

## CULT Committee hearing on the Prevention of Radicalisation, 15 October, 2015

### EUROCLIO Intervention: *What can history education contribute to the prevention of radicalisation?*

EUROCLIO was established in 1992, under the auspices of the Council of Europe. It is a daily form of communication and cooperation among history educators in Europe and beyond. EUROCLIO's activities take the form of these three pillars: 1. Professional capacity building, developing and implementing innovative teaching tools. 2. Dialogue, national, cross-community and transborder networking and knowledge exchange. 3. Participatory and sustainable professional civil society. EUROCLIO represents 48 independent member associations of History and Citizenship educators, and 22 associated members from 47 countries.

EUROCLIO works from a clear mission. The mission has in 2014 been unanimously accepted into a EUROCLIO Manifesto that is currently being translated into all EU languages. In the Manifesto it is stated that **High-Quality History, Heritage and Citizenship Education** does not attempt to transmit a single truth about the past and it raises awareness of the fact that the past is perceived differently. It recognizes that its significance is related to current experiences and challenges. It embraces cultural, religious and linguistic diversity and it introduces global perspectives.

*The Paris Declaration of Education Ministers of 17 March 2015* called for actions i.a. '...to reinforce the role of education in promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, strengthening social cohesion and helping young people become responsible, open-minded and active members of our diverse and inclusive society'. In April 2015 EUROCLIO responded by having 157 history and citizenship educators gathered in Helsingor, Denmark, deliberating the Paris Declaration and setting up *the Helsingor Declaration* as a joint response.

In *the Helsingor Declaration* it is stated that in order to respond to the Paris calls for action we must: 1. Develop new educational tools and resources, 2. Support reforms, tuning and adaptation of official curricula and examination frameworks, 3. Create and foster networks of dialogue and cooperation. And in order to do this we need: 1. More student-centered education on identity, opinion-making and information in the digital age, 2. A pedagogy of cooperation and quality, 3. History education that reflects diversity.

'Responsible' history education helps pupils understand that History is an interpretation, is complex and value-based, thus calling for teaching multiperspectivity. Since pupils' historical consciousness receives input from many sources such as public and private history, the media, and political (ab-)use of history 'responsible' history education also aims at developing in pupils a learned historical consciousness.

In European history education today in many cases the opening paragraphs of curricula contain concepts recognizable from the Paris Declaration such as critical thinking, citizenship-building, democracy, tolerance, and diversity. But when it comes to examination frameworks they are often focused on reproduction of textbook facts, mostly about wars, politics, and men. The Danish history curriculum is highlighted, because this attempts to match introductory concepts and examination frameworks, also by including in history syllabi topics such as 'Cultural Encounters', 'Identities' and 'Migration'. Based on this, EUROCLIO calls for innovation in examination frameworks.

In conclusion EUROCLIO presents the following *Recommendations to the CULT Committee*: 1. Propose to the European Commission to simplify Erasmus+ mobility rules that prevent educators from taking the initiative to develop professionally, 2. Promote usage of Erasmus+ KA3 and Horizon2020 instruments as mechanisms that bring practice and policy together, 3. Foster the House of European History as a facilitator of historical dialogue on migration and diversity in member states, 4. Consult the Lifelong Learning Platform on the role of education vis-a-vis the security agenda, 5. Collaborate closely with Council of Europe and UN bodies in existing frameworks such as 'Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights Education' and 'Education for Global Citizenship', 6. Consider that investment in education is long-term and does not yield quick results.