

Winter session, 2018

Coordination meeting minutes

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Date: Monday, January 22nd, 2018

Place: Agora, room G03

Participants:

- Anna Rurka, president of the conference of INGOs
- Claude Vivier Le Got, Chairwoman of the Education and Culture Committee
- Julianne Lagadec, Vice-Chair of the Education and Culture Committee
- Thierry Matthieu, Chair of the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges committee
- Simon Matthijssen, Chair of the Human Rights Committee
- Gerhard Ermischer, Vice-President of the Democracy, Social cohesion and Global challenges Committee

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I. Official first part

Mrs. Ana Rurka opened the meeting by presenting her best wishes to those present. She brought everyone's attention to the objective of the meeting: to present the roadmaps for the three themed commissions of the conference of INGOs (Education and Culture, Democracy, Social cohesion and Global challenges, and Human Rights). For anyone curious about what the Conference of INGO had been doing these past 6 months she declared herself open to any questions.

1) Presentation of the roadmap for the Culture and Education Committee

This presentation was introduced by Julianne Lagadec who indicated that the committee (made up of the committee's president, and its two vice presidents) had met (face to face or via the internet) once a month from August to January to work on the roadmap. This kind of team work is essential and will be maintained throughout the three years mandate.

Claude Vivier Le Got, Chairwoman of the Education and Culture Committee indicated that the common theme for these 3 years of work would be that of European cultural identity. It will be made up of 4 working groups:

- 1) Intercultural cities
- 2) Lifelong learning
- 3) Heritage and creation, shaping Europe
- 4) Digital citizenship (transversal group)

Following this she made a speech using a video.

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stSDaSTjb1s>.

An intercultural city is a fraternal city.

2008 was a turning point – one that still seems irreversible – in terms of the structuring of human space: ever since, the majority of the world's population has been living in towns. Today one person in five lives in an agglomeration of more than a million inhabitants. The populations of these metropolises are characterised by plurality. The diversity of nationalities, languages, faiths and cultures engenders different sorts of lifestyle. Paradoxically, the city both testifies to a desire to live side by side – a desire to come together – and represents microcosms, fear, exclusion and isolation.

The building of fraternal cities requires both a collective and individual effort. Accepting and integrating populations in all their diversity is a global challenge. To live, we need a habitat. It would seem illusory to conceive of living together harmoniously without also thinking in terms of the spatial planning of cities, knowledge of others and learning. In order to continuing the work begun by the previous working group on intercultural dialogue, the Committee suggests considering education, culture and urban landscape as a three-fold means of invigorating the concept of harmonious living.

An inclusive society is a learning society.

Economic, technological and human generations do not evolve at the same speed or at the same rhythm. Breaks in dialogue are deepening between those who work and those who do not; between graduates starting out on the job market and employees striving to update their skills; between workers in less technologically advanced nations and those trained to use the latest tools; between displaced men and women and the companies in a position to employ them.

The right to education is a fundamental right, and this includes lifelong learning. Dignity, citizenship and work are closely linked. In this context, lifelong learning is a social issue. It helps to prevent workers' skills from becoming obsolete. It eases adaption to cosmopolitan environments and plays a role in socialisation, integration and mobility. In this sense, every social and economic organisation is responsible for lifelong learning.

The Education and Culture Committee suggests, among other things, considering equipping every member of society, and not just certain groups, with an evolving skills passport.

To conceive of European cultural identity is to travel shared cultural routes

Land, maritime and virtual routes connect us from one end of Europe to the other. In the past, wool, cod, iron, coal and lace travelled along these routes. So too did traditional recipes, tales and legends and folk dances and music.

Notwithstanding vast distances, borders and wars, our citizens have built a collective European history and share a desire for belonging. This desire is evident in art and in the spirit of sport. It can also be seen in research. Intellectual, economic, scientific, artistic and philosophical migrations, along with the migrating knowledge of carpenters and stonecutters, fuel our desire to travel further together.

To live together is to share landscapes, histories and collective experiences. The European Cultural Routes are replete with heritage; they also pass on traditions that are rich in cultural value. The diversity of this heritage, be it material or abstract, is the essence of European cultural identity. This was the idea behind the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes Programme, namely: bringing citizens together via their shared history and heritage. The Education and Culture Committee suggests that the Cultural Routes be thought of as cement for European identity.

Education, culture, human rights, democracy, social cohesion, global challenges, digital technology as revolutionising how we think, lifestyles and modes of action

Men and women are no longer simply encouraged to enter the digital world – they are obliged to do so. Sometimes they inhabit this world against their will and often they are not entirely aware of doing so.

These connected citizens have the right to grow in a safe and secure environment. They have the right to protection of and respect for their lives, which are these days expressed and broken down in terms of data. They have the right to reliable and accurate information. Monitoring those who monitor us, controlling information flows and the use of our vast amounts of data, reporting fake news – all of these are new global challenges.

The potential of new technology is not always fully harnessed in terms of diffusing information, furthering education, mobilising citizens and promoting a new form of European citizenship. New educational tools are an opportunity to diversify forms of learning in the context of both formal and informal education.

The Education and Culture Committee suggests shaking up the traditional economic order and presenting the creators of new technology with a fresh vision; in short: promoting the conception and creation of new, civil society-driven guidelines in line with our hopes for the world of tomorrow – a world inhabited by democratic citizens.

2) Presentation of the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee's roadmap

Thierry Mathieu takes the floor to speak about the initial ideas put forward by himself and the two vice presidents. It is essential according to them to forge strong links with all actors involved in the following themes:

- 1) Promoting the participation of civil society in political life
- 2) Preventing corruption
- 3) Protecting people and human dignity
- 4) Social and territorial cohesion (transversal group)

The Democratic, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee hopes to reinforce cooperation with NGOs so as to be for them a communication channel towards European institutions. In addition, a transversal initiative will be carried out with the Education and Cultural Committee with a focus on the digital and with the Human Rights Committee one on the freedom of association.

3) The Human Rights Committee's roadmap

Simon Matthijssen closed this first part of the meeting by indicating that, even though everything came back to human rights, the committee he intended to lead would be focused on the subjects dear to the European Council.

The four proposed projects were the following:

- Protective mechanisms for the defense of human rights
- Surveillance tools at the level of civil society
- Digital rights and the digital future (in partnership with the Culture and Education Committee)
- Poverty, discrimination and exclusion and their link to populism

4) Interactions with the representatives of the INGO

Several subjects were discussed, the main ones being the following:

Three indispensable themes: youth, migration and gender

These three themes will be dealt with by all committees and all teams, via an integrated approach. It will require a real effort from all those involved. The question of gender equality has been looked at previously. The three committees have systematically restated their commitment to this theme. The question comes up of who within the committees and teams will be responsible for monitoring that these essential subjects will be effectively dealt with.

Integration of work done by the Conference with that of the Council of Europe

There are numerous tools available at the European Council and they need to be used or completed as needs be. If it is felt that a necessary tool is not available, the Conference can set about creating one. The three committees have made known their desire to align themselves to the themes put forward by the Council of Europe and to work with their representatives. The Education and Culture committee has already invited representatives of the Council of Europe to the first meetings of its committee – Tuesday 23rd January: Ivana d’Alessandro and Francesca Lionetti for Intercultural Cities and Eladio Fernández Galiano for Cultural Routes; on Thursday the 25th January: Ahmet Murat Kilic, Head of the Digital Citizenship Education project at the European Council.

Transversal working groups

There are currently three and they are systematically involved in each of the three committees; for each of them, one of the committees is in charge of coordinating their work. The mandates were to be discussed on Thursday 25 January (in the afternoon).

Anne-Marie Chavanon (IFHP), previously the Chairwoman of the Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee, sees the transversal teams as a way to facilitate common debate and to present the conclusions to the three committees.

European Social Charter

The European Social Charter should help the INGOs isolate the challenges faced. It is a useful text for all the working groups.

Roadmaps

The roadmaps presented on Monday 22 January have been submitted for consultation. They are expected to evolve on the basis of discussions during the current winter session. Even after their adoption, over the next three years they will remain subject to change. The INGOs must get involved in determining the content of the working groups’ work – particularly if they wish a specific topic to be addressed.

Léon Dujardin (ESAN) recalled that the associations are partners, not assistants.

Prompt action

Whilst some subjects are long-term in nature and will be of ongoing concern for the INGOs, others require a prompter response. *Anna Rurka* said she would like the Conference to act more quickly in some cases – by means, for example, of declarations, articles and calls for expert participation in specific agenda items.

II. Education and Culture Committee: discussion in small committees

Claude Vivier Le Got

The aim of this half hour of discussion is to attempt to develop ideas, proposals and approaches that the Education and Culture Committee might incorporate into the work of its working groups. The common theme connecting the four working groups is the concept of European cultural identity as symbolising values of democracy and plurality of identity. The groups will evolve from one year to the next. It is essential to ensure the convergence of their work.

Gabriela Frey (EBU)

European cultural identity is highly diverse. The 'Intercultural Cities' working group covers intercultural, intergender and interreligious aspects, amongst others. In Europe certain identities tend to be forgotten (European Hindus, European Buddhists etc.). We need to establish a broader, more inclusive identity.

Claude Vivier Le Got

The current Office of the Education and Culture Committee works closely with Sabine Rohmann. The 'new' 'Intercultural Cities' group will serve to translate the existing conclusions on intercultural dialogue to the city level. The concepts of urban landscape and harmonious living will be brought together. Thus, previous work will be continued in the urban setting.

Pierre Dussere (OIEC)

Ivana d'Alessandro, head of the 'Intercultural Cities' unit, provided substantial assistance to the previous working group and might be consulted again.

We suggest two solutions:

- the organisation of an event for the general public;
- the conducting of a study of intercultural dialogue and skills education in promoting democratic culture; for this we can consult teacher trainers. We should also think about translation and the process of translation.

Paula Jardon (Association Comenius)

Teacher training is indeed important when it comes to heritage and history. We need to emphasise European values and history – not the history of wars, but also – and fundamentally – the history of peace. Nor must we forget women.

Claude Vivier Le Got

In the working group on Heritage and Creation, shaping Europe we will not neglect contemporary heritage; nor will we overlook past creation. We wish to adopt a contemporary view of artistic and cultural production.

Monika Holtschneider (SIE)

It is important that meetings be well structured and that we be aware of who is who and what his or her interests are. Someone should be in charge of ensuring we keep to the agenda.

Claude Vivier Le Got

It is indeed essential that we all get to know one another. There should be an online tool for remote work. We will organise an annual meeting involving all the groups.

Julianne Lagadec

A document will be compiled that will set out who everyone is and what they do using information from the participation forms.

Patrick Long (ESAN)

The working group on heritage and creation in Europe and cultural routes has a genuine focus on culture. This focus was lacking in previous years. Certainly we should pay attention to the routes that have been constructed, but we should not forget those that have appeared more spontaneously: economic axes and paths forged by schools of thought or religions (the Huguenots, for example). We need to demonstrate the existence of cultural identity and also its manifest diversity.

Bernard Senelle (OEIC)

In Europe, what promotes – or does not promote – the coming together of different convictions, religions and so on? What values and attitudes help us to interact with one another?

Mohammed Derghal (EUROTALENT)

In terms of the right to lifelong education, we must not forget persons with disabilities.

Farouk Allouche - EURODOC

Education should indeed be accessible to all. Intersectoral mobility is an important topic, as are mental health and disabilities. Equality is essential, and that includes gender equality.

Gabriela Frey (EBU)

The non-separation of state and religion is problematic. The word 'discrimination' needs to be addressed from primary school onwards. The speaker referred to Article E of the European Social Charter.

Iana Zbar (ICJW)

Intercultural dialogue necessarily involves interreligious dialogue and learning about peace. We need to discuss education in schools. Harmonious living is a form of education. Everyone must be able to tell his or her story.

Cornelia Woll (SIE)

In terms of intercultural cities it is essential to discuss city planning, which plays a role in improving the lives not only of people from different cultures but also of women etc.

Claude Vivier Le Got

An essential aspect of the working group 'Intercultural Cities' will indeed be urban planning and communication and how cities are designed.

Monika Holtschneider (SIE)

The education of girls and women is crucial. Our approach here should be reflective rather than dogmatic. We need to be able to put forward different points of view and not only the traditional European point of view.

Paula Jardon (Association Comenius)

The Iberian Peninsula was Muslim for eight centuries. We inherited numerous traditions. The idea of cultural crossroads might, in this sense, be considered in relation to the theme of cultural routes.

III. Conclusion in plenary

Simon Matthijssen

Numerous ideas have been expressed and the working groups have already evolved. We've seen a great deal of enthusiasm. Reflection is ongoing across all the groups.

Claude Vivier Le Got

We have worked on two major aspects:

- Methodology. The Committee has established a data retrieval document; this will constitute a database for anyone interested in the Committee and its working groups. A meeting report will be available shortly. We are keeping French and English as our two working languages; this will require everyone to make an effort and be understanding.
- Foundations. The concept of cultural identity already exists and has been defined numerous times. It is relevant to all areas of the Committee's work. It incorporates values associated with human rights, democracy and alterity.

Thierry Matthieu

The roadmaps of the three committees are 'on the table' and need now to be discussed. The second portion of the committee meetings will allow us to clarify matters further.

Gerhard Ermischer

The committees allow us to work in a more interactive way. There are however certain limitations – in particular the fact that we are using two working languages.

Expressions of thanks and closure of the meeting.

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08/02/2018