

Cidree professional staff exchange
Jeroen Bron (SLO) and Klaus Mayer (Education Scotland)
March 20 – 23, 2012

Jeroen Bron (SLO) attended the Pupil participation and pupil voice conference organised by Education Scotland on March 23. Jeroen's interest in pupil voice was awakened when he participated in CIDREE's collaborative project on pupil voice, organised by NCCA Ireland in 2006. This project resulted in a publication that is still available through CIDREE's website http://www.cidree.org/publications/reports_and_studies.

At the moment Jeroen is involved in a PhD study that explores pupil participation in curriculum development. During Jeroen's stay Education Scotland organised a program for him which provided a number of opportunities to meet and discuss the topic with practitioners and lead organisations. This included a meeting with Education Scotland staff and with representatives of the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child in Scotland. He also visited a 'Rights respecting' school' and the Scottish Youth parliament. The conference itself provided various examples of pupil participation in schools as well as results of studies that included the voice of young people. He has finished a literature review of pupil voice in England and Scotland. The visit gave him the chance to compare his conclusions with the situation in a number of schools.

He has learned that in Scotland, pupil voice is taken seriously both in policy measures and in practice. He found that the concept of pupil voice and participation fits well into the concept of citizenship education and the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). This connection makes participation and voice a relevant issue in Scottish schools.

SLO is following curriculum developments in a number of countries including Scotland. Jeroen's visit gave him the chance to learn more about the implementation of CfE. There seems to be some reluctance among teachers in secondary education now that the exams come into play. Teachers in primary seemed to be happy with the new curriculum. It inspired them to emphasize the learning over the teaching to mention one thing.