



European Youth Meeting

Rimini (Italy) 9-12 May 2008

General issues

In a Europe of shifting values, boundaries and peoples, a new sense of European belonging and citizenship is required, based on a life-long learning process. Mutual respect, understanding, awareness and curiosity of the diversity of Europe's many nations shall be the guiding principles. Cultural and national differences should be celebrated as part of the richness of the community as a whole and can form the basis of a socially and economically more coherent and vibrant entity.

Intercultural education should involve adults and students in a two-way relationship: Guidance on the adults' part and acquiring knowledge on the students' part in order to foster an understanding and respect for other cultures and values.

Interethnic and interreligious dialogue aims at mutual respect, communication, open-mindedness and tolerance.

In a multicultural and inter-cultural context, the similarities of Europe's peoples as well as the differences in their religious and cultural backgrounds need to be celebrated.

Active citizenship in the new and developing Europe should be fostered by vital participation in the decision-making process.

Citizens will want to participate in this process if they have a sense of belonging to a community and the belief in the fairness of the structures of power.

Responsibilities and rights and the inextricable link between them, remain key ingredients of a European consciousness but those responsibilities are ideally embraced by the individual as part and parcel of the rights that go with them.

In order to finalise our personal effort we do ask you:

- More resources and training for teachers on this topic.
 - More money to implement initiatives within the schools.
 - Stable core policies which should be dependent on the welfare of the education system alone and not on the changing political power.
 - Finally more **real and consistent support** from our politicians.
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How to be practical and develop intercultural education and dialogue

At a political level (National and Transnational)

- Make European studies part of the countries' curricula. It does not necessarily have to be a separate subject but it must be integrated into the common school curriculum . The aim is to have a European dimension in almost every activity focusing on different cultures, ethnicity, and religion. This work should start from a young age and should therefore be introduced in primary/elementary schools. The results should be shared by the students/other schools in a "European Week" organised on a regional level, as well as a European level.
- Every school should take part in at least one European activity organised by the EU.
- The need for a regional coordinator has been identified. This person will be responsible for organising and coordinating European projects for the schools in that region.
- Make intercultural education part of the teachers' training (**every** teacher NOT ONLY LANGUAGE TEACHERS). Make teachers aware of training programs currently being offered by the EU and promote their attendance. It is important for teachers to be obliged to be inter-cultural at a University level (when getting their training) through programs like Erasmus. In

this way they can experience other schools in different countries.

- facilitate the exchange of teachers on a life-long basis
- At least 2 compulsory foreign languages should be taught
- have the same policy as far as language hours are concerned (5 teaching hours per week for the first foreign language, 4 for the second language and 3 for the third language)
- European certification must be given for each language which would be recognised by all member states.
- Start teaching foreign languages at a younger age (train school teachers accordingly, e.g. appropriate text books and in service training)
- Transparency of certification and diplomas
- Institutions dealing with education must cooperate at all levels (policy makers, resources)

In order to implement these policies and practices:

- WE NEED SMALLER NUMBERS OF STUDENTS PER CLASS
- WE NEED MORE MONEY! 😊