

Minutes of the Lunch Meeting for Providing Information on the Newly Founded EFC Children and Youth Interest Group in Rome on 16 May 2009

The Chairman of the Board of the Universal Education Foundation, Raymond Georis, welcomed those present, thanked them for their interest and congratulated all those who had been involved in setting up the Children and Youth Interest Group. He recalled the old interest group, Youth and Education, expressed his delight at the new focal points set and said that for the first time his children had become an issue in the EFC. He congratulated the Chair of the Interest Group, Christian Petry, on his election and requested him to inform those present about the considerations so far.

First of all, Mr. Petry thanked Gerry Salole for his friendly words in the AGA, his willingness to provide support through the EFC and informed everyone that, to his delight, Sevdalina Rukanova would look after the Interest Group.

He also announced that Massimo Lanza, the Chair of the EFC Network Building Committee, was prepared to personally support the development of the Interest Group and could be contacted at any time if his assistance was needed and be invited the Interest Group to also plan one of its meetings in Venice. Gerry Salole said that this was a very valuable offer and could contribute to the broad-based networking of the Interest Group's work.

After a round table discussion, the Chair firstly explained the functions and tasks of the Interest Group according to its philosophy.

1 Functions and tasks of the Interest Group

1.1 Learning from the initiatives of members and sharing experiences

We hope that foundations not only relate the showcases, good practice and change stories on the selected subjects but also report on "kitchen stories" from which one can learn.

1.2 A demanding but, in the Steering Committee's view, a valuable function is to be: knowledge management.

In view of the rapidly developing research work on children and youth, which is becoming unmanageable, it appears advisable to undertake joint efforts to share key insight with one another.

1.3 Just like the old interest group, Youth and Education, the new group also intends to give the foundations involved the possibility to agree on joint action. It was the overwhelming conviction that one learned the most with joint action and that those foundations which, for whatever reasons, could not participate directly would also benefit from this.

1.4 The Interest Group can, within the framework of the EFC, have another important function both for the handling of joint topics and the support of joint campaigns: advocacy and networking with institutions at European level. Such an

opportunity could arise in particular if, as planned, there was a series of talks with the Commission in the week before the next AGA of the EFC in Brussels. The Interest Group should also prepare itself for this.

All the participants at the meeting expressed their agreement with these functions. The statement of Gerry Salole was duly noted with approval that the EFC secretariat is prepared to also support the Interest Group in the development of platforms for the implementation of projects in various ways.

2. Topics

The topics mentioned by the Steering Committee (which we are enclosing with the Guidelines) were all assessed as being interesting and, in principle, accepted as possible key issues.

In a round table discussion all the participants expressed their opinions on their personal priorities in the list presented. The following topics were mentioned most frequently:

2.1 Early childhood. It was stressed by several people that the family should be included here and a holistic and comprehensive approach should be developed.

2.2 The inclusion of children from families with a migrant background and other excluded minorities (Roma) was mentioned with equal frequency. Special emphasis was placed on the fact that these people must be understood as assets and not as liabilities.

2.3 As the third topic, it was mentioned several times that great importance should be attached to learning values and beliefs as well as democratic education.

2.4 The proposal to deal with the subject of children's resilience as part of the function of knowledge management was discussed with great approval. In this context the subjects of mental health and children's rights were also mentioned.

2.5 The foundations expressed the wish to become involved in the practical project, Youth Empowerment Partnership Project; the new Interest Group would also incorporate youth empowerment in its issues so that this project acquired a reference framework again. They would gladly report to the other foundations which were interested in children and youth about the insight they gained in the implementation of this project.

2.6 It was highlighted several times during the general discussion on the topic profile of the Interest Group that they would have to focus the work and set priorities. They should ask whether in fact all projects are equally suitable and whether priority should not be given to more general issues (such as learning democracy) and special issues (such as, for example, youth crime).

3. Possible joint campaigns

3.1 Some foundations which want to merge to form a consortium put forward the proposal of making the subject "Education by all for the well-being of children" the first joint project.

3.2 Equally, some interested foundations expressed the wish to form a "Forum Inclusion of Roma in Education" relatively quickly in order to create the conditions for co-operation with the EU Commission by European foundations together with the Roma Education Fund. These two wishes met with a lot of goodwill and interest from the other participants.

4. Resolutions

Everyone expressed the wish to meet at a joint conference if possible in the second half of September in order to reflect on priorities and pass relevant resolutions. Sevdalina Rukanova (EFC) was requested to prepare a mapping of the programmes of those foundations participating so that everyone could talk to each other on the basis of better mutual insight. She agreed.

All the foundation representatives present expressed the wish to be invited to this meeting.

Christian Petry
Rome, 17 May 2009

Annex 1

Founding organisations

Bernheim Foundation, Evens Foundation, Freudenberg Stiftung, Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, Jacobs Foundation, Mercator Foundation, Robert Bosch Stiftung and Universal Education Foundation are the founding members of the new EFC Interest Group focusing on Children and Youth.

The decision to form the Group was taken at a meeting convened by Freudenberg Foundation on 28th April 2009 in Weinheim, Germany and follows extensive consultations with these and other foundation Members of the EFC that are working on children and youth issues. (see Annex 2 below)

The founding organisations agreed to act as the Group's first Steering Committee. Each has committed to providing 2.500 euros/year for a period of three years towards the coordination and development of the group. The Secretariat will be provided by the EFC.

Freudenberg Stiftung will chair the Group during the first year.

Annex 2

Minutes EFC Children and Youth IG – Founding meeting Freudenberg Foundation, Weinheim, 28th April 2009

Present:

Bernheim Foundation, Brussels
Education Volunteers Foundation, Turkey
Evens Foundation, Antwerpen
Freudenberg Stiftung Weinheim
Guerrand-Hermes Foundation, Brighton
Jacobs Foundation, Zürich
Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stuttgart
Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung, Zukunft, Berlin
Stiftung Mercator, Frankfurt
Universal Education Foundation, Paris
Victoria Children Foundation, Moscow

Excused:

- Bertelsmann Stiftung
- Compagnia de San Paulo
- Fondazione di Venezia

Decisions:

1. The Children and Youth Interest Group was declared founded by the Foundations present that wish to be considered founding members: Bernheim Foundation, Evens Foundation, Freudenberg Stiftung, Guerrand-Hermès Foundation for Peace, Jacobs Foundation, Mercator Foundation, Robert Bosch Stiftung and Universal Education Foundation. It is thought likely that Compagnia de San Paulo will also wish to be a founding member.
2. The Guidelines were approved: see amended Guidelines attached.
3. Chair of the Interest Group: Christian Petry, representing the Freudenberg Foundation, was elected Chair for three years. After one year he will request the Steering Committee to review this choice.
4. All the founding members commit themselves to making a financial contribution to the costs of the secretariat for the first three years. For the first year, on the basis of the budget presented, the amount was fixed at 2,500 euros/foundation.
5. The work of the Secretariat will be undertaken by Gloria Arjomand if confirmed by Sevdalina Rukanova (EFC) with the support of Jean Gordon.

6. A number of themes were discussed as indicative areas of interest to the group. It was agreed that any founding member could propose a project. Each foundation would then decide if they wished to support it. (See list below)

Possible Themes of a Children and Youth Interest Group

As identified at the founding meeting held on 28th April 2009

1. Learning Democracy (ILDE, NEF Project)
2. Youth and Empowerment (YEPP)
3. Religion and the Educational System (Religion and Democracy, NEF-Project)
4. Education by all for the Well-being of Children (UEF)
5. Early Childhood including family support
6. Transition from kinder-garden to primary school, from primary school to secondary school
7. Transition from school to working life
8. Poverty and Exclusion: Integration of the Roma into the educational system
9. Abuse of children and young people
10. Children's Rights education
11. Arts Education including community art