

**Final Report
EU, Youth, non-formal
education and the Community
Colleges Format
The Snoghøj Seminar,
27. september 2003**

ACC co-operating with Snoghøj Højskole.

The Snoghøj Seminar took place on September 27th from 13.00 to 17.30 at the Snoghøj Højskole in Fredericia (DK). The Seminar was a public event, opened for everyone. Neighbouring schools and people from the local surrounding of Fredericia took part. Discussions continued in the evening of the 27th among those who chose to stay.

The Seminar was possible due to support by the Board for EU-enlightenment.

Enclosed to this report is a leaflet/programme.

Europe today –the challenges!

The EU-Commission White-paper on European governance as well as the one on youth policy, the Nice-protocols, reports and memoranda en masse all describe a very crucial and basic problem within the European integration process, namely that of a gap between the institutions materializing the European integration on the one side and the citizens of Europe on the other.

Europeans need to "meet" their political institutions.

Citizens of Europe do not know the people with whom they share the same political system but - what is even more important - the representatives of different states, regions and people, meeting in the political-institutional forums do only very seldom have the opportunity to meet a "purely" European live audience. Who knows what the Europeans can believe and think in common?

The European political institutions need to "meet" the Europeans.

Moreover, a public complement (a European public sphere) to the institutionalised-political forums has to

be developed.

Europeans need to meet each other.

The political identification of citizens is missing the European dimension, whereas national and local level identification to a much larger extent is a fact.

These challenges have been met by a range of endeavours of the EU to propagate, to inform, and to involve citizens. The Council of Europe's Directorate for Youth and Sport has been facing the same challenges and for a longer time. More than 50 years work and experience has accumulated within this institution.

Non-formal education and the Folk High School format –the means?

In the Nordic countries the residential and non-formal institutions for general education, the Folk High Schools, have traditionally offered a tool for taking up the mentioned challenges. The Folk High Schools in for example Denmark have offered forums for citizens to get to know each other, for citizens to get to know about their political institutions and been a way for politicians to meet the citizens of Denmark.

In a time of European and global integration the main challenge of general education could be met in the same way; to situate the debates about concrete political and common questions among common Europeans.

Maybe the lack and problem of European integration is mirroring a lack of space and forums in which issues of common nature can also be discussed and dealt with in common -by those who are affected by these concrete issues?

Maybe the format of the Folk High Schools (Community Colleges) offer the tool for building bridges between European citizens and for filling in the gap between the European politicians and the European citizens.

EUrope and the Snoghøj Seminar – the future!

At the seminar in Snoghøj Højskole, we met a Local/Danish audience with the purpose of discussing the possible links between the format of the Danish/Nordic Folk High Schools and the challenges and needs of an integrating Europe and a globalising world.

The Seminar consisted of three introductory

presentations followed up by two workshops.

As an inspiration Conchi Gallego introduced the EU-work and -policies within the Youth field. Conchi (Brussels/Madrid) has been working in the Spanish Youth Council as an international coordinator for 5-7 years. She is a European Researcher for the EU Youth Web Portal.

Mjellma Mehmeti introduced likewise the Council of Europe work and -policies within the Youth field. Mjellma (Århus/Skopje) has been active in women rights movements for 9 years and is now a European Culture, Politics and History Student at the University of Aarhus.

Jan-Christoph Napierski provided the seminar with a natural bridge to the workshops following. Jan-Christoph (Copenhagen/Haan) is a cand. mag. in European Studies and an intern in the Council of Baltic Sea States. Jan-Christoph presented the Mission statement of the First European Community College (working title of a concrete project) as an example of a basis for future European Community College(s).

Two workshops followed up on the introductions.

Participants were asked to draft a map of the ways they could nowadays influence their own situation wherever they lived. Concrete contexts were asked for. Influence in the kinder-garden, the school, the working-place, your living conditions as what property concerns, your state, parliament, municipality, county, etc. etc.

In the second half of the workshops, participants were asked to make a parallel to the European and the world wide level. The question was now reformulated to: how should you be able to influence your own situation?

Slow by slow the discussion turned in very concrete directions. There were many proposals from the audience on how to affect the democratic system in Europe and on how to learn for and to get educated in a direction making this possible.

At the end of the seminar the working group of the ACC presented their vision on starting a European Community College / a European Folk High School in Denmark. There were as well many proposals on what could be the contents of such a school?

Key headlines were mentioned as Citizenship-education, Europe and the wider world Unity and Diversity as well as European values?



Conchi Gallego explaining possible links between the EU-Youth policy and the format of the Folk High Schools.



Mjellma presenting the CoE-Youth-endeavors and parallels to the format of the Folk High Schools.



Citizens of Fredericia and neighboring schools took part.



Visitors from Asia gave an important global input" to the debate.



What if we were to establish a European Citizenship Education?



Dialogue on future initiatives.

Keywords from the white-board of the two workshop:

A) **Contents** for European Citizenship Education:

- (1) English, German.
- (2) Methods for learning language=study skills, passport and portfolio.
- (3) Cultural skills.
- (4) Communication skills.
- (5) Identity management.
- (6) From history to the present –institutions, decision-making, structures.
- (7) Common understanding of history.
- (8) Marketing of ideas.
- (9) Play European debates.
- (10) Project Management.

B) **Issues** for European Citizenship Education:

- (1) Languages.
- (2) Handling identity/ies.
- (3) Common story/history share.
- (4) Engagement.

C) **Integration** of existing material in European Citizenship Education.

D) Key **concepts** for European Citizenship Education:

- (1) Communication.
- (2) Transparency.
- (3) Reflection.
- (4) Competencies.

E) Key **questions** for European Citizenship Education:

- (1) Methodology?
- (2) Multicultural/Intercultural?
- (3) Where is Europe (who are the participants)?
- (4) Motivation (why do participants want to participate?)

Answers to the question, how can you influence politics today?

- (1) Demonstrations
- (2) Use of modern communication technologies
- (3) Talk with people
- (4) Letters to editors
- (5) Repeating communication
- (6) Use of the media –take a famous person to promote an idea
- (7) Address politicians
- (8) Work in NGO's
- (9) Try together more people in a non-verbal way – arts events, happenings.
- (10) Right to vote
- (11) Votes in organizations

- (12) Collecting signatures
- (13) Campaigns
- (14) Education
- (15) Bringing up your children

NB! There were actually participants who had to answer, that they couldn't really influence politics today. This due to corruption and lack of division of powers of the state.

What if European/Global Citizenship Education became possible some day? What would we need to teach then in order to be able to influence politically at European/global level?

- (1) Awareness
- (2) Communication: (a) languages, (b) communication strategies, (c) ability to use communication technologies
- (3) Information about (a) Political structures/institutions, (b) Formal/institutionalized possibilities for influence, (c) geography, (d) cultures, (e) big industries, (f) political theories, (g) European history
- (4) How to attract the attention of decision makers/politicians/common people
- (5) Give a living experience of European identity (learning & living together).
- (6) Give space for discussions on any topic that the participants are interested in.
- (7) Signing, drama, playing music
- (8) Cooking
- (9) What gives us national identities / European identity
- (10) European sports/gymnastics
- (11) Courses for special groups (farmers, teachers, social workers)
- (12) Europe's role in the wider world.



.. and a few hours to enjoy the surroundings of Snoghøj.

/The Working group/John Petersen