*SIESC Newsletter, Sept. 2017*

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 *Looking back at Vichy 2017*

About 70 participants from 12 European countries met at Vichy in France from July 24th to 30th, 2017. The colleagues of CdEP (Chrétiens dans l’Enseignement Public) had chosen **“Fraternity – a challenge to our time”** as a topic, both because it is a fundamental topic for our existence and because it is getting more and more topical every year. Already at the beginning the hosts awakened the universal longing for fraternity by songs and gestures. On the first day the educational philosopher **Béatrice Moulin** gave in **“Educating to fraternity“** a survey on the conditions, the possibilities and the chances of contributing to strengthening the fraternal living together at school. From the very start the various conditions from the French laicist public school to the Catholic private school in many countries caused a lot of discussions. On the second day the power point presentation prepared by the sociologist **Jérôme Lagoutte** (who could not come at short notice) presented **“Fraternity in the French legal system”**. It became obvious how difficult it is to bring to fruition the originally religious idea in a secular respectively laicist social system. Finally the theologian **Bertrand Dumas** introduced us by means of **“Brotherhood – a divine promise in little human steps”** in a very realistic and close to life way to aims and possibilities of realizing this attitude relying on a religious conviction.

In four groups of different languages, consciously composed out of several countries, the quite different experiences and expectations were shared. One evening groups came together for lace-making, painting mandalas, singing, and philosophizing in workshops.

And we got to know the department of Allier: by an evening of traditional songs and dances, a guided tour of Vichy, a visit to the Castle of Lapalisse, to the abbey of Chantelle, to the opera house of Vichy and finally during the excursion by a visit to the capital Moulins and the singular national museum of theatre costumes as well as to the former Cluniac monastery of Souvigny, where we were surprised by an organ concert and a Medieval festivity.

The personnel at the Centre omnisports at Vichy accommodated and fed us well. But first of all a rather large number of colleagues of CdEP cared for us excellently and prepared and organised the meeting by intensive activities. Without intending to lessen the contributions of the other colleagues, SIESC would like to thank especially Gabrielle Gaspard, Christine Antoine, and “our lady on the spot” Sylvie Paquet.

The colleagues in France know how to create days that stimulate thoughts, are festive and entertaining.

Wolfgang Rank

 *Offers by the members of SIESC and by SIESC for young colleagues*

After the president’s appeal to the responsible colleagues of the member associations to provide information about the special offers for young colleagues, some of them answered, others didn‘t. After considerations in the Executive Board and the Council the suggestions can be summed up as follows:

- The needs of the young ones expressed by themselves are observed. Then special events for the young colleagues are organised.

- At meetings of young teachers beginning their work in their first year they get information on the legal position, the relevant authorities, the possibilities of getting help and support.

- In larger cities working groups on professional topics of single subjects are offered (questions of didactics and methods, on teaching material etc.) which provide help for work.

- Young colleagues prefer tasks of short duration with immediate results.

- For special tasks in the association homogeneous teams of about the same age are formed, which then grow “older” together in their task and thus stay together.

- Young ones often expect concrete experiences or mediation for the encounter with Jesus or God.

- Events for teachers together with students are offered. E. g. a circle of Young Pedagogues formed by young teachers and students, meeting every two months, talking about social and religious questions and also about their scientific activities.

- Days of the family, in which the whole family can participate, combine topics on the profession, on meditation, on spirituality (seen not only from the religious viewpoint) with personal encounter.

- In general the ways of exchange by Erasmus+ are seen as positive.

- SIESC, however, wants to offer a special form of teacher exchange. Two young teachers of different countries get to know each other during a SIESC meeting. They arrange to both host the other one during the school year for a week, so that the guest can participate in the school life and the lessons of the host. That would be a very personal, relatively economical and perhaps more successful form of exchange.

- To make that possible the member associations of SIESC ought to promote the participation of young colleagues in SIESC meetings, at best financially as well.

- It will be considered how the SIESC website could serve in establishing contacts between the young colleagues.

- A group of Council members will develop this project and offers their help:

Marius Boldor (AGRU, Romania), Wolfgang Hübl (VCL, Austria), Magdalena Jarc (DKPS, Slovenia), Catherine Le Coz (CdEP, France).

 *DKPS - Slovenia*

Up till now DKPS has existed for 27 years. We are glad to have two new associations of DKPS, at Postojna and at Bela Krajina. The main activities are: the seminars, the magazine Vzgoja, the voluntary work and the international collaboration.

THE SEMINARS

In the year 2016 we arranged 16 seminars for teachers and educators with 228 participants. Our activities are open to members and non-members. We announce our activities by our website ([www.dkps.si](http://www.dkps.si)), a newsletter, e-education (every two weeks), in the magazine Vzgoja and otherwise. Some titles of seminars: Personal journal, Encouraging the development of self-confidence and self-esteem, Disturbing, invisible and traumatized pupils.

THE MAGAZINE VZGOJA, THE CALENDAR VZGOJA

The magazine Vzgoja has been published four times a year since 1999. The magazine consists of sections: Editorial, Central topic, Our conversation, Ethics at school, Being a teacher in the classroom and the educational programme, The parents, Domains of education, Voluntary work, We have read, Life of DKPS, Experience, Calendar of announcements.

THE VOLUNTARY WORK

has existed in DKPS for 16 years. It is called “Human beings for others”. In 2016, 50 persons have done voluntary work in kindergartens, with refugees, old, handicapped, young persons with special needs.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Since 1992 we have been members of SIESC, which unites teachers all over Europe. Already in 1993 we invited representatives of SIESC to Slovenia, who prepared a two-days meeting for Slovene teachers entitled “The European school and its Christian dimension”. Up till now we have prepared three SIESC meetings: at Ljubljana, at Kranj, and at Maribor. We write for SIESC-Today and participate in the meetings.

DKPS is present throughout Slovenia by regional associations, which are situated in the towns of Ljutomer, Celje, Mozirje, Kranj, Tolmin, Kočevje, Novo Mesto, Postojna, Trebnje, Ljubljana, and Bela Krajina.

Every two weeks there are meetings of the Young Pedagogues.

Magdalena Jarc

*From the SIESC Council*

● At the elections of the Executive Board of SIESC the following decisions were taken:

Cathérine Le Coz and Gisela Gerhardt were elected vice-presidents,

Christine Antoine treasurer and Annelore Hecker secretary general.

Wolfgang Rank stays president, as ruled by the statutes, for one year; in 2018 a new president will be elected.

● The Council has admitted the AIDU (Associazione Italiana Docenti Universitari) ([www.aiduassociazione.it](http://www.aiduassociazione.it)) as a full member of SIESC on the request of its president Roberto Cipriani.

● In SIESC a lot must be translated from and into the languages English, French, and German. That’s why the Council searches for colleagues who are ready to help with the translation for SIESC-Today, the newsletter, or for the annual meetings.

● On our website most of the member associations present themselves under the heading “Links, members”. Those texts date to the year 2011. The member associations are requested to re-read their presentation and to adapt it if necessary.

Tier

*Invitation to Trier 2018*

**Next SIESC meeting at Trier from July 24th to 29th/30th, 2018**

**Topic: “Law – freedom – responsibility”**

By freedom in a democratic state under the rule of law we first of all think of a sphere protected by the state within which the individual can develop freely. But what is the relationship between the laws of the community and the freedom of the individual? Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote that freedom without obedience to the law meant arbitrariness, obedience without freedom meant slavery. In responsibility both are realized, obedience and freedom.

We will illustrate the concepts from various perspectives:

* **From a political-philosophical point of view:** Some stages in the long evolution of the concepts of state and of freedom from the Middle Ages to the present will be the topic of the lecture.
* **From a pedagogical-psychological point of view:** Work with children and youngsters displaying behavioural problems demands high pedagogical intuition and courage to use unorthodox procedures. But how are single case decisions and particular regulations argued?
* **From a theological point of view:** What concepts of law and freedom does the Bible communicate?

Trier is situated in the central valley of the Mosel, near the border to Luxemburg. It is the oldest German town. Nowhere else north of the Alps can the times of the Romans be experienced as authentically as here. Nine UNESCO world heritage sites are found at close distance.

The optional excursion at the end of our meeting will take us to the town of Luxemburg, then to Echternach, the main place of “Luxemburg’s Little Switzerland”, so attractive for tourists.

SIESC and the preparatory team invite you cordially.

Gisela Gerhardt, Vice-president of SIESC