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**Steering Committee for Education
CD-ED**

**Analytical Repertoire of official texts
and projects of the Council of Europe
of the field of Intercultural Education**

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I. Introduction

The Council of Europe's work concerning intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, particularly within the contexts of education, culture and heritage, and youth, has assumed increasing importance in the process of its development. Efforts to promote dialogue represent a multi-faceted approach to reducing conflict, upholding democracy, and strengthening social cohesion in Europe.

This document has been prepared in connection with the project "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe," an undertaking launched in 2002 with the aspiration of underscoring the religious dimension of intercultural education as a means of fostering a dialogue of common identities, cooperation, and peaceful conflict resolution. In this respect, the project relies on the foundations of the Council of Europe's past work and calls greater attention to the challenges posed by Europe's religious diversity, particularly in relation to the role of intercultural exchange in a democratic context.

The following pages offer an analytical synopsis of the major developments of the Council of Europe's endeavours to promote intercultural and inter-faith dialogue among a particularly diverse constituency of some 800 million Europeans. The document provides a basis for understanding the institution's past work by including a general overview, a summary and analysis of the Council of Europe's official texts concerning intercultural dialogue, an examination of the specific efforts that have been undertaken by the sectors of education, culture and heritage, and youth, and finally a discussion of the Council of Europe's specificity in comparison with intercultural dialogue projects of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the European Commission. However, the document places emphasis on activities within the context of education, particularly by including selections from official texts that underscore the role of education in encouraging intercultural dialogue.

This repertoire, in addition to providing the background information necessary for understanding the implications of the project "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe," may serve as a source for the formulation of future action plans, as it sheds light on the complexities of managing diversity while strengthening equality, democracy, and cohesion in Europe.

II. Overview

The current undertakings of the sectors of education, culture and heritage, and youth with respect to intercultural and inter-religious dialogue signify the products of an extensive process during which objectives, approaches, and priorities have evolved over the course of time. In analysing the Council of Europe's recent activities, it is essential to bear in mind that current initiatives represent developments upon earlier laid

foundations, recently given new momentum in light of world happenings and the challenges faced by an enlarging and multicultural Europe.

Perhaps one of the most distinguishing aspects of the effort to promote intercultural dialogue has been its flexibility- over the last several decades, cross-cultural communication has been a key facet of broader projects involving the strengthening of secondary education curriculum to include a "European dimension," human rights education, education for democratic citizenship, cultural policy for conflict prevention, and youth training programs promoting a culture of peace. While these projects have centred on various themes, each have included the core objective of encouraging intercultural communication in an effort to cultivate mutual understanding. It is in laying these cornerstones, namely those of promoting tolerance and equality, that the Council of Europe has hoped to foster cooperative interaction, the settling of disputes through democratic principles, and the experience cultural enrichment. In this respect, projects encouraging intercultural and inter-religious dialogue have reflected the core values embraced by this inter-governmental institution. Secretary General Walter Schwimmer has asserted that "The Council of Europe's primary goal is to achieve a greater unity between its 45 member states in safeguarding individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy and which touch the lives of all Europeans in many different ways." Without question, undertakings fostering intercultural communication make a significant contribution to Schwimmer's above defined goal. Emphasising the benefits of a multicultural society while tracing the roots of a common heritage shared by Europeans, celebrating diversity while also ensuring equality, programmes involving intercultural dialogue represent a genuine effort to fulfil the Council of Europe's principal objective.

The Council of Europe's work concerning the integration of migrants and their children throughout the 1970's and 1980's emerges as an appropriate point of departure for examining the broader effort of promoting intercultural dialogue. These projects, namely "Teacher Training and Expenditures for the Education of Migrants' Children," "Education and Cultural Development of Migrants," and "Democracy, Minority Human Rights," each of which are described in detail in section III of this document, were based on an explicit acknowledgement of diversity in European societies, augmented by the presence of migrants. Regarding education as an effective instrument in furthering a dialogue of mutual understanding, necessary steps were taken to work toward objectives of easing the integration of migrants and their children, combating prejudices and xenophobia, as well as allowing for cultural enrichment among migrants and receiving countries. These projects placed special emphasis on the importance of teacher training and European co-operation in this endeavour, thereby encouraging intercultural dialogue on the level of practitioners.

Projects concerning migrants and highlighting the role of education in promoting intercultural understanding dominated the Council of Europe's efforts in the field of intercultural dialogue for several decades. Indeed, the status of migrants and the

importance of ensuring equality in the spheres of education and culture provided some of the central themes that later motivated efforts to further develop human rights education, heritage education and a secondary school curriculum that effectively campaigned against negative stereotypes, racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism. Moreover, the launching of a considerable project addressing the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe in 2000 provided further grounds for expanding the Council of Europe's focus on intercultural policies encouraging integration while also protecting the cultures of Europe's minorities.

Undertakings involving intercultural education received fresh impetus when in 1997, they blended with another theme of utmost importance to the Council of Europe's principal objectives, that of "Education for Democratic Citizenship." With the adoption of Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec 2002 (12) in October 2002, this endeavour "to launch an initiative for democratic citizenship with a view to promote citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society" recognized intercultural dialogue as an area essential to its success. In emphasising equality as a core value of democracy, it was deemed crucial to foster intercultural and inter-religious dialogue as a means of advancing conflict resolution within the context of democratic standards. A mission to uphold democratic values through a multi-faceted approach involving the efforts of several sectors, "Education for Democratic Citizenship" developed into one of the Council of Europe's priority projects. In doing so, it provided a catalyst for fostering explicit recognition of the multicultural nature of European society and of the role of intercultural dialogue in cultivating attitudes of tolerance.

Despite the vigour of the aforementioned endeavours, the promotion of intercultural, and in particular, inter-religious dialogue required greater attention of the Council of Europe's directorates. Ethnic conflicts ensued throughout the 1990's, with the atrocities occurring in the Balkans shaking the notion of harmonious European co-existence, a concept that had been promoted by integration and Council of Europe enlargement. While intercultural dialogue had been advanced as a means of quenching the flames of cultural clash in the former Yugoslavia, ethnic tensions among numerous member states remained an obstacle to upholding democratic principles and defending human rights. Indications that programmes involving intercultural dialogue required further development were only intensified by the severity of the September 11th attacks, often cited as evidence of the need to apply intercultural and, specifically, inter-religious dialogue to the struggle against terrorism. Indeed, it was following the atrocities that unfolded on 11 September 2001 that the Committee of Ministers resolved to establish GT-Dialogue, a working party specifically charged with augmenting the Council of Europe's activities in intercultural and interfaith dialogue, particularly with respect to terrorism as a radical menace to democratic systems based on liberty and human rights. The challenges provoked by the September 11th attacks prompted GT-Dialogue to identify "strengthening intercultural and inter-religious dialogue...as a new priority in all sectors of the Council of Europe" with the strategy that "a lot of effort is invested in education and youth: making young people aware of cultural diversity (including

religious diversity), presenting diversity as positive, teaching openness and respect, democratic citizenship and dialogue/negotiation skills.”

The meetings of GT-Dialogue raised numerous queries as to the Council of Europe’s role in fostering such dialogue, the value of previous undertakings, and prospects for more effective future action. It was recognized that while intercultural and inter-religious dialogue within Europe is of vital importance, especially in the aftermath of violence in the Balkans, it is crucial that the Council of Europe play a role in inter-civilisational dialogue. To be precise, future projects should address the deficiency of dialogue between regions, with particular respect to the Southern Mediterranean and Central Asia. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that “the Council of Europe has on the whole been more a facilitator of dialogue than an actor of dialogue,” begging the question of whether the institution itself should assume a greater responsibility in engaging in dialogue within the scope of international relations. Should Turkey emerge as a “bridge Member State” in fostering intercultural and inter-religious dialogue across civilisations? How can dialogue encourage unity and productive co-operation while also addressing the thorny issues that divide members of various ethnic, religious, and civilisational groupings? The questions seemed endless, the urgency of addressing them perhaps more pressing than ever.

Though it is clear that dialogue alone cannot filter the conflicts that threaten social stability, it represents a dynamic useful in peaceful conflict resolution and the strengthening democratic values. Responses to the observations and questions set out by GT-Dialogue were particularly pronounced within the sectors of culture and youth, whose recent undertakings compliment expanded projects in the education sector. The development of cultural policy and activities that encourage mutual respect and reconciliation have been given greater attention through the launching of “Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention Project” in 2002. In a manner similar to the working method of projects adopted by the education sector, this is an effort to aid policy-makers in developing a policy of dialogue, to conduct research on the roots of cultural and religious conflicts, and to identify examples of good practice of positive dialogue among individuals and communities. The project’s aims serve to encourage constructive co-operation and emphasise the use of cultural policies in preventing conflict. They also compliment common heritage campaigns and heritage classes, an undertaking that had developed in the 1980’s and is being enhanced to promote further cultural exchange, the concept of unity in diversity, and social integration.

Likewise, the youth sector has intensified its efforts, particularly with respect to the project “Youth Building Peace and Intercultural Dialogue.” While the youth sector has previously engaged in programmes training youth on conflict management for participation in endeavours of non-governmental organisations, more recent initiatives underscore conflict and violence prevention, thereby advocating a “culture of peace.” The programmes are youth-centred, specifically encouraging “youth-led initiatives” in the areas of mediation, conflict prevention, and “combating violence in everyday life.”

Intercultural, inter-religious, and inter-civilisational dialogue serves as a basis for these projects, being recognised as a foundation for advancing such a “culture of peace.” Furthermore, the project’s objectives are strengthened by such initiatives as “Youth Promoting Human Rights, Human Dignity and Social Cohesion” as well as “Youth Participation and Active Citizenship.” These endeavours, as well as those adopted by the sector of culture and heritage, are explained in greater detail in section III of this document.

In light of these projects, “Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe” has emerged as the education sector’s contribution “to make intercultural and interfaith dialogue one of the major axes of the Council of Europe’s development.” Relying on an innovative approach to augment positive exchange among policymakers, practitioners and pupils, the project will produce recommendations to governments, policy reports, compilations of examples of good practice, as well as methodological guidelines for enhancing intercultural programmes in primary and secondary school curricula. An undertaking embracing the core values of the Council of Europe, “Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe” represents a new path toward cultivating peace, democracy, and a sense of shared citizenship among member states.

III. Official Council of Europe texts concerning the role of education in fostering intercultural dialogue

Resolution (70) 35 on school education for the children of migrant workers, adopted by the Ministers’ Deputies on 27 November 1970.

...

«Recommends that governments of member States:

A-Guarantee, by means of legislation or regulation, exercise of the right of migrant workers’ children to school education;

B- Take appropriate measures for the attainment of the following objectives:

6. To promote, after a period of adaptation appropriate to each child, full integration into normal classes in order to develop mutual understanding;

7. To see to it that, where practicable (and except for special classes or courses), compulsory classes do not contain dissimilar pupil groups in numbers likely to prejudice the teaching both of the children of migrant workers and of the native children;

11. To encourage and assist teachers in the countries of origin to follow courses in the receiving countries and vice versa, in order to promote understanding of the cultural and educational systems of these countries;»

....

Recommendation 786 (1976) on the education and cultural development of migrants, adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 16 September 1976.

....

«2. Convinced that a variety of cultures can be a source of mutual enrichment for the societies concerned, but fearing that the educational and cultural difficulties encountered by migrants may aggravate the social problems;

3. Believing that migrants contribute to the unification of Europe, but that improved information is needed in order to dissipate misunderstanding and prejudice, both in the host countries and in the emigration countries;

12. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

a. invite member governments to implement with greater vigour the texts adopted in the Council of Europe concerning migrants, especially Resolution (70) 35, on school education for the children of migrant workers

c. invite member governments to provide greater resources and step up the training of personnel to be responsible for the education and cultural development of migrants;»

....

Resolution 807 (1983) on European co-operation in the field of education, adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 3 October 1983.

....

«2. Regarding education as an integral part of European cultural co-operation and recalling its recent Recommendation 940 (1982) on that subject;

3. Recalling also its belief in education as a continuing, lifelong process directly related to the cultural development of the individual;

4. Recognising the fundamental importance of education for the transmission of the values of democratic Western society and for the preparation of future citizens;

7. Wishing to see education play a more decisive role in developing in young people;

- i. a sense of civic responsibility
- ii. tolerance, such as intercultural understanding and rejection of political and other forms of violence
- vi. cultural creativity;

13. While being aware that education is mainly the responsibility of national or local authorities, welcomes the work by international bodies in the education field, and stresses the need for continued vigilance in order to co-ordinate these activities and avoid overlap;»

....

Recommendation No. R (84) 18 on the training of teachers in education for intercultural understanding, notably in a context of migration, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 25 September 1984.

....

«5. Considering that the societies with multicultural features created in Europe by the population movements of recent decades are an irreversible and generally positive development, in that they may help to further closer links between the peoples of Europe as well as between Europe and other parts of the world;

6. Considering that flourishing relations in all fields require a fuller understanding of the cultures and ways of life of other peoples as well as, in the event of their common cultural heritage;

7. Considering that the presence in schools in Europe of millions of children from foreign cultural communities constitutes a source of enrichment and a major medium- and long-term asset, provided that education policies are geared to fostering open-mindedness and an understanding of cultural differences;

8. Considering the essential role of teachers in helping such pupils to integrate into school and society, as well as in developing mutual understanding;

9. Considering it is necessary to prepare teachers for this important task;

10. Considering that, in order to fulfil this task, the training given to teachers should equip them to adopt an intercultural approach and be based on an awareness of the enrichment constituted by intercultural understanding and of the value and originality of each culture;

I. Recommends:

A. that the governments of member states...

1. make the intercultural dimension and the understanding between different communities a feature of initial and in-service teacher training, and in particular:

1.1 train teachers in such a way that they:

- become aware of the various forms of cultural expression present in their own national cultures, and in migrant communities;

- recognise that ethnocentric attitudes and stereotyping can damage individuals, and therefore, make an attempt to counteract their influence

- realise that they too should become agents of a process of cultural exchange and develop and use strategies for approaching, understanding and giving due consideration to other cultures as well as educating their pupils to give due consideration to them;

- become aware of social exchanges existing between the country of origin and the host country not only in the cultural field but also in their historical dimension;

- become conscious of the economic, social, political and historical causes and effects of migration;

2. encourage the development and use of appropriate materials to support the intercultural approach in the training of teachers and in school in order to give a "truer" image of the different cultures of their pupils;

3. as far as possible, encourage the setting up of "intercultural resource centres" in which documents, information and various teaching aids relating to the different cultures concerned would be available, or encourage existing resource centres to act as such;»

....

Recommendation 1093 (1989) on the education of migrants' children, adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 31 January 1989.

...

«4. Observing...that, despite the agreement over pedagogical principles for intercultural education, there are still divergences between host countries of origin when it comes to the practicalities of the education of migrants' children;

9. Affirming that intercultural education is the only way of making use of the valuable asset represented by the presence of young migrants in schools;

10. Pointing out that the aim of intercultural education is to prepare all children, indigenous and migrant, to life in the pluricultural society;

12. Considering that the success of an intercultural policy depends to a large extent on a teacher training policy centred on the intercultural approach;

13. Underlining the need to create in each country the preconditions for all social groups to participate actively in the social, economic, cultural and collective life of the society;

16. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers:

b. strengthen the research programmes and educational innovations that aim at the implementation of intercultural education for all children, in all sectors of the educational system;

c. promote, within the context of intercultural education, activities including modern techniques in the field of teacher training;

d. encourage educational exchanges at all levels of education and the setting up of a relationship between schools and migrant families;»

Recommendation 1111 (1989) on the European dimension of education, adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 22 September 1989.

...

«1. Having regard to the European Cultural Convention (1954) which underlines the need for education to develop mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe, especially through the study of languages, history and civilisation;

2. Expressing its concern that education should prepare the individual for life in a democratic society by enabling him to carry out his duties and responsibilities as a citizen...teaching him the fundamental principles and values at the root of our society, such as respect for human rights and democracy, as well as the tolerance and solidarity that result from a greater understanding and knowledge of others;

3. Recalling Recommendation No. R (83) 4 of the Committee of Ministers concerning the promotion of an awareness of Europe in secondary schools, and Resolution (85) 6 on European cultural identity;

12. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers further develop the European dimension of education in close concertation with the European Community and UNESCO, where possible including Eastern Europe...»

....

Recommendation 1346 (1997) on human rights education, adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 26 September 1997.

....

«3. The Council of Europe Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism, and Intolerance showed that disrespect for, and violations of, human rights are not only a matter of government policies but also depend on the attitudes of ordinary citizens in everyday life

4. In addition, in several member states of the Council of Europe, there is still a certain lack of human rights culture and a failure to understand the true meaning of human rights and their implications in everyday life.

6. The Assembly has repeatedly and consistently pointed out that ignorance...is at the root of most of the negative attitudes towards people belonging to such groups, for example Jews, Muslims, Roma/Gypsies, immigrants, or members of national minorities. It has therefore advocated education as one of the most effective ways of preventing such attitudes.

11. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers call on member states:

- i. to review curricula from primary school to university, with a view to:
 - a. eliminating elements that might contribute to the creation of negative stereotypes;
 - b. pointing out the positive aspects of different cultures and ways of life;
 - c. introducing elements to promote tolerance and respect for people from different cultures...»

Recommendation No. R (98) 5 concerning heritage education, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 March 1998.

...

«Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members;

Having regard to its previous recommendations:

-on the role of the secondary school in preparing young people for life (Recommendation No. R (83) 13);

-on the training of teachers in education for intercultural understanding, notably in a context of migration (Recommendation No. R (84) 18);

Considering that one of the aims of education is to train young people to have respect for diverse cultures, citizenship and democracy;

Recommends member states to adopt appropriate legislative, regulatory, administrative, financial and other measures to initiate and develop heritage education activities to promote heritage awareness among the young...»

...

Recommendation No. R (99) 2 on secondary education, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 19 January 1999.

...

«Noting that education systems in the member States of the Council for Cultural Co-operation are today faced with a number of fundamental challenges:

iv....-the increasingly multicultural and diversified nature of Europe and European societies and the dangers of isolationism, racism, xenophobia, intolerance, anti-Semitism and ultra-nationalism;

-among young people in particular, the danger of growing scepticism about, or even apathy towards, politics and democratic processes;

Reaffirming their conviction that secondary education plays a decisive role in taking up these challenges while respecting fundamental common values, in particular through:

- the affirmation of cultural diversity as a common asset;
- the education in ethical values founded on respect for the rights of others, tolerance, mutual aid, and combating racism and anti-Semitism;
- education for democratic citizenship, not only through the curriculum but also through encouragement to participate in democratic decision-making inside and outside school;
- the promotion of a European dimension which is respectful of national and minority identity nationally and regionally, and which is aware of its world context, ...»

...

Recommendation No R (2000) 4 on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 3 February 2000.

....

«Appendix to Recommendation No. R (2000) 4

II. Curriculum and teaching material

8. Educational policies in favour of Roma/Gypsy children should be implemented in the framework of broader intercultural policies, taking into account the particular features of the Romani culture...

10. However, the member states should ensure that this does not lead to the establishment of separate curricula, which might lead to the setting up of separate classes.

11. The member states should also encourage the development of teaching material based on good practices in order to assist teachers in their daily work with Roma/Gypsy pupils.»

....

Recommendation Rec (2002) 12 on education for democratic citizenship, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 October 2002.

....

«1. Affirms:

- that education for democratic citizenship is fundamental to the Council of Europe's primary task of promoting a free, tolerant and just society,

- and that it contributes, alongside the Organisation's other activities, to defending the values and principles of freedom, pluralism, human rights and the rule of law, which are the foundations of democracy;

2. Declares:

- that education for democratic citizenship is a factor for social cohesion, mutual understanding, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and solidarity, that it contributes to promoting the principle of equality between men and women; and that it encourages the establishment of harmonious and peaceful relations within and among peoples, as well as the defence and development of democratic society and culture;

Appendix to Recommendation Rec (2002) 12

2. Educational objectives and contents of education for democratic citizenship
-paying particular attention to the acquisition of the attitudes necessary for life in multicultural societies, which respect differences and are concerned with their environment, which is undergoing rapid and often unforeseeable changes.

To that end, it would be appropriate to implement educational approaches and teaching methods which aim at learning to live together in a democratic society, and at combating aggressive nationalism, racism and intolerance and eliminate violence and extremist thinking and behaviour. The acquisition of the following key competencies would contribute to reaching these aims, namely, the ability to:

- settle conflicts in a non-violent manner...
- listen to, understand and interpret other people's arguments;
- recognise and accept differences;
- make choices, consider alternatives and subject them to ethical analysis;
- shoulder shared responsibilities;
- establish constructive, non-aggressive relations with others;
- develop a critical approach to information, thought patterns and philosophical, religious, social, political, and cultural concepts, at the same time remaining committed to fundamental values and principles of the Council of Europe.

3. Methods of education for democratic citizenship

- (The acquisition of the above objectives should be encouraged) by adopting an educational approach closely combining theory and practice;
- by promoting and strengthening education and awareness-raising approaches and methods throughout society, and particularly among pupils and students that are conducive to a climate of tolerance, and to the respect of cultural and religious diversity;»

...

Resolution Res (2003) 7 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 29 October 2003.

...

«II. ...the following shall be regarded as thematic priorities for the years ahead:

a. the promotion of intercultural dialogue and peace, with special emphasis on:

- the promotion of mediation, peace-building and conflict resolution;
- intercultural dialogue and dialogue between civilisations;
- the training of youth leaders and capacity-building of European youth organisations, based on intercultural learning methodology ;

b. human rights education and the promotion of human dignity, and social cohesion, with special emphasis on:

- the fight against racism, intolerance and all forms of discrimination;
- the development of social cohesion;
- the fight against social exclusion of young people;
- the fight against violence in everyday life
- ...(these priorities shall be implemented through) a multidisciplinary and intercultural approach;»

....

Analysis

1. The adoption of **Resolution (70) 35** by the Ministers' Deputies on 27 November 1970 represents a point of reference for analysing the Council of Europe's activities in the area of intercultural education, particularly those projects of the 1970's concerning the integration of migrants. With its emphasis on equal access to education, the resolution highlighted the importance of education in strengthening social cohesion, despite the challenges posed by the cultural and linguistic diversity of the children of migrant workers. To that effect, the resolution suggested that migrants' children attend "special classes or courses...for the shortest time strictly necessary" in order to "promote, after a period of adaptation appropriate to each child, full integration into normal classes." Two particularly important and progressive concepts underscore the objectives enumerated in this official text. In recognising the benefits of increased cultural diversity in Europe for both migrants and receiving countries, the resolution acknowledged the importance of developing "mutual understanding," a key aspect of any program concerning intercultural dialogue. The text further emphasised intercultural dialogue by urging greater collaboration among educators of countries of origin and receiving countries, as well as by mentioning the role of teacher training in promoting mutual understanding among pupils.

2. Six years later, **Recommendation 786 (1976)** expanded on the notion of diversity as a "source of mutual enrichment" and likewise called for equality not only within the education system, but also between migrant and native workers. In explicitly addressing the problems of "misunderstanding" and "prejudice" that arise in multicultural societies, the recommendation reasserted the value of implementing the goals set out in Resolution (70) 35 and encouraged member states to make a stronger

commitment to personnel training and the integration of migrants in the spheres of culture and education. Though chiefly concerned with migrants and not necessarily with diverse elements already existing within European countries, the recommendation was an early effort to foster intercultural dialogue in the name of increasing co-operation among member states in education and strengthening cultural unity.

3. In **Resolution 807 (1983)**, previous work concerning aspects of intercultural education and dialogue involving the children of migrants was moulded into the broader context of "challenges facing modern Western society." In this manner, "cultural development," implying the transmission of democratic values, the development of a sense of common heritage, and a beneficial exchange among members of different cultures, was recognised as an area that warranted greater attention from Council of Europe directorates. Other international institutions as well as national and/or local bodies were likewise recognised as vital players in fostering meaningful "European co-operation in the field of education." The text also bolstered the importance of education projects that promote mutual understanding and integration by identifying "tolerance" and "intercultural understanding" as key objectives. However, in connecting the intercultural dimension with such aspirations as strengthening a "sense of civic responsibility" among Europe's youth, the text illustrated the ease with which projects concerning intercultural education may be woven with those seeking to strengthen social cohesion or democratic values. Intercultural education would continue to be addressed in terms of heritage and civic values, and as such, has achieved significant momentum as an area that concerns the fundamental principles embraced by the Council of Europe.

4. Only one year later, **Recommendation No. R (84) 18** of the Committee of Ministers came as a direct acknowledgement of issues concerning intercultural communication within the domain of education. While discussing the challenges posed by migrants and their children, the depth of the recommendation provided a major framework for intercultural education projects seeking to address existing diversity within member states. One should note the use of the term "irreversible" in the description of "multicultural features" of European societies. In urging recognition of cultural diversity, the text was a source of new impetus for the implementation of projects to ameliorate the tensions that result from cultural misunderstandings. The acknowledgment of multiculturalism as a permanent and positive feature of European societies and the statement that beneficial cultural exchange "[requires] a fuller understanding of the cultures and ways of life of other peoples" make it possible for the text to be regarded as a springboard for allowing intercultural education projects to achieve greater priority within the Council of Europe's agenda.

Recommendation No. R (84) 18 likewise emphasised the central role of education as a means of addressing the challenges of living in a multicultural environment. As such, the efficacy of education programs was discussed in terms of reaching out to the broader community within the framework of efforts exerted by teachers and pupils. In

addition, the text suggested a plan of action by enumerating key players and their responsibilities in generating a positive environment for multicultural exchange. This structure specifically described the roles of member state governments and institutions for teacher-training in combating prejudices, developing a greater understanding of migration and its implications for both countries of origin and host countries, as well as strengthening the "process of cultural exchange." It should be noted that legislation concerning education, teacher training, the value of national and international seminars, and the development and dissemination of teaching materials as emphasised in this text would serve as key action areas for subsequent intercultural education projects.

5. Assembly **Recommendation 1093 (1989)** on the education of migrants' children provided a means for facilitating the implementation of proposals set forward in the 1984 recommendation on the training of teachers in education for intercultural understanding, notably in the context of migration. The text acknowledged that despite the clarity and specificity of the areas needing to be addressed in order to encourage meaningful intercultural dialogue through education, it is imperative that member states realize greater co-operation and that a certain level of data standardisation is achieved. While further underscoring the importance of intercultural education in social cohesion, including "economic, cultural, and collective life," and the more general context of learning to live in a "pluricultural society," the recommendation encouraged enhanced co-operation among member states, both in terms of research and development and in the form of conferences and seminars addressing cultural and educational issues. The importance accorded to conferences highlighted a necessity of establishing greater exchange among politicians, teachers, teacher-training centres, and migrants' associations. As such, the text was explicit in emphasising collaboration among various societal sectors, in addition to co-operation among member states.

6. **Recommendation 1111 (1989) on the European dimension of education** provided further evidence of the increasing importance of intercultural dialogue and education as the Council of Europe re-examined its agenda in the late 1980's. The document reaffirmed that the "European dimension" of education serves to strengthen democratic values and increases individuals' awareness of Europe's political, economic, cultural, and social challenges. In doing so, the recommendation explicitly confirmed the notions that would lead to the development of a broad project concerning the role of education in enhancing democratic citizenship in 1997. Noting that the "European dimension" "has yet to be more effectively integrated into teaching in practice," the recommendation motivated member states to take greater action in teacher training efforts, research, and exchange of information.

Another facet of the document placed significant emphasis on inter-institutional co-operation with regard to the "European dimension" and the role of education in reinforcing "tolerance and solidarity." The recommendation strongly encouraged that the Council of Europe achieve greater co-operation with both UNESCO and the European Community, urging that such co-operation would facilitate implementation of

improved teaching strategies cultivating “mutual understanding between the peoples of Europe, especially through the study of languages history and civilisation.” As such, this recommendation was particularly forward-looking. Its accent on improved relations between European institutions and greater co-operation among practitioners of member states acknowledged the need to foster intercultural dialogue, specifically with respect to Eastern European countries and their role in an enlarging Europe.

7. The Parliamentary Assembly’s adoption of **Recommendation 1346 (1997) on human rights education** represented substantial progress in allowing intercultural education to become a priority area on the agenda of today’s Council of Europe. Its call on member states to adopt certain measures of transmitting human rights standards through education have blended with the objectives of current intercultural education projects, including those of “Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe.”

The recommendation explicitly acknowledged the distressing reality that human rights violations, racism, and xenophobia continue to surface in member states that, in principle, espouse the Council of Europe’s covenant of exemplary democratic and human rights standards. As a means of promptly addressing this issue, the recommendation set into motion efforts to examine curricula “from primary school to university” with the goal of recognizing examples of good practice and developing strategies that build values of tolerance and mutual understanding. In order to ensure the effectiveness of such efforts, the recommendation likewise proposed more intensive training for teachers, journalists and other public officials whose work contributes to shaping social perceptions of Europe’s multicultural nature. Most importantly, the recommendation’s emphasis on compiling and disseminating examples of good practice, targeting ‘major players’ for special training, exploiting information technology for cultural exchange and endorsing human rights education “as a priority for the intergovernmental work of the Council of Europe in the years to come,” embodies the concepts that now provide the cornerstones for action areas of the project “Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe.” It should be noted that the adoption of this text in 1997 coincided with the launching of “Education For Democratic Citizenship” and provided a directive for this project’s initiatives and methodology.

8. The Council of Europe’s commitment to strengthening the role of education in promoting mutual understanding and preparing European citizens for the challenges of life in a multicultural society was reasserted in Committee of Ministers **Recommendation No. R (98) 5 concerning heritage education**. This March 1998 text empowered the sector of culture and heritage to make greater efforts in encouraging unity and sponsoring intercultural dialogue. While recognizing the achievements of teacher training and the improvement of curricula with respect to intercultural education since the adoption of Recommendation No. R (84) 18, the document called for further development of heritage activities to advance notions of

"tolerance, good citizenship, and social integration." Recommendation No. R (98) 5 specifically encouraged the enhancement of heritage classes for primary and secondary school children that would make "young people aware of the great cultural diversity of Europe and alert them to what they have in common." The values promoted by such heritage education may be viewed as driving concepts for the Council of Europe's work concerning "celebrating diversity" and strengthening "a common European heritage." Furthermore, the implications of enhancing European heritage classes reaffirmed the role of education in teaching life skills and encouraging co-operation among Europe's diverse communities, a role that remains essential to current campaigns endorsed by the sector of culture and heritage.

9. **Recommendation No. R (99) 2** and its appendix comprise an extensive document concerning the priorities, objectives, and "European dimension" of secondary education. The document's most significant element in light of intercultural education is that it treated the promotion of tolerance, "the affirmation of cultural diversity as a common asset," as a response to growing disillusionment with democratic procedures among Europe's youth. In this manner, the recommendation acknowledged a vital relationship between objectives of education projects and the goals of bolstering democratic values, combating xenophobia, and profiting from Europe's cultural diversity. This text was exemplary in recognizing that the goal of promoting intercultural dialogue may be blended with a variety of Council of Europe campaigns, whether they focus on cultural and heritage policy, reforms of secondary school curricula, education for democratic citizenship, or youth campaigns. Thus, the recommendation made it clear that the advancement of dialogue is an aim embraced by numerous sectors of the Council of Europe and requires the co-operation of these sectors and of member states in order to ensure its success.

10. **Recommendation Rec (2000) 4 on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe** is mentioned here as a working example of the use of dialogue with regard to a specific minority group in Europe. The portions of the recommendation highlighted above illustrate that the project on education for the Roma population is linked with the Council of Europe's work concerning intercultural education and dialogue. With respect to the development of teaching strategies, the project involving Roma encouraged efforts to remove aspects of curricula that transmit xenophobic attitudes and to foster acceptance of diversity and recognition of shared values among Europeans. While retaining the theme of integration that had characterized even the earliest texts examined in this analysis, Recommendation Rec (2000) 4 demonstrated the development of innovative strategies of investigation, curriculum development and exchange that enhance co-operation among politicians and practitioners of the Council of Europe's member states.

11. **Recommendation Rec (2002) 12 on education for democratic citizenship** approached the issue of intercultural dialogue from the perspective that "education...is fundamental to the Council of Europe's primary task of promoting a free,

tolerant and just society" and therefore requires a commitment to combating racism and xenophobia as "major threats to the security, stability and growth of democratic societies." The recommendation advanced the notion that the inclusion of an intercultural dimension to education would address the issue of scepticism toward democratic processes and matters of equality in participation.

The most striking element of this official text in relation to those previously examined is that it included the first explicit mention of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue with its statement that "education for democratic citizenship is a factor for social cohesion, mutual understanding, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and solidarity." This statement distinguished intercultural dialogue as a theme tied to numerous aspects of civic education, most specifically those concerning equality, co-operation and interpersonal relations among Europeans. In its appendix, the document discussed education, including its intercultural dimension, in connection with the broader scope of civil society and identified education as a link among youth, family, social institutions, and organisations. Such discussions implied that in order for projects on education for democratic citizenship to be effective in enhancing social cohesion, they must include the promotion of intercultural dialogue on numerous levels of society. This principle has since directed projects involving intercultural dialogue by ensuring that specific members of society are targeted in these projects' objectives. By the same token, the document suggested that while multiple levels of society must be reached for a project to truly prove effective, education should play a greater role in facilitating co-operation among a community's members and institutions.

Finally, the text's appendix identified several themes involving peaceful conflict resolution, respecting diversity and enhancing the solidarity of European society. While the themes listed are indubitably areas of focus for the specific project on "Education for Democratic Citizenship," they all require special emphasis on intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Thus, the text presented dialogue as an area not only linked to many of the Council of Europe's endeavours, but as a foundation upon which other efforts to uphold democracy and protect human rights may be built.

12. Resolution Res (2003) 7 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe developed the priority status of intercultural dialogue among the projects of Directorate General IV in a manner that expanded upon the recommendations set forth by the previous year's text on education for democratic citizenship. The document reaffirmed the concept of "pluralist democracy," which rests on a foundation of values protecting human rights and respecting ethical standards of law. However, while Recommendation Rec (2002) 12 emerged as an essential text because of its explicit mention of intercultural dialogue, the Committee of Ministers' 2003 text on the Council of Europe's youth policy was even more progressive. It is in this resolution that the growing importance of intercultural dialogue was most accurately portrayed, identifying the "promotion of intercultural dialogue and peace" as a "thematic priority for the years ahead." The advancement of intercultural dialogue and peace was once again affirmed

as inherently linked to efforts concerning human rights education, social education, and the strengthening of democratic values. In discussing the advancement of intercultural dialogue in the contexts of peaceful conflict resolution and youth training, the resolution provided directives for future campaigns within the sector of education and urged the launching of fresh initiatives by the sectors of culture, heritage and youth.

IV. Intersectoral Contributions to Intercultural Dialogue: Education

“Teacher Training and Expenditures for the Education of Migrants’ Children”

The evidence of the Council of Europe’s long-standing commitment to the advancement of intercultural dialogue lies in an analysis of the education sector’s activities over a thirty-year period. In the 1970’s “une idée force” was launched: that of the intercultural approach to education. Recognizing not only the need for greater integration of migrants’ children in education, the roots of this project were based in the idea that European societies are becoming increasingly diverse and that interaction among members of different cultural communities is more and more valuable. The project’s Working Group underlined their objectives in highlighting the importance of including an intercultural dimension in such areas of education as the human and social sciences, artistic expression, and religion. The Working Group likewise stressed that their work warrants the participation of parents and community members; to work simply within the context of the migrants’ children would not be sufficient for enhancing intercultural dialogue on a larger scale. Working Group President Micheline Rey asserted that the intercultural dimension must include “interaction, exchanges...and reciprocity.” In recognizing these elements of intercultural dialogue, Rey set forth a model for tackling the challenges presented by a multicultural Europe. These foundations would provide a framework for future projects, not only within the sector of education, but for the sectors of culture and heritage and youth as well.

As is necessary for any project adopting an innovative approach to a complicated challenge, “Teacher Training and Expenditures for the Education of Migrants’ Children” stressed the importance of research activities. An initial state was taken to initiate an examination of the situations with the education systems of such member states as France, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Switzerland. It should be recalled that the goals of the project placed particular emphasis on the integration of migrants’ children in education, and therefore it was also essential that dossiers be created on the education systems of countries of origin (including Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey) and receiving countries (such as Belgium, Denmark, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland). These research assignments were multi-dimensional, addressing such issues as roles of culture and civilisation on migration, the structure of education systems, socio-cultural status of migrants, the challenges faced by migrants in their host countries, the integration of migrants’ children, and the role of religious diversity in countries of origin and receiving countries.

The project's investigative programme was likewise responsible for the formation of a French-Portuguese team to conduct "bilateral research-action." Examining the education of migrants in France and Portugal, the research team was part of an important development of the Council of Europe's work concerning interculturalism: that of enhancing cooperation and promoting dialogue on multiple levels. In addressing the challenges of multicultural society, the Council of Europe has been concerned with promoting dialogue not only on the community level that represents the target of many of its projects, but also among members of governments, educators, researchers, and Council of Europe personnel.

With the completion of the aforementioned research assignments, the project entered a second phase that stressed the presentation and dissemination of the information that had been previously gathered and analysed. Conferences and symposiums emerged as a practical means of exchanging dialogue among experts and educators and provided an opportunity to examine the research projects' conclusions through a critical lens. In Lisbon in 1980, the French-Portuguese "bilateral research-action" team was given the floor to communicate their findings and aid the Working Group as it assessed its goals and developed future plans of action.

The final symposium organised by the Working Group took place in Aquila, Italy in 1982 and provided a forum for experts and Working Group members to analyse research results, provide an evaluation of past activities, and formulate recommendations for future prospects. This forum is of particular importance to the project "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe," as its participants devoted a substantial portion of the conference to discussing the role of religion in the realm of intercultural communication. This role came to be acknowledged as the "religious fact," a term which has evolved to currently describe religion as a "cultural fact" or a "fact of multiculturalism." Each of these terms implies the function of religion as a belief system, enhanced by rituals and cultural practices, which moulds the values embraced by its followers. As such, religion must be directly addressed in intercultural education as cultural element that contributes to the diverse nature of European society. In addition, the idea of religion as a "cultural fact" is inclusive, acknowledging non-believers, agnostics, and atheists as actors in inter-religious dialogue and representatives of philosophies that are not rooted in any particular organised religion. Participants of the Aquila Symposium noted religion as a source of tension and prejudice in Europe and suggested that a remedy emerge from the Council of Europe's education sector, especially since European secondary school curricula of the early 1980's appeared to marginalize the role of religion in influencing politics.

Many of these themes explored in the Aquila Symposium have re-emerged in the 2003-2005 programme developed in "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe." This fact makes the inseparable nature of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue particularly apparent and distinguishes current

initiatives not as fresh undertakings, but as developments of the Council of Europe's work over several decades.

"Education and Cultural Development of Migrants"

The following project represents a response to Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 786 (1976) of the same title. Its founding principles are embraced by the Assembly's text, mostly stressing recognition of the multicultural nature of European society, the fact that Europe will continue to grow diverse and multicultural, and the notion that this multiculturalism, if attitudes of mutual understanding are established, can be particularly valuable to the pursuit of peace and prosperity in Europe. However, the most complicated aspect of the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation, is that it advocated the preservation minority cultures while simultaneously encouraging integration and the recognition of a shared European heritage. How should Europe celebrate diversity while strengthening social unity? This is the question that provided direction to "Education and Cultural Development of Migrants," which attempted to shed light on some answers by adopting a largely research-based methodology.

The compilation of case studies from the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom represented the project's point of departure. Such case studies allowed for an evaluation of the educational opportunities available to migrants' children and the socio-economic status of migrants in various host countries. The conclusions drawn from such investigations elucidated the social complexities of migration. Most notably, migration creates a situation that forces many migrants into a state of identity crisis- it becomes increasingly difficult for migrants to be identified, and for them to identify themselves, with either those sharing their original nationality or with the natives their host country. The project's work presented this as a dilemma over whether migrants should be distinguished "by their past" or "by their future." As it grew more obvious that much of Europe's migrant population had intentions of remaining permanently in their receiving countries, such questions called for greater attention from Council of Europe member states. While these issues seem central to the migrants themselves, the project likewise explored problems involving relations between migrants and the native population of their receiving countries. For instance, the project recognized that many migrants came from regions formerly colonized by European powers and that they inhabited urban areas, often in poorer conditions and without meaningful contact with non-migrants, leading to a glaring problem of segregation and inequality.

It is in light of these challenges that the objectives of an educational plan were adopted. Education and cultural development were targeted as key areas that would allow for more successful integration of migrants and their families. It should be noted that migration has implications for both minorities and the local populations of receiving countries; thus successful integration requires efforts of both of these parties. On one hand, primary and secondary school curricula needed to be examined and restructured

so as to prevent the transmission of negative stereotypes and prejudices that lead to social exclusion. At the same time, many of the challenges faced by migrants in terms of identity and socio-economic status made it evident that minority populations must engage in full and equal social and cultural participation within their receiving countries. In the context of education, this issue begs speedy integration of migrants' children once language barriers have been contended with, while also remaining certain that the curriculum does not undermine the individuality of their distinct cultures.

"Democracy, Minority Human Rights"

The project of "Democracy, Minority Human Rights," consisting of a programme of numerous symposiums, workshops and debates, can be regarded as a turning point in the Council of Europe's work concerning intercultural dialogue within the dimension of education. Just as the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly's texts adopted in the late 1980's and early 1990's represented a change in thematic focus, the project "Democracy, Minority Human Rights" signified a newly launched effort to include intercultural dialogue in the larger context of democratic citizenship and human rights education. Carried out from 1993-1997, "Democracy, Minority Human Rights" symbolizes a point of departure for understanding the Council of Europe's later emphasis on "Education for Democratic Citizenship."

Embracing an innovative strategy of combining intercultural issues with the support of democratic values, the project implied the development of an acute awareness of diversity management as a vital dimension of a European human rights culture. The initiative confirmed the Council of Europe's commitment to defending "the principles of democracy, pluralism, the pre-eminence and respect of human rights" and to "promoting the principles of tolerance and respect for diversity." In doing so, the project augmented the importance of education in upholding the organisation's core values and declared education as an instrument capable of addressing issues of minority rights in both theory and practice.

The project's conferences and "reflection workshops" were centred on various thematic issues, each of fundamental importance to the challenges posed by multiculturalism. Early undertakings concentrated on further developing a European sphere of civic education, recognizing the need to reinforce democratic principles among Europe's youth. This challenge would later serve as a driving force for the beginning phases of the 1997 project on "Education for Democratic Citizenship." In formulating strategies for implementing a civic education programme, emphasis was certainly placed on values of tolerance and mutual respect as a means of retaining intercultural communication at the foreground of the project's priorities. The issue of diversity management was also incorporated in the development of such strategies by calling attention to methods of presenting history and cultural studies, including an examination and editing of history textbooks so as to prevent the transmission of xenophobic attitudes. The primary model of implementation adopted involved the

cultivation of abstract pedagogical principles and the follow up of such ideas through practical means of structuring educational activities on the levels of primary and secondary schooling.

The thematic configuration of the project's seminars and workshops also allowed for an analysis of the major challenges faced by minority populations by linking minority human rights issues with the broader goal of bolstering the role of education in advancing democratic values. Most importantly, the thematic issues given priority created a model by which understanding the challenges of life in a diverse society were facilitated. As many of these difficulties stem from the crises of identity that migrants experience within the societies of their hosting countries, the question of identity was presented as a series of shells composed of layers defined by history, language, geography and religion. These elements were explored in detail in order to fully analyse the complexities of national identities and their influence on politics. Also examined were languages as instruments of transmitting culture, claims to territory and their function in escalating ethnic tension, and finally the role of religion and scepticism in shaping a society's underlying values.

Such work provided considerable momentum to the goal of incorporating an intercultural element to the advancement of civic values in democratic society. The four-year initiative involved an eclectic analysis of thematic concentrations while driving efforts to improve pedagogical material, develop innovative teaching strategies, and strengthen the intercultural dimension of civic education. Exploring the intricacies of identity with respect to the individual and the collective, "Democracy, Minority Human Rights" represented a progressive effort to shape the Council of Europe's priorities in intercultural communication and strengthening democracy.

"Education for Democratic Citizenship"

Launched in October 1997 at the Second Summit of Heads of States of Governments in Strasbourg, "Education for Democratic Citizenship" has received attention as a priority project within the Council of Europe's recent agenda. Its first phase, conducted between 1997 and 2000, embodied the aspiration of encouraging "democratic institution building," with particular emphasis on enhancing participation and promoting a commitment to equality, dignity, and ethical standards in politics and citizenship.

While it may be observed that stimulating intercultural dialogue itself was not explicitly highlighted as one of the project's primary objectives at the time of its launching, the implications of "Education for Democratic Citizenship" and its status as a priority project has been a significant factor in augmenting the Council of Europe's role with respect to promoting dialogue. During its earliest phase, the project embraced the goal of increasing awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in democratic society while underscoring the importance of cultivating civic virtue and a sense of solidarity. Thus, at the outset, the project's initiatives implied that great attention would be

devoted to citizens' life skills, including constructive co-operation in pluralist democracy, where multiculturalism has developed into an inseparable element of European society. Indeed, the issues that pressed the Council of Europe to launch such a project on education for democratic citizenship, namely a growing disillusionment for democratic practice among Europe's youth and concerns about xenophobic attitudes in Europe, are inherently tied to the challenges posed by the presence of cultural and ethnic diversity. In fact, the project's directives identified the necessity of establishing a citizenship education programme that would allow member states "to benefit from the positive aspects of our changing societies: individualism as liberation from social conventions and as increased potential; diversity as a source of mutual respect and enrichment...and the global village as the setting for mobility and communication." By embarking on a mission to cultivate democratic standards and a greater awareness of citizens' rights and responsibilities, the project was specified to address cross-cultural communication and a dialogue of shared values, identities, and responsibilities in democratic society. In this manner, the objectives directing "Education for Democratic Citizenship" were firmly linked with issues of social cohesion that implore the advancement of intercultural education and dialogue.

It is essential to recognize that the launch of even the first phase of the project directed the Council of Europe's attention to issues of everyday life in democratic society. Indeed, by concentrating on the role of citizens and the power of participation on the collective level when individual rights and responsibilities are exercised, the project has embodied a thematic focus on the life skills necessary for constructive interaction in diverse societies, where questions of identity, values, and recognition are often at the foreground of interpersonal relations. By strengthening an awareness of rights and duties on the individual level, the project has served as a precursor for efforts to promote intercultural dialogue and enhance social cohesion. The themes of "inclusion" and "learning to live together," areas that have assumed utmost importance in initiatives concerning intercultural education, certainly stem from the project's emphasis on the teaching of life skills for participation in democratic processes.

Also worthy of mention is the methodology that had been adopted for the project's execution, involving a "multidisciplinary" and "intersectoral" approach upon the recommendation of the Secretary General. Such a guide for future action has served as a model employed in the most recent endeavours regarding intercultural dialogue, a subject that may only be adequately addressed by managing challenges in the areas of education, culture and heritage, and youth campaigns. Similarly, it is such a "multidisciplinary" and "intersectoral" approach that has allowed intercultural dialogue to develop, like "Education for Democratic Citizenship," into a priority project of the Council of Europe, employing the efforts of various governmental and non-governmental actors.

The second phase of "Education for Democratic Citizenship," launched as a 2001-2004 initiative, has been built upon the foundations laid by the project's earlier stage in order

to further develop its “multi-dimensional, holistic and lifelong learning approach.” More recent programmes have highlighted the importance of targeting specific groups including policy makers, teachers, media personnel, experts, and NGO’s for participation in community-reaching efforts to build social cohesion based on shared democratic values and responsibilities. This second phase has concentrated on implementing the recommendations set forth in Rec (2002) 12 of the Committee of Ministers, thereby emphasising the role of education in cultivating democratic and ethical standards of interpersonal communication. The objectives of the latter phase of “Education for Democratic Citizenship” directly coincide with those of “Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe” in including a joint-effort “European Year of Citizenship through Education” in 2005. The development of materials to facilitate the dissemination of information, an exploitation of information technology for the purpose of enhanced communication and exchange, an emphasis on co-operation among various practitioners of member states, and the organisation of conferences and workshops all provide a common ground for promoting human rights standards, life skills for democratic citizenship, and intercultural/interfaith communication.

V. Intersectoral Contributions to Intercultural Dialogue: Culture and Heritage

“The new role and new responsibilities of Ministers of Culture in initiating intercultural dialogue, with due regard for cultural diversity”

In the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, the Council of Europe has mobilized to amplify its role in facilitating intercultural and inter-religious communication as a means of responding to conflict, advocating conflict prevention through cultural policy and including dialogue as an element of the struggle against terror. With the formation of the GT-Dialogue working party, the sector of culture and heritage, in addition to education and youth, was empowered to play an increasingly important role in managing the conflicts that threaten the order and stability of democratic society. In light of the Council of Europe’s mission to defend human rights and peaceful conflict resolution, current events have implored the organisation’s development of more specific initiatives in the area of diversity management. While the meetings of GT-Dialogue have conjured numerous questions concerning the effectiveness of dialogue in international relations and the roles of various member states and regions in future programmes to promote dialogue, an informal meeting of the European Ministers was organised in Strasbourg, 17-18 February 2003 to specifically analyse such matters. Including culture ministers from member states, candidates for membership and observer states, the meeting provided a forum for the discussion of the challenges facing the cultural sector and possible proposals for future action plans. Most importantly, the thirty Culture Ministers who participated in the meeting created a framework that would shape the Council of Europe’s priorities in cultural policy for several years to come, concentrating their efforts on the most urgent themes of

“culture and conflict,” “diversity and dialogue,” “governance and intersectoral co-operation” and “intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention.”

The conclusions of the informal Strasbourg meeting were enlarged upon several months later at a conference of the European Ministers responsible for Cultural Affairs held in Opatija, Croatia 20-22 October 2003. With the participation of not only the ministers of culture of 48 states but also representatives from Japan, the League of Arab States, the European Central Initiative and the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organisation (ALESCO), the opportunity was seized to continue to redefine the role of the Council of Europe’s cultural sector in promoting dialogue and respecting cultural diversity. The results of this conference led to the development of a renewed action plan for the project “Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention,” an effort that had been launched in 2002, and a confirmation that the “Council of Europe is convinced that culture, being an excellent means of communication, is a factor that must be taken into account both in the prevention of conflict situations and in post-conflict social reconciliation.” In light of these decisions, a commitment to promoting dialogue and co-operation among ethnic and cultural groups on a local scale and between regions and member states emerged as a reaffirmed priority in the Council of Europe’s cultural policy agenda for several years to come.

“Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention”

Though launched before the Strasbourg and Opatija conferences defining the new responsibilities of the Ministers of Culture, the project on “Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention” is representative of innovative cultural policy on the advancement of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Targeting the local, regional, and national levels of civil society, this initiative aims to promote dialogue as a means of encouraging mutual understanding and reconciliation as well as taking measures to prevent conflict among cultural and religious communities. The project underscores the importance of using dialogue to tackle challenging and controversial issues though carefully acknowledges that such dialogue must never be exploited to create divisions along cultural and ethnic lines.

One of the project’s most essential elements is its research focus, supporting the compilation of investigative case studies, analysing policies of dialogue to aid politicians in decision-making, and identifying areas of good practice. Most importantly, the project’s research has maintained a focus on the causes of cultural, religious and ethnic conflict, an effort that will aid the Council of Europe in deciding its future action plans and priorities. As such, the research conducted as an aspect of “Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention” has allowed the project to become linked with the objectives of the Integrated Project “Responses to Violence in Everyday Life in a Democratic Society.”

The project’s agenda has been quite broad, with its activities during 2002-2004 supported by four pillars of action areas defined early on in the project’s formulation.

Research conducted on the causes of conflict in multicultural society is characterized by its implications for other undertakings adopted by Directorate General IV in such areas as intercultural education, conflict resolution, or democratic citizenship. Likewise, the project has aided in defining the Council of Europe's general mission concerning the prevention of violence through dialogue and cultural policy with its emphasis on creating a framework of "concepts and standards." Through ministerial and expert colloquy, the project has endeavoured to "adopt...an appropriate pan-European cultural co-operation strategy" that is built on the insight of "representatives of the various religions, experts in intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, conflict prevention and human rights, representatives of international organisations, foundations and NGOs, and cultural players working on intercultural communication projects." In this manner, the project has encouraged co-operation among institutions, experts, and other participants in research and colloquy initiatives and has paved the way for further collaboration among these key actors in the development of cultural policy.

One of the most significant forums for analysis of cultural and religious tension and the role of dialogue between diverse communities took place in Strasbourg 7-9 October 2002, centring on the topic "Dialogue serving intercultural and inter-religious communication." Throughout the discussion, a recurring theme proved to be the inaccuracy and potential dangers of attempting to understand conflict, and particularly terrorism, along purely cultural and religious divisions within societies. By adopting a model of ethnic conflict for understanding international relations, such as the "clash of civilisations" model that had been introduced by Samuel Huntington, cultural tension nearly becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, with every group finding the need to increasingly define itself against "the Other" or "the rest." According to participant Mr Neci Nedimoğlu of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "11 September...resulted with an emerging consciousness: a mutual realization of the inadequate knowledge of the other, of the need for forging new relationships of attaining solidarity through the respect for cultural diversity...the broad understanding...was reached that terrorism does not have a religion, does not have a geography, it can not be and should not be defined on cultural lines and can not have any justification." A tendency to classify conflicts within a framework of fault-line and civilisational clashes would defeat the purpose of developing dialogue in order to spread knowledge and create relationships of respect and co-operation among members of various cultural and religious communities.

Specifically, the threat of terrorism has created a situation of viewing conflict within the frame of "Islam's bloody borders,"¹ to borrow Samuel Huntington's terminology. According to Dr. Hassan Hanafi, such perceptions fuel a vicious cycle of stereotyping within the Western and Islamic worlds, perpetuating an unnecessary emphasis on cultural and religious differences while ignoring that most clashes, even when mobilized along ethnic and religious divisions, are fundamentally "conflicts of interests, especially

¹ Huntington, Samuel. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. London: Simon & Schuster UK Ltd. 1996. 254.

economic and political interests." Hanafi's contribution of *The Meaning of Cultural Conflict* to the seminar presents the level of complexities involved with the struggle against terrorism, particularly in describing paradoxical cycles of stereotyping stimulated by "the presence of West in the Arab and Muslim World and the presence of Islam in the West."

On the contrary, participants were increasingly in agreement on the point that the September 11th attacks created an urgency for engaging in intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, described by HRH Prince Hasan bin Tallal of Jordan as a signal that "We must therefore learn to work together globally, recognizing our common ground." At the same time, this issue creates certain complications, particularly within the context of European integration. The deepening of European integration has provided an environment for the promotion of dialogue, peaceful conflict resolution, and constructive co-operation; yet identities, including their cultural and linguistic dimensions, are not amalgamated. Thus one of the most fundamental challenges of intercultural dialogue and education arises: how to preserve the individuality of distinct identities while simultaneously promoting conditions of solidarity and cohesion?

From this perspective, Necil Nedimoğlu, in his "Reflections of the Rapporteur General" of the colloquy, noted that Europe thus provides a rich environment as a "multinational 'laboratory'," where dialogue may serve as a bridge for managing complexities of intercultural interaction. Furthermore, the Council of Europe emerges as a logical actor in initiating dialogue, for, as we have seen, dialogue rests on a commitment to defending tolerance and equality, certainly one of the most vital elements of the organisation's core mission.

These issues, very thoroughly explored in the 7-9 October 2002 colloquy on "Dialogue serving intercultural and inter-religious communication," represent perhaps the most far-reaching implications of the project "Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention." Undoubtedly, the questions posed throughout the forum provide a basis for the project's three other pillars, those of "co-operation networks," "European identity as a dimension of cultural projects," and "flagship initiatives." Since the adoption of the project's 2002-2004 action plan, significant attention has been devoted to encouraging co-operation among regions of Scandinavia and the Russian Federation as well as the Caucasus and Mediterranean by encouraging "training, creativity, exchange of information and support in organising cultural events." The attempt to establish "co-operation networks" is further aided by programs involving "shared cities," projects involving the promotion of dialogue in cities that have been historically shared among diverse groups, and "peace enclaves," the compilation of case studies illustrating situations in which the retention of "multicultural identity" has provided a means for peaceful conflict resolution. The pillar involving "European identity as a dimension of cultural projects" encourages the use of artistic expression in intercultural dialogue, embracing the goal of using the restoration of archives and training courses for curators, publishers, librarians and archivists to promote mutual understanding. Finally,

“flagship initiatives” have involved exhibitions and artistic and cultural programmes to increase awareness of the uniqueness of various ethnic and religious communities and of the similarities among diverse cultures.

Heritage Education

Another initiative managed within the sector of culture is worthy of mention here, that of heritage education. The development of curricula for “heritage classes” is by no means a new project for the Council of Europe and certainly attests to the organisation’s experience in providing education, particularly within the realm of intercultural relations. Heritage classes, which had begun in France in the early 1980’s, have developed into an opportunity for teachers to expose primary and secondary school students to new environments and in the process, allow them to discover the historical, artistic, literary, architectural, or scientific achievements of various cultures. It should be noted that these classes have been met with success in France and Belgium and are in recent years becoming more and more focused on strengthening the notion of a shared European heritage.

One of the most significant aspects of these classes is that the programme allows students to learn from their experiences and be able to understand other cultures through art, emotion, and communication. An important element of the courses involves international exchange and the opportunities that the young students gain to communicate with members of various cultural and religious origins. As previously noted, the growing “European dimension” within the heritage education programme has embraced the objective of making “young people aware of the great cultural diversity of Europe and also to alert them to what they have in common” while also placing emphasis on the life skills necessary for co-operation in multicultural societies.

VI. Intersectoral Contributions to Intercultural Dialogue: Youth

“Youth Building Peace and Intercultural Dialogue”-an initiative linked to “Youth Promoting Human Rights, Human Dignity and Social Cohesion” and “Youth Participation in Active Citizenship.”

Just as the cultural sector was mobilized to take greater action in the area of dialogue following the September 11th attacks and the formation of GT-Dialogue, the youth sector has likewise seen an intensification of priorities on the role of dialogue in reconciliation and conflict prevention. Relevant youth campaigns have been, for the most part, structured as three-year programmes mirroring many of the campaigns and training sessions that have encompassed the sector’s previous work; the most important development has thus been the promotion of an inter-religious dimension. The role of the youth sector has recently concentrated on social cohesion as well as the prevention of violence, a timely response to Secretary General Walter Schwimmer’s

affirmation that "Intercultural dialogue, including the religious dimension, is a key factor in conflict prevention and in post-conflict reconciliation."

The project entitled "Youth Building Peace and Intercultural Dialogue" embodies previously tested methods of youth-led activities and activist training as a means of managing conflict. However, the youth sector has been empowered by the adoption of a new theme concerning the creation of a "culture of peace." While inevitably linked to the efforts of the education sector to combat prejudices through the teaching of democratic standards and the development of pedagogical tools to promote tolerance, this youth project relies on "multicultural youth activities...[and] the role of intercultural (including inter-religious) dialogue in the promotion of peace." This initiative is designed to challenge Europe's youth to consider resolutions for existing conflicts, to develop strategies for conflict prevention, and to engage in intercultural exchange that builds confidence and mutual understanding.

Perhaps the most innovative aspect of this project is that it defines its programme by affirming that intercultural dialogue and its religious dimension represents "a prerequisite for the development of a 'culture of peace'." While the project's emphasis is on activities that involve youth training and encourage young people to assume leadership roles, the initiative is a multilateral effort that likewise seeks to reach out to youth organisations, particularly in advancing strategies for peaceful conflict resolution, diversity management, and the strengthening of democratic principles. Also targeted are governments and policy-makers, whose roles are crucial in shaping effective plans to promote democratic citizenship and intercultural co-operation among youth. Finally, the youth sector's objectives in providing training and developing/disseminating materials among educators and organisers of youth training programs directly contribute to the efforts undertaken by the education sector, in addition to the goals of "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe."

It should be noted that the project's objectives seek to combat "everyday violence," an effort that compliments the education and cultural sectors' recent concentration on the development of skills for life in democratic, multicultural societies. Since 2003, special attention has been given to the development of a Euro-Mediterranean training course on "intercultural dialogue and human rights education," training sessions to study the conflicts of South East Europe and the Caucasus, and the development of strategies to curb youth violence.

"Youth Building Peace and Intercultural Dialogue," a project that encompasses numerous areas of thematic focus, has fundamental ties to other youth initiatives, namely "Youth Promoting Human Rights, Human Dignity and Social Cohesion" and "Youth Participation and Active Citizenship." The co-operative nature of these projects again illustrates the wide scope of subject matters included in the Council of Europe's overall mission to generate dialogue, as well as the reality that any lasting success in

these areas requires intersectoral co-operation and the implementation of programmes treating intercultural relations from various perspectives. In addition to encouraging dialogue, both intercultural and inter-religious, the project on "Youth Promoting Human Rights, Human Dignity and Social Cohesion" emphasises solidarity by targeting campaigns against xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance and by upholding principles of solidarity and human dignity. The initiative concerning "Youth Participation and Active Citizenship," though less explicitly involved with the promotion of dialogue, is a programme that effectively compliments the mission of Education for Democratic Citizenship. In doing so, the project engages youth in leadership training, encourages participation in non-governmental and youth organisations, and in particular highlights the importance of equality and participation of minority groups in democratic processes.

VII. Council of Europe Initiatives: A Specific Approach Among Institutions

In order to fully understand the Council of Europe's role in adopting fresh measures to promote intercultural dialogue and education, it is imperative that these programmes are viewed within the larger spectrum of the undertakings of various other institutions. The implications of the Council of Europe's newly launched projects, its specificity in intercultural education and the manner in which recently conceived programmes relate to the organisation's core mission become much clearer in comparison. While a certain degree of overlap exists among various institutions' projects involving intercultural dialogue, this document elucidates the Council of Europe's distinct objectives and action plans through an analysis of the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as well as the European Commission.

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, comprised of 190 Member States and six Associate Members, has adopted a mission to "forge universal agreements on emerging ethical issues" and thus embraces intercultural dialogue as an instrument to "promote international co-operation...in the fields of education, science, culture and communication." While UNESCO's involvement in intercultural dialogue certainly encompasses the goal of cultivating attitudes of mutual understanding across diverse communities, it also defines its projects as an effort "to create the conditions for true dialogue, based upon respect for commonly shared values and the dignity of each civilisation and culture."

Fundamental differences between UNESCO's specificity and that of the Council of Europe are immediately apparent after examining the principles that underlie these organisation's motivations for promoting intercultural dialogue. Secretary General Walter Schwimmer has described the Council of Europe's primary goal as a mission "to achieve a greater unity between its 45 member states in safeguarding individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law, principles which form the basis of all genuine democracy and which touch the lives of all Europeans in many different ways."

Yet UNESCO has defined its work in terms of “ensuring space for and freedom of expression to all the world’s cultures” and asserts that “while each culture draws from its own roots, it must fail to blossom without contact with other cultures.” In the context of the Council of Europe, the ethical principles governing democratic society are always at the foreground of the organisation’s initiatives; in an effort to uphold exemplary human rights standards, defending democracy emerges as the primary outlet for creating a culture of peace and encouraging equality and social cohesion. On the contrary, UNESCO approaches its mission with much heavier focus on the role of culture and likewise embraces the notion that civilisations flourish when processes of cultural diffusion are at work. Thus, while the Council of Europe’s projects are continually linked to education for democratic citizenship and campaigns to train youth for life in democratic society, UNESCO approaches intercultural dialogue with the goal of encouraging cultural development. Also noteworthy is the two organisations’ differing perspective of multiculturalism: since the 1970’s, educational projects of the Council of Europe have emphasised multiculturalism as a reality that must be recognized so that the challenges posed by diversity are managed successfully. However, UNESCO defines multiculturalism not so much as a ‘cause’ for policy but as an ‘effect’: UNESCO has stressed that it is only when multicultural forces are at work that individual cultures may prosper.

UNESCO’s dialogue programmes are primarily organised along geographic lines, each project handling aspects of intercultural dialogue within a specific region. Thus their mission includes such programmes as “Intercultural Dialogue in Central Asia,” “The Slave Route,” “The Routes of al-Andalus,” “Mediterranean Programme,” “Caucasus Project,” and “Arabia Plan.” This structure, and UNESCO’s concentration on cultural diffusion, may be in part motivated by the fact that the institution includes 190 Member States from various regions as opposed to the Council of Europe’s 45. As a significant component of each of UNESCO’s projects, research is emphasised as a means of understanding the intricacies of celebrating diversity while promoting a sense of common heritage. In this manner, the importance of study and investigation in the organisation’s projects mirrors the prominence of research initiatives within the Council of Europe. At the same time, it should be recognized that much of UNESCO’s research is centred on the histories of the regions treated by respective projects. As for the Council of Europe, broader questions have received the spotlight, such as that of understanding the role of culture and religion in conflicts.

Perhaps the most important difference between the two institutions’ approaches is that UNESCO places a rather heavy emphasis on history while the Council of Europe appears chiefly concerned with the strengthening of democracy and civic value. Indeed, UNESCO’s work on intercultural dialogue is “intended to improve people’s knowledge of the past so that they are better prepared for the future. Its purpose is to link culture, science, technology and development.” Thus, UNESCO has developed projects such as that of “The Slave Route,” an effort that calls attention to historical exchanges of culture that occurred across the Atlantic while simultaneously seeking to increase

dialogue on the subject of the slave trade. Similarly, "The Routes of al-Andalus" explores historical information extensively in order to promote a dialogue of co-existence among Muslims, Jews and Christians.

Finally, it is essential to recognize that UNESCO's programme has not developed a concept of the "religious dimension" of intercultural dialogue in a manner that characterizes the Council of Europe's most recent initiatives. While UNESCO does treat the subject of religion within such projects as "The Routes of al-Andalus" and the "Caucasus Project," its efforts are much more focused on cultivating a broader sense of mutual understanding among the world's various regions. The Council of Europe's response to the attacks of 11 September has been focused on analysing features of religion as "cultural facts" that are entwined with current conflicts, terrorism, and relations between Europe and the Middle East. In contrast, UNESCO has developed the approach of the "Arabia Plan": concentrating on inter-civilisational dialogue and co-operation with the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALESCO) on matters of cultural policy instead of centring efforts on the promotion of interfaith dialogue within specific regions.

The European Commission

The European Commission, as an institution of the European Community and deeply connected with the deepening of European integration, has likewise defined its specificity in the context of intercultural dialogue, conducting programmes that sometimes serve as a direct compliment to the work of the Council of Europe. Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, declared at the Conference on Intercultural Dialogue in Brussels 20 March 2002 that the European Commission's work is driven by the idealistic visions of "a future free of fear, peaceful progress for the good of all, defence of human values against violence, hatred and discrimination." With these goals in mind, the institution also guards the experience of European integration as a motivation for policy involving intercultural dialogue, in a manner similar to that of the Council of Europe's definition of projects in terms of upholding democratic and human rights standards.

The European Commission has incorporated intercultural dialogue as a facet of the Jean Monnet Project "European Integration in University Studies," which represents a significant departure from the strategies embraced by the Council of Europe. The Commission approaches dialogue as an aspect of integration, an element that must be incorporated with the development of mutual understanding among European Union member states in order to support relations both within and outside of the EU. However, the Council of Europe may be viewed as an organisation not necessarily focused on specific integration issues but rather on the complications that arise from an enlarging Europe. To be more precise, the Council of Europe is concerned with the challenges faced by European societies characterized by democracy and

multiculturalism, integration representing one facet that may contribute to the rise of such challenges.

Another point of incongruity between the European Commission and the Council of Europe lies in the fact that the Council places significant emphasis on the individual level, including the rights, responsibilities, and skills of individual citizens. While the role of the individual is without question an area of importance for institutions of the European Union, the European Commission provides a fresh approach to intercultural dialogue by embracing the perspective of Europe as a distinct actor in international relations. Thus, while it is necessary to facilitate dialogue among EU members, the Commission likewise highlights the duty of the integrated states to engage in dialogue with countries of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. In addition to embracing a unique perspective, the European Commission has also developed specific strategies concerning not only interfaith dialogue but also the *role of religion* in interfaith dialogue. Such a strategy suggests that the common values of religions be exploited to facilitate the process of cultural enrichment and to inspire "hope," "creativity" and "wisdom" as instruments of co-operation "in combating poverty and injustice." To reaffirm the value of this approach, Romano Prodi has quoted Chief Rabbi Sirat, who urged "the leaders of nations to make every effort to create and consolidate, on the national and international levels, a world of solidarity and peace based on justice."

Both institutions are particularly focused on education, recognizing education as an invaluable tool for building stable, ethical and prosperous societies. However, Council of Europe initiatives have placed enormous weight on teacher training and the restructuring of curricula for primary and secondary school children, whereas the European Commission has, as part of the Bologna Process on a "European higher education area," developed programs to encourage the mobility of students and teachers. Furthermore, programs such as Erasmus, facilitating student and teacher exchange programmes, have led to the development of a "hands-on" approach to intercultural communication that may be adopted by pupils and educators alike as perhaps the most effective form of "training." The European Commission's strategies on intercultural dialogue have also endorsed the programme of Comenius- European Cooperation on School Education. It is through initiatives such as Comenius that the Commission focuses on the study of languages as a key aspect of intercultural understanding.

Though embracing different strategies and perspectives in the realm of intercultural dialogue, both the European Commission and the Council of Europe retain unique ties to the issue of dialogue- the Commission through its involvement in integration as a history of "reconciliation through dialogue" and the Council as a long-time provider of education and an institution committed to safeguarding human rights. Each institution's work can only serve to enhance the accomplishments of the other.

VIII. "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe": Future Possibilities and Concluding Thoughts

In light of the Council of Europe's work in the area of intercultural dialogue and its role in the domain of international affairs, the recently launched "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe" represents a vital step in enhancing social cohesion and strengthening democracy through intercultural exchange. As dialogue evolves into a "major axis" among Council of Europe programmes, the 2002 project emerges as a channel for more specifically addressing the implications of religious diversity and facilitating cooperation among the institution's cultural and youth sectors, as well Europe's politicians and practitioners.

The project's roots may be clearly traced from earlier Council of Europe initiatives; its foundation embodies both the institution's focus on education strategies and its more recent objective of responding to conflict through the promotion of dialogue. Indeed, the challenges posed by a religiously diverse European society in the context of intercultural dialogue and education has been of thematic importance as early as the May 1982 Aquila, Italy symposium, and has reappeared as an area addressed by projects and official texts adopted throughout the 1990's. In the recent context of an enlarged Europe, the project likewise represents an instrument by which the Council of Europe may reaffirm its fundamental values as an inter-governmental institution stressing tolerance and equality in its aim to promote unity and strengthen democracy. Key areas of the project's logistics also rely on techniques and organization methods that have proven reliable in the realm of the education sector's initiatives. In acknowledging the value of conferences in facilitating exchange, developing methods for enhanced teacher training, and producing a compendium of examples of good practice, the 2003-2005 action areas for "Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue in Europe" echo the approach of such earlier projects as "Democracy, Minority Human Rights" and "Education for Democratic Citizenship."

At the same time, the current initiative has distinguished itself as "innovative in its theory, yet with a practical hands-on approach." The cornerstones for such a project may have been positioned early on in the Council of Europe's work in promoting intercultural dialogue though the programme itself is unique in its explicit analysis of religion as a key element of culture. While educational projects have previously included the study of major religions within a historical context, teachers and pupils are now being challenged to think critically about the role of religion in shaping the values and practices of cultural communities and to build bridges of exchange across such diverse communities. It is therefore logical to assess the developing project, as did the European Ministers of Education in 2003, as a "major contribution to the shared goals of mutual understanding, respect, and learning to live together." The project is also distinct in its emphasis on capitalizing available information technology, emphasizing the value of publishing and distributing a CD-ROM for members of the teaching profession and launching a website as a forum of exchange in the development of

learning strategies that promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. As the programme likewise encourages intersectoral and inter-institutional co-operation, the 2003 Athens, Greece Declaration of the European Ministers of Education recognizes the project as an instrument seeking to “build understanding of the European dimension of education in the context of globalisation, by introducing respect for human rights and diversity, foundations for managing diversity, openness to other cultures, inter-religious dialogue and ‘Euro-Arab’ dialogue.”

Defining the social and cultural challenges of 21st century Europe, the current project bridges gaps between programmes concerning the education of migrants and the strengthening of democratic principles and practice of earlier decades. Built on solid foundations but applying innovative techniques, celebrating diversity but resolved in advancing a sense of shared values, “Intercultural Education and the Challenge of Religious Diversity and Dialogue” represents a crucial step along the path to cultivating more harmonious relations within a multicultural Europe.