



Consortium of Institutions for Development
and Research in Education in Europe

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Foreword

In the foreword to the previous CIDREE Brief, I portrayed CIDREE as an extensive and potentially very strong learning network. Many recent and upcoming events illustrate the intended interaction between a wide variety of professionals, exchanging, discussing, sharing and developing relevant professional knowledge.

A (non-exhaustive) selection of events, combining both the social as well as the substantive nature of the consortium includes:

- our General Assembly (GA) (including pre-conference on language policies) in Dublin;
- the Contact Persons meeting in Prague (this year including a conference about curriculum policy making);
- an expert meeting in Brussels (about early selection in secondary education);
- a major Chinese-European conference on curriculum development in Beijing;
- two symposia with broad CIDREE participation at the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) in Helsinki (on school-based curriculum development and on curriculum development research respectively);
- the publication of another CIDREE Yearbook, entitled *'Beyond Lisbon 2010: perspectives from research and development for education policy-making in Europe'*.

This yearbook will be presented during our Conference and GA in November 2010 in Oxford, when we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of our consortium, definitely a highlight in our CIDREE history!

Another sign of the vitality of our consortium is that the locations for the combined GAs and annual conferences have already been set for the next two years: Lyon in 2011 and Stockholm in 2012.

In the meantime we continue to invest in stimulating interaction and joint knowledge growth, to increase our membership to include as many European countries as possible (various discussions are ongoing), and to increase the visibility and relevance of CIDREE.

In this respect, another initiative is noteworthy: an upcoming meeting of CIDREE and OECD in Paris in October 2010. The chief executives of all individual CIDREE member institutions have been invited to this event. In addition to information exchange, the main aim of the meeting is to explore possible interaction between OECD and CIDREE on common themes. We are convinced that such collaborative CIDREE exchanges with other major external parties can contribute to both the internal cohesion of CIDREE, as well as to its external visibility and reputation. The joint Beijing experiences underlined that intention, and the Paris meeting will certainly also increase the added value of CIDREE. These are encouraging signs for an organisation on the verge of reaching a really adult age!

Jan van den Akker

President of CIDREE

Director General SLO (Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development)

2009 CIDREE CONFERENCE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Clock Tower, Department of Education and Science,
Dublin**

The NCCA hosted the 2009 General Assembly in Dublin and as is customary, also organised a conference on a theme in which it has special interest and which has broader application among CIDREE colleagues.

Conference, November 12th

Many Voices: The language of change and diversity in education in Europe

Built around the work done by the editors and contributors to the 2009 CIDREE Yearbook, the conference brought together two significant keynote speakers and a number of the Yearbook authors to reflect on the challenges and opportunities presented by the ever-increasing social and cultural diversity in the education systems of Europe.

In a presentation entitled *Languages in, of, and for education – a Council of Europe perspective and current work*, Waldemar Martyniuk (Executive Director of the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe in Graz) provided a contextual basis for the Council of Europe's policy in the area of language policy and offered some thoughts on shaping a new European language education policy and practice as well as reviewing some recent Council of Europe language initiatives.

He pointed out that language involves more than just a command of linguistic means of communication. Language is a tool for acquiring and transferring knowledge, an important aspect of the development of the person, as both individual and social being, a means of and factor in understanding and making sense of reality, and a vehicle for imaginative creativity. Language education is therefore a fundamental element of good quality education.

For the Council of Europe, the right to good quality language education, in the form of plurilingual and intercultural education, is seen as both an integral part and a major component of quality education. Nevertheless, education systems also fulfil functions and respond to aims that cannot be reduced to the educational entitlements of those concerned. They have to take account of societal expectations, scientific, technical and economic developments and collective interests, both national and other, that affect education in various ways and serve to modify or guide the exercise of a universal right to quality education.

In conclusion, the presentation provided more detail on the current project to promote plurilingual and intercultural edu-



cation, with a particular focus on the right to quality education based on fundamental Council of Europe values. The project aims to raise awareness of the transversal nature of language education and, in a rights perspective, takes into account all the languages and language varieties in, of, and for education.

“Responding to the challenge of increased linguistic diversity: some reflections on curriculum, pedagogy and assessment” was the title of the address of David Little, Trinity College Dublin.

Professor Little identified the integration of pupils/students whose first language is not the language of schooling as one of the most challenging tasks facing educational systems in the developed world. PISA surveys have established that children and adolescents from migration backgrounds tend to perform at a level significantly below the native average and drop out of education without achieving formal qualifications. This waste of human potential is likely, he suggested, to have serious social consequences.

The presentation explored this challenge from a linguistic perspective, explaining how two Council of Europe tools, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and the European Language Portfolio, can be used to analyse learners' language needs, specify a graded curriculum in the language of schooling, and help the learners themselves to understand the task that faces them.

The talk illustrated this argument with reference to primary and post-primary curricula that were developed in Ireland for English as a Second Language and the versions of the European Language Portfolio that were devised to support their implementation. The presentation concluded by briefly describing an innovative approach adopted by the English Language Support Programme of the Trinity Immigration Initiative, which is concerned with the English language development of post-primary students from migration backgrounds.

The afternoon session built on these stimulating presentations

and was an interesting exchange of views structured around brief inputs from Jean-Marie Pincemin (INRP, France), Urs Voegeli-Mantovani (SKBF / CSRE, Switzerland), Ulla Lindqvist (SKOLVERKET, Sweden), and Katrina Keogh (NCCA, Ireland); all of whom provided insights on practical approaches taken in their respective countries to address the challenge of linguistic diversity in education.

As the final element of the conference Prof. Tom Collins, Chair of the NCCA launched the CIDREE Yearbook for 2009.

CIDREE General Assembly, November 13th.

25 participants from 15 countries attended the General Assembly in the Clock Tower, a building of great character in the Irish Department of Education and Science. It was a gathering of some 'firsts'; Jan Van Den Akker presided at his first CIDREE general assembly as president, Rudi Schollaert attended for the first time as CIDREE Programme Manager, and it was a first time attendance for colleagues from Albania. Robert Gjedia presented on the activities of the Albanian institute IKT and the assembly was delighted to formally welcome IKT as a member of CIDREE. It is hoped to have an application from our colleague agency in Estonia at a future assembly.

As with many organisations, CIDREE is frequently concerned with accessing **additional sources of funding**. At this meeting it was revealed that there may be a possibility of receiving funding from the Jean Monnet Fund which supports EU agencies which are involved in Education and Training activities. While a number of eligibility criteria apply it appears that this is an option worth pursuing with 25% of any money received being spent on administration. The CIDREE Board will act as the steering group for the funding application.

The assembly heard reports of progress in a range of **CIDREE projects, staff exchange, one-day meetings and other activities**. In this item activities such as a project on curriculum provision for exceptionally able students; plans for an expert meetings on the teaching of Mathematics and Internationalisation of curriculum, work in the area of Pupil Assessment in Citizenship Education, among other items were discussed. Details of many of these can be accessed on the CIDREE website (www.cidree.org).

Details of a **SLO/Chinese seminar** were outlined to the assembly and CIDREE members were invited to participate in the event in Beijing in 2010 the second week of April 2010. The theme of the conference is broad and will include items such as curriculum trends, the inclusion of other topics will be considered. It follows on from a similar event held in the Netherlands earlier in 2009.

The **CIDREE Yearbook** (an annual publication) was the focus



of a good deal of discussion. The need to increase the visibility of this important work is a key concern of the organisation and especially in the coming year (2010) when a special anniversary edition (edited by Sheila Stoney); with a working title *The role of Research and Development for the Future of Education in Europe* will feature contributions from past presidents reflecting on significant European educational trends of the last two decades. Colleagues from INRP and LTS suggested some themes for Yearbook 2011 and these will be discussed at a future date.

The General Assembly had a discussion about the exciting opportunities offered by the initiation of a **CIDREE Academy**. The function of the Academy would be to cater for the professional development needs of younger or newly appointed staff in member organisations. By drawing on the strengths and expertise of the CIDREE network, the academy might, for example, focus on familiarising staff with current issues and procedures in the areas of education/curriculum policy from a European perspective.

Among a range of suggestions from the CIDREE Board was one which would see the development of a new **Strategic Plan**. It was proposed that a brief concise document broadly outlining the strategic plan would be prepared by the Board and brought to the General Assembly in 2010 and hopefully this will encourage a good discussion next November in Oxford.

Future CIDREE schedule

The CIDREE Conference and General Assembly will take place in Oxford, on November 11th and 12th, 2010.

Three countries have offered to host the GA in the coming years. These were INRP (France), SKOLVERKET (Sweden) and LTS (Scotland). The Board will finalise the schedule of venues but for 2011 the suggested dates for the moment are November 10th and 11th.

John Halbert
NCCA Ireland

HETEROGENEOUS GROUPING IN LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

CIDREE Expert Meeting, Brussels, February 12, 2010.

This expert meeting was attended by representatives from Belgium, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scotland, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

Prior to the meeting the following brief was communicated to the CIDREE member institutions.

Since the 1960s and the early years of comprehensive education, there seems to now be a renewed interest in comprehensive education. This evolution can presumably be interpreted as coming from more evidence based studies on school careers, drop outs, too many unqualified students, etc...

Additionally, international tests results from PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS, etc. seem to revive the interest in comprehensive education.

Frequently, references to the Scandinavian systems can be seen in a diversity of publications, and several European countries are engaging in initiatives which may result in the reorganization of secondary education.

A recurrent theme in all discussions regarding comprehensive education appears to be the strategies in place to manage heterogeneous groups, with a view to ensuring that standards are not reduced/levelled down to the lowest common denominator. A lot of effort and time is devoted to identifying strategies for differentiation among those heterogeneous groups.

These strategies include:

- *Strategies for teaching and learning – linked to the differentiation of aims and objectives, teaching methods (e.g. peer tutoring), materials, assessment, etc.*
- *Manipulating time: additional hours, summer courses, Saturday courses, one-to-one-teaching, repeating classes.*
- *Flexible grouping of pupils: splitting groups for a certain time, temporary subgroups, grouping models...*
- *Teaming up teachers.*

We want to learn from one another about any statutory arrangements regarding differentiation in our different countries, and about how these practices of differentiation actually work in our various systems.

In recent years, a range of initiatives have been developed to respond to the above issue. During the expert meeting, all the member institutions that were represented gave an account of how heterogeneous grouping is dealt with in their particular education system. The problems and difficulties they experience were also discussed.

In summary, from the presentations from participating countries on the day, the conclusion can be drawn that there are similar priorities and goals, but each country has a different starting point from which it is developing its improvement agenda, both in terms of national policy and current practice in schools.

The five key points which emerged from the expert meeting were:

- The political will for change is clearly apparent in each country. In particular, we sensed cross-political party support on the need for change. This is helpful in ensuring common understanding of the key issues and the likelihood of more sustainable policies and policy direction.
- There is a general movement towards greater autonomy for teachers/ a recognition of their professionalism. This should help to encourage more flexibility and innovation so that schools and teachers can meet the needs of children and young people more effectively.
- All of the countries represented were trying to give equal status to academic and vocational education - or were at least moving towards greater parity between academic and vocational pathways.
- Within comprehensive education, there is a growing trend towards meeting the needs of children and young people through careful grouping across classes and / or subjects. In Scotland, this is referred to as 'streaming' or 'setting' – with setting offering a flexible and effective way of grouping pupils differently for different subjects / activities. Within classes of course we would always expect the teacher to differentiate in the learning and teaching of individuals groups and pupils. These approaches help to address the 'homogenous versus heterogeneous' argument.
- All of the countries represented were looking to simplify pathways through their education system, essentially by taking the best features of different routes and trying to develop a sufficiently flexible system to enable comprehensive schools to cater effectively for all children and young people.

Joke Ysenbaert

CURRICULUM REVIEW SEMINAR

Prague, March 11 2010

On the 11th of March 2010, in Prague, CIDREE members came together for a seminar on the subject of curriculum review. The venue was specifically chosen since the Czech republic is about to begin a review of established framework education programmes, and VÚP (the Research Institute of Education in Prague and the host institution for the meeting), as the principal curriculum body in the Czech Republic, will be responsible for this review.

The main purpose of the seminar was to compare the developing Czech model of curriculum review with models from countries that have already experienced review. Discussion was stimulated by presentations from Jan van den Akker (NL) President of CIDREE, Bart Maes (Flanders), Alan Armstrong (Scotland) and Stanislava Krckova, head of VÚP.

The speakers agreed with the necessity to carry out curriculum review and were also in agreement on some of the reasons for this. School autonomy, the need to react to social change, and the requirement to ensure that the skills taught in schools link with the labour market were frequently mentioned.

Bart Maes (Curriculum Department, Flemish Community of Belgium) presented the system of curriculum review in Flanders. Of particular interest to colleagues from the Czech Republic was the information regarding the Flemish programme of national evaluation, which involves different institutions gathering different kinds of information for curriculum review and revision. Of further interest was that fact that, in Flanders, there are developed mechanisms for the evaluation of the implementation of curriculum reviews. That is, the process is complete and cyclical involving evaluation of the school system, review of the curriculum, implementation of changes, and a return to evaluation of the system.

Alan Armstrong (Learning and Teaching Scotland, Director of Education Improvement) gave a presentation on review of the Scottish curriculum. Of particular interest to Czech colleagues was the motivation for recent curriculum review, which had been triggered by the fact that too many young Scots were leaving school without qualifications. The review focus was mainly on developing skills for life, learning and work. The Scottish curriculum also surprised Czech colleagues in its range, covering pupils from age three to age 18.

Stanislava Krckova (the head of VÚP) presented the Czech concept of curriculum review and confirmed that this would become one of the most important future activities of her institution. The review model will depend on the cooperation of all institutions in the Czech school system and will also benefit from cooperation with the CIDREE consortium.

The speakers were also in agreement on the key stumbling blocks to successful curriculum review – a lack of willingness from schools to cooperate; the absence of a formal approach to self-assessment, which is central to the whole system of curriculum review; the isolation of outcomes; and insufficient evaluation of curriculum implementation. It was suggested that the issue of motivation for schools could perhaps be a topic for a forthcoming CIDREE seminar.

In addition to the main guest speakers, Czech colleagues also provided contributions to the seminar. These all linked to the theme of curriculum review.

In conclusion it is true to say that the meeting was inspirational and established the framework for future cooperation between CIDREE and VÚP.

Lubomir Tanzmann.



CIDREE CONTACT PERSONS' MEETING

Prague, March 12, 2010

The CIDREE 2010 Contact Persons' (CP) meeting was conducted in a friendly spirit. Nineteen representatives of their home institutions from 13 European countries met to discuss the important points on the extensive agenda, which covered three large topic areas – curriculum, the CIDREE conference and future work/collaboration.

The issue of the international content of the curriculum in individual European countries was discussed in some detail. Colleagues from the Netherlands reminded everyone that this is a very sensitive issue on the domestic political scene; the question of the degree to which the curriculum should be international has been discussed in the Dutch parliament for five years. Another curricular issue raised was curriculum revision and review, which had been the subject of the CIDREE conference the day before. Jaroslav Faltýn from the host institution highlighted the burning issue in curriculum review as the lack of comprehension and cooperation from teachers. There was also debate on the curriculum for gifted pupils.

In the subsequent part of the meeting, the conferences which CIDREE member organisations were attending or organising in the forthcoming period were discussed. Perhaps the most substantial item for discussion here was the planned (April 2010) visit to China, which had been organised reciprocally following the visit to The Hague of Chinese colleagues in 2009. The 2010 conference programme included visits to Chinese schools and familiarisation with the Chinese educational system. The upcoming Paris OECD – CIDREE meeting planned for October 2010 was also discussed, as was the CIDREE Conference and General Assembly planned for November 2010 in Oxford.

The second half of the meeting took the form of a brainstorming session at which there was lively debate on the future of CIDREE. The majority of attendees agreed on the need to

improve CIDREE's external communications so that the consortium could better perform its role as a leader in the development of the curriculum and educational research in Europe. A further issue raised was the frequency of meetings. There was agreement that these needed to take place more often so that the work of the various curricular and educational research institutions could be better coordinated. Another important discussion point was the possibility of organising a CIDREE 'academy'.

Lubomir Tanzmann.



SECOND CHINA - CIDREE CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION

Beijing, April 12 – 16, 2010

“When we started strategic positioning and target design for curriculum reform a decade ago, we had anticipated all kinds of risks and challenges”, this statement by Mrs. Zhu Muju, deputy director-general of the department of basic education and director-general of the National Centre for School Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT) of the Ministry of Education in China, was recognized by all participants in the second Chinese European Conference on Education, which took place from April 12 to 16 this year.

The conference was organized by NCCT and the Beijing Society of Education in collaboration with CIDREE. From the European side, the conference was facilitated by the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO), which had made the initial contacts with the Chinese Ministry of Education. Indeed, the first one in this series of conferences was held in March 2009 in The Hague and a third one is currently planned for autumn 2011 also in China.

In addition to a significant number of Chinese representatives,

the Beijing 2010 conference was attended by delegates from CIDREE member institutions from Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

The conference host was Beijing No 4 High School, one of the more prominent schools in Beijing. Delegates also visited other key schools in Beijing on the first day of the conference. Each school had prepared an excellent programme for us which varied from classroom visits to performances of Chinese Opera.

The next two days were spent listening to presentations and contributing to discussions on various topics, including such themes as the challenges of curriculum reform in China, the implementation of new educational policies in Ireland and Sweden, quality and assessment in Slovenia etc... There were workshops on inclusive education, teacher professional development, and mathematics and science education. In short there were a variety of topics illustrating that education is an important issue with many stakeholders in every layer of society.

On the third day, the question “what have we learned?” was answered with the conclusion that learning from each other and cooperating is essential for increased global understanding and for the education of future generations.

This conclusion did not however end the conference for the European participants – most of whom remained marooned in Beijing following the eruption of the volcano in Iceland and the subsequent closure of almost all airports in Europe. Some CIDREE representatives remained in Beijing for more than a week, others managed to get back home following some very exotic routes including Beijing - Dubai – Rome – Amsterdam; and Beijing – San Francisco – New York – Dublin.

One of the unintended consequences of the Beijing conference was the wonderful opportunity it afforded for bonding among the CIDREE delegates, spending time together, sharing each other’s hopes and fears...It also taught us to persevere, to improvise and to realise that despite modern means of communication and McDonalds, there is no place like home!

Harma Evers
Conference Organiser
SLO The Netherlands

OECD – CIDREE MEETING

Paris, October 22, 2010

On October 22, a bilateral meeting was arranged between the Head of CERI (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation of OECD), Prof Dr Dirk Van Damme and his colleagues, and the CEOs of the CIDREE member organizations.

This meeting, which took place at the OECD headquarters in Paris, was intended to find ways for CIDREE members to guide their institutions through this period of economic and financial crisis by considering ways of acquiring additional funding, through creating a synergy between OECD initiatives and projects run by CIDREE members.

For instance, the OECD has put in place an initiative called the “OECD Education Lighthouse” and was willing to share information on this with the heads of the CIDREE institutions. The CIDREE – OECD meeting was also very timely as the education ministers of the OECD were to meet one month later in Paris to discuss the same issues and the meeting with the CIDREE heads could provide the OECD ministerial meeting with some interesting input.

Fifteen CIDREE members registered for this meeting.

Due to the timing of the meeting, a mere week before the publication of the CIDREE Brief, we cannot give an account of the outcomes of this high level meeting. So please bear with us until the 2011 issue of CIDREE Brief.

MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

CIDREE Expert meeting, Dublin, June 11th 2010

Attendees

The meeting was attended by Anna Torres Vasquez CIDE (Spain), Sue Pope QCDA (England), John Tease LTS (Scotland), Veerle Verhaegen AKOV (Belgium), Mojca Suban Ambrož PSM (Slovenia) and Sirje Pihlap HITU (Estonia). Present from Ireland were Doreen Mc Morris Department of Education and Skills, Prof John O'Donoghue NCE-MSTL, Cammie Gallagher Project Maths Development Team, Bill Lynch NCCA, Rachel Linney, NCCA and Shane Scanlan NCCA. Anne Looney CEO NCCA and Board member of CIDREE opened the meeting.

Rationale

This meeting was convened to look at issues of teaching and learning mathematics, with a focus on post-primary mathematics. Ireland is undergoing dramatic change in the way mathematics is taught, learned and assessed. Work of a similar nature is ongoing in other European countries. Colleagues who attended from other CIDREE agencies were expert in the different areas of maths education including curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, research, inspectorate and teacher professional development. The meeting was convened to bring this wealth of experience together in order to learn about the work in each country and to share good practice.

Discussion

Prof John O'Donoghue NCE-MSTL spoke about 'Issues in mathematics education' with particular reference to the work on the National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching and Learning based at the University of Limerick, Ireland.

Bill Lynch, Director Curriculum and Assessment, described the major Irish initiative, *Project Maths*.

Key points from the ensuing discussion were as follows.

- It is important to keep curriculum specifications and learning outcomes more general to avoid teachers looking at curriculum in an atomised way.
- The provision of minimal competencies should be avoided.
- The importance of learners acquiring skills rather than knowledge in order to produce successful, confident students.
- If assessment is fit for purpose, it will test the curriculum, but assessment must have context, generate challenge at each level and seek out breadth of understanding.
- Teachers should help students to set high goals.
- Schools should provide maths education appropriate to the level of the students taking it, while maintaining equal opportunity for all students.
- Mathematics should be an obligatory subject for all students to study for each year they are in school.

- Teachers need to be empowered by helping them to develop their own teaching and learning plans, because they are the main agents of change.
- It is important that schools would have mathematics departments to help prevent isolation of teachers and to encourage dialogue and sharing among teachers.
- The use of an oral exam (30%) administered locally by teachers is a new initiative in one country and is worthy of further investigation.

During the second part of the meeting the group had discussions on specific topics. The key points from each discussion are summarised in a paragraph for each topic.

Teaching and learning

Teachers need to understand that change will take time, but it is worth doing. Teachers should be enabled to distinguish between energetic learning and active, collaborative and shared learning. Students will engage with mathematics if they are given rich tasks and make use of ICT in their learning. Work under way in England and Scotland to increase the use of assessment in everyday learning and teaching appears interesting. Teachers need to reflect on their teaching and make use of video, discussion, peer collaboration and standards being set by other teachers.

Assessment and certification

It is important to have a flexible system for certification on a national basis. In some certification systems, assessment at upper second level is seen predominantly as a filter for third level education, whereas it should be regarded as recognition of the achievement of each individual against an agreed set of standards. This will encourage participation at a higher level and allow students more choice in the amount and level of difficulty of the mathematics they study. There is likely to be opposition to such initiatives, arising from concerns about reducing the gold standard of certification/awards.

Teacher professional development

There is need for structures that encourage collaborative work between teachers within schools to promote innovation and creative work. In some instances, department meetings in schools are frequently more about focusing on readiness for examinations rather than concentrating on issues more closely related to the teaching of maths. External inspections can be an important means of monitoring standards in schools. To assist in their CPD, teachers in networks of schools should be able to meet on a regular basis to discuss and share good practice.

Mathematics in context, applications and problem solving

The group accepted that, while learning mathematics in context is important, it should be underpinned by good basic skills and understanding of mathematics concepts. There is

an important distinction between 'mathematics in context' and problem-solving applications of mathematics. A balance should be maintained between the learning of mathematics and the richness of context which keeps students engaged. The practice of trying to put all topics into context whether they are suitable or not must be avoided. In this regard, we should not be limited to the learners' direct experience but also refer to what they can imagine or envisage. They should be able to develop their problem-solving skills through the application of their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

However, it is not always necessary to find an application when structuring learning; maths can be interesting and engaging without applications if it taught with imagination. We should make use of the learners' love of puzzling on occasions when they have to learn some mathematics to bridge a gap to a new concept. This can be powerful approach and lead to Eureka moments for learners and teachers. While learners do not have to understand why they are studying every topic they should have the 'big picture' view of where the maths is taking them. Learners leaving a classroom should be able to articulate what they have learned in the lesson.

The use of technologies such as calculators, computers and dynamic software enhances the teaching of mathematics, provided the learners understand and have learned some mathematics.

Conclusions

Although mathematics teaching, learning and assessment in the countries represented at the meeting exhibit differences, as one would expect, there is also a commonality in the kinds of problems we are dealing with. Each country is working at different stages in areas such as experimenting with new types and methods of assessment, developing teaching and learning methodologies, and the use of technology in mathematics education.

As key agents of change, teachers need to have good mathematical knowledge as well as good pedagogical knowledge. Even those teachers who have a wealth of experience need support to help them to develop their practices, to 'believe' in what they are doing and to make the journey with learners.

There is need to create interest and excitement in the learning of maths but not without any loss in the integrity and rigour of the mathematics learned. Keeping learners engaged will enhance the experience for both teachers and learners.

Varied assessment is central to development of good teaching and learning, and is continually on the agenda in each country.

Where do we go from here?

Support for teachers, in professional development and in the

classroom, needs to be continuous if real change is to be effected.

Collaboration between teachers in a school or in a network of schools is an effective way to share and develop good practice.

Co-ordination between agencies in a country should be seamless –between curriculum development groups, schools, government department and assessment bodies. International forums such as CIDREE could provide a virtual platform for sharing information, expertise and good practice.

Shane Scanlan
NCCA Ireland

CIDREE YEARBOOK 2010 – A VERY SPECIAL EDITION

As part of the activities to celebrate 20 years of CIDREE, a very special edition of the Yearbook is under preparation. The Yearbook is the flagship publication of CIDREE, and each year it takes a theme of topical importance for educational developments across Europe. At the start of the year, experts nominated by CIDREE member institutions are invited to contribute papers. The Yearbook is then launched at the annual conference and general assembly held in November of the same year, and is published on the CIDREE website.

For this anniversary edition, we wish to be especially ambitious and tackle the major issues which are facing European educators as we enter the second decade of this millennium. The opportunities presented by the new *Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training ('ET 2020')*, which builds upon the Lisbon objectives and work programme of the last ten years, provide a key context for this.

Whilst anticipating the future, we also wish to learn from experience. To do this, we are drawing upon the unrivalled knowledge and expertise of those who have led CIDREE over the last 20 years, together with one or two noted experts from CIDREE institutions and the European Commission (EC).

Each author has been invited to prepare a thematic essay (a 'think piece'), which takes a European perspective on their chosen theme. The essays are expected to be reflective and thought-provoking, whilst also charting the best way forward for future developments in the area. They also consider the roles that research, curriculum development and cross-national collaboration can play in supporting and improving educational policy-making and practice. The essay titles and authors are given below:

1. European Education and the Nation-state: a globalisation perspective (*Roger Standaert, Belgium*) Current Secretary-General of CIDREE and Board member
2. Unity in Diversity: the cross-Europe debates surrounding key skills and competences (*Chris Van Woensel, Belgium*)
3. Schooling for the 21st Century: a personal view (*Seamus Hegarty, England*)
4. Teacher Professional Identity: restoration or reset? (*Anne Looney, Ireland*). CIDREE Board member
5. The Role of Inspection of Schools in Ensuring Quality in education: past, present and future (*Johan C. van Bruggen, Netherlands*)
6. Teachers in Charge? Internal school assessment and evaluation in Europe (*Alejandro Tiana Ferrer, Spain*)
7. The Use of Students' External Assessment and its Impact on Education Systems (*Olivier Rey, France*)
8. The Role of Educational Research in Improving Educational Systems: a CIDREE perspective (*Gabor Halasz, Hungary*)
9. Building Bridges: How research may improve curriculum policies and classroom practices (*Jan van den Akker, Netherlands*) Current President of CIDREE and Board member
10. Efficiency in Education: 20 years of talk and no progress? (*Stefan Wolter, Switzerland*). Board member and in-coming President of CIDREE

The Yearbook themes will be the prime focus for CIDREE's Anniversary Conference, entitled *'Beyond Lisbon 2010: perspectives from research and development for education policy-making in Europe'*. This will be organised by NFER and held in Oxford, England on 11 November 2010. The Yearbook will be available on the CIDREE website immediately afterwards.

Sheila Stoney

2010 CIDREE Yearbook Editor



Helmar Vyverman



Rudi Schollaert

THE CIDREE PROGRAMME DIRECTOR: GOODBYE AND WELCOME

Last year, CIDREE Programme Director Helmar Vyverman decided the time had come to focus more on activities relating to his own ambitions and to spend more time with his family, including his grandchildren. Helmar was the fourth Programme Director following in the footsteps of Colin Mc Andrew (LTS Scotland), Hans Hooghoff (SLO The Netherlands) and Paul Aerts (DED Flanders/Belgium).

The coordinating work of the CIDREE Programme Director should not be underestimated. It requires continuing attention to contacts, enquiries/queries, communications, and updating and monitoring the CIDREE website. The role also involves the preparation of yearbooks, producing and editing the CIDREE Newsletter and countless communications, e-mails and phone calls to follow up the various initiatives and projects being undertaken by the Consortium.

On behalf of all CIDREE member institutions, the CIDREE Board expresses its special gratitude for Helmar's efforts and his dedication, and wishes him all the very best for the future, be this with his family, in pursuing his own interests, and in his intention to explore world literature, as well as the world itself. The new programme manager replacing Helmar Vyverman is Rudi Schollaert.

Rudi is director of the education and training unit of CONSULT INC, a Belgium based international consultancy company.

After having taught for a number of years, Rudi consecutively became an inspector, senior adviser to the Flemish Minister of Education on matters of CPD (continuing professional development), and the director of the in-service training and international relations department of VSKO, the leading educational umbrella organisation in Flanders. In this capacity he was the co-ordinator for six major EU lifelong learning projects and networks.

Rudi has worked as a part-time lecturer at Saint Michael's College, Vermont (USA) and at Ghent State University (Belgium). He has published 10 books and a whole range of articles on various aspects of education. He has lectured widely in a great many European countries, and beyond and has undertaken consultancy work all across Europe, as well as in Asia and Africa.

Rudi Schollaert is a Fulbright scholar and holds an Honorary Fellowship at Oxford Brookes University (UK).

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