

11<sup>th</sup> EMIE Meeting  
Antwerp 31 st May

### **Point 1 Agenda**

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Participants attending: Simon Steen (Chairing), Joseph Barnils, Per Kristensen, Alfredo Fernandez, Sara Alonso, Eugenio Gil, Wim Kuiper, Sofia Reis, Etienne Verhack, Daniel Klagsbald, Detlef Hardrop

SS: Open the meeting welcoming and congratulating the attendants.

Asked if he should keep on chairing the meeting stressing he only do it with approval of all participants: recalled the democratic profile of EMIE and its purpose. All participants were in favor.

All participants invited (and that attend the last years), that could not attend the meeting sent apologies:

Phillipe Gorre, Enseignementet Liberté  
Adele Hodgson, European Council of International Schools  
Gudula Meisterjahn, Knebel – Montessori Europe  
Ivan Juras, Montessori Europe  
Antoine Leonelli, CADEICE  
Beatrijs Pletinck, VSKO (Belgium)

It was remarked that for mistake EUCIS-LLL was out of the invitation list. To be included on the list of EMIE participants and will receive the minutes of the meeting.

### **Point 2 Agenda**

2. Approval of the agenda

The draft agenda had been spread on the 26 of April and received several contributions.

Approved as spread by Peter Warnders e mail message dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May)

### **Point 3 and 4 of Agenda**

3. Round Table with the reflections of the participating organizations on their main activities last year and their ideas and plans for the coming year with a special focus on possible common actions as EMIE partners.
4. Round Table with the actual situation of freedom of education from your point of view, regarding:
  - a. legislation
  - b. education policy
  - c. public debate

ECNAIS: European Council of National Associations of Independent Schools (**Per Kristensen**)  
ECNAIS is representing a diversity of national organizations (with various profiles): a network of self knowledge, and mutual learning.

Main roles: supports national organizations providing gathering at national level to independent schools, whatever profile or ethos, guarantying a support the human rights:

1. "The human right to offer educational alternatives to the state education is unchallenged in all European states, and is accepted and / or supported through national legislation."
2. Parental Choice: "The parental choice of an alternative education is supported through state funding."
3. Values pursuit on the framework of human rights: Those have a certain level of autonomy in curriculum management: "Independent Schools are free to pursue their own values within the framework of the European Convention on Human Rights, and have the autonomy to determine their own curriculum."

ECNAIS applied in 2011 and received an EU grant from Jean Monnet LLL: to develop a project on Diversity in Education – The outcome of the program launched about the DIVERSITY is available on the website, the contents of the meetings and under the banner Diversity: [www.ecnais.org](http://www.ecnais.org)

OIDEL: Organisation International pour le Droit à l'Education et la Liberté d'enseignement  
**(Eugenio Gil)**

OIDEL is collaborating (support, help and ideas) with the Special *rapporteurs* of United Nations on the right to education (for three years) - Mr. Kinshore Singh to prepare a report of education on the world. The *rapporteurs* ideas delivering a report every year and the purpose is to have a final report in three years time.

In order to prepare information, provide comments and feedback to the special *rapportuer* a Platform of 24 non-governmental organizations is set.

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/SREducation/Pages/SREducationIndex.aspx>

Parentsparticipation.eu is an "Observatory of parental involvement in education, a structure of independent information and research on parental involvement in educational systems in Europe. The Observatory has been created by a European consortium, consisting of Universities and civil society organizations, which have been working over the last ten years to improve the management of education systems. It develops tools that report on the status of parental involvement in fifteen European Union countries, based on the rights accorded to parents." (Adapt from: <http://www.parentsparticipation.eu/en/observatory/presentation>). As an outcome, a book has been published in several European languages.

OIDEL is negotiating with the Council of Europe to extend the Observatory to all countries of the Council of Europe for the purpose of Prague Forum for Human Right to Education (parental associations).

In the Council of Europe OIDEL is the NGO committee and at the Parliamentary Assembly established contact and is supporting MP Carmen Quintanilla (Sp - PPA) who is the producing a report on Freedom of choice for parents in Europe. A site event is on preparation.

OIDEL is developing a Project for the European Commission: to create an Observatory of indicators of rights of Education for migrants (legal indicators).

#### Escuelas Catolicas FERE/CECA/EyG (**Sara Alonso**)

The situation in Spain is complex, due to the economical crisis, and the existence of 17 different regions with Parliaments and an extended degree of autonomy. Since the last elections, held November 2011, the national association is redirecting all work to diminish the impact of (national and regional) cuts on education and the renegotiation of the contract - *concierto* (the independent supported sector). Some examples: the cut in the share of regional governments of that part of the schools budget, cut on teachers' salaries (5%).

Some other measures are being discussed such as: the change of the secondary education structure: length of the compulsory secondary educations and the non-compulsory (*bachillerato*); increase of the number of children per class (which will lead to the teachers' unemployment) and the pay of teachers' replacement (by the government).

Principles such as freedom of education, parental choice and freedom of curriculum are to be kept in balance during those difficult negotiations. An interesting example is the policy undertaken by the Government of Madrid Region that is enlarging school network with private schools publicly funded offering special profiles in secondary education. Also in Madrid Region the 'regional curriculum', which corresponds to 35%, may be used by schools which will manage this share.

[www.escuelascatolicas.es](http://www.escuelascatolicas.es)

#### IV Internationaler Verband für Christliche Erziehung und Bildung (**Wim Kuiper**)

A brief explanation on the different organizations of Christian schools, their main target and goals, how they are linked:

<http://www.cogree.com/> The coordinating group for Religion in Education in Europe CoGREE promotes cooperation between associations, organizations and networks committed to religious education of children and young adults in Europe. CoGREE member organizations base their collaboration on the right of children and young people to religion and religious education. They advocate approaches to religious education that are in line with the European Convention on Human Rights." (from the website: Statutes)

As umbrella organizations: it counts amongst its members: IV and ICCSWEB

<http://www.int-v.org/> International Association for Christian Education / Internationaler Verband für Christliche Erziehung und Bildung IV

"The international Association for Christian Education is an organization of associations from different countries in Europe with the aim to support the Christian Education in private school as in schools under public law and to save the human values of Christian Education." (from the website)

<http://www.iccsweb.org/> InterEuropean Commission on Church and schools ICCS

"Is a network of churches, institutes for education and religious education, and state organizations which deal with education and RE. ICCS creates a forum especially to discuss the relations between church and school." (from the website)

Coming initiative from IV, AGM connected to a seminar about schools chaplaincy, in Poland, 9/10th November.

During the last year, three main themes were debated by ICCS: social cohesion, democratic citizenship and the role of religion/ interreligious dialogue, which is a member of the Conference of International Non-governmental Organizations of the Council of Europe.

A central topic is the holistic approach/concept to education (the importance of *Bildung* and room for the own values of the school) versus an instrumental approach of education by the EU (education as the shortest way to the labor market).

The instrumentalization of education by economy. Politicians and decision makers at European level envisage schools exclusively as settings for the production and development of human capital at the service of labor market, neglecting values that are the force behind the philosophy of education, moreover the importance of values transmission and the importance to safeguard public spaces for religious education vrs secularism.

Book coming up: Christian ethics, intercultural dialogue: what are their contributions, to citizenship (?)

Comite Européen pour L'Enseignement Catholique (**Ethiene Verhack**)  
[www.ceec.be](http://www.ceec.be)

Brief explanation about the role of the CEEC and the role played in various international organisations. The strongest representation of catholic schools is in Paris at UNESCO, the French national secretariat (OGEC) assures the support through a large delegation working beside the UNESCO. At the Council of Europe: Roasaline Moreu, Sir George Platt and.... and in NY at the UN another representation.

Report on a recent meeting, organized by the liberal party of Verhofstadt, in the European Parliament: Mr. Jean de Gucht, Mr. Molnar from Hungary and Mr. Porteous Wood attended. The general approach towards religious educations and confessional schools was very critical and negative.

Diversity in Education is an important issue, discussion going on in France. New statutes of catholic schools in France raised the discussion about the integration of religious education in the educational provisions as public education and the questions concerning the 'neutrality' of school ethos.

Difficult dialog between the representatives of the school boards and of the bishops' conference in NL.

Gravissimum educationis (1965) will be 50 year in 2015. EV is advisor of the Vatican for educational questions. He is looking forward the discussion of this document and collection of proposals for new elements (updates) to be integrated.

[http://www.ceec.be/telecharger/2011\\_Anthologie\\_Textes\\_Congregation\\_FR.pdf](http://www.ceec.be/telecharger/2011_Anthologie_Textes_Congregation_FR.pdf)

[http://www.ceec.be/telecharger/2011\\_Anthology\\_Texts\\_Congregation\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ceec.be/telecharger/2011_Anthology_Texts_Congregation_EN.pdf)

CEEC has a relevant role in the religious continuous training of teachers, not exclusively of the 'religion' teacher, but mainly to all staff already teaching and promotes the self development of teachers. The challenge being how to develop a catholic ethos in general subjects as math or languages. The teacher as a believer: role model.

EV will resign in 2013, turning 65. He will follow some lines of work, namely the London: meeting 2014 of Bishops in charge of education from all over Europe and the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gravissimum.

The work for the catholic schools in the eastern European countries on behalf of CEEC will be done by the secretariat of the Austrian catholic organization; in Spain and in Portugal there will be work done the national organizations.

The reflection on economics is important: From egoistic-economy to altruistic-economy (title of a presentation of a Spanish speaker in Barcelona. We have to offer to the christian democratic parties in Europe our vision on values in independent education. Communities are more important than states: New trend that the concern should not be address not only to individuals and state, but should address: individuals, communities, families, as those are the important elements of the social fabric.

Independent schools are functioning as a community and not just delivering education as a public service

Legislation in Albania: elimination of religious approach at schools as to be considered indoctrination

Sweden-The right of a child (of 16) to choose the school is prevailing to the right to his/her parents.

Erasmus for all : a further step on the instrumentalization of education. CEEC refuses to apply for EU financial support on the basis of projects/programs.

Suggestion to make contact with Microsoft: interesting collaboration. It makes sense to contact them for communication about free education. (Partners in learning program).

#### Jewish Schools (**Daniel Klagsbald**)

Discusses the introduction, at a very early stage, of ICT in teaching and learning. What will be the new role of teachers in the internet era and tablet computers in the classroom; where do schools have to say no against more computers in schools?

Reports a court case in Canada (Québec); new law which forces all schools the pay attention to all religions in a neutral way. Two parents of a catholic school lost their case against it in court. Now the school went in appeal.

European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education - ECSWE (**Detlef Hardrop**)

[www.ecswe.org](http://www.ecswe.org)

The Council gathers more than 1.000 Steiner schools. There is a shortage of qualified teachers: it is a problem to find enough engaged Waldorf teachers

DH is the Geschäftsführer (managing director) of the Waldorf Schule Association of the state of Berlin/Brandenburg.

There is a fight against the politicians for the right to continue the existing Waldorf schools which are facing big budgetary cuts because they are a threat for the public schools in times of declining of number of pupils (in NL there is a discussion going on that in areas of decline of pupils the last school in a village should be a public school and also that the closure of a small school is not bad because small schools have not good quality they say). And it is now brought to the constitutional court of Brandenburg about the new legislation being against the constitution.

The association, together with other partners, promoted a first step towards a popular initiative, and this step consisted in the have a public hearing at the parliament. The initiative was successful.

DH discussed the problem of freedom of curriculum versus external high stakes examinations (as Abitur). In fact the contents undertaken by the examinations become the curriculum whereas all other approaches and themes are to be neglected in order of those high stakes. Waldorf schools are trying to overcome the problems with the central Abitur examinations, at the end of secondary education. The solution being the developed of a European diploma (Steiner curriculum – program) that could be undertaken (likewise the IB or other), to be legally registered in England. This program being legally registered would be recognized and accepted for University admission purposes, Europe wide, according to the Lisbon treaty.

ECSWE is also developing activities under a grant awarded by LLL – Jean Monnet, about the quality of childhood education. A third book has been recently published and can be viewed and downloaded at: <http://www.ecswe.org/publications.php#qoc-europe-2012>, a conference will be organized in Leuven, Belgium, from August 31st to September 2nd. “This conference is primarily for teachers who would like to consider piloting units, which have so far been written in mathematics, physics, native language and literature and history for classes 9 through 12.” (from: [www.yorksteinerschool.org](http://www.yorksteinerschool.org))

ECSWE is also is also a NGO at the Council of Europe, where is developing work on quality of Educations.

## **Point 5 Agenda**

### **5 Education For All Research**

- a. access to research data on the added value of independent schools
- b. stocktaking of a possible research agenda
- c. financial consequences of an EMIE research agenda

SR comments the difficult task to share knowledge about existing data, reports and documents which underline the importance and value of independent schools for society.

The use of ICT to go in-depth and to link the organizations participating in EMIE; for which themes are we especially interested to search for relevant data on: freedom of education;

parental choice; quality of education; what promotes social cohesion; social cohesion enhancements; cost effectiveness of independent schools, etc.

ECNAIS website could be used for exchanging information and making links (for example: see site of University of Tilburg of juridical education department, site of OECD, Eurydice, IPE- UNESCO (data base about the education law and policy worldwide), IBE - international bureau of education, EFA - Education for All).

The outcome was a common decision that ECNAIS website will support a portal to EMIE, with links to all organizations with a short description of the goals of the EMIE participants.

Erasmus Mundus (+ EUCLIS document)

New Erasmus for all program from 2014. The end of Jean Monnet program, in 2013, will be replaced by actions under Erasmus Mundus- see document of EUCLIS-LLL and their site and also the article in the magazine of the Dutch European Platform.

Inclusion of children with education special needs

Discussion on the question of inclusion of children with very severe need in 'general' education backgrounds; i.e. in schools with no special responses to stimulate (and/or) to support adequately the development of these children versus the special needs school.

Several documents are supporting more recent changes from governments on the national policies: the convention of the rights of persons with disabilities; the interpretation of article 7;

There is understanding about what inclusion – Salamanca declaration

Inclusion is not integration: how is the UN Treaty about inclusion be put in law by the member states?(UN Convention on the rights for persons with disabilities).

Some of the issues discussed are here summarized:

- does this mean that all special schools have to disappear?
- the story goes round that schools for special education are very expensive
- in The Netherlands there is a strong coalition for inclusion and the policy for Adapted Education (to be organized by regional cooperation between regular and special schools) is focused on reducing the number of pupils on schools for special education; it has also consequences for the parental choice and what will be the final outcome of this Adapted Education on the level of the pupils in terms of quality of the education.
- in the Nordic countries there is really a political struggle going on; the good thoughts on inclusion go back to the Salamanca paper from the 90ties in the last century. Be aware that inclusion is not integration. It demands extra education for the teachers and the cross-competence for cooperation of the experts from the special schools.
- in Spain it is the same as in the Nordic countries
- who is defining the category of the handicapped?
- it is good for everyone to meet handicapped children during their school time
- there is a recent declaration of the international conference on education in inclusion in 2008 in Geneva (Unesco)
- special schools were based on the devotion of the teachers for the pupils who need extra attention and it cannot work on a basis of calculated devotion.

We agree to ask for a meeting of EMIE with the EU Commissioner of Education about the themes we mentioned earlier in the meeting of today with a connection to an actual theme of importance for the commissioner.

We also need some short statements from EMIE as a signal from the Civil Society that formulates clear statements on key issues with a common vision shared among the organizations attending EMIE

The continuation of EMIE and further actions

- An annual report on the political situation on education in each country and the implementation. Oidel is willing to make a proposal for a format to fill in by the participants of EMIE themselves;

- Ecnais is willing to make proposals for short EMIE statements and it is up to the individual participants of EMIE to support each of those statements of EMIE as a group;

- Next year we could address invitations to official representatives for a part of our annual EMIE meeting

- Need to improve the cooperation between with EUCIS-LLL

- The increase of services and activities will require, at a certain moment a financial compromise from the organizations

**Books:**

François Moog: À quoi sert l'école catholique

Jonathan Sacks: The dignity of differences

**Conferences:**

ELA: European Association of Education Law and Policy

14th of June in Tilburg