptical. This scepticism needs to be countered by a positive everyday experience of democracy and human rights and schools are very good places for that. Education is not only about passing on knowledge about democratic institutions and human rights mechanisms, but also about passing on the values, attitudes and skills that ensure respect for human dignity for all in our daily life. This is a shared understanding that has been developed over many years of international co-operation in the framework of the Council of Europe and is today summed up in a legal instrument - the Council of Europe Charter on education for democratic citizenship and human rights. The Charter was adopted in 2010 by the 47 member states of the Organisation in the framework of a Committee of Ministers Recommendation (CM/Rec (2010)7).

No double standards

While in the late 1990s the programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights was launched very much in the spirit of accompanying the newly emerged eastern democracies in the transition process, member states now share a common understanding of the need to develop education for democratic citizenship and human rights on an ongoing basis, even if the context, challenges and solutions can be very different from one country to another. The Charter provides a common framework and a "checklist" of what needs to be done by all the countries. The first report on the implementation of the Charter was prepared in 2012. The outcomes of this report and a survey for NGOs were discussed at a major conference organised in co-operation with the European Commission and the European Wergeland Centre (Strasbourg, 29-30 November 2012). A second – and improved – review cycle is planned for 2017. The Charter and the review process being developed represent an important step in strengthening citizenship and human rights education in Europe. But as all these countries are so different, is it possible to meet their diverse needs and priorities?

One size does not fit all

There can be no "one size fits all" approach in citizenship and human rights education. While the Charter provides a common framework for all the member states, it also leaves a considerable margin of appreciation in respect of their constitutional structures, priorities and needs. It is very difficult to compare citizenship and human rights education in different countries. Such education has a lot to do with values and attitudes (which are more difficult to assess than knowledge) and is deeply rooted in a specific context. An approach that has proved to be successful in one country cannot be directly transmitted elsewhere. This is why, whenever possible, the Council of Europe responds to requests from its member states and mobilises its networks of partners and experts to provide country-tailored advice and assistance. One example is the Joint Programme between the Council of Europe and the European Union in Turkey on "Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education" (2011-2014), which supports a comprehensive three-year reform of education policy and practice based on the expertise developed over many years of multilateral co-operation activities, including a set of guidelines and manuals for key actors in citizenship and human rights education.

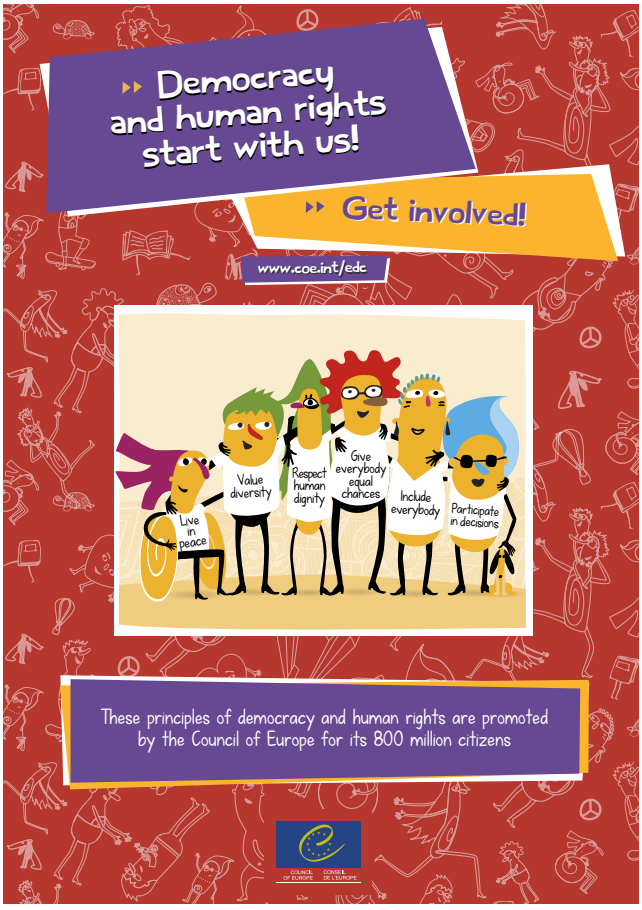
"Do not tell me what to do – show me how you do it"

Not many people like to be lectured but most will be grateful if you can tell them how you have solved a problem that is similar to theirs. The Council of Europe has neither the mandate nor the means to interfere directly in member states' education systems, but it can provide space and tools for the countries to learn from each other and to help one another. One way of doing so is through the development of manuals and guidelines which are based on the latest trends and the most advanced examples of good practice. A comprehensive set of such manuals is available online in many languages at the Council of Europe website (www.coe.int/edc). All these publications aim to improve access to the wealth of expertise available in the Council of Europe member states on this topic.

One recent example is the publication "Democracy and Human Rights Start with Us: Charter for All" (2011), which is a child-friendly version of the legal text of the Charter. In 2013-2014 it is planned to launch a series of publications on education for democracy and human rights in curriculum reform in co-operation with UNESCO, OSCE/ODIRH[2] and the Organization of American States.

We can learn from other people's mistakes, why make our own?

Another approach is to arrange face-to-face exchanges of first-hand information among people who deal with education for democratic citizenship and human rights – teachers, school directors, teacher trainers, NGOs, ministry officials and parliamentarians and other interested parties – where they can explain how they do their work and what lessons they have



2. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe / Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

learned in the process. The Council of Europe is in a good position to facilitate exchanges of good practice and peer-to-peer learning among the countries and it is exactly for this purpose that the Council of Europe/European Union pilot projects scheme "Human Rights and Democracy in Action" was launched in 2013. The scheme provides funding for co-operation projects between 2-5 countries in the framework of the Charter. Its main purpose is to collect data, facilitate exchange and co-operation, and contribute to the development of sustainable mechanisms for the promotion of citizenship and human rights education in the participating countries.

Too many concepts? Keep it simple!

All this is very well, but the Council of Europe is not the only international institution active in this area. Many organisations promote somewhat different concepts of value education, such as peace education, tolerance education, education for sustainable development and global education, to mention just a few. This can be rather confusing and overwhelming, especially when it is understood that these are subjects that need to be squeezed into the already overloaded curricula. It is a totally different story, if you consider that these concepts are not so much about specific subjects (even if it is important to have this kind of value education explicitly included in the curriculum) as about an approach to what education is about and how it is delivered. These concepts have different origins, different "constituencies", and vary in focus, but they are often similar in their aims and objectives. In the long run, what is important is that education should put human beings at the centre of attention and contribute to the well-being of each single individual – regardless of their origin and background – and to the well-being of society as a whole and not to the well-being of a few, at the expense of other people. The Council of Europe works very closely with other international institutions and promotes partnerships and synergies whenever possible. In particular, in 2011 it initiated the establishment of the International Contact Group on citizenship and human rights education, which aims to ensure close co-operation among regional and international institutions in this area. Today, the Contact Group includes the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNESCO, OSCE/ODIHR, European Commission, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the Organization of American States and the Council of Europe. One example of co-operation is a joint newsletter, which allows sharing achievements and lessons learned in one part of the world with a broader audience. And international institutions are not the only partners of the Council of Europe.

Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights 2006–2012, and Ólöf Ólafsdóttir

Many hands make light work

The Council of Europe Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights has rather modest resources at its disposal, especially bearing in mind its' ambitious scope. However, this programme benefits from co-operation with many friends and supporters, and we would like to mention some of the most recent examples. Andorra made history in 2012 by becoming the first member state of the Council of Europe to choose education as the main priority area for its Chairmanship. It initiated a debate in the Committee of Ministers on competences for democracy, human rights and intercultural dialogues, and launched the development of a Council of Europe framework on this topic. The support of the Andorran authorities was instrumental in improving the political visibility to this work.

In 2009, Norway, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, set up the European Wergeland Centre, a European resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship. The Centre aims to build bridges between policy, research and practice. Among other activities, it runs successful regional Summer Academies on Human Rights and Democracy at School in co-operation with the authorities of Poland and Montenegro.

Switzerland contributed to the development of a series of manuals for teachers "Living Democracy", and launched, together with Ukraine, the first pilot initiative on the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. This inspired the launch of the "Human Rights and Democracy in Action" pilot projects scheme, which is now open to all the States Party to the European Cultural Convention.

Finland contributed to the publication of the child-friendly version of the Charter ("Charter for All"), prepared jointly by

the Council of Europe Youth and Education Departments and the Programme "Building Europe for and with Children". Many other countries have contributed to this work by hosting major events, translating and publishing Council of Europe materials, and by integrating Council of Europe standards – such as the Charter – in their education policy and practice.

Last but not least: people matter

All in all, considerable progress has been made in recent years in the field of education for democratic citizenship and human rights, even though much still remains to be done. And all these results could not have been achieved without the vision, commitment and hard work of many people in the member states and in international organisations. While it would not be possible to mention them all, we would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ms Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation, who has to a great extent encouraged, steered and supported the work done in this area by the Council of Europe.

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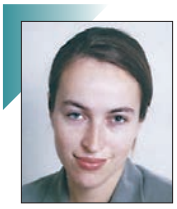

Generation Democracy – Turkey

On 25 July 2013, the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Turkey signed and approved a new curriculum for an optional course on Citizenship and Human Rights Education to be offered in secondary schools in Turkey.

This course curriculum was produced under the Joint Programme between the European Union and the Council of Europe "Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Turkey: Generation Democracy". The national and international experts who evaluated the new curriculum agree that it represents a true step forward in the modernisation of education in Turkey. The curriculum is based on the principles that lie at the heart of the Council of Europe's work on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) and gives concrete form to Turkey's commitment to this pan-European initiative.

In addition, this summer the Programme assisted the Board of Education of the Ministry of National Education of Republic of Turkey (MoNE) in training all textbook authors in Turkey, as well as textbook reviewers, on the EDC/HRE elements in Turkish textbooks. More than 150 philosophy and history teachers from all over Turkey were trained to train their colleagues in their respective provinces. The first phase of the training programmes focused on the core concepts of EDC/HRE whereas the second phase aims to equip the new trainers with the didactic approaches relevant to EDC/HRE teaching.

Teacher trainers from 81 provinces in Turkey at a training session in Izmir

The EDC/HRE Joint Programme, currently the largest in Europe, has also piloted the new textbook that will be available to pupils in Turkey, as well as a manual that adapts and broadens the Council of Europe philosophy in the field of Democratic School Governance. One of the major outputs of the project – "The Competency Framework for Democratic School Culture in Turkey" – is itself now ready for piloting, together with supporting activities, throughout Turkey this year. This is a major development for the MoNE as both students and school management will be involved in deepening democratic practices in schools.

Curriculum Review and Legislation Review reports based on EDC/HRE criteria have also been produced and shared with relevant stakeholders in Turkey.

Study visits to countries with the most developed EDC/HRE practices have been arranged for more than 100 civil servants from the ministry. Networks have been established with experts from Germany, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Important partnerships with local stakeholders in Turkey have been set up to ensure higher quality and the sustainability of project results. One good example is our collaboration with the architects of the FATIH project (Movement of Enhancing Opportunities and Improving Technology) to provide smart boards and tablets to all schools and pupils in Turkey, which enables our project to publish materials and make them accessible to more than 2 500 000 teachers and students in Turkey.

All those positive results were accomplished under the supervision and with the close support of Ms Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation, who not only provided high-level Council of Europe support at the key meetings but also, more importantly, supplied daily motivation and political advice to the secretariat in Strasbourg and in Ankara.

Reed Markham, an American-born Icelandic Educator, once said "A good leader inspires other men and women with confidence. A great leader inspires them with confidence in themselves". This sentence sumarises our feelings for Ólöf. We have had the privilege of being a part of her big family for only a few years but her wisdom and constructive aproach to life has been a true inspiration to us.

We would like to thank her for being a mirror to us all and for reflecting the potential we have within ourselves. We wish her a very happy retitrement.

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Quality and Inclusion in Education: the Unique Role of Language

This was the title of an intergovernmental conference held in Strasbourg on 18 and 19 September 2013. Throughout Europe countries are facing similar challenges in education: how to ensure that all pupils are engaged and committed to learning, how to decrease drop-out rates from schools, how to support vulnerable and disadvantaged learners so they have full access to the curriculum, how to raise standards so that pupils are adequately prepared for employment and for participation in society as active, democratic citizens. The role language education plays in meetings these goals has in the past not been sufficiently understood or acknowledged. Traditional policies on language education have inadvertently served to widen gaps in achievement, promote inequalities and lower standards. The conference will examine the re-thinking that is required to ensure that policies and practice on language education are formulated and co-ordinated to ensure high quality provision.

The results of the OECD's PISA surveys alerted many countries to the role languages play in children's learning difficulties. Norway, for example, decided to develop a Framework of general competences in which reading, writing and oral competences are clearly described and defined. Ms Elisabet Dahle, State Secretary, Ministry of Education and Research of Norway, spoke to the participants about what she called the 'PISA shock' and the resulting development of the framework, an in-depth reform of the curricula for all school subjects and widespread training for teachers.

Other initiatives have been taken by other countries or regions, including North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany). But in the majority of member states, there is a real need to make the language dimension of all learning / teaching explicit in curricula and in the classrooms. The importance of language has always been acknowledged, but to what extent has not always been properly assessed. The conference also provided an opportunity for the Language Policy Unit to draw attention to the tools it has developed to help those responsible for curricula to define the language dimension in curricula for all

Johanna Panthier

school subjects and instruments, and to which should be added a Guide for curriculum designers and teacher trainers.

The other aim of the conference was to support an integrated, holistic view of language elements in the curriculum (including the language of schooling, language taught as a subject in its own right, foreign and classical languages, language as it is used in other subjects, regional, minority and migrant languages) to promote plurilingual and intercultural education. The basic principle of this global approach is to begin by taking account of the linguistic and cultural repertoire that children bring with them when they start school, not only out of respect for them but also in order to help them build their individual and collective identities and pursue their cognitive development, which is intimately connected with language development.

The responsibility for language education should no longer be confined to one or two specialist subjects but must extend across the entire curriculum. In order to learn a subject it is necessary to learn the language of that subject. This is more than just learning new vocabulary, it includes new ways of thinking and expressing ideas. Some pupils are disadvantaged because they struggle more than others to develop the necessary competence in the language of school subjects either because this is not their first language or because they are not accustomed to such abstract and academic forms. In order to ensure inclusion, all teachers need to be trained to recognise their role in developing language competence. The teaching of language as a specific subject (whether the language of schooling or foreign languages) should not be seen in isolation but should be developed in relation to every other subject and the wider curriculum. This means looking at synergies and transversal competences and establishing broad aims and a values framework for language education that apply to the whole curriculum.

In times of economic restraint it is particularly difficult for education policy makers to be faced with the results of international tests that may suggest that standards of achievement are not high enough. Under those circumstances it may be tempting for countries and regions to fall back and seek to narrow their focus with regard to language education, to restrict the range of languages being taught, to focus on functional skills in language as subject and to see language in other subjects as a luxury rather than a necessity. It may be tempting to go for 'quick fix' solutions with a narrow and restricted focus. However, this is exactly the opposite of what is needed to improve standards. Language education needs to be broad, integrated, diverse, rich and fulfilling in order to raise standards.

Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on ensuring quality education highlights the fact that the right to education can only be fully exercised if the education provided is of adequate quality. The recommendation recognises that quality education should be inclusive, and draws attention to the importance of language as the basis of successful learning in all subjects.

Ólöf Ólafsdóttir

Following an analysis of the Recommendation, the conference ended with a round table discussion on the contributions made by the various languages (languages of schooling, foreign, regional, minority or migration languages) and intercultural education to quality and inclusion in education. The notion of 'critical thinking', present in both the Recommendation and the Council of Europe's language policies, was at the heart of the discussion. It was deemed essential, perhaps dangerous by some but fundamental to our democracies.

In her last contribution to a public event as Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Ms Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, reacted to the points of view expressed by the members of the round table, welcoming the Recommendation as a major step forward, as it set out criteria for defining the quality of education systems for the first time; in her opinion, it is an important stage in a genuine change of perspective in education. She said how pleased she was to see how much the Language Policy Unit's work focused on the learner, considering all his or her affiliations and seeing each one as a unique individual deserving a quality inclusive education. Finally, she expressed her concern over the general trend to want to measure everything, recalling the words of Pierre Bourdieu: "We are classifiers classified by our own classifications".

The Language Policy Unit was very happy that the Director ended her career at the Council of Europe by opening, alongside Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of DG II, and closing this conference on language policies for quality and inclusion in education. All its members wish her a long and happy retirement.

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Teaching history for reconciliation and tolerance developing a culture of co-operation: the experience of the Council of Europe

Since its creation in 1949, the Council of Europe has always considered history teaching as a subject with unique value which cannot be replaced by any other discipline. It is particularly important to stress this now as 2014 will mark the 60th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention, which highlighted the importance of teaching and learning history for a better understanding of the common European heritage. The importance of history teaching was clearly reaffirmed, at the highest political level, at the Council of Europe's Summits of Heads of State and Government in Vienna (1993) and again in Strasbourg (1997). The Action Plan adopted at the Third Summit in Warsaw in May 2005 included history teaching in its list of priorities for the Council of Europe in the coming years.

But just what makes history teaching essential at the beginning of the 21st century in the context of globalisation? Firstly, it gives the younger generation an opportunity to travel in a historical space while learning a great deal from previous experience, which results in an ability to better understand and evaluate present-day political and social processes. Historical knowledge, and not least an understanding of history, helps to develop important skills and attitudes such as critical thinking, open-mindedness and tolerance. As a result, young people are better prepared to cope with life in present-day society, to understand the value of cultural diversity, and to be willing to communicate with representatives of different cultures, religions and linguistic groups. Furthermore, historical knowledge can help young people to feel that they are not only citizens of their own countries, but also representatives of the European continent and even of the world as a whole. These are essential competences for citizens of democratic societies; they are essential elements of the democratic culture without which democratic societies cannot function.

Human rights as reflected in the history of art

The views of the Council of Europe on history teaching have been reflected in a number of documents such as Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec (2001) 15 on History teaching in twenty-first-century Europe; CM Recommendation Rec (2011)6 on Intercultural dialogue and the image of the other in teaching history; Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1880(2009) on History teaching in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Over the last few years, the Council of Europe's programmes on history education have focused on promoting intercultural dialogue, an essential tool for building mutual understanding, trust and confidence in Europe, and on teaching history to strengthen the reconciliation process in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Intercultural dialogue and developing a culture of co-operation

During the period 2011-2013, the ideas of intercultural dialogue through teaching and learning history were developed in the framework of bilateral co-operation programmes in Serbia and Ukraine, as well as within the on-going intergovernmental project on *Shared histories for a Europe without diving lines*. A dialogue comprises multiple levels as follows:

- **knowledge:** an exchange of information through which one provides one's first ideas about others;
- **understanding:** at this level knowledge becomes understanding through the ability to analyse differences on the basis of open-mindedness, accepting differences as positive factors. Curiosity plays an important role at this stage;
- **evaluation:** one agrees or disagrees with what one has learnt about others; this process is based on the system of individual values;
- **action:** having completed the three previous steps, one reacts accordingly in society and builds relationships with different people.

The analysis of the mechanisms of dialogue brings us to the question of values and attitudes. One of the main conditions for developing a dialogue is an understanding of global human values and, most of all, the value of a human life. The Council of Europe suggests including more topics from everyday life when teaching history so that pupils may better understand the role of civil society in making history. *Open-mindedness* and *tolerance* are other important elements linked to the Council of Europe's recommendation to use multiperspectivity when presenting different points of view on the same historical facts.

One of the crucial elements that constitute a basis for dialogue is mutual respect. Its two components, self-respect and respect for others, correspond to the two stages in a dialogue: self-expression and the ability to listen to others, including those who have different perspectives. The latter is the most problematic and the result is often a series of monologues rather than a genuine dialogue. In this regard, special attention has been given to the development of techniques of active listening.

Another element which should help to motivate the development of a dialogue is the creation of an atmosphere of confidence and trust in a classroom. The Council of Europe suggests developing interactive methods in teaching history to help teachers and pupils create this atmosphere on a daily basis. Curiosity plays an important role in the education process, as it is an efficient instrument for dialogue. The ability to communicate through dialogue is directly connected to training in communication skills. The paradox is that while the explosion in the development of new technologies has provided access to global communication to almost everybody, it has also created additional difficulties in teaching communication skills. School education should therefore play a special role in the development of communication skills if

The development of education

The impact of the industrial revolution

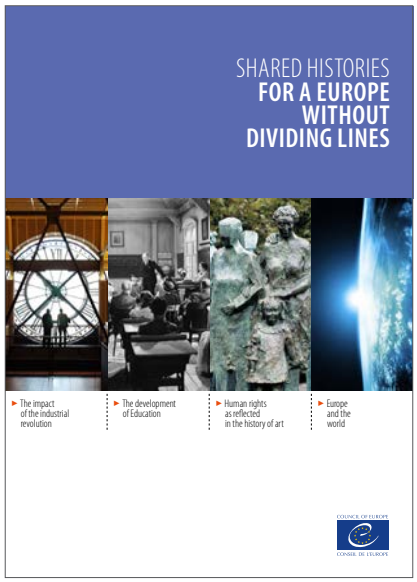
we really want to help pupils find their place in a rapidly changing world. Knowledge of dialogue mechanisms and the ability to use them could help in strengthening reconciliation factors and conflict prevention processes, and provide a solid basis for social cohesion and peace.

Shared histories for a Europe without dividing lines

Diversity of the European space and intercultural communication skills were also the focus of the on-going intergovernmental project on *Shared histories for a Europe without dividing lines*. Interactions and convergences, as much as tensions and conflicts, have left their imprint on the history of the European area. History has made Europe a continent distinctive in its unique combination of common features and the peculiarities that are the hallmark of each country, region, continental subset and social groups. These interactions and convergences, which have been neither straightforward nor free from contradictions, have affected a variety of fields. They have impinged on values, art and culture, demography, the economy, science and technology, lifestyles, and so on.

The project focused on revealing the chief interactions and convergences which have characterised the development of Europe as a spatial entity and created the conditions for European construction; producing proposals for strategies and methods towards awareness and knowledge of these dimensions of European history; defining the course content as well as the competences needed by history teachers, essential to ensuring a sound understanding of common trends in European history within a global context.

One of the project's outcomes will be an interactive e-book which will address teacher trainers and teachers in training. It will contain examples of teaching materials relating to significant historical examples of interactions and convergences within Europe along with strategies, methods and teaching techniques conducive to gaining a fuller awareness of these interactions and



Shared histories for a Europe without dividing lines

convergences. The e-book will be based on the topics examined during the project: the industrial revolution and its consequences; the development of education; human rights in the history of art; Europe and the world. The project will also introduce a new approach to teaching history as a shared space based on a balance between interdependence and independence; common values and diversity of points of view; consensus and a space for debates; common action and individual development; self-respect and respect for others. The results of the project will be presented at a conference in Vienna (9-10 April 2014), which will be held in the framework of the Austrian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

Teaching history in conflict and post-conflict situations

The key word in the process of rebuilding confidence and trust through educational co-operation programmes is 'patience'. Any wish to accelerate the process risks causing great damage. Our experience shows that the confidence-rebuilding process should follow several steps:

Step 1

Listening and sharing: listening to people who have been through a conflict and sharing their emotions and experience.

Step 2

Analysing a concrete conflict or post-conflict situation within a global picture involving examples of other countries which have faced similar difficulties and found their own way out; presenting different examples of similar conflict situations gives an opportunity to show that the existing conflict is not unique and that a solution may be found.

Step 3

A search for common ground: people who have come through a conflict find it difficult to agree that they could have anything in common with confronting parties. The use of examples of interactions presented by topics from non-political history could be of help in this particular case.

Step 4

A search for a peaceful solution and ways of avoiding conflicts in future: teachers are really committed to this. This approach is creative, as teachers feel that here and now they can offer their considerable input in the conflict transformation process.

These reflections bring us directly to the conclusion that present-day schools should become a space of the peace-building process and that history lessons could help in strengthening reconciliation trends by:

- providing an understanding of the diversity of the globalised world and a need to find ways for co-operation;
- teaching more about different cultures, as ignorance can create a space which can easily be filled by all kind of manipulations;
- putting the emphasis on interactions between peoples through history and providing a balance in teaching political, social, cultural and everyday history;
- encouraging the use of interactive methods based on dialogue.

In recent years, bilateral activities have put special emphasis on the discussion about how history teaching could help strengthen the reconciliation process in conflict and post-conflict situations. Our co-operation with Cyprus is an

Europe and the world

example of such work. Launched in 2004 on the initiative of the Secretary General, it comprised teacher-training activities which enabled about 700 participants from different communities to work together, reflecting the fact that Cyprus has been a multicultural environment throughout its long history. The Council of Europe's main partner in Cyprus was the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research, a unique non-governmental organisation which brings together history educators from all communities across the divide. The activities received strong support from all teacher trade unions, strengthening links with practising teachers.

The aim of these activities was to enable educators from the whole of Cyprus to meet on a regular basis and share their experiences and concerns, make an impact on strengthening mutual understanding and start the preparation of supplementary teaching materials on history by themselves. One of the main outcomes of this co-operation was the publication of the first interactive supplementary teaching pack on history of Cyprus, which was published in three languages (English, Greek and Turkish) and introduced in May 2011 at the inauguration ceremony of the Home for Co-operation in the buffer zone in Nicosia. This was followed by the ongoing programme on *Developing a culture of co-operation through teaching history*, which is aimed at bringing together teacher trainers from all communities.

Our work in different conflict and post-conflict areas clearly shows that:

- teachers can play a crucial role in reconciliation and conflict-transformation processes;
- a history teacher today is not just a professional who is well-versed in history and child psychology, but also one who is responsible for harmonising human relationships;
- there is a growing need to give history teachers better training and support, supply them with efficient pedagogical instruments;
- particular attention should be paid to training specialists working in pedagogical institutes; modern initial training should help history teachers to acquire the following competences: an ability to respect differences; a capacity for self-development; an openness to integrating new teaching methods; creativity; willingness to create an atmosphere of confidence and trust in a classroom.

The involvement of families in teaching and learning history is crucial for strengthening confidence and trust and as a result the whole reconciliation process. Our experience shows that the following ways of involving families is particularly efficient:

- involving parents in research on families' history; the wide inclusion of oral history in the learning process;
- parents' participation in debates and in the development of school history projects;
- inviting parents' representatives of different nationalities to schools and sharing information on their cultural traditions;
- parents' involvement in extracurricular activities (excursions and museum visits).

NGOs have a special role to play in conflict and in post-conflict areas. They can provide valuable help by setting up direct contacts between young people from conflicting sides, which could be the first step in a conflict transformation process, destroying stereotypes and images of an enemy.

When developing its history teaching programmes the Council of Europe brings all actors together and provides a wide forum for discussion. Building bridges between governmental and non-governmental levels is the most challenging but the most often requested role of the Council of Europe, as many peace-building initiatives spring from civil society. The most efficient area of co-operation is teacher training, bearing in mind the special role of teachers in society and their personal and professional commitment to the peace-building process. When developing projects, we aim to fulfil our commitments by providing continuity in the work; an equal footing for all participants involved; full transparency in co-operation; a wide forum for discussion on the basis of multiperspectivity, thereby building a solid basis for confidence and trust which, in a globalised world, are crucial factors in building diverse, inclusive democratic societies.

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Speak peace, not hate

NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT

One of the most significant achievements of the Council of Europe's Youth Department during Ólöf Ólafsdóttir's time as Director of Democratic Citizenship and Participation is the No Hate Speech Movement, a Campaign of Young People for Human Rights Online, organised at the initiative of the co-management bodies of the Youth Sector.

The No Hate Speech Movement is a Europe-wide campaign, devised by young people in the Council of Europe, to raise awareness of hate speech online, and combat it. The campaign was initiated and is run by the Council of Europe, but it is based on national campaigns involving young people online and offline that are building up in all the member states, with a special focus on human rights education, including schools. Making the Internet a safe space for human rights is all we ask for. Human rights are for everyone, everywhere.

Human rights education plays a central role in the campaign. Combating hate speech is not just about inciting young people to be nice to each other, it is about fighting all forms of expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including homophobia, misogyny and sexism. Hate speech online reaches and directly affects young people, often deeply and in secret, particularly when combined with cyberbullying and cyberhate. The campaign seeks to reduce the acceptance of hate speech online as "normal" and inevitable. Beyond education and awareness-raising, the campaign should also result in the establishment of clear normative guidelines for combating hate speech at national and European level. The campaign will continue until December 2014. Anyone wishing to take action or join the national campaign is invited to visit the website:

www.nohatespeechmovement.org

Another important project is the Roma Youth Action Plan, a response by the Council of Europe to the challenges facing young Roma people in Europe, notably with regard to their empowerment, participation in policy decision-making processes and structures at European level, and the multiple realities of discrimination.

As for our plans for the future, and more specifically the 2014-2015 programme of activities, the Youth Department, in addition to continuing the No Hate Speech Movement and Roma Youth Action Plan, will focus on two major issues: "Beyond the Crisis: young people's access to social rights" and "Youth participation in decision-making at local and regional levels".

On behalf of the Youth Department, I would like to thank Ólöf for her unfailing support of our work and wish her a very happy retirement.

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The European Centre for Modern Languages... 5 years on

The focus of the European Centre for Modern Language's work over the past 5 years can be summarised around 3 guiding principles: coherence, co-operation and communication:

- Coherence – both with regard to actions and activities organised directly by the Centre to produce a clear profile and with regard to priorities set by the Council of Europe as a whole;
- Co-operation – within the Council of Europe and with other intergovernmental organisations such as the European Commission and the member states of the Partial Agreement, as well as with partners on a federal, regional and local level and with teacher associations and INGOs;
- Communication – to achieve greater visibility, dissemination and impact and also to provide accountability to all stakeholders in the Centre, most notably to the member states.

The ECML's programme *Learning though languages* was launched in 2012 following a wide-ranging consultation

process with the Centre's stakeholders. The programme is based upon a vision to boost language skills by seeking to improve learners' access to good quality language education through the development of inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural pedagogic approaches to education. This approach reflects the ECML's motivation to pursue and further build upon the fundamental values and principles underlying the Council of Europe's work in language education. The projects within the programme support the implementation of recommendations and other policy instruments developed by the Language Policy Unit in Strasbourg, such as the Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio, where the Centre promotes their use and adaptation in national contexts. On an organisational level the Centre has encouraged transversal synergies within its programme through regular meetings of the project co-ordinators and consultants and by assigning a member of each project team the responsibility for mediating and promoting project work to relevant specialist networks and to the wider public.

The Centre's establishment of the INGO-Professional Network Forum on language education in 2010 has opened up a new area of co-operation with civil society and demonstrated the ECML's strength as a network leader (www.ecml.at/professionalnetworkforum). The INGO-Professional Network Forum today comprises 14 international associations and institutions which share common values and expertise in the field of language education and assessment. These members have played an important role in enhancing the quality of the Centre's work and in promoting ECML products and publications via their extensive networks, which potentially reach hundreds of thousands of language education professionals. The most recent addition to the membership, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in July 2012, reflects the global composition of the group and the vast expertise and experience it can draw upon.

In 2012 the ECML's training and consultancy for member states was established, providing an area of co-operation available to members of the Partial Agreement. The scheme offers language education activities based on themes of ECML expertise to states on a bilateral basis. The activities are tailored to the specific context and needs of the individual states. Three areas are currently proposed which focus on developing online teaching skills, relating examinations to the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and supporting the use of electronic language portfolios. In the coming years it is planned to expand this area to include projects within the ECML's current programme under this scheme. The scheme represents a major new instrument for enhancing the ECML's visibility and impact in member states (www.ecml.at/trainingandconsultancy).

Ongoing discussions with the European Commission over the past five years have served to highlight opportunities for co-operation and synergy, in particular with regard to dissemination. Common actions on the European Day of Languages and within specific projects such as Quality education in Romani for Europe (QualiROM) led to the signing of a one year co-operation agreement in May this year on Innovative methodologies and assessment in language learning. Through the agreement, a series of 14 national training workshops are open to member states of the ECML and of the European Union in relation to two initiatives: Use of ICT tools available in support of language teaching and learning and Relating language examinations to the common European reference levels of language proficiency. Both initiatives have benefited from experience gathered through the Centre's training and consultancy scheme. It is hoped that this initial agreement will pave the way for subsequent joint actions extending this form of co-operation between the two institutions well beyond May 2014.

The Centre co-operated effectively with the Austrian authorities on a number of initiatives which were successful in promoting the work conducted by the Centre and in ensuring that its expertise is recognised and can be practically applied at local level. The launch of the Sprachennetzwerk Graz, which involves municipal authorities and more than 12 local institutions and associations with a stake in quality language education, is a good example (www.sprachennetzwerkgraz.at) The level of national support for the Centre was highlighted on the occasion of the successful ECML's 15th anniversary event, which was hosted jointly by the Austrian Ministers for Education, Arts and Culture and for Science and Research. The ECML is also a key partner in the organisation of a

Waldemar Martyniuk and Ólöf Ólafsdóttir at the conference "Empowering language professionals"

high-level conference on the theme of education to be held in Graz on 20 and 21 March 2014 within the framework of the Austrian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. The event will also involve the members of the Professional Network Forum.

With regard to communication the ECML has significantly developed its outreach in the past five years. Through involvement with key networks of language education professional and targeted participation at major international events the Centre has attracted a new clientele to its activities. A number of ECML projects within the current programme have a 'mediation' focus, promoting approaches and tools developed by the Centre to new stakeholders who are in a position to influence change, such as parent associations, community language associations and non-formal mentoring groups. The broad focus of the Learning through languages programme also targets and opens up its work to new groups: deaf learners, teachers of subject areas, majority language teachers, employers, corporate human resources managers, school managers and organisers of mobility programmes. This wider base has already proved successful in disseminating the results of the ECML's work to new audiences, thereby increasing its impact.

The networking and communication function of the Centre has also been enhanced through the development of over 40 web portals which provide projects and ECML networks with an effective collaborative working platform. They have also served to promote a wide range of new learning instruments aimed primarily at language teachers and teacher trainers which were published in 2011-12 in conclusion to the Centre's 2008-11 Empowering language professionals programme. The Centre can now count upon a series of networks for disseminating information and documentation relating to the ECML, in particular the National Contact Points established in each of the member states and project networks such as the language teacher associations targeted through the Language Associations and Collaborative Support project. The Centre's keynote interventions at major conferences and events have addressed thousands of language education professionals and contributed to making the ECML a true reference point in its domain. The Centre's work and expertise is now recognised around the world with translations of ECML publications into non-European languages, training events, consultancy and application of the Centre's work in Japan, Morocco, South Africa, the USA and Canada, to name but a few.

Below is a selection of some of the feedback received from experts and partners of the ECML on the benefits and impact of the Centre's work:

"The ECML projects launched within the framework of the ongoing medium-term programme match the national educational priorities in Bulgaria in the field of foreign language learning and teaching in a comprehensive and constructive way, enabling the language professionals not only to upgrade their skills, but what is more important, to explore possibilities to break the pattern by making use of the innovative approaches of teaching offered through various practice- and evidence-based and empirical research projects, supported by ECML."

"Above all, the ECML seminars have provided numerous invaluable opportunities for intercultural meetings and the exchange of expert experience. Since 1994, the impact of the ECML extensive work has been very obvious and has been reflected in different ways within the Slovenian language policy.

"For me, it was a revelation: about the ECML, the co-ordinators of this project in particular, and our European training space. A real training experience on a personal as well as professional level. In fact, there is now a before and after ECML in my life and work." (France)

In this review of some of the important developments relating to the ECML over the past 5 years there are, in particular, two persons to whom we wish to pay tribute.

Ólöf Ólafsdóttir has guided the ECML through what has been a particularly challenging time in its existence, with fluctuations in member states and, as a result, in budget and staffing. Ólöf has provided a constant calm voice of support and encouragement to the Centre and its staff. She has assisted the Centre in establishing strategic partnerships, in adjusting to changing needs in the environment and has helped the ECML to build a stronger profile.

Waldemar Martyniuk has been Executive Director of the ECML since autumn 2008. It is thanks to his clear vision and ability to transform this into concrete actions that the Centre has been able to develop and to attract new groups and ultimately member states to the Centre. Many of the achievements highlighted above would not have been possible without Waldek's dedication and expertise. He has played an inspirational role and leaves the Centre on a stable footing with clear orientations for the future.

On behalf of the Centre, we wish Ólöf an enjoyable retirement and Waldek a successful next step in his career.

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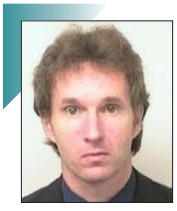

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Implementation makes the difference: the role of the European Wergeland Centre

Policy documents are the cornerstone of the Council of Europe's work with its member states. But how can these policy documents be made into living instruments? To assist in this challenge, the Council of Europe and Norway established the European Wergeland Centre (EWC)[3] in 2008. A welcome initiative, the Centre's objectives and mission are a direct response to the commitments entered into by the Third Summit of the Council of Europe held in Warsaw in 2005: "While legal standards and policy making are essential, it is their effective implementation that will ultimately make the difference. This is where we see the role of the European Wergeland Centre."[4]

Participants in the "Summer Academy Democracy at School"

As a "privileged partner[5]" of the Council of Europe, the new priorities of the Directorate General for Democracy are guiding principles for the EWC and are clearly reflected in its activities. For us, capacity building means empowering people and institutions to develop democratic practices and a democratic culture based on the principles and values of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE). More specifically, it means building on people's creativity, experiences and ideas to trigger positive changes in their lives, their workplace and their communities. It means empowering people to take action and supporting them when they do. In keeping with this, in 2014 we will continue to develop, together with the Council of Europe and other partners, the Programme on Democracy at School (in Poland) and Human Rights in Action (in South East Europe), which now reaches out to more than 20 countries, as well as the alumni network and the online academy, among other projects. We are also aiming to encourage action research connected to capacity-building activities in order to better understand and measure their impact and outcomes.

Participation of all citizens is essential for a democratic society. EWC is addressing this priority through the new initiative Youth Forum for Democracy and Human Rights in Ukraine (in co-operation with the Council of Europe and the Ukrainian authorities), and the Project on the Development of

3. The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) is a resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship

4. Statement by Ambassador D.I BATIBAY, representing the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Inauguration of the European Wergeland Centre, Oslo, 29 May 2009

5. Co-operation agreement between Norway and the Council of Europe, article 6

Democratic Competences in the Russian regions in co-operation with local partners.

In our multicultural societies, understanding and developing diversity is key and EWC will continue implementing the DEMBRA project (Democratic readiness to fight racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination at school) and strengthen its support for the Council of Europe's No Hate Speech campaign though a number of "educator consultations" in Austria, the Czech Republic and Germany; and seminars for teachers.

The establishment of the Centre was the result of a long process that involved many people. But we would like to pay tribute to one very special person, Ólöf Ólafsdóttir. We would even say that EWC is the result of Ólöf's vision which, combined with resolution and hard work, became a reality five years ago. Since then, Ólöf has been our liaison officer, a warm and charismatic leader, always forward-looking, always supportive, always available. Ólöf represents a unique mix of expertise, wisdom and kindness that we do not often see in the public arena. The early years of a young organisation are not an easy journey, but through it, EWC has had the great fortune to count Ólöf as a loyal critical friend. We, the EWC team, wish Ólöf all the best in this new period of her life. It has been an honour sharing these five fantastic years with her.

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Rethinking the university: how the Council of Europe might contribute

For over 15 years universities and higher education have undergone numerous upheavals, mainly structural, and all this has happened in a more and more difficult budgetary context. Higher education has become widely diversified, thereby emphasising the rich variety of its missions. All institutions, even those most concerned with vocational training, must be founded on academic values and develop multi-purpose skills such as critical thought, analytical ability and communication. While a particular outcome of the Bologna process has been to keep the higher education question on the political agenda of the countries involved, one must realise that it has placed the university in the midst of manifold and sometimes contradictory expectations, subjecting it to many forms of pressure. That has probably dismantled the ivory tower and broken the splendid isolation of the university. Still, it is possible to feel a certain nostalgia, not so much for the pomp and circumstance as for the utopia to which this ideal of research and advancement of learning bore witness, misguided though it may too often have been. The utopia, the ideal, is to be at once of this world yet out of it; to further active citizenship through a forum of critical thought accepted and recognised in our societies; to be integrated in a here and now not overlooking the potential of the future. In other words, what has been built on the wreckage of the ivory tower? In the compass of this short article, one plainly does not presume to thrash out these questions, merely to suggest some avenues furthering reflection while highlighting the role which the Council of Europe and its higher education programme can or do perform. It will thus be a matter of addressing four challenges: social responsibility, relationship with knowledge, European responsibility and educational challenge, before looking at the strong points of the Council of Europe in that framework.

Wilhelm von Humboldt, founder of the University of Berlin

Rethinking centrality when on the fringe.

Being built at the core of urban communities, the university has sometimes shut itself in, holding itself aloof from certain debates, hard put to visualise its interaction with societies, fearing – sometimes with good cause – too instrumental a

vision of its existence. Yet it is important that, while respecting the diversity of its missions (personal development; research; production and transmission of learning; home of democracy and citizenship; employability)[6], the university should be able to assist in re-founding the social dialogue, too often debased, of European societies. It is crucial to the democratic present and future of our societies, and of Europe itself, to preserve a space for critical thought, which is the role that the university has performed and must continue to fulfil. This depends on a standing dialogue with the "here and now" realities which circumscribe its existence. The work conducted with the International Consortium for Higher Education[7] helps clarify afresh the social responsibility of the university, of the academic world conceived as being at the service of the entire community through its critical vision. Let us dwell here on one of the most central elements of discussion concerning today's university: its role in terms of employability. It is obvious that being learner-centred, and we shall return to this, higher education in general and the university in particular cannot forego an examination of the central issue for many citizens, youth especially – employment. While in many countries Europe is facing massive youth unemployment and therefore dreads the syndrome of sacrificed generations, in order to fulfil and meet a social responsibility it is essential that higher education and the university should concern themselves with the question of employment, of their relations with enterprises and the world of work, with the market. So this is indeed a central question, but in addressing it the university's other roles and missions cannot be dismissed, relegated to the past or postponed to a more or less distant future when the economic situation will have improved. Moreover, this dialogue must proceed with respect for the different partners, and while the economic question is admittedly very important, it cannot and must not obliterate the questions of democracy, citizenship, and human dignity – all that the work of the Council of Europe is founded on – which must be reflected and find its embodiment in the 21st century university.

This endeavour should not result in recreating the Humboldtian model while emphasising the central link between education and research which should no doubt be thought out again. In the complexity of our globalised world the university cannot, can no longer be (if it ever was) the sole proponent of a discourse that lays the foundations for communal living. But it must play a part in this, albeit a more humble and more modest one; it has a duty to contribute, and not only from the angle of employability.

Acceptance of being just one path of knowledge

In this framework, something by no means easy for institutions as steeped in history as universities is to accept that in research, and in generating and imparting learning and branches of knowledge, higher education and the university are no longer any more than one of the research avenues, one of the voices speaking truth, beauty and good in the long platonic tradition which Europe is duty bound to carry on (while accepting once again that in a globalised world this has to be weak thinking, a position wary of the injunctions too often issued by Europe to the rest of the world).

In considering how higher education and the university continue to be an arena for research and for generating and imparting learning/branches of knowledge in the 21st century, the explosion of the new information technologies, of social networks cannot be left out of account. Wikipedia, Google, the manifold potential of the Internet, the vehicles for producing, passing on and seeking knowledge have proliferated, creating a world-wide web which from an anthropological standpoint can give every human being the illusion of having virtually instant access to everything (a totalitarian conception of our humanity, whereas the beauty of our womanhood or manhood may lie in acknowledging our limitations). In this perspective, the question of classifying the branches of knowledge as well as that of validating them independently and critically remains a challenge which the university and higher education are probably the best equipped to meet. This no doubt presupposes genuine acceptance of their plurality, with the practical consequence of promoting and improving dialogue between the academic world and the vocational training and adult education sector. This dialogue is still too often vitiated by the relative status of these branches, by mutual distrust of two worlds that exist side by side without really being acquainted.

A European responsibility

Plainly, all these arguments are not placed in a strictly national context but indeed in a European or world-wide perspective. Thinking on higher education and the university in the 21st century must be done in a universal perspective, "the local less the walls" as Miguel Torga said[8], and the Bologna process in its global dimension makes a sustained contribution to this thinking as does the academic world itself, particularly through the International Association of Universities. But this universalist outlook cannot and must not evade the more specific question of the university's and higher education's role in the actual building of Europe, perceived here as stretching from Dublin to Vladivostok and from Aberdeen to Baku. Exchange programmes and mobility for students and academic staff are of course a vector of this thinking. But from an academic standpoint, it also involves thinking Europe and its interplay of logics, in the tradition of Edgar Morin. That hinges on an intensification of research into and teaching of cross-disciplinary skills for "living together as equals in dignity" – the title of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue adopted in 2008 by the Committee of Ministers, hence on promotion of intercultural dialogue. So that diversity viewed as a blessing and not a curse can be lived to the full, so that the diversity which enriches our continent can be turned to account, in association with all the tools available to the Council of Europe, it is indispensable to make the most of the diversity already present in university lecture halls (internationalisation of the local

6. cf Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe Rec(2007)6

7. http://www.internationalconsortium.org/

8. Miguel Torga, "The universal is the local less the walls", title of a lecture published by William Blake, 1994.

level – "internationalisation at home") as well as enabling all students and academic and administrative staff to develop their intercultural skills.

A necessary exercise in educational philosophy

One of the greatest challenges of the Bologna process is the change of paradigm, framed as a challenge to universities to think in terms of learner-centred education. This is a real upheaval after centuries to which the very architecture of university premises bears witness, a podium or a lecture hall standing testimony to the primacy of oral transmission of learning. The university must also perceive itself as a forum of educational philosophy, of reflection on the very act of teaching, of imparting. This approach invalidates the figure of the teacher thought of primarily as a researcher before being a pedagogue, before regaining his Socratic role. It queries both the training of teachers, still focused too much on actual knowledge, and their assessment, a process in which research work is always given more credit than educational endeavour and innovation. However, there again, to conceive education from the learner's standpoint is not to sacrifice knowledge but on the contrary to restore full meaning to the idea of an academic community in which professors and students make a combined effort, in their plurality of skills and disciplines, to forge the keys that mankind needs to understand the world we live in. This challenge is attended by the necessary departitioning of disciplines. Promoting interdisciplinarity is also a signal that the implicit hierarchy established at present (economic subjects taking precedence over scientific studies and human sciences being left in last place if not completely eliminated from the curricula), leads nowhere and stunts the ability to understand the world.

In this context, the strengths of the Council of Europe

In this context, regardless of the budgetary strain limiting the capability to develop specific programmes, the Council of Europe has numerous strengths. In this field as in many others relating to the very values on which its existence is founded, it can be or it is a true laboratory of ideas and reflections as the "Higher Education" series of publications especially has testified for many years. This series provides both the public authorities and the academic world with benchmarks for qualification, competences and also content (in particular interculturalism and the democratic mission of higher education). Through the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region and the work of the ENIC centres – in liaison with the NARIC network of the European Union – the Council and Unesco provide the sole legal instrument on higher education in existence at European level. It is a central instrument intended to guarantee that student mobility is a boon to learners and not a handicap, for without clear, shared principles on recognition of qualifications, there can be no true mobility.

The purpose of this is to provide scope for exchange, for promoting good practices which, in respecting institutional autonomy, in promoting quality education, and in addressing the challenge raised by corruption, help to frame "soft law" without which the treaty mechanisms would risk being no more than half-empty vessels.

All this work can be carried out by the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation with an effort to adopt a holistic approach to the entire process of education whether formal (in the Education Department) or non-formal (in the Youth Department). In this context, the formation of the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE) can afford an opportunity, in a formal education perspective, for thinking through the educational process in its entirety. It will nevertheless be expedient that the CDPPE can guarantee the link which existed in the former Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) and which, in a unique way, provided a setting for encounter and joint policy-making between public authority and the academic world. Furthermore, through joint programmes as well as organised conferences and networking activities (particularly on the development of qualifications frameworks), the Council of Europe offers a unique setting for dialogue and co-operation, in an intercultural perspective, between the various higher education systems bearing the stamp of different histories and national expectations.

In the field of higher education, as in others such as culture, youth, languages, history teaching, education for democratic citizenship and teacher training programmes, the Council of Europe assists through its activities and actions in developing common standards, joint activities and tools serving both official and academic players and thus contributes fully, if modestly, to building the Europe of education. Education is still too often imprinted by the national approaches of the 19th century, national preserves which are no longer necessarily suited to the challenges posed by globalisation for this old continent, one of whose finest heritages is the universities. It is up to everyone not to squander this wealth but rather to turn it to account with the requisite adaptations. The Europe founded on values, on human rights and democracy, cannot be built without including the age-old wealth of higher education and universities, the acknowledged strongholds of critical thought for an evolving continent.

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The Pestalozzi Programme – a transversal programme of the Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation

The Pestalozzi Programme aims to train education professionals to become multipliers for the principles of the Council of Europe and the values which unite us. It expresses the conviction that education professionals have a key role to play for the development of our democratic societies. There is probably no other profession with which we spend so much time in our lives — first as pupils, then as students, and still later as parents.

The Pestalozzi Programme targets education professionals – all those who are actively engaged in the day-to-day practice of education: teachers, teacher trainers, but also school heads, school psychologists, parents or community representatives. And it does all this by offering support to practitioners through training opportunities and through an online "community of practice" where currently over 1 300 members exchange ideas and resources and develop answers to common problems.

The programme focuses on the development of certain transversal attitudes, skills and knowledge which are essential for our democratic culture. I am speaking particularly of competences such as the ability of critical observation from different perspectives; the respect for human rights and dignity in all our actions; the ability to act democratically and to co-operate, to understand diversity and to live in diversity; to understand the past and the present, and the ability to project oneself into the future; the ability to communicate across all types of borders; the critical and responsible use of the media environment; or the readiness to engage in lifelong learning.

The programme applies a pedagogy based on the conviction that effective training activates and builds on the expertise and experience of the trainees. It is learner-centred and focuses on "learning by doing". It promotes collaborative work. It develops sensitivity and awareness, knowledge and understanding, and facilitates change of individual and societal practice.

The programme draws on the know-how and conceptual resources of many other programmes of the Council of Europe, including the youth sector, the activities in the human rights field, the media and information society programme, the "Intercultural cities", the programme "Building a Europe for and with children", the sports sector and the Conference of INGOs, but also the experience of institutions and organisations in the member states.

How transversal is the Pestalozzi Programme? How is the Pestalozzi Programme transversal?

By definition

- Transversal by its aim to enhance education for democracy
- Transversal by targeting all education professionals not just one group of even one particular school subject
- Transversal by focusing on both content and appropriate pedagogical approaches
- Transversal by domain by focusing on all forms of learning: formal, non-formal and informal

By networks

- A network of about 80 national Liaison Officers in 50 countries who host activities, manage the programme on the national level and co-operate in the management on the international level

- An online Community of Practice of about 1 300 education professionals having participated in the training activities over the past few years and who exchange and mutually support each other, pool their expertise to develop actions and projects

By partnerships

Within the Council of Europe

- Sectors within the education department – by offering training activities for the thematic areas the Education Department focuses on such as democratic citizenship and human rights, intercultural education and diversity, languages and communication, history teaching, prevention of crimes against humanity, etc.
- The European Youth Foundation and activities of the Youth Department – co-organisation of a trainer training course on respect in the virtual social space with the European Youth Foundation (2013/2014), expert support for the No Hate Speech Campaign (2013)
- Intercultural cities programme – training for intercultural competence and development of a self-evaluation tool and application for intercultural competences (from 2010 to 2013)
- Building a Europe for and with Children – co-operation in a trainer training course on the prevention of violence (2011/2012) and on sexuality education (2013/2014)
- Media and information society division – co-operation in a Think-tank on media literacy and Human Rights (2007), co-operation in various activities on media literacy since then
- Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sports – co-operation in training activities on how sports can contribute to the respect for human rights and dignity in diversity (2013- 2015)
- Committee on Education and Culture of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations – co-operation in a conference on the professional image and ethos of teachers (2014)
- Committee on Human Rights of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations – co-operation in the organisation of a Think-tank on living together in a connected world (2012)
- And regular requests for co-operation and support from other sectors of the Council of Europe

With external partners

- The Academy of Bad Wildbad who hosts the Summer School and co-operates in other activities
- The European Wergeland Centre who co-operates in training activities and other projects
- The Permanent Representation of Mexico – agreement on a pilot arrangement on opening places in our training activities for Mexican education professionals (since 2013)

External contacts and co-operation

- Teacher education policy in Europe (TEPE)
- European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL)
- ICC – The International Language Association
- The Arab League Education, culture and Science Organisation (ALECSO)
- The Anna-Lindh Foundation (between 2006-2009)
- Regular invitations to speak at annual conferences of many other international organisations and initiatives in the field of education and in particular teacher education

An opportunity to build on

Over the past five years, and supported by Ms Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, first as Head of Department and then as Director, the Pestalozzi Programme has developed a strong core: a functioning programme for the professional development of education practitioners with a profile specifically adapted to the concerns of the Council of Europe. In other words, how education, and in particular education practitioners can and must contribute to developing and promoting democracy based on respect for human rights.

This is an opportunity to build on.

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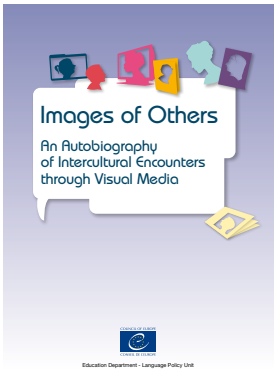
Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters: new version and online self-study course



The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE) was developed as a means of helping us to think about our face-to-face experiences of 'other people' with other 'cultures'. Images of Others – an Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM) is based on the AIE but is substantially different because the ways in which our experience of others is affected by the visual media has to be taken into account. Like the AIE however, it is a means of helping us to decide how we can and should learn from an intercultural encounter, what we should do, what action we might take, how we can find out more about and benefit from the event which has been important to us, and how we can make it part of our understanding of 'others' and their 'cultures', whether they seem distant or near to us in time and place.

The AIEVM is essentially a series of questions about a particular image, often one which has been particularly striking and left an impression. The questions help us to reflect on the image, how we responded, how we thought and felt about it then and now, and what conclusions we can draw from it for the future. The questions follow a careful sequence which is based on scientific research but are written in a way which makes it easy for anyone to follow. In the 'Standard' version, those who use the AIEVM can do it alone or with others – with the help of a friend or teacher for example – whereas the version of the AIEVM for younger learners is intended for children who need help from an adult in reading and writing and in thinking about the image.

Online self-study course for educators

A self-study online course is available for educators and youth workers who would like guidance in working with the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters. The course contains activities based on the key concepts and theory underpinning the AIE to help teachers, teacher trainers and youth workers explore the potential of this pedagogical tool for learning through reflection on personal intercultural experiences.

All these resources are available at:
www.coe.int/lang-autobiography

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How to contact us

Come surf with us on **http://www.coe.int/democracy** and find information on a wide range of Council of Europe activities and publications on education, culture and the cultural heritage.

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