

The Educational-Cultural Dimension of Renewing European Citizenship

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Introduction

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights prescribes the right, and describes authentic education as a process which «shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms». Furthermore Article 13 paragraph 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) states that education «shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. [...] that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society [...]». Rights, respect and participation are bound firmly together. Education in this full sense embraces personal development, not merely the transmission of information or professional training. It enhances social, cultural and economic development, active citizenship and fundamental ethical values. Such a broad understanding of education urges for a value-driven education perspective of the European future.

Within this framework it is important to identify the major socio-cultural transformations which are challenging education in the global and European context: – the negative impact of exclusive market-driven economic approaches on society building leads to a commodification, marketisation and monetarisation of societies and human relations; – the growing complexity of multi-cultural societies leads to growing uncertainties and human (economic, social, political, etc.) insecurity; – the democratic multi-level governance practices are confronted with a plurality of visions and multi-perspective policy-making; and – the globalisation vs. europeisation debate shapes the nature of internal and external relations within and beyond Europe with

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consequences on good citizenship building at European and global level.

In short, the ongoing interaction between these societal trends requires a new culture for education and citizenship which should respond with creativity and innovation to the challenges in European societies. Moreover, the role and responsibility of education in such multi-cultural and complex societies should reinforce the overall substance and urgency of the search for adequate and concrete responses in the learning agenda (i.e. formal and non-formal education as well as informal learning) embracing diversity and dealing with education through and for change and responsible citizenship.

The paper is divided in three parts. The first part introduces the existing international and European legal framework for education. The second part analyses the crucial role, responsibility, objectives and competences and aspects of education for integral human development, in particular European citizenship and intercultural education. The third part deals with the education policies in Europe, with a focus on the European lifelong learning agenda of citizenship building.

1. The Right to Education: The Legal Framework

Education is a fundamental human right and important for the exercise of other human rights. It promotes individual freedom and empowerment and yields important development benefits. Freedom of education has been guaranteed in international and European law. Therefore it is important to recall the following articles that constitute the universal, international and European legal framework for the right to education.

– The right to education has been universally recognised in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)¹: «1) Everyone has the right to education: Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. 2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms».

¹ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>.

– Article 2 Protocol 1 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Rome, 1950) says «that no person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religions and philosophical convictions»².

– Article 13 paragraph 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) clearly states that «education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. [...] that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace»³. The impact of the global economic downturn on education systems if the protection of the right to education is not fully protected has been dramatically illustrated by the UNESCO «Education for All: Global Monitoring Report 2010. Reaching the Marginalized»⁴.

– Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU (2000) defines the right to education as follows: «1) Everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training; 2) This right includes the possibility to receive free compulsory education; 3) The freedom to found educational establishments with due respect for democratic principles and the right of parents to ensure the education and teaching of their children in conformity with their religious, philosophical and pedagogical convictions shall be respected, in accordance with the national laws governing the exercise of such freedom and right»⁵.

As well as being a right in itself, the right to education is also an enabling right. If people have access to education they can develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights. Education gives people the ability to access information and to grow in knowledge. Furthermore it helps people to develop the communication skills to demand these rights, the confidence to speak in a variety of forums, and the ability to negotiate with a wide range of authorities and power holders. In other words some preconditions are needed to make education a

² <http://www.hri.org/docs/ECHR50.html>.

³ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ceschr.htm>.

⁴ <http://www.unesco.org/en/efareport>.

⁵ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf.

⁶ <http://www.right-to-education.org>.

⁷ It is useful to recall major general UN contributions to education since 1990: Education for All (1990); Agenda 21 for the Environment (1993); World Plan of Action for Education on Human Rights and Democracy (1993); Vienna Conference on Human Rights (1993); The Contribution by Religions to the Culture of Peace (1994); Declaration of Principles on Tolerance (1995); Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995); Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Declaration (1995); International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (1998); Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (1999); UN Millennium Declaration (2000); The Earth Charter of Amsterdam (2000); Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001); Declaration on Dialogue among Civilizations (2003); Culture of Peace (UN Recommendations A/Res/63/113, 26 February 2005); The Hague Agenda on City Diplomacy (2008); Charter for a World without Violence (2009); etc.

⁸ Delors Report, *Education for 21st Century Learning: The Treasure Within*, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, UNESCO Publishing, 1996. The Report focuses on the relationship between education and the six subject areas of development, science, citizenship, culture, social cohesion, and work.

⁹ See *Education Together in Catholic Schools*, published by the Congregation of Catholic Education, Rome, September 2007.

¹⁰ Z. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000; Id., *Europe: An Unfinished Adventure*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1994; Id., *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2006; A. Giddens, *Europe in the Global Age*, London, Polity Press, 2007; J. Habermas, *Europe. The Faltering Project*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2009; U. Beck, *World at Risk*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2008.

meaningful right. Katarina Tomasevski, the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education developed the concept of the 4 As⁶: education should be available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. Of course these conditions are to be cherished, elaborated and strengthened, in respect of the key objectives of education.

2. The Crucial Role of Education

2.1. Point of Departure: Shared Social Responsibility for Human Integral Development

Education plays a central role in the development of both human beings and modern societies as it enhances social, cultural and economic development, active citizenship and ethical values. Education is to build peace, foster dialogue and enhance understanding in order «to build peace in the minds of men» as enshrined in UNESCO's 1945 Constitution and further developed in its various recommendations, declarations, resolutions and initiatives⁷. To be educated is to learn and to be able to feel free of any kind of dependence, submission or fear. It is to be able to create, to think, to imagine, to dream – all distinctive and decisive capacities of the human condition. The Delors Commission *Education for 21st Century Learning: the Treasure Within* identified four pillars in the education process: – learn to know; – learn to do; – learn to be; – learn to live together⁸.

The current crisis of socialisation and value transmission has made the task of education difficult but vital for society building⁹. The crucial role of education needs therefore to be reset within the dramatic acceleration in the speed of social change brought about by the process of globalisation. I am referring to the works of sociologists such as Zygmunt Baumann, Jürgen Habermas, Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens, who are analysing education respectively in a liquid society, risk society or reflexive modernity¹⁰. In such a transformation process there is an urge to rethink the meaning of education as well as the use and practices of teaching and learning.

In this perspective three major interconnecting strands of thought are to be taken into account:

- Education, lifelong learning and modern society: this linkage can be interpreted from a sociological point of view. Such a vision embodies responses to the challenges of the emergence of a post-industrial society, information society, risk society, sustainable society, etc. Education and training are then the keys to innovative economic and social well-being in the emerging new society.
- Education, lifelong learning and the labour market: this interconnection refers to the permanent transitional labour market in European and global perspective. Education and training are then seen as measures to prepare a fluid integration between learning and working throughout the life cycle.
- Education, lifelong learning and social inclusion: this strand links education and lifelong learning to social inclusion. The strategy is to address the issue through education and training and through work-related incentives to increase people's social and civic awareness and their employability skills. In other words, educational inclusive policies go beyond mere employment focus and require a holistic approach, also addressing citizenship needs.

2.2. Objectives and Competences

Education is a dynamic process of learning that creates added value and forms the person to integral development. It is to transmit possibilities and opportunities with conviction, intuition and motivation. It is always a meeting with the other: hence the role of teachers as key agents for change and the need to accompany and respect their role in the educational landscape. Henceforth, Europe and the international context are an integral part of the general educational project as well as of each individual learning path. This implies to transmit in an open and critical way ideals and principles that valorise the person at the centre in education systems and national curricula recognising the European and international context.

The first tasks of education are to form (young) people to become responsible citizens, providing them with information, knowledge, competences, skills and an open behaviour, in line with fundamental values such as peace and tolerance of diversity. Key competences refer to knowledge, skills and attitudes that serve personal fulfillment, social inclusion and

active citizenship. These include the traditional competences but also the more transversal ones such as learning to learn, social and civic competences, cultural awareness and expressions¹¹. In this context the reference to Edgar Morin is essential. He proposes four objectives in the transmission of knowledge and the activities of teaching¹²: – to form a well-developed mind (better than a too full mind); – to teach the human condition; – to educate to live (learning does not mean only the acquisition of knowledge, techniques and productive modes, but also an interest in the relations with the other and with oneself); and – to learn the dignity of the citizen.

2.3. Citizenship Education: Education to Active and Responsible Citizenship in a Plural Europe

When education has the priority task to transmit knowledge and competences that give scope and responsibility to the development of each person¹³, a number of fundamental questions need to be addressed: – education to and for all; – education of humanity: this implies to overcome the tension between a «humanistic» education and a «professional» education; – education for change: it deals with the meaning of creativity and the use of a critical mind; – multilingual education; and finally – education in the search of values: it implies to surpass the so-called contradiction between tradition and innovation.

However, in the processes of learning and transmission of knowledge, it is not sufficient to affirm the principle of the centrality of the person. The educator and the teacher have to act within the socio-cultural context responding to the challenges of global interconnectedness and complexity, cultural disintegration and the dispersion and fragmentation of knowledge. This requires an integration of various learning sources and levels.

As was noted above, Europe is part of such a learning process. The question however remains open to what extent a common vision, founded on common goods, can survive in a context of economic globalisation and cultural relativism. The problems of social inequality and poverty, values of solidarity, responsibility and respect for differences, as well as the non-accessibility of the benefits of globalisation, have to be tackled by various forms of

¹¹ The European dimension of such an education is very well captured by A.V. Zani, *Formare l'uomo europeo: sfide educative e politiche culturali*, Roma, Città Nuova, 2005.

¹² E. Morin, *Réforme de la pensée et éducation au XXI siècle*, in J. Bindé (ed.), *Les Clés du XXI siècle*, Paris, UNESCO/ Seuil, 2000, pp. 271-275.

¹³ Commission of the European Communities, *Schools for the 21st Century*, Staff Working Paper, Brussels, 11 July 2007.

learning. In short, the current situation requires an inspiring vision and strategy. Europe cannot be taught as a technical project, but demands breadth of vision and engagement. Education has the mission to be an agent of change and has the responsibility to revitalise its original project and consequently, mobilise its citizens, in particular the youth. This can only be done through (formal, informal and non-formal) education and learning to active citizenship. Such a broad approach might stimulate commitment of (young) people to the European project, the plural Europe, the Europe of dialogue and the intercultural Europe.

2.3.a. Definition:

A Modern, Dynamic and Diversified Concept of Learning

The notion of «responsible citizenship» concerns an awareness and knowledge of rights and duties. This is closely related to civic values (such as democracy and human rights, equality, participation, partnership, social cohesion and social justice) as well as to the knowledge and exercise of rights and responsibilities. In recent decades, societies have changed and, with them, the theoretical conceptions and practical implementation of citizenship. The concept is steadily broadening and changing, as lifestyles and patterns in our relations with others become more diversified. Far from being limited to the national context, the notion of harmonious coexistence among citizens relates to a wider concept of a community embracing local, regional, national and international contexts in which individuals live.

The link between citizenship and education is very close. Today's challenge is to strengthen the need for citizenship in societies and to develop learning modes which respond to the societal developments of today's world. This should be the core of the pedagogical approach to citizenship. However, the teaching of citizenship is not sufficient; it is the learning and experiencing of citizenship which is essential. This consists of the development of contextualised intercultural competences through practice, experience and dialogue in formal and non-formal instruction. As a consequence, the concept of citizenship could (and should) be integrated into the educational process in a very integrated way with a horizontal focus from different perspectives.

Moreover, active citizenship is a lifelong process. Learning

citizenship is interactive and deeply embedded in specific formal, non-formal and informal contexts. Support should therefore also be given to citizenship learning with the civil society as well as within the informal settings of the family. Teaching to learn to become active citizens implies to give people the access to these capacities and skills of which they are in need to efficiently participate in the economic, political and social life. This also means the knowledge of languages. In fact, the educational dimension of European citizenship has as much to do with rights as with responsibilities and duties.

Accordingly, the «European citizenship» cannot be merely reduced to forms of individual participation to political life or to bilateral economic relations, but it should take into account the acquisition of skills that have been previously acquired during the formal and non-formal process of education. This process should be favoured from below by concrete projects at local and regional citizens' level with exchanges between schools, students and teachers. Extra-curricular opportunities for citizenship learning should therefore also be encouraged through international exchanges¹⁴.

Education traditions and approaches to citizenship vary across Europe. Although the sense of citizenship is embedded in each individual's life history and its relationships with others, no standard model for developing citizenship can be applied¹⁵.

Till recently the concept of citizenship was conceived in mainly state and institutional terms¹⁶. In today's Europe the concept of citizenship has become more fluid, dynamic and contextual, linking it to the multiple identity of Europe. This means that learning to live together positively with differences and diversity is becoming the central dimension of practicing citizenship in Europe. Therefore, citizenship education is conceived as a modern and dynamic concept with a European dimension.

2.3.b. Objectives

While its aims and content may be highly diversified, key objectives of responsible citizenship education in today's complex world should relate to (1) political and (multi)cultural literacy, (2) critical thinking and the development of certain attitudes and values and (3) active participation.

1) The development of political and cultural literacy may

¹⁴ See EU citizens' programme.

¹⁵ J. Holford, R. van der Veen (eds.), *Lifelong Learning, Governance and Active Citizenship in Europe*, ETGACE project, European Commission, EU Research on Social Sciences and Humanities, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2006, p. 206.

¹⁶ T. Steele, R. Taylor, *Citizenship and Global Chaos: Education, Culture and Revolution*, in D. Wildemeersch, V. Stroobans, M. Bron (eds.), *Active Citizenship and Multiple Identities in Europe. A Learning Outlook*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2005, pp. 88-97.

involve: learning about social, political and civic institutions, as well as human rights; the study of conditions under which people may live harmoniously together; teaching young people about national constitutions so that they are better prepared to exercise their rights and responsibilities; promoting recognition of the cultural and historical heritage; promoting recognition of the cultural and linguistic diversity of society.

In this perspective increased literacy should favour active communication and participation in democratic societies, and consequently responsible citizenship building. However, increasing diversity of peoples in European societies requires a re-conceptualisation of literacy towards a political, multicultural literacy which might be a vehicle to mutual understanding and learning in European multicultural societies and beyond. In other words political and cultural literacy requires a life-long and a life-wide education.

2) Critical thinking and the development of certain attitudes and values. This may entail following competences: acquiring the skills needed to participate actively in public life; developing recognition of and respect for oneself and others with a view to achieving greater mutual understanding; acquiring social and moral responsibility, including self-confidence and learning to behave responsibly towards others; strengthening a spirit of solidarity; the construction of values, with due regard for differing social perspectives and points of view; learning to listen and resolve conflicts peacefully; learning to contribute to a safe environment; and developing more effective strategies for fighting racism and xenophobia.

3) Finally, active participation of youngsters may be promoted by: enabling them to become more involved in the community at large (at international, national, local and school levels); offering them practical experience of democracy at school; developing their capacity to engage with each other; encouraging pupils to develop project initiatives in conjunction with other organisations (such as community associations, public bodies and international organisations), as well as projects involving other communities.

In short, it should be clear that citizenship education is not just concerned with imparting theoretical knowledge to enhance the political and (multicultural) literacy in issues such as democracy, human rights, the functioning of political institutions, the

cultural and historical heritage, etc. It is crucial for integral human development that positive civic attitudes and values should be developed and that active participation should be promoted – be it at school level or in society at large.

2.3.c. *European Dimension of Citizenship Education*¹⁷

Citizenship always has a territorial connotation, whatever its scale and limits. Education processes should therefore take account of the fact that future citizens identify with different entities and dimensions, whether local, regional, national, European, international or global. Four aspects should be considered in developing the European dimension of education: curriculum building, teacher education, support for teachers and teaching materials and extra-curricular activities involving mobility and exchanges.

1) Curriculum building: the European/international dimension of citizenship should be part of the overarching general aims of various levels and phases of education. Aspects which could be addressed in education/learning paths are: rights and obligations of EU citizens; contemporary history of European nations; the EU integration process; functioning of European/international institutions; main economic/political/social issues in European/international cooperation; knowledge and promotion of socio-cultural diversity; learning about European culture/literature/values; etc. From the curricular standpoint, citizenship education can be offered as a separate stand-alone compulsory or optional subject, or integrated into one or more other subjects (such as history, social studies, geography or philosophy), or as a cross-curricular educational theme, so that the principles of citizenship education might be present in all subjects of the curriculum. These different approaches are not mutually exclusive.

2) Teacher education: the European dimension of citizenship education should be taken into account in the initial teacher education as well as in the provision of in-service teacher training.

3) Support for teachers and teaching materials: teacher support measures relevant to the European dimension of citizenship education may exist in a wide variety of forms and bodies. They may be devised by the education authorities of a particular country, public research institutes, and institutions for teacher education, associations and NGOs as well as by a variety of

¹⁷ The European Commission has published various White Papers and studies on European citizenship education such as: *White Paper on «Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society»* (1995) (http://ec.europa.eu/languages/documents/doc409_en.pdf); *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000) (<http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/MemorandumEng.pdf>); *Resolution on Lifelong Learning* (2002) (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2002:163:0001:0003:EN:PDF>); European Commission, *Open Learning Environment, Active Citizenship and Social Inclusion. Implementation of Education and Training 2010 Work Programme: Progress Report*, Brussels, November 2003; European Commission, *The Future of Education and Citizenship Policies: The Commission Adopts Guidelines for Future Programmes after 2006*, Brussels, 2004; *Learning for Active Citizenship. A Significant Challenge in Building a Europe of Knowledge: Education and Active Citizenship in the European Union* (2006) (http://ec.europa.eu/education/archive/citizen/citiz_en.html); *Programme in the Field of Lifelong Learning 2007-2013* (http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm). Interesting policy-oriented studies were made by GHK, *Study on Active Citizenship Education*, commissioned by DG Education and Culture, February 2007, p. 151 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/pdf/doc248_en.pdf) and Eurydice, *Citizenship Education at School in Europe*, May 2005, p. 91 (<http://www.moec.gov.cy/programs/eurydice/publication.pdf>).

European institutions, such as the European Commission or the Council of Europe. They may involve materials or facilities intended directly for teachers, or information materials on the European Union for the general public.

4) Activities in the wider school context: learning about the European dimension of citizenship means acquiring formal knowledge and developing awareness about a set of societal and political issues. However, this learning process requires above all that students should be able to gain experience of a practical nature as in simulation games or various exchange programmes. Many European, national and regional education programmes and schemes exist for promoting the European dimension and awareness.

If Europe wants to fulfil its destiny a drastic increase in the engagement of citizens and (young) people to the European project is necessary. We are convinced that a more holistic and integral approach to the concept and practice of citizenship will enrich the possibility to promote active citizenship together with the European dimension. From the Tindemans Report *Europe of Citizens and Peoples* (1976) onwards many community action programmes have been launched to contribute to the building of active citizenship, mainly in the fields of education, training and youth (e.g. Socrates, Leonardo, Culture 2000, the Lifelong learning programme, «Youth on the Move»).

In short, the European dimension of active citizenship goes beyond the economic, political, social and cultural boundaries. Such an inclusive approach to citizenship education may lead to the recognition and acceptance of a European citizenship covering multiple identities and nationalities. This is not an exclusive responsibility of governments, but also a responsibility of citizens and civil society. Consequently, diversified forms of civil society participation to concretise active citizenship have emerged and been developed at local and regional level in Europe. However a certain level of common identity is needed to strengthen the European dimension of citizenship. This identity exists in different complimentary forms, creating a multilayered identity. It is a process that should be enhanced, as long as it goes along with the recognition of diversity. Intercultural learning could be a key towards this strengthening.

2.3.d. The Conditions for Active Citizenship Learning in Plural Europe

The conditions for such an integral human development in education and learning can be summarised as follows:

- 1) The development, not only of an analytical mind and understanding, but also of synthetic and creative capacity to applied learning in concrete training projects. There is need of capacity and skills to confront and go beyond isolated subjects, disciplines and frontiers. This favours tolerance and avoids stereotype behaviour and prejudices.
- 2) The formation of general and specific knowledge, in particular thinking and acting with respect for diversity and differences within and outside Europe. This requires a knowledge acquisition with an open and critical spirit in a historical perspective; but conscious of basic values.
- 3) Education to listening, tolerance, comprehension and respect for other cultures and other peoples and education to responsibility. Therefore, knowledge of one's culture and language, of other cultures and languages is an important key for actual communication.
- 4) A pedagogy embedded in the regional and educational specificity: it implies territorial inclusiveness in order to create formal and informal spaces of learning set with a European context.
- 5) The development of programmes for learning to life together and life skills at grass roots level which stimulate participation, respect and dialogue.

2.3.e. General Education Practices to European Citizenship

Active citizenship in a European context should be applied in general and specific education and learning processes by focussing on:

- 1) Attention to European themes and topics in the educational project, not as a residual factor but as a crucial and permanent reference with the help of numerous European, national and regional programmes.
- 2) Building a curriculum of formal and informal education towards interdisciplinary learning by an exchange of good practices in a comparative perspective.

3) Transmission of collective memories, confirmation of common values and the formation of an open mind and tolerant/respectful/interested behaviour to other cultures through experience, examples and exchange programmes and permanent learning.

4) Financial support to concrete projects to develop networks of regional, national, European and international collaboration among schools and teachers.

Various programmes of education for democratic citizenship are organised by international organisations¹⁸ as well as by governmental and non-governmental organisations¹⁹. They all offer training/education/learning activities targeted for teachers, students or specific groups such as minorities or handicapped persons, often with a focus on the local implication. They all illustrate the importance of the societal role of education for integration and inclusion purposes in democratic and multicultural societies. The main challenge remains however the implementation of these education activities in formal and non-formal curriculum building at local and school level.

2.4. Intercultural Education: The Cultural Dimension of European Citizenship

The cultural dimension of the concept of «European citizenship» derives from the awareness of a common cultural European heritage, rooted in the diversity of histories, citizenships, nationalities and identities. Its European character presents an added value to citizenship building and could be an instrument for further European integration and cohesion and against stereotype behaviour and prejudices. Formal and non-formal education and learning as well as testimonies and experiences of this European unity in diversity can therefore contribute to a strengthening of a shared European cultural identity and develop a common cultural consciousness²⁰.

2.4.a. Search for Meaning

The specificity of intercultural education refers to learning processes which lead to a knowledge of other cultures and install behaviour patterns of availability, openness and dialogue. It concerns a rather complex type of knowledge. The primary

¹⁸ See the education programmes of the UN, UNESCO, Council of Europe, the education, youth and citizens' programme of the EU, etc.

¹⁹ A good example of a grass roots European-specific organisation is «Ryckvelde», a non-profit organisation promoting conscious European citizenship, founded in 1956 and located in Bruges (Belgium). It offers training and debates and run actions, events and projects on the European integration process. It targets both youngsters in education and adults. See for more details (<http://www.ryckvelde.be/nl/ryckvelde/english-42.html>). See also L. Bekemans, *(New) Instruments for a Participative Democracy. Case Study: Learning Experience of Participative and Deliberative Democracy: European Movement, College of Europe & «Ryckvelde»*, in «Ateliers of the Committee of the Regions», November 2008.

²⁰ See High-Level Advisory Group, European Commission, *Dialogue between Peoples and Cultures in the Euro-Mediterranean Region*, 2003, p. 45; L. Bekemans, M. Karasinska-Fendler, M. Mascia, A. Papisca, C. Stephanou, P.G. Xuereb (eds.), *Intercultural Dialogue and Citizenship. Translating Values into Actions. A Common Project for Europeans and Their Partners*, Venezia, Marsilio Editori, 2007, p. 665; L. Bekemans, *Intercultural Dialogue and New European Citizenship. A Contribution to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008*, in «Pace diritti umani/Peace human rights», no. 1, 2007, pp. 7-23. Some tentative conclusions and prospective building concepts, in «Seminarium. Intercultural Education and Religious Pluralism», n.s., vol. XLVIII, no. 2-3, April-September 2008, pp. 519-530.

objective of intercultural education should be the promotion of the capacity of constructive conviviality in a multi-form cultural and social context, valorising the cultural dimension of active citizenship. It consists not only of the acceptance and respect of diversity, but also of the recognition of the place of the proper cultural identity in a perspective of mutual learning. The challenge of such education to comprehension can be expressed at two levels: the cognitive level of knowledge and information on the world and the others, and the affective level of the attention to the relation, interaction and the story with the other.

We believe that the unifying perspective of intercultural education lies in the reconciliation between unity and diversity in various situations of multi-cultural and plural Europe. Out of tolerance and respect dialogue and mutual enrichment can be developed to manage cultural diversity and strengthen citizenship. The notion of solidarity may then be opened up to the concept of hospitality; and the principle of equality may integrate with the recognition of diversity and finally lead to mutual responsibility. In short, education will need to play a key role at all levels in developing the ability to build an intercultural citizenship²¹.

2.4.b. Objectives and Practices of Intercultural Education

Following the above line of thought intercultural education should accept the paradigm of human rights as the universal point of departure, implying the importance of human rights education and consequently of education to democratic citizenship. Therefore a multi-dimensional approach to intercultural education should respond to a multiplicity of objectives: (1) Education to reciprocity: it implies a promotion of an attitude to life together, to collaborate with others and to affirm the value of each individual and all persons who make up society; (2) Education to complexity: it signifies a learning beyond particularities to be able to live in various educational spaces (schools, universities, families, etc.) between universality and cultural plurality amidst ongoing change; (3) Education to a correct and respectful interpersonal communication, verbal and non-verbal; (4) Education to conflict-prevention: it means to teach to manage conflict in a civilised way; (5) Education to the conviviality of differences: it implies the promotion of initiatives

²¹ S. Bergan, H. van't Land (eds.), *Speaking across Borders: The Role of Higher Education in Furthering Intercultural Dialogue*, Council of Europe, December 2010.

with respect of differences and common denominators; (6) Education to peace: it consists of a more global education to values constitutive for peace building.

Various programmes and practices of education to cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are organised within a European context²². Respect for diversity and intercultural dialogue are conceived as vehicles for conviviality of multicultural societies, on the condition that intercultural learning is practice oriented and rooted in a territorial context.

3. Education Policies in Europe

The Context: An Educational Crisis

Education systems mediate, transmit and re-shape the value systems of the societies in which they are embedded. However, many European education systems, at all levels, have been redesigned to reflect an overriding concern with specifically economic performance. This emphasis affects both the objects of study (a preference for scientific, legal, and economic subjects rather than for the traditional «humanities») and the methods used (matters of pedagogy and assessment). The Bologna Process, although a very valuable initiative to create «European Higher Education Area» has nevertheless drawn criticism that: (1) it promotes a Europe of knowledge and of capacity for employment, directly oriented towards economic and industrial productivity, over the ideal of integral human development; (2) it emphasizes the acquisition of marketable professional skills rather than critical reflection and judgement; and finally (3) it has included ever more detailed «targets», so that administrative burdens excessively limit teaching time and schools' freedom to plan curricula.

²² A good example is the Anna Lindh intercultural citizenship education programme for the Euro-Mediterranean Region, see Anna Lindh Foundation, *Euro-Med Intercultural Trends 2010*.

The Anna Lindh Report, pp. 16-87 (<http://www.euromedalex.org/sites/default/files/AnnaLindhReport2010.pdf>).

For a good overview of national approaches of intercultural practices see European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERicarts), Report *Sharing Diversity, National Approaches to Intercultural Dialogue in Europe*. Study for the European Commission, March 2008, p. 160.

3.1. The Legal Basis

At European level, education in general and higher education in particular are not subjects of a «common European policy». With the principle of subsidiarity each member state maintains full responsibility for the content and the organisation of its education system. The European Commission's work in the field of

education and training rests on two pillars: (1) policy cooperation and work with the member states; and (2) funding programmes, such as the Lifelong Learning Programme. The basic principle is that member states are in charge of their education and training, and the European Commission works together with the member states to help achieve common goals.

Education was formally recognised for the first time in the Treaty establishing the European Community signed in Maastricht in 1992. The Maastricht Treaty set the scene for education and vocational training in the EU. The legal basis is now set in Articles 165 and 166²³ of the Lisbon Treaty. The Community «shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States», through a wide range of actions, such as promoting the mobility of citizens, designing joint study programmes, establishing networks, exchanging information or teaching languages of the European Union. The Treaty also contains a commitment to promote life-long learning for all citizens of the Union. Therefore, the Community has a complementary role to play: to add a European dimension to education, to help develop quality education and to encourage life-long learning.

3.2. Overview of the European Lifelong Learning Agenda in Relation to Citizenship

3.2.a. The European Union

The European Union has introduced the notion of «European citizenship» in 1992 and completed its understanding in the updates of the Treaty on European Union²⁴. After having stressed the representative and the participatory dimensions of the democratic character of the EU, the concept of active citizenship was promoted, especially by insisting on the «rights» linked to citizenship, neglecting somehow the responsibilities attached to citizenship. However, (EU) citizenship does also entail responsibilities. In the European context, this means becoming «actively involved [...] to develop a sense of European identity, [thus] enhancing mutual understanding between Europeans». However there is no doubt that today's citizen is much more attached to the rights than the obligations (a sort of «clientelistic citizenship»). If citizenship is only expressed in a

²³ TEU, Lisbon Treaty, Title XII, Article 165.

²⁴ The democratic principles of the citizenship of the Union are laid down in Articles 9-11 of the Lisbon Treaty.

legal/political relationship between the citizen and his/her polity (as a community/political system), today's citizen seems to be rather a consumer of the rights treating the obligations to the community marginally. Therefore, today such responsibilities should be taught in a dynamic process of formal, informal and non-formal learning.

It is however important to recall that citizenship building has become an integral part of the EU education and training agenda. Since the mid-1990s the EU and the member states have attached great importance to lifelong learning in the knowledge society. Various White Papers, Memoranda and Resolutions illustrate the impact of lifelong learning on citizenship building: – The White Paper of the European Commission on «Growth, Competitiveness, and Employment» in 1994 proposed for the first time that: «Lifelong learning is, therefore, the overall objective to which the national educational communities can make their own contributions». It further said that: «All measures must, therefore, necessarily be based on the concept of developing, generalizing and systemizing lifelong learning and continuing training. This means that education and training systems must be reworked in order to take account of the need [...] for the permanent recomposition and redevelopment of knowledge and know-how»²⁵.

– In 1995 the Commission published the *White Paper on «Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society»*²⁶ and declared 1996 the European Year of Lifelong Learning. The 1997 Amsterdam Treaty officially adopted lifelong learning as the basic principle for its education and training policies. The subsequent policy paper *Towards a Europe of Knowledge* developed the principles of lifelong learning in order «to promote the highest level of knowledge for its people through broad access to education and its permanent updating». It confirmed the emergence of lifelong learning as the core policy strategy of the EU for the 21st century. Institutional recognition of lifelong learning was expressed in the creation of the Lifelong Learning Policy Unit within Directorate XXII in Brussels.

– In 2000, the EC published the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*²⁷ which defined lifelong learning in terms of: «[...] all learning activities that are undertaken throughout life, with the aims of improving knowledge, skills and competence, within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective».

²⁵ <http://aei.pitt.edu/1139>.

²⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/languages/documents/doc409_en.pdf.

²⁷ <http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/MemorandumEng.pdf>.

It was finally published as a Commission Communication in 2001 *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning Reality*²⁸, making explicit its four broad objectives of active citizenship, personal fulfillment, social inclusion and employability. The taking into consideration of the full range of formal, non-formal and informal learning was also important.

– In June 2002 the European Council of Heads of State and Government adopted the *Resolution on Lifelong Learning*²⁹. It was to be the guiding principle for the reform of education and training in the member states. It contained a declaration that by 2010, 15% of the working population must be engaged in educational activity. It argued that: «Education and training are indispensable means for promoting social cohesion, active citizenship, personal and professional fulfilment, adaptability and employability». It further affirmed that: «Lifelong learning facilitates free mobility for European citizens and allows the achievement of the goals and aspirations of the European Union countries» (i.e. to become prosperous, competitive, tolerant and democratic). It should enable all persons to acquire the necessary knowledge to take part as active citizens in the knowledge society and the labour market. It also agreed that lifelong learning should in future play a key role in: «[...] the actions and policies developed within the framework of the European employment strategy, the action plans for skills and mobility, the Socrates, Leonardo and Youth programmes, the e-learning initiative, and in the research and innovation actions among others».

The previous developments and various policy documents finally resulted in the integrated action *Programme in the Field of Lifelong Learning 2007-2013*³⁰: the new programme replaced the existing four sectoral programmes on school education (Comenius), higher education (Erasmus), vocational training (Leonardo da Vinci) and adult education (Grundtvig). The budget earmarked for this new integrated programme was € 6.97 billion for the seven year period. They were further concretised in September 2006 with a Recommendation that identified the key competences in lifelong learning and a Recommendation on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning³¹.

The Lisbon Strategy: the development of lifelong learning as the EC's strategic policy for education and training does

²⁸ http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11054_en.htm.

²⁹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2002:163:0001:0003:EN:PDF>.

³⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm.

³¹ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/eqf_en.htm.

not stand alone. Since 2000, lifelong learning policies have become increasingly integrated as a core dimension within the broader economic and social policies of the EU with regard to the knowledge economy, employment, mobility and social inclusion. The Lisbon Strategy was agreed in March 2000 when the European Council of Heads of State and Government formulated the new strategic objective for the EU as follows: «The EU must become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion». In order to achieve this ambitious goal, the European Council demanded «[...] not only a radical transformation of the European economy, but also a challenging programme for the modernization of social welfare and education systems»³².

For the first time agreement was reached on shared targets to make education and training policies central to the knowledge economy. A 10-year work programme was adopted to be implemented through the sharing of experiences, working towards common goals and learning from what works best elsewhere through the open method of coordination. This new instrument paved the way for a more coherent policy in education where a «common policy» is not feasible but where there is a real need for a «European educational area».

This programme constituted the new and coherent Community strategic framework of co-operation in the fields of education and training. Three major goals were to be achieved by 2010: – to improve the quality and effectiveness of EU education and training systems; – to ensure that they are accessible to all; and – to open up education and training to the wider world. These ambitious goals were complemented by more specific objectives covering various types and levels of education and training (formal, non-formal and informal) aimed at making a reality of lifelong learning, including citizenship education. *Education and Training 2010* integrated all actions in the fields of education and training at European level, including vocational education and training (the «Copenhagen process») as well as the development of the European Higher Education Area (the «Bologna process») implying the introduction of the 3 cycles (Bachelor/Master/PhD), a quality assurance and the recognition of qualification and study periods. However, the results of the Lisbon Strategy and the achievement of targets set for 2010 were

³² http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm.

not totally successful and a more realistic strategy for the current decade has been proposed.

The EU 2020 Strategy: the Lisbon Strategy has now been replaced by the EU 2020 Strategy. It is the EU's growth strategy for the current decade. In a changing world, the EU wants to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These three mutually reinforcing priorities are said to help the EU and its member states deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. Key priorities are (1) creating value by basing growth on knowledge; (2) empowering people in inclusive societies and (3) creating a competitive, connected and greener economy. The key tasks are a successful exit from the crisis and an advanced strategy for convergence and integration within a multi-level governance setting and global context.

Concretely, the Union has set five ambitious objectives – on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy – to be reached by 2020. Seven flagship initiatives were launched to boost growth and jobs: Smart growth (i.e. Digital Agenda for Europe, Innovation Union and Youth on the Move); Sustainable growth (i.e. Resource Efficient Europe and an Industrial Policy for the Globalisation Era); and Inclusive growth (i.e. an Agenda for New Skills and Jobs and a European Platform against Poverty). Specific challenges for education and training have been addressed and quantitative indicators identified: – to achieve the target of a reduction of school drop-out rates below 10% and of at least 40% of 30-34 year-olds completing third level education; – to strengthen the social embodiment of education (i.e. rethinking the role of university in knowledge and research generation in society); and – the development of competences and skills adapted to the needs of an emerging new economy and society.

A further boost to European citizenship building is given by the Regulation on the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) (2012). With the ECI, which is part of the Lisbon Treaty, EU citizens are being given the opportunity to play a part in the democratic process for the very first time. Although the ECI is not a legislative instrument, it can be a tool for participative cross-border democracy and a vehicle to bring Europe a little closer to its citizens. The proposed new «Europe for Citizens» programme 2014-2020 aims to enhance remembrance and civic participation in Europe³³.

³³ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/studiesdownload.html?languageDocument=EN&file=75891>, access 12/09/2012.

3.2.b. *The Council of Europe*

The Council of Europe is particularly active and productive in the areas of education, citizenship and intercultural dialogue. It has been dealing with these issues for several years through its programme «Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights» (EDC)³⁴. The EDC is a set of practices and activities designed to help young people and adults play an active part in democratic life and exercise their rights and responsibilities in society. It encompasses concepts such as peace and intercultural education. Human rights education (HRE) is conceived as the core and indivisible part of democratic citizenship education.

In this context we refer to the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (May 2010)³⁵. Article 2 of the Charter defines education for democratic citizenship as «education, training, awareness-raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to empower them to exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life, with a view to the promotion and protection of democracy and the rule of law». As to the relationship between education for democratic citizenship and human rights education Article 3 states that «education for democratic citizenship focuses on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, in relation to the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society, while human rights education is concerned with the broader spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of people's lives». Article 5 refers to its lifelong learning aspect: «learning in education for democratic citizenship and human rights education is a lifelong process» (Article 5b), an essential element of «the promotion of social cohesion and intercultural dialogue and the valuing of diversity and equality, including gender equality» (Article 5f).

The cultural dimension of citizenship has been very much strengthened on the occasion of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008). The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, *Living Together as Equals in Dignity*³⁶, has been most relevant not only for its definitions in relation to

³⁴ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/default_en.asp.

³⁵ Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

³⁶ White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, *Living Together as Equals in Dignity*, Council of Europe, May 2008.

inclusion, integration and diversity, but also for its views on the active promotion of citizenship: «Citizenship enhances civic participation and so contributes to the added value newcomers bring, which in turn cements social cohesion». The White Paper looks at cultural diversity, national minorities and intercultural dialogue with an emphasis on education for citizenship. This also includes aspects of learning that facilitate the acquisition of skills and the development of attitudes and consequently fosters a lifelong awareness of the citizens' role in society, political life and the locality to which they belong. The Paper also connects to democratic values, the recognition of the dignity of every human being and the concomitant equality of all.

Conclusion

Conceptual Reflections

So far the EU has concentrated much on the «output legitimacy» of citizenship-building, whereas it is necessary to include the citizens on the input side of such legitimacy, especially given the widening gap between institutions and citizens and the decreasing sense of belonging to the European project³⁷. Europe today is characterised by a seemingly contradictory process of increasing diversity and supranational governance, not equipped with the proper institutional architecture to cope with the economic, political, social and cultural challenges of today's world. There is also the challenge to combine culturally different concepts of being a good citizen with the over-arching concept of building an inclusive global but European-oriented citizen in the ongoing globalisation vs. Europeanisation debate. European citizenship should evolve to a flexible but equilibrating notion of rights and responsibilities within a European and global space. It should be embedded in a multi-level and multi-dimensional polity, consisting of different levels and covering various social, economic, ethical and political dimensions. The educational and cultural dimension of citizenship building is therefore crucial. The knowledge society requires an in-depth development of lifelong learning benefitting from a variety of interconnecting learning resources of citizenship building. However, today's policy towards a learning society implies a more innovative

³⁷ Eurobarometer, *Intercultural Dialogue in Europe*, December 2007 (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_217_sum_en.pdf).

capacity to (re)design (new) institutions of political, economic, social and educational governance which can respond properly to the challenges of the multi-faced process of globalisation. The learning society manifests fundamental structural trends towards the individualisation of risk and the threat of social exclusion while promoting social inclusion, personal fulfillment, and lifelong learning for employability and adaptability. Learning new skills should therefore be envisaged for citizenship as much as for employability. This includes learning for personal, civic and social as well as for employment-related purposes. It implies raising investment in people and knowledge and broadening opportunities for innovative, more flexible forms of learning, respecting multiple identities within the European meeting place. The policy consequence is that education institutions should accept lifelong learning as their collective responsibility, but that governments should invest in training teachers and trainers for all stages and dimensions of learning and that Europe should strengthen its lifelong learning agenda to active citizenship.

When referring to citizenship education, it therefore seems necessary to broaden the term «citizenship» beyond its mere legal connotation and adopt a more comprehensive approach. Citizenship education has to be conceived as embracing all members of a given society, regardless of their nationality, sex, or racial, social or educational background. Responsible citizenship is to be seen as a universal concept of giving children and young people the knowledge, values and skills they require to participate in society and contribute to their own and society's well-being.

Furthermore, the European and international dimension should be conceived as an integral part of citizenship education. While concerns relevant to citizenship education are primarily related to a particular national context and associated with the need to strengthen democracy or the participation of certain social groups, membership of the European Union also calls for its own form of civic awareness. The need for knowledge regarding Europe is covered in school curricula by a very wide variety of disparate elements. This is often limited to transmitting basic knowledge of the European Union (i.e. the functioning of its institutions, the various entitlements of its citizens, or important stages in the process of integration). However, teaching should

also focus on matters more concerned with European identity (e.g. the foundations of a common European culture, the position of one's own country in the EU), on subjects related to society (e.g. solidarity in social and economic issues, human security, development, etc.), or on learning values (e.g. understanding and promotion of present-day socio-cultural diversity). Alongside traditional education, extra-curricular activities and projects, such as travel exchanges, school twinning, participation in EU competitions, improve intercultural skills as well as language proficiency. Implementation of the European dimension in courses and extra-curricular activities however much depends on the skills of teachers, requiring professional development as much as initial teacher education.

Policy Suggestions

Life-long and Life-wide Learning Approaches to Citizenship

The question is how can education to citizenship take on board the concept of difference in a globalising society which is seeking convergence rather than fragmentation? I believe in the perspective of a value-driven socio-political economy of investments in lifelong learning in the knowledge society. Such an approach examines lifelong learning policies in terms of their formulation of the «life-long» and the «life-wide» dimensions of learning. It is about bridging the gap between education and the outside world, linking education with everyday life in an ongoing process and stressing its citizenship element.

Understanding the development of lifelong learning policies in terms of the (re-)distribution of opportunity structures throughout individual life courses implies a new awareness of active citizenship building and inter-generational solidarity with regard to the learning opportunities in multi-cultural societies. If we adopt life-long and life-wide approaches as the base-line for the analysis of lifelong learning policies to citizenship, the recognition of the growing diversity in individual life courses will inevitably require more innovative and creative approaches to launch, develop and finance lifelong learning from the perspective of integral human development. A network of multiple excellences and learning environments of citizenship building within multi-level education governance can provide

some policy answers to the current challenges to lifelong learning.

Prioritising the Educational and Cultural Dimension of Active Citizenship

New inclusive education policies to citizenship which respond to the very requirements of education for a risk society being more open, broad, critical, creative and innovative should consider the following three elements: 1) differentiated discourse, 2) curriculum content, and 3) social and cultural relevance:

1) Discourse refers to people's internalised values and the way they behave. A deeper understanding of how people build up a self-image should help educators to offer effective and adequate learning programmes for those most excluded from the mainstream. Educational inclusion for active citizenship also means that different and alternative ways of knowing and doing within our mainstream learning programmes should be recognised.

2) The development of a curriculum content in a European context needs i) to contextualise the curriculum building in a critical, reflexive learning experience with the goal that understanding the role of the self is critical to learning how to contribute actively to a changing world, and ii) to introduce the idea of an alternative curriculum, alongside the conventional mode of disciplinarity, as a new mode' of knowledge – context specific, transdisciplinary, created and transmitted largely outside of universities.

3) Social and cultural relevance: the most common method proposed for democratising the selection and control of knowledge is through discussion and dialogue. There is need for a critical dialogic approach to learning which recognises community experience as a contribution to knowledge and as a means of understanding its cultural relevance to the curriculum. This also implies recognising values outside the dominant perspective of the education system, in particular an education to intercultural dialogue, human rights and democratic citizenship. Such an inclusive approach of integral human development based on the above mentioned key characteristics has following policy implications for education and active citizenship in the European context:

1) Focus on a redesigning of the lifelong learning agenda towards a citizen-centric focus: the redistribution of learning opportunities and sources throughout individual life and community-driven education and training needs to favour citizenship building at all levels of learning.

2) Focus on the embeddedness in social life: lifelong learning policies need to be deeply engaged in the social construction of human subjectivity. This involves active engagement with the complex processes of risks arising from the flexibility in individual life courses. Globalisation posits both threats to traditional patterns of social life but it also opens up new opportunities for human development. Therefore, education policies for citizenship need to address the continuous and often difficult transitions between private and public spheres. This can only be achieved by the recognition of diverse learning environments and various acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes and cultural expressions. The economic viability of such structures will demand a radical reconfiguration of the entire social architecture of education and training to citizenship.

3) Linking with the knowledge society: the knowledge society poses a major challenge to those generations who today live in a society for which they were not prepared by their initial education. Knowledge societies need to invest in inter-generational solidarity and citizenship awareness with respect of cultural diversity. This calls for a radical reconfiguration of the entire structure of life-long and life-wide learning opportunities.

4) Education and training for change/employability: there is a close relation between work and education in our societies. The rapidly changing structural conditions of European societies such as the globalisation of markets, fragmentation of the labour market and the current global financial and economic crisis drastically shape the nature of the interrelation of work, education and employability. These conditions have a great impact on the role and objectives of education and training and determine the sense of (non-)belonging to a culture, a place or territory. More and more focus should be put on individual learning paths taking place in formal, informal and non-formal settings. Education and training should therefore become part of a more broad life-long and life-wide learning process within a context of global challenges.

Consequently, the promotion of an education to active citizen-

ship and multiple identities needs to be understood and carried out in a wider societal context of the knowledge triangle. A more comprehensive, international and multi-perspective analysis of the interconnection between education and society is proposed for both economic and societal reasons to make societies more cohesive and active citizenship an instrument and a goal.

In order to respond to these contextual and societal developments the following broad guidelines are suggested: – a value orientation and a community of shared values, i.e. a vision based on universal values which support and guide concrete action to build a European public space; – a request for integral human development and the acceptance of education as a common good: this implies an educational approach that places the individual as a person at the centre in the pedagogy to learn to think, reflect and act; – an identification of learning objectives and competences which make intercultural dialogue worthwhile and intercultural communication possible in times of ongoing change; – an equality of respect and opportunities of democratic principles in citizenship building; – the recognition of (cultural) identity building to be understood in its social context; – launching innovative pedagogical projects of citizenship in European context; – sharing best learning practices of active citizenship in a positive and pro-active manner; and finally a dialectics of thinking and acting together with a view to learn to fully participate in society building.

