

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES

CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMISSION

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP: A ROLE FOR THE CHURCHES?

Conference held in Strasbourg, 5-7 October 2011

The Conference was supported, including financially, by the Chapitre Saint-Thomas (related to the local Protestant Churches), the City of Strasbourg and the Region Council of Alsace.

REPORT

The Working Group on Education of the Conference of European Churches organised a two day Conference in Strasbourg to discuss the role that churches should play in the field of education for democratic citizenship. It was attended by 27 people coming from 13 countries. The report that follows was drawn up by the Conference rapporteurs and is considered by the Working Group to give an accurate overview of the proceedings. The Conclusions set out at the end of the report were approved by the Conference participants at the closing session. The report, and especially its Conclusions, will form the starting point for the Working Group's further activities in this field.

Introduction

People in Europe today often seem to be disenchanted with democracy. We see widespread disaffection from politics and declining participation in elections. Moreover, many politicians are distrusted and even despised. A lot of people feel that their vote will not make any difference and that politicians are out of touch with ordinary citizens. Moreover, the mainstream media do not always inform people in depth about political issues.

At the same time, there is a worrying growth of extremist political parties in many European states, offering simplistic solutions that pander to people's prejudices. If democratic institutions are supported only half-heartedly by the majority of the populations, they will not be well placed to counter forces that offer authoritarian solutions to current problems, especially at times of economic crisis, social disruption and confusion about values.

One way of trying to improve the health of European democracy is through what is called *education for democratic citizenship*. This means preparing and equipping people to participate actively and intelligently in the life of society; to become responsible and active citizens in a participatory democracy. The term "education" is to be understood in a broad sense including not only formal education, but also non-formal and informal education. Education for democratic citizenship is closely linked to human rights education.

The theme of education for democratic citizenship has been taken up by the European political institutions, but the role and possible contribution by religions and religious believers has not received the attention it deserves. The Council of Europe's programme on education

for democratic citizenship (“Learning and living democracy for all”) has been running for some years, during which a range of educational tools and practical activities have been developed. The European Union (EU) runs a programme called “Europe for citizens” which aims to provide the Union with instruments to promote active citizenship.

The Council of Europe has provided a useful working definition of education for democratic citizenship: “Education for democratic citizenship” means *education, training, awareness-raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law* (Strategic support for decision makers – Policy tool for education for democratic citizenship and human rights, p. 54, Council of Europe Publishing, 2010).

Churches, as an important part of civil society, can and do play a significant part in preparing people to live as responsible members of democratic societies. Religion can motivate people to engage in social and political activity. The *Charta Oecumenica* commits European churches “to work towards a humane, socially conscious Europe, in which human rights and the basic values of peace, justice, freedom, tolerance, participation and solidarity prevail” (§ III.7). This is why the Church and Society Commission of the Conference of European Churches (CSC/CEC) has included education for democratic citizenship as one of the two main issues of its new Education Strategy, adopted in 2010. The aim of this Conference was to explore and clarify how CSC and its member churches should contribute to citizenship education.

Churches have a very long tradition of involvement in formal education. They may run their own schools and colleges and, depending on national legislation, may participate and take responsibility for public education. Many church-based activities are part of non-formal and informal education and encourage people to live as active and responsible citizens. This may apply to all kinds of church work with children and young people, but also to work with adults and to the opportunities for lay people to participate in the synods and councils of the Church. Moreover, churches have a special concern for the ethical aspects of political issues and encourage Christians to get involved in political, social and practical activities aimed at improving the people’s lives, especially those who are the most vulnerable and socially marginalised.

All this gives churches both the right and the duty to contribute to debates in the wider society about education for democratic citizenship.

Questionnaires

Before coming to Strasbourg for the Conference, participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire setting out their initial understanding of the term “education for democratic citizenship” and describing any relevant projects in which their church or other body was involved.

At the end of the Conference, participants were asked to fill in a second questionnaire showing how their understanding of education for democratic citizenship had changed and how their church could contribute to it. They were also asked to specify two actions they proposed to undertake on returning home and two goals they would like CSC to pursue in its contacts with the European institutions dealing with education for democratic citizenship.

The content of the questionnaire responses will be examined by the CSC Working Party on Education at its next meeting. In addition, a letter will be sent to participants about six months after the Conference inviting them to inform the Working Party about the results of any action they have been able to take in the light of the Conference.

Opening session

The **Rev'd Rüdiger Noll (Director of the Church and Society Commission of CEC)** recalled that the Church and Society Commission had decided to open up a new area of work on education policy because, although education remained primarily a matter for national governments, European institutions were becoming increasingly active in this field. The CSC Education Strategy specified two areas for future work: monitoring the work of the EU; and education for democratic citizenship. The EU documents seemed to envisage education primarily as an engine for economic growth and a means of promoting people's employability, while the churches would probably wish to press for fuller recognition of the broader purposes of education. Churches did not hitherto seem to have been greatly involved in education for democratic citizenship, but in view of their involvement in most areas of education they were well placed to become more active in this field. The Conference should help to clarify the messages which churches should seek to bring to European work on education for democratic citizenship as well as stimulating the participants to encourage new initiatives in their home churches and organisations.

Translating democratic citizenship into everyday life: how can the churches be involved?

In order to illustrate the kind of initiatives which can be undertaken by churches or church-related bodies, the following seven projects were presented to participants on the basis of posters prepared by those responsible:

- Children of Chernobyl, presented by Alena Domanevskaya, member of the Belarusian Ecumenical Forum of Christian Women.
- Social media: a shortcut to democratic intercultural dialogue, presented by J.H. Pedersen (video journalist with the Church of Denmark).
- Superbadger, a social media project launched by the Christian charity Tearfund, aiming to help young people take part in the fight against poverty and injustice, presented by Diane Murray.
- Life in Fullness – Sustainable Way of Life (exhibition by the Protestant and Catholic churches of St Gallen, Switzerland), presented by the Rev'd Dr Daniel Schmid-Holz.
- Seminar on the Christian Contribution to Education for Democracy organised in Bad Wildbad (Germany) by IV, a Christian teachers' organization, presented by Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer.

- Peace education programme, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, presented by the Rev'd Friedhelm Schneider.
- Encounter between young people from both parts of Cyprus, Israel and Palestine, organised by the Church of Cyprus and presented by Georgios Ioannou

Fuller information about these projects is set out in the Addendum to this report.

Presentation on Christianity, Citizenship and Education

Dr Liam Gearon, University Lecturer in Religious Education in Oxford University, started by pointing out that since the Enlightenment the role of religion in public life had been minimised, but that in recent years it has started to become more visible. This applied at the global level of the United Nations, while at the same time citizenship education was now giving increased attention to religion and religious identity and religious education was giving greater attention to the political implications of religion. Drawing on his research project based on interviews with a large number of religious leaders in the UK, Dr Gearon identified different approaches within the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church concerning the relationship between religious authority and political authority. He then contrasted two current views on the process of secularisation. Some considered that the resurgence of religion and religious issues in public life indicated that the secularisation theory was wrong. Others considered that religion was coming back into public life, not for its own sake, but because of the political agenda of the State. In Dr Gearon's view, we can see the emergence across Europe of what might be called a common European "civil religion" based on citizenship, human rights and democracy. International bodies, particularly the European Court of Human Rights, were playing a prominent part in defining this "religion". [Arthur, James; Gearon, Liam; Sears, Alan (2010): *Education, Politics and Religion: Reconciling the Civic and the Sacred in Education*, London and New York: Routledge]

Reflecting on Dr Gearon's talk, the Conference concluded that although Christians could to a large extent identify with and support this emergent civil religion, for example by contributing to education for democratic citizenship, they should nonetheless maintain a critical distance and not allow themselves simply to be co-opted into furthering the State's agenda.

"World café" discussions

The Conference then discussed the following three questions using the "world café" methodology: There were three questions, which to some extent mirrored several in the first part of the questionnaire, gave participants the opportunity to share their ideas and experiences in this area.

1. What is your church/organisation offering in the field of education (formal and non-formal)?

To some extent there was a geographical divide, as while there was a wide range of educational activities at all levels in Western Europe, in some other countries there was a shortage of even basic theological education for priests and few resources for education for children or adults.

2. How can you/your church be involved in education for democratic citizenship?

The definition applied to education in this context was very wide and included a range of subjects and activities, particularly those involving team work as opposed to individualism, and which stressed the value of working together.

3. What are your issues/proposals for future work?

There were a wealth of proposals and a wide coverage of areas which might be included in education for democratic citizenship, for example peace education. Church sports clubs could be a way to build teams, attract young people and provide a foretaste of democratic practice Churches could look at the link between Christian values and education for democratic citizenship. Many of the other suggestions are included among the conclusions.

Amongst the many points coming out of the café discussions were:

- a) Churches can act as cultural/educational centres. They can fill the gaps left when State education withdraws from subjects seen as less important for the economy, such as music and drama. These can be effective vehicles for learning democratic citizenship.
- b) It was proposed that, in seeking to contribute to education for democratic citizenship, the churches should resist the tendency to reflect the excessively consumerist emphasis on “my rights” and underline the need for active (participatory) and responsible exercise of citizenship. This, it could be argued, was the way of the gospel: I find my true fulfilment through assuming my responsibilities for others.

Presentations on the work of the European institutions

Mrs Maria Ochoa Llido (Directorate of Education and Language, DG IV, Council of Europe) recalled that the programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship had been launched at the Council of Europe’s Strasbourg Summit in 1997. Education was seen as playing a major role in promoting the Organisation’s core values and as a defence against racism and intolerance. The basic text is the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7). In November 2012 there will be a major conference to review the implementation of education for citizenship in the member States. Implementation depended on cooperation with governments, schools, teachers, parents and NGO’s – including the churches. Religious bodies were specifically mentioned in the Charter as potential partners. A network of national coordinators had been set up to coordinate the implementation of the Charter in the member States. The Council of Europe has published several practical manuals aimed at helping these different groups to put education for democratic citizenship into practice. A European Resource Centre (the Wergeland Centre) had been set up in Norway and this could be of value to the churches. She thought there was plenty of scope for cooperation with the churches in this field. (cf. <http://www.coe.int/edc>)

Mr Jonathan Hill (European Commission, Cabinet of the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth) then presented the Commission's current activities and future plans in areas relevant to education for democratic citizenship. In a globalised world it was becoming increasingly important for people to develop language skills and intercultural skills. Bearing in mind that education remained primarily a matter for member States, this was an area in which the EU could play a useful complementary role. The Commission encouraged democratic citizenship through a) policy development (promotion of research and sharing of best practice), and b) mobility programmes, enabling large numbers of people to study, work and teach in other EU countries and beyond. One of the Commission's four strategic goals for the coming years, as set out in the framework for Education and Training 2020 ("ET 2020"), was "to promote equity, social cohesion and active citizenship" – in other words, education for democratic citizenship.

The Commission supported member States in raising standards in the key competences people need in order to participate fully in society. These included communication skills and the capacity to interact with other cultures. The Commission was currently proposing a massive (73%) increase in funding for its education programmes during the period 2014-2020. These funds would be allocated to mobility programmes (65%), cooperation programmes (25%) and policy reform (10%). By virtue of being a European network and because of the churches' longstanding expertise in the field of education, organisations like CEC and its member churches were well placed to apply for such funding. This applied particularly to the cooperation programmes, which were designed to assist NGO networks and platforms in developing activities which contributed to the achievement of EU educational goals such as education for democratic citizenship.

In the discussion that followed, Jonathan Hill defended the Commission's stress on education for employability on the grounds that high youth unemployment was such a major concern, but emphasised that the proposed new funding cycle would include a substantial component on issues related to education for democratic citizenship. The EU was not only concerned with economical questions, but also very much about helping people to live together. He also encouraged CEC and its member churches to contribute their thinking to the policy reform process, working in the first place through national governments. Moreover, churches had great opportunities to create or contribute to networks on numerous educational topics (e.g. use of IT tools in schools, early childhood education, etc).

Note on applications: Project promoters interested in setting up a project must complete the relevant application forms and follow the application procedures which are described on the website of the Programme.

See http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/how-to-participate/doc485_en.htm

Applications are processed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency Executive Agency (EACEA).

Initiatives at the local level

Mr Dmitri Marchenkov (Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe) said that the Congress had recently taken up the topic of education for democratic citizenship. The Current Affairs Committee was drawing up a report entitled “Education for democratic citizenship: tools for cities”, which would shortly be debated in plenary. In order to ensure the stability of democratic systems of government it was necessary for a culture of democracy to become embedded in society and among citizens. Education for democratic citizenship was about fostering such a culture. Because of their emphasis on moral responsibility, including social responsibility, the churches could play an important part in this process.

The role of local authorities, civil society and religious bodies was also crucial in the related field of intercultural and inter-faith relations. In its 2011 report and debate on this question, the Congress had emphasised the need for a) dialogue between local authorities and religious organisations (cf. the twelve guidelines included in the 2006 publication *Gods in the City*), b) the right of all residents (including legal immigrants of five years’ standing) to vote in local elections, and c) the value of councils of foreign residents as advisory bodies to city councils. Each year since 2007, the Congress had organized Local Democracy Week, and those cities most actively involved in this event had been granted the title of “Twelve Star City”. Over several years, and in particular since 2010, the Congress had been working to promote human rights awareness and human rights training at the local level. Whether or not they realised it, local authorities were very much involved in human rights issues (e.g. municipal policing or the authorisation or banning of parades, as well as the whole range of social rights).

In the discussion that followed, Dmitri Marchenkov pointed out that intercultural problems were not usually about faith as such, but about relations between groups of people; and thus churches had an important part to play in developing good community relations.

Participants expressed their interest in the recent Council of Europe report by the Group of Eminent Persons: *Living together: Combining Diversity and Freedom in 21st Century Europe*. (<http://book.coe.int/ftp/3667.pdf>)

The suggestion was also made that in places where democratic culture was not yet firmly established, churches could work together with the Congress on local projects.

Link to the Resolution 332 (2011) of the Congress on “Education for Democratic Citizenship – Tools for Cities” =

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1855345&Site=Congress&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=CACC9A&BackColorLogged=EFEA9C>

Mr Robert Herrmann (First Deputy Mayor of the City of Strasbourg), speaking as a politician, assured the Conference that the question of education for democratic citizenship was at the centre of the thinking and action of the Strasbourg city authorities. Moreover, in the special conditions of Alsace, dialogue between political authorities and religious bodies was a normal practice. Political action should be based on listening to others, especially to those who were suffering most in the current economic crisis. Democratic citizenship depended on remaining constantly alert to the risks of exclusion and racism. Such questions called for continuing dialogue with all concerned, and not least with the churches.

Conclusions of the Conference

On the basis of both the group work and the discussions in plenary, the Conference agreed on the following conclusions.

Some general considerations

1. Churches are major providers of both formal and non-formal education in many countries even though the nature of their relationship with the public education system varies greatly from one country to another. They have, therefore, both a duty and a right to contribute to reflection and action about implementing education for democratic citizenship.
2. There are, in addition, many and varied church or church-sponsored activities which can be seen as contributing to democratic citizenship, e.g. dance, drama, sport, development of interpersonal relationships and social skills.
3. In all parts of Europe there is a need to redefine the role of the churches in society and to encourage governments to see that the input of faith bodies is a natural part of the democratic process.
4. In post-communist countries, churches may feel a particular need to help people understand and experience the workings of representative democracy and participatory democracy, as well as the relationship between freedom and responsibility.
5. In European societies as a whole, churches must insist that human fulfilment is not only a matter of the awareness of one's rights and one's personal development, but comes also, and perhaps even more so, from willing acceptance of responsibilities and service to one's neighbour.
6. Although churches can identify to a very large extent with the aims of education for democratic citizenship, they should nonetheless be aware of the risk of simply being co-opted as agencies for delivering an essentially secular agenda. Although there is clearly a very considerable correspondence between the mission of the European churches and the aims of the Strasbourg human rights institutions, this does not mean

that member churches will always fully endorse the positions of the human rights bodies on specific issues. Accordingly, while seeking and welcoming opportunities for contributing to education for democratic citizenship, churches should always be careful to maintain a critical distance from government and intergovernmental objectives and programmes.

7. The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Recommendation CM/Rec(2001)7) constitutes a valuable basis for further reflection on education for democratic citizenship within the churches and other organisations.

What should we now do?

1. What churches can do?

- 1.1. Organise exchanges of experience/partnerships between different churches, e.g. visits to churches in other countries. Undertake comparative studies of how specific types of church activity, such as confirmation preparation, can contribute to education for democratic citizenship. Prepare and share a compilation of good practices. Hanna Broadbridge will provide a short report about a planned trilateral project between Denmark, Scotland and Latvia. This can be used also to work out criteria on what ‘good practice’ means.
- 1.2. Contact the relevant national coordinator for the Council of Europe’s programme on education for democratic citizenship in order to examine the possibilities for church involvement in policy-making and implementation at national level. (The list of national coordinators can be found at : <http://www.coe.int/edc>, then Network of EDC/HRE coordinators, then list of national EDC/HRE coordinators and finally “Country”) The list is available online and the participants should contact their coordinator to ask what kind of actions are planned and how the countries contribute to CoE activities on EDC/HRE.
- 1.3. Encourage governments at national level to do more to implement education for democratic citizenship along the lines they have agreed to, in the context of the Council of Europe programme.

Find out through national coordinators (See 1.2) what is done and planned and think about how churches can be connected.
- 1.4 Explore the possibility of working with local authorities in projects like Local Democracy Week.
- 1.5 Carry out research on the theological basis of education. Reflect on the philosophical and theological grounding for a concept of citizenship based on human dignity. Consider in greater depth the reasons why Christian churches should be concerned with education for democratic citizenship. Is it simply because we are all citizens? Or is there also a more specifically theological justification, something which proceeds from our faith?

- 1.6 Critically examine educational programmes to ensure that they promote responsibility, empowerment, integrity, commitment and freedom in those for whom they are intended.
- 1.7 Consider where the limits to tolerance are: although diversity and tolerance are shared values in Europe today, presumably not *everything* is acceptable.
- 1.8 Analyse different churches' understandings of the way in which the principles of education for democratic citizenship can be applied in the institutional life of the church (with a view, in particular, to assisting those churches that are seeking to become more democratic in their internal practice).

2 *How CEC/CSC can support these activities*

- 2.1 Follow the development of the European Union's programme *Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020)*. Attempt to re-balance the perceived emphasis on employability and technical skills in the EU approach to education; insist on the importance of thinking critically, in order to solve problems and to develop reflective competence.
- 2.2 Keep abreast of the new funding opportunities of the EU due to be adopted later this year.
- 2.3 Inform churches about the opportunities for European funding of projects on education for democratic citizenship and assist churches in making applications to the EU programmes. This would include existing programmes such as Comenius (schools) Erasmus (universities), Grundtvig (adult education), as well as the new funding possibilities which will be introduced in the programmes shortly to be adopted for 2014-2020. Note that the European Commission has now set up offices in each member State to assist people drawing up applications for funding.
- 2.4 Explore in depth with officials of the relevant European institution what the practical possibilities are for cooperation with the churches.
- 2.5 Through its Working Group on Education, make contact with the European Wergeland Centre to see where this could help churches in their work on education for democratic citizenship (of particular interest could be the Centre's work with the Council of Europe's Pestalozzi Programme for the Training of Education Professionals). Inform member churches about this.
- 2.6 If the Church and Society Commission of CEC is to carry out these tasks for its member churches, it will need to be adequately resourced. In particular, it would be highly desirable to make available a staff member with responsibility for implementing the CSC Education Strategy.

Appendix 1

Addendum to the Report on the Conference on Education for Democratic Citizenship

Strasbourg, 3-5 October 2011

« Translating » democratic citizenship into everyday life, How can the churches be involved?

Under the part of the programme labelled « *Translating* » *democratic citizenship into everyday life, How can the churches be involved?* seven people prepared posters and explained the projects to the participants.

1. Children of Chernobyl, presented by Alena Domanevskaya, member of the Belarusian Ecumenical Forum of Christian Women

The representative from this organisation gave a pictorial presentation of their activities. It strives to improve conditions for a wide range of people, affected by the difficult political and economic climate. Among the activities figure:

- weekly discussion groups on current topics such as freedom of speech, ecology and the use of nuclear energy, the social and political situation in Belarus;
- participation in and help with a summer programme for children which sends them abroad for a month to help them recover their health;
- a weekend club for lonely older people, humanitarian aid for sick and disabled children, prisoners etc;
- an annual international youth festival and a summer ecology school;
- the care of the Garden of Hope planted in 1996 with women from fifteen countries to mark the tenth anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster.

2. The contribution of social networking to democratic citizenship

Two projects were presented in this area.

Social media – a shortcut to democratic intercultural dialogue was presented by J. H. Pedersen, a video journalist from the Church of Denmark

This poster and the ensuing discussion aimed to make people and organisations aware of the use of social media and how it could be used as a way of keeping in contact between church services. It has been argued that the social media are superficial in their form. Whilst this

may be so, the fact remains that it exists and is a major force and the Church **must** rise to the occasion and include the social media as part of their work, especially with the younger generation.

The important points are that the social media:

are a shortcut to democratic intercultural dialogue;
allow groups and individuals, otherwise isolated, to take part in the democratic process;
aim at strengthening relations within and between groups;
allow for an efficient and swift sharing of cultural, political and religious values;
can contribute toward a better stronger Church.

SUPERBADGER presented by Diane Murray

This is a practical way for UK citizens to make their voices heard, in areas where government action is needed in the cause of justice and action. Started three years ago by Tearfund (a UK Christian charity) it aims to help young people particularly take part in the fight against poverty and injustice, even while surfing the internet, poking or tweeting people.

To badger in English means to remind and keep on reminding until action is taken and this is what those involved in the programme do. They remind Parliamentarians and others in powerful positions of promises made, draw attention to wrongs, support action and outline abuses especially in the areas listed here - climate change, corruption, disaster management, risk reduction, fair trade, natural disasters, politics, poverty and justice, uncategorized water & sanitation.

To give an example - the Energy Bill in the UK was having a second debate on 10 May and an amendment was to be attached, so that the energy efficiency programme in the bill resulted in cuts in carbon emissions and tackled fuel poverty. On 9 May Badgers were told that although over 580 MPs had been emailed their MP may not have been among them, so they were asked to email him or her before the debate and ask them to support the amendment, which is designed to facilitate the UK's transition to a low carbon economy, whilst providing a boost to the economy, new jobs, improved energy security and reducing fuel poverty.

Badgers have also worked in the international field by using Facebook and iPhone to send over 1500 emails to different UN employees drawing attention to the award of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) prize for "scientific achievements" to Teodoro Obiang, President of Equatorial Guinea, who had been accused of rigging elections, rights abuses and corruption. These emails had an impact and UNESCO suspended the prize.

3. "Life in Fullness - Sustainable Way of Life" presented by Rev'd Dr. Daniel Schmid-Holz

This will be an exhibition of the Protestant and Catholic churches of St.Gall – Gallus jubilee 2012 Examples of a sustainable way of life in six areas:

- 1 Development cooperation/ mission (development agencies...)
- 2 Sustainable consumption (local markets, low energy...)
- 3 Resource productivity (clean clothes, water...)
- 4 Energy (electricity, heating, buildings...)
- 5 Ethical investment (micro finance...)
- 6 Mobility (going by foot, bikes, policy...)

Posters and objects will be exhibited and lectures and workshops organized.

There will be contests in the following areas:

- 30 posters, designed in collaboration with NGO's, 30 topics;
- interactive objects e.g. bike that produces electricity, footprint-calculator, films;
- quiz, workshops, lectures for children and adults;
- a contest for young people about a sustainable way of life;
- future workshops and open space conferences.

The aim - I wanna stay here! – The story of Gallus and a sustainable way of life

Why do we want to stay here? is the key question of Gallus today. The story of Gallus says that he walked along a creek, then he stumbled and fell into the thorns of roses. When he got up, a bear brought him the wood for fire. Now he knew: I wanna stay here. This was the beginning of the town of St.Gall. However, today, we have to express ourselves and formulate our visions for a new quality of life as a reason to stay here.

4. IV Seminar the Christian contribution to Education for Democracy, presented by Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer

Education for democratic citizenship from a Christian perspective has been a core issue of IV since it was founded by a group of teachers from the Netherlands and Germany, after World War I. Today, IV is an umbrella organization, overarching teacher associations, school board organizations, networks of schools and teacher training institutes from different European countries. It pursues its goals often in cooperation with other bodies, especially ICCS. For example, a joint publication is in progress with the title "Education for Democratic Citizenship in a European Context - Challenges and connecting points for Churches and educators from a Protestant perspective" (authors: Peter Schreiner and Eckhart Marggraf).

The Seminar held April 26-29, 2011, in Bad Wildbad (Germany) together with the Ministry of Education of Baden-Württemberg was on "European citizenship for the future: the Christian contribution to education for democracy" (*in German: "Welche Bürger braucht Europa? Der christliche Beitrag zur Demokratieerziehung"*).

The invitation was addressed to teachers, school leaders, board members and other school related professionals from all over Europe and the speakers came from six different countries. The topics addressed included:

"European Citizenship Education" on the agenda of the European institutions and their attitude towards religion and churches (review)

"What role does religion play in the education of our citizens? – What role does Europe play?" (contributions from the Netherlands and Hungary)

"Concepts of political education and of democratic acting in the European horizon" (seen by a politician)

"Basic elements of an ethics of responsibility in the Christian education" (from the perspective of the Church of England)

There was the opportunity to have an exchange of ideas in groups (method: "World Café")

Examples of education for democratic citizenship in the countries of participants included:

Social studies – Europe – Religion in the seminary of Maulbronn (Germany)

"Stiftung Dialog" at the Campus Muristalden (Switzerland) and its project "Jugend debattiert" ("Youth on debate")

"Citizenship Education" at the "Lycée d'enseignement hôtelier" and at the "Lycée d'enseignement général, technologique et professionnel" (Strasbourg, France)

"Education to Social Responsibility" at the Protestant school centre of Michelbach (Germany)

"Education! – Democracy! – Religion ?" (John Keast)

The Seminar was very stimulating because of the large variety of contributors (teachers, school leaders, theologians, sociologists, politicians). The outcome is, of course, not restricted to a single message.

5. Project: Peace Education Programme, presented by the Rev. Friedhelm Schneider

The Rev. Friedhelm Schneider is part of the "Network Peace Education Rhineland-Palatinate" (Netzwerk Friedensbildung Rheinland-Pfalz)

Target Group: Teachers and students in public schools

Context: Before conscription was suspended in Germany, 8 of 16 Federal Ministries of Education signed a contract with the army ("Bundeswehr"). These contracts recommend the participation of "Youth Officers" in school education in order to inform students inter alia about the necessity of armed forces and military intervention. In August 2011 the Rhineland-Palatinate Ministry of Education signed the first German Peace Education contract with a network of 15 (church-related and civil-society-based) peace organisations. With the support of the Ministry of Education these organisations can send experts to schools to inform them of voluntary peace service, non-violent conflict resolution, human security etc.

Aims: The project is to support in public schools the awareness of prevention and non-violent conflict resolution from a personal to an international level.

Relation to Citizenship education: According to the school law of Rhineland-Palatinate education has to contribute “to non-violent living together and to the binding idea of international understanding”. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child stresses “the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin” (Art 29).

Impact on Church activities/ideas: The priority of non-military / civilian conflict resolution is one of the basic principles of Protestant peace ethics.

For more detailed information (in German) see www.netzwerk-friedensbildung-rlp.de

6. Project from the Church of Cyprus presented by Mr Georgios Ioannou

In an interesting power point presentation Mr Georgios Ioannou gave information on a project, which brought together young people from both parts of Cyprus and from Israel and Palestine.

Appendix 2

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP - A ROLE FOR THE CHURCHES?

Strasbourg, 5-7 October 2011

PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 5 October

Afternoon (at CIARUS)

14h00 **Opening prayers**

14h10 **Introduction to the Conference by the Director of CSC – Rüdiger Noll**

- What we wish to achieve
- Pitfalls we would be wise to avoid
- Brief outline of the themes for discussion

14h20 **“Translating” democratic citizenship into everyday life. How can the churches be involved?**

[Short introductions to projects and programmes, involving both the churches and civil society. This session will use the method of posters allowing for dynamic and interactive presentations. It will be held in two parts on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning.]

Possible projects

- Children of Chernobyl Foundation – Alena Domanevskaya, member of Belarus of the EFECW (Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women)
- Project within the Church of Cyprus – Mr Georgios Ioannou, Orthodox Church of Cyprus, Representation to the European Institutions in Brussels
- IV Seminar “The Christian Contribution to Education for Democracy” – Dr Gerhard Pfeiffer
- Mr J. H. Pedersen, video journalist in the Church of Denmark
- Revd. Friedhelm Schneider, Peace and Environment project, Protestant Church of Palatinate (Germany)
- The contribution of social networking to democratic citizenship e.g. Super Badger, Mrs Diane Murray (United Kingdom)
- “Life in Fullness” - Dr Rev Daniel Schmid-Holz, Protestant Church of Switzerland,

15h20 – 15h30 Short break

15h30 Presentation followed by discussion on “**Christianity, Citizenship and Education**” by **Dr. Liam Gearon**, University Lecturer in Religious Education, Department of Education and Senior Research Fellow, Harris Manchester College, University of Oxford

16h30 Break at the bar

17h00 **World Café**

We shall use the method of a “World café”. We provide tables each for 4-5 persons, paper table cloth and different coloured pens for each table. There are three rounds of talks and exchange, each of them between 20 and 30 minutes. Each table has a host who stays at the table during the whole session. The paper table cloth is used to note main ideas, to draw pictures to comment written ideas etc. After the first phase the travellers go to another table, the host stays. In the second phase they exchange ideas of the first round and link them with ideas at the “new” table. In the third phase the travellers go again to a different table. After this a presentation of results is done in plenary session where the wall papers are presented and discussed.

18h20 Reporting back in **Plenary**

Possibility to have dinner at CIARUS at 19h00 and possibly activities in the evening

Thursday, 6 October (at the Council of Europe – **Agora Building**)

9h00 **Presentation of the work of the European institutions,**

Presentation by a representative of the Council of Europe

Ms Maria Ochoa-Llido, Head of Department, Directorate of Education and Language, DGIV, Council of Europe

Presentation by a representative of the European Commission

Mr Jonathan Hill, member of the Cabinet of Ms Androulia Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth.

Round table, questions and discussion with the speakers

11h00 Break

11h15 Where are we so far?

12h30 Lunch (at the “Pharmacopée” of the Council of Europe)

Afternoon (at the Council of Europe)

14h 15 **Working groups:**

- to discuss critically the material presented by the European institutions;
- to consider how we can contribute to fostering democratic citizenship and inspire implementation of these ideas a) through the educational work of the churches and associated organisations and b) at the European level. What is already done of at the European level? How can we use existing programmes?

16h 45 **Plenary:** to sum up the findings of the groups and to draw some initial conclusions on what has been heard and experienced this day

19h00 “Tarte Flambée” in a local restaurant (Ancienne Douane, rue de la Douane)

.../...

Friday, 7 October (at CIARUS)

Plenary

9h00 Skeleton of draft conclusions by rapporteurs.

Questionnaire n° 2 will be handed out

9h30 **Mr Dmitri Marchenkov**, member of staff for the Congress of Local Authorities from the Council of Europe

Implementation on the political level

How can politicians and different actors from civil society/churches act together? What are the expectations? What can we learn from each other?

10h30 Break at the bar

11h00 Evaluation including

- Rapporteurs to present draft conclusions of the Conference
- Comments and requests to the rapporteurs, who will finalise their paper

11h30 **Mr Robert Herrmann**, First Deputy Mayor of Strasbourg

12h20 Closing prayer

Questionnaire n° 2 are collected

12h30 **Lunch**

Departures

Afternoon: for the Working Group members: 12.30 – 13.30 Short meeting for debriefing

Appendix 3

Education for Democratic Citizenship – A role for the Churches?

Strasbourg, 5-7 October 2011

List of Participants

Rev. Ewan AITKEN, Church of Scotland

Rev. James BARNETT, ICCS

Mr Louis BLOCH, Jewish Community in the Bas-Rhin

Mrs Hanna BROADBRIDGE, The International Council for the Danish Lutheran Church

Metropolitan Stephanos CHARALAMBIDES, Orthodox Church of Estonia

Miss Alena DOMANEVSKAYA, Children of Chernobyl

Mr Vincent DUBOIS, United Protestant Church in Belgium

Prof. Liam GEARON, University of Oxford

Dr Laima GEIKINA, University of Latvia, Faculty of Theology

Ms Elvira GÖMBÖCZ, Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Hungary

Mrs Mara GRIGOLA, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia

Rt Rev Dr Norman HAMILTON, Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Mr Georgios IOANNOU, Church of Cyprus

Mr Jean-François JOLIVALT, Orthodox Church of Estonia (Journalist)

Archimandrite Dr Arsenios KARDAMAKIS, Ecumenical Patriarchate

Dr David LANKSHEAR, Inter-European Commission on Church and School

Rev Sören LENZ, Union of Protestant Churches in Alsace and Lorraine/Eglise autrement Le Château Liebfrauenberg

Fr Gabriel NISSIM, SIGNIS (World Catholic Association for Communication)

Mr Jesper Henning PEDERSEN, Folkekirkeinfo

Dr Gerhard PFEIFFER, IV – International Association for Christian Education

Dr Rev Daniel SCHMID HOLZ, Protestant Church in Switzerland

Rev Friedhelm SCHNEIDER, Evangelical Church of the Palatinate

Mr Peter SCHREINER, Intereuropean Commission on Church and School (ICCS) and
Protestant Churches in Germany (EKD)

Rev Christian Ulrik TERP, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark and Grundtvigsk Forum

Dr Kostas ZORBAS, Church of Greece

Staff

Rev Rüdiger NOLL, Director of the Church and Society Commission, Associate General
Secretary of CEC

Rev Richard FISCHER, Executive Secretary of CSC

Rev John MURRAY, Associate staff of CSC

Ms Marie-Madeleine LINCK, Administrative staff of CSC

Ms Diane MURRAY