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EUROCLIO, a Cause or Consequence of European Historical Consciousness

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The creation of EUROCLIO

The creation of EUROCLIO, the European Standing Conference of History Teachers Associations was inspired by several national and international developments which took place within the same period.

In the early 1990's there was a hype of articles, debates and activities concerning the idea of a European dimension in education. The European Union was the main initiator of these events. The Union had neither specific educational sectors nor subjects in mind, but tried to stimulate educational networks to devote attention to this topic and to organise activities and courses to implement the European dimension in education.

The Council of Europe operated as a second actor in the development towards an international organisation for the learning and teaching of history. Since its foundation in 1949, the Council of Europe had been active in the debate on learning and teaching history, however it only represented Western Europe. At the end of 1991, as an intergovernmental organisation, the Council of Europe organized the first pan-European meeting in Bruges, Belgium on learning and teaching history in the New Europe. With the meeting in Bruges, the Council of Europe could extend this debate to the whole of Europe, and those who participated in this first debate felt the enormous challenges of this event. More than 100 history educators from almost every European country were present at this meeting. Inspired by Maitland Stobart, the Deputy Head for the Council of Europe's Department of Education, Culture and Sport, many of them then became the backbone of the European history educators network in the 1990's. To Stobart's regret, there was evidence that the Council's intensive work on history had had too little impact at the practical classroom level. During this conference, European history educators such as myself, felt the need to set up an organisation of history educators which could act, among other things, as an instrument for implementation of the Council of Europe's work on history. In fringe discussions at the meeting in Bruges, a group of representatives of history teacher associations met to discuss the possibility of setting up a European History Teachers Association.

During the meeting it became apparent that the Fall of the Wall had created a specific need for such an instrument as many history educators from central and eastern European countries were looking to the west and asking what they should do to improve their history education. This easy question caused concern among the history educators from the west. Although people were convinced that they were doing their best and had good ideas, there was little evidence that their assumptions about the results of modern history education really were true. Many western European educators realised that they were not sure if they could be of any help to their colleagues in eastern Europe.

After the meeting in Belgium, Helene Bude-Janssens, Secretary of the Dutch History Teachers Association and I started to collect addresses of existing History Teachers Associations

and of people in Central and Eastern Europe who, as history educators, were interested in political and educational change and innovation. At the same time, first steps at drafting international statutes and other necessary documents took place.

In November 1992, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, we were able to invite about 30 representatives from History Teachers Associations and active history educators to Strasbourg to discuss the foundation of *the European Standing Conference of History Teachers Associations or Conference Permanente Europeenne des Associations de Professeurs d'Histoire*.

This name for the organisation was a cause of concern. Abbreviations of the official English and French names were too dissimilar and neither the full name nor abbreviations were appealing to a general public. Two of the Belgium delegates came up with the clever solution of EUROCLIO as a popular name. Their proposal received general approval and has been very effective, as EUROCLIO soon became a well-known logo.

During the course of the meeting the delegates came to the conclusion that the learning and teaching of history had a lot in common all over Europe. It was obvious that Europe not only shared a complex past, but also a multitude of problems related to learning and teaching history. In addition, almost every delegate was confronted with general domestic reforms in education. Among the history educators present, there was a general feeling that it was useless to repeatedly reinvent the wheel when trying to find solutions for this multitude of challenges.

In 1993, in co-operation with the Dutch Government the Dutch History Teachers Association and others, the Council of Europe organized a conference in Leeuwarden¹ on the Teaching of History since 1815 with special Reference to Changing Borders. This gave the initiators of EUROCLIO the chance to invite history educators from all over Europe to have an official founding conference and to present the association to a wide European audience. 17 associations from 14 countries signed the organisation's foundation statute.

Since then EUROCLIO has grown successfully. In 2001 it includes 76 full and associated members and a growing number of individual members from 43 countries².

Europe-wide issues in the learning and teaching of history

Almost every European country in 1992 was involved in a process of educational reforms. The key elements were similar; educational authorities were keen to introduce skill-based education in order to create independent learners with flexible competencies to enter the labour market and face international competition.

How to fit history education into this process was a key question. In most of the western European countries, history was not seen as a practical subject which could fulfil the new aims in education. This declining importance of history and the resulting decrease of time allocated to history in the national curricula was an important issue for history educators at that time. This anxiety was laid down in the first aim of EUROCLIO, as it should strengthen the position of history in the curriculum of schools in Europe. This early concern about the position of history in schools in 1999 was confirmed by EUROCLIO research into time allocated to history. The results indicate a clear decrease in the minutes spent on learning and teaching history in Europe³.

¹ The Dutch title *Grenzen VerleggenJ Europa sinds 1815* meant something different. The Dutch organisers were too inexperienced at that time to explain that idea to the Council of Europe staff in Strasbourg. The title should have been Changing Borders, Europe since 1815.

² Albania, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, The Netherlands Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, 'Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States.

³ EUROCLIO questionnaire on time allocated to history in the curriculum, 1999.

However, the concern about the position of history in the national curricula was only one of the problems which justified the necessity of a European-wide organisation. We discovered that the list of topics related to history education of a European-wide calibre is almost endless. In Europe and beyond, history educators debate questions such as the aims of history in school, the content of curricula and syllabi, and the criteria for content selection.

Substantial issues are questions such as which balance there should be between knowledge and understanding, historical skills and attitudes and how to achieve effective learning and teaching of history. Furthermore, history teachers debate the role of information and communication technology for their subject and how to make history interesting and meaningful for pupils taking into consideration their age and abilities. Difficult European-wide questions are, how to cope with the conflicting demands on the subject by society, how to deal with a multicultural country or continent with the conventional approach to teaching history from the perspective of the national majority or the nation state. But the status and salary of the (history) teacher and their (lack of) initial and in-service training are also issues which come up with regularity.

Dominant focus on learning and teaching approaches

Outsiders would expect that in a European organisation for history education, content issues would play a dominant role. However in the first 8 years, the emphasis in the organisation's work has predominantly been focused on innovative, meaningful and effective ways of learning and teaching.

This focus on methodology finds its predecessors in diversified or difficult national situations. Christina Del Moral, history expert for the Ministry of Education in Spain, recounted overcoming problems in history education in post-Franco Spain when talking for the Council of Europe in 1999 in Sarajewo: we could not agree on content but we could agree on skills⁴. Skills became the basis for a unified approach for the subject in Spain. Alan McCully, history teacher trainer from Northern Ireland said at the same meeting: History is enquiry. Through that medium we can explore the past in our divided community. And also the Netherlands, which, as result of its multiple religions, had no national curriculum for history until the 1990's, was able to agree in 1992 on a basis of skills and concepts in an outline national examination program.

The EUROCLIO focus on methodological approaches to the learning and teaching of history also shows the close relationship with the objectives for civic education. EUROCLIO's activities aim to develop training and innovative additional teaching materials for such parts of the history curriculum which particularly relate to the development, acquisition and applications of democratic values, to the techniques of democratic practice and critical and analytical thinking skills. They want to promote intercultural education which aims at a mutual understanding between pupils from different backgrounds and ways of learning, which combats nationalism, discrimination and racism, and fosters positive images of others within the country and in neighbouring countries. EUROCLIO members favour a multiperspective approach in the learning and teaching of history.

Since 1993, EUROCLIO has organised a variety of international workshops, seminars, conferences, study visits and projects, all with a dominant but not single focus on learning and teaching history, in Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Latvia, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Northern Ireland, Russia, Scotland, Slovakia, Serbia and

⁴ Council of Europe seminar Teaching Controversial and Sensitive Issues in History Education for Secondary Schools, Sarajewo 19-20 November 1999.

Ukraine. The Annual Conferences in 1994, 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2000 were focused on issues directly related to problems of learning. The Annual Conferences in 1993, 1995 and 1997 and 2001 were more content related.⁵

Special concentration on Central and Eastern Europe

EUROCLIO members from Central and Eastern European countries had to face an especially difficult task as they not only had to adjust to the new manner of learning and teaching, but also had to rewrite their history textbooks and reorganise their history teaching. The fall of the wall had created a need to redefine the national and collective identities in most countries in Central and Eastern Europe, and history education was seen as a major tool to develop these new identities. The main question in most of these countries was how to rewrite school history in the light of the de-ideology processes and new knowledge about the past. In many (new) countries the big debate was to what extent national history should be the core for the national or school history curriculum, and whether national history should be a separate topic or part of an integrated course with European and world history. The new independence created a tendency to put special emphasis on the national past in an attempt to reinforce the nation state. However the wish to belong to Europe also demanded an expansion of the European dimension. A collaborative debate and work among all EUROCLIO members became an important tool in the search for meaningful solutions for these problems.

National history versus the European dimension

The second, third and fourth aims of the EUROCLIO statutes all show how concerned the members were in 1992 about the European dimension in history education. The members wanted to *promote the European dimension in history teaching in the member countries of the Standing Conference, without neglecting the global, national and regional dimensions; they wanted to encourage the development of a greater European awareness through the medium of history teaching and supported studying the role of Europe and its relations with the rest of the world.*

Despite the clear wish to teach history in schools from a European perspective, it became evident in 1999 that in many European countries at the end of the 20th century, the priority of history teaching was the formation of a national identity. Research carried out by EUROCLIO in that year demonstrated that, according to our members, the core of school history in most countries in Europe is national history and that national history should also for the future be the core of history curriculum⁶. When looking at the current situation in 2001, it is clear that history education in most European countries is still based on a national mirror of pride and pain.

⁵ EUROCLIO Annual Conferences:

April 1993, The teaching of history since 1815 with special reference to changing borders, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands.

March 1994, Problems in the Learning and Teaching of History, Bruges, Belgium.

March 1995, Teaching about the Potsdam Conference and its Consequences, Berlin, Germany.

March 1996, History Teaching: a Key to Democracy? Neufchatel, Switzerland.

March 1997, Preparing for the 21st Century. Principles for the Design of History Syllabuses', Budapest, Hungary.

September 1997, Challenges and Implications for the Teaching and Learning of History, Pees, Hungary, on the outcomes of the Youth and History project.

March 1998, History Teaching and Information Technology. Will IT enhance History Teaching? Helsinki, Finland.

March 1999, Stereotyping and History Teaching, Edinburgh, Scotland.

March 2000, Teaching History, Commemoration and Memories, Lisbon Portugal.

March 2001, A Changing World. The significance of everyday life in the learning and teaching of history with focus on the 20th century, Tallinn, Estonia.

⁶ EUROCLIO questionnaire on history education on identity and heritage, 1999.

During successive EUROCLIO conferences, it became apparent that even topics with a clear European dimension are treated from an entirely national perspective. In 1995, during EUROCLIO's Annual Conference on the impact of the Potsdam Agreement in 1945, we discovered that countries, which were more or less involved in the war, stress national assets or losses. Countries which were neutral in World War II, such as Spain, hardly mention this agreement in their textbooks. Similar approaches were found in 1995 during an EUROCLIO conference on the role and impact of King Philip II. of Spain.

The concept of Europe for EUROCLIO members

In 1992 there was no heated debate about the concept of Europe. Chapter V of the statutes on membership determines that *membership is open to Associations of History Teachers of all levels of education in the member states of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, the Standing Conference may decide to admit as members associations from other countries.* However, over the years there was an urge among members to formulate more clearly which associations were eligible for membership. In 1999 the General Assembly decided that History Teachers Associations from former Soviet Republics receive full membership. Institutions related to history teaching from that region receive full associated membership. History Teachers Associations and Institutions related to history teaching in regions where no international organisation for history teaching exists can receive temporary associated membership. These temporary associated members have the obligation to develop international history teaching organisations in their own region. An overall majority of the member associations voted in favour of this proposal. Although the existing statutes were appropriate for these decisions about extending EUROCLIO membership, the General Assembly in 2001 has explicitly attached this extended version of membership to the statutes.

This broad view on membership prevented EUROCLIO from becoming part of a European Fortress. In the years after this decision, history educators from Kyrgystan, Israel, Turkey and, recently, even the United States were welcomed as members. Unfortunately, the significant aim to Study the role of Europe and its relations with the rest of the world has not been carried out. One attempt to organise a European Union teacher in-service project to study the effects of colonialism and imperialism on the developing world failed to receive the necessary grant. EUROCLIO has not even had the chance to make its members think about the global role of Europe.

EUROCLIO Constraints

Although EUROCLIO has a good record on positive understanding among history educators, not everything functions well. There are some significant constraints in its work. In the first place, working together is hindered by cultural differences in the way (academic) historians study the past. In quite a number of countries there is a strong belief that we can find an objective truth about the past when we research all facts carefully. Interpretation is not considered a key word for this type of historical studies. In such an approach, an authorised version by an acknowledged professor or a state-approved version is considered the true story/narrative of the past. Adherers to this are predominantly, but not only, found in the former communist countries. EUROCLIO's objective of presenting the past with a multiperspective approach in school education is therefore not shared by all European historians or history educators.

A second important problem interfering with the development of a common stand on learning and teaching history is the question of whether history education should focus

foremost on content or on the ways of learning history. In most countries there is growing interest in the debate on what to teach, why it should be taught, and how it should be taught to make it interesting and effective. Even countries with little tradition in curriculum debates, such as Estonia, Latvia, Macedonia, Romania and Russia, teachers are now becoming involved in this debate.⁷ Here we encounter an interesting phenomenon. Although this debate is almost Europe wide, some associations do not feel inclined to join in. The German and French History Teachers Associations seem predominantly interested in content problems. They might feel somewhat overruled by the overall interest of EUROCLIO Members in educational issues and are therefore less actively involved.

Successful dissemination of information is sometimes an uphill struggle. Despite the information society it is difficult to reach a European audience. History educators and others throughout Europe are all too often lacking in knowledge of EUROCLIO's work. This is not so much a problem of a lack of information, as EUROCLIO has a magazine on history teaching, *The Bulletin*, which appears twice a year, a Newsletter and a web site. However, that does not mean that we reach people easily. In many countries there is still a lack of a good information infrastructure, what makes it difficult to reach some local, regional and national associations or independent educators.

To awaken the interest of the media is also quite difficult. Education and good history education is certainly not a focal point in media interest. And, on the whole, the media is not interested in positive news. However, recent projects in Estonia, Latvia and Russia have received wide press coverage⁸.

A very practical but important constraint for EUROCLIO's work is a lack of finances. It is very difficult to obtain substantial financial support from the European Union or commercial and private donors. National authorities, with some very positive exceptions, have also done little to support the Association financially. Sound, European-wide activity is almost impossible. For political reasons grants are available for projects for Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, but only with great difficulty and persistence. However, for Western Europe it is almost impossible to find donors interested in issues related to history education. This is a lost opportunity as many of the initial reasons to start working together are still relevant. Therefore EUROCLIO is perhaps not able to give its members enough and cannot always reach a large, pan-European audience of teachers.

However, internal issues were and are also problematic, such as the language policy. In 1992, the 17 original member associations decided on two official languages: English and French. For that reason the German history teachers had hesitated to join. It claimed that German should also be acknowledged as a European language. Obviously this request was a very expensive claim and due to financial constraints, it was not adopted.

The new associations mostly send English speaking delegates with the percentage of French speakers diminishing so that now, in 2001, there are very few⁹. This situation has made some members question the choice for French as the second official language. A careful handling of this language issue by the EUROCLIO Board has solved this question for the future. The General Assembly in 2001 decided on a pragmatic approach to languages in future. This means that a

⁷ In more than 25 in-service history teacher training seminars organised by EUROCLIO in Estonia, Latvia and Russia in 2000, hardly any teacher initially mentioned this issue when asked for key issues in their work. As soon as it was raised it was cause for lengthy debates.

⁸ *New Ways to the Past* a project (1998-2000) in Estonia and Latvia, to develop and implement a handbook for history teachers and *Uroki Klio* a project (1997-2000) in Russia, to develop and implement 3 new school textbooks plus a teacher guide on post war Russian history. Several times the activities of these projects were even headline news for national and local television stations.

⁹ In the Annual Meeting, full translation is provided into both languages, a maximum of 10 out of 100 participants need the French translation.

French translation can be provided, however other European languages could have an equal footing and, depending on the situation and financial possibilities, different language options can be followed.

In recent years there has been increased anxiety among some of the larger members that too many small associations could overrule the decision-making process, as the 1992 statutes stated that each member association should have one vote. The EUROCLIO Board initiated a discussion to solve this apparent but delicate question. In the General Assembly of 2001 it was decided to give a certain weight to associations (with one, two or three votes) according to the number of their members.

Interesting examples of a hindrance for positive co-operation are still related to Cold War sensitivities. A few years ago a good Russian Board candidate failed to be elected as a result of an active lobby against his candidature based on anxiety concerning Russia and Russians. Not all members share the same feeling of responsibility towards Central and Eastern Europe. And even there, some envy could be sensed among western Europeans that Central and Eastern Europe participants receive more sponsorship. However this lack of solidarity is mostly negligible. The mere fact that people have become better acquainted with each other during the years has given more insight into each other situations. Such knowledge has created a greater mutual Understanding

The sense of belonging to Europe

To what extent do EUROCLIO members feel that they belong to a common family? Although EUROCLIO has not seen an extensive debate to define Europe and its borders, it is interesting to note the different approaches to Europe. Our Russian colleagues and most of our Scandinavian and British members, talk about Europe as if it were an alien, or at least different continent. However the Bulgarian, Lithuanian and Albanian members consider themselves part of, Europe without any reserve.

Politicians in most countries, if not all, are responsible for curriculum decisions. In most countries, even in the Netherlands, they play national cards. As was said before, EUROCLIO research demonstrates that most teachers agree with the attitude that national history should be at the core of the curriculum.

With national history as the focal point of history teaching and a rather vague European awareness, we can question how much change we have seen as an effect of the common European discussion on history education over the last 10 years. At least we might conclude that there is a sort of European history curriculum and that the emphasis on Europe in the curriculum is growing. Many countries share the curriculum topics for Antiquity and for the XX century history.¹⁰ However, this European history means the history of some large countries in Europe such as Germany, Italy, Britain, Russia and France. Many of the member associations from smaller countries have complained several times that they do not exist in the minds of most Europeans as history curricula, and that textbooks ignore their existence totally.

On a practical level there have been very positive examples of the sense of belonging to the EUROCLIO community. Since 1993 there has only once been a problem in the organisation of the Annual Conference by local member organisations. The EUROCLIO Board has received offers until 2006 from national associations to take on the burden of organising an event for at least 100 representatives. And representatives from member organisations are very keen to participate in these events.

¹⁰ Robert Stradling, *The European Content of the School History Curriculum*, Strasbourg, 1995 CC-ED/HIST(95) 1.

A considerable number of member associations have been very active in setting up and running projects. Especially in Central and Eastern Europe there is a very keen interest to participate in such projects. A good example is that of the Serbian history teachers. They organised themselves, as soon as Milosovic was gone and asked for EUROCLIO membership right away. Immediately after their acceptance by the General Assembly of 2001 they wrote their first project proposals. The materials resulting from these multilateral projects demonstrate that such projects contribute to a growing European awareness. The textbooks produced by the authors of the Moscow History Teachers Association show a much wider perspective than the traditional Russian textbooks. As a result these textbooks found their way into Russian speaking schools in many former Soviet or Soviet satellite countries.

Also the conferences dealing with the Potsdam Agreement of 1945 (1995), the role and impact of Philip II. (1995), the Unknown Baltic States (1996), the Revolutions of 1848 (1997) and the History of Everyday Life (2001) were eye-openers and changed the attitudes of the participants towards the European dimension in their teaching. In reports about these events, participants frequently reflect on the impact of such events. They acknowledged that these activities had confronted them with their lack of European awareness and promised a change in approach for the future. Some western associations such as the Danish Upper Secondary and the Irish Scottish History Teachers Association and the British History educators Association have developed direct links or programs for co-operation and support with partners in several central and eastern European countries.

Results of almost 10 years work

EUROCLIO has been a fast growing organisation. It started with 17 member organisations in 1992. In 2001 it has member associations and organisations in 43 countries. The amount of European countries without affiliation with EUROCLIO is negligible, history educators from only two European countries are not involved. EUROCLIO has built a network of History Teachers' Associations with a long tradition and of those which have just recently been established across and even beyond Europe. Some member associations operate in countries with strong democratic systems, others work in a very fragile democratic environment and some associations even have to face a hostile attitude from their governments.

A huge amount of expertise has been gained. Member associations as well as individual representatives of the associations have benefited from the exchange of ideas across Europe. History teachers from different parts of Europe have learned about, and from, the situation of other members and challenged those concepts of history teaching within their own country. Many of these ideas were unchallenged before joining the organisation. Many members also established personal contacts reaching beyond professional relationships.

A number of members became teacher trainers, a significant group gained expertise at an international level and a growing group of history educators operates on an international level. Many EUROCLIO activities have helped to spread good practices.

EUROCLIO has become a strong and respected partner for national authorities and for most of the European and other international organisations. In co-operation with other players in the field of history education EUROCLIO has created an international platform for history education and has become deeply involved in the discussion on the learning and teaching of history and the promotion of democratic values at international, national, institutional and school levels.

There has been a growing interest in the Annual Conferences. In recent years more than 120 participants from 40 countries have participated in these meetings. The associations offering annual meetings almost have to compete to acquire the nomination. The next annual

conference will be organised in Prague (2002), under the title Rich and Varied Diversity. Learning and Teaching about Ethnic, religious and Linguistic Minorities in History. In Warsaw or Cracow in 2003, history educators will discuss the wave of educational change during the last decade, and in 2004, in Wales, the role of the regional dimension in a European history curriculum will be discussed. Also Albania, Azerbaijan, Denmark and Romania have offered to organise annual meetings in the future.

EUROCLIO publishes the Bulletin, a magazine on history education, newsletters and has an improving web page. It discusses with the European Schoolnet, the European Virtual School, whether it should in future be responsible for the Virtual School's history department.

Past projects have been positively assessed and lately some new projects have been acquired. Member associations from Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia have been involved since 2000 in a project called Understanding a Shared Past, Learning for the Future, and will develop and implement a teacher handbook on the history of everyday life in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia from 1945-2000. A two-year project starting in 2001 in the Ukraine The Innovation of History Education in Ukraine aims at a common development of innovative educational materials by a mixed group of experts from the History Teachers Association NOVA DOBA, the Ministry of Education and Academics. Estonia, Finland and Hungary and Romania are involved in smaller textbook projects.

And, finally, there is a growing demand for EUROCLIO know-how and experience. Very few activities on the learning and teaching of history in Europe take place without involvement of the organisation and its members. Members now notice a smoother access to educational authorities in many countries.

European awareness, European sense of belonging or European historical consciousness?

We have noticed that since 1991, a common discussion on aims for and ways of learning and teaching history has developed. In meetings in the early nineties, history educators provided ongoing information to each other about the situation and developments in their countries. Recent meetings show that this stage is over and that participants have started to work on common goals and implementation strategies.

Mutual approaches such as the application of historical skills and competencies, inquiry-based learning and multiperspectivity are permeated in almost every history curriculum in Europe. However this does not always mean that a European dimension is certain. A participant at the 2001 Annual Conference in Tallinn observed that the situation " ... *shows how much traditional history has been retained despite all the progress that has been made, for instance by shifting to teaching skills. Even before the conference I was convinced that real innovation means a shift in focus, but now I feel that more than ever ...* " All EUROCLIO activities and projects focus on a larger perspective and propose to include topics, such as social and cultural history, which reinforce a wider dimension. The same observer wrote: "*What I learned about history in present-day Estonia and other countries is that different communities have different memories. The commemoration of Estonian and Latvian deportations and destruction of books versus Soviet memory of Baltic Russians until 1994 were exciting stuff to learn about, ..* "

However, at the same conference we noticed an interesting situation. Politicians still seem to favour the traditional political approach to history teaching, while the national history educators opt for a change.¹¹ How much European trends change national curricula seems to be

¹¹ EUROCLIO questionnaire on the Teaching of the History of Everyday Life. Politicians favoured an increase or the same amount for the teaching of political history; the history educators opted for an increase of the history of everyday life as well as for cultural history.

dependent on the democratic structures for curriculum development. History educators have shown that they are open to the influence of other European colleagues. Whether the same is the case for national politicians remains to be seen.

Future

There is still a need to carry out the mission to support the establishment of history teachers' associations in those countries where they still do not exist, although the number of countries without affiliated organisations is rather small.¹²

During the last decade, the interest in and support for history teaching by governments in most European countries has declined. In previous periods, but also particularly during recent events, Europe has witnessed several attempts to misuse history to serve particular political and or nationalistic purposes. EUROCLIO's mission therefore involves education for democratic citizenship and, increasingly, an introduction of a European perspective and awareness. This policy will find its way through enhancing the quality of learning and teaching history, promoting international co-operation and networks, professionalisation of history teachers and their organisations and the strengthening of the organisation and sustainability of EUROCLIO.

The EUROCLIO mission is based on learning and teaching history in schools in such a way that it fosters pupils' understanding that everything and everybody has a (his) story, that these stories are told from certain backgrounds and points of view and that these stories do not necessarily merge. That there is not only one single truth about the past, that there is not always a clear right and wrong, but that there is sometimes an unmistakable good or bad.

We want pupils to acquire some understanding of the recurring patterns and the dynamics of change which have shaped this past, and that pupils leave school with an understanding that a complex present is related to a complex past. And that also for their future it is important that they ask themselves every now and then how we got to this certain point, and what sort of message could that give me before I take further steps.

History taught from such a perspective is an interesting and useful subject which can contribute to an improving mutual understanding in Europe.

Conclusion

The hype for a European dimension on (history) education and the Fall of the Wall were directly responsible for the founding of EUROCLIO. Despite the constraints, I believe that EUROCLIO, has contributed to a growing European Historical Consciousness among history educators in Europe. Since 1991, EUROCLIO's work has created a growing awareness that history is taught from a exceedingly narrow national perspective in many European countries. The increase of a European dimension in history education shows the impact of such awareness. However, reaching people and changing habits is a very slow process. It is a task which will certainly last longer than many politicians expect or would like it to last. EUROCLIO has not yet finished its work.

The title of this article asks whether EUROCLIO is a cause for, or consequence of a European historical consciousness. The article gives evidence that EUROCLIO can certainly be defined as a consequence of a growing European dimension. However, it should also be considered as an important cause for the growing European awareness among history educators in Europe.

¹² This metaphor was used by Maitland, Stobart in his speech at the EUROCLIO 1998 Annual meeting in Helsinki.

Whether this development leads to a European historical consciousness among history educators will have to be researched in due time.