

Workshop Session 2

“SOCIAL COHESION IN THE EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY”

Report from the workshop
Saturday, December 3rd, 2005

Presentators:

Andreas Korvats, Hungary
Cheryl Turner, UK
Manuela Guilherme, Portugal

Chair:

Jumbo Klercq, Netherlands

Reporter:

Ines Potočić, Croatia

Mr. Klercq opened our work session by introducing the speakers (presentators) and invited the audience to actively participate in our today's subject of working group. Main points from presentations are:

Andreas Korvats: THE CASE OF IMMIGRATION

- Immigrants in Europe – an estimated 24.5 million people in 30 European countries, 4.5% of the total population are immigrants
- Who are they; labour migrants, their household members, refugees and asylum seekers
- Integration of immigrants
 - Core areas and dimensions: housing, employment, education, social networks and civic participation
- **The ultimate goal is an independent life and self sufficiency!**
- Introductory and Orientation Programmes as a Form of Civic Education
 - Integrated models as best practices (language, vocational and orientation)
 - Civic content: fundamental values of the society; constitutional, legal and political knowledge; cultural orientation; historical overview; information on welfare, education and health system
- Some issues for consideration:
 1. Are there any general set of values that represents the recipients society?
 2. To what extent should the culture, norms and values of the immigrant communities be reflected by the introductory programmes?
 3. Should the programmes be made compulsory?
 4. Who shall pay the costs of such programmes?
 5. How to evaluate?

Cheryl Turner: SOCIAL COHESION AND ADULT LEARNING

- Definition of the “Hard to reach learners” – individuals or groups of people for whom education is unreachable because of their class/age/economic status/gender (also long term unemployed, old people, ex-offenders, people with no qualification etc.)

- Small but accurate changes to policy and practice that enable us to target our work precisely and make a significant difference
- The use is developing a national Framework for adult active learning for active citizenship which may be an opportunity to:
 - a) focus attention on the role of adult learning in citizenship education
 - b) value a community-based development, learners-centered approach to the citizenship learning

Manuela Guilherme: INTERACT – Intercultural Active Citizenship Education

(project started 2004, till 2007-European commission)

- Focus of the programme is on all students, searching for the intercultural dimension of citizenship education
- Overall conceptual analysis: which are the ideas behind produced documents (by Council of Europe and European Commission) and how are they interpreted and implemented by politicians and teachers
- Curriculum analysis of postgraduate and teacher training programmes
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis (individual and group interviews with politicians, policy makers, academics and teachers)
- Evolution of terms in documents: democratic education, human rights education, multicultural education... intercultural education
- Evolution of ideas: assimilation, intergration... participation
- Researched concepts: identity, democracy, human rights, citizenship, multiculturalism and interculturalism
- National scope of these terms and concepts in 4 countries: Denmark, England, Portugal and Spain

Discussion:

1. Which prerequisites have to be created (socio-political, trainings etc.)?
2. Which forms of European cooperation/project work can be developed?
3. Can the interaction of Civic Empowerment and Community building be related stronger than before to the policy fields of action of the European institutions?

Those were the questions that Mr. Klercq showed to the group by the projector and asked the audience and presentators to state the situation in their own countries as they see it. The discussion started by defining who are Hard-to-reach-learners groups in each country that was represented in the audience (Latvia, Denmark, United Kingdom, Romania, Netherlands, Portugal, Germany, Sweden, Hungary).

Conclusions were that actions in civic education should be taken within political, educational and policy level. At the political level we need institutional extension of the voting system so it includes the immigrants and in the same time tools of preparation of the candidates for local elections. At the educational level group agreed that integrated, interdisciplinary approach would be the best way to form a link between formal and non-formal education (including community centres). For that we should provide an on-going trainings for teachers in integrated and interdisciplinary approaches. This includes not only educational institutions and organisations, but appropriate learning places

(learning environments); not only educational policy but the involvement of employers. This approach means learning and working together, constant exchange of experiences. At the policy level there is a need for integral and interconnected policy which includes inter-departmental approach within governments, and also within government institutions and non-governmental organisations. Participation from minority groups at different levels of this actions is very important and should be a priority.