

SIESC - TODAY

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EDITORIAL

Educating in times of crisis

The raging crisis makes afraid of the future, and one can state hesitation among young adults to take responsibilities. It would be good to promote a closer collaboration between parents and school. An adult respects the child by demanding of him good will and the observation of rules and notices him/her as an individual personality whom he/she must allow to develop his/her proper talents.

Formation needs time, for finally it's only the pupil who can "form him/herself". Media education will enable the youth, whose experience of life is limited, but who has a close familiarity with the internet, to detect the message in its facts and interpretations. That critical position is what he/she will later on realize opposite possible falsifications of history or again in countries where because of hypocritical policies you don't find the truth anywhere.

The diversity of the world which he/she imagines by means of the internet is what he/she can also experience. "Comenius" offers to pupils who take advantage of it to abolish the frontiers for some time, to overcome prejudices and to develop the bonds of fraternity. At school itself the presence of children of migrants, even if it makes the tea-

chers' work more complex, can also help them to dispose the youngsters to discover the values of civilisation of other national communities and to orientate them towards forming an authentic spirit of peace.

When the times are hard, there is a temptation to economize in the finances of schools to the detriment of pupils with difficulties. Youths themselves feel that they are more concerned about their professional success than about their personal development. But education doesn't only concern qualities profitable for the economy. Forming the whole human being includes his/her religious dimension, which must no be banned from school, where you can express it in various ways, which, however, do not always result in unanimity.

Shouldn't we wish to search for establishing a new order of economy, where the persons and their happiness would be most important? Living in dignity should be possible for all, even the most helpless ones. Isn't that humanitarian claim at the centre of Jesus' message as well? "Holiness is the real force that can change the world", John Paul II. said. Living in modesty and poverty is one way of following the example of Jesus.

Agnès ROSE

SUMMARY

Editorial

Educating in times of crisisp. 1

International life

Pax Romanap. 2

Education in Europep. 3

The mediap. 3

International periodical : Europeinfos p. 4

News from member associations

Germany VkdLp. 5

Austria VCLp. 5

France CdEPp. 6

Italy UCIIMp. 6

Slovenia DKPSp. 7

Czech Republic UCP CRp. 7

News from partner associations

Poland KIKp. 8

News from guests

Spainp. 8

Swedenp. 9

Ukrainep. 9

Special pages of n° 50

A short historyp. 10

Twenty-three annual meetingsp. 11

International lifep. 12

The associationsp. 13

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Editeur : SIESC, association loi 1901, siège social : 20, rue Mégevand, F-25000 Besançon, représentant légal : Wolfgang RANK, parmi les principaux associés : Nicole BALU, Darja MAZI-LESKOVAR, Agnès ROSE.

Directeur de la publication : Wolfgang RANKo

Responsable de la rédaction : Agnès ROSE

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Bilden in Krisenzeiten

Die herrschende Krise macht ängstlich vor der Zukunft, und man kann ein Zögern der jungen Erwachsenen feststellen, Verantwortungen zu übernehmen. Es wäre gut, eine engere Zusammenarbeit zwischen Eltern und Schule zu fördern. Der Erwachsene achtet das Kind, indem er von ihm guten Willen und die Einhaltung von Regeln verlangt, und er nimmt es als eigenständige Persönlichkeit wahr, der man erlauben muss, ihre speziellen Begabungen zu entwickeln.

Bildung braucht Zeit, denn schlussendlich ist es nur der/die Schüler/in, der/die „sich selbst bilden“ kann. Medienerziehung wird dem/der Jugendlichen, dessen/deren Lebenserfahrung begrenzt ist, der/die aber eine enge Vertrautheit mit dem Internet hat, die Botschaft in seinen Tatsachen und Interpretationen herauszufiltern. Er/Sie wird diese kritische Stellungnahme später gegenüber eventuellen Verfälschungen der Geschichte anwenden oder wiederum in Ländern, wo man auf Grund politischer Heuchelei nirgends die Wahrheit findet.

Die Verschiedenheit der Welt, die er/sie mit Hilfe des Internets erahnt, kann er/sie auch erfahren. „Comenius“ bietet Schüler/innen, die daraus Nutzen ziehen, zeitweise die Grenzen abzuschaffen, Vorurteile zu beheben und Bande der Geschwisterlichkeit zu entwickeln. In der Schule selbst kann die Anwesenheit von Kindern mit Migrationshintergrund, auch wenn sie die Arbeit der Lehrpersonen komplexer macht, ihnen auch helfen, die Jugendlichen anzuleiten, die zivilisatorischen Werte anderer nationaler Gemeinschaften zu entdecken, und sie zur Bildung einer authentischen Friedensgesinnung hinlenken.

Wenn die Zeiten hart sind, ist man versucht, bei den Geldmitteln der Schulen zum Schaden für die Schüler/innen zu sparen, die Schwierigkeiten haben. Die Jugendlichen selbst spüren, dass sie sich mehr um ihren beruflichen Erfolg als um ihre persönliche Entfaltung kümmern. Aber Bildung betrifft nicht nur für die Wirtschaft vorteilhafte Qualitäten. Den ganzen Menschen zu mildern, schließt seine religiöse Dimension mit ein, die nicht aus der Schule verbannt werden darf, wo man sie mit Hilfe verschiedener Vorgangsweisen ausdrücken kann, die aber nicht immer zu Einmütigkeit führen.

Wäre es nicht wünschenswert, eine neue „wirtschaftliche Ordnung“ zu errichten zu versuchen, wo die Personen und ihr Glück das Wichtigste wären? Leben in Würde, das müssten alle, sogar die Hilflosesten, können. Ist diese humanitäre Forderung nicht auch im Zentrum der Botschaft Jesu? „Die Heiligkeit ist die wahre Macht, welche die Welt verändern kann“, sagte Johannes Paul II. Bescheiden und arm zu leben, ist eine Art und Weise, dem Beispiel Jesu zu folgen.

Agnès ROSE

Former en temps de crise

La crise qui sévit rend craintifs devant l'avenir, et l'on peut constater une réticence de jeunes adultes à prendre des responsabilités. Il serait bon de promouvoir une collaboration plus étroite des parents et de l'école. L'adulte respecte l'enfant en lui demandant de la bonne volonté et l'observation de règles et il le perçoit comme une personnalité individuelle à laquelle il doit permettre de développer ses talents propres.

La formation a besoin de temps car finalement c'est seulement l'élève qui peut «se former» lui-même. Une formation

médiatique permettra au jeune dont l'expérience de vie est limitée mais qui a une grande familiarité avec internet de déconstruire le message en ses faits et ses interprétations. Cette position critique, il la mettra plus tard en oeuvre devant d'éventuelles falsifications de l'histoire ou encore dans des pays où, en raison d'une politique hypocrite, on ne trouve nulle part la vérité.

La diversité du monde qu'il entrevoit par internet, il peut aussi en faire l'expérience. «Comenius» offre aux élèves qui en bénéficient d'abolir momentanément les frontières, de lever des préjugés et de développer des liens de fraternité. A l'école même, la présence d'enfants de migrants, si elle rend plus complexe le travail des enseignants, peut aussi les aider à disposer les jeunes à découvrir les valeurs de civilisation d'autres communautés nationales et les orienter vers la formation d'un esprit de paix authentique.

Quand les temps sont durs, la tentation est d'économiser l'argent des écoles au détriment des élèves qui ont des difficultés. Les jeunes, eux, se sentent plus concernés par leur réussite professionnelle que par leur épanouissement personnel. Mais l'éducation ne concerne pas seulement des qualités profitables à l'économie. Former l'homme entier inclut sa dimension religieuse qui ne doit pas être bannie de l'école où on peut l'exprimer selon des modalités différentes mais celles-ci ne font pas toujours l'unanimité.

Ne serait-il pas souhaitable de chercher à établir un nouvel «ordre économique» où les personnes et leur bonheur seraient le plus important? Vivre avec dignité, tous même les plus démunis devraient le pouvoir. Cette exigence humaniste n'est-elle pas aussi au centre du message de Jésus? «La sainteté est la vraie force qui peut changer le monde», disait Jean-Paul II. Vivre modestes et pauvres est une façon de suivre l'exemple de Jésus.

Agnès ROSE

INTERNATIONAL LIFE

Pax Romana

*(on the occasion of the 50th anniversary
of the Second Vatican Council)*

The 21st century Church and the heritage of the «Catacomb Pact of the Poor and Servant Church»

One of the most impressive documents of faith of the 2nd Vatican Council fathers was signed in the Catacombs of St. Domitilla on November 16th, 1965. They committed themselves to living a modest and poor life and to place the poor in the centre of their pastoral work.

By this act the fathers tried to respond to Pope John's XXXIII. desire for the Catholic church to be the church of all, especially the church of the poor. That doesn't only mean working among the poor and evangelization as one of the topics, but the main, central question – which means following Jesus Christ's example. It should have become the soul of the doctrinal and legislative work of this Council, and the most important contents of the work of the church at large.

In spite of certain official texts, admitting the importance of poverty and the poor for the church, and Cardinal Lercaro's

reminding of the relevance of these facts, there was only little resonance among the council fathers. So those who were sensitive to the problem, started to discuss it and pray together every two weeks in Belgium to bring it into the centre of general attention.

As a result, more than 500 bishops, many of them from so-called «Third World» countries, signed the «Catacomb Pact» after the end of the Council. The pact can also be seen as an anticipation of documents of the 2nd Assembly of the Latin American Bishops at Medellin in 1968.

Although the documents of Vatican II are hardly understood by the contemporary society 50 later, they still represent the challenge and great inspiration for the present and future life of the Catholic Church.

Dagmar PARHOVÁ

Challenges for formation and education in Europe

If you follow the discussions and the school reforms in European countries, it's first of all 3 challenges which Christian teachers must take up and which demand constant commitment.

– **Formation, not only training** : There will always be schools whose task is the special training or instruction for a trade or profession. In those schools, too, but especially in schools of general education formation must not be edged out by concentrating on practical skills and directly applicable knowledge. Human beings must also be able to lead a full life before, beside and after their working life, probably even more in future than up till now. Schools must also prepare for life in culture, in the community, for emotional life. That's why literature, music, philosophy, history and the like must not be reduced and edged out continually. Formation also needs time, for basically only the pupil can "form" him/herself.

– **Form the whole human being, not only the "homo oeconomicus"** : Many people nowadays tend to judge educational systems only by means of PISA results and similar rankings or adapt their own system to those demands in order to get better results. A lot of achievements of our schools are not reflected in those rankings, which are mostly demanded and promoted by economic organisations (e.g. the OECD). Arousing creativity, formation of the character, readiness to take social responsibilities, capability of experiencing and enjoying culture, physical training, all those (and more) are tasks and achievements of our schools, but cannot be grasped by multiple choice questions. Moreover we must not let the task of education be taken away from schools, and that does not only concern virtues profitable for economy.

– **Don't banish the religious dimension of human beings from schools** : One part of the formation of a complete human being is also the religious dimension. If it is not taken into account at school or banished from school with reference to neutrality and respect of religious freedom, the development of an important dimension of their lives is withheld from the pupils. At the same time religion is restrained to the private sphere intentionally and that is shown as correct to the pupils

for a lot of years. Later that is continued without interruption by the increasing efforts of society to banish religion from public life. It's therefore a matter of expressing the importance of religion for the life of the individual and of society at schools as well. Different forms of doing that have been developed in the European countries, from religious instruction through taking religions into account in ethics to appreciation of the performance of religions in many other subjects.

So there are enough challenges and tasks for Christian teachers and their associations in our schools and in the formation of societal structures !

Wolfgang RANK

The media: facts, interpretations and reliability

The relationship between facts and fiction, between the media representation of the world and our perception of reality has been one of the great challenges of the contemporary media-based society in which media literacy and the reliability of the information media sources have become a central issue also for teachers and educators.

Media products testify that media messages are seldom characterised by a clear distinction between facts and their interpretation, between truth and its individual representation. This intermingling of objectivity (in relative terms) and subjectivity is not a novelty since it constitutes the core of any inter-human communication and it is essential also for the communication in the media field. The book, as the most eminent traditional media, offers texts illustrating various types of intermingling of facts and interpretations. In case of literature the latter may be seen as a synonym for imagination. Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, a story of differences in the perception of the world, is a classical example of a literary text in which facts and imagination are married. Since it is told according to the conventions of its genre, it is reliable, similarly to other works of fiction which are not expected to convey factual truth about the world but to fulfil the tasks of literature.

The perception of the message is radically different with the information type of media. Their presentation of standpoints requires serious critical attention of the audience, to prevent that what is presented as 'reality' becomes a mere disguise of interpretations. These appear most cunningly in the mass and electronic media which can produce fiction-like reality that seems to function as surrogate life experience. Such media production revolutionized the audience's perception of truth and facts long before *Second life* and experts have been exploring to what an extent media consumers are interested in the uncovering of the distinction between reality and interpretation. Despite Paul Ricoeur's claim that narrating a story is already reflecting upon the event narrated (Time and Narrative) (1), confirming that the intermingling of facts and their interpretation is unavoidable, the educated audience is aware that the risk of misrepresentation of reality has become increasingly lurking. Hence media education seems to be vital for any appreciation of reliability of media messages.

Media literate audiences can deconstruct media messages into facts and interpretation and is capable of critical stance. Youngsters with a limited real life experience and a considerable exposure to the Internet, the media source with most blurred borders between factual and fictitious, are particularly in need of media education that would enable them to critically appraise media offers. To encourage their growth into responsible users of the Internet, teachers could discuss media issues, e.g. the importance of uncovering facts and interpretations in order to refer only to reliable media sources. They could also help them find instructions how to make the Internet a reliable tool. The golden rules, to be selective and to consult only information identifiable through attributions, authors and their affiliation (needed for further checking) are precious not only for young people but also for the rest of Internet fans and in general for any media user.

(1) Paul Ricoeur : Time and narrative (Eng. Translation), Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1983-1985.

Darja MAZI-LESKOVAR

International periodical : Europeinfos

At the beginning of 2011 the monthly periodical *Europeinfos* entered a new stage of its history.

The first number of Europe Infos in January 1999 took over from *Objectif Europe* (cf. *SIESC-Today* nr. 18 and nr. 22), a publication of OCIPE (Office Catholique d'Information et d'Initiative pour l'Europe), an organisation founded due to an initiative by lay people and promoted by the Jesuit Order. At the beginning published in five languages, nowadays in three languages (English, French, German), it is the fruit of a cooperation of COMECE (Commission des Episcopats de la Communauté Européenne) and OCIPE.

Since 2011 *Europeinfos* is presented as a "monthly of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the EU and the Jesuit European Office", the reference to OCIPE still present in 2010 has disappeared.

That is not the main innovation of 2011: *Europeinfos*, having been published simultaneously in printed form (subscription paid for) and in electronic form (gratis subscription), is now in general only accessible on the internet; exceptional solutions are considered for those who don't have the advantage of an internet connection.

The gratis electronic spreading has doubtlessly increased the number of its readers. Not all of the older ones, however, are used to reading on the screen and therefore their reading of the monthly depends on the use they make of their printer. Their reading has become more fragmentary, sometimes limited to the summary, when the presentation of one of the articles doesn't seem to motivate a complete attentive reading.

The articles of each number, generally 9, occasionally 7, are always varied. Let's take the number 149 of May, 2012 as an example, which only counts 7 articles.

The editorial, entitled "An Ecumenical Ethical Charter" shows that "one of the important problems the ecumenical dialogue is confronted with is the fact that today the controversies between the Churches essentially belong to the ethical domain." In fact, if the Churches find one another in their general view of the human being, they don't understand it in the same way, so that they don't agree on the ethical consequences. It would be necessary to elaborate an ecumenical charter of ethics.

In a second article concerning "Social Affairs", "Are quotas the way to achieve Equal Opportunities?", it is mentioned that "still today the percentage of women occupying responsible positions is low, especially in big enterprises," Under the category "Climate Change" the question is about "Rio + 20 and the European Union". Then follows an exposition on the domain "Bioethics": "The new EU Strategy for the Protection of Animals". Next come a study of "Development Policy": "Congo: legislative initiatives in the mining sector" followed by an analysis concerning "Fundamental rights" dedicated to "the protection of human rights in the face of terrorism". The number concludes with a "Viewpoint on Morocco", in the category of "Foreign Policy".

You do not only notice a variety of categories, but also a variety of topics dealt with in each of the categories, of which some are presented more frequently, that's especially the case of "Research and bioethics", "Foreign Policy", "Migration and Asylum", "Economy and Finances" and first of all "Social Affairs", missing rarely.

Under that general term you can also read a text dealing with "a strategy for adequate, secure, and viable retirement" as well as a presentation of "Hildegard Burjan – a female European politician" or again an analysis of the "social responsibility of enterprises and the tradition of the Church's social doctrine", but also an exposition showing that "the Commission relies on social entrepreneurship" or similarly an article dedicated to "the perspectives of employing youngsters", if you don't reflect together with Father Madelin: "Economic crisis: reinvent work". Those are only some examples which give testimony of the diversity of topics dealt with under that general title "Social Affairs", a diversity which you find in each of the various categories.

Thus the information is not limited to only some topics and it gives room to deep-reaching analyses. The articles are not too long, they can be easily read by persons whom their commitments leave little time, but who are concerned with clearing them up by means of objective information and serious reflection.

*For any information address yourself to: Europeinfos
19 square de Meeûs, B-1050 Bruxelles
e-mail : europeinfos@comece.eu*

Agnès ROSE

NEWS FROM MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Germany VkdL

Two articles

In the magazine "Katholische Bildung" of December 2011 we have read a very interesting article on the establishment of the Johannisschule at Osnabrück, which was organized to take in and form pupils of various religions and cultures, Christians, Jews, Muslims. Their identities are taken into account there by means of special courses of religion. School community is realized by common inter-religious days, by teaching across the subjects either concerning the topics or involving different age groups, and by "morning circles" every Monday under the responsibility of the headmaster in order to solve problems of school life. A good form of receiving the other one!

In the number of May 2012, an article by a child psychiatrist, "Children should stay children", is interested in the right relation between children and adults. Parents should not infantilise themselves by their way of putting themselves on the level of their children and should not want to make precocious adults out of them, either, by involving them into grave decisions of the family too early. Teaching should not be too much personalized so that it can be the place of a confrontation with the others. Children should not be able to spend hours in front of their electronic screens to the detriment to direct relations to other children and to adults. It's necessary to reinvent the right relation.

Those magazines can be ordered from "VkdL - Hedwig-Dransfeld Platz 4 - D. 45143 Essen" or VkdL-Essen@t-online.de.

The editors

Austria VCL

Starting from a study saying that in Austria about 9% of youngsters had only finished the lower forms of secondary schools and were unemployed at the moment (in contrast it is about 14 % in the Europe of 27), the president of the VCL muses in an article of VCL-NEWS :

How to ban the danger of a lost generation?

In future school and parents must work together even more closely and the state must improve the general set-up continuously.

Both teachers and parents need more appreciation and professional support. Just as schools need support by school psychologists and social workers (which by the way is a longstanding demand by teachers' organisations), those parents who don't seem able to cope with education and interested in their children's formation need more intensive help and assistance. ...

It's often difficult to get professional help. It's even more difficult if the parents are not ready to cooperate at all. Why shouldn't the state have the right to call those parents to do their duty who refuse offers of help, neglect their duties grossly and pass them on to the school, which cannot but be unable to cope with that? But instead of taking up that problem by initiatives of the state, the topic is more or less played down or hushed up.

A lot of renowned brain researchers, educationalists and experts with practice at schools continuously emphasize the importance of early stimulation and support. In spite of that teachers are still expected to compensate for deficits in education and, at the same time, to prepare the children in the best way possible for internal and external examinations of their performance and first of all for life. A Herculean task, by which more and more pedagogues are in danger of being broken! ...

What we need, are firm parents and stable personalities as teachers to whom the children mean a lot!

And of course we need more appreciation of teachers by politicians and society.

It should be a main concern of politics to get the right ones enthusiastic about the teaching profession. That's only possible if you open up for them perspectives worth striving for. Making the teachers feel unsure about themselves by means of new ideas of reforms every day certainly contributes as little to that aim as bad preparation and overhasty introduction of reforms.

I would be helpful if the role of the teachers was strengthened and their work found more appreciation in public. Children need rituals, straight procedures and professional assistance by teachers qualified in the best way as experts and human beings. Those show their appreciation of the pupils also by demanding achievement, concentration, quiet as well as keeping to rules in the classroom. Similarly children need parents who respect and encourage them in the best way possible, who support the work of the pedagogues at home, in fact by interest and affection, and not by providing private coaches. Parents who notice their children as individual personalities with individual talents and who by counselling them in their right choice of school and job take care that their children's talents can unfold ideally.

Isabella ZINS

In Latvia with «Comenius»

October 2011: With an English teacher of my secondary school I am "hired" to supervise the stay in Latvia intended for pupils participating in a Comenius project on the environmental theme « Our Planet in Our Hands ». This operation, spurred by my French colleague, concerns pupils who are pre-teenagers and teenagers from five nations: Latvia, Poland, Romania, Turkey and France. We thus land at Riga airport for a wonderful week.

We are welcomed in the Sermuksi school, nestled in the middle of a forest. It is an idyllic setting, on the margin of a lake, with only a few houses all around, whose majority provide a home for people of the school staff. This school consists of nine classes gathering together children from the 1st form to the 9th form.

Throughout our stay varied activities are suggested to us, all of them being equally interesting. Two days are dedicated to the discovery of the school and the educational system – more particularly to English or maths classes or a visit to the computer science room, which is an opportunity to realise how heavily these last two subjects depend on a universal language. Other times are taken up by sports or such a handicraft as the making of trees with varied materials: a healthy spirit of competition prevails in the room among the pupils from the different countries. Lots of visits enable us to travel across the region highly marked by its medieval history. Outings to the regional park and the towns of Cesis and Riga fortunately complete our programme.

After the beginning of timid dialogues among the different young people, sports, art, songs, games and dancing will group together these young people until the last evening in a festive atmosphere and laughs shared during the whole stay. The national groups gradually crack and are replaced by cheerful inter-community parties, in which the common language, English, prevails over any other one.

What is to be learned from this week ?

Enthusiasms: In my opinion, Comenius offers the pupils a wonderful experience which enables them to abolish borders momentarily, end prejudices – our pupil of Congolese origin caused our Latvian hosts a sensation and aroused a lot of curiosity – and develop bonds of fraternity. We can hope this trip leaves indelible marks. As far as I am concerned, though I am not an English specialist, this stay, marked by an unflinching understanding with my lovable colleague, has both a flavour of SIESC, of course with much younger participants, and a slight foretaste of paradise; it has also imparted me a strong desire to set to study Shakespeare's language.

A few drawbacks: In view of a free stay advocated and the cost of the flights, Comenius concerns only a small number of pupils at each stay. Moreover, my colleague who organized everything, came up against the weight of the files to fill in, the administrative steps and even the problems of transfer of funds, such things being able to exhaust the best will of anyone.

Christine ANTOINE

The teacher as mediator of intercultural coexistence

The issues of the last SIESC meetings, focusing on the culture of coexistence, have given rise - within our association - to a SIESC-UCIIM research team on the topic «A School for everyone: from acceptance to mutual recognition».

The research started from the data processed by the Ministry of Education and the EU Commission. They show that in European countries at least 10% of the school population consists of children of immigrants; a percentage that emphasizes and marks an inevitable turning point even in the Italian school, which requires renewal.

The daily work of teachers takes place in an increasingly complex challenging environment of cultural diversity and heterogeneity of classes, a phenomenon which is also an opportunity for enrichment and deepening of pedagogical experience.

School has in recent years learned by doing, strengthening its role in education and as a training agency in that domain, and continues to work to consolidate and enhance the work done so far.

The research team has conducted a small survey in some institutions in the provinces of Catania, Rome and Vicenza, and this has confirmed what the above mentioned documents had pointed out about the difficulties of integration and learning of immigrant pupils, of the school's problems and the tools used to solve them, quite often without any help by the institutions.

In order to guide this effort in an UCIIM perspective, we have gone right back to the thought of our founder Gesualdo Nosengo. We have rediscovered its richness and timelessness: *"One of the duties of a new school is to open up to the surrounding society and to its problems. The school must teach young people how to understand the values of civilizations possessed by other national communities and initiate them to the formation of a true spirit of peace. Teachers must feel that school, in front of young people and of society, has altered a lot of its tasks and functions. They must, therefore, agree to change their own functions by accepting all the new tasks and by acquiring the new skills required."*

The challenges are of two types: those concerning teaching and socio-cultural ones.

The problems of teaching require specific didactic attention including the use of simple and understandable textbooks and the commitment of every teacher in becoming a «facilitator» of learning.

Regarding the socio-cultural problems, it is necessary to operate on two levels: the cognitive one (knowledge, information) and the affective one (relations, experiences). The intercultural projects must propose on the one hand occasions of getting to know "others" by enriching the contents of the subject by means of knowing others, on the other hand they must pay attention to the relational atmosphere, the daily interactions, stereotypes and prejudices.

Support to such projects can come from the experiences of professional and cultural associations, NGOs etc. The SIESC-UCIIM Research Team has already begun to establish such contacts.

Maria Vittoria CAVALLARI

Slovenia DKPS

Holiness will save the world

In a time of big changes in economy, politics and society, we believe that Christians have the vocation to pray for a Europe of peace and holiness. Following the thoughts of Father Šinkovec, the spiritual assistant of DKPS, and Dr Rojnik, who received the Slomšek award in 2011, we would like to share our and the world's hope with colleagues of Europe.

At the occasion of Slomšek Day, Father Šinkovec wrote: "In a world that is not friendly to its inhabitants, where people are not nice to the land, in a time when the future is uncertain and slips out of the hands of engineers of politics and economy, in a world where beauty is not beautiful, but we talk about the aesthetics of ugliness, in a time when values of honesty and equity are not appreciated, when truthfulness is a forgotten word, in a time when prayer dies and almost no one believes in the power of blessing, in a time when we proclaim self-realization as a heyday of life, in such a time we need a special sign. This sign is holiness."

We could survive in today's circumstances if we take constant care of physical, mental and spiritual fitness. Furthermore, after 38 years of priestly service, Dr Rojnik is deeply convinced that we will not survive without spiritual life.

The greatest environmental cleaning "Let's Clean Slovenia" in April 2010 attracted thousands of people. Unique incentive and an enviable success! On the other hand the call to holiness invites us, like we take care of clean environment, to take care of a healthy mental state by thinking positively and by purification in the moral domain; we take care of spiritual ecology.

We often quote John Paul II.: "Holiness is the true force that can change the world." But how to take holiness as a personal vocation and mission? We can follow the way of Christ, which is reflected in the Good Samaritan, the Sermon on the Mountain, the parable of the good father who embraces his son, the widow's offering etc..

External splendour or bizarre behaviour is not required for holiness. All we need is a feeling heart and heart culture. Even if one is not religious, it is enough to fulfil a golden rule: "And as you want men to do to you, do you to them." (Luke 6, 31). Today the first task of evangelization and catechesis is in the field of guiding to holiness.

Dr Rojnik usually ended lectures of educating catechists by a quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church no. 25, which summarizes the idea of the Roman catechism: "The overall purpose of teaching and educating should be guiding to love that never subsides. Maybe it is good to explain what is to be believed, or hoped for, but mostly it is necessary to clearly show the love of our Lord, so that everyone can understand that the fullness of a virtuous Christian action has no other source but love."

Magdalena JARC

Czech Republic UCP CR

St. Agnes of Prague and her heritage

The UCP CR organized a spring seminar on the topic of St. Agnes' life and legacy. Many teachers from Bohemia and Moravia took part in the seminar. The participants could also visit the exhibition "St. Agnes of Prague" installed in the St. Agnes' monastery in Prague, an interesting excursion into her lifetime as well as the social and political context of the times.

Prof. Petr Piřha, a former head of the Ministry of Education, gave the main lecture of the seminar. He focused on the ontogenesis of this extraordinary person and pointed out factual moments of her life that give examples to be used in our time as topical ways of behaviour.

As the seminar was held in the Franciscan pastoral centre of their monastery, the superior of the Franciscan order Brother Regalat presented a historical lecture about the course and the circumstances of a historic incident of 1611, when 14 Franciscan monks were murdered during riots in Prague. The presentation was accompanied by a video and a guided visit to the monastery, especially the places where the tragedy happened.

A new head of the school department of the Czech Bishops' Conference also joined the Union members. The participants highly appreciated his outright approach to contemporary problems of our society and his attitudes to them, as well as his offer to co-operate more effectively.

The qualities of the seminar and the exhibition were positively appraised by all the participants. We all look forward to meeting again at the summer seminar in Olomouc (Moravia) in August 2012, which is being prepared by the executive committee of the UCP at the moment. The seminar will try to find answers to problems of teaching the school subject History, which is under dispute because of certain misinterpretations of some historical events.

Dagmar PARHOVÁ

NEWS FROM PARTNER ASSOCIATIONS

Poland KIK

23 years after the collapse of Communism Poland faces problems with education, family life and the old age.

The last school reform, introducing obligatory attendance up to 16 and replacing the old educational system by a 6-year primary school (instead of 8 years before) and a 3-year junior secondary school, was not successful. Unfortunately it ruined vocational education. Simultaneously the reduced 3-year upper secondary school was unable to prepare pupils well for learning at colleges.

In the new schools you come across more rivalry than comradeship, you meet youngsters more concentrated on their future professional success than on seeking answers to important questions and acquiring new skills. Because of the economic crisis young people are more afraid of the future and less ready to take responsibility for their lives and for their families.

Plumbers, mechanics, construction workers and electricians left Poland seeking a better life in the West. Their successors cannot attend proper vocational schools, which were attached to big national enterprises formerly. At the moment a large number of well-trained young people work outside the Polish boundaries, they have settled down there, sometimes founded a family. They are not planning to come back to Poland.

The children born under Martial Law are 25 – 35 years old today. However, no population growth is expected. (...) Poland

must prepare itself for a sharp decline of the birthrate. (...) Bringing up children, education and health care are costly.

(...) It seems that soon the ratio of working people to pensioners can reach 1:3. To solve this problem 6-year-olds are sent to school, so that they could start working a year earlier. Moreover, the working life is being prolonged. Both women and men will retire at the age of 67 (now they can retire at 60 and 65 respectively). Parents keep protesting. They think the schools are not adapted for the youngest learners. (...) The parents' protests made the government postpone the educational reform by 2 years. Therefore parents have a choice now. Some of them decide to send their children to school at the age of 6 because of financial reasons – you don't pay for the school in Poland.

The numbers given as an estimate of years which an average Pole will live as a pensioner are also contradicted by many people. Life expectancy is rising, but compared to the rest of Europe, we are far behind. The health care system is inefficient. It is hard to get an appointment with a specialist. Civilization brought new diseases concerning blood circulation, oncology and allergies. We are incapable of dealing with them.

It took 200 years to build capitalism in the west. Poland started the transformation to market economy 23 years ago. However, we've been a Catholic country for 1050 years. I strongly believe that God has been watching over us ever since. He guided us through the Red Sea of Communism. He will help us to get over materialism, globalization, relativism etc.

Roza SOBANSKA-WOCIAL

NEWS FROM GUESTS

Spain

The crisis that devours us

All industrialized countries have entered into an economic crisis with negative repercussions in the socio-political domain, and that crisis manifests itself in a very negative form and influences the lives of ordinary people and first of all the poorest ones in an awful way.

Here in Spain the crisis provokes great suffering in millions of families, and we begin to take into account where it comes from and what can be done to live in dignity. The origin of the crisis is located in the speculative financial economy typical of liberal capitalism. The manipulators are several people owning a large fortune, whose aim is to satisfy their desires for riches by making them grow without limits. They have the principal media in their hands and they are not concerned about the common welfare. To top the misfortune, the politicians are in their hands as well. The banks also assist that financial policy of unlimited gains.

Fortunately, one is about to open oneself in gigantic steps for a new way, that of the "common welfare economy"*. One wishes to establish a new "economic order" where the persons and their happiness would be most important. One of its promoters, its principal pioneer, is Christian Felber. He knows Spanish very well and he is about to promote that new economic order in Spain, supported by entrepreneurs and scientists who had already advanced in this direction. His theory has a lot of points in common with the fundamental values of the Gospels: the human being and his/her dignity are at the centre of Jesus' message, above any institution of whatever holiness. Certain members of the high Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy follow those projects from far away. They seem to be uneasy with losing their traditional privileges. At this moment it is necessary to signalize that the Spanish Church is willing to make great efforts to help the most disadvantaged ones.

Carlos ESCUDERO and Antonia QUEVEDO

*A note from the editor : in french «économie citoyenne», in german «Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie».

Sweden

«A New Education Act and New Courses of Studies in the Swedish School System»

On 1 August 2010 the Swedish parliament passed a new law called "The New Education Act - for Knowledge, Freedom of Choice and Confidence".

An important issue has been if confessional elements can be accepted in education at Swedish schools. Before the act was passed our organization, Riksförbundet Kristen Fostran, that is "The Swedish Association for Christian Upbringing", the RKF, has delivered our opinion. Our remarks have not been taken into consideration, we are sad to say. The Swedish Education Act does no longer admit any form of religious elements. Only if the aim is to study a phenomenon it is accepted. The result of that is that for instance the breaking up of school at the end of each term cannot easily be celebrated in a church, which has been the tradition for a long time. (...) Now such an event must be free of choice for the students. Another example when the church has played an important role is when crises occur. (...) The prohibition of confessional elements causes big problems in those situations. It is also more difficult for Christian schools to carry on with their work now.

In the new course of studies, which began coming into use during the school year 2011-2012, religious education has to be all-round from the first years at school (for children 7-9 years of age) and comprise all religions. Our association, the RKF, think that 7-9 year old children are too young for being taught about religions in Asia for instance. A child has the right to know the history and the traditions of his or her own country in the first place. After that the child can more easily learn about other religions. We have read in the newspapers that our Minister of Education has paid some attention to our opinion and the opinions of other Swedish Christians. (...)

Our organization has also taken part in a petition, a list of signatures, to cause the Swedish Education Act to be tried at the European Court of Human Rights. (...) No confessional elements are admitted at Swedish schools now. Only in free Christian schools they are allowed, but there they must be voluntary.

In the new Education Act the goals of knowledge for all school subjects have been raised substantially. The fact that the demands are higher is good, but there is a risk that children with difficulties, who cannot keep up with the rest of the pupils, won't reach the goals of knowledge. This is the case especially in hard times when schools have to save money. Then the classes will be bigger and there will be no money for group lessons. When the remedial teachers get fewer it is generally bad for the weaker pupils. (...)

The formation of teachers has also been altered and has got new aims and a new direction. Earlier the students concentrated on how to get knowledge and now you really learn facts in order to become well informed. We have also gone back to teaching the pupils in age-groups of year 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9. This is good, since the teacher will be an expert on his/her age group.

Ulla Carin DAHL-ROLFO

Ukraine

Dear friends,

In the early history of Ukraine you find two colours, blue and yellow, blue symbolizing liberty and yellow the wheat fields, Ukraine's riches. The blue and yellow flag was the national Ukrainian flag during the independent Republic of Ukraine from 1918 to 1920. During the Soviet period of Ukraine the yellow colour was substituted by red. Those who venerated the blue and yellow were persecuted by the Bolshevik regime.

In spite of that very short prehistory, which happened a century ago, and considering yourself free after August 24th, 1991, you have the impression of still being persecuted till today by that regime.

Under the Polish regime the Ukrainians, especially those who wanted to get education or have some well-paid work had to turn "Polish". Under the Soviet regime the Ukrainian people suffered most, morally and physically. The Soviet power suppressed the Ukrainians, inventing all sorts of imaginary causes in order to arrest, imprison, deport or even eliminate them. The Soviet policy was marked by hypocrisy, by injustice. It was a policy of two faces.

After the referendum of December 1st, 1991, Ukraine was proclaimed an independent state in sovereignty separated from the Soviet Union. One reintroduced our national symbols, our traditions, our Church, forbidden under the Soviet regime and functioning clandestinely, but that liberty appears ephemeral nowadays.

Possessing a symbolic renown, that of being the wheat granary of Europe, and having in food industry one of the principal economic branches thanks to the fertile black earth, one will nevertheless find the food products in the warehouses very expensive.

Religion underlies a strong influence by the Russian Orthodox Church; education and instruction are also orientated towards the Russian educational system.

In spite of democracy and freedom of speech you will nowhere find truth.

In all domains Ukraine possesses the favourable preconditions for a long-term and innovatory economic development. But as long as the whole economy is concentrated in the hands of certain persons who enrich themselves the country continues to suffer.

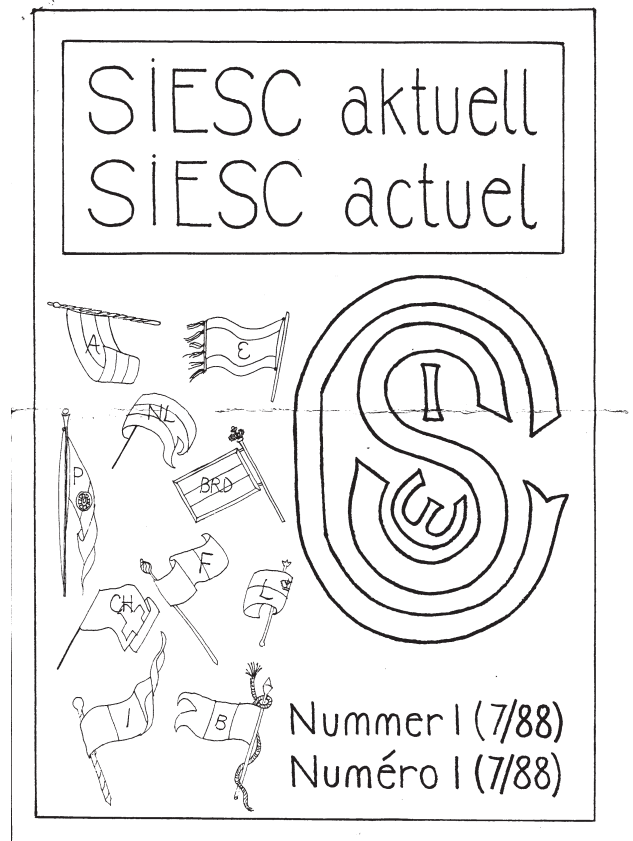
We are very happy to be Ukrainians and to have the possibility of speaking our mother tongue, of bringing up our children in the popular customs and traditions, but we suffer hard because of that hypocritical policy of the present government.

Natalya BILYAKOVSKA

Special pages of no. 50

«(...) *SIESC-actuel* is to be a mutual connective link between the Executive Board and the member associations in the time between study meetings. For this first number the members of the Executive Board have written contributions relying on their fields of subject matters or interest. In the long run *SIESC-actuel* can, however, only be successful, if all associations are willing to send in reports on the work of their associations and other contributions that might interest teachers and educators first of all. (...) Thanks a lot for your efforts.»

Extract from the preface to no. 1
by Gabriele PEUS, president of SIESC (1984-1997)



A short history

Modest beginnings

It was at Santiago de Compostela in July 1988 that the first number was sold under the title «*SIESC aktuell - SIESC actuel*», a bilingual number in German and French.

The publication of an information bulletin had been decided by the Council of SIESC. Its fabrication had been ascertained by our secretary general, Susanne ZEITZ, who became Susanne KAMMERER in 1994. Susanne had realized it totally alone: calling on contributors, members of the Council, translating one of the articles, but also typing and photocopying the articles and even pinning together the 5 sheets of format A4. 3 numbers a year were planned.

The charge for the bulletin was still completely taken over by Susanne for the 3 following numbers, for which she also had to manage the subscriptions and the distribution.

Distribution of responsibilities

The charge became too heavy and no. 5 of January 1990 marks the beginning of a distribution of responsibilities at the same time, when the half-yearly rhythm of appearance was adopted.

3 tasks were distinguished: the editorial secretariat, the fabrication and the management of the subscriptions and the distribution. The latter task was successively taken over by the secretary general, then the person responsible for the fabrication and finally by the editor. Starting with no. 7 of January 1991 the rule adopted then has been valid: "Each participant of an annual meeting receives one number of *SIESC-Today* during the meeting as well as the 3 following numbers."

As concerns the editorial secretariat including the organization of translations, that has been confided to Agnès ROSE

since January 1990.

The fabrication

During some years the fabrication implies typing the texts, as certain contributors send their texts as manuscripts and the publication demands a sort of harmonisation of the presentation. Even if technology advanced (diskettes, then e-mail) and was spread a little among the potential contributors, it was soon necessary to rely on printers.

In any case a person responsible for the fabrication is indispensable to check and give the release to printing. Yves CALAIS, having typed the texts during several years, relied successively to two printers at Besançon. In 2003 Marie-Louise FINQUENEISEL took over at Nancy. Since the end of 2008 the bulletin is produced at Troyes thanks to Christine ANTOINE.

The appearance

It was first of all altered by adopting the format A5 from no. 2 to no. 12. That format fitted perfectly to a bilingual edition. Since no. 8 of July 1991, however, the bulletin has become trilingual, as introducing English had been imposed by the growing presence of colleagues from the East at meetings. Each copy became voluminous and the postage rather expensive.

One returned to A4 with no. 13 in January 1994, when it was decided that each number should appear in 3 editions: *SIESC-ACTUEL*, *SIESC-AKTUELL* and *SIESC-TODAY*. A trilingual editorial in each edition, by presenting the tenor of the number, makes the international character of the bulletin visible.

All printers have added their special mark. Certain numbers are illustrated by one of two photos, whose quality has been improved in the course of the years and the progress of techniques. The use of colours, whose alternative use allows dis-

tinguishing the years, appeared in 2006, first only for the cover pages, then since January 2009 for the whole number.

The categories

In order to clarify the appearance, it became necessary to give a summary of contents, where the reader could find his/her way, as the articles multiplied.

Since the first number you could find diverse information on the life of SIESC: an announcement of the meetings and the word of the President Gabriele PEUS, and also a reference to international life as well as the word of several associations.

The important domains explored by the bulletin are there, but only from 1991 onwards they were distinguished explicitly: the life of SIESC, international life, the life and the publications of associations. Apart from those categories some numbers, especially at the beginning, give space to a meditation (no. 2, no. 11) or a prayer (no. 6, no. 7, no. 12); later on it will sometimes be possible to find some prayer in the synthesis of a meeting.

One special number, the no. 34 bis, published on the occasion of the 50th meeting in July 2004, is freed from those categories. After the word of the President Wolfgang RANK "50th Annual Meeting of SIESC" you can read there "Origin of SIESC" by Jan NUCHELMANS, one of the founding fathers of SIESC, an article already published in no. 3. That is followed

by Yves CALAIS, "Half a century of SIESC", then "Places and topics of the 50 international meetings", "The former presidents of SIESC", "Members of the Executive Board" and "Present member associations of SIESC".

The demands to editing

Some kind of harmonisation gradually emerged concerning the length of articles. That was first left to the initiative of the contributors; when their number increased, it became useful to establish rules in order to keep to a more or less constant number of pages and to best maintain equilibrium of the diverse contributions.

On the other hand, in order to make the half-yearly rhythm of publication possible, the contributors are invited to respect the deadlines for sending the articles and that especially, if an article cannot be sent in the 3 languages and must be translated by voluntary colleagues. Many thanks to the ones and the others!

Those regulations have become the more important as *SIESC-Today* in 2006 obtained for each of its editions an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number). That entails legally depositing a copy of each number at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. We have come far from our modest beginnings!

Agnès ROSE

Twenty-three annual meetings

A tour of Europe

Starting from no. 2 of *SIESC-Today* you will find an account of the annual meetings, successively Santiago de Compostela (E), Innsbruck (A), Luxemburg (L), Fulda (D), Urbino (I), Nantes (F), Aveiro (P), Usti nad Labem (CZ), Nocera Umbra (I), Dublin (IRL) Alsopahok (H), Krems (A), Ljubljana (SLO), Pau and Jaca (F and E), Frascati (I), Prague (CZ), Maribor (SLO), Salzburg (A), Modra (SK), Samobor-Zagreb (HR), Agrigento (I), Strasbourg (F), Warsaw (PL): 14 countries for 23 meetings.

There we welcomed colleagues from 24 countries, 10 countries must be added to those mentioned above (with their car registration signs), Albania, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Sweden and Ukraine. Since 1991 countries of the former Eastern Bloc have been represented regularly. There had been 33 annual meetings before since the first one in 1955 at Breda in the Netherlands, among them meetings in Belgium and Switzerland.

The topics

The topics of our meetings are always chosen by the national association which organizes the encounter; they reflect the concerns which they want to share with others at the time of the meeting.

– **In Italy** for 4 meetings, on European identity (1992), on the future of democracy and the new citizenship (1996), on the demands to the formation of teachers (2002), on education to inter-culture (2008).

– **In Austria** for 3 meetings, on education in a media society (1989), on the new view of the 20th century (1999), on the relations between state, churches and schools in our countries (2005).

– **In France** for 3 meetings, on hope in a secularized world (1993), on teachers in a multicultural world (2001), on education to citizenship in our different countries (2009).

– **In the Czech Republic** for 2 meetings, on hope in a post-communist society (1995), on Christian education for the 21st century (2003).

– **In Slovenia** for 2 meetings, on youth in new networks of relations (2000), on pupils outside norms (2004).

– **In Spain**, on education to the new technologies and the human rights (1988), continued by the topic of the meeting in Austria in the following year.

– **In Luxemburg**, on the national and regional identities in the European Community, their conservation and their integration (1990).

– **In Germany**, on the situation of churches and schools in the new democracies (1991), the first meeting with talks by colleagues from the East.

– **In Portugal**, on education to solidarity (1994).

– **In Ireland**, on Christian educators in a world dominated by science and technology (1997).

– **In Hungary**, on Jesus the pedagogue (1998).

– **In Croatia**, on spirituality and the mission of the Christian teacher in Europe (2006).

.../...

– In **Slovakia**, on education in a free and open society (2007).

– In **Poland**, on the conditions of living together with the spectres of the past (2011).

The encounter of the participants

Our annual meetings are no congresses of responsible persons of national associations who take a stand for an action in society, but direct, personal encounters of teachers at the same time ordinary and committed in multiple forms, Catholics with Protestant friends, happy to occasionally receive Jewish, Muslim, agnostic colleagues.

From the topics you can see how our meetings contribute to a reflection that nourishes the performance of our responsibilities as teachers and Christians in our countries, in our schools, whether they are public or Catholic private schools. The meetings allow us to reflect together with colleagues of other countries, to compare different practice, to give life to international information which reaches us by means of articles or broadcasts. Our exchanges make appear mentalities, similarities and variants which create a more lively consciousness of the European reality.

International life

Already in the first number an article on “SIESC within the international organisations” and “News from the European Parliament” and its programme of education of 1978 called “Arion”. Already organic links to Pax Romana and the ICO, and diverse information.

Pax Romana

Since its second year of existence SIESC had applied for its admission to PAX ROMANA, the International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICM.ICA), which had been created at the outcome of the war of 1914-18; SIESC is one of its specialized professional secretariats representing the teachers. Starting in no.5, we find in almost every number at least one more or less elaborated article on Pax Romana, giving account of its activities and its evolution, or summing up our participation and our statements. Responsible persons of SIESC participated in world congresses of Pax Romana when they took place in Europe. Today the contacts are more numerous with the European branch, Pax Romana-Europe. We are expected there and we regret having no colleagues that speak English and have enough time to follow the working meetings regularly.

The ICO for education

The other international institutions to which we are connected are the International Catholic Organisations for Teaching and Education, assembling several Catholic organisations of teachers, not only of Catholic schools and universities. During a number of years the representatives of SIESC, Jan Nuchelmans, Gabriele Peus, then Marie-Thérèse Drouillon, played an important role there. But

The times of conviviality, of which the accounts render too quick an echo, are of great importance, they open up to contacts of friendship outside the meetings. The visits and the touristic trips hardly mentioned in the pages of SIESC-Today are privileged moments of sharing while at the same time discovering the countries.

The prayers and the eucharistic services prepared by the local people also show characteristics of national sensibility and traditions; if it is possible, oecumenical prayers are organised together with Christians of different churches. So knowledge of persons is completed by knowledge of spiritual realities which are marked by the history of each of our countries and which make of our encounters a “Catholic”, i.e. universal, church, more capable of making us grow in faith.

The author of the accounts always indicates the thanksgiving addressed to the organizers, for the meetings are always a wonderful present they offer to all those who come there.

Yves CALAIS

because of lack of efforts by other members the ICOE ceased from their activities in 2006. In 1997 Jan Nuchelmans had published a history of the ICOE since their creation in 1963, see no. 24.

The Roman Congregation for Catholic Education called the responsible persons of Catholic teachers' associations together in Rome in 2007, SIESC was represented there by Wolfgang Rank. Since then nothing new!

Other international relations

- The congress of Catholic lay people, organized by the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome in 2000, see no. 28
- The Congregation for Catholic Education, see no. 40 and 42
- The internet network of the European Laity Forum, see no. 48

Information, some chosen titles:

– on ecumenical life

- European Ecumenical Meeting at Bâle, at Pentecost 1989, no. 2
- European Ecumenical Meeting at Graz, in June 1997, no. 18 and 21
- The Lutheran-Catholic agreement on justification, signed by the representatives of the Vatican and the Lutheran World Union, no. 25
- Ecumenism in Europe, no. 26
- The European Ecumenical Charter of 2004, signed by the responsible persons of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CEE) for the Catholics and of the Conference of European Churches (CEC/KEK) for

the Protestants, the Anglicans and the Orthodox Churches, no. 26 and 28

- Several ecumenical events in Europe, no. 45
- 100 years of ecumenism in Europe, no. 46

– on inter-religious life

- Religious Culture and catechesis, no. 17
- Inter-religious colloquium of youth in Brussels, no. 41 and 44
- Europe and the religions, no. 47
- Buddhism and Catholicism, no. 47
- 25th Anniversary of the Meeting at Assisi, no. 49

– on important orientations of the Church

- The relations to the integrists who have followed Msgr. Lefebvre, no. 44
- The announcement of the Synod for Evangelisation, no. 48

– on important discussions in the Church

- The Church and war, no. 32
- Cultures and religions for peace, with Sant' Egidio, no. 33
- The Church and Human Rights, no. 46

– on teaching and culture in Europe

- The European dimension of teaching, no. 3
- Teaching in Europe (3 articles), no. 10

- Education and apprenticeship in Europe, no. 12
- The spirit of community in Europe, no. 15
- What hopes for education in the 21st century?, no. 16
- Women and fundamentalism, no. 30
- Education goes on, no. 40
- Colloquia on cultural questions, on the youths, no. 41
- Women and men, gender and sex, no. 42
- The Bologna process, no. 46
- Culture and the book at UNESCO, no. 48

– on bilateral relations between our associations

- Italy - Albania, no. 18
- Numerous bilateral relations appear in articles by the associations.

International magazines

Every 2 years, i.e. in every 4th number since no. 18, SIESC-Today gives a concise account of some European publications, regularly on *Europeinfos*, which has followed to *Objectif Europe* as the printed organ of COMECE, the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the EU.

Yves CALAIS

The associations

Starting from the 1st number space was given for the expression of the associations. They have in more or less greater number contributed to our bulletin, but in each number you will discover the concerns and/or the projects of several of them.

Which associations?

The "former ones"

Reading the 50 numbers one realizes that associations present from one of the 3 starting numbers onwards still faithfully send an article. Those are the VCL of Austria, the UCIIM of Italy, the P.U./CdEP of France, the VkdL of Germany. That concerns founding associations of SIESC since its beginnings or the following year.

Among the other associations of which one can read a contribution in the first numbers and which are founding associations, apart from the 3rd one mentioned below, certain ones disappear. That can be because they have fallen asleep, e.g. the Conférence Saint Augustin (Luxemburg), or they have stopped the relations with SIESC, e.g. Sint Bonaventura (Netherlands) or the Katholische Pädagogearbeit (Germany), which, after having renewed its collaboration interrupted for 5 years, has ended it after no. 21. There are also some that have ceased from their activity, so the Agrupacion Catolica de Graduadas (Spain - Catalonia) some years ago, and now ACMEC, whose last contribution could be read in no. 49.

New associations from the "East"

The fall of Communism has allowed the creation of new associations or the reanimation of "sleeping" associations. And from no. 9 onwards DKPS in Slovenia and AGRU in Romania started writing regularly, followed by UKPCR in the Czech Republic since no. 13 and KIK in Poland starting from no. 15 onwards.

You will also read frequent contributions from Croatia, where HKDPD was constituted, from Ukraine, where a Catholic association of professors of Lviv was created and the life of a former association Obnova found followers. ZKPS in Slovakia provided texts during several years.

Appearances without a sequel

There are also associations which present themselves and almost immediately stop communication. That's the case of 2 associations in Great Britain (no. 9 and no. 13), the union of organisations of educators in Portugal (no. 15 and no. 16), of KEG in Germany (no. 19) or of one in Hungary (no. 21 and no. 26).

Personal statements

Where we don't have associations expressing themselves, we invite former participants of meetings of SIESC to communicate problems of their countries. That's why we could read several articles or messages from Albania, diverse regions of Spain or Luxemburg as well as Belgium and Serbia. No. 50 sees the appearance of a text from Sweden. Those who express themselves often belong to an association, but these do no more or not yet have direct links to SIESC.

Distinction between the associations

These possible links to SIESC are explicitly mentioned in our statutes. Starting with no. 17 in February 1995 SIESC-Today distinguishes three forms of links:

- 1) Member associations whose delegates are members having the right to vote of the Council of SIESC
- 2) Associated associations whose delegates are members of the Council of SIESC in an advisory capacity.
- 3) Invited persons, who can belong to associations or not be attached to any association.

The first two groups of associations are asked to express themselves in all numbers of our bulletin, the invited persons only in the summer numbers.

Reading the contents summaries allows you to see that several associations which were first simply invited have intensified their relations to SIESC and have become full members of associated members.

The contributions

Activities of the associations

Several associations dedicate most of their articles to the presentation of events which mark their lives, their reunions and meetings. All of them, to various degrees, wanted to make themselves known by means of their first contributions. They presented their activities and methods and elaborated their aims. So one can realize that several associations, e.g. VCL in Austria and UCIIM in Italy, are very much committed to the representation of professional life.

Professional problems

One will not be astonished when the articles of those associations are often concerned with the problems caused by school reforms and diverse problems of teaching. But none of the other associations is indifferent to pedagogical problems and each one provides a lot of time for that kind of questions. It is interesting to see that the same difficulties can be found in diverse countries and that the solutions, whose number is limited, even if they can differ, rarely seem satisfactory to those interested in them.

General problems

You find similarities in the statements and interrogations concerning the diverse domains which attract the attention of our correspondents. Several examples from among others:

• Problems of education,

no. 13, VCL "Where and how to meet the youth?", P.U. "Images of success with the youth"; no. 21, Agrupacion "Encounter with the youth";

no. 15, VkdL "The nature of authority", P.U. "For a true authority";

no. 33, VkdL "Priority of education in the family over education by the state"; no. 34, ZKPS "Cooperation between school and family";

no. 43, 44, 46, UKPCR "Value education"; no. 48, DKPS "Educating to ethical values".

• Passing on faith,

no. 14 and 18, the discussion on "teaching religion in Spain"; no. 24, UCIIM "Religious instruction at school"; no. 31, DKPS "Religious instruction at school and catechesis in the parish".

• Life in and of the Church,

no. 17, VCL and the "Petition to the Church in Austria"; no. 28, "The choice of the Greco-Catholic Church in the choice for Europe in Ukraine"; no. 31, AGRU "Lay people in the Rumanian Greek-Catholic Church"; no. 35, KIK "The Polish Church and politics"; no. 44, CdEP "Unrest in the Church in France";

no. 23, VCL "The Church is a community"; no. 31, P.U. "Questions on the future of Christianity"; no. 38, UCIIM "Laicity and ecclesiasticism", P.U. "Vatican II, fetish or irruption of the Spirit?".

• Christian life in society,

no. 11, P.U. "Christians in public schools", no. 21, Katholische Pädagogenarbeit "Christians in a pluralist world"; no. 35, ZKPS "Living faith and responsibility".

• Problems of society,

no. 8, P.U. "Education, love and society in the times of AIDS", UCIIM "Fight against drugs"; no. 27, Spain "The youth and alcohol";

no. 25, ACMEC "Exclusion, marginalisation, integration"; no. 41, VkdL "The children must not become playthings of society".

Problems of the countries

There is another type of concerns: the problems of the country at a difficult or decisive moment of its history. So Croatia gave a testimony in March 1992 (no. 9) on "War and school". In Germany VkdL asked themselves in July 1992 (no. 10) about "the situation of children and youngsters in the new Länder", and in January 1993 (no. 11) they were "searching for a new national identity". In July 2010 (no. 46) KIK presented "Katyn - 1940-2010".

The diversity of situations is in any case quite obviously an interrogation on national identity, which can be put to everybody reading those articles. United in diversity, isn't that what we are under at least three headings, as Europeans, teachers and Christians?

Agnès ROSE

SIESC-TO DAY

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english edition

SIESC-AKTUEL

Januar 1994 n° 13

Deutsche Auflage

Eine neue Präsentation von
SIESC-AKTUEL - Warum ? - Wie ?

Une nouvelle présentation de
SIESC-Actuel
Pourquoi ? Comment ?

INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

SIESC-ACTUEL

janvier 1994 n° 13

édition française

Une nouvelle présentation de
SIESC-Actuel
Pourquoi ? Comment ?

Voilà 5 ans et demi que SIESC-ACTUEL existe, depuis le numéro 2 il a adopté le format que vous connaissiez. Avec le numéro 13 nous passons à un autre format pour en assurer une meilleure diffusion.

Les tarifs postaux ayant beaucoup augmenté, pour équilibrer le budget il fallait réduire le poids de la revue afin de bénéficier d'un tarif acceptable. Nous aurions pu garder la formule antérieure mais il aurait fallu alors limiter le nombre et la longueur des articles.

anderen Format über, um eine bessere
Verbreitung zu gewährleisten.

Da die Postgebühren erheblich
zugenommen haben, mussten wir das
Gewicht der Zeitschrift verringern, um eine
annehmbare Gebühr zu erhalten. Wir
hätten das alte Modell beibehalten können,
aber dann hätten wir die Anzahl und die
Länge der Artikel beschränken müssen,
und das wollten wir nicht. Wir haben also
beschlossen drei einsprachige Ausgaben
herauszugeben (deutsch - englisch -
französisch), jedoch den internationalen
Charakter unserer Zeitschrift
beizubehalten, indem wir die Artikel der

SOMMAIRE

Nouvelle présentation	p 1
LA VIE DU SIESC	
39° Rencontre Internationale de Nantes-Rezé 1993	
document de synthèse	p 2
écho des Slovaques	p 3
écho des Tchèques	p 4
40° Rencontre Internationale	

SIESC aktuell SIESC actuel

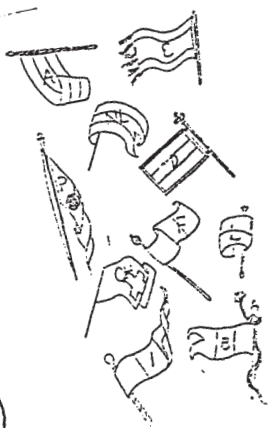
TABLE DES MATIÈRES
INHALTSVERZEICHNIS

	page/Seite
Meditation	2
Rencontre du SIESC à Innsbruck	3
Jahrestagung des SIESC in Innsbruck	4-7
Synthèse de la rencontre de Santiago	8-9
Zusammenfassung der Tagung in Santiago	10-11
Colloque Européen de Bâle	
Europäisches Kolloquium in Basel	
L'association nationale espagnole	
Die spanische Vereinigung	

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Rédaction:

Dr. Susanne ZEITZ
Florianigasse 30/43
A-1080 Wien
Autriche



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A note from the editor

SIESC-TODAY publishes articles of two types :

1/ It provides information concerning the life of SIESC and international affairs : for this SIESC governing body takes on full responsibility.

2/ On their authors' own responsibility, it publishes information coming from member and partner associations as well as from guests to allow them to put into dialogue their own positions and to lead readers to think about these positions which can not be shared by everybody.

OUR BEST THANKS TO OUR TRANSLATORS