



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2006

Welcome ...



To the second EFTRE newsletter. Sadly we have been unsuccessful in our bid for Comenius funding for a project on citizenship but we will be looking to rebid in 2007 and will keep you informed. We have been moving forward with plans for the Xth tri-annual conference which will be in Budapest from the 23rd-26th of August 2007, more about this later in the newsletter.

The EFTRE board met in Trondheim at the end of September (picture above) and as well as looking at future plans for EFTRE working on the planning of the conference in Budapest.

Attendees: Hugo Verkest (Belgium), Hans Fijn van Draat (Netherland), Jens Steffensen (Denmark), Marit Svare (Norway), Nils Tidman (Sweden), Marja Honkaheimo (Finland), Marianna Szabo (Hungary), Sonja Danner (Austria), Jose Guardia (Spain), Orazio Ruscica (Italy) Paul Hopkins (UK).

EFTRE is keen to continue to develop the ideas of how RE is taught across Europe. If you are able to send an example of a lesson of RE from your country this would could be invluded on the website and would be very interesting. As well as text, in English and your own language, we could include images, audio and video.

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Minutes of the Trondheim meeting

The meeting was held at the Dronning Mauds Minne Høgskolen, Trondheim, Norway.



- 1. Welcome** - Sonja Danner greeted everybody. Apologies from Cath Sinclair, Scotland, James Nelson, Northern Ireland, Alfred Weber, Switzerland, Jane Brooke, England, Genevieve Locqueville, France, Peter Schreiner, Germany, Olga Schihalejev, Estonia
- 2. Agreement of Agenda** - The agenda was agreed.
- 3. Matters arising** - Workshops to be sent to Sonja with abstract (details) for 13th October
Newsletter to be sent via Marit / Sonja to Paul for 6th October; the newsletter will go out to the representatives and then to wider groups via the representatives.
- 4. Minutes from the last meeting** - The minutes were agreed.
- 5. Membership, new members, revision of membership list** *Every board member* is asked to check if the members in his/her country still want to be members, and if so, have they paid. This last is due to the fact that Hans Fijn van Draat has received several payments into EFTRE's old account, and not all are identifiable.
Invoices are to be sent to the board member how will pass it on to the members together with the next newsletter.
When the next newsletter is ready, renewed contact will be taken with representatives in Poland, Greece and Iceland.
Marja Honkaheimo will be in touch with the Finnish Orthodox Association to clarify their status within EFTRE.
New member is Loccum Religionspädagogisches Institut, Germany
- 6. The conference in Budapest - August 2007** - For the draft programme see the next page and also the website at www.eftre.net If you would like to download a poster / advert for the conference for your national publication please see the website. Costs and application forms also on the website.
- 7. EFTRE's contribution to CoGREE** -and how we can further develop the relationship.
Through CoGREE we have an access into the council of Europe and to the other European Institutions. The meeting feels that Peter Schreiner will be a good representative within the wider European conference. We understand CoGREE to be more of a platform than an umbrella for EFTRE, and that it is important that the European institutions see this as a two-way organisation and that CoGREE passes on the links to the correct part of the membership. We agreed on taking part in making CoGREE's statutes, and then when we know the statutes agree to whether or not take part in making CoGREE an NGO.

8. Internet - Paul was thanked for the re-design of the website which was a great improvement. There were areas of the website that still needed to be developed if the site was to reflect the work and the aims of the organisation.

- Butterflies - the 'good ideas for teaching' (see box below)
- Country reports for 2006 need to be delivered
- Membership needs to be checked and updated
- Errors and corrections on membership
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9. Next Meeting - The executive will meet in Budapest on the 9th and 10th of March. The board will meet during the conference in Budapest.

Draft Programme for the Xth conference of EFTRE - August 23rd-26th 2007

Thursday 23rd	What is citizenship?
14:00 - 15:30	Registration and Coffee
15:30 - 17:00	Keynote Lecture: What is Citizenship - Liam Gearon (UK)
17:00 - 18:00	Language Groups
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner
19:30 - 20:30	Keynote Lecture: Linking City to Citizenship - Svein Sando (Norway)
Friday 24th	Religious identity and citizenship
09:00 - 13:00	Tour of relevant sites in the city looking at the place of citizenship in the cityspace
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:45 - 15:30	Considering and summing up the morning visit
15:30 - 15:40	Speaker's corner
15:40 - 17:30	Keynote Lecture: Religious Identity and Citizenship - Bert Robben (Belgium / Netherlands)
17:30 - 17:40	Conference Photo
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner
19:30 - 21:00	General assembly and board meeting - all welcome

Saturday 25th	Into the classroom
09:00 - 09:15	Introduction to the day
09:15 - 09:25	Speaker's corner
09:30 - 11:00	Workshops I (see below)
11:00 - 11:15	Coffee
11:15 - 12:45	Workshops II (see below)
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:30 - 16:30	Keynote Lecture: Title to be announced - Chris Doude van Troostweijck (France)
18:00 - late	Social evening with dinner and boat trip (not included in conference fee)
Sunday 26th	Perspectives of the future
09:00 - 09:10	Speaker's corner
09:15 - 10:00	Keynote Lecture: Visions for the future: Speaker to be announced
10:00 - 11:30	Closing sessions - reflections on the conference: John Keast (UK)
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch and departure

Workshops	
1. RE and e-citizenship	Paul Hopkins (UK)
2. Music and citizenship - P!O!P	Sonja Danner and Christoph Örley (Austria)
3. RE, citizenship and drama	Jane Brooke (UK)
4. RE, citizenship and Image	Hans Fijm Van Draat (Netherlands)
5. RE, art and culture	Juha Luodeslampi and Marja Honkaheimo (Finland)
6. Philosophy and Citizenship	Helle Hinge (Denmark)
7. Citizenship and Architecture	Genevieve Locqueville (France)
8. Conflict and co-operation in Citizenship	Hugo Verkest (Belgium)
9. Citizenship in Turkey	Ole Bjorn Pedersen (Norway)
for more details on the workshops keep an eye on the EFTRE website at www.eftre.net	

The Volga Forum

An international Conference, "Dialogue of Cultures and Inter-Faith Cooperation" (The Volga Forum) was held in Nizhniy Novgorod, Russia from the 7th to the 9th September 2006. There were about 300 participants, mainly from Russia. Foreign participants represented the COE and other international organisations (Like UNESCO, ALECSO, OSCE and others), experts (nominated by COE), representatives of religious denominations and COE member states and observers.

The final report from the forum

1. The International Conference on "Dialogue of Cultures and Inter-Faith Cooperation", which took place within the framework of the Russian Federation's chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, represented a milestone in efforts to foster intercultural dialogue since the Third Council of Europe Summit (Warsaw, May 2005). The participants drew inspiration from the Russian chairmanship's slogan: "For a united Europe - without dividing lines". The Russian Federation, whose history and culture are inseparably linked with those of Europe, possesses a unique cultural, ethnic and religious diversity constituting not only a historical legacy but also a creative potential for both Russia and Europe in the 21st Century.

2. The participants rejected the idea of a clash of civilisations being at the heart of present-day instability. It is in the interests of all cultural, ethnic and religious communities that such misleading and provocative ideas are not used as a factor of political mobilisation. Although the insensitivity of some towards the global outlooks and cultural traditions of others is deeply regrettable, attempts to put views across through violence or threats are totally unacceptable.

One way of responding to these challenges from the strategists of conflict between civilisations is to promote effective intercultural and interfaith dialogue and cooperation at local, national and international level. The aim of such a dialogue, which is a major priority for both the Council of Europe and national governments, is not a mere exchange of views but the attainment of social harmony respecting political diversity - on the basis of the recognition of internationally accepted human rights - and thereby greater security in Europe and the world.

3. The Council of Europe's approach to culture and religion and to means of communication, dialogue, achieving consensus and preventing conflict is first and foremost based on the principles and standards developed over the years by the Organisation, in particular through the European Convention on Human Rights. Its activities are rooted in the European Cultural Convention and the Faro Declaration on the Council of Europe's strategy for developing intercultural dialogue, and involve a wide range of actors. Among them, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Commissioner for Human Rights have played a special role in recent years to integrate the religious dimension into the Council of Europe's action to foster intercultural dialogue and understanding.

4. **Intercultural dialogue** and, more broadly, cooperation are general approaches to understanding the historical heritage of civilisations, drawing lessons from the past and promoting joint responsibility for a common future. These approaches, pursued through education, cultural and intercultural relations, information and human exchanges, as well as joint intergovernmental and non-governmental projects, contribute to securing peaceful stability in the long term and averting the threat of terrorism.

It is clear today that, besides the existing socio-economic factors underlying international instability, cultural and religious ignorance - including lack of knowledge of one's own and others' culture and heritage - provides fertile ground for rejection, extremism, terrorism and war. In this connection, value-driven education and cultural practice (such as education for democratic citizenship and human rights education and the promotion and encouragement of cultural expression) are becoming essential tools in combating hatred and intolerance as well as overcoming barriers caused by efforts of certain political forces to exploit cultural and religious ignorance for their own political ends. In this respect, the participants expressed their support for the project aiming at setting

up, in the framework of the Council of Europe, a pole of excellence on human rights and democratic citizenship education, taking into account the religious dimension.

5. Challenges and opportunities for cultural diversity

Recalling that cultural diversity has been recognised as a factor of human development and a manifestation of human liberty in the United Nations Human Development Report of 2004, the participants welcomed the inclusion of the democratic management of cultural diversity as one of the priorities of the 3rd Council of Europe Summit. This should remain a core concern, especially with a view to the new realities of a globalised and interdependent world. However, explicit policies that lead to effective delivery tools and actions are urgently required. The participants offered their strong support for Council of Europe's work that ensures the cohesion of societies based on the principles of the acceptance of difference and freedom of expression.

Russia, with its important history of cultural diversity in terms of religions and religious beliefs, languages, models of society, distinct ethnic groups and experience of intensive migration processes, regards cultural diversity increasingly as a resource. The country has adopted specific Federal Programmes for social and cultural development of ethnic groups as well as legislation for independent cultural organisations ("National Cultural Autonomy", 1996). The participants acknowledged Russia's experience in moving from conceptual to policy frameworks, and from policy to action, and noted that the new "Culture of Russia" Plan (2006-2010), explicitly targets the preservation of the countries' multi-ethnic cultural heritage. They welcomed Russia's contribution to ongoing Council of Europe collections of policies and practices, providing a valuable tool to all member states, and its support of cultural and heritage conventions.

The participants stressed the importance of the local and regional levels of governance in contributing to the democratic management of cultural diversity and the promotion of intercultural dialogue, as well as the fundamental role that local/regional authorities, working closely with individuals and groups in civil society, must play in shaping respective policies. An effective cultural diversity process requires the open participation of each citizen, with special attention paid to the participation of minorities. Citizenship is affected by global migration; individuals are increasingly living in transcultural contexts, often with multiple identities. The participants agreed that the European debate on cultural diversity will be enhanced if it incorporates the notion of multiple belonging and the richness of its cultural landscape as an asset for Europe.

6. The religious dimension in intercultural dialogue

The participants reaffirmed their commitment to the universal values and principles which form the common heritage of their peoples and the true source of individual freedom, political liberty, public ethics, civil responsibility and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy. They stressed that these values and principles should not contradict the continent's cultural and religious traditions and cannot be challenged nor undermined. Attempts to draw them into conflict are the results of ignorance or manipulation. Still, the promotion of these values will greatly benefit from discussions between politicians and ethnic, cultural and religious communities.

The freedom of conscience, the freedom of religion and the freedom of expression constitute fundamental values, as set out in the European Convention on Human Rights and developed in other Council of Europe instruments and in the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights. These cannot be limited except under the strict conditions foreseen by the Convention.

As they generally do at national level, religious organisations must have an opportunity to participate in European dialogue and discussion of all topical problems at international level, including the different aspects of respect for human rights, social cohesion and cultural diversity. This will enable them to contribute in a meaningful way to the pan-European project embodied by the Council of Europe.

The participants paid tribute to the pioneering role played in that context by the Human Rights Commissioner. They welcomed the newly established policy of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of inviting religious leaders and consulting with religious organisations on relevant topics. They felt that the time had indeed come for the Council of Europe to develop appropriate mechanisms for an open, transparent and regular dialogue with religious organisations.

7. The role of the media in intercultural dialogue

The participants stressed that the media can make a positive contribution to fostering a culture of understanding in a pluralistic society. With due regard to the fundamental right to freedom of expression and information and to the media's indispensable independence in a democratic society, media could be encouraged to reflect society's diversity, particularly in the context of audiovisual programming, and to report on ethnic, cultural and religious matters in a sensitive manner, avoiding demeaning stereotypes and generalisation and providing insight into each community's own diversity.

Media self-regulation is an important element in this context, and for reconciling the right to freedom of expression and information with respect for human dignity and the protection of the reputation or the rights of others. Other responses, especially of a regulatory nature, must respect obligations under international law and conform to the relevant case-law of the European Court of Human Rights.

The participants supported the Council of Europe's work towards the implementation of relevant items of the Action Plan adopted at the 7th European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy ("Integration and diversity: the new frontiers of European media and communications policy", Kyiv, March 2005), particularly as regards freedom of expression and information in times of crisis and diversity and pluralism in times of globalisation. They emphasised the need to encourage the media's contribution to intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and the interest of instituting an award for media which have made an outstanding contribution to conflict prevention or resolution, understanding and dialogue.

8. The participants expressed their support to reinforce national mechanisms for the protection of human rights and national minority rights. They underlined the importance, in this respect, of action taken by the Council of Europe and its relevant member states, including the Russian Federation, to fulfil their obligations under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The rights of the followers of all beliefs and traditions, whether majority or minority, newly implanted or long established, all beliefs and traditions must be respected, on the condition that they themselves respect the fundamental values enshrined in the Convention.

9. One example of effective cooperation forged in the course of history is the Volga region, where there has traditionally been peaceful interaction between the different ethnic and religious communities. Here, it is not just tolerant attitudes and intercultural dialogue that have developed in the course of time, but practical cooperation and joint action. Mutual influence, common action and joint responsibility for regional stability characterise the historical example of the Volga region, which is an asset for the Russian Federation and an example of a Europe without dividing lines.

10. The participants expressed keen interest and strong support for the Council of Europe initiative to prepare a "White Paper on intercultural dialogue". They invited governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as religious organisations in Europe, to play an active role in this process. They also welcomed the prospect of 2008 being designated "European Year of Intercultural Dialogue" and underlined the pertinence of the Council of Europe's contribution, drawing from a greater Europe, to this event.

Report from the colloquy at Chateau de Klingenthal on Religion, Citizenship and Education 16th to 20th October 2006.



ICCS organised the colloquy that aimed at sharing information and learning from each other and from those who are involved at the European Institutions. Some 20 participants were gathered from most (if not all) of the CoGREE member organisations.

The programme was diverse, lectures, presentations and discussions. One morning was spent visiting the Council of Europe, with a lecture by Carole Reich. Ulrich Bunjes and Alexandre Guessel came out to Klingenthal and lectured there. Important information

from these sessions is available on the following internet sites

On the Faro Declaration on Intercultural Dialogue: The Way Ahead http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/CulturalConvention/Source/FARO_DECLARATION_Definitive_Version_EN.pdf. I would also like to draw your attention to the White Paper that is being produced for this declaration. A draft is planned to be published before 2007, with the final edition scheduled for November 2007.

The home page for the Council of Europe on Education has also valuable information http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/, look especially out for the book Religious Diversity and Intercultural Education A Guide for Schools, to be published there.

Geza Tessenyi from The Intercultural Communication and Leadership School (ICLS) gave a presentation of their work in areas with intercultural conflict. www.intercivilization.net

One afternoon we visited the Lycée Ort in Strasbourg, a very interesting Jewish school that also have non-Jewish students, where we met both administrative and teaching staff as well as students. For more information on their work see <http://www.strasbourg.ort.asso.fr/lycee/legal.html>

In addition to guest speakers, the participants contributed with lectures, presenting good practice, projects relevant to the topic, such as these :

- ★ <http://www.redco.uni-hamburg.de/web/3480/3481/index.html>
- ★ <http://enreca.isert-network.com/docs/index.htm> and books, two of which are the following
- ★ <http://ci-muenster.de/bookshop/artikel/buecher/ru24.php>
- ★ http://www.waxmann.com/index2.html?kat/reihe_131.html



On the **EFTRE** website you can also find a button “project and practice” with a practice from Finland. “Godly play” is a good example of teaching RE in a different way. We try to make a kind of a teachers corner, where everybody can find “good examples” (practice) from different countries or projects which are made. Here we need your help!!! if we want to keep it up to date. You know some good examples? You know somebody who has made a good project? Please send it to eftre@paulhopkins.org.uk

Overview of activities and meetings - Europe and Education 2006-7

Date	Event
23rd - 25th Nov, 2006	IV General Assembly , Strasbourg
2007	
19th - 20th January, 2007	CoGREE core group : Crêt Beret Lausanne (Switzerland)
29th Jan - 3rd Feb, 2007	ECCE conference “Between Traditions - new directions in children’s ministry St. Pölten (Austria)
10th - 13th April, 2007	IV seminar in Donaueschingen
23rd - 26th August, 2007	EFTRE conference : “Contribution of Religious Education to Active Citizenship – Developing a European Perspective?” (Budapest). www.eftre.net
Autumn	IV seminar in Poland

If you have any events that you would like to add to this please let us know.