

Annexes – Europa Conference 4 June 2010

Break-out Discussion Groups – Summaries from notes

Morning Input-led Sessions: Policy into Practice

Annex 1

Developing active European citizenship: proposals for schools – Dr Mairin Hennebry

Dr Hennebry situated her talk around an ESRC (UK Education and Social Research Council)-funded research project she conducted in four European countries. As a linguist, language teacher and teacher trainer she was interested in whether foreign language classrooms were serving as an effective channel for teaching and learning about European citizenship. Her review of European Commission policies and initiatives revealed that modern foreign languages have been considered an appropriate arena for instruction about being a citizen of Europe, for widening and strengthening adolescents' understanding and use of their rights and responsibilities beyond their own local context. By means of questionnaires and interviews eliciting data from both learners and teachers Mairin found that the link between European citizenship knowledge and the motivation to learn a modern European foreign language is tenuous, largely due to practical issues teachers face with their respective curriculum requirements. As one Spanish teacher asserted, "languages are a very important channel for getting to know reality" about other cultures. However, persistent "educational" modes of "covering", "addressing", and "delivering" imposed schemes of work, particularly in England, produced descriptives such as "horribly tight", "constraints", "compressing", "jumping through hoops" from teachers. While teenagers across England, Ireland, Spain and France in general felt ill-informed about their European citizenship and wished to know more about the EU, English students were the least interested in finding out more and had the weakest sense of being European citizens. However, the conditions of foreign language teaching in England were also least conducive to including these topics in the classroom. In response to the EU's call for re-engaging its citizens, Dr Hennebry challenges the EU to engage in further research and to work effectively and efficiently toward providing member states with a common framework and appropriate resources for the training of teachers, not only in foreign languages and possibly in other curriculum areas, but more specifically educating "active and aware" European youth, "able to take up [the] challenges and opportunities" of European citizenship. A great deal of work remains to be done in this area.

Annex 2

European Policy and bilingual educational futures – Prof Kalypso Nicolaïdis TBC

Annex 3

How can the European Baccalaureate serve the future Europe? – **Jim Campbell, Renée Christmann**

The session began with a brief consideration of the differences between European Schools (ES) / European Baccalaureate (EB) and the International Schools (IS) / International Baccalaureate (IB). The latter were noted as generally lacking mother tongue instruction and being essentially Anglophone at heart.

http://www.euroschool.lu/luxschool/bac_info/baccalaureat.pdf is the 2009 report from the Cambridge independent reviewers.

Arguments in favour of the ES raised questions involving the widening out of the ES system, exemplified, perhaps, in the gradual transition of ESCulham to a UK state Academy. The most pressing problem is how to at the same time preserve the best of ES education, to wit mother tongue teaching which brings in other approaches to schooling, pedagogy and curricula, while fostering the meeting and mixing of cultures among teachers and among learners and thereby developing deep cultural insights and tolerance in everyone.

We were pleased and privileged to have Renée Christmann, the Secretary General of the European Schools, with us to explain the present status of steps toward the reform of the EB. Principal justifications for EB reform include the need to cut costs, to include more cross-curricular and cross-cultural aspects, probably in the form of assessed projects and presentations. Points made were based on Professor Mats Ekholm's report in which, as Chairman of the European Baccalaureate Examining Board for 2009 and in line with much current pedagogical thinking, he proposes a less "pen and paper" approach to EB examining. Questions remained: who will administer a future, possibly enlarged EB system? While the Bureau in Brussels has been given the authority to do this, no actual *means* for doing so have been allocated. A great deal depends on political will. Proposals for action are:

- meetings with and development of coherence among Type II schools – R Christmann has already made moves in this direction; it is an area which ETEE could possibly contribute to;
- outgoing ES teachers should be coordinated as a pool of experience, information, and possibly even future teachers in Type II, III schools – many are interested in staying in the ES system;

- negotiations around financing need to be conceptualised and carried out;
- ESC could serve as a business case for other European Schools facing widening out;

Annex 4

EU policy and practice in education and human rights – Paddy Carpenter

Paddy Carpenter opened the session with an astonishing review of the *absence* of the word “education” in European-wide documents up until its appearance finally in the Maastricht Treaty. The sense of “Europe” and being European involves, on a personal level, feelings, experiences and memories. How to create such an essentially personal, human-based sense of European awareness in children and young people is a task now facing us. This is not easy in places like England where joining the European Community itself was surrounded by both controversy and fears that continuously re-appear in national news.

A central tenet in a curriculum for a European education is tolerance but the question must expand beyond Europe to the whole world. In France, for instance, there is a push to use education to further the integration of foreigners, not just European foreigners but from the entire globe. Paddy argued for the need to establish a delicate and astute balance between national, European and global identity. We need to encourage a European identity within a global context. A European identity is not entirely separate from other identities. We must not fortress Europe but determine how and where Europe belongs in the world.

So what can provide a “European education”? The above rather private experience of developing European-ness clearly implicates other means aside from formal education through which learning can take place. Paddy has been involved in numerous European projects that extend the school curriculum. Currently he is working on a project where video links are established between schools in different countries. Students are acquiring a wide range of cultural, social and of course linguistic knowledge through this contact beyond their school. It is important to realise that language teaching is not the principal vehicle for European education. Learning a language may open up to the learner new contexts and values but a language in itself does not transmit values of tolerance and human rights. Ways forward must include *the ways we organise* our institutions so that we are “walking the talk”.

Afternoon Working Groups: Concrete proposals toward education in a multi-lingual, multi-cultural Europe

Annex 5

Europe in and across the curriculum – Angus Roberts and Jim Campbell

Paddy Carpenter began the session with the question of what is and should happen across the curriculum. Prof Furedi’s plenary talk was recalled and it’s question: what is Europe? The main message is reconciliation after centuries of war. At present we find ourselves in the throes of

what happens in a marriage after the first thrills of love have passed and we need to settle down to making it work. On a positive note, everyone is contributing a little bit toward this. And in the classroom? We need to show the richness of the subject of Europe by including the contributions of others, not just our own nation. We need to transmit the values, providing with the context as well as the content of the learning environment what is valued and what are values in Europe – tolerance and freedom. We need to be specific about the subject of Europe. For many it represents bureaucracy but we need to cut through this to the cultural treasures. Comment was made about how nowadays education in England at least is viewed instrumentally. Foreign language learning is for jobs and economy, possibly a remnant of colonial thinking, and this needs to be changed.

At the mention of Canada and its approach to languages, it was pointed out that most of the population is not bilingual. Immersion programmes are the most popular, but in fact, the French language is closely linked to culture and history, predominantly in Quebec.

At a more local level in language education is the question: what sort of language teacher do we need? only native speakers? They can certainly bring something of the culture into the classroom. Can a non-native speaking teacher bring the diversity that is present, for instance, in the ES system with native speakers? On the other hand, it was argued, what about the position of non-main European languages like Polish in the European schools? Compared to French and German, for instance, is Polish history and culture taught to any depth or thoroughness? Questions underlying the whole 2010 Europa conference came to the fore: can the European School approach and curriculum be transferred to mainstream schooling? Are we in fact, viewing the ES system as something of a utopia? The questions were left open and the discussion proceeded to more practical and substantial possibilities for a “European” curriculum. The “Model European Community” programme is an activity which can have real impact. Children take roles, copy politicians from different countries, research their country and its position in the EC, then role play an EC meeting. It opens minds and teaches tolerance. It is important to note that the curriculum can be taught but values not in the same way. We need to live out values, thus children who go the ES come out of school with greater tolerance and understanding, which cannot be measured as learning of curriculum subjects can be measured. So it is not about how we *teach* attributes like tolerance but how students *learn* them. The question was re-posed: How do we get the European dimension into the classroom? We need to be careful: European schools work because children come from a particular background. Thus it cannot be universal, but it could be taken into more schools. It may not seem realistic in most state schools but it could be done, step by step, a kind of cloning of the European Schools.

Annex 6

Preparing bilingual education for all – Jackie Holderness, Gabriela Meier

The two session leaders each made short presentations that complemented the other. Thereafter lively discussions ensued about ideas for ways forward, for ES Culham and other European Schools and also for state and private schools throughout Europe.

Key points which Jackie Holderness made in her talk centred on education for bilingualism as opposed to simply an entitlement to learn a language. She emphasised language and languages learning as integral to the structuring by the child of his/her identity. She pointed to increasing

neurological findings that the bilingual brain operates differently from a monolingual's neuronal firing; more research will certainly lead to greater understanding of this in terms of education. It has furthermore been found that a good foundation instruction in the mother-tongue is essential to establish an academic base for the child's future learning. There are many models of education for bilingualism. Some examples given were: Canadian sink-or-swim immersion where sinking is possible and does occur; Spain where there are four regional languages and focus is on mother tongue and national languages thus exemplifying a multilingual but not necessarily multi-national approach; in the Netherlands a range of different models have been developed, some of them extensively researched. Sometimes a private school venture into bilingualism education receives state support. Across Europe there are instances where governments are looking to state educational provision for bilingualism. The European School model is to provide the child with mother tongue instruction. It is a late-exit or developmental approach beginning with aural-oral skills before written literacy. It acknowledges and takes into account that to learn a language at school requires at least 5-7 years.

Dr Gaby Meier presented an example of a state approach to bilingualism in the State Europe School Berlin (SESB). This is a state comprehensive that offers German in conjunction with another language. It has been running for 18 years as a two-way immersion programme for years 1 – 13 where L1 literacy is developed before L2 literacy. The objective is bilingualism after 8 years; a bilingual A-level exam is offered for university entrance. There are both linguistic and social benefits, the latter in terms of better integration of immigrant children with fewer anti-social incidences. However, parents must understand and support the approach. Other models exist in Germany, many established particularly to address problems arising from the many Turkish in the country.

There are many players in bilingual education, including university research findings, parental support and finding support resources and effective structures, in some cases cross-nationally throughout Europe.

The discussion which followed was critical but also upbeat as participants' strove to identify best ways forward for bilingual education for all. It was agreed that the attitude of central government is crucial. In some instances, ministries or embassies can and do provide support toward recruiting and paying for national/native speaker teachers. Teacher expectations are important but so are teacher training, teacher's status, support and professional development. Dedicated teaching materials are needed. Sometimes these are home grown.

So the picture is one of both top-down and bottom-up will and input. Beyond immediate educational structures there is outreach, for parent information, for family contacts and also for cross-school support. This latter can be integral to the system as with European Schools. It can also be policy driven. Judith Woodfield explained that the English state school where she works has been designated a regional centre for language training with an awards scheme providing resources and development opportunities for other schools and in conjunction with regional teacher training institutions. She mentioned that this type of development could be appropriate for ES Culham when it becomes an academy.

Annex 7

The wider school, parents, the role of NGO's – Barbara Macleod, John Sayer

This session complemented Paddy Carpenter's presentation in the morning by extending the view of the wider school and school curriculum. Barbara Macleod represented the Scottish European Educational Trust (SEET) and shared with the group the many activities which SEET has developed to increase European awareness and knowledge about European citizenship in Scottish schools. She stated baldly that governments were not being successful in this respect. NGO's and special interest groups that focus on specific issues were more effective in delivering change. There is an enormous amount that can be done despite and beyond government plans and regulations.

SEET was established in 1993, became an independent charity in 2003, is self funding and has support from many different institutions. Several European grants have been received but funding comes primarily from business. One of SEET's most effective activities has been the Euroquiz which promotes teamwork, self learning, and European citizenship. Over 2,000 Year 6 children were involved in the Euroquiz in Scotland this year. SEET runs a speaking (not debating) contest, information days for universities and colleges, and supports individual school initiatives and events. There are numerous other activities under SEET's umbrella such that in Scotland SEET is seen as *the* contact point for European issues. A continuing task is to build further contacts at all levels and throughout Europe. Parents have been very supportive with very few negative reactions.

Quite to the contrary, said one participant, has been his experience of trying to interest schools in London in European education. It was a real struggle. John Sayer observed that in Scotland there is a greater "presence" of Europe: when a project has been accomplished it is recognised by a plaque being installed. Plaques are visible everywhere in Scotland whilst EU activity is virtually invisible in England.

Elsa Cristofori then described organisational efforts that are attempting to bridge the gap between government and NGO's. The National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is the umbrella body for the voluntary sector in England, with sister councils in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This Council has 7,000 members and represents and supports over half the volunteer sector in the UK. In July 2009 it was instrumental in creating the European Network of National Associations (ENNA) whose remit is to address the range of issues affecting voluntary organisations across the EU. ENNA is also focusing on the development of a European Charter which would ensure that all voluntary sector bodies have a relationship with the EU and have recognition as partners, for instance, of special interest to us, in education. This is a step toward empowering civil society where people come together to make a positive difference to their lives and the lives of others, for mutual support and to pursue shared interests and causes. In this respect the voluntary sector has the power to transform the lives of people and communities for the better. There are many important questions facing civil society and these umbrella

organisations are meant to be instrumental in addressing them. One of these issues is the precarious relationship between civil society and the EU which was originally created for two partners only, government and business. Civil society is a latecomer third party and although lamentable it is not inexplicable that the EU is against a Charter. Article 11 of the Lisbon Treaty serves as a framework to guide dealings between the EU and civil society so that these dealings are open, transparent, efficient and continuous. Effective communication still has to be created and sustained, however. ENNA's remit includes acting as a voice for the pan-European voluntary sector in this respect.

The approach from the voluntary sector is to rebuild communities and institutions from the bottom up. This implicates a great deal of networking, and technologies have been proposed as potential facilitators for this. During the ensuing group discussion, however, the question was broached whether networking ultimately has a positive or a negative effect. A distinct lack of networking across ES parent associations was identified by one participant who asserted that without taking issues into their own hands, nothing gets done.

Returning to questions of education, Barbara Macleod said that her dream is to have a Euroquiz in every country with the finals at the European Parliament. Thus the session came full circle to affirm where an NGO *has* made a difference and could possibly expand that influence in education.