A Europe of Active Citizens:

Assessment, Policy Responses and Recommendations on Active Citizenship Education

International conference
Budapest, November 11, 2010

SUMMARY REPORT

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP FOUNDATION
HUNGARY

DARE
Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learnin

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Introduction

The Active Citizenship Foundation and the DARE Network (Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe) organized an international conference on the current situation and opportunities for active citizenship education, which took place in Budapest on November 11, 2010, and was supported by the Hungarian National Civil Fund, the European Commission (EC) and the Open Society Institute. Hungary's Presidency of the European Union (EU), starting on January 1, 2011 accorded special importance to the conference. The presenters and the participants who gathered from several European countries are well-known experts on the topic, possessing both theoretical and up-to-date practical knowledge and experience.

Section one of the conference presented an overview of the latest international and European research that directly or indirectly measure the citizenship competencies and democratic attitudes of young people. The section also addressed the issue of the extent to which there is a universal concept of active citizenship in the countries of Europe. The second part of the conference discussed how the promotion of active citizenship fits into the framework of public education and education in general; what policy tools and training methods are necessary to enrich the world of schools and make citizenship education an integral part of it. Both the morning and the afternoon sections started with general welcome and introductory speeches followed by panel discussions.

SUMMARY

Active citizenship education is a recent and rather complex concept. Due to these two characteristics the concept does not have a precise and final definition that would allow us to freely discuss all of its aspects. Education for active citizenship has become one of the key concepts in education and political socialization, and it may gain even more importance in the future. This phenomenon can be explained by social trends observable across the whole of Europe, such as the reduced levels of interest and trust in state institutions and political parties, limited levels of participation in elections and lower levels of trust in democratic institutions.

Conference participants examined the theory, content, methods, institutions and different practices of education for active citizenship. In the morning, **Georg Pirker,** the secretary of the DARE Network and **Zsuzsanna Szelényi,** the chair of the board of the Active Citizenship Foundation, Hungary delivered short introductory talks. **Dr. Tamás Szűcs,** the head of the European Commission Representation in Hungary described the new strategy of the European Union and its programmes aimed at developing active citizenship. Then active citizenship attitudes and the issue of preparing young people for their role as citizens were discussed in view of recent empirical research. The research projects dealt with different questions and used different methodologies, however, they intersected in outlining the qualities of active citizens by mapping their attitudes and behaviour. The following topics and research projects were described:

★ **Professor David Kerr,** NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research, UK) and associate research director of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS)[1] presented the results and methodology of ICCS, which is based on the civic-related knowledge, attitudes and opinions of students, teachers and educational institution heads in thirty-eight countries;

★ **Dr. Bryony Hoskins** of the Institute of Education, University of London, analyzed the current situation of active citizenship on the basis of a comparative European survey conducted in 2006 and other research projects;[2]

★ **Tamás Keller** described Hungary's position along the axes of traditional-religious vs. secular-rational, and closed vs. open modes of thinking, based on the Comparative Values Surveys by TÁRKI;[3]

★ **Péter Krekó** presented the results of a survey conducted by the Political Capital Institute which utilized the DEREX (Demand for Right-Wing Extremism) Index[4] developed by the Institute.

At the beginning of the afternoon section, **Zoltán Pokorni,** the chair of the Committee on Education, Science and Research of the Hungarian National Assembly, described the development of the Hungarian education system as part of the attempt to identify the reasons for loneliness among young people. His talk was followed by a panel discussion between **Ana Serrador** (European Commission), **Gina Ebner** (European Association for the Education of Adults, EAEA), **Dr. Katalin Szilágyi** (Ministry of National Resources, Hungary), **Yulia Pererva** (Council of Europe) and **Georg Pirker** (DARE Network). The discussion centred on the practical issues of education for active citizenship: the existing methodologies, the tasks and requirements facing schools, the expectations towards politics and, in view of the above, the recommendations and suggestions formulated by the participants of the conference.

MAIN ARGUMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conference participants formulated several fundamental arguments that can be highlighted as the outcome of the event and should be included in the active citizenship discourse, developed and utilized in both theoretical and empirical research, and also decision making. Some of these

arguments concern the current situation, while others are recommendations for the future. They are presented below to experts, decision makers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as to practising teachers and heads of educational institutions. Apart from the thematic suggestions we have also included the key thoughts and statements of presenters and participants.

1. Active citizenship education: conceptual issues, aims, tasks and competencies

★ **Active citizenship as a value-based concept:** A European perspective on active citizenship always should refer to democracy and human rights as founding elements.

★ **Active citizenship education as a value:** Education for active citizenship is a value in itself, and this should be acknowledged by politicians and policy-makers as well.

★ **The requirement of authenticity:** Citizenship education must be authentic, and this can only be achieved in a democratic environment.

★ **Social inclusion:** Citizenship education reflects the norms of social cohesion and equality, thus, it serves as a means for the inclusion of marginalized social groups.

★ **Improving economic and financial literacy:** Among civic competencies a stronger emphasis must be placed on economic and financial literacy and business skills.

★ **Developing individual competencies as well as clusters of competencies:** Active citizenship is a complex concept consisting of several competencies which overlap, but each of them can and should be developed separately and in a co-ordinated fashion.

★ **Integrating formal, informal and non-formal education:** Formal, informal and non-formal education complement each other; none of them should be neglected.

★ **Facilitating participation through interactive methods:** An important goal of citizenship education is to facilitate participation, which can be achieved best through the use of interactive methods.

★ **Broadening the focus to include others, not only young people:** Citizenship education must not concentrate only on young people, it is important to reach all age and target groups.

★ **Lifelong learning:** Lifelong learning must be a prioritized area, since the learning process is broadening and we continue to learn throughout our lives.

★ **The importance of civil society:** Attention must be paid to civil society both at European and at national levels. Strong co-operation between civil society, education and politics is needed to strengthen and sustain active citizenship.

★ **The role of the family and parents:** Families and parents play an outstanding role as socializing agents in children's lives. Positive aspects must be reinforced, developed and broadened.

★ **Integrating education, research and practice:** Citizenship education must be strengthened in the sphere of education, research and everyday practice at the same time. The co-operation between these fields must appear in schools, non-governmental organizations, as well as among experts and decision makers.

★ **Long-term goals and steps to be taken in the short term:** While long-term thinking is necessary, we must also make plans for the foreseeable future.

2. The role of schools, management of educational institutions and teachers

★ **Learning through democracy; the school as a model of democracy:** Students should learn not only about democracy, but through democracy: they should gain a real-life experience of its meaning and working mechanisms. This aim must be reflected in the running and structure of schools, in class work, as well as in games: schools must model the work of democracy in their everyday practices.

★ **Increasing the receptivity of teachers and institution heads:** Education for active citizenship starts with teachers, who must be made receptive to this task. The attitude of institution heads is also important: without their support and acceptance nothing can change in schools. Active citizenship education must be a source of prestige for a good school, a form of "added value".

★ **The importance of teacher training (information, methodology):** Teacher training plays a key role in active citizenship education. Teachers need to acquire the necessary knowledge, but it is even more important that they should use new, interactive methods, thus making it possible for students to live in and experience democratic principles and models.

★ **Reinterpreting general knowledge:** Our concept of general knowledge needs to be reinvented: due to the changing challenges and tendencies, new elements must be added to the body of compulsory knowledge and competencies in schools.

★ **Developing skills beyond transferring knowledge:** In the field of citizenship education, educational practice still places the main emphasis on transferring knowledge, that is, the cognitive aspect of learning even though it would be important to teach skills as well (such as analytical, observation and argumentative skills).

★ **Spreading interactive methods:** A wide range of interactive methods is available to teachers. These should be collected, demonstrated and taught to teachers, so that they can apply them successfully.

★ **An open school that collaborates with its environment:** Schools should become more open, build strong links with the outside world and collaborate with other stakeholders. The relationship between schools and local communities is especially important. Schools must collaborate with their environment so that students can learn and experience what they learn in practice, in a realistic setting.

3. Politics, public policy responses

★ **Political will and support:** Citizenship education and community building must be supported by politicians at all levels (local, national, European and international). Political will is necessary to strengthen and sustain the initiatives in this area.

★ **Harmonizing European programmes, regular reports:** Citizenship education should be harmonized with the European Youth Strategy, the follow up of the Action Plan on Adult Learning, the European Years and the programmes promoting lifelong learning and studying as well as working abroad (such as Grundtvig, Comenius, Erasmus and Youth on the Move). Reports on the realization of these programmes must be prepared regularly, citizenship should be broadly included in existing monitoring and reporting instruments.

★ **The contribution of European projects on active citizenship education:** In order to formulate the issue as a priority and to achieve a uniform approach, it would be useful to analyze the extent to which the various projects have contributed to the development of active citizenship. To achieve this goal, a new question about the relationship of the given project and education for active citizenship should be included in the forms used to apply for European Union funds and to submit proposals.

★ **The importance of assessment and evaluation of outcomes:** Assessment and evaluation strategies must be introduced so that the results, effects and values of citizenship education can be measured and demonstrated.

★ **Collecting best practice:** Best practice must be collected and distributed among teachers, decision makers and members of civil society in an easy-to-follow format.

Arguments put forward by the speakers

Georg Pirker

★ There is no clear-cut definition of active citizenship education, its interpretation and practice is different in every country.

★ In Europe education for active citizenship should be closely connected to human rights education and education for democratic citizenship. Citizenship education holds up certain values in itself and cannot be used as a mere political tool to achieve certain goals.

Zsuzsanna Szelényi

★ The concept of active citizenship education is not well known and it often happens that false assumptions based on out of date associations are linked to it.

★ There are serious shortfalls in democratic socialization in Hungary, the level of civic competencies is low, which explains why there is a growing need for authority.

Dr. Tamás Szűcs

★ As a result of the financial crisis and changing international relations, the European Union faces new challenges, which require a coordinated response from the member states.

★ Education and citizenship education are both key areas in the new strategy of the European Commission (Europe 2020), which may play a major role in strengthening growth and cohesion.

Professor David Kerr

★ Education for active citizenship is a response to social changes and at the same time a key in imagining the society of the future. This society is characterized by its social cohesion, inclusion, participation and democracy.

★ According to ICCS 60% of students trust their national governments, 75% their schools, while only 40% trust political parties. Students are more likely to trust a democratic process and the institutions of democracy than the individuals leading them, particularly political leaders.

★ ICCS examined what teachers think about the goals of citizenship education: the most common response mentioned the improvement of knowledge and skills, and only a few mentioned the promotion of active participation as a goal.

Dr. Bryony Hoskins

★ Well-known concepts, such as trust, need to be examined in a new light. Although trust is thought to be a positive quality, it is worth thinking about its negative aspects, too: a healthy level of scepticism is necessary when dealing with politicians.

★ Hungary is in the last position among 19 European countries on the active citizenship composite index; the country achieved the highest score in the question regarding community participation.

Tamás Keller

★ Hungary is characterized by a secular and closed mode of thinking. This places us far from the core Western countries among which we are supposed to belong. We are closed countries linked to the orthodox cultural tradition, such as Bulgaria and Moldova.

★ According to the general experience, the higher the GDP of a country, the more open the mode of thinking. Even if we consider the level of GDP, Hungarians think in a closed mode: in a significantly more closed manner than countries with similar economic power.

Péter Krekó

★ Antidemocratic attitudes are stronger in countries where dictatorial or authoritarian regimes existed in the past 80 years. Countries with the highest DEREX indeces – including Hungary – are all located in Eastern-Europe.

★ In Eastern-Europe prejudice is linked with strong anti-establishment attitudes, which may present a serious challenge to the stability of the political system. In most Eastern-European countries the support for the political system among young people is at the same level, or only slightly higher than among older people, which indicates the failure of democratic socialization and citizenship education. The expectation that young people will reshape the thinking of our societies, which emerged at the time of post-state socialist transformations, seems to have been an illusion.

Zoltán Pokorni

★ Promoting and supporting volunteer work is important because a great deal can be achieved through it in society at large, and also among young people. However, it should not become compulsory and no sanctions should be introduced to enforce it since the essence of volunteering would disappear in this way.

★ Greater emphasis should be placed on group work, project work and other methods promoting co-operation in curriculum development.

Yulia Pererva

★ It is important to learn through democracy, not only about democracy. Democracy must become a part of practice in schools; to this end interactive methods are needed: it is impossible to educate towards democracy through from-the-front presentations.

★ The topic of active citizenship should be given a place in education policy; educational goals should include that students become active participants in society.

Dr. Katalin Szilágyi

★ Teachers should be made receptive to the importance of citizenship education.

★ Training for class teachers should become a part of teacher training. This would enable teachers to leave behind their role as teachers of a specific subject and discuss current issues or social issues that are important in the everyday lives of students in the classes dedicated to such matters. In addition, the opportunities for children to deal with such issues must be taken in other classes, too.

Gina Ebner

★ The target group for active citizenship education must be expanded: the focus cannot be limited to young people; every age group must be reached. The role of parents is especially important in this respect.

★ Education for active citizenship must be linked to lifelong learning, and the two should be strengthened and developed at the same time.

Ana Serrador

★ The role of active citizenship education is very important in European policy agenda; the importance of the topic has been emphasised by ministers in Council Conclusions. Education for active citizenship is also a priority in a number of European educational programmes (such as Comenius, Erasmus and Grundtvig as well as Youth on the Move).

★ It is important to strengthen educational co-operation regarding schools and key competences in the 21st century. Education systems in different countries face similar challenges and problems.
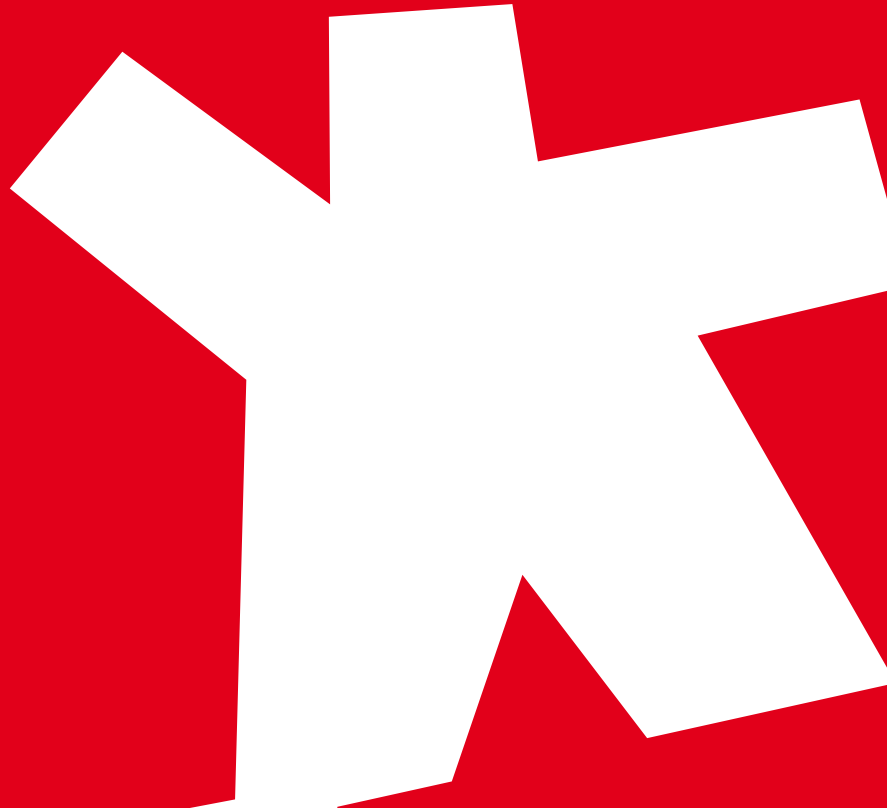
Welcome and introductory speeches

Georg Pirker, representing the DARE Network, and Zsuzsanna Szelényi, the chair of the board at the Active Citizenship Foundation, Hungary welcomed the participants and the speakers on behalf of the organizers, and set the direction of the conference with their introductory comments.

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY GEORG PIRKER

The representative of the DARE Network expressed the pleasure he felt concerning the conference, which, he believes, took place at a very good time. According to Mr. Pirker, it is high time that the European Union clarified and defined the role it would like active citizenship to play in the future of the Union and in common policies. Although the concept of active citizenship has been used more than ten years by the institutions and in the documents of the European Union, there continues to be no consensus on its precise definition. Although there are some guiding principles, a clear definition is still absent. One possible interpretation of the concept comes from President Barack Obama of the USA, who said the following in Indonesia while Mr. Pirker was preparing his speech: "It takes open society and active citizens to reject inequality and injustice." Mr. Pirker asserts that the European Union would support this definition, since the principles expressed in the speech are shared by everyone in the Union. The European concept of active citizenship must be based on two fundamental values: that of democracy and the struggle for human rights. This should be named in the official documents.

Beyond these two values, however, there are differences among European countries regarding the definition of active citizenship. Different concepts exist in the member states, and one can encounter a wide range of approaches and methods. While in some countries the definition centres on equal opportunities and freedom, elsewhere a paternalistic approach dominates. Without going into details, the differences can be explained by historical and cultural factors to a large extent.

Mr. Pirker believes that democratic citizenship and human rights should not be treated separately. From the perspective of education there is an obvious link between human rights education and education for democratic citizenship. The learning and educational concept both centre on creating a living society, which enables and supports its members to live their lives at the centre, at the core of a society.

The concept included in the *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education,*[5] adopted by the Council of Europe member states in May 2010, is an important milestone in the history of education for democratic citizenship and human rights in Europe. This document sets a standard that must be followed by the European Union in their citizenship policies. When defining the concept of European citizenship, that is, providing a European definition for the concept of active citizenship, the assessment of the situation and the description given in the Council of Europe document must be taken into account. The principles laid out in the document must be used pro-actively and productively.

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights form integral parts of any concept about active citizenship, and they are values in themselves. The issue of active citizenship education must be dealt with accordingly. Mr. Pirker warned against simplifying the issue to that of a mere political tool which helps member states achieve the goals of cohesion and competitiveness. The primary goal of active citizenship is not being an instrument for the creation of social cohesion or

the enhancement of competitiveness. According to Georg Pirker active citizenship education must be a goal in itself, in order to create a democratic future society based on freedom and respect for human rights.

INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BY ZSUZSANNA SZELÉNYI

After welcoming the participants, the chair of the board at the Active Citizenship Foundation started to talk about the definition of active citizenship. In her experience the concept of active citizenship is not part of the common sense knowledge shared by the majority of people: it seems too complicated and multi-layered, and for most people it only embodies an alienated legal contract. However, the emergence of citizens and citizenship has been a vital process in European history, which has fixed the social and economic relations between the state and its citizens, thus enabling a rapid process of development that opened up the possibility of economic development and the formation of democracy. This process has been strongly influenced by the specific circumstances and histories of individual countries. For example, on the peripheries of Europe the state socialist system interrupted the organic process of civic transformation after the Second World War, making the maintenance of civic identity impossible and dismantling the healthy structures that could have served as foundations for economic development and a democratic system. After the post-state socialist transformations these countries had to start the process again, lagging far behind the rest of Europe.

The unique project of European integration was started in those areas where the civic and democratic system was able to develop organically. This process is based on rational co-operation towards a common goal. It is the co-operation between European governments and citizens that has made Europe a special, developing and liveable place.

Zsuzsanna Szelényi quoted an article by Denis Mac Shane, former British minister for Europe published in Newsweek, which argues that with the disappearance of the mutual enemy and the weakening of the Atlantic commitment a new era started in Europe. This era is characterized by community cohesion, rather than social cohesion. In the context of increased uncertainty, the circles of trust have become smaller. Small groups are searching for their identity and only seem to be able to define themselves in opposition to other groups, be it the European Union, North-America, globalization or ethnic groups, such as Roma, Jews or Muslims. These groups are engaged in identity politics that are based on denial. They are looking for authoritarian solutions, and long for power and help from powerful people. In the past ten years identity politicians have gained power all over Europe.

What could be the reason for this phenomenon? – asked Zsuzsanna Szelényi. Why are we turning inwards? Could it be the case that people have lost trust in one another – the trust that is the foundation of European identity and community? The speaker believes that one of the goals of the conference is to explore the answer to this puzzle, as trust is the basis of democratic systems and thus it is also an important element of active citizenship education.

Zsuzsanna Szelényi asked the participants to analyze the concept and the content of citizenship and try to outline the multi-layered, yet still clear content that is based on values and forms the basis of progress, development and European co-operation. At the end of her introductory talk, Zsuzsanna Szelényi formulated the following questions to guide the common thinking and discussion:

★ What do governments have to do in order to promote active, democratic citizenship?

★ To what extent are the social skills necessary for active citizenship and co-operation integral to general knowledge?

★ How can the education system be shaped in order to realize these goals more efficiently?

★ How can the education system and civil society co-operate to achieve this goal?
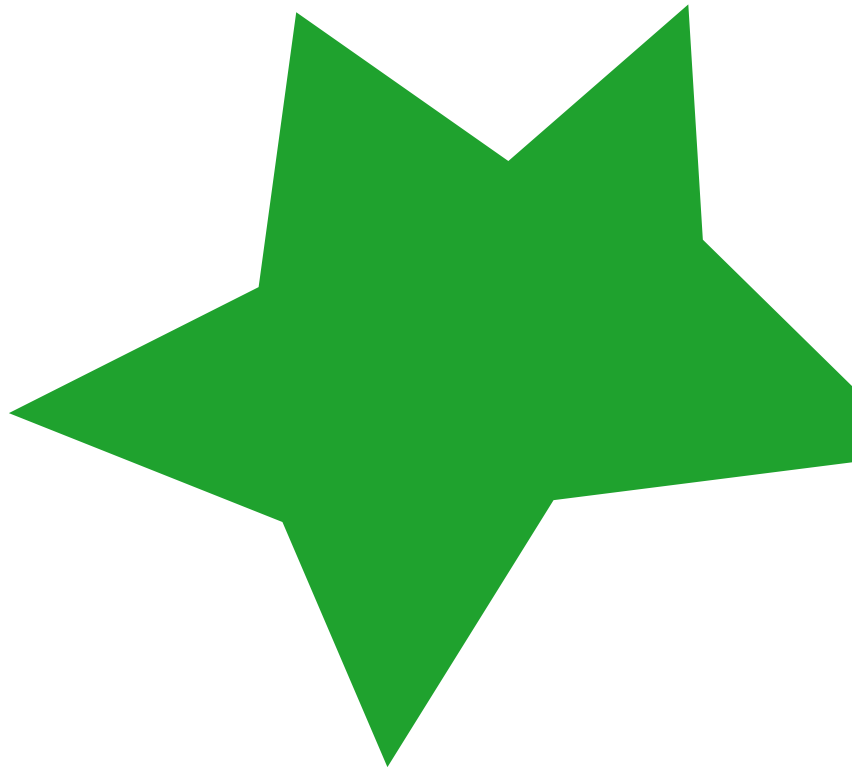
The Europe 2020 Strategy: smart, sustainable and inclusive growth with and for active citizens

Tamás Szűcs explained the links between active citizenship and the Europe 2020 Strategy[6] accepted by the European Commission, and described the relevant objectives and programmes of the strategy. The talk was divided into two parts: first Dr. Szűcs gave a general description of the strategy, and then he explored the theme of education and training in more detail.

According to the speaker the timing of the strategy was not a matter of chance. As a result of the economic crisis and in a world of changing international relations the European Union is facing new challenges, to which the member states can only give a unified response. The Europe 2020 Strategy, which was accepted on June 17, 2010, reflects these circumstances. The primary objective of the strategy is to promote economic growth. Europe needs a new kind of economic growth, termed smart, sustainable and inclusive in the strategy. The EU expects the strengthening of cohesion in all areas: in the labour market, as well as in a social and geographical sense. Co-ordinated financial and structural reforms are necessary to achieve these objectives. Young people have a large share in the responsibility for starting growth and achieving the targets of the strategy, which is why the strategy places a strong emphasis on educational and training programmes aimed at them.

The strategy names five headline areas with corresponding concrete targets, which member states translate into national targets. The Commission works closely with member states and gives concrete help. The headline areas are: education, employment, research and innovation, climate change and energy, and the fight against poverty.

The five targets corresponding to the headline areas are:

★ The share of early school leavers should be under 10%;
★ At least 40% of the younger generation should have a degree or diploma;
★ 75% of the population aged 20-64 should be employed;
★ 3% of the EU's GDP should be spent on Research and Development; and
★ 20 million fewer people should be at risk of poverty by 2020.

Apart from the five headline areas, the strategy also proposes seven flagship initiatives, each of which is a complex package of proposals. Tamás Szűcs described only those three flagship initiatives which are relevant to active citizenship. They are:

★ Youth on the Move, which aims at enhancing the performance of the educational systems and promoting young people in entering the labour market;
★ An Agenda for new skills and jobs, aiming to improve labour market skills and enhance labour market participation; and
★ Innovation Union, aiming at improving the framework for research and access to financial sources.

Tamás Szűcs admitted that, although young people play an important role in the future of Europe, they are in a very difficult position. The economic crisis has made the age group vulnerable: unemployment among the youth has increased drastically and 40% of those employed work only

part-time. One of the main target groups of the strategy is therefore young people, targeted by the Youth on the Move initiative. The initiative has 3 main objectives:

1. Enable young people to participate in the knowledge economy;
2. Increase the proportion of those participating in higher education; and
3. Help the youth to fit into the labour market, get their first jobs and start their careers.

In the framework of the initiative both the Commission and the member states launch programmes which can be divided into three groups:

1. Education and skills development: the modernisation of higher education, lengthening the time period spent studying, enhancement of the quality of internship programmes, vocational training, etc.;
2. Promoting student mobility and study abroad: setting up a mobility chart, introducing study loans to help study abroad;
3. Employment of young people: help the transition from study to employment, vacancies throughout Europe should be more accessible through the expansion of EURES, setting up microfinance initiatives to promote the business activity of young people.

The European Commission provides various forms of support to member states in achieving the targets, such as financial contribution, co-ordination, organizing events to share experiences and by using other administrative means. Although an independent budget has not been allocated to the Europe 2020 strategy, member states have access to sufficient financial resources by reorganizing and rethinking the existing resources. As an example, Tamás Szűcs mentioned that in the current budget period approximately 50 billion Euros will be re-allocated to research and development, 3 billion to developments linked to competitiveness and innovation, 7 billion to the development of lifelong training, and some 280 billion is re-allocated from the structural funds to achieve the objectives of the strategy. New types of financing possibilities are being considered beyond the existing resources, and efforts are being made to include private businesses into the realization of the strategy.

Tamás Szűcs told the participants that the Commission has great expectations of the Youth on the Move initiative, which plays a decisive role in the success of the whole Europe 2020 strategy as well, since it is connected to all the targets in the strategy. That is why the Commission wishes to transform the programmes within this particular initiative and tries to increase their efficiency. The cluster of programmes will also be supported from the European Social Fund, and from outside sources, such as the new means of providing support to young entrepreneurs. This particular tool has been proposed and realized by László Andor, the Hungarian commissioner.

Finally, Tamás Szűcs expressed his hope that all European citizens will become familiar with the strategy in order to promote co-operation and mutual success: raising awareness of the strategy may be one of the tasks of active citizenship education, and he asked the conference participants to help the realization of the strategy.

Who is an active citizen? Preparing European young people to undertake their role as citizens: the results of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS)

Professor David Kerr discussed three topics in his presentation:

★ The analysis of the rationale for and definition of active citizenship;
★ The initial findings of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS);[7] and
★ The main challenges facing active citizenship.

1. THE RATIONALE FOR AND DEFINITION OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Professor David Kerr began his presentation by addressing the issue of the conceptual basis and definition of active citizenship. Connecting his argument to the speeches of Georg Pirker and Zsuzsanna Szelényi, Kerr said that the expression has become widely used in the last ten years, and that today "it is everywhere". Since it is a very recent and 'active concept', it is still changing and becoming increasingly precise. Kerr believes that this conference can also contribute to the clarification of the concept.

According to Kerr, the concept of active citizenship has found support among decision makers, in the EU and at regional, national and local levels. The concept is very complex and multi-faceted, that is, we are not facing a simple linear concept. Several questions can be formulated around the issue: What is active citizenship? What do active citizens actually do? How do we have to educate them? Referring back to the introductory speech of Georg Pirker, David Kerr mentioned Barack Obama, who stated that the fight against injustice and the struggle for freedom are the most important characteristics of an active citizen. This, according to Kerr is only one possible approach; several other definitions and approaches exist. However, there are some characteristics common to all definitions, according to which active citizenship:

★ Is a response to pace of change in modern society and associated challenges;
★ Is a key to vision of future society which is cohesive, inclusive, participative and democratic;
★ Is an antidote to the challenges of democratic deficit;
★ Requires crucial role of lifelong education and learning in formation of active citizens.

David Kerr briefly discussed the debate among researchers concerning the causes of disinterest among young people towards the issues of active citizenship. One possible explanation is that this phenomenon is related to the age group, that is, young people are too busy with other things. Another suggestion is that young people today are completely different from earlier generations. According to David Kerr we can only state with certainty that young people do not participate in "public life" to the same degree and in the same way as older ones. That is why it is important to educate young people about how to behave as active citizens. It is best to start the process already within the framework of formal education. David Kerr thinks that education for active citizenship is an important aspect of preparing young people for the future, which is the original, primary goal of schools. Education for active citizenship must be given an important role in formal education, too. However, the older generations are also important, which is why several research projects have analyzed the importance of lifelong learning in active citizenship education.

Quoting British publications, David Kerr highlighted the importance of social renewal. Individuals and institutions react by showing ever newer reactions to the changing society: ever newer

concepts and assumptions emerge. The responses given to these concepts and assumptions may be participation in representative politics, that is, voting at the local, national and European levels, volunteer work, charitable work, etc. Education for active citizenship gives a fixed point from which to orient ourselves and form our actions. However, due its nature, active citizenship education is an ongoing activity that can never be completed, never finished.

Active citizenship is a complex concept, and is made up of several components: knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and identities. It can take the form of traditional political participation, informal citizen participation, charitable activities and participation in various communities. If we consider the context, active citizenship education can take place within the framework of formal and informal education, in schools or through participation in the wider community. According to David Kerr the concept of active learning is closely connected to active citizenship, since practice is very important. Beyond learning there a great emphasis is placed on lived experience: we have to see how it works.

The research conducted by the CRELL institute of the European Commission has created a composite indicator of civic competence. According to this indicator, civic competence can be divided into affective (attitudes and disposition) and cognitive (knowledge and skills) components. However, complex indicators can also be examined by placing the personal aspect into the foreground. In this case background information is taken into account, such as Who are you? Who are your family? What kinds of education have you or your parents received? What kinds of influences reach you (for example, through the media), etc?

A few years ago two American researchers examined how active citizenship works and how it appears in concrete programmes and projects which represented different capacities, commitments and types of education policies. Based on the above they have found three levels of active citizenship:

1. Education for active citizenship creates responsible citizens at a personal level. This is reflected in their everyday behaviour, for example they may do volunteer work in their community.
2. Participant citizens actively take part in the life of society and convince others to do so as well. They play an active role in the life of the community.
3. Justice-oriented citizens are created when individuals experience some kind of social injustice (either in their own lives, or in their environment) and it motivates them.

2. INITIAL FINDINGS OF ICCS

Following the theoretical discussion David Kerr described the initial findings of the ICCS. 38 countries participated in the study, including some EU member states as well. Although Hungary was not among them, Kerr believes that the evaluation of the results may be of use to every country: the results are comparable with the experience of our own country and the conclusions are valid for other countries as well, not only for those taking part. David Kerr explained that he was responsible for creating the European regional model and for assessing the national contexts (the situation of active citizenship education, legal context, etc).

David Kerr explained that the objective of ICCS was to examine how young people are educated to become active citizens, how they are prepared to take their roles as citizens seriously. The

study makes international comparison possible and ranks the participating countries. In the study 140 thousand students and 62 thousand teachers were asked in 5000 schools in 38 countries. The teachers were specialized in all kinds of subjects, not only in active citizenship or subjects with similar curricula. Of the 38 countries 26 are in Europe, and the study was also conducted in Asian, Central- and South-American countries between 2007 and 2010. The study is partly based on questionnaires and partly on the analysis of the context (subjects, curricula, etc.). Based on the large amount of data, the final research reports from ICCS are expected to be detailed and comprehensive. The first preliminary summary of the results was published in June 2010; the general description of findings will be published on November 10th, followed by the regional reports (the European one on November 22, the latin American in early 2011, the Asian one in mid 2011). These publications will be followed by the technical report and finally, in late 2011, by the encyclopaedia which devotes a separate chapter to every country and describes the situation of active citizenship education in the given country.

Figure 1. Countries participating in ICCS. Schulz et al., 2010, p. 16.

The study focused on four dimensions:
   1. The national contexts of civic and citizenship education;
   2. Assessment of students' civic knowledge;
   3. Survey of perceptions and behaviour patterns of students;
   4. The school and community context of civic and citizenship education (how it takes place, what affects it, etc.).

1. The national context of civic and citizenship education

While examining this dimension, local political decision makers were asked about the theory and practice of teaching the topic. According to the results, there are several approaches: in 21 countries there is a specific subject dedicated to civic and citizenship; while in several schools it is integrated into other subjects, while in yet other schools it is a horizontal topic, embedded in the whole of the curriculum, and all the teachers and the whole school is responsible for it.
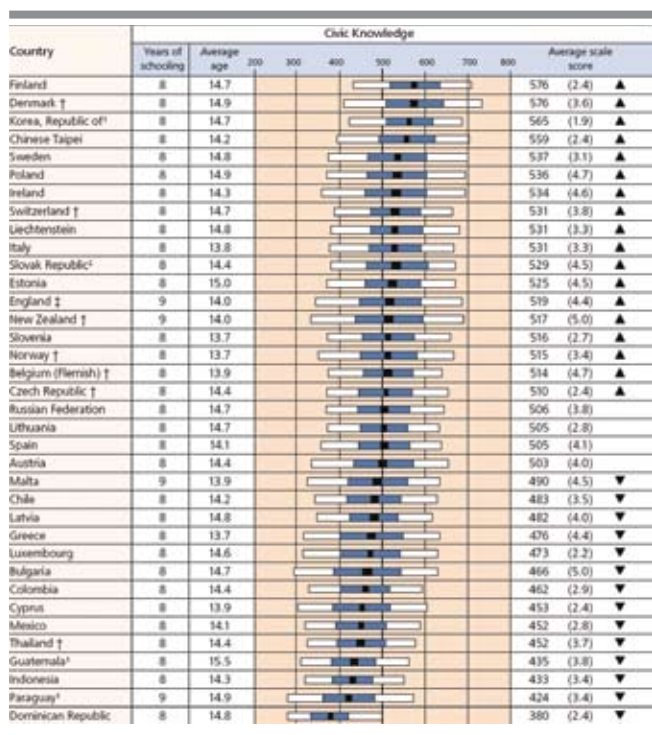
Through the analysis of curricula the researchers have found a wide range of topics and issues discussed in classes connected to civic and citizenship education. In twenty-five countries human rights are part of the concept; in twenty-three countries the understanding of different cultures and ethnic groups, and the issue of the environment is becoming more and more central. At the same time, the traditional approach of describing the democratic institutions (the parliament, electoral system, government structure) and their working is also present.

Based on the results David Kerr concluded that in education the strongest emphasis is still on the transfer of factual knowledge, that is the cognitive aspect, even though the development of skills (analytical, observation and argumentative skills) would also be very important. Nowadays, it is not only knowledge that is important: the school should transfer attitudes and create behaviour patterns in the students. The best possible method for this is where students take part in the life of the community both in school and outside it. In several schools that participated in the study attention is paid to this aspect, reported David Kerr.

2. Assessment of students' civic knowledge

The study also aimed at measuring the fact-like elements of students' civic knowledge. To this end, students were asked to complete an assessment which focused on citizenship concepts as well as on traditional social science knowledge. The data gathered this way was then used to construct a scale, which allowed researchers to assess students' knowledge.

The results have varied a great deal within countries and also in international comparisons: 4 countries achieved the average, 14 countries did better than average, while 18 countries achieved a below average score. Finnish students achieved the highest scores, followed by the Danish, Swedish, Estonian and Luxembourg ones. Students of Scandinavian countries have a high level of civic knowledge: in Sweden, for example, 4% of students performed at a high level in the assessment, while in the four countries with the lowest scores students could only achieve 70% of the average score. Most countries can be placed at proficiency level 2 on the three-level achievement scale constructed by researchers.

It is also clear from the data that girls have achieved significantly higher scores than boys in 31 countries.

Apart from the international comparisons, researchers wanted to analyze the results and draw practical conclusions, and also examine what factors influence student performance. David Kerr told the audience that the characteristics of parents – educational background, employment, social-economic circumstances and their position in the social hierarchy – have a major impact on student performance: the

Country	Years of schooling	Average age	Civic Knowledge 200 300 400 500 600 700 800	Average scale score	
Finland	8	14.7		576	(2.4)	▲
Denmark †	8	14.9		576	(3.6)	▲
Korea, Republic of¹	8	14.7		565	(1.9)	▲
Chinese Taipei	8	14.2		559	(2.4)	▲
Sweden	8	14.8		537	(3.1)	▲
Poland	8	14.9		536	(4.7)	▲
Ireland	8	14.3		534	(4.6)	▲
Switzerland †	8	14.7		531	(3.8)	▲
Liechtenstein	8	14.8		531	(3.3)	▲
Italy	8	13.8		531	(3.3)	▲
Slovak Republic¹	8	14.4		529	(4.5)	▲
Estonia	8	15.0		525	(4.5)	▲
England ‡	9	14.0		519	(4.4)	▲
New Zealand †	9	14.0		517	(5.0)	▲
Slovenia	8	13.7		516	(2.7)	▲
Norway †	8	13.7		515	(3.4)	▲
Belgium (Flemish) †	8	13.9		514	(4.7)	▲
Czech Republic †	8	14.4		510	(2.4)	▲
Russian Federation	8	14.7		506	(3.8)	
Lithuania	8	14.7		505	(2.8)	
Spain	8	14.1		505	(4.1)	
Austria	8	14.4		503	(4.0)	
Malta	9	13.9		490	(4.5)	▼
Chile	8	14.2		483	(3.5)	▼
Latvia	8	14.8		482	(4.0)	▼
Greece	8	13.7		476	(4.4)	▼
Luxembourg	8	14.6		473	(2.2)	▼
Bulgaria	8	14.7		466	(5.0)	▼
Colombia	8	14.4		462	(2.9)	▼
Cyprus	8	13.9		453	(2.4)	▼
Mexico	8	14.1		452	(2.8)	▼
Thailand †	8	14.4		452	(3.7)	▼
Guatemala¹	8	15.5		435	(3.8)	▼
Indonesia	8	14.3		433	(3.4)	▼
Paraguay¹	9	14.9		424	(3.4)	▼
Dominican Republic	8	14.8		380	(2.4)	▼

Figure 2. Civic knowledge results of the ICCS. Schulz et al., 2010, p. 38.

higher the parents' social status, the better students' civic knowledge. Certain factors, which used to be thought influential, such as migrant background or the civic interest of parents, have less influence than expected.

Given the fact that 15 ICCS participant countries were also included in the CIVED survey conducted on the same topic in 1999, researchers could derive comparative data between these two points in time. However, we must be very careful when drawing conclusions. The sets of questions in the two surveys were not identical, and even if the questions were the same or similar, there may have been differences with regard to the wording, the methodology or the assessment. For example, in the case of Great Britain and Sweden the data are not comparable as the age of the students surveyed was different. Despite these methodological difficulties we can state that the 1999 results were better than those in 2009 – with the exception of Slovenia – even though the reason is not clear.

3. Students' perception, values and behaviour patterns

Examining trust in institutions has yielded surprisingly good results: 60% of students trust their national governments, that is, they support democratic institutions. The highest scoring countries in Europe are Austria, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Russia and Sweden. Even more students, 75% of those asked trust their schools. David Kerr explained that as students become more mature, they feel at home at school, make friends there and participating in the life of the community. Compared to these two figures, a significantly smaller proportion, only 40% of students, trust political parties. David Kerr drew the conclusion that although young people trust the democratic process, they do not necessarily trust the people who participate in the process or direct it. In several countries the survey's conclusion was that students trust institutions, but not politicians. However, there are several differences among countries: young people in Nordic countries have the highest level of trust in institutions.

Keeping the low level of trust in political parties in mind it is not surprising that half of students do not have a party preference. According to David Kerr this is one of the reasons why it is very important to raise students' awareness that active citizenship does not equal active participation in political parties, the latter is only a small segment of the former.

The survey also assessed students' attitudes towards gender equality. Similarly to the results of the 1999 CIVED survey, 90% of students supported gender equality, the equal rights of men and women. This issue is supported more by girls than by boys.

Examining students' interest in political and social issues it has been found that students are most attracted to local issues, international and foreign policy issues are ranked lower. Although boys show more interest, the gender difference is not significant. There is also a weak association between students' interest and the jobs and migrant background of parents. It is parents' political interest that has the strongest impact: if the parents themselves are interested in events and discuss them with the students at home, it is likely that the students will also show more interest.
The active participation of students was also examined. The results show that most students do not participate in the life of the broader community outside school. The reasons for this finding are hard to determine if we want to move beyond the popular claim that young people nowadays do not care about anything. Low participation may be explained in several ways: students spend

a lot of time studying, they have a lot of homework, they do not have time or they are really not even interested. It is also an important question, and one related to the structure of the school, as to whether students have an opportunity to participate in the life of the community. If they do, it is possible that they have trouble finding the best opportunities for participation and they need help and support in this area. Students are very active at school level: they are happy to actively participate in school life, even in elections or debates.

Researchers have also tried to answer the question of whether it is realistic to expect students to play a more active part in the community. 80% of them indicated that they intend to vote in elections when they grow up. However, David Kerr reminded us that such a response must be handled with caution, as the promise is far from the activity itself. First impressions are of key importance: if the student votes on the first occasion when he/she is legally eligible, they are significantly more likely to vote again later. There is also an association between knowledge and participation in elections: the higher the level of a student's knowledge, the more willing they are to vote later. However, participation is also related to interest: the more interested students are in the issues of politics and society the more likely it is that they will vote later. It must be noted however, that participation in civic life and politics does not exceed the willingness to vote: only a few students plan to join a political party or stand as a candidate in elections. These findings show that the young generation does not want to be very active in politics.

4. The context and practice of civic and citizenship education

In order to answer the question of how civic and citizenship education is conducted in schools, researchers interview teachers and heads of schools to supplement the information gained from students' questionnaires.

The countries included in the sample follow different approaches regarding civic education. The overwhelming majority of schools include citizenship knowledge in the curriculum: only 23% of students go to schools that do not provide civic education or social science classes.

The objectives of civic and citizenship education also vary among schools. Teachers and school heads typically mentioned two objectives: transfer of knowledge and skills development in the first instance, and the creation of active participation as a secondary objective. According to the survey results, the majority of schools placed stronger emphasis on transferring knowledge, rather than on encouraging participation.

Schools claim that they provide opportunities for students to participate in the life of the smaller community: they organize sporting and cultural events to this end. However, the connection with the world outside school is more limited: only a small proportion of teachers participate in human rights projects or volunteer to help disadvantaged people.

Impact mechanism

David Kerr explained that during the interpretation of survey results researchers also aimed at highlighting how the different elements [of civics and citizenship] impact on one another.

For example, participation in elections is impacted by civic knowledge, individual beliefs and conviction (including self-confidence), self-management skills, the attitudes towards institutions and the belief that one can have an effect on the life of the community. While family background also affects participation in elections, only to a smaller degree than the factors mentioned above.

The relationships between the explanatory factors of active political participation are different: civic knowledge plays a less important role, while beliefs, attitudes and the trust in institutions that have a stronger effect.

European regional module

The first regional report of the study, the one about the European regional module, will be published on November 22, 2010. The research project carried out in Europe was part of the ICCS, but it was complemented by a survey asking students about the European Union, about the values they hold concerning tolerance and equality, and the degree to which they feel they are European. David Kerr gave a few examples of the analyzed issues, such as students' knowledge about the rules of the EU and their suggestions as to what the five most important European issues are. The European module also aimed at answering the following questions: how strong is the European identity of students? What attitudes do they hold about intercultural relationships? What opinions do they hold on minorities, immigrants, the free movement of people, the opening of the national labour markets and the European institutions? Do they trust the institutions of the EU, such as the European Parliament and the Commission? What do they think about the further enlargement of the EU? What do they think about learning languages in Europe, what languages do they speak, etc.? Norway and Russia did not participate in the European module.

3. CHALLENGES FACING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

In the final part of his talk David Kerr reflected on the further use of the study, as well as the directions of further research and thinking. Given the complex nature of the concept of active citizenship, it is important to define its components, so that we know how the concept is constructed. This is necessary to determine the direction of future research and policymaking.

According to Kerr an important direction for future research is mapping the links of the cognitive dimension and the analysis of the precise relationship between knowledge and participation. Another future task is to analyze the ICCS data broken down according to individual countries and to conduct thorough international comparisons. This work will begin as a part of ICCS in 2011.

With regard to education policies, David Kerr thinks it is important to clarify what active citizenship entails at a local, a regional and a European level, and how these levels are connected. How the targets of the Europe 2020 strategy can be translated into different national contexts must also be examined.

Kerr thinks that the ICCS is also relevant to the better understanding and exchange of ideas between education policy concepts and teaching practice, as the study helps us to understand how a concept becomes reality, how educational principles and objectives are manifested in reality.

The findings of the study can contribute to the shaping of education policy, as well as teaching practice.

Finally, David Kerr reminded the audience that active citizenship education is a never-ending process: it is a lengthy process, and in the meantime society and circumstances are constantly changing. The younger generations will always need education to prepare them for the challenges.

David Kerr recommended a volume of studies and recommendations published by the Council of Europe to provide strategic support to decision makers in the field of education for democratic citizenship and human rights.[8] The book, which is co-authored by David Kerr, includes concrete recommendations on transforming principles and objectives into policies.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

At the end of the talk members of the audience asked questions.

To the critical comment that it is 'active doing' rather than active learning that should be in the focus of education, David Kerr replied by expressing his opinion that active learning and activity are closely connected, indeed inseparable, and thus cannot be in an either/or relationship.

David Kerr agreed with the comment highlighting the importance of the culture of debate and the ability to listen to opinions differing from our own. He mentioned that according to the findings of the study most curricula also emphasize this element.

David Kerr could not answer a question about what explains the good results of China (Taiwan) in ICCS, because he did not work on that module. He referred the person raising the question to the co-ordinator of the Chinese module.

A member of the audience asked if the European module of ICCS can be considered authentic, given that the two largest EU member states, Germany and France did not participate in it. David Kerr said it was the decision of the two countries not to participate and expressed his conviction that despite this fact the results are valuable and relevant; 26 other European countries allow the researchers to identify European trends.

In response to a question David Kerr mentioned that the ICCS findings will also be compared with the results of the PISA survey.

In response to a comment emphasizing the importance of teachers' attitudes David Kerr also highlighted the key role of teachers in active citizenship education. He said that unfortunately the ICCS team could not research the opinions and perceptions of teachers in as much depth as perhaps would have been necessary, as the study is not targeted at teachers.

Panel discussion: Social context, differences and similarities in active citizenship attitudes in Europe

In response to David Kerr's talk, Judit Lannert emphasised the importance of European research and highlighted that it is important to participate in these surveys with the intention of promoting Hungary's participation in international surveys similar to ICCS. In her opinion if Hungary is left out of these research projects, the country will be left off the map, and no attention will be paid to us. The fear of weak results cannot justify non participation. She also emphasised the importance of regional comparative surveys. This panel discussion provides an opportunity for such a comparison since all participants talk about a research project that entails international or regional comparison.

First Dr. Bryony Hoskins from the Institute of Education, University of London described the results of the research projects she has lead.

BRYONY HOSKINS: ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP COMPOSITE INDICATOR[9]

The talk was organized around two central questions:
1. Who is considered an active citizen in Europe?
2. How can active citizenship be learnt?

1. Identifying active citizens

The CRELL Institute of the European Commission conducted a project on active citizenship in collaboration with the Council of Europe between 2005 and 2008. In the preliminary phase of the project numerous discussions took place about the concept of active citizenship, analyzing a number of aspects and dimensions, and shedding new and interesting light on several concepts and dimensions. One of these concepts is participation, which does not always signify a positive thing. Participation in the realization of bad objectives can be harmful, that is why the definition of active citizenship mentions respecting human rights and democracy. Another similar concept is trust: we normally use it in a positive sense and think about trust in friends. At the same time, a healthy level of scepticism towards politics and politicians is indispensable.

Bryony Hoskins also discussed the difference between active citizenship and social capital. Social capital is not a productive concept and its results are not always positive. The definition of social capital includes some elements that are not always necessary. In contrast, active citizenship is formed against injustice.

The speaker drew attention to the fact that active citizenship does not equal the maintenance of the status quo; rather, it is an opportunity for positive change, which is why active citizenship education guarantees the survival of democracy. In the preparatory phase of the project a working definition was created that is also used by the European Commission, even though the final, precise definition is still under construction. According to the working definition active citizenship is participation in civil society, community and/or political life characterised by mutual respect and

non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy.[10] The concept includes political activity, civil society and community life, volunteering, helping others and the values of democracy. Thus, the definition integrates a wide range of value-based activities.

Based on this definition researchers could formulate the conceptual framework, assess the European situation and compare different countries. The research conducted in the project's framework utilized the results of the 2002 European Social Survey (ESS), which concentrated on the 15+ age group. Country-level data are not always fully comparable, however, as there are certain technical and methodological constraints (for example data about new and informal ways of participation are missing, occasionally the methods of data gathering are different, etc.).

Based on the ESS questionnaires, 63 indicators have been identified to measure active citizenship that have been grouped along the following 4 dimensions:
1. Conventional political activity, participation in political life;
2. Civil society (participation in peaceful protest);
3. Participation in community life (religious, sports, cultural activities, volunteering, charity);
4. Values.

Bryony Hoskins summarized the findings by saying that the Nordic countries lead, and the scores become lower as we move towards the South of Europe. Hungary is at the end of the list (achieving the highest scores in the dimension of participation in community life). The picture is heterogeneous for the whole of Europe in all dimensions. The differences can be traced back to the different historical contexts: while in the Nordic and Western-European countries democratic traditions are older, in Southern-European countries democratic development faced obstacles a few decades ago, and the countries of Eastern-Europe are new democracies in a historical perspective.

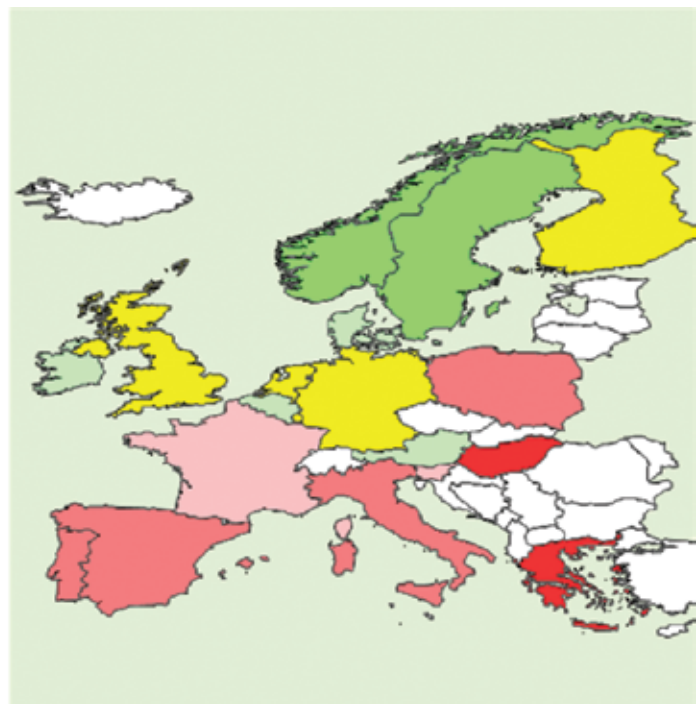| Points	Country
766	Norway
755	Sweden
641	Denmark
632	Austria
559	Ireland
557	Belgium
555	Netherlands
543	Luxemburg
533	Germany
483	United Kingdom
452	Finland
371	France
347	Slovenia
298	Spain
266	Portugal
260	Italy
226	Poland
205	Greece
171	Hungary

Figure 3. Results of the Active Citizenship Composite Indicator. Hoskins et al., 2006, p. 7.

It is interesting to note, that while there are large differences between the scores describing the level of participation, there are major similarities regarding who active citizens are and how they can be characterised. According to the findings of another survey, the European active citizen is aged 48-64, educated, takes part in lifelong learning, tends to read newspapers rather than watch TV, and has relatively high earnings. The group of inactive citizens is also fairly homogeneous: they are 20-25 years old, have low educational attainment and are not learning at the moment, they are employed, but with low earnings and tend to watch a lot of television.[11]

Bryony Hoskins referred back to the talk of Tamás Szűcs, who emphasised the role and responsibility of young people in the advancement of Europe. Bryony Hoskins thinks that young people are affected by two disadvantages: they are a smaller group than older people and, given that they are less active, have less influence on politicians.

2. How can active citizenship be learned?

In the second half of her talk Bryony Hoskins addressed the issue of learning active citizenship: how we can build active citizenship competencies and support their acquisition, and also, how we can help teachers in this task.

Civic competence – which is one of the eight key competencies listed by the European Union – is a complex concept, made up of knowledge (democracy, justice, equality, citizenship etc.), skills (e.g. engage effectively with others, problem solving in the community, decision-making, critical and creative reflection) and attitudes and values (respect for human rights, equality and democracy, respect values for community cohesion etc.). The speaker pointed out that this definition may help member states to create and shape curricula and also in practical work.

Next, Bryony Hoskins introduced a composite indicator they developed on civic competencies based on the findings of the 1999 CIVED survey (see Figure 4).[12] The Composite Indicator combines all these aspects of civic competence: it contains citizenship values, social justice, participatory attitudes as well as cognition about democratic institution. She pointed out that there are no clear cut reasons why some countries score better or worse. For example, some of the Eastern-European countries have scored higher along the future participation dimension than some Western-European or Nordic countries.
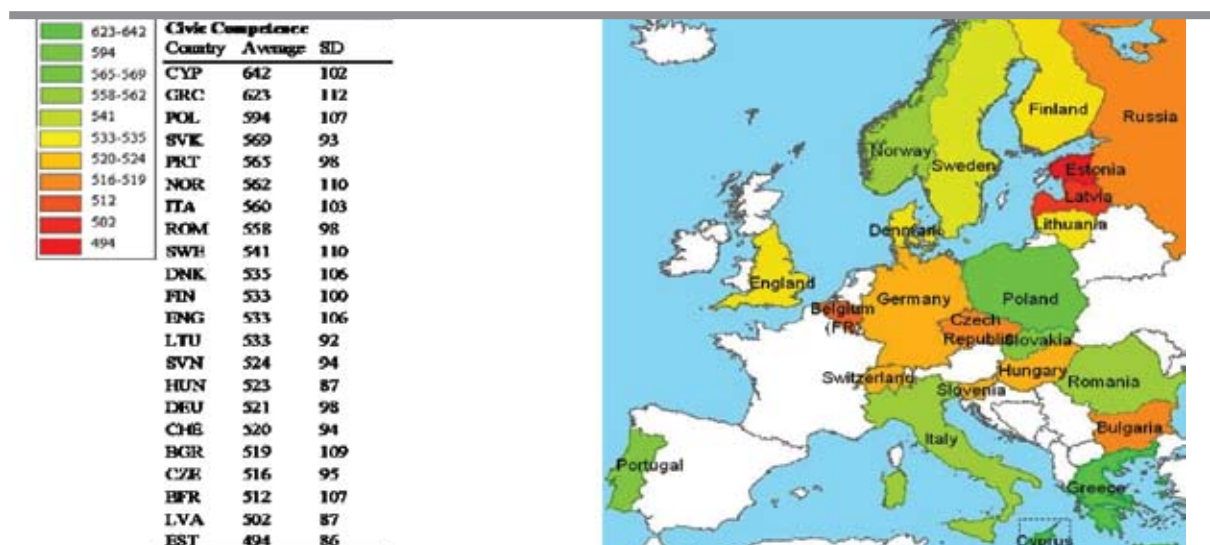

Civic Competence		
Country	Average	SD
CYP	642	102
GRC	623	112
POL	594	107
SVK	569	93
PRT	565	98
NOR	562	110
ITA	560	103
ROM	558	98
SWE	541	110
DNK	535	106
FIN	533	100
ENG	533	106
LTU	533	92
SVN	524	94
HUN	523	87
DEU	521	98
CHE	520	94
BGR	519	109
CZE	516	95
BFR	512	107
LVA	502	87
EST	494	86

Figure 4. Civic Competence Composite Indicator in Europe (Data 1999/Age group 14). Hoskins et al., 2008, p. 43.

After that Bryony Hoskins moved on to discuss research on the characteristics of learning and the utilization of knowledge.[13] She mentioned that the definition of learning has been clarified in a study and this concept is useful when teaching civic competencies.

One of the most important characteristics of learning, Bryony Hoskins states, is that it takes place in a practical community, which may be located anywhere: in the street, in classrooms, in different communities (schools, associations, conferences, at home, etc). Learning is done through social contacts, in a community and in the framework of discourse or activities carried out in a community. In other words: learning is always the outcome of interaction. Active participation, which is a central dimension of active citizenship, can be analyzed in several communities, and with regards to different identities – for example, participation in the local community, in school life, as well as in global processes and relationships – which may lead to controversial results.

Bryony Hoskins stated that in the survey they considered learning to be a social practice. The research team assumed that students' opinions and/or understandings and cognitions are the outcome of discussions with parents, teachers and fellow students; this is when they acquire and construct different meanings and cognitions. In another dimension, they have the opportunity to test how participation works in practice, how they can be more active.

Five countries participated in the respective survey; the aim was to test the hypothesis. As she talked about the results, Bryony Hoskins first highlighted that practice and participation do not have a major effect on the cognitive aspect. The role of talking to the teacher is not obvious: it may be positive or negative. It is clear, however, that social contacts play a great role in developing civic competence. The contacts do not need to be formal and organised; the only thing that matters is the discussion. The data that pointed to this conclusion were very similar in all five participating countries.

It has been proven again that schools play a vital role: they are especially important for those students who lack the appropriate family background. Schools can contribute even more to the development of active citizenship if the school environment is shaped in a way that supports civic competencies. The environment should generate debate, as students need opportunities to make decisions. The relationship of schools, families and communities should be improved: parents should be involved in the educational process; they need opportunities to enter schools, to communicate there and set examples. Another important aspect is the strengthening of interactions among students: they should learn from each other, the relationships between different age groups of students need to be supported.

TAMÁS KELLER: CULTURE AND WORLD VIEW

The researcher for TÁRKI talked about the results of another international survey,[14] which does not focus directly on active citizenship, but on the cultural and cognitive factors in the background. The foundation of Tamás Keller's talk is the World Values Survey (WVS), which has been conducted in 97 countries in five waves. The latest wave was conducted in Hungary by TÁRKI, and the presentation put forward the relevant results.

The talk started with Inglehart's theory, which places countries along two dimensions. Keller argues that these dimensions overlap with active citizenship. Social capital and trust, which are important factors in the research presented by Bryony Hoskins, also appear in these two dimensions. The two dimensions can be imagined and pictured as two value axes:

1. Traditional-religious vs. secular-rational [modes of] thinking. The five elements characteristic of traditional-religious thinking are religiosity, national pride, deference to authority, obedience and family-centeredness. Secular-rational thinking can be described by the opposites of these characteristics.

2. Closed vs. open [modes of] thinking. The open [mode of] thinking is characterised by freedom, self-interest, tolerance, independence and trust, while the opposites are characteristic of the closed [mode of] thinking.

Countries are placed in a graph along these axes: along axis X the score of the closed vs. open mode of thinking is represented, while the traditional-religious vs. secular-rational score is represented on axis Y. Countries are also labelled according to the cultural dimension, which corresponds to Huntington's cultural zones, broadly based on religions. For Europe and Hungary it is the countries of the Western and the Orthodox cultural zones that are of interest. Due to its history and geographical location Hungary may be grouped with the Western cultural zone. However, the values survey has found that Hungary is characterised by secular and closed mode of thinking; which sets it apart from the Western cultural zone that is characterized with secular and open mode of thinking. Slovenia and Spain for example belong to the Western cultural zone. Hungary on the other hand is located fairly far from the core of the Western cultural zone, and is close to countries of the Orthodox cultural zone, such as Bulgaria, Moldova and Russia.

When the findings were combined with economic descriptors, such as GDP, the Hungarian results also turned out to be very interesting. Typically there is a correlation between wellbeing and the open mode thinking in a society. Relative to our GDP, Hungary is characterised by a rather closed mode of thinking, significantly more so than countries with the same GDP.
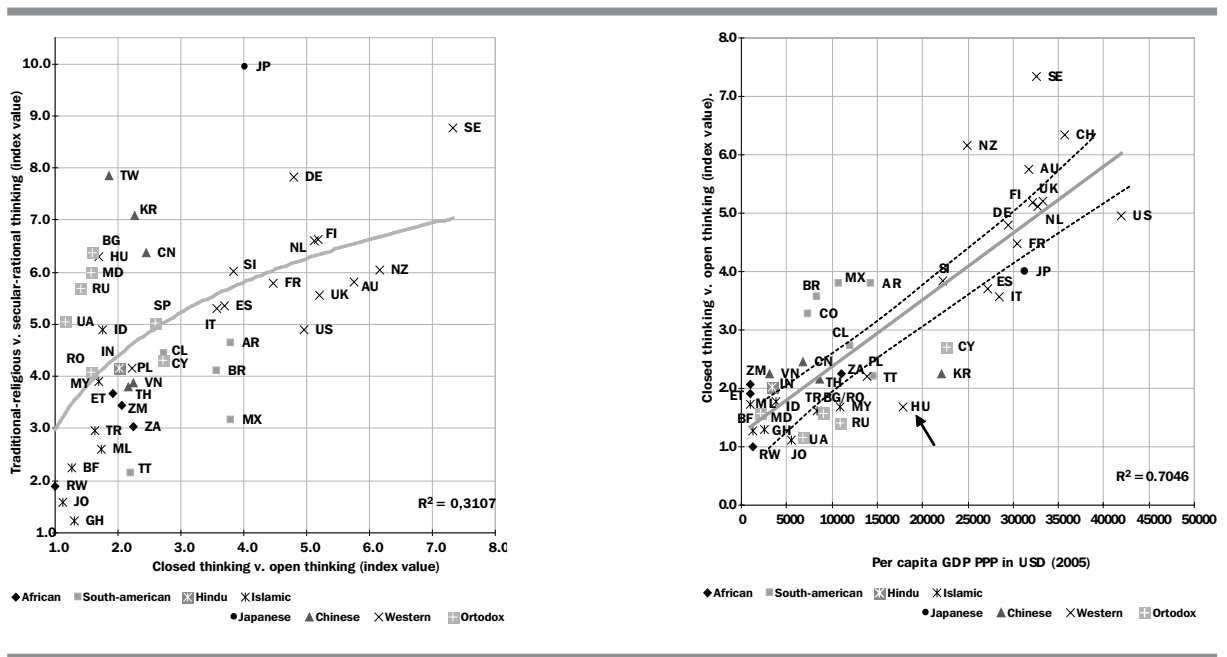
Figures 5 and 6. The positions of 44 societies along the axes of traditional/secular-rational and closed/open mode of thinking and the relationship between the closed thinking v. open thinking value axis and per capita GDP PPP. Keller, 2009, pp. 12 and 15. (Review of Sociology, Vol. 20., No: 1., pp. 27-51, pp. 31 and 35.)

At the end of his talk Tamás Keller summarized the question raised by his research. An important question in his opinion concerns the institutional boundaries of social development. Other issues raised by the research include what to do with the closed mode of thinking, how the country can be dislocated from this condition, and what roles do citizens and politics play in this process.

PÉTER KREKÓ: DEMAND FOR RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM INDEX (DEREX)[15]

Following Tamás Keller, Péter Krekó talked about radicalism, which, in his own words, is the inverse of active citizenship. Péter Krekó and his team also drew data for their survey from the European Social Survey, similarly to Bryony Hoskins; however, they used different methodology. Comparing 32 countries, European ones, Israel and Russia they have calculated the DEREX for 2002-2003, 2004-2005, 2006-2007, as well as for 2008-2009. The research is based on the opposites of the values that are so important in active citizenship: inclusive society, trust in institutions and participation.

The index is made up of four components:
★ prejudice and welfare chauvinism
★ right-wing value orientation (similarly to the traditional-religious vs. secular-rational dimension)
★ opposition to the political system/anti-establishment attitudes
★ fear, distrust and pessimism

Those in the 15+ age groups are classified as predisposed to extremism that can be characterized with at least 3 out of the 4 dimensions. The results are projected onto a map where the different colours signal the score of each country. If the DEREX Index is higher, there is a higher proportion of citizens who demand radical, exclusionary and anti-establishments ideologies and solutions. It is interesting that the results are similar to those reflected in the Active Citizenship Composite Indicator, however, in a negative sense.

Turkey has achieved the highest score, but the Ukraine, Bulgaria and Hungary are also at the "top" of the list: in these countries the proportion of people predisposed to right-wing extremism is higher than 20%. Péter Krekó emphasised: it does not mean that there would be a strong, well-establish right-wing party in these countries. The high score signals a strong social demand, which could be satisfied even by a governing party. The strong social need pushes actors to try and satisfy these exclusionary and anti-establishment demands.
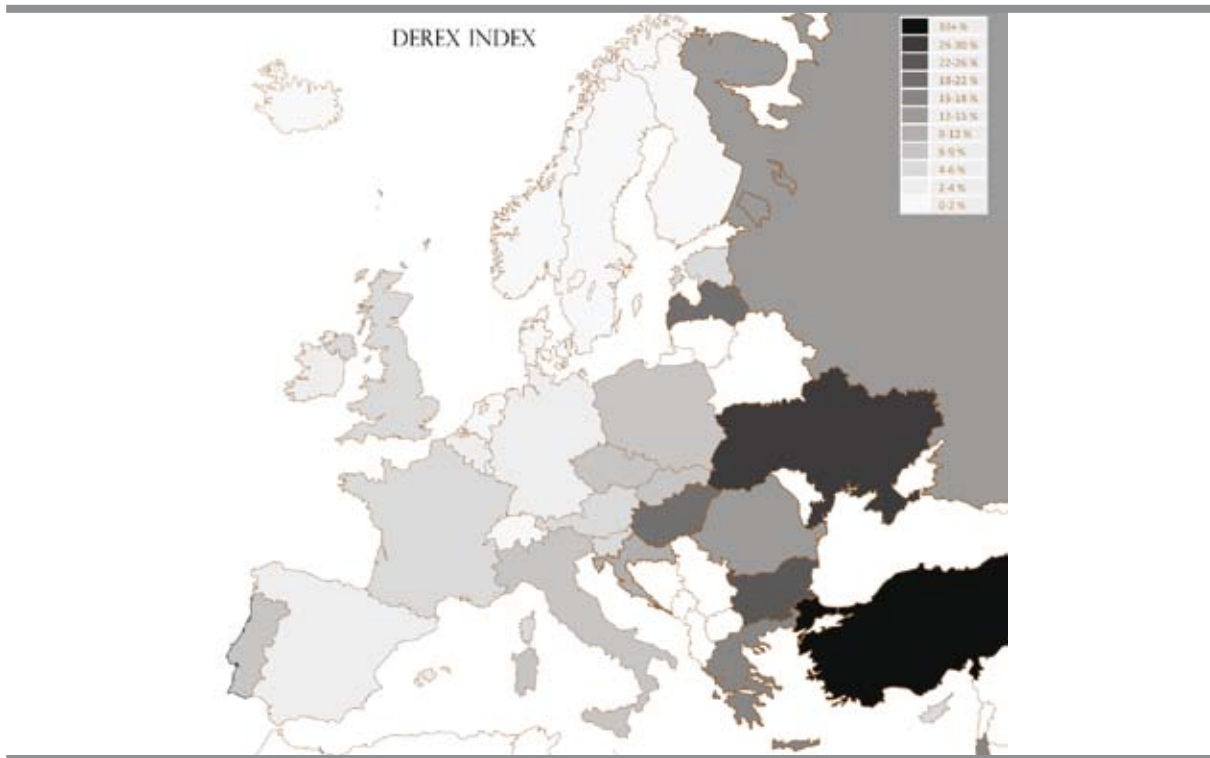
Figure 7. Results of the DEREX Index. Political Capital, 2010

There are two major dividing lines between the participating countries: an East-West and a North-South one. Countries in the South score high, as the democratic traditions were formed late and the countries experienced setbacks. In Eastern-Europe the scores are also high, which can be explained by the post-state socialist past and the lack of democratic tradition.

Some of the data on prejudice and welfare chauvinism are alarming: in Hungary more than 50% of society has relatively strong exclusionary attitudes (partly because welfare chauvinism is linked to the belief that immigrants take jobs from the 'natives', they take benefit payments, use up the resources. The other factor explaining high scores is homophobia).
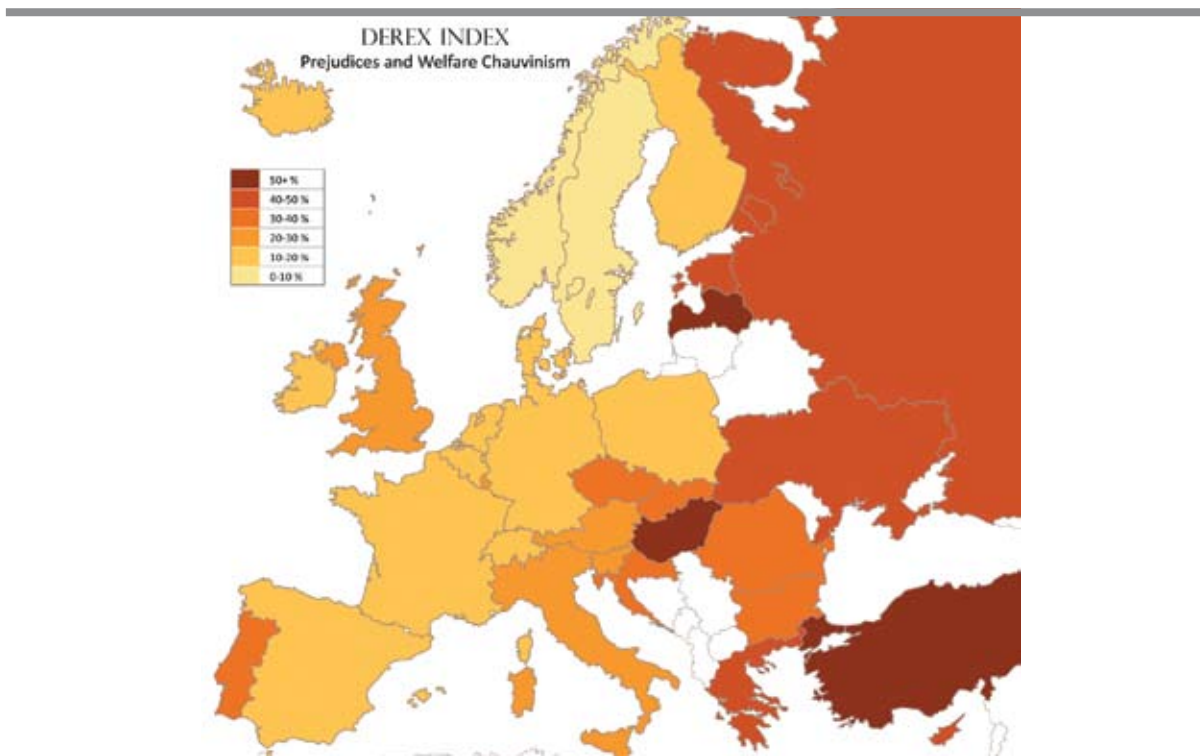
DEREX INDEX
Prejudices and Welfare Chauvinism

50+ %
40-50 %
30-40 %
20-30 %
10-20 %
0-10 %

Figure 8. DEREX Index: prejudices and welfare chauvinism

Differences between younger (under 35) and older generations were also analyzed, especially in the components of prejudice and anti-establishment sentiment. It has been observed that the demand for right-wing extremism is almost always lower among young than older people; which gives rise to some optimism. In some countries the difference is small (for example the Czech Republic); while in other countries it is significantly greater (for example Hungary). In post-state socialist countries young people are in general more democratic and open than older generations. In terms of trust towards institutions there are no significant differences between older and younger people, although naturally there are cross-country differences. In Bulgaria for example anti-establishment attitudes are stronger among young people; in Hungary they tend to trust institutions a bit more. Overall it is true that in Eastern-Europe the trust in institutions is lower than in Western-Europe. According to Péter Krekó the findings point to deficiencies in democratic socialization. Education can be blamed for this only in part, and political actors themselves are also responsible for this tendency.

Closing his talk Péter Krekó highlighted that although there are positive developments in the world view of young people, we cannot really be satisfied, as young people in Eastern-European countries do not seem a strong base for democracy. The expectation that young people will reshape the thinking of our societies, which emerged at the time of post-state socialist transformations, seems to have been an illusion.

The talks were followed by a discussion around questions raised by the chair and the audience.

Questions from the chair

Referring to Tamás Keller's talk, **Judit Lannert** asked what institutional barriers stop Hungary from performing as well in the dimensions of active citizenship as would be expected, for example, based on the country's GDP.

Tamás Keller replied by saying that the issue is very much like the chicken and egg problematic: it is hard to decide whether we think the way we do because the country's economic development level is low, or our economic development lags behind because we think this way. The findings of the survey show that trust in institutions is a very important factor to achieving good scores. Trust in institutions may have a stronger effect than trust between individuals. Hungary's performance in these two dimensions is very different: we perform quite well in terms of trust in people, but this does not show a close correlation with economic development. However, in terms of trust in institutions Hungary performs less well: the level of trust is especially low in political institutions, banks and financial institutions, journalism and journalists, that is, precisely in the institutions that supply us with information and in which we entrust our money.

Péter Krekó started by clarifying that their research focused on attitudes and not on values. This is important here, because attitudes, such as trust in institutions, change more easily and quickly than values. In Eastern-Europe we have seen examples for attitudes completely being reshaped in periods of 4-8 years. In Hungary for example anti-establishment attitudes characterised only 12% of the population in 2002-2003, but by 2008-2009 is had reached 46%. The proportions are similar in Bulgaria and the Ukraine, too. Positive changes can be seen in Poland for example, where trust in institutions has grown significantly between 2004-2005 and 2009.

According to Péter Krekó this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that in Eastern-Europe there are no strong foundations which could prevent pessimism from radiating out into the whole system when there is an unpopular government or a politically chaotic time period. In this region anti-government attitudes can easily lead to an opposition to the entire political system; that is why citizenship education would be particularly important. In Central- and Eastern-Europe, citizens, including young people, have never been taught what democracy and democratic values are, and why it is better to live in a democracy. In this context it is important to point out that no one has explained this to teachers, either. This is compounded by the fact that politicians have often played with nostalgic, anti-democratic and anti-establishment feelings whenever it has suited their goals under particular circumstances. Thus, Péter Krekó thinks that education plays a vital role: it can create the strong foundations which can prevent negative political and economic changes from turning into anti-democratic feelings towards the entire system. It is important to start active citizenship education as early as possible.

Bryony Hoskins agreed with Tamás Keller, and stated at the beginning of her response that there is no simple answer to this question, several reasons and obstacles should be taken into account. The question could be reformulated thus: does the environment change people or vice versa? The obstacles in her opinion can be linked to civic culture but the behaviour of the individual is strongly influenced by his/her own (stable or uncertain) socioeconomic situation, which in turn is

closely related to the country's wealth. In addition, the dominant understanding of citizenship may also determine the outcome. Trust is another important factor. Why are people more predisposed to trust in Nordic countries? Probably because the countries themselves are more predisposed. Bryony Hoskins pointed out the importance of the values people hold, and referred to the example of gender equality. According to research in countries where people are more active citizens, the level of trust is higher and the issue of gender equality is given more attention, and indeed, there are fewer inequalities among people.

Judit Lannert, drawing on all the input from the panel, mentioned the concepts of the closed mode of thinking, radicalism, refusal and ethnocentrism as those that have a negative relationship with active citizenship. In her opinion national identity has a positive relationship with active citizenship. She asked the panellists if there are research data available on this relationship. She also raised the questions of how a positive national identity can be created, and of how it is connected to the concept of active citizenship.

Péter Krekó agreed with the chair that there is a positive national identity and reminded the participants of the difference between patriotism and chauvinism. He thinks that in countries, where the democratic development has been continuous, patriotism can exist without having an exclusionary edge to it. In Eastern-Europe, however, the experience of national identity was taboo, and thus, as a backlash, nationalism and national identity often appear in aggressive, exclusionary ways, and radical groups define the content of these concepts. In contrast, in societies with a more organic historical development and with a more democratic past, patriotism, the positive form of nationalism, is manifested in a clearer form and is not then exclusionary. Yet, attitudes may change in these societies as well, as in France and Germany, where exclusionary attitudes have recently appeared and even members of the government are talking about the failure of multiculturalism. Prejudice is becoming stronger in these countries as well, and the understanding of the nation is shifting in a more exclusionary and biased direction. The current situation shows that at times of crises the process may take a negative turn.

Tamás Keller also shares the conviction that national identity has a positive understanding. As a researcher, however, he has found that national pride shows a negative correlation with other attitudes that contribute to the strengthening of active citizenship. In surveys national pride is measured by asking how proud someone is of being a member of a certain nationality. People who are very proud of this tend to show a lower level of trust in others, thus, the closed mode of thinking is more prevalent among them.

Bryony Hoskins made a link with the issue of European citizenship, pointing out that there is an ongoing discussion about how such an identity can be created without it being exclusionary towards others.

Judit Lannert summarized the responses to the question by saying that those who are confident and have a positive lived experience of their national identity can become good and conscious European citizens.

Questions from the audience
A participant argued against the statement that the cognitive aspect of active citizenship is not process-, but rather goal-oriented. He opposes this approach and believes that only a student-

centred approach is needed, since it is the only way to success. This is how students' attachment and drive to active citizenship can be created. The participant thinks that empirical methods should be used in formal education: debates and dialogues are necessary in order to create critical thinking and the creativity of students. Students need to take part in situations where they can experience participation, such as in a student parliament. The participant thinks that a practical toolkit for active citizenship education, similar to COMPASS[16] [a manual on human rights education with young people] would be very useful, as it would describe and promote the methods of empirical learning.

Another participant summarized the talks of the panel by saying that there seems to be an agreement on education being the way towards creating a better society. However, the participant thinks that all research data show that those who have participated in education in the last 50 years have actually moved away from politics, they are decreasingly likely to vote in elections and they watch increasing amounts of television. Thus, it is important to ask how education itself can improve so that can meet expectations.

Bryony Hoskins responded first to the comment about the process-oriented approach. She said that in the survey they had paid attention to this aspect by analyzing methods which involve students, such as an open atmosphere in the classroom. She agreed with the comment and said that this aspect needs to be concentrated on more closely and more questions should be asked in order to analyze process-oriented methods.

With regard to the second comment she stated that education has improved everywhere in the world. At an individual level education still seems to be the most efficient means of creating an active citizenship attitude. At the same time, she thinks it is justified to ask how it is possible that despite improvements in education, turnout in elections is still declining. She believes that these two phenomena cannot be linked so directly, there is no causal effect. Research evidence shows that turnout in elections has a positive correlation with the level of education: the longer someone participates in formal education, the more likely they are to participate in elections.

In his response to the second comment **Péter Krekó** argued that it is hard to research the real content of education. He supported the argument of Bryony Hoskins and quoted statistical data that demonstrate the relationship between the number of years spent in formal education and democratic attitude. He believes that in Hungary and in the region in general, the problem is that education does not concentrate on issues connected to democratic citizenship or promote the creation of such an attitude. He thinks that apart from the content of the curricula, the attitude of teachers is also very important, for example, what teachers think about the meaning of democracy and citizenship, and what they think about the advantages of public debates before making a decision. The answers to these questions are absent from the curricula and these considerations are missing from the classrooms. Democracy is not a common sense term: its advantages must be demonstrated and discussed, and the flexible attitude of schools and teachers is necessary to this end.

Current issues in education: trends in education policy in Europe

Zoltán Pokorni started to talk about an important topic that had been on his mind for a long time and also seemed to be related to active citizenship: the loneliness of young people. Zoltán Pokorni thinks that active citizenship requires young people not to be lonely; this is how the two topics are connected. Pokorni thinks that young people are much lonelier than older people, and this is the result of the developments of the last two decades. It is difficult to measure loneliness, even if there are data about media consumption. According to a survey conducted in 2005, Hungarian children spend the most time watching television, 208 minutes a day. Although by 2009 this figure had dropped to 105 minutes, another 160 minutes of computer use has been measured. This does not mean that television is responsible for the loneliness of children: watching television is only a symptom, since television is only a substitute that replaces the real community with virtual ones. According to Pokorni, the question is why children watch television instead of doing something else?

Searching for the reasons for loneliness and isolation, Zoltán Pokorni mentioned the following: the Kádár-era, state socialism, Soviet occupation during WWII and the 40 years of Soviet occupation after World War II. The relationship between the individual and the community has not developed in a harmonic way in Hungarian society because of the ideal of collectivism and political hypocrisy. Due to these factors Hungarian society had become very individualistic by the time state socialism collapsed.

The post-state socialist transformations, the appearance of free market conditions and democratisation have created a new opportunity. The first period of the past twenty years brought new impetus, and there was a renewed trust in forms of community and communal activity. However, this initial momentum was lost within a few years. The traditional forms of co-operation, such as churches and youth organizations fell apart or they could not gain much more acceptance than they had under state socialism, and the new formations could emerge only partly, or not at all.

In addition to these circumstances, the educational system was not in a position to successfully fight these trends. Institutions faced increasingly urgent financial difficulties. As a result, schools gradually gave up those activities that were not part of education as such, but provided great opportunities to learn co-operation, such as weekend trips, choirs, drama groups, summer camps, various clubs and school newspapers.

The new era has created a competitive model for schools (parents were free to choose schools for their children), which has several advantages, but it also forced the institutions to enter into fierce competition. In this competition schools strengthened their professional/educational portfolio even further, they established new subjects and ignored classes aimed at developing soft skills; forms of communal action shifted out of focus, as these skills did not help students on their way to higher education, both parents and students supported this process.

At the same time, the world of adults did not give examples and models for young people, for example, parents did not create a community in schools. Parents' evenings concentrated only on administrative matters, parents were not included in the life of the class and the school. Zoltán Pokorni believes it is very important that there is a relationship among parents, as in some cases

they can only take action as a group. Teachers and class teachers should be taught in higher education how to include parents, how to keep in touch with them, how to help them to create a community. It would be vital to organize events in school that provide an opportunity for parents to set an example. Developing co-operation between teachers would also be very important, as it is very weak in today's schools.

Curriculum development is another important issue in formal education. It would be important that group work and project work are given stronger emphasis in schools; they should become accepted methods in the hands of teachers. In some schools these methods are used, and the students become used to getting in touch with the outside world, with strangers and with other institutions. Unfortunately, this is only true of a small fraction of Hungarian schools. Reshaping the content of the curricula and reducing the amount of factual knowledge that should be taught would also be vital steps. Although these steps have been attempted several times, the amount of material that should be covered in classes continues to grow.

Another reason for the emergence of loneliness among children has been the dissolution of local communities, the loosening of geographic groups. The freedom of parents to choose schools for their children disrupted the natural ways in which communities are formed: people living in the same area used to go to the same school, which allowed classmates to meet outside school and to spend their free time together.

After analyzing the current situation, Zoltán Pokorni moved on to discussing the points of potential change and the actions necessary. He believes that one important future task is to promote volunteer work in the community in both secondary and higher education.

As for organizing schools, Pokorni Zoltán expressed the opinion that limiting competition between schools would not lead to a renewal of community activities; it would not recreate the spaces for community in schools. These activities cannot be constrained in classes, cannot be degraded to school subjects, instead they need to be completely reconceptualised. This could only be achieved by special financial support and funding which depends on strong political will.

Zoltán Pokorni would promote the community formation of parents and teachers through teacher training, through special programmes, financed through tenders, and by disseminating good practice. He thinks that policies would be useful in shaping the communities of teachers: certain norms can be prescribed to school heads and the local authorities who finance schools. In addition, this aspect should also be reflected in teacher training.

In the field of curriculum development, first the methods which promote co-operation should be given stronger emphasis, second, the reform of the National Curriculum would allow for a reduction in the amount of material taught. The curriculum development that takes place in the schools can be encouraged and influenced though recommendations in the framework curricula.

Finally, Zoltán Pokorni talked about trust in institutions, in adults, which is closely connected to the issue of active citizenship. He expressed his concern about the falling level of children's trust in politics, in their families and parents. Unfortunately, he could not recommend solutions as to how this trust should be recreated and strengthened.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

A question from the audience focused on virtual friendships. Zoltán Pokorni thinks that virtual friendships are better than television, because they are interactive, but of course, they are still not as good as real communities, as live contact. In his opinion, virtual connections are positive as additional elements, however, it is dangerous and wrong if they are all that is left. He emphasised again that it is not the symptoms that should be eliminated, but the real causes.

Panel discussion:
Active citizenship education
as part of general knowledge:
policy responses
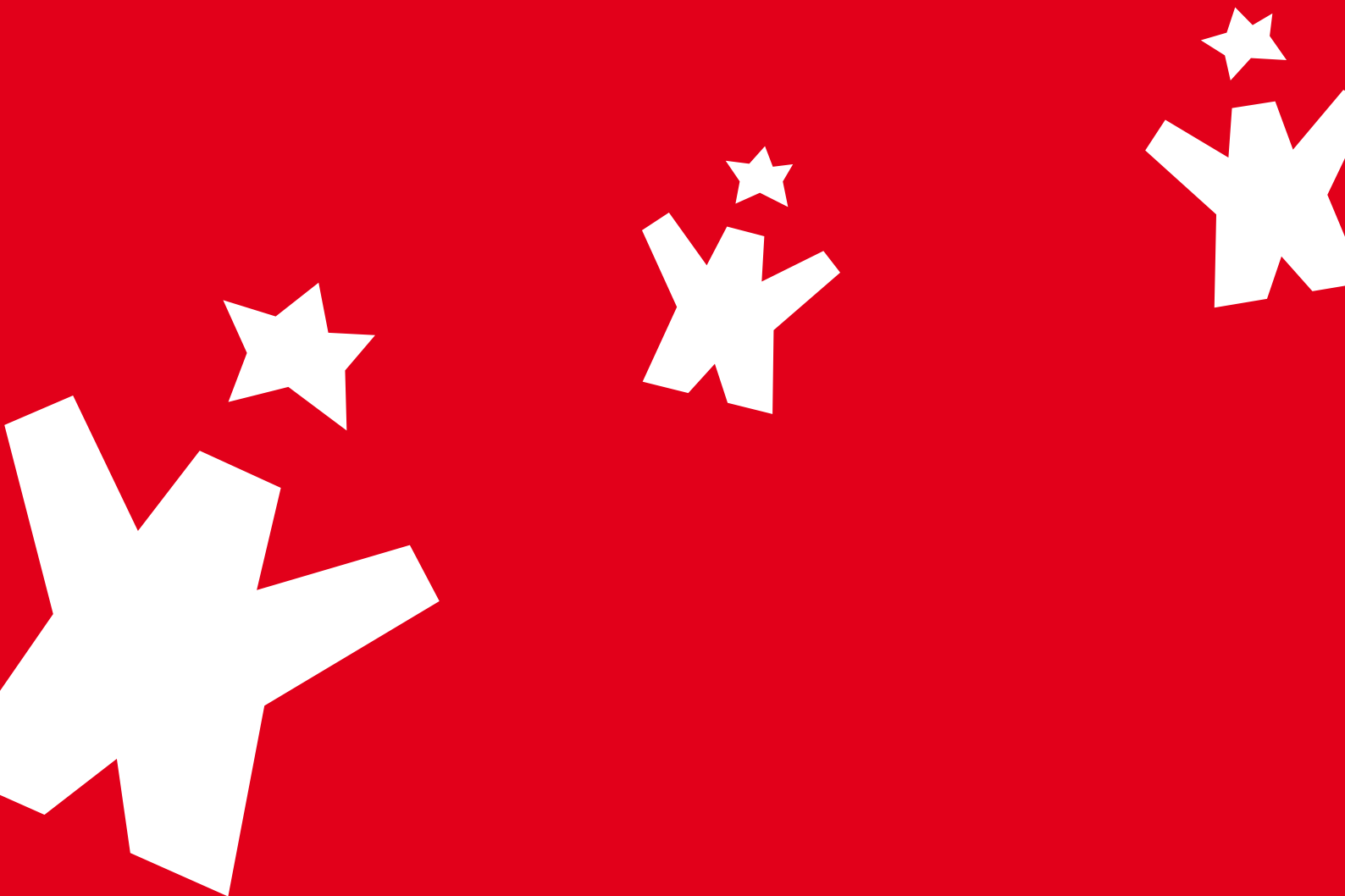
Chair: Zsuzsanna Szelényi, the chair of the board of the Active Citizenship Foundation Participants: Ana Serrador, European Commission, DG Education and Culture, Unit A2 „Equal Opportunities and Equity"; Georg Pirker, DARE Network; Gina Ebner, European Association for the Education of Adults; Dr. Katalin Szilágyi, Ministry of National Resources, State Secretariat for Education, Department for International Relations in Education, Hungary; Yulia Pererva, Council of Europe, Division on Citizenship and Human Rights Education

Introducing the panel discussion, Zsuzsanna Szelényi stated that democratic socialization in Hungary is weak and the level of civic competencies is low, which is part of the reason why the need for a strong authority is growing. Referring to the earlier talks, the chair drew the conclusion that a country's social and economic development is related to how active its citizens are. Several components of the concept of active citizenship are clear, we understand what we are talking about, even if the concept itself is still changing and developing. According to Szelényi, one of the main arguments of the day is that although active citizenship education is aimed at a number of target groups, there is still a strong emphasis on young people. She stated that civic competence can be learned and improved. At the end of her introduction she asked the participants of the panel to focus on the following two areas:

1. Which methods can be used to develop the competencies inherent in active citizenship?
2. What are the main educational policy recommendations: examples, good practices and conclusions?

Yulia Pererva was the first to respond. She emphasised that it is important not only to learn "about democracy", but also to learn "through democracy". That is, democracy must be part of everyday practices in schools and in classes, which includes the use of interactive teaching/learning methods. Students must be actively involved, and it is important to encourage them to discuss controversial issues. It is impossible to educate towards democracy through from-the-front presentations by teachers. However, teachers need training, as such interactive methods require new attitudes, skills and approaches. Role-plays should be used in schools, as they allow students to link what they have learned to reality and also makes materials more relevant and exciting. During discussions and debates it is important that students listen to each other, reflect on what the others say, and respect different opinions and the people who represent those opinions. One very useful technique is when in a debate students have to represent an opinion that they oppose. This helps them to think over the point of view of the other side in a debate.

Yulia Pererva also emphasised the role of teachers: they should be role models who can set an example for students. It is not enough to concentrate only on the material they are teaching, the ideas discussed in class should also be reflected in the teacher's behaviour and attitudes. The materials covered in class must engage students, that is why teachers must plan lessons and choose methods based on the needs and circumstances of the students. For example, some students are so used to the new media that their attention span is fairly short, and teachers would have take this into account when planning their classroom activities. There is therefore an important challenge to teacher training, which is the need to develop the relevant competencies of future teachers and to assist them in putting such competencies into practice in their future work.

In his response **Georg Pirker** referred back to an earlier statement that we solely trust schools and the education system in general. He is sceptical in this sense, since according to research data 90% of learning takes place outside formal education. At the same time, however, schools play an important role in developing skills in students. Schools would become stronger if more emphasis was placed on non-formal education, as the majority of learning in communities belongs to this category. Students should be helped in co-operating with those who contribute to improving their civic competencies. Governments should be ready to put enough financial means into co-ordinating activities of formal education with the expertise from the non-formal sector without subordinating the approaches.

It would also be very important for students to be included in democratic processes from the outset. Democratic approaches must be reflected in methods, for example, students should establish the rules themselves. This would contribute to their becoming independent; that is why it is good if students decide on the learning environment and on the deadline by which they want to learn something. According to Georg Pirker schools must become student centred, the role of non-formal education must become stronger and schools should be encouraged to co-operate.

Dr. Katalin Szilágyi talked about the role of teachers and teacher training. She said that teacher training should include a special training course for class teachers that is aimed at empowering teachers to leave behind the context of their special subjects. The objective is that registration group lessons spent with the class teacher should be used to discuss current issues which are relevant to the everyday lives of students, and not taken up by administrative matters or be spent studying other subjects. Katalin Szilágyi thinks it would be useful to have a list to guide class teachers of which social issues should be discussed and what methods could be used. Another reason why training for class teachers is important is that citizenship education should start with teachers, who should be sensitised to the task. Civic competencies can also be developed in other classes, in that the subject matter can be linked to current issues and students' lives. Foreign languages, literature and history classes are especially well suited to such discussions.

Gina Ebner raised a new issue when she argued that not only young people, but all age groups and target groups should be concentrated on. She referred back to the morning talk which emphasised the importance of parents discussing political issues with their children. That is, parents also should be targeted since they also need help with this task. She also highlighted participatory and lifelong learning, both of which are closely connected to active citizenship education. Study circles, which exist in Nordic countries, for example, are a good form of lifelong learning: participants study together and try new things together in a democratic manner. Study circles provide an opportunity for discussion and debate: they provide the space, the structure and a safe environment for lifelong learning. Sports associations can also be good examples of non-formal education because they can strengthen democratic attitudes and set role models for young people.

Ana Serrador started her contribution by describing the changes taking place at the European Commission: the issue of active citizenship now belongs to a new organizational unit, the Directorate General for Communication, where they are now clarifying responsibilities and shaping concept papers. The issue is becoming increasingly important in European Union policies, and co-operation on educational issues, which has been taking place for a number of years, is becoming more robust through the open method of co-ordination. In her opinion the role of schools is changing is the 21st century, and all schools face similar challenges and problems.

Currently the main issue under discussion at European level is the Education and Training 2020 strategic programme, within which active citizenship education is of special importance. European ministers of education emphasised that the system of education and training plays a fundamental role in strengthening social cohesion and in promoting active citizenship. Defining the eight key competencies is a shared priority of member states because they are vital to the active citizenship of all students completing their school education. Acquiring soft skills, such as learning cultural identity and self-motivation, are of vital importance. Both formal and non-formal education play an important role in shaping these skills, and the relationship with families and parents complements this.

In conclusion, Ana Serrador emphasised that she would appreciate the expertise and support of conference participants and research institutes. She said that the European Commission has carried out a new survey on active citizenship education, which will be accessible soon: a new EURYDICE survey being launched on Citizenship Education at school. The Hungarian EU presidency will be a valuable period as an informal meeting of ministers for education will take place on the issue in March 2011. In the near future co-operation can be strengthened and a policy handbook should be published to support experts.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

A conference participant talked about the knowledge that is transferred in schools. He believes that this knowledge should be geared towards activity, that is, knowledge that can be used in real life situations. Schools – even though they are not out of social context – exist in an isolated environment, while the knowledge that is transferred in schools should be operationalised in the 'outside world', in society. This kind of knowledge cannot be transferred in a classroom environment: teachers should co-operate with the social environment, schools must form a living relationship with the community around them. It must be made possible for children to leave the classroom and gain experiences and relationships in real life, in local communities. It is important that the management of the school supports such initiatives. Learning and teaching must resemble real life. Drama pedagogy, which has a long tradition in Germany, may be an important tool in this process. It is a good method for taking school into the real world, and taking the real world into school.

Another conference participant emphasised that knowledge should be broken down into building blocks. Active citizenship, even if we use a single expression to refer to it, is in fact made up of a dozen competencies. (For example, there are several competencies needed to participate in a debate: students must understand the issue at hand, they need language competencies, they must be able to evaluate whether they are safe or not, etc.). All aspects and moments of school life and life outside school can be reflected on and used to encourage students' participation. Educational policy should reflect this complexity. Initiatives that contribute to the formation of an observing, reflective behaviour should be encouraged.

RESPONSES FROM THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PANEL DISCUSSION

There are three important areas in active citizenship education: education, research and activities/practical implementation. Ideally, these elements appear in schools, in civil society and among experts. The answer to the issues raised is co-operation in formal, informal and non-formal education, and their mutual impact. There are some good examples of these solutions in Hungary.

There are schools which encourage students to help old people or families with several children, and there are other schools where students organize their own cities with their own money, and by doing this they learn how a community works.

Civil society may help in achieving more active participation and in bringing the different sides and representative bodies closer to each other. That is why civil society and non-governmental organisations should be given attention both at European and at local level, and co-operation with them should become stronger. Educational policy must be shaped in co-operation with civil society.

The issues of active citizenship and lifelong learning must be discussed together. A recent research project has proven that health, active participation and lifelong learning are related to one another.

QUESTIONS FROM THE CHAIR

How can we promote co-operation between formal and non-formal education, and how can schools, public institutions, and the institutional environment in general be encouraged to co-operate?

Yulia Pererva replied that the Council of Europe had developed considerable expertise on this issue since 1997, and the culmination of its work was reached in May 2010 with the adoption of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. Based on the experiences in the Council of Europe member states, one can conclude that for citizenship education to be effective, several partners need to work closely together. The issue should be addressed in educational policy making; the objective of students becoming active participants in society should be stated among the aims of education. It is important that active citizenship is included in the curriculum, either as an independent subject, or in an integrated form or even at the level of the whole school. In an ideal situation citizenship education should be included at all levels at the same time.

Yulia Pererva also talked about the importance of the general atmosphere in schools, and the representation of democracy. The organization of the educational system has a major influence on education itself and the way it is organized in a particular school. It is not enough, for example, to have a formal students' council, it should also have a real function in the life of the school. In the spirit of democratic governance schools should provide opportunities for students to experience democracy. Teachers and heads of schools should be trained on the issue of active citizenship, and it should also be reflected in the school as a workplace: such as in teaching practices and on the job training for teachers. It is not enough to train just one specialised teacher: the entire staff should help promoting active citizenship education and the way the school works should radiate this ethos. Evaluation is also important: the performance of the school must be assessed. However, the democratic approach must be dominant in this respect as well: a positive attitude is necessary; schools should be given a chance to decide what role they would like to fulfil in the future and to draw up a plan for measuring their success.

According to **Georg Pirker,** in the youth field two political tools exist at the European level: the EU Youth Strategy and the EU Youth Report. The latter must be prepared regularly by all member states, and it would be necessary for it to refer to the state of (active) citizenship education. How

the various countries performed in this respect should be analyzed and stock taken of existing experiences.

Ana Serrador thinks there are a number of ways in which the European Commission can promote active citizenship education: there are various programmes which could be utilized towards this end, such as the programme of lifelong learning or the Comenius and Erasmus programmes. Certain policies which prioritize active citizenship education can be realized through these programmes. According to plans, the programme on lifelong learning will be even more explicit in promoting the issue. The Youth on the Move programme will create a useful link with formal education.

The research described by David Kerr in today's conference was supported and co-ordinated at a European level, and there was also an attempt to determine the factors contributing to success. One of the objectives was to share good practice, so that every country can use the already existing knowledge. In addition, they also wish to provide guidance to decision-makers on how to handle the issue in their own country, schools, teacher training, at regional and local level. Ana Serrador said it is very important that research data and practical information are at hand, as well as recommendations for decision-makers and teachers. The European Commission is opening up the issues of lifelong learning and the future of the Youth on the Move programme to public consultation.

Dr. Katalin Szilágyi replied that the programme of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 is almost complete, and schools will be given an important role and important tasks within this framework. Children will be accompanied to various events. This will be an important stage with respect to connecting formal, informal and non-formal methods. As Katalin Szilágyi said, there is always a threat that after a short and intensive period the original objective of the programme will be forgotten. She hopes it will not happen in this case, because the European Year of Volunteering makes inroads into the activities of schools, which ensures that the practices will continue.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

A member of the audience pointed out that best practice, such as children's parliaments could later be used effectively by the European Commission, and highlighted the importance of information and communication technology in active citizenship education.

Another member of the audience argued for responsible planning for the future. As he said, the future will reflect the extent to which young people are involved in planning it. That is why it is necessary to establish citizens' councils and promote participatory decision-making.

Another comment emphasised the opinion expressed earlier, that lifelong learning is an important element of active citizenship. She believes it is a mistake to equate active citizenship with volunteer work. She recommends that when an organization applies for EU funding for a particular project or programme, the application form should have a question on how the given project contributes to active citizenship education.

Another member of the audience suggested that school heads should be given training because no initiative can start without their support and their participation is vital. It is not small reforms that are needed in schools, but a change in attitudes and a new mode of thinking.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

After questions and comments were raised by the audience, Zsuzsanna Szelényi summarised the most important arguments of the panel discussion.

★ Active citizenship includes several competencies, some of which overlap.

★ Not only schools, but also their environments, local communities, play an important role in education.

★ Active citizenship education is successful if the school and the entire community reflect democracy, the democratic model.

★ There is a great emphasis on the relationship between schools and local communities, schools should co-operate more closely with their environments, so that students can learn and also experience what they have learnt in real life.

★ It is not enough to concentrate only on schools, lifelong learning should be a priority, as we continue to learn all our lives.

★ Active citizenship education should start with teachers; they should be more open to this task.

★ There are several methods which make the learning process more interactive, more participatory, these should be disseminated, taught to teachers and used.

★ Formal and non-formal education are of equal importance.

★ It is not only young people who should be in focus but all age and target groups.

★ The role of parents and families is outstanding, as children learn a great deal at home.

CLOSING REMARKS

Zsuzsanna Szelényi, the chair of the board at the Active Citizenship Foundation

Zsuzsanna Szelényi thinks the conference was a success, as it has brought together the researchers, practitioners and decision-makers involved in the issue, thus creating a forum for discussion among different groups of experts, and providing an opportunity for the wider public to access the latest research results.

Another reason why the head of the Active Citizenship Foundation thinks the conference has been success is that it has contributed to the preparation for Hungary's EU Presidency, and the informal meeting of ministers for education due to take place in March 2011. In this respect it has been particularly important that the representatives of the Hungarian Government and the European Commission who are preparing and participating in that conference have met, found out more about one another's opinions and had informal discussions in the breaks.

As a third aspect, Zsuzsanna Szelényi highlighted the importance of the Central- and Eastern-European region appearing and participating in active citizenship education. As an outcome of their historical development and current situation these states face at least partly different problems and have different points of view to Western-European countries. The conference has provided an opportunity to present these special viewpoints more emphatically and include these themes in the discourse, as contributions from speakers from this region and the audience shed light on several specific aspects.

At the end of the conference Zsuzsanna Szelényi and Georg Pirker both thanked the speakers and the audience for their work and active participation, as well as to organizers for their hard work and contribution to the success of the conference.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTORS

Professor David Kerr

Professor David Kerr is a Principal Research Officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) in the United Kingdom and visiting Professor of Citizenship at the University of London. One of his main research interests is citizenship and human rights education policy and practice (at national, European and international levels). He is currently the Associate Research Director of International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), managed by International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) with responsibility for the study's European regional module, and Director of the nine-year Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (CELS) in England. He has extensive experience of working with European and international agencies, including Council of Europe, European Union, IEA and British Council. He has directed a number of international and European seminars and events, and has numerous publications in the area of citizenship and human rights education. He is the co-author of the Policy Tool for EDC/HRE just published by the Council of Europe.

Dr. Bryony Hoskins

Dr. Bryony Hoskins is currently leading an international research project on inequalities at the LLAKES Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economies and Societies. The project aims to identify the relationship between experiences of inequalities and behaviour, such as Active Citizenship, that affect socially cohesive societies. The project is collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data in four countries (France, Germany, England and Denmark) in different educational settings. Before arriving at the Institute of Education, Dr. Hoskins worked at the European Commission in the Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning (CRELL). Whilst there, she was responsible for leading the project on the development of indicators on Active Citizenship. Her work contributed to the monitoring of the then EU Lisbon Strategy on Education and Training in the field. In addition, she was part of the Project Advisory Committee of the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) 2009, and of the team of experts that created the Council of Europe indicators on Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC).

Yulia Pererva

Yulia Pererva worked in the Delegation of the European Commission in Moscow before she moved to Strasbourg in 1997 to work for the Council of Europe. Within the organisation, she contributed to a number of co-operation programmes in the field of human rights, youth and education. At present, she is part of the team working on the Council of Europe Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights 2010-2014. This Programme is a European contribution to the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education, and is implemented in close co-operation with other regional and international institutions and organisations.

Gina Ebner

Gina Ebner is Secretary General of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), and president of the European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS LLL). Before that, she worked as a language assistant in England, a trainer for German and English at different adult education institutes and as a pedagogical manager for a vocational training institute in Austria. After moving to Brussels, she was a project manager at EUROCADRES (Council for European professional and managerial staff) until joining EAEA.

Ana Serrador

Ana Serrador is a senior policy officer on active citizenship at the European Commission, DG

Education and Culture, at Unit A2 „Equal Opportunities and Equity". She graduated in Sociology at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and conducted post-graduate research at the Technical University of Berlin. Ana has ten years of experience in policy development at DG Education and Culture, while six years in the field of research, and ten years in national administration.

Georg Pirker
Georg Pirker is responsible for the department of European and international educational work at the Association of German Educational Organizations (AdB), an umbrella organization of civic educational NGOs. Since 2007 he has been co-ordinating all activities of the DARE network. He studied political sciences and recent history at the University of Tübingen, Germany, worked for the German Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (IFA) and for TANDEM, the Co-ordination centre for Czech-German youth exchange.

Dr. Katalin Szilágyi
Dr. Katalin Szilágyi has been the head of the Department of International Relations in Education at the State Secretariat for Education, Ministry of National Resources since 2010. She has an MA in English and French with a teaching degree, and a PhD from the same university. She is a tenured professor at the College of International Commerce, Budapest.

Judit Lannert
Judit Lannert is the CEO of the TÁRKI-TUDOK Knowledge Management and Educational Research Centre. She has been active in the field of educational research since 1990, and launched the series „Report on Hungarian public education" which has been published by the National Institute for Public Education. She chaired the roundtable „Education and Children's Opportunities" initiated by the Prime Minister of Hungary between 2007 and 2009. She is one of the authors of the "Green book for the renewal of Hungarian public education" which is one of the outcomes of the roundtable. As a researcher and expert, she participates in both national and international projects. Among others, she has lead the Pedagógus 2010 (Teacher 2010) online research in 2010.

Tamás Keller
Tamás Keller is a sociologist working as a researcher at TÁRKI Social Resarch Institute and is the doctoral candidate of the Sociology Doctoral School of Budapest Corvinus University. His research fields include social structures, attitudes and values.

Péter Krekó
Péter Krekó is the research director of the Political Capital Institute, an organisation specializing in political analysis and consulting and an assistant lecturer at the Department of Social and Educational Psychology at ELTE University, Budapest. At Political Capital, he works in the field of analysing current public affairs and political risks, and researching extremism, prejudices, attitudes. He is one of the authors of the Right-Wing Extremism Index, which makes it possible to measure and compare the receptiveness to extreme right-wing ideologies of the public in 32 countries, first published in 2009. In 2008-2009 he was a consultant to the Hungarian Anti-racist Foundation. He teaches social psychology and political psychology at ELTE University. His doctoral thesis is on the social psychology of conspiracy theories.

Dr. Tamás Szűcs

Dr. Tamás Szűcs has been the Head of the European Commission Representation in Hungary since January 2010. He joined the European Commission in 2004, and has been the Director for Strategy in DG Communication since 2006. He worked as a diplomat at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU in Brussels from 1995 until 2004 where his main responsibility was the coordination of the enlargement process and accession negotiations. He has been following the EU institutional reform negotiations since the very beginnings of the preparation of the Amsterdam Treaty. Dr. Tamás Szűcs earned his degrees at the Faculty of Legal and Political Sciences and at the Faculty of Arts at ELTE University, Budapest, and pursued postgraduate studies at the University of Oxford in the UK. He is the author and editor of several books and specialist publications on European Integration.

Zsuzsanna Szelényi

Zsuzsanna Szelényi has been the Chair of the Board of the Active Citizenship Foundation, Hungary since 2007. Ms Szelényi started her professional career as a member of the first freely elected Parliament in Hungary. Between 1996 and 2010 she worked at the Council of Europe as the Deputy Director of the European Youth Centre Budapest. Ms. Szelényi's professional experience encompasses the broadest range of political process, public policy, development policy, conflict management, and general management activities at an international level. She holds various decision-making functions in several non-governmental organizations. She holds an MA in Psychology from ELTE University, Budapest, an MA in International Relations from Corvinus University, Budapest and has recently completed the Global Masters of Arts Program (GMAP) within the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Boston (USA) in International Politics and Economics.

Zoltán Pokorni

Zoltán Pokorni is a Member of the Parliament and the chair of the Committee on Education, Science and Research of the Hungarian Parliament. He joined the political party Fidesz in 1993, and he is the head of the educational policy cabinet of the party. He has been the vice-chair of Fidesz since 1994. He also entered the Hungarian National Assembly as an MP in 1994. Between 1998 and 2001 he was Minister of Education in the government of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. Since May 2003 he has been vice-chair of Fidesz Hungarian Civic Union. He has been reelected as the mayor of the 12th district of Budapest in 2010 and currently holds this position as well.

[1] See http://www.iea.nl/icces.html#c911
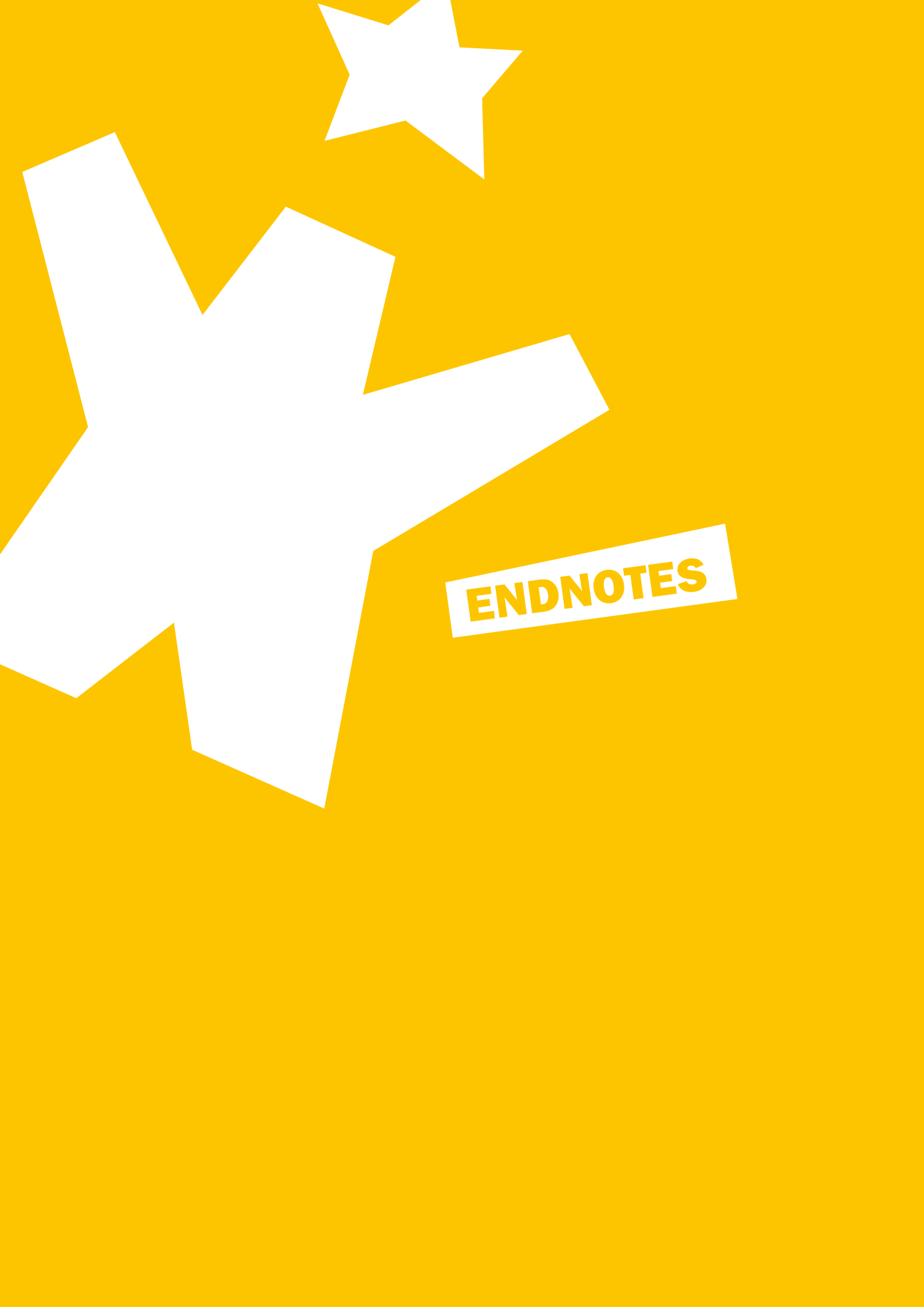
[2] Bryony Hoskins, Jochen Jesinghaus, Massimiliano Mascherini, Giuseppe Munda, Michela Nardo, Michaela Saisana, Daniel Van Nijlen, Daniele Vidoni, Ernesto Villalba: Measuring Active Citizenship in Europe. CRELL Research Paper No. 4. European Commission, Directorate-General Joint Research Centre, Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen, 2006. See at http://crell.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ActiveCitizenship/AC-Final Report-December 2006/measuring AC.pdf

[3] Tamás Keller: Hungary in the world value map. Tárki Social Research Institute, Budapest, 2009. See in Hungarian at http://www.tarki.hu/hu/research/gazdkult/gazdkult_wvs_keller.pdf

[4] Demand for Right-Wing Extremism (DEREX) Index.
See at http://www.riskandforecast.com/post/in-depth-analysis/back-by-popular-demand_411.html

[5] Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education – Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 11 May 2010 and explanatory memorandum. Council of Europe, 2010. See at
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Pdf/Downloads/6898-6-ID10009-Recommendation%20on%20Charter%20EDC-HRE%20-%20assembl%C3%A9.pdf

[6] Europe 2020 – A European Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. European Commission, 2010.
http://europa.eu/press_room/pdf/complet_en_barroso___007_-_europe_2020_-_en_version.pdf

[7] International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS). See at http://www.iea.nl/icces.html#c911. The presentation could cover only the initial findings, as the official launch date of the survey results was planned to take place after the conference, on November 22, 2010. For the publication on initial findings see: Wolfram Schulz, John Ainley, Julian Fraillon, David Kerr, Bruno Losito: Initial Findings from the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study. International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), 2010. The publication is avaliable at http://www.iea.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/ICCS/ICCS_2010_Initial_Findings.pdf

[8] David Kerr and Bruno Losito with Rosario Sanchez, Bryony Hoskins, William Smirnov and Janez Krek, Strategic support for decision makers – Policy tool for education for democratic citizenship and human rights, Drawing upon the experiences of the Council of Europe's EDC/HRE project. Council of Europe, September 2010.
See at http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Source/Pdf/Downloads/6896-2-ID9989-EDC-HRE%20Strategic%20Support%20for%20Decision%20Makers%2016x24%20assembl%C3%A9.pdf

[9] See Bryony Hoskins et al. Measuring Active Citizenship in Europe, ibid., footnote 2.

[10] Ibid, p. 10.

[11] Massimiliano Mascherini, Anna Rita Manca, Bryony Hoskins: The characterization of Active Citizenship in Europe. European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Institute for the Potection and Security of the Citizen, 2009. See at http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/.../reqno_jrc54065_the_characterization_of_ active_citizenship_in_europe%5B1%5D.pdf

[12] See Bryony Hoskins, Ernesto Villalba, Daniel Van Nijlen and Carolyn Barber: Measuring Civic Competence in Europe – A composite Indicator based on IEA Civic Education Study 1999 for 14 years old in School. European Commission, Joint Research Centre, Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen, Centre for Research on Lifelong Learning (CRELL), 2008. See at http://active-citizenship.jrc.it/Documents/active%20citizenship/BryonyCCI_JRC42904_final.pdf

[13] See Bryony Hoskins, Jan Germet Janmaat, Ernesto Villalba: Learning Citizenship through Social Practice Outside and Inside School.

[14] See Tamás Keller, ibid., footnote 3.

[15] See at http://www.riskandforecast.com/post/in-depth-analysis/back-by-popular-demand_411.html

[16] Patricia Brander, Ellie Keen, Marie-Laure Lemineur eds.: „COMPASS" – A manual on human rights education with young people. Council of Europe, May 2002. See at http://eycb.coe.int/compass/

NEMZETI CIVIL ALAPPROGRAM

Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

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Education in Adult Learning"
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