

The Activity Report 2007

This is a summary of the implementation of the portfolio of work undertaken by the EIESP in 2007.

In 2007, we had the privilege of organising a joint seminar with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on “Learning to Live Together – A necessary Utopia” to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the publication of the UNESCO report, “Learning, the Treasure Within”. (See below)

The report is organised under the following headings:

1. Lifelong Learning – Policy and strategy development in the EU and in transition countries
2. Programme evaluations
3. Dissemination and publications
4. Learning in the 21st Century

1 Lifelong Learning – Policy and strategy development in the EU and in transition countries

For many years, one of the key aspects of the work of the EIESP has been to contribute to the development of strategies for lifelong learning with a focus on major issues such as access to learning and qualifications and pathways for progression; recognition of learning; transparency and portability of qualifications and overall quality of provision.

In 2007, the projects included notably a 32-country comparative study for Cedefop; building on the work undertaken by the Institute on National Qualifications Frameworks through the publication of an issue of the journal and also through support to Croatia. All the work in this field was undertaken on EU funding.

1.1 The shift to learning outcomes; policies and practice in Europe.

The EIESP was a member of the team led by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in the UK to carry out a 32-country study commissioned by Cedefop which examined the shift to learning outcomes in education and training policy development and implementation in vocational education and training (VET), general school education and higher education. The three main authors are: Tom Leney (QCA), Jean Gordon (EIESP) and Stephen Adam (Westminster University). A set of 32 country fiches was drafted to a common template by a team of about ten authors who are competent in the different languages of the countries. They were then reviewed by colleagues in the Cedefop Refernet network which is represented in all the member states of the EU.

The draft final report was presented to and discussed at a conference on Learning Outcomes organised by Cedefop in Thessaloniki in October 2007. The final report has been approved and the full report will soon be available on the Cedefop website. A summary is already available: http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information_resources/Bookshop/publication_details.asp?pub_id=494

This study, like all major comparative studies, was an excellent opportunity to make a contribution to policy making through gaining a better understanding of the different concepts and approaches implemented by countries, the major changes and progress made, as well as the areas in which there are still obstacles (upper secondary leaving diplomas and assessment in general). The study also contributed indirectly to the work undertaken by the EIESP for the Universal Education Foundation insofar as it entailed analysing some of the recent curriculum developments in the context of the missions and goals of education systems. In 2008, another study for the Commission (DG EAC) on cross-curricular key competences and teacher education builds on the results of the learning outcomes study.

1.2 Strategies for National Qualifications Frameworks

Developing the transparency of qualifications among European countries (and within them) has been a focus of the Institute's work for over 15 years. In 2007, the *European Journal of Education* published an issue on the development of NQFs internationally and in specific countries. The issue was entitled: "National Qualification Frameworks; research and policy implications of an increasingly global development". It was guest edited by Michael Young and Jean Gordon (<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/117977087/issue>). In addition to two overview articles, the issue included country case studies on Scotland, France, Romania and South Africa. The following is an extract from the editorial that summarises the issues explored:

"In its focus on NQFs as an example of system-wide reform, this issue of the Journal brings together articles from countries with very different histories that have had very different approaches to the major social and economic challenges of the recent decades. ...

A perennial issue for both educational researchers and those involved in policy development is the lack of dialogue between the two. To some extent this is inevitable; they have different agendas and time is always at a premium. On the other hand both are diminished by the lack of dialogue. This issue is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the case of NQFs, where there has been much policy advocacy and little research. Policy makers, especially in developing countries interpret proposals for NQFs developed by other countries and by consultants for international bodies as if they were handbooks for using a machine or recipes. A primary role of research is to make explicit the shared trust which must be the basis of a successful NQF. Outcomes statements can support that trust but are no substitute for it. More specifically, researchers can explain not only why NQFs invariably 'go wrong'; they can show how implementation could be approached differently and avoid the mistakes of earlier attempts. Governments too easily assume that if outcome statements and level descriptors are written they will somehow work on their own. Research shows that an NQF like any other technical instrument (a School Inspection Schedule, for example) only works if there is a 'trust' in it that is shared by all users (it is the same with currencies although with their long history, the issue of trust is more straightforward and taken for granted). Governments can use their statutory power to impose NQF criteria. However this will only lead to compliance and 'box ticking'. If governments seriously want to improve educational provision, NQF levels and outcome statements will need to be seen as 'resources' by employers, students and

teachers as they explore new progression routes and new links between different qualifications that will be needed as the global economy continues to change. In other words like all valued qualifications, NQFs and international qualification frameworks will need to follow and respond to demand, not try and create it.”

These questions are illustrated in one of the transition countries where the Institute provided support in 2007. As part of the European Training Foundation’s support to the reforms of vocational education and training in Croatia, Jean Gordon was contracted to provide support for seminars organised for stakeholders in Croatia on the development of sector councils, quality assurance and NQF. This specific consultancy followed on from several years of working with ETF on developing strategies for NQFs both in the Western Balkans and in the MEDA countries. Consultancy on the development of the Croatian NQF continues in 2008.

1.3 Adult Learning in Croatia

Under the EU-funded CARDS programme, Croatia is receiving support and technical assistance to improve the quality of adult education. The consortium is led by Aarhus Technical College and the team leader is Kristen Tejsner who has considerable experience of reform processes in transition countries in general, and in the Western Balkans in particular, having spent eight years in Bosnia leading EU-funded programmes. The current project in Croatia is supporting the development of the Adult Education Agency. The project is undertaken in an overall context of reform of the education and training system which includes new developments in the qualification system (sector councils, standards) and work towards a national qualifications framework. Jean Gordon is a key expert for the component which focuses on the improvement of the quality of adult provision. Firstly, this component includes piloting a methodology for developing short occupational training courses for adults (unemployed or in employment) based on a modular structure and specified learning outcomes; Secondly, it is making proposals for improving accreditation and quality supervision of these courses with subsequent potentially broader application to other areas of adult education. The inception period started in September 2007 and the project will continue until May 2009.

1.4 Study visit for Romanian officials

In September 2007, the EIESP organised a one-week study visit for a group of 20 Romanian officials. It was organised in the framework of a project to improve the quality of Regional Education Action Plans, Local Education Action Plans and School Action Plans by providing labour market information and building the capacity of Regional Consortia. The core interests around which the programme for the visit was structured were the collection and use of labour market information, the development of training standards, transparency of pathways from vocational training to university and quality assurance.

The Institute is very grateful to its colleagues in the different French agencies and government departments who made it possible to provide a high quality study visit. During the five days, the Romanian colleagues had meetings with the full range of agencies and departments that deal with the themes they were investigating. The visit was organised by François-Xavier Chevrier.

The group met with key staff from:

- Association Française pour le Développement de l’Enseignement Technique ;
- Conseil National de la formation professionnelle tout au long de la vie ;
- Commission nationale de certification professionnelle ;

- Centre Inffo ;
- Lycée Frenel – lycée des métiers de l’optique ;
- Commissions professionnelles consultatives ;
- AFPA – Association française pour la formation des adultes.

In addition, the group had half day working sessions with two *Inspecteurs généraux*: Alain Michel (overview of the French system) and Thierry Malan (recent developments in higher education).

2 Programme Evaluations

2.1 Evaluation of the CEJI “School Community Approach”:

CEJI (“A Jewish contribution to an inclusive Europe”) is an international non-profit organisation set up in 1990 and based in Brussels which focuses on education for diversity and aims to provide decision-makers in the EU with experiences, projects and ideas in the field of basic rights, education, training and social integration in order to contribute to a democratic, responsible and caring Europe. CEJI considers education and training to be “critical forces in the making of an inclusive Europe. Youth and adults must be equipped with the sensitivity and skills required to succeed in diverse societies. Educational environments must be prepared to meet this need and to be able to demonstrate inclusion and equity in the process and content of the educational system”. Its portfolio includes programmes addressing children and young people in their school environment (both as students and as youth leaders), teachers, as well as schools and public authorities.

CEJI commissioned the EIESP to undertake an evaluation of a programme, the “School community approach”, developed over the last two years. Previously, CEJI interventions tended to target either the teachers or the students. The main aim of this programme is to take a more complete approach to supporting diversity in schools through targeting the whole school community. The design of the evaluation took as its starting point the mission of CEJI: *“Delivering diversity education and training programmes that develop respect and skills for an inclusive Europe.”*

The evaluation started in the spring of 2007 and will be completed by summer 2008. It focuses on a small number of schools in four countries (Belgium [Flanders and Wallonie], France, Italy and the Netherlands where the “school community approach” is being implemented. In addition, two schools in France that are not part of the programme have been included to provide a point of comparison. It is a qualitative evaluation using face-to-face interviews and group discussions in the schools as the principal means of collecting data. Evaluation tools were designed to respond to the needs of this particular evaluation based on a set of agreed indicators. All the interviews were carried out in the language of the school. The EIESP carried out the interviews in French-speaking schools and experienced consultants were brought in for the interviews in Dutch/Flemish- and Italian-speaking schools. During the spring of 2007, Céleste Girard and Marcela Tovar, who were undertaking an internship at the EIESP, worked with Jean Gordon on the development of the evaluation tools and carried out some of the interviews. In 2008, Céleste Girard contributed to the analysis and reporting stage on the EIESP team. The report will be finalised in autumn 2008.

3 Dissemination and publications

3.1 The European Journal of Education

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/117977051/home>

The *European Journal of Education* has been edited by the Institute for over 30 years and is a key strength and the concrete image of the Institute all over the world. The journal has been published by Blackwell Publishing since 2000. Blackwell merged with Wiley in 2007 to form Wiley-Blackwell, which is now one of the largest publishers of journals in the world (in the top four).

Circulation: The Journal's current circulation is to just over 2800 libraries which hold subscriptions and about 2200 institutions access it through databases (e.g. EBSCO). Among the top ten subscribers in the world (for readership of the articles), there are four Chinese universities. There are also two in the UK (Oxford and the Open University), and one in Greece (Aristotle University Thessaloniki), USA (Michigan State), Netherlands (Maastricht) and Norway (Oslo). Interest in the Journal is rising in countries outside Europe and outside the traditional readership as Blackwells participates in the schemes to offer free or low price subscriptions to institutions in developing and poorer countries through philanthropic programmes (e.g. INASP). This means that the Journal can be made available in over 100 of the poorest countries and over 600 institutions can receive free or low paid access.

Readership: In 2007, articles were downloaded 67,935 times through *Blackwell Synergy* and other online hosts. This compares with 46,018 in 2006 and 28,660 downloads in 2005. The development of electronic circulation since 2001 has vastly increased the reach of the Journal.

The four issues published in 2007 (Volume 42) were:

1. March: **The Labour Market of European Higher Education Graduates: Some Analytical Approaches** Guest edited by José-Ginés Mora and Ulrich Teichler
2. June: **Futures of Learning - A compelling agenda.** It is partly based on the 2005 seminar in Paris and Glasgow. Guest edited by Roberto Carneiro, Jean Gordon, Graham Leicester and Alain Michel. (<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/toc/ejed/42/2> free to download issue in 2007)
3. September: **Doctoral Education – Quo vadis? European Developments in a Global Context.** Guest edited by Barbara Kehm.
4. December: **National Qualification Frameworks and the European Qualification Framework; implications of an increasingly global development.** Guest edited by Michael Young and Jean Gordon

Quality:

The editorial board is very concerned to continually improve the quality of the Journal for its readers and to build up readership. It was decided at the editorial board meeting in November 2007 to formalise the network of editorial correspondents and reviewers and to publish the two networks on the Journal's website.

3.2 Seminars linked to the journal

In 2007, the *European Journal of Education* co-organised two seminars with its partners in Lisbon.

The Gulbenkian Foundation and the *European Journal of Education*, with the support and participation of UNESCO, joined together to revisit the underlying notions, progress and problems,

and future directions of “Learning to Live Together”. A seminar was held at the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon on Thursday, 21 June, 2007:

Learning to Live Together, a Necessary Utopia

Ten years later, revisiting the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, *Learning: The Treasure Within*

Background

“...Education has a fundamental role to play in personal and social development. The Commission does not see education as a miracle cure or a magic formula opening the door to a world in which all ideals will be attained, but as one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war...

It is the view of the Commission that, while education is an ongoing process of improving knowledge and skills, it is also - perhaps primarily - an exceptional means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups and nations...

the members of the Commission wished ... to stress the pivotal role of UNESCO, a role that stems directly from the ideas on which UNESCO was founded, based upon the hope for a world that is a better place to live in, where people will have learned to respect the rights of women and men, to show mutual understanding, and to use advances in knowledge to foster human development rather than to create further distinctions between people.

The Commission has put greater emphasis on one of the four pillars that it proposes and describes as the foundations of education: *learning to live together*, by developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit which, guided by recognition of our growing interdependence and a common analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, would induce people to implement common projects or to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way. Utopia, some might think, but it is a necessary Utopia, indeed a vital one if we are to escape from a dangerous cycle sustained by cynicism or by resignation.”

(From the Introduction to: *Learning: The Treasure Within*)

The seminar examined the scope and hope of “Learning to Live Together”, trying to tease out what experience has taught us, what young people feel, need and express, and what new tensions and pressures are upon learning to live together, including as a result of migration and immigration patterns. By discussing specific experiences, the meeting will be able to look closely at what is being tried, discarded, and experimented in school-based or non-formal/informal situations.

The seminar was organised in two sessions, a closed session in the morning for about 35 invited participants and an open session in the afternoon attended by about 200 people. The seminar was chaired by Eduardo Marçal Grilo, Trustee for Education of the Board of the Gulbenkian Foundation.

The second seminar was held on Friday 22nd June organised by the:

Centre for the Study of Portuguese-Speaking Peoples and Cultures (CEPCEP), Universidade Católica Portuguesa, on

“Communication and Intercultural Dialogue”

The seminar was chaired by Roberto Carneiro, chair of the *European Journal of Education* and Professor at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa.

Following opening speeches by Rui Marques (the High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue), Roberto Carneiro (Director of CEPCEP) and Angélica Ribeiro (President of the Teacher Association for Intercultural Education), a panel discussion took place with Zaghoul Morsy (Former editor of the UNESCO Education Quarterly, “Perspectives”), John Volmink (Professor at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and member of the Board of the Universal Education Foundation), Neville Kluk (Secretary-general of the Evens Foundation) and Rodolfo Stavenhagen (emeritus Professor of the Colégio de México) on the theme of Communication and Intercultural dialogue. The second part of the seminar focused on dissemination. It centred around the presentation of the *Entreculturas* Education and Training website and the *European Journal of Education*. The seminar brought together some 25 participants.

An issue of the Journal was published in June 2008 on the theme of “Learning to Live Together – A necessary Utopia” as a follow up to the seminars. It is also the EIESP’s contribution to the EU Year of Intercultural Dialogue. Papers presented at the seminar were included in the issue.

4 Learning in the 21st Century

4.1 Universal Education Foundation

The EIESP is a partner to the Universal Education Foundation and a member of the core management team of UEF and provides support on aspects of design, planning, implementation and dissemination of specified activities in the work programme, taking special responsibility for the European Operations. The secretariat of the foundation is housed in the Institute.

UEF is an international foundation established in the Netherlands in 2004 and led by Marwan Awartani and Daniel Kropf. The current Chair of the Board is Raymond Georis, one of the founders of the EIESP. The vision and focus of the work of UEF is “education by all for the well-being of children”, which emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to education and of engaging children and young people in shaping their learning environments (particularly in the education system, through media and ICTs and in the health system). The work builds on current research which illustrates that effective learning is related to students’ feeling emotionally and physically safe and that student involvement with ICT and media environments is shaping the ways they think, build relationships with peers and adults, construct knowledge, and perceive current reality and build their futures.

The Institute has been involved in developing and piloting one of the three linked core activities: the Voice of Children programme, which is developing and piloting tools to monitor how children and young people perceive the effects of their learning environments as supporting, or not, their overall development. It is a set of qualitative and quantitative surveys and focus group tools designed to capture the views of young people and to engage them as change agents. The first version of the quantitative survey was piloted in three countries in the Middle East in 2006 (Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine) and also focus groups in Palestine. During 2007, the survey was revised by an international team producing a second version (VoC2) which is being piloted in Wales during 2008. All documents can be downloaded on UEF’s website: www.uef-eba.org

In addition to follow-up of the Welsh pilot, the current European Operations includes building a network of European foundations under the umbrella of the European Foundation Centre. A first group of foundations came together in 2007 with the intention of developing joint initiatives focusing on making children's and young people's learning environments more conducive to their well-being. In 2008, the group includes the Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Robert Bosch Stiftung (Germany), the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (Portugal), the Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace (France and UK), the Evens Foundation (Belgium and France), ACEV – Mother and Child Education Foundation and the Education Volunteers Foundation (Turkey), and the Jordan River Foundation (Jordan).

In 2007, an article was co-authored by Marwan Awartani, Cheryl Vince Whitman and Jean Gordon for the issue of the *European Journal of Education* on Education and Well-being (published March 2008). <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/119398852/issue>

The EIESP joined the partnership of the UEF in 2005. Other members of the developing global partnership are Education Development Center (Boston), a primary partner that hosts UEF's Global Resource Center. Other partners are the SYNERGOS (New York), Academy for Educational Development (Washington), the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (an organisation of the UN system), the International Partnership Network, Madariaga European Foundation (Brussels), Media in Education Trust (Durban), the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships, and World Education (Boston). A regional partnership is being developed in the Middle East which includes government partners and UNWRA in Palestine, the business sector and foundations, as well as ICT partners such as CISCO. In Wales, the higher education, government and business communities are involved in the partnership, as well as the youth parliament: Funky Dragon and the main umbrella organisation grouping all the organisations working on children's issues, Children in Wales.

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