



## Newsletter N°5 March-April 2007

### EUCIS-LLL

European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF EUCIS-LLL PLATFORM, 29 MARCH 2007, BRUSSELS

The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning gathered about forty of its member networks' representatives in Brussels for its second General Assembly. Patrick Fève, Head of Unit Relations with Civil Society and Constitutional Questions at the European Economic and Social Committee, welcomed the members and notably mentioned the Liaison Group in which the platform is very active. In the afternoon, Odile Quintin, General Director of DG Education Culture of the European Commission, discussed the perspectives of European policies in the field of lifelong learning with the members. Moreover, a new network joined the platform, FICEMEA (<http://www.ficemea.org/>), which makes a total of 13 members. Other European networks were also invited to participate in the public part of the General Assembly and mentioned their interest in a possible adhesion to the platform.

The assembly was an opportunity to provide an overview of the numerous activities that were realised in 2006 with a seminar on "non formal education in the city" in Lyon, a public hearing on "the new Programme for Lifelong Learning" in Brussels, a conference on "Mobility and the European Qualification Framework"

in Paris, some position papers but also the participation in expert groups and the implementation of new cooperation projects between the members. The platform has also been largely involved for the promotion of participative democracy in Europe by integrating the two places of representation of civil society in Europe, the Liaison Group of the European Economic and Social Committee and the Civil Society Contact Group.

Finally, the Assembly set some perspectives with notably a better structuration of the network and the organisation of events with, for example, a public hearing planned on 5 July on adult education in Brussels, a second audition on 4 October in Brussels and a contact seminar on intercultural dialogue in E&T in Toulouse on 5-9 December 2007. The second semester 2007 will also be a moment to organise events in the frame of the "Lifelong Learning weeks" that the platform wishes to implement in each Member state.

The minutes of the General Assembly will soon be available, contact the platform's coordinator, Audrey Frith, ([afriith@laligue.org](mailto:afriith@laligue.org)).

#### LIAISON GROUP OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, PLENARY SESSION OF 1<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2007

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) Liaison Group for European Civil Society Organisations and Networks has been designed to be both a liaison body and a structure for political dialogue. It ensures that the EESC has a coordinated approach towards these organisations and networks, as well as the monitoring of joint initiatives. This group gathers 15 important sectoral European platforms (gender equality, education and training, youth, family life, rural development, promotion of the European idea, art and culture, old persons, development, consumers' policies, service providers, cooperative movement, health insurance and social protection, European

citizenship, protection and integration of handicapped persons).

The Liaison Group met in its plenary session on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007. During this meeting, some modifications on the Liaison Group composition and functioning were adopted as a result of the evaluation of its two first years of existence. The members also debated on the work programme for 2007 and 2008. Three subjects largely emerged from the debates : the constitutional process that will be debated during the next Liaison Group meetings, intercultural dialogue with the organisation of an important event during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester 2007 and the Lisbon strategy that will be

studied in cooperation with the working group on this issue in the EESC.

The representatives of EUCIS-LLL within the Liaison Group are Tommaso Grimaldi, member, and Ellinor Haase, alternate. Furthermore, Jean-Marc Roirant, president of

EUCIS-LLL, is the co-chair of this group with the president of the EESC, Dimitris Dimitriadis.

You can download the minutes and the contributions of the EESC Liaison Group on :

[http://eesc.europa.eu/sco/group/intro/index\\_en.asp](http://eesc.europa.eu/sco/group/intro/index_en.asp)

#### COMMUNICATION OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY CONTACT GROUP ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROME TREATY

The Civil Society Contact Group is an informal group that brings together 8 important platforms of NGO's active at European level - social, development, human rights, environment, women, culture, public health and lifelong learning. Encompassing hundreds of European NGOs and thousands of national affiliates, they work together to develop the dialogue between civil society organisations and the EU institutions as an essential part of strengthening participatory democracy.

EUCIS-LLL platform is represented within the Contact Group by Ellinor Haase and by Audrey Frith.

The members of the Contact Group challenged the EU to make the most of its 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. If European leaders are to regain the confidence of its citizens, they must close the gap between intention and action and enable the EU to deliver on its promises. Europe's domestic aspirations and the achievements made in the past 50 years should now be extended by an explicit commitment to strengthening Europe's role in the world.

You can download the declaration and visualise the animation on the Contact Group's website :

<http://act4europe.horus.be/code/en/hp.asp>

#### EUROPEAN COMMISSION CONSULTATION ON SCHOOL EDUCATION

EUCIS-LLL was invited to participate in an informal platform on school education constituted by the European Commission. This platform brings together civil society organisations such as EUCIS-LLL, OBESSU (student unions), ESHA (school heads) or AEDE (teachers) but also social partners. The representatives of this group were invited to encourage their members to give their opinion on the text that will be proposed during the consultation and to answer the consultation once it will be published.

EUCIS-LLL contribution to the draft text of the consultation was several. Initially named "modernising school", all the representatives from civil society organisations criticised such formulation that did not recognise the perpetual adaptation of school education. EUCIS-LLL, represented by Audrey Frith, outlined the disequilibrium that existed in the text between the

employability and adaptability dimensions of education and training, largely mentioned, and the social and citizen dimension barely inexistent in the text. In the same way, the importance of schools territorial anchor was outlined as well as the link to reinforce between the different educative actors (local authorities, associations, parents, etc.) Finally, EUCIS-LLL asked the European Commission to mention the existence of innovative practices all over Europe and to insist on the necessity to give further autonomy to structures.

The publication of the text of the consultation in the coming weeks will allow us to see if our comments were taken into account. This consultation should be opened until June and will be followed by a conference organised by the Portuguese presidency and the European Commission on 2-3 November in Lisbon.

#### COMMUNICATION OF THE COMMISSION ON A COHERENT FRAMEWORK OF INDICATORS AND BENCHMARKS, LISBON OBJECTIVES IN E&T

Policies for Education and Training represent an important part of the EU's Lisbon strategy. As their contribution to the Lisbon Strategy, Ministers of Education adopted common objectives for the improvement of education and training systems and a work programme to achieve these objectives, known as the Education & Training 2010 programme. It is implemented through the open method of coordination and indicators and benchmarks play an important

monitoring role and provide support to the exchange of experiences and good practices.

This Communication published on 21 February 2007 proposes a framework of indicators and benchmarks for the follow-up of the Lisbon objectives in the area of education and training. It is coherent and fully reflects for the first time the more detailed objectives of Education & Training 2010. In addition, it also covers objectives related to the convergence of higher education structures within the "Bologna process", and

the "Copenhagen process" in vocational training. It outlines a statistical infrastructure from which the indicators can be derived. It invites the Council to adopt the framework as a basis for providing strategic guidance and steering to the Education & Training 2010 strategy.

You can download the Commission's Communication on :

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/fr/com/2007/com2007\\_0061fr01.pdf](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/fr/com/2007/com2007_0061fr01.pdf)

#### INFORMAL COUNCIL OF EUROPEAN EDUCATION MINISTERS IN HEIDELBERG : PRIORITY TO EARLY EDUCATION !

Within the framework of the German EU Council Presidency, the German Federal Minister of Education and Research, Annette Schavan, invited the Education Ministers of 27 EU Member States to Heidelberg on 1-2 March 2007. The objective of this informal meeting was to continue the discussions on a common way of implementing lifelong learning.

The conference was first focused on the perspectives for European cooperation in the frame of the "Education and Training 2010" programme : adult education and early childhood education. In the context of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rome Treaties and of the re-launch of the constitutional process, Annette Schavan also outlined the contribution of education policy to the development of a European community of values. Indeed, according to her, education policy is of special

importance for teaching values such as democracy, tolerance and respect for basic rights.

In order to achieve these goals, the governments in Europe will increase their efforts to improve the training of teachers working in early childhood education. In this connection, it is important that institutions offering early childhood education are adequately equipped with both staff and funding.

Press Release :

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Press\\_Releases/March/0301BMBFMinistertreffenBildung.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Press_Releases/March/0301BMBFMinistertreffenBildung.html)

Final Communiqué « Education Unites » :

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/download\\_docs/Maerz/0301-BJK/034Abschlusskommunique.pdf](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/download_docs/Maerz/0301-BJK/034Abschlusskommunique.pdf)

#### THE EUROPEAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION DESAGREE ON THE PUBLICATION OF A EUROPEAN HISTORY TEXTBOOK

European Education Ministers have held differing views on the publication of a pan-European history textbook during their informal meeting in Heidelberg on 1-2 March 2007. This project had already been discussed during the European Council of Education Ministers in Brussels. The Member States had reacted on this issue with more or less enthusiasm, the Britannic press being openly hostile to the project. The minister Annette Schavan wished that this issue was discussed during the informal meeting, thinking that the success of the French and German history textbook

could serve as an example to the other states. The discussion was a little troubled with notably the intervention of the Polish ministry on the necessity to forbid abortion or to condemn homosexuality in scholar textbooks. The idea of a German and Polish textbook was also mentioned. The representative of the European Commission indicated that the Member States were responsible for their diplomas and for the content of their courses but that the Commission had nothing against such initiatives, on the contrary.

#### EU DECLARATION ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY : WHAT SPACE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ?

European deputies debated the Berlin Declaration which was signed on 25 March to mark the 50th anniversary of the EU with Chancellor Merkel. The declaration, signed by the three Presidents of the European institutions, was widely welcomed by the major groups, although some MEPs criticised the way it was negotiated. Chancellor Merkel suggested that the EP hold an event with civil society to formally contribute to the June European Council.

European Parliament Press Release :

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/008-4691-087-03-13-901-20070326IPRO4616-28-03-2007-2007-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/008-4691-087-03-13-901-20070326IPRO4616-28-03-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm)

EU Declaration on the 50th anniversary :

[http://www.eu2007.de/de/News/download\\_docs/Maerz/0324-RAA/French.pdf](http://www.eu2007.de/de/News/download_docs/Maerz/0324-RAA/French.pdf)

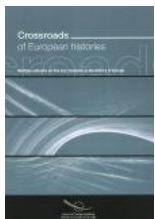
The 27 Economy and Finance Ministers adopted conclusions on the budgetary guidelines 2008 on 27th March. Faced with the challenge of ensuring the continuity and coherence of its activities whilst undertaking policies that look to the future, the Council insists on the need to respect annual limits of financial perspectives. As a world player the EU should act rapidly and effectively when needs arise or crises occur

unexpectedly. A total of 200 million euros have been set aside in the guarantee funds and will be available if required.

Download the Council's conclusions on :

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/ecofin/93326.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ecofin/93326.pdf)

#### OECD PUBLICATION : CARREFOURS D'HISTOIRES EUROPEENNES



How can history teaching contribute to a spirit of tolerance with respect to promoting different points of view, respect for the other and developing the critical and autonomous judgement of future active citizens within democratic societies?

This book is a contribution to the implementation of a methodology based on "multiperspectivity", and

allows teachers to present numerous examples of various approaches in their practical teaching as well as different points of view or ideas on the same events in recent European history.

This publication allows both teachers and pupils to place regional and national history in a wider context, develop their historical knowledge, make connections across space and time, and compare different perspectives on the same events and developments.

### Next events

- **5 JULY 2007 :** \* Public hearing on adult education, Brussels, 14h-17h00

Hearing on the European Commission's communication of October 2006 « Adult education : it is never too late to learn » with personalities.

- \* Working group on Lifelong Learning weeks, Brussels, 10h-12h30

Follow-up of the results of the working group on the organisation of Lifelong learning weeks in Member States held on 10 January 2007.

- **4 OCTOBER 2007 :** Public Hearing in Brussels, 14h-17h

The theme of this hearing will be determined soon, for any suggestions please contact the platform's coordinator.

- **5-9 DECEMBER 2007 :** Grundtvig contact seminar on intercultural dialogue in E&T

Seminar co-organised with the French Agency for the Lifelong Learning Programme in the frame of the Grundtvig programme. It aims to foster the implementation of cooperation projects between the organisations belonging to the platform's member networks in the frame of this programme on the theme of intercultural education.

EUCIS-LLL is a European platform that gathers 13 important European organisations or networks active in Lifelong learning : **ACC** (Association for Community Colleges), **AEGEE** (European Student's Forum), **EAEA** (European Association for Education of Adults), **ECSWE** (European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education), **EFFE** (European Forum for Freedom in Education), **EfVET** (European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training), **EUCEN** (European University Continuing Education Network), **EURO-WEA** (European Workers Education Association), **EVTA/AEFP** (European Vocational Training Association), **FEED** (European Federation for Education and Culture), **FICEMEA** (International Federation of Training Centres for the Promotion of New Education), **IAEC/AIVE** (International Association of Educating Cities), **SOLIDAR** (European platform on social affairs, international solidarity and lifelong learning).