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Content

Description of the project.....2

Some input about identity.....5

The Image of the “Other”/the Neighbour in the School Textbooks of the Balkan Countries - Fotini I. Toloudi.....6

“Balkan Identity Reexamined” - prof. Maria Todorova.....10

“Balkan vicious circles” - Ivaylo Ditchev.....14

“Global or Local? New Identities in Unified Europe” - Juliana Roth.....17

“EU Cultural Policy and the Creation of a Common European Identity” - Heather Field.....27

Comparative study of youth policies and legislation in states party to the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe.....41

Youth information policy and principles for youth information services - ERYCA.....47

Program of “Balkan Co-operation and European Integration”.....49

Expectations and presentation of the participants’ organizations 51

“Youth emigration/immigration – escape of identity or forced mobility?” - discussion.....54

“Freedom of self-expression” - work in small groups.....57

“Virtual identity” - on-line simulation game.....59

“Unisex” - confrontation game.....62

Evaluations.....63

List of participants.....64

Balkan Identity and Youth Information Polycy - Discription of the project

Identification of the problems and needs:

1. Difficulties in organising youth exchanges and European Voluntary Services between South - Eastern Europe and other European countries because of the broken links and significant changes in the last years;
2. The lack of knowledge of the minorities groups and of disadvantaged people in South–Eastern Europe in organisation of youth exchanges and EVS projects.
3. Information, cultural and political barriers between Balkans and West-European countries;
4. Disintegration in the Balkan region versa integration in Europe;
5. The lack of youth information flow between Balkan countries and between those countries and other European countries; undeveloped network of youth information centres on the Balkans;
6. The identity problems of youth in South–Eastern Europe;
7. The negative youth behaviour and attitude to the surrounding reality; passive and resistance youth.

How will this project meet the needs?

Giving an opportunity to youth organisations from the South - Eastern Europe and from other parts of Europe (16 organisations from 12 countries) to meet and to share experience about youth information policy and about youth exchanges management (during the contact seminar “Balkan co-operation and European integration” and during the training course “Youth exchanges management and youth information”), the project will try to enhance the active participation of young people in the integration process and to stimulate them to think about their identity and their place in the modern society.

By the help of the developed information materials (CD-ROM – “Youth resources in Internet”, website and brochures) the project “Balkan identity and youth information policy” will facilitate the co-operation of youth organisations on the Balkans. Additionally, establishing the “Balkan youth

information network" the project will create sustainable communications and efficient contacts between youth information centers in South-Eastern Europe and in other European countries and in this way will contribute to the integration process in Europe.

Last but not least, all the planed events will encourage the ability of young people from Balkans to organize youth exchanges and European Voluntary Services and thus will facilitate the networking process in Europe.

The project will train young leaders and young people how to use modern media and communications and the methods of open & distance multimedia learning in the youth work. "Balkan identity and youth information policy" will also try to provide knowledge to disadvantaged youth how to use new media and information technologies in the youth work.

The integration process in South–Eastern Europe and the European integration are closely related. The recent political, economical and cultural transformations in whole Eastern Europe and especially on the Balkans have changed the European map, have broken the old links, stereotypes and visions. The whole set of significant changes and interinfluences in the Balkan region aroused the problem of the identity. The European integration of the region posted a lot of questions related to the identity preservation. The networking process of the Balkans and the establishment of strong links between this region and the other European countries could be stimulated by using the potential of youth information and youth exchanges and involving the modern media. Youth information and youth exchanges are also important instruments for promoting tolerance, understanding and intercultural approach in South–Eastern countries.

All the problematic settings of situation described above and the significant problems in organizing youth exchanges and voluntary services on Balkans have strongly motivated us to seek for tools and measures to overcome those problems and to enhance the abilities of youth organizations from South-Eastern Europe to organize youth exchanges.

Objectives:

1. This project gave an opportunity to young people to discuss the problems of Balkan identity and to exchange ideas about the disintegration and integration process in South-Eastern Europe;
2. This project focus the attention of young people on the role of youth information and youth exchanges in the integration process;
3. This project explored youth information as tool against violence and intolerance (comparing European experience and Balkan experience);
4. The project enhanced the ability of the youth organisations in the pre – accession countries in South - Eastern Europe to organise European Voluntary Services and youth exchanges
5. This project explored youth information and modern media as instruments for future development of youth exchanges and European voluntary services in the pre - accession countries in South - Eastern Europe.
6. This project encouraged the development of youth information policy in the Balkan region using the European experience.
7. This project showed the ways of enhancing the youth participation in the society;

Beneficiaries:

1. Youth organisations and youth information centers in Europe which would like to realise common activities with partners from South-Eastern Europe;
2. Direct beneficiaries: all participants in the contact seminar “Balkan cooperation and European integration” and in the training course “Youth exchanges management and youth information” that will receive training during the training course and who will be able be organize follow-up activities;
3. Disadvantaged young people who would like to use modern media & information technologies in their work
4. Youth workers and young people from youth organizations providing youth information and involving or working with disadvantaged young people in South-Eastern Europe;
5. Youth workers and young people from youth organizations developing youth exchanges and working on international level;

Some input about identity

Identity gives us an idea of who we are and of how we relate to the others and to the world, in which we live. Identity marks the ways, in which we are the same and the ways, in which we are different. How are identities connected with the world of media and the images, which surround us? There are a lot of sites on the web where people express their identity.

Identity has many aspects - some of them visible and some - hidden (invisible). One way of looking at the different dimensions is to imagine yourself as an onion. Each layer corresponds to a different part of your identity.

LAYERS:

1. ETHNICAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY - the place where you were born, were you live now, belonging to a minority or not; a region with shared history and common cultural concern.
2. SOCIAL IDENTITY - the feeling of belonging to a particular social group and the role you play in the society (student, doctor, lawyer, banker and teacher).
3. PERSONAL IDENTITY - the part of your identity that you may be able to choose - fan of Ricky Martin, member of political party, style of clothes.
4. VIRTUAL IDENTITY - in Internet everyone could freely choose her/his social, cultural and sexual identity - an old man could be teenager, a girl could be a boy. In this way the individuals construct a new untraditional “virtual identity”.

We believe the identity plays very important role and it is a part in the quality of the relations and general co-operation both between Balkan people and other Europeans. The European integration of the different countries and its people is also strongly influenced by the identities wich they have and choose. That is why we pay special attention on these problems. The other thing which we think is important for the establishment of sustainable civil society and the building of strong relations between all european people is the right and clear youth information policy.

The Image of the 'Other'/the Neighbor in the School Textbooks of the Balkan Countries

by Fotini I. Toloudi

In the 'The Image of the "Other"/The Neighbour in the School Textbooks of the Balkan Countries' we concluding that there is a need for substantial intervention in the school textbooks of the Balkan countries in order to mitigate national prejudices and thus encourage the peaceful coexistence of the various peoples.

The purpose of the paper is to examine school textbooks (mainly history, but also language books) in the Balkan countries and determine what sort of image they present of neighboring peoples and what sort of image they help to create. **It is considered generally important to investigate the image of the 'other', on the one hand because it plays a part in the development of a student's national identity[1], and on the other because it may play a part in the quality of the future relations and general co-operation between the Balkan peoples**. The purpose of the paper is to investigate: i) how historical circumstances and political priorities influence what the books have to say about neighboring peoples; and ii) how far what they say perpetuates political rivalry and a hostile climate in the Balkans.

The presentation of the views is somewhat selective, but also, as far as possible, representative. In most cases, the general framework of the specific research projects and the general observations that the Balkan people put forward are uninfluenced by their national identity. The exception was the conclusions about the image of the Serbs presented in Croatian schoolbooks: the Serbian delegate maintained that the Croatian books treat his fellow Serbs as enemies, while all his Croatian

colleagues believed that their books present the Serbs as brothers. In all other cases, all the researchers reached more or less the same conclusions regarding nationalities and books.

Two initial findings emerged from the investigation of the textbooks: i) there are consistent national stereotypes all over the Balkans; and ii) excessive attention is paid to wars and related events.

As far as the first point is concerned, the research has concluded that the national stereotypes in the Balkans share certain constants, and essentially all that changes is the name of the 'other' to which they are applied. In most cases, each nation-state presents its own members as a 'chosen people', heroes or victims in relation to the 'other'. Thus, for instance, Serbs hate Croats and vice versa; Moslem Albanians hate Moslem Turks, to differentiate themselves in ethnic terms; Greeks hate the unsophisticated or barbaric Turks; Turks hate the scheming, arrogant Greeks... Also, references to minorities are comparatively fewer than references to neighboring nations.

The second point is not unconnected with the first, for it is the existence of national stereotypes that has led to the writing of a history that consists of conflicts and wars. Wars and battles dominate most of the school textbooks, and exaggerated emphasis is given to them. War is presented as a heroic epic, cosmeticized, and held up as a means of gaining liberation. The damage done by military campaigns is not adequately discussed, nor is there any mention of how ordinary people view the role of war. This overemphasis on war keeps nationalist sentiments alive and perpetuates the political tensions in the region.

All the speakers on a Balkan conference concerning these problems stressed the need to find solutions that will help to defuse the tensions created and sustained by the school textbooks. However, some of the delegates were rather cautious and skeptical in their response to certain solutions that were proposed–such as that the references to war should be heavily pruned and replaced with factors that unite the various peoples (cultural characteristics, for instance, folk dances, and so on). The reason for this was that the political climate in the Balkans in the last decade has been such that the professional integrity of both historians and teachers has been severely tested. The Bosnian delegate, for instance, pointed out that it is just as impossible for historians and teachers to respond to a 'Pedagogy of Peace' as it is for schoolchildren to accept a different perception of Serbs, Croats, and Moslems. The scars left by the civil war are

still raw and the school textbooks are perpetuating the climate of tension because most of them were written during the war and have not yet been replaced. Bosnian teachers have a particularly difficult role to play, because in most cases their professional integrity is simply unable to transcend the memories of the conflict, which are still too fresh in their minds. So children learn that the 'bad neighbor' is the Serb or the Croat living within the same country.

Further reservations about cutting down references to war were expressed by the Turkish side. The Turkish academic felt there was a risk that the absence of such references might lead to a historiographical subculture. Both the Turks and the Greeks, he said, particularly those from Asia Minor, are entitled to receive accurate information about the history of the wars between them; so he proposed, instead of excising references to wars, that an assiduous analysis of both war and peace should be given. In the case in point, however, this would seem to be a rather utopian aspiration, since the guidelines for compiling Turkish school textbooks come directly from the Foreign Ministry, with the result, the Turkish academic said, that thirteen-year-olds have strongly nationalistic feelings.

As a number of speakers pointed out, the development of a different perception of cohabitation in the Balkans is not only a matter of wiping out prejudices and reducing the number of references to war in school textbooks. The attitude of the mass media, political priorities, and historical circumstances are equally important factors and either help people to live together or encourage rivalry and reinforce prejudices.

All the same, as far as the part played by schools in developing social and political awareness is concerned, all the speakers without exception stressed the need for intervention in the textbooks in order to implement a pedagogy of peace; and the large audience was enthusiastic in its approval. One indication of the importance the Balkan academic communities attach to the role of school textbooks is the fact that not only are similar research programs under way all over the Balkan Peninsula, but applications have been made for even more. Efforts to date have resulted in major interventions in the content of some Bulgarian and Croatian books and the organization of scientific conferences on similar and related subjects.

Other alternatives proposed during the conference included: i) that a book of Balkan literature be written and used in all the Balkan countries (the proposal came also from the Greek Undersecretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. G. Paskhalidis); ii) that the history textbooks and the national

history of each country be rewritten, focusing on a broad presentation of the cultural past, so that each nation can find alternative solutions to the question of its identity by discovering what it has in common with its neighbors, rather than what divides them; iii) that the role of the West Europe in Balkan history be redefined, and at the same time the history of Western culture be organically incorporated into the history of the East European countries; iv) that the way in which history is taught be changed and the teachers trained accordingly; v) that there be more frequent educational contact; vi) that psychologists, educationalists, and sociologists be involved in deciding the content of school history books so that these will answer their new pedagogical purpose; and vii) that an inter-Balkan scientific organ be set up for the purpose of studying, *inter alia*, controversial historical issues.

Despite all the feverish research that has been going on in this context all over the Balkans in recent years, the political influence of the scientific community extends only to the point where political volition begins. Because to change the way a people is perceived or approached is a political matter. At all events, the efforts made by scientists depend on the degree of approval they receive from the political leadership of their country; and this approval is influenced both by the current political situation and by historical circumstances. Scientists cannot draw up foreign policy guidelines. However, inter-Balkan scientific concord and persistent pursuit of the issue of changing the content of school textbooks in order to cultivate patriotism and not chauvinism can go some way towards securing, if not coercing, the necessary political volition.

Notes

1. National identity is formed in relation to the ‘other’ and evolves in comparison with the ‘other’.

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Balkan Identity Reexamined

Maria Todorova - professor in at the University of Florida

http://www.nettime.org/nettime.w3archive/200011/msg00055.html

"Do Identities Exist and Who Has Them? Some Reflections on Balkan Identities,"

Can we describe this common identity?

The Balkans, as a geopolitical and socio-psychological term, usually means something wild, dark and obscure - at least when seen by the Western eyes. I will take Serbia as a paradigm. Serbia is often seen as irrational and savage. And there is some truth in it. But I don't see it as something bad. Serbia itself simply provokes and challenges the world to consider the very nature of the civilization.

Under the pressure of the Christianity, the Western civilization deeply suppressed what psychoanalysts call Id. Instead of accepting the existence of the Shadow in the man and the society, and trying to make a balance with it, the West either missed the chance to recognize the Shadow in itself, or to affirm it. The Western sexual revolution of the sixties was a cool thing, but it stopped in the middle of its way - it did not deal much with the emancipation of the individual or the other side of the instincts. It rather propagated sexual freedom in its reduced form of another Western instant and shortcut wise sayings of the the-road-less-traveled kind, and similar obscurities. Serbia is (or WAS before October 5, 2000 - as optimists would like to believe) the Reign of the Shadow. But this fact, at least, recognizes the existence of the Shadow - which is the first step towards an attempt to solve the Shadow problem. I believe it's more honest than denying the Shadow. Deny-

ing and suppression lead to the internal contradiction, which is exactly what happens to the West ever since Colombo. And this is very dangerous, especially now. NATO-Serbia conflict in 1999 was a conflict between a powerful schizo and a stubborn savage. (And the truth was victim, as usual.) Well, at the end, how could we describe the Balkan identity? Maybe as _the_last_oasis_of_sincere_intolerance_.

How can we define a coherent cultural and social identity of the Balkan area baring in mind its characteristic as a crossroad of different civilizations?

There is no coherent cultural and social identity here. The Balkans is a complicated mixture of Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic. Balkan nations know nothing about each other: the Bulgarians have romantic stereotypes on the Serbs, the Croats believe that each Serb is a natural born killer, the Serbs from Serbia see the Bosnian Serbs as a bunch of primitive shepherds and bear hunters, etc.

On the other hand, everybody here eat, fart and sleep. And overreact. And have many other tribes in their neighborhood. What's common here is that experience of suspicious neighboring. There is another important element of so-called Balkan identity: impossibility to be put in preset categories. It always gets on my nerves when I fill in some stupid on-line form for this and that: each form requires me to choose one of the preset categories for me, which I simply can't do. These forms were created by the Westerners, and the Balkanians don't fit in it.

Is there a global identity being developed in the Balkan area?

I would like that to happen. I would like that hypothetical new global identity to be defined as the resistance to the linear globalization.

Can we defend a broader sense of globalization that would protect traditions and different cultural identities as far as Balkan area and artists working in this area are concerned?

I don't think so. The tribes should remain the tribes. Interest, not love, is what can keep the peace - at least, the interest in living peacefully. And what about the artists? They will network with other artists who do the similar things, no matter where are they from. "Globalization" should not be understood as a given homework to "protect traditions and different

cultural identities".
"Globalization" should be a spontaneous networking with the similar ind viduals.

Do we need a closer cooperation between cultural and educational centers based in the Balkans?

That's what we need all the time - but it must be spontaneous, not a given task.

Are direct communication and cooperation links between Balkan cultural and educational centers strong enough?

I wouldn't say so - as far as I know.

How does multiculturalism and different religions affect communication and cooperation procedures between artists and cultural centers in the Balkan area?

When I communicate with some other Balkan artist, I don't think about his/her religion. This is the last thing I would think about. And multiculturalism is one of the most boring phrases the political correctness has ever invented. I see a person as an individual primarily, whose cultural background may become the object of my interest later - first I'm interested in somebody's attitudes, interests, taste, walk, voice, eyes, hands, legs (if female)... "Multiculturalism" is a word I can't even spell, and I don't use it.

What are the cultural links with other European centers?

I don't know. As far as my job is concerned, I have good links with some British and American and Australian artists. Some other Serbian artists I know are good with the people from Middle European countries, etc. I think it varies from one case to another.

Do Balkan artists express common needs?

Do they know which are their common needs?

Does there a Balkan cultural network already exists and, if it does, can we name it?

Some forms of Balkan cultural networks exist, but I think they are not efficacious enough. And can we name it? My counter-question is: why should we do that?

Would there be an interest in either creating a new one or re-shaping already existing Balkan cultural networks?
My answer would be YES. But this should not be a network just for the network's sake. This should not be just another art managers' network for taking money from the resigned West and for selling crap - this should be initiated by the artists themselves. And this should not be only one network.

Which, according to your opinion, should be the structure and the aims of this network?
The structure: a productive organization with its mailing list.
The aims:
- INFO! Art managers tend to manipulate the information, and the information must reach the artists and belong to them.
- Breeding new initiatives and projects, i.e. the art itself.

The aims should not be:
- Regional conflict resolution (it's a Utopia, and there are other means for that).
- Anything else outside and beyond the art itself.

Center and periphery of culture. How could we state our point of view on the subject?
Maybe I'm wrong, but let's try in this way: the Center is the place with the greatest concentration of artists, while the Periphery is the place with the greatest need for art. These two should meet each other, but it costs. Who will give the money?

Balkan vicious circles

By Ivaylo Ditchev

http://www.access.online.bg/civicnetwork/bt/balkan_vicious_circles.htm

No other region in Europe is as eager to catch up with modernity, as ready to the turn the past into tabula rasa and leap into the future. By comparison, the Russian empire also tried to make up for the historical delay, yet its elites developed, starting in the 19th century, powerful ideologies defending the specific character of Russia and advocating Russia's particular way to modernity. In the Balkans, there is a striking consensus on the benefits of western-style modernization and the duty to become like what were formerly called the "civilized," and today just the "normal" people. After Romanian latinization throughout the 19th century, Turkey perhaps offers the most amazing example of such radical westernization: in the course of a single decade, Mustafa Kemal changed not only the political and religious outlook of the state, but also the alphabet, dress, attitudes to women and family names,implementing reform on a scale far grander than that conceived by his predecessor Peter the Great.

If "historical" delay is regarded as evidence and if there is no alternative to the imitation of a simple comprehensive model, modernization turns into a race where the prize is recognition by the dear West. Neighbours become rivals, all the more dangerous since they have identical weapons at their disposal: glorious past, historical injustices to redress, a population ready to accept anything.

Importation of the model becomes the privileged occupation of Balkan elites. Contrary to the situation in Russia, the party of the "native soil" is

never equal to that of the “pro-westerners”: one imported model can only be opposed to another. In the Bulgarian case, the Russian army model competes with French administration, and Austrian education with German engineering. This suggests why communism was such a success in the Balkans: it served as an overall role model offering simple and clear formulae for transition to modernity - from the village to the city, from family dependence to autonomy, from poverty to mass consumption. In this respect, communism was even a greater success than the German or Italian-made totalitarian model of the 30s which influenced many Balkan countries: if the latter models reinforced the existing social hierarchies, communism seemed to offer the utopia of a social elevator giving the last in line a chance to move up to the top.
That was because the communist ruling elite was not economically, but politically based, i.e. it was dependent on the situation rather than on stable social forms and rules.

The price of this healthy consensus, with few if any dissidents, was external projection of aggression3 targeting the figure of the enemy which seemed to fit into the regional cultural pattern. National consensus has hitherto observed a number of sacred taboos: in Serbia, you may not doubt that Kosovo is the cradle of Serbicity; in Romania, that Romanians are Latins; in Albania, that the Albanian people is at least as old as the Greeks; in Bulgaria, that Macedonians are Bulgarians; in Macedonia, that Macedonians have never been Bulgarians.

On the Balkans, identity is always imposed : you must be what you are said to be. In the etymological sense identity (idem, “this one”) is an index that points at you and you, in turn, point at the others. Balkanites are not what immediate tradition handed down by former generations have made them, since they are eager to break with a shameful past and leap into modernity: thus they risk to become what neighbours call them. Hence, fighting the neighbours becomes a way of fighting themselves. The really shameful tradition - Ottoman, fascist or communist - is suppressed by the tabula rasa impulse, the result being an “invention of tradition” (to use Hobsbawm’s expression) that is much more pronounced than on the rest of the continent. Symbolic victories in wars over names, heroes and myths mark the process of this invention.

The question of Balkan identity has resurfaced since the fall of commu-

nism. Even though hardly anyone in the region will willingly agree to be part of this new European ghetto. There are people who tell you: don't talk about the Balkans, that's what the West wants us to do in order to get rid of us. The paradox: in wishing to escape Balkan identity, we actually prove that we are Balkanic.

The paradox of modernization consists in the wish to catch up with what we call the normal people. The more we force ourselves to be modern and to imitate the West, the farther we lag behind the West. After competing with Western Europe in establishing nation-states and public institutions at the end of the last century, we eagerly proceeded to imitate them as producers in the communist period. In the course of the present third wave of modernization, our imitation strategy has changed: today we want not to produce, but to consume like the normal people; the velvet revolution was a revolution of consumers. The question is: will history repeat itself or will the Balkans find a way out of compulsive repetition?

Global or Local?
New Identities in Unified Europe

Juliana Roth, Munich

1. The Globalization - Localization Paradigm

The modern globalized world has put streams of merchandize, capital, services, people, informations, and ideas on the move. Whenever the question of globalization is addressed, what is meant is economic globalization, which finds expression in global markets, in capital, commodity and information flows, in the world-wide operations of the media. It is also assumed that economic globalization has cultural effects: implicit in the idea of globalization is a notion of the disappearance of cultural differences. As a result of the global economic and political restructuring and the expansion of communication and transportation systems national boundaries and barriers between peoples, countries, and cultures have been lowered or removed altogether. Among other things, this was guided by the hope for cultural convergence and the emergence of universal values, attitudes, practices, and institutions. Reality has shown, though, that there is only little evidence to support the assumption of such a convergence; rather, the globalization of economic and political relations appears to produce socio-cultural consequences which do not support the earlier optimism concerning cultural universalism and the rise of a "global culture".

Indeed, the idea that cultural differences will fade away as people share more media, information and consumption, and participate in similar work environments, has turned out to be a problem rather than a solution. The very concept of economic globalization that implicitly departs from, and explicitly demands and implements, the cultural homogenization of the world, has meanwhile produced a number of unexpected and severe social consequences. Contrary to expectations, the promoted universalism has in many cases strengthened old boundaries and created new ones between religions, ethnic groups, regions or nations. For many, these serious socio-cultural consequences of the globalization process have come as a surprise, but meanwhile the close link between increasing universalism and its opposite side, the growing "ethnification" or "balkanization" on the local level, has become an undisputed reality (cf. Lindner 1994). Or, as the German publicist Marion Gräfin Dönhoff argued in Die Zeit (9/16/1994):

"*Whereever you look, old traditions, national particularities, and local idioms have vanished. Like a water-proof rubber skin, a kind of unified civilization covers the globe. This leads to a yearning for the local, for the familiar which, in turn, leads to a return to the national as a correlate of globalization*".

The course of globalization has introduced new quantities and qualities of cultural diversity in everyday life and has changed many coordinates of our social environment. It has also created an environment for the interactions between individuals from different cultures which is also influenced by cultural counterreactions to the tight grip of economic globalization. As a consequence, we cannot fail to notice that there is

* an increase in the general awareness of the relevance of culture as a factor,

* a growing sensitivity for cultural differences and similarities,

* an increased awareness of the particularities of one's own culture, and, as a result,

* a strengthening of ethnic or cultural self-awareness.

This is the background before which we must understand why every opening of a new McDonalds branch, Walt-Disney shop, Benetton boutique or Coca-Cola factory anywhere in the world can become a cultural litmus test: While some consider each such event as a further step on the way to universal progress, other deplore it as a threat to cultural identity — a dispute which in many countries is carried out with greatest vigor.

The rising awareness of the importance of cultural issues is meanwhile often mirrored in the culturally adapted strategies of the big international companies. The following quote demonstrates this: "The first McDonald's in India opened on Sunday in the capital New Delhi. It will be the first branch of the American food chain anywhere in the world not to sell hamburgers made of minced beef. Since the cow is a sacred animal to the Hindus there is no question of its meat passing over the counter. 'McDonald's is very sensitive to our culture', said McDonald's partner Vikram Bakshi" (Press Report, 12.10.1996).

For Europe, globalization has some additional effects which consist not only in the world-wide economic restructuring and the expansion of communications and transportation systems, but also in the large waves of

migration from the crisis areas of the world, in the steady growth of the European Union, and particularly in the collapse of the Soviet political and ideological system in Eastern Europe. Especially the latter has brought about dramatic changes and shifts in the European national and ethnic identities which, in turn, have produced new barriers between the European East and the West. The initial enthusiasm about the coming down of the Iron Curtain and the political liberalization was, as we know, soon reduced or even obliterated by a new boundary that came to be called the "wall in the heads" ("*Mauer in den Köpfen*"), a metaphor that was coined in Germany some time after the fall of the Berlin Wall to express the deep mental alienation between the peoples on both sides of the former physical Berlin Wall.

2. A Look at Eastern Europe: "Us vs. Them"

The boundary between *East* and *West* in Europe is not at all new. Its beginnings go back to the 18th century when the relations between the two parts of the continent were defined in binary oppositions and established as a West—East cultural decline. In the wake of today's globalization, this dividing line acquires again some of its old meaning and relevance: While in the socialist period East—West relations were indeed dominated by the antagonism of the political systems, in the present period the *cultural* dimensions have come to the fore again. Increasingly, the specific nature of political and economic processes in Eastern Europe is attributed to cultural differences, and cultural factors are considered to be relevant. The existence of invisible mental barriers between East and West Europe is no longer denied even by politicians and economists who are skeptical of cultural factors. The subject of cultural differences between East and West in Europe is treated with growing intensity because the reality of unrestricted communication between individuals from both parts of the continent has revealed unforeseen communication problems and reactions.

The situation in Eastern Europe makes it very clear that the socio-cultural consequences of globalization in this part of Europe are far more serious than in the West because in the post-socialist countries (a) globalization coincided with the painful process of political and economic transformation and (b) the pre-socialist context of the West—East dichotomy was revitalized. Observations of post-socialist everyday life and the analysis of intercultural situations in Russia and other post-socialist countries show that indeed the East European variety of the opposition *global—local* acquired additional drama by being superceded by the opposition *West—*

East: the defensive reactions against globalization are sharper and more powerful — and they are largely perceived and experienced as an East—West controversy. It goes without saying that the impact of globalization is experienced differently in each East and Central East European country. In all these countries, however, globalization is equaled to Western hegemony or colonialism, and it leads to a growth of mental barriers for the safeguarding of identities: the more the former legal, economic, and political boundaries are lifted, the stronger the Western penetration of the East European countries by economic and political models, informations, ideas, and images becomes, and the stronger the desire for safety and protection behind new walls of national or local identities appears to grow.

The negative consequences for intercultural communication in post-socialist Europe are obvious. In view of the size and the intensity of the problem it is all the more surprising that it has as yet received so little attention. In business reports and political analyses it is usually treated as an annoying disturbance on the path to economic and political development and as a transitory social phenomenon. Few scholars have ventured into this field, in spite of the fact that the need for research into the nature of the socio-cultural processes in Eastern Europe is imperative because they form the context in which all intercultural contacts between people from East and West Europe occur.

The creation of mental barriers between West and East in Europe is one of the most important social consequences of the reform processes. It seems that the concept of "otherness" (*Fremdheit*) as a central "culture theme" and as a key concept for the understanding of intercultural encounters offers the most promising theoretical frame for the study of these barriers.

"Otherness" rests largely on the mutuality of the exchange between the familiar self and the alien other. The "alien" or "other" and the "own" are closely interrelated; it is the very existence of the "own" that helps identify the "other". Thus, the distinction between the "own" and the "other", between "inside" and "outside" is fundamental to the problem of otherness; and because every reference to the "other" always discloses the contours of the familiar "own", it is also an indication of a bicultural situation. From this perspective the category *ingroup—outgroup* can be made useful for the interpretation of intercultural situations. The distinction between the social "inside" and the social "outside" is, of course, a universal social category, but the nature of the boundary between the two is culture spe-

cific, and the dividing line is defined and interpreted very differently in each culture. As a consequence, its use in real interpersonal communications is also culture specific. Therefore it can acquire the function of a *cultural dimension* in the sense of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck; it describes a universal phenomenon which makes the recognition of cultural variation possible. The dimension can thus be used as an analytical tool for the description of cultures on the basis of the difference in their value orientations.

In the literature on intercultural communication the *ingroup—outgroup* dimension has not yet been treated as a separate category: It is treated as a component of categories of a higher order such as individualism — collectivism or private - public: This disregards the fact that the nature of the *ingroup—outgroup* dimension enables it to a high degree to grasp essential culture specific perceptions and behavioral orientations in the interactions between members of different cultures. It functions like a subconcious objective platform of perceptions and behaviors shared by a group, similar to “cultural reservoirs”, that can be used by its members in an individual and subjective manner. The specific cultural knowledge about the drawing and handling of the boundary between inside and outside finds its expression in the actions and communications of the individuals. The observation and recording of these actions on the level of the individual encounters allows conclusions on the “collective programming” of the group with regard to the *ingroup—outgroup* dimension. The interrelatedness of the objective—collective and the subjective—individual level (which is basic to Bourdieu’s *habitus* concept) allows us to relate empirical data from the observation of individual interactions to the level of collective value orientations or “cultural reservoirs” and to seek explanations for the organisation of intercultural interactions.

In the following, I will advance the thesis of a post-Cold-War resurgence and amplification of mental barriers between East and West Europe; the category which I will place in the center of my analysis will be the *ingroup—outgroup* dimension and the related concept of “otherness”. I will argue that in post-socialism the “us vs. them” dichotomy - that is, the distinction between inside and outside, between “ours” and “theirs” - gains new significance as it furthers the creation of local, autonomous worlds. This establishing of new boundaries can be seen as a counterstrategy against the boundlessness of economic globalization.

Let’s take a closer look at the “us vs. them” distinction. It is obviously a cultural theme that is basic to the formation of social relations, and thus

governs important domains of social life. The tangible expressions of this distinction are various symbols, mostly non-verbal, which signal to the stranger "you don't belong to us" and request him to position himself on the "them" side of the boundary. The structure and the process of the positioning ritual are not different for intracultural and intercultural interactions, but the handling and the management of the boundary differ largely. For instance in Russian—Russian interactions Russians share the common (intuitive) knowledge of the importance of this boundary and are aware of the concomitant strategies and attitudes, for example when an outgroup member craves acceptance by ingroup members. In Russian—German interactions, for example, the German participants are usually unaware of this distinction and its relevance and function for the structuring of the communicative exchange. The strategies for dealing with the "us vs. them" boundary also differ considerably: while Germans will prefer to minimize or ignore it, Russians will feel more comfortable with maintaining and enhancing the distance to the "other" partner.

The conscious opposition between "we, ourselves" and "them, the others" strongly determines identity and mentality formation on the basis of a binary opposition; Each statement about the "own" always demands its reflection in the outside view, and in many situations the self image is constructed only with reference to these outside criteria; a positive identification with the "own" can best be achieved through the negation of the "other". This identity formation *ex negativo* and the resulting attitude to "otherness" can be observed very clearly today: Exposed to a bombardement of foreign Western market economy, political institutions, forms of education and consumer goods, many East Europens today demonstrate their non-compliance with Western models in order to identify positively and sometimes even to boost their identity by attacking this model.

The "cultural logic" of the "us vs. them" arguments can be encountered in all spheres of life in Eastern Europe; one can detect them in analyses of the economy, in political declarations, in television talk shows, in statements of well-known public figures or in newspaper comments and editorials. They all offer a culture-immanent explanation for the increase of nationalistic patterns of argumentation in the private and in the public discourse. They are to be interpreted as a consequence of the disappointment with the West which has for large sectors of the East European population already lost its orientational influence. The delicate interplay between the "own" and the "other" permeates practically all spheres

of life and in the present period of transformation has become the core element of identity construction.

It goes without saying that the *ingroup—outgroup* dimension operates generally for the distinction and boundary maintenance between inside and outside, between distant and near, between the familiar and the alien. The definition of the *inside* inevitably defines the boundary to the *outside*; it can be narrower or wider, depending on the situation, but it is alway defined and experienced in a subjective manner. The inside—outside boundaries form a kind of sequence of concentric circles, from the intimate family to social units like classmates, circles of friends, colleagues, or neighbors up to larger units such as local communities, regions, and the whole nation. For the person not familiar with the local culture, the boundaries are often hard to detect, and it is quite difficult to recognize them on the basis of observed behaviors.

These boundaries are manifold and they are dynamic: they can set the family apart from the circle of friends, one group of colleagues from another, the people living in one apartment block from those in the next block, the people living on one floor from those living on the next floor, the passengers in one train compartment from those of another. The place of birth or of residence can be as divisive (urban centers vs. rural areas) as the ethnic group (Bulgarians vs. Bulgarian Turks) or the whole nation (Bulgarians vs. foreigners). In societies with an emphasis on the “us” vs. “them” distinction almost everyone is embedded in tightly knit groups like family, neighborhood, colleagues, that are held together by a strong cohesion between group members and by a high degree of intimacy and privacy in the inside (such as intimate address, emotionality, need to communicate, trust). The inner life of the group also creates the frame of reference for the social behaviors and obligations of each of its members; and the group’s definition of the position and the leeway of the individual regulates his contacts with the outside world.

The intimacy of the group presupposes its protection by a clearly defined barrier to the outside world. This boundary is permanently marked by means of specific behaviors towards outsiders such as strict formality, secretiveness, reservedness, and distrust which signal to them that for the time being they have to position themselves as outsiders. As a consequence, there exist two separate sets of behavior for the satisfaction of social and communicative needs: communicative acts like getting together, bidding farewell, fixing a date, meeting, negotiating, information, etc. can be performed in completely different ways depending on whether the other

person is considered an insider or an outsider. To make it clear one more time: This separation can be found in all cultures, and each culture defines criteria for the transition from outsider to insider status. The particularity of Eastern Europe lies in its extreme emphasis on this distinction, in the large amplitude of the behaviors determined by the belonging to an *ingroup* or an *outgroup*, and by the high requirements outsiders have to fulfill for the transition from outgroup to ingroup status.

Outsiders are always looked at in relation to the defined boundary; their behavior is compared with the stereotypical expectations toward "strangers" and judged accordingly. The boundary with the "other" is always latent, and it is activated by specific situations and events for which the individual has at his disposal a variety of verbal and non-verbal means of expression. In answering my question for the preparations for an international conference and the accomodation of the Russian and the foreign participants, a colleague, professor at Moscow University, described the preparations taken for the Russian participants and then added: "*Well, for the foreigners we have to prepare something very different, with foreigners we behave differently anyway.*" This attitude is typical not only of Russia, but of many Eastern countries.

Under the present conditions of market economy and institutionalized democracy, the need of East Europeans to organize their social environment by ingroups and to look for the familiar both in private life and at the work-place is growing even stronger; more than before 1990, this attitude guides people, for example, when political, economic or administrative positions have to be filled. A Russian consultant, specialist for organizational development, said in an interview (*Ogonyok* no. 12, March 1996, p. 23):

"*And what can you expect when personal relationships have always been the most important thing in peoples' lives in Russia? The reason lies not in our Soviet past ... One has to look at it from a broader perspective — it is the foundation of our cultural tradition. It is not surprising that it has jumped over into the sphere of economy. What do our private companies consist of in reality? They are all built on the principle of personal trust — no one takes anyone from the streets. As a rule such an enterprise is organized by people who have known each other for years. I know companies consisting entirely of members of a lay choir or a group of mountaineers ... There is an interesting moment; when such companies ask us to advise them on personnel decisions they go into all details whom they will hire how and at what conditions, but almost never would they ask*

questions about the formalities of firing a person. How can this be possible — to take someone and then fire him? This would mean that one had to break up all relationships. A president of a company told me of his accountant: 'Well, he is a bad employee but our families are good friends after all ...'"

Let me conclude:

In the face of the indisputable reality of worldwide globalization, Eastern Europe displays a reverse tendency; it returns to the regional, emphasizes the formation of local cultural identities, and produces the effect of localization, usually in the form of ethnification. The "us vs. them" dichotomy serves as an important vehicle for this strategy; under the dramatic circumstances of post-socialist economic, political and socio-cultural transformation it usually assumes the guise of an "East vs. West" dichtotomy.

The stronger the emphasis on the "us vs. them" dichotomy, the greater the importance of cultural differences. How does that relate to the notion, that contemporary economic globalization creates the essentials for the homogenization of the world through technology and media, thus furthering the reduction of cultural diversity? Are we confronted with a paradoxical situation, and is it again that Eastern Europe does not conform to the international paradigm?

Research on the socio-cultural effects of globalization - which is still scarce - shows that 'globalization' and 'localization' cannot be thought independently of one another. They are obviously two sides of a single coin. The relationship of the two sides seems to be very basic: it is the supposed placelessness and boundlessness of the global that allows the specificity of the local to become visible again. The case of Eastern Europe is therefore by no means unique: the assertion of the local for the purpose of identity management and as compensation for the pressure of global homogenization can in fact be observed at different levels in all European societies. Eastern Europe is specific insofar as it is a fairly large and separate region, and that in the context of the political and economic integration into the European Union the growing ethnification is transformed into an East—West antagonism. As a matter of fact, for the people in East and Southeast Europe, globalization is largely tantamount to Westernization and to the loss of their own identities.

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EU Cultural Policy And The Creation of a Common European Identity

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Abstract

The paper examines the issues of cultural integration, moves towards a common EU cultural policy, and attempts to create a common European identity, with a major focus being on language and the use of English. Cultural integration has been seen as means of furthering integration beyond that which has been achieved in the spheres of economics and politics. In response to those the EU has been given powers with respect to cultural policy, and there have been hard-fought wars over trade and subsidies with respect to cultural products such as television programming, films and other cultural products. However, while some convergence has taken place between national cultures, there has been an increase in the use of English and the influence of Anglo-Saxon culture. It is argued here that the issue is an extremely difficult one for the EU, since moves to create a more common European culture will tend to increase the importance of English and of Anglo-Saxon culture, which is not the intention of their authors. However, if it were to meet with success, the creation of separate European culture distinct from that of the US and North America could be a divisive and undesirable development.
Introduction

The development and continued progress of integration in Europe has been one of the major success stories of the second half of the 20th century. Now that there has been substantial economic and political integration in western Europe, the issues of a common European cultural policy and the creation of a common European identity are gaining greater importance.

This paper examines the question of EU cultural policy, cultural divisions and attachments in the EU, and their relevance to the overall 'cultural politics' of the EU and the creation of a common European identity. It is argued here that there are two main underlying issues of this new 'cul-

tural struggle'. The first is that the main member states of Germany and France, and the EU's common institutions, want to see the creation of a common European culture and identity in order to support and provide a basis for further integration. The second is that they wish at the same time to prevent or avoid the development or adoption of a common culture which is based on Anglo-Saxon popular culture, or, though this is less of a possibility, one based on the more liberal Scandinavian model. If it is assumed that the process of creating a common European culture is already under way and will continue, the key question which remains is hence 'Whose culture is the new common European culture going to most closely approximate?'. Language, education, and the dominance of Anglo-Saxon popular culture, are all relevant issues here.

While there are differing constructs of the EU itself (Diez 1997), there are yet more disparate constructs and concepts of what a common European culture is and should mean, whether it is desirable, and how it may be achieved. It is argued here that the development of a common European culture is likely to prove much harder to guide and direct than the development of common political institutions and economic arrangements did.

A major conflict exists between the desires of member states and the greater part of their populations to hold on to national and in some cases regional identities, and the view that cultural differences are an impediment to integration and need to be reduced. One aspect of this is the development of 'identity-creating arguments' that there can be 'better' or 'worse' Europeans (Diez 1997, p. 29) and by implication good and bad citizens within the EU context.

Motivations for the creation of a common European culture and identity

The main motivation behind moves to promote or create a common European culture and identity appears to be the view that differences in culture and identity result in reduced support for further European integration, and hence there is a need to try and reduce or remove them. The view that the existence of such differences reduces support for further European integration is supported by cultural theorists such as Zetterholm (1994) and communitarian theorists such as Walzer (1970), who focus attention upon cultural difference as a source of objection and resistance to integrating pressures. Walzer's argument that (1970, p. 194) 'the citizen's point of reference is the political com

munity, but as a man he has other memberships other references and

these he sometimes sets against the state' can be readily extended to the EU and the context of the different attachments of citizens here, to the EU as well as to member states, regions, family, and other sources of identity such as ethnic and linguistic group, and class. The greater the degree of cultural heterogeneity among the groups forming a political unit, the greater the risk that political decisions may be inconsistent with the central values of one or more groups (Zetterholm 1994, p. 67). As long as the populations of member states feel that their national cultures are different enough from the standard unified culture being developed by the EU, they will be reluctant to transfer their allegiances to central institutions in Brussels.

It is not the case that individuals feel that their attachment to their national state and identity is in conflict with a more general European or EU identity. Hedetoft (1994, p. 19) notes that respondents who expressed a strong European identity could also express a strong sense of national identity. Nevertheless, there is a view that strong national attachments cause or assist individual states to take differing positions with respect to policy initiatives.

Political theories such as those propounded by Walzer and Zetterholm suggest that survey respondents will prefer smaller political units which are better able to reflect their preferences. This is borne out by survey results. For example the results of a 1990 survey indicated that the percentage of respondents describing themselves as 'very attached' to the EC ranged from 4 per cent in the Netherlands to 18 per cent in Italy and Spain (Reif 1993, p. 139). These percentages are very small in comparison with the high percentages of respondents from some of the smaller countries who described themselves as very attached to their country: 86 per cent in Greece, 84 per cent in Denmark, 71 per cent in Ireland and 70 per cent in Portugal. The percentages of respondents describing themselves as 'very attached' to their countries in the larger EC member states were lower than this, being 58 per cent for the UK, 55 per cent for Italy, 47 per cent for Germany and 46 per cent for France. However, although the Netherlands and Belgium are smaller than any of the 'big four' countries just mentioned, only 40 per cent of respondents in the Netherlands and 30 per cent of those in Belgium described themselves as 'very attached' to their country. The levels of attachment which individuals had to their region varied widely. More respondents were attached to their country rather than their region in Belgium, Germany, Greece and Spain, while the converse tended to be true elsewhere.

Duchesne and Frognier (1995) note that 6-26 per cent of respondents selected Europe as their first or second choice of identity in Eurobarometer surveys, with the percentage being highest in Italy where 20-25 per cent chose Europe as the unit to which they belonded as first or second choice, and lowest in Denmark where it reached 6 per cent in 1979, but with less than 1 per cent giving it as a first choice. A 1996 peak in the proportion of respondents indicating a sense of European identity was followed by an adrupt decline in 1988, perhaps affected by the 1986 enlargement. With respect to the question of whether European identity grows independently of national pride, they found that 'national pride' was not a determinant of attitudes towards the EC, which is in accordance with Hedetoft's results. A larger proportion of highly educated respondents stated that they often consider themselves European, with there being high correlations in this respect in Greece, of 0.30, and in Portugal, of 0.32, with only 10 per cent of less educated respondents in Portugal saying 'often' compared with 36 per cent of those still studying at age 20. In Denmark educational level produced variations of only 6-10 per cent, but there were variations of 20-40 per cent in Spain, Greece and Britain. There was some indication of a reverse correlation in Germany in 1983, with the proportion often feeling European being higher among the lowest income quartile than among the highest income quartile. With regard to income effect, this accounted for 20 per cent or more of variation on this issue in Spain, and in Portugal for more of the variation on this issue than education did. Fewer women felt European. In Greece, Spain and Portugal younger respondents were more likely to report often feeling European, but in other member states the feeling was stronger among older residents. They concluded that feelings of European identity were strongly related to social and demographic factors in Greece, Portugal and Spain and to a lesser extent Ireland and Italy, but that in Denmark, Britain, Germany and France respondents' feelings seem quite independent of these factors.

National attachments are not necessarily something individuals see as positive. Hedetoft found that (p. 23) a 'fair number' of German and British respondents' to his survey 'frequently denied having a national identity, or admitted to having one but only as if this was a confession of fault'. The citizens of smaller member states are presumably less likely to be motivated by negative associations of nationalism. Bekemans and Lombaert (1996, p. 99) see identification with the state as weakening.

The development of EU cultural policy

The impact of cultural policies in reducing national attachments and furthering a sense of EU or European identity necessarily takes time. Core cultural differences are developed during childhood, and change only very slowly (Soeters 1996).

The development of EU involvement in cultural policy has also been a slow process. In 1977 the Commission released a communication to the Council which proposed that the European Community (EC) should be involved in the economic and social aspects of culture (Bekemans and Lombaert 1996, p. 194). During 1982-86 there was a greater involvement of the EU's institutions in cultural issues, with the Addonino Committee on 'A People's Europe' being established by the Council in 1984 to look at a number of measures towards strengthening and promoting the EC's identity and image among its citizens and the rest of the world. It supported the adoption of initiatives which included an EC passport, an EC driving licence, an EC emergency health card, EC border signs and an EC flag, and the financing of an EC TV channel to promote 'the European message'.

The Maastricht Treaty on European Union, which was signed in 1992, but only ratified and in force in 1993, gave the EU's institutions competence in the area of culture and cultural policy. Article 128 under Title IX sets this out as follows (Senelle, p. 55):

> 1. The Community shall contribute to the flowering of cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore.
>
> 2. Action by the Community shall be aimed at encouraging cooperation between Member States, and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their action in the following areas:
>
> - improvement of the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples;
> - conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance;
> - non-commercial cultural exchanges;
> - artistic and literary creation, including in the audiovisual sector,
>
> 3. The Community and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of

Europe.
4. The Community shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of this Treaty.

The motivations behind the attempts to create a common EU or European culture include the desire to create a new 'imagined community' along the lines postulated by Benedict Anderson (Anderson 1991), with the concept being particularly apt for an EU whose borders have been shifting at intervals to take in new territories and national identities and will continue to do so. The creation of such an 'imagined community' would give the EU's common institutions, and the political reality of a high degree of control by the EU's key member states of Germany and France, a legitimacy they continue to lack, which in turn results in inadequate popular support for further political integration and transfers of power to the prospective new superstate which would be achieved at the end point of the integration process. However, there are other motivations, including the desires of particular member states to bolster their interests within the EU and the impact of their domestic policies, and the desire to protect EU industry from outside competition.

While the EU's political institutions are active in trying to create and promote a common European culture and identity, critics such as Galtung (1994) argue that such symbols and programmes are unnecessary. In Galtung's view (p. 220) 'Euronationalism is age-old', and 'What we are dealing with is European supernationalism in search of institutions, rather than supra-European institutions in search of nationalism'. One of his points of criticism is that the efforts of the EU's institutions result in a (p. 224) 'new distortion', involving works which deal with the EC/EU in 'a totally uncritical manner'. He cites as an example of a work involving this distortion a textbook by Jean-Baptiste Duroselle called *L'Europe: Historie des Peuples*, describing it as presenting a gender biased and sanitised view of history.

More recently there has been a four-year saga of attempts to impose TV programming quotas on an EU-wide basis which appeared to come to a close with a decision by the Council to retain the existing system of voluntary quotas. Although the European Parliament (EP) attempted to introduce 63 proposed amendments to the directive, mot of these were rejected. Some of them, such as attempts to extend the quotas to video-on-demand or cable TV, and to the Internet, were beyond the bounds of technical feasibility.

David Puttnam (Puttnam 1997) portrays the conflict between the US and the then EC over cultural products such as television programming in the context of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations as a 'war' between the US and Europe, with even the CIA's agents being brought in to obtain information. The US was seeking to have programming and film brought into the negotiations as traded products for which there should be liberalisation, the EU was seeking to exclude them from this.

At the supranational level, the European Court of Justice has adopted an 'active and at times imaginative' role in extending the provisions of the Treaty and the application of Community law over the ears of culture and education, at the same time restricting and reducing the powers of the member states (Pauly and Higgins 1996, p. 227). Its expansionary and pro-integrationist stance may be expected to continue.

Wayne David (David 1996) considers attempts such as these futile, on the basis that there is no likelihood of an EU identity superseding or replacing existing identities. However, this is probably rather too simplistic a conclusion. There is evidence that a more common identity is developing, but that it is strongly influenced by Anglo-Saxon culture, as discussed below.

The question of 'Whose culture?'

Cultural integration can be both problematic and non-problematic in nature. As integration develops, communication is made easier by the convergence of economies, ideologies and lifestyles (Mussolf, Schaeffner and Townson 1997, p. 11). This convergence can be a result of modernisation and the removal of barriers. It can also be result of pressures from one or more cultures for adaptation to their model, and concerns about such pressures can be major source of conflict. When one group feels that the other is using the political system to disseminate its culture throughout the whole society, the group that feels this will see the actions of the other group as threatening its culture (Zetterholm, p. 70). One very basic example of this is the British reluctance on entry to the then EC to abandon chocolate cakes which were produced with the assistance of brown dye, and canned peas which included green dye to make them appear more palatable: the dyes involved were on the EC's banned list because they were considered to be a health risk. Another is the reluctance of the Netherlands on the one hand to make illegal the sale of marijuana, and on the other of France and Germany to remove their legal penalties for its sale or possession, a situation which has pre-

vented the French government from being able to remove its entry checks on the Belgian border. Differences in attitudes to pornography have also caused conflicts, with complaints in the UK against the broadcasting of hard core pornography by a Dutch satellite TV company. In this latter case the UK government took legal measures against the company which were not challenged as being contrary to EU law. The Dutch government changed its own laws to make child pornography more clearly illegal, removing some of the concerns of other EU countries that their own restrictions were being undermined by over-liberal Dutch laws. All of these are examples of aspects of cultural difference which were resolved in various ways, sometimes through the removal of the difference, sometimes by finding that EU law allows the difference to be maintained, and sometimes by not applying agreements. The simple non-application of EU laws, for example in the informal economies of Italy and Greece, allows culture-based differences to be maintained in spite of the adoption of common provisions.

However, a major problem with respect to cultural harmonisation is that this has in practice involved the increasing influence of US popular culture, and widening of the use of English. The nature of the problem is indicated by the following quotation from the president of the EP's culture committee, Luciana Castellina, on the EP's majority vote in favour of making quotas requiring over 50 per cent European content in television programming mandatory (Buonadonna 1996):

> I am pleased by what we have achieved. This is not a victory over the US but a victory for our own culture. Something must be done in a situation when 82 per cent of programmes aired in Europe are produced in the US.

However, the EP's vote was overruled by the Council, with British opposition being a strong factor. Britain could be regarded as the 'Trojan Horse' in the battle to create a common culture not subsumed by Anglo-Saxon influences. While there are many differences between British and US culture, there are many similarities, with language being perhaps the most important connection. One consequence is that there is a common literature between the UK and the US, but not a 'common European literature', as the economist J. K. Galbraith points out (Cornwall 1998).

Language and cultural politics

Language is a very important issue for EU cultural politics, but once again, it is not as straightforward an issue as might first appear. One view is that

the continued existence of numerous national languages as official languages used at the supranational or common level is a major barrier to cultural integration. For example, Edye (1997, p. 73) states that in lacking a common language, the EU lacks one of the main components of culture (Edye 1997, p. 73).). Kramer and Kyriakopoulos (1996) noted that the EU has eleven official languages and considered whether this indicated that there was a need for cultural integration to consolidate political and economic integration. Haller (1994) recognises that the diversity of languages in Europe and the EU constitutes a barrier to the development of a common European culture. However, he also recognises that in practice English has been developing as a *de facto lingua franca* in Europe. Hence the problem is not that Europe does not have a de facto common language, but that for political and other reasons there is strong resistance to the acceptance of this situation on a formal basis.

Although English is the most common second language of the EU, there has been strong resistance, mainly from France but increasingly now from Germany, to the elevation of English to the status of the official common language of the EU. One reason for this has been fear of Anglo-Saxon cultural hegemony, as discussed below. Another has been the late entry of the UK into the integration process. Had Britain been a founding member of the EU, English might have been accepted as the common language. National prestige is also an important factor, certainly for large member states which are conscious of their global 'image', and on more concrete grounds. When the European Economic Community (EEC), the predecessor of the European Community or EC and the later EU, was established in 1958 with a membership of six, a decision was made that all the main languages of the member states would be represented and used in the political interactions and work of the common institutions. The Luxembourg vernacular, Letzeburgisch, was not a written formal language and was hence excluded. When the EC was enlarged in 1973 to include the UK, Ireland and Denmark, English became important as a working language in the common institutions, and the effective working languages of the European Commission have been French and English. One consequence of the decision to use all the main languages of the member states as working languages has been that while there are more speakers of Turkish than Danish in the EU, Danish is an official EU language while Turkish is not (Barbour 1996).

The decision not to move to a common language has imposed a heavy financial burden on the EU, with two billion US dollars going on language

services in 1989. It cost over half a million US dollars per MEP to meet the cost of translation requirements each year (Gubbins 1996). Gubbins' solution to these problems is the adoption of Esperanto as the EU's common language. However, it might be argued that there is already a language which most MEPs and officials have some facility in, and that is English.

The importance of the English language can be seen from Salman Rushdie's description of it as 'the most powerful medium of communication in the world' (Wells 1998), and from its having been proposed as a 'global language ' by Crystal (1997), as well as its status as the *de facto* common language of Europe. As Hanson (1997) indicates in his review of Crystal, it is not the flexibility, clarity, or ease of learning of a language which makes it popular, but its importance and value: people learn and use English to improve their prospects, to become more internationalised, to participate in the excitement of youth culture, and to feel part of the 'in crowd' and to be in touch.

Opposition to greater use of English or its being given a more formal status in Europe can be understood in terms of Crystal's warning of the resentment, envy, anger of the non-English mother-tongue speakers who feel disadvantaged, or feel their mother tongue or identity threatened. These feelings no doubt account for moves to try to restrict the growing use of English as the common European language. The culture committee of the EP has for example proposed that there be widespread return to the teaching of Latin and Greek so that these languages can be maintained as 'a basis for European culture in a world threatened by technology and pragmatism' (Fraser 1997). The problem with maintaining and furthering a separate European culture through such a move is that it would induce a separateness of Europe relative to North America and the rest of the western world which does not at present exist. For example, the Internet is mainly conducted in English.

The unification of Germany, and also the admission of Austria to the EU, have raised the importance of German in the EU. There has been a trend towards much greater use of German by politicians, and in the new united Germany and in Austria there has been a greater emphasis on German language radio stations and television programming. Central and eastern Europe are now the new cultural or linguistic battle grounds between English and German. German is spoken to a greater extent than English as a second language in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Kazakhstan and Georgia, but is very much second to English as the sec-

ond language of most other central and east European countries. Russian is still important, even in countries which aspire to membership of the EU and of NATO; for example in the Baltic States national armed forces use it as their common language. Germany is taking steps to try and increase the use and importance of German in central and eastern Europe, as well as the EU. It is running language classes for top central and east European government officials, and sent 522 language teachers to eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in 1995. The Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel, has said he wants to see the language play a greater role in Brussels (New Europe 1996). Since France is also taking steps to preserve and perhaps expand the use of French, spending US$1.1 billion a year to promote its use internationally (The Economist 1996), there is no prospect at present of the adoption of English as the 'official' European language. Laws continue to be applied to prevent the entry of English words into popular use in the French language.

The question of Anglo-Saxon and British cultural influence

One of the paradoxes of European integration is that the stronger and more integrated Europe becomes, the more the influence of Anglo-Saxon culture has increased, leading to the attempts to hold it back through cultural 'dykes' such as television programming quotas, refusal to allow it become the official EU language, and subsidies for national film production.

While the EU's institutions battle the inroads of Anglo-Saxon popular culture through attempts to impose television programming quotas, its young people choose to use the assistance provided by the EU's Lingua and Erasmus schemes to study in the UK rather than France, Germany, or other EU countries. For both schemes, around a third of students (33 per cent for Lingua and 32 per cent for Erasmus) chose to go the UK, followed by 22 and 27 per cent respectively who chose to go to France, and 10 and 18 per cent respectively who chose to go to Germany (Gubbins 1996, p. 125). In 1995-96 more than 21 800 European students came to Britain through support from Erasmus mobility grants, while just over 11 700 British students took up a temporary place at a European institution. The latter group is estimated to have decreased by around 900 the following year (Tysome 1997). The ERASMUS scheme has been partly aimed at developing a shared sense of identity among students from different member states (Kleinman and Piachaud 1993). One response to the imbalance in favour of study in the UK, which has also been expensive for the UK because it has to meet the cost of places, and to criticisms that

the schemes were elitist, was to cut back and replace the schemes with assistance for schools and language teachers only, but this move now seems to have been reversed.

The reason for the greater popularity of the UK as a location for education for young people in the EU arises largely because of the status of English and its value on the job market. However, other factors are also important. Education in the UK could be said to have a more 'international' nature, at least compared to smaller member states, because of the long tradition of educating overseas students, and also because the systems of student assessment and of definition of appropriate research sources are similar to those of North America. British youth culture, and even the 'individualist' as opposed to collectivist nature of the UK as indicated by Soeters (1996), could be considered to be factors here.

Conclusions

There is widely held view that cultural convergence will assist in the furthering of integration in the EU and Europe. It has encouraged the development of cultural policy powers and initiatives on the part of the EU, most notably including the competence with respect to cultural and educational policies given by the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. There is some evidence of cultural convergence in terms of modifications to the ways in which national systems differ, but it is also still the case that considerable differences continue to exist. However, what there is most clearly evidence of is that moves towards cultural integration will bring a greater acceptance of Anglo-Saxon culture and the use of English, something which is not an intended outcome and remains a matter of greater controversy.

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COMPARATIVE STUDY OF YOUTH POLICIES AND LEGISLATION IN STATES PARTY TO THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL CONVENTION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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EUROPEAN STEERING COMMITTEE FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL CO-OPERATION IN THE YOUTH FIELD (CDEJ)

Introduction

This study looks at the youth policies and legislation of States party to the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe. It has been compiled by the Council of Europe's Youth Directorate on the basis of information received from the governments of the States concerned. An initial study was carried out on the basis of information received by the Directorate by 1 March 1995. This second study contains revisions based on information submitted by the States at the Directorate's request and includes any changes to the original document.

The following States have submitted changes: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Principality of Monaco, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom.

During a discussion in March 1998, last-minute information was provided by Albania, the French-speaking community of Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Switzerland and Ukraine.

The study sets out to take stock of policies and legislation in the youth field in different countries in Europe.

The information is presented in each case under 8 headings:

1. Bodies responsible for co-ordinating government policy in youth affairs;

2. Government policy, current and planned, in the youth sector;

3. Parliamentary committees on youth;

4. Constitutional and legislative provisions relating to youth affairs;

5. Laws relating specifically to young people;

6. Associative life of young people;

7. International co-operation in the youth field;

8. Criteria and arrangements for recognising and funding youth organisations and projects.

This study is of obvious interest to countries of Central and Eastern Europe, many of which are in the process of drafting new legislation and policies in this area. Given their tradition of youth work, albeit on a different ideological basis, these countries may also serve as an example in the light of the differences characterising them.
In this respect, it will be noted that these countries have made considerable efforts to set up institutional and legislative structures as well as coherent policies dealing with youth affairs.

1. Government body responsible for youth affairs

The first question to be examined concerns the body responsible for co-ordinating youth policy in each country. For this purpose, countries can be divided into three groups.

First group

Countries with a ministry, a special committee or a state secretary with responsibility for youth affairs and the implementation of national policy in the youth sector. This particular scenario is rarely encountered in the countries of Europe included in the study. Such structures exist in France, Luxembourg, Russia, Malta and Ireland.
Some countries, such as Germany, have a particular system: on the one hand the voluntary and statutory support agencies stand for society's commitment and on the other public support for young people is provided by Youth Offices. In many fields of youth work voluntary support agencies provide most services and facilities. They are autonomous and they set the content and goals of their work for themselves within the framework of country's legal system.

Second group

This group comprises those countries that do not have a particular ministry with responsibility for youth matters, which consequently come under a ministry whose purview includes matters not always directly linked to youth affairs (generally speaking either the ministry of culture and social affairs or the ministry of education). Normal government practice is to set up special youth departments within these ministries.
This is the case in the French-speaking community of Belgium, Estonia, Latvia, Italy and Croatia.
In some countries such as Spain and Portugal special Institutes for Youth have been established in order to co-ordinate different youth projects on a national level as well as international co-operation and research projects in the youth field.

Third group

This group comprises those countries that have neither a special ministry with responsibility for youth affairs nor a department dealing with them within a ministry. Questions relating to young people are handled by different ministries according to the particular youth aspect involved. This is the case in Poland and Switzerland.

2. Government policy in the youth sector

The second question to be addressed in the study deals with the national youth policies conducted by different member states. The content of such policies varies from one country to another as a function of national customs, government priorities and the nature of the problems encountered in the respective countries.
Coherent overall policies have been introduced in some countries, such as Croatia, Lithuania, Malta and Germany, whereas in others the governments have not made the implementation of youth policy an objective.

3. Parliamentary Committee on Youth

In the course of this study consideration was given to the parliamentary aspects involved. An attempt has been made to establish whether youth concerns are dealt with in a separate committee or whether they are dealt with by different committees according to the nature of the issue involved. It emerges from the study that member states' parliaments can be divided into two groups: those that have established separate committees or sub-committees on youth and those that have not.

Very few countries have set up special parliamentary committees to deal with youth affairs. Those which have include Bulgaria, Croatia and Portugal.
Such affairs are more usually dealt with by existing committees such as the parliamentary committee on education, sport and/or culture.

4. Constitutional and legislative provisions relating to youth affairs

The existence or otherwise of constitutional and legislative provisions relating to youth affairs in the different countries included in the study was felt to be a further subject of interest.
Concerning, firstly, constitutional provisions it emerges that the constitutions of most countries provide a definition of the age of majority as coinciding with the enjoyment of active voting rights (the ability to vote in elections) but differing sometimes from the age at which passive voting rights are granted (the ability to stand in elections). A high proportion of the constitutions of the countries studied contain provisions dealing with the special protection afforded by the state to minors, orphans etc. Such provisions are often based on international texts (such as those of the United Nations, the Council of Europe etc) dealing with human rights and the rights of the child.
Legislative provisions applicable to young people are to be found in laws, procedural or substantive legal codes relating to civil, criminal and family law and the law of succession etc.

5. Laws dealing specifically with young people

It is worthwhile ascertaining to what extent there are laws catering specifically for young people in the different countries. It would appear that not all countries have such laws, and where they do exist they may cover areas that vary from one country to another.
In some countries there are specific laws concerning young people. Ukraine has adopted in 1993 a law on assisting the social condition and development of youth. The authorities of the French-speaking community of Belgium have set out to draft detailed regulations relating to young people, and more particularly to the recognition of representative youth bodies. In Italy, no specific legislation has been adopted at national level, but half the regions have adopted youth-related laws in those areas under their direct responsibility. Legislation in Iceland includes two laws dealing specifically with young people: the law on youth policies, which serves to define government aid granted to youth organisations and which

also deals with their establishment, and the law on youth activities. Estonia, which is currently preparing new legislation, is considering a bill on youth organisations which will define relations between them and the state.

6. Associative life of young people

In all countries there are large numbers of youth organisations established on different political, ideological and religious grounds. They are usually represented by a National Youth Council. There are countries, however, where no such council exists. In other countries several bodies exist to co-ordinate the activities of the different youth organisations; in Albania, for instance, there are two.

7. International co-operation in the youth field

The pace of European integration shifted into a higher gear in the wake of the events of 1989 and international co-operation in the youth sector has taken on added importance.
This co-operation is carried out primarily in the context of the programmes of international organisations such as the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Nordic Council, the UN, UNESCO and others. These programmes aim at fostering youth mobility, encouraging intercultural understanding and youth participation.
Furthermore, a considerable number of youth organisations run important international activities through the offices of bodies such as CENYC, the Youth Forum etc, that co-ordinate the activities of youth movements.
Within the limits of their own responsibility, national authorities co-ordinate and encourage international youth co-operation, for instance by concluding bilateral and multilateral agreements in the areas of culture and youth. They also fund a certain level of international youth activities in various fields, such as international youth exchanges, cultural events abroad etc. By way of example one might mention the French-speaking community of Belgium, where the General Commission for International Relations co-ordinates international co-operation in the youth sector.
This item also includes information concerning participation of representatives of youth organisations and nationals in different activities organised by the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe: study sessions, training courses and language courses.

8. Criteria for the recognition and funding of youth associations, initiatives etc

Procedure for the recognition and funding of youth associations, initiatives etc varies widely from one country to another. Some countries, such as Hungary or Italy have no hard and fast rules governing such recognition and funding.

Other countries lay down very strict rules. The regulations adopted by the authorities of the French-speaking community of Belgium, for example, embrace a very wide range of criteria. Denmark and the Netherlands have also stipulated effective criteria for the recognition of an organisation's representativeness and for its funding.

A youth organisation's representativeness is the first consideration for governments. Some countries, such as Denmark, stipulate a minimum membership for the recognition of an organisation (1000 members).

Generally speaking, the criteria for the recognition and funding of youth associations are very often based on the nature and lawfulness of the association, its aims and working methods, etc.

Youth information policy and principles for youth information services

ERYICA

In a society that is more and more complex, youth information and counselling play a role that is more important than ever in a young person's transition to adult life. Information and counselling can help young people to achieve their vocational and individual aspirations and can promote their participation in society as responsible citizens. Information should also widen the choices available to young people, promote the exercise of their autonomy, facilitate their mobility and help to make Europe a part of their daily life.

Respect for democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms implies the right of young people to dispose of complete, understandable and reliable information on all the questions and needs that they express, giving them the widest range of choices without discrimination and free of ideological or any other kind of influence.

This right to information has been recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and in the Recommendation N° R (90) 7 of the Council of Europe concerning information and counselling for young people in Europe.

The following principles constitute guidelines for youth information services, which help to guarantee the right of young people to information:

- **Youth information services shall be open to all young people without exception.**

- **Youth information services seek to guarantee the equality of access to their information for all young people, regardless of their situation, place of residence or social category.**

- **The information available shall be exclusively based on the request or need expressed by the user and is independent of**

any other interest or concern. It should cover all subjects which interest young people.

- **Each user is received as an individual, and the response is adapted to the request.**
- **There is free access to youth information services (no appointment is required).**
- **Information and counselling are given in a way that respects the user's confidences and anonymity.**
- **Information is free of charge.**
- **The information offered is complete, impartial, accurate, practical and up-to-date.**
- **Information is provided in a professional manner by staff trained for this purpose.**
- **Every effort is made to ensure the objectivity of the information provided through the pluralism of the sources used.**
- **The information distributed shall be independent and free of any ideological, political or commercial interest.**
- **The use of sponsoring or paid advertising must respect the independence of the service and of the information provided.**

Program of the contact seminar "Balkan Co-operation and European integration" - 05-08.2001, Bulgaria

05.04.2001
Morning: *Arrival*
Afternoon: *Leadership Team meeting*
Evening: *Getting to know each other*

06.04.2001
Morning:
- Official opening
- Expectations
- Presentations of the organizations + exhibition
- "The phenomena Balkan Identity - reality or fiction?" - lecture
- "Unfinished Europe" - exploring the challenges of European Integration for the Youth - discussions

Afternoon:
Workshops:
- "Freedom of self-expression"
- "Virtual Identity"
- "Unisex"
- "Youth emigration/ immigration escape of identity or forced mobility?"
-Reports from the working groups
Evening: *International evening*

07.04.2001
Morning:
Meeting with local NGO's

- Relations between YOUTH programme members and non-members and development of EVS in South-Eastern Europe & Youth information policy - input and discussions
- Next steps in the project development - ideas for future activities
- Establishment of Balkan youth information network (exchange of ideas and sharing of experience)

Afternoon:
- Visits to art galleries, museums, "The old city" etc.
Evening:
Farewell party

08.04.2001
Morning:
- Evaluation - filling in of questionnaires and estimation
Afternoon:
- Departure

Expectations

All participants taking part in the contact seminar “Balkan Co-operation and European Integration” had some expectations, that depends on their opinion about the problem and their experience and adjustment. In the first day of the event everybody got a sheet of paper and had to write down the following things. You could see the resume of the answers.

Input:

- My ideas about Balkan
- Information about Balkans and the young people ideas
- New ideas
- Information about youth organizations in my country and about my culture
- Experience in the youth work
- Collaboration proposals
- Good mood

Output

- Ideas about the topic
- New friends
- New contacts
- Proposals for international projects
- Good feelings
- New knowledge
- Knowledge of Youth structures, of Balkan countries

What you would like to happen?

- To discuss ideas for future international projects
- Real discussions and exchanging of ideas
- To learn interesting things
- Say something about my culture
- To learn more about Bulgaria and Balkan culture
- People open wide them minds and hearts to participate
- Meet new friends
- Interactive exchange

What I would like to avoid?

- Leaving without useful contacts
- Not getting involved in the core of the problems
- To speak about politics
- Wasting time
- Lack of communication
- Be bored
- Virtual Identity
- Misunderstanding

Presentation of the participants and their organizations - Exhibition (pictures)

"Youth emigration/immigration – escape of identity or forced mobility?"

In the frame of the contact seminar "Balkan co-operation and European integration" was held discussion about the transmission of identity during the emigration/immigration processes.
The recent political and economical changes in whole Eastern Europe and especially on the Balkans are the reasons for the alarming problem with the young immigration. One of the aims of the event was to explore the relations between the emigration in South-Eastern Europe and immigration processes in Western Europe and the identity finding problem for young people.

The discussion on the topic "Youth emigration/immigration – escape of identity or forced mobility?" was organized in small groups. Every one of the participants had to present the situation in their country, the official politic and their personal experience.

The groups had the following questions to discuss:

1. What are the main factors for the migration of young people nowadays?
2. Is migration a chance to start a brand new life in a new country – the Haven's search?
3. Is migration a way to escape of national identity?
4. Does the feeling of national belonging increase greatly when somebody is forced to leave the home country (for political and economical reasons)?
5. Could national identity be inherited and educated in the family not

living in the country of their origin?
6. What is the attitude of society to the immigrants in your country and what is the official policy?
7. Does the presence of foreign minority group endanger or force national identity?

We may focus on two main factors for the migration – financial and political ones (wars, national uprisings, ethnical conflicts, genocide).
Most of young people from the South-Eastern Europe emigrate searching better way of life. The unemployment and difficult economical situation in their countries force them to leave the origin countries.

The motives for the youth from Western Europe are better professional realization and searching of a different experience. Probably we should make difference between mobility and immigration. The globalization and the integration processes in Europe encourage the mobility, which is in fact the freedom to travel, work and live abroad. On the other hand the immigration is forced by the bad circumstance in former communistic countries.

Go into the migration process as a chance to start a brand new life, we could point at difference between hopes and realities. A lot of young people go abroad with idealized images about the life. Often the mass media build unreal vision about the easier way of life in the West, showing the higher standard and the opportunities for better professional realization.

The groups concluded that it is hard to escape of national identity. Of course it is possible to develop a new, modified identity or even to create two identities. The integration of emigrants in the society costs more or less the changing of national identity.

If somebody forced to leave the home country for political and economical reasons, then the immigration is not a will. In most of the cases the reaction is focusing, defending on national identity.

The national identity could be inherited and educated in the family not living in the country of their origin. Good example for that are chines or Arabic people abroad, which preserve their traditions very well.
The attitude of society to the immigrants depends on national background.

The image and the stereotype of some nationalities are more positives them of the others – for examples in Spain the Latin-American people are more accepted in the society, because of the popular Latin American TV "soup operas". The problem with integration of Gypsy is existed in all over Europe. They are living mostly isolated in kind of a ghetto or in caravans, the unemployment among the group is very high.

Often the image of the immigrant is reflection of a fear of unknown and different. In fact exactly this fear is the root of a stereotypes and prejudices. In this order comes the problems with the intolerance, discrimination, isolation or even violence.

Does the presence of foreign minority group endanger or force national identity?
In most of the cases the answer in positive. The majority may feel explored or endangered from the increasing group of immigrants. But it is possible also to have tolerance, multicultural attitude.

"Freedom of self-expression"
(Discussion and work in small groups)

New media and communications offer young people the possibility to express their non-official and non-traditional point of view. The participants in the workshop had oppurtunity to discuss this topic in small groups and to tought about this questions:

1. How do young people use modern media (global networks - Internet and Intranet, multimedia installations, local and global TV channels) for self-labeling and self-expression?

2. Do modern media encourage the active participation of young people in the society and in which way?

3. What is the image of youth shown in Internet (positive or negative youth, resistant or passive youth)?

4. Do you think that the new communications are effective ways to promote ideas and to influence the society?

5. Where are the limits of freedom of self-expression in Internet and is there any censorship on the Web?

6. In which way do the personal websites help their authors to overcome their anonymity and to become part of the global world of Internet?

You could read some toughts about the topic:
...freedom:
- interfered by all the patterns to fill being part of society with habits and traditions

...limits
- economical independence
- censorship
- standards
- INSIDE boundaries

...modern media
- an adequate solution for encouraging young people to participate in the society

...a stream line of keys...chat...chat
still chatting...getting closer to someone...
searching for an image, choosing yourown identity
self-expressing, self-labeling!

...the virtual escape from reality seems to be working right!

...getting stimulated

...getting into communication

...however, chatting is a passive process, isn`t it?

...Internet - Global World

...a global society of each man`s societies

...globalization - harmonization of rules (we can`t live without) of different nations in an Union

...being an active participant in the www.society by performing your own web_image

...chat rooms versus website
or
where does anonymity end!

"Virtual identity" - online simulation game

The new communications as chat, e-mail, discussion rooms etc. give you the freedom and the tools to change the sustainable components of your identity. In Internet everyone could freely choose her/his social, cultural and sexual identity - an old man could be teenager, a girl could be a boy. In this way the individuals construct a new untraditional "virtual identity". The aim of online simulation game "Virtual identity", that was held during the event contact seminar "Balkan co-operation and European integration", was to give participants opportunity to choose some different identity. After the interesting and funny one hour chanting, the group shared the impressions of being someone else. The topic of the online discussion was "the sex".

You could see some examples of it below.

The participants had to discuss following questions:

1. How deep could you know each other through the Internet communication?
2. What would your virtual identity be if you were able to choose it now? (E.g. you are communicating in the chartrooms).
3. How do you feel? Is your virtual identity equal to your real personal identity?
4. Do you think that disable people or minority groups could feel them in a privileged position? Do they change their image?
5. Do the virtual global world have similar rules like the real society? Do people have a special status, does someone dominant, is someone isolated, are there formed groups?

The group found that person chooses personality, which is projection, reflection or setting yourself. In fact in most of the cases you create the man that you want to be, or that you are but someone or something forced you to conceal your true face.

The share that the communication trough Internet is easier than face to face contact. Just because you can be absolutely anonymous you can express your self freely, to say whatever you want and how you want.

It is very important to have these opportunities for "free speech" if there are some factors, which restrict it. The new communications are the tool that provides you "tribune" avoiding the fear of repression, overcoming

the disadvantages of the traditional media and way to define your self, your culture, your way of thinking.

Example of the chat:

.....
[Hunny-Bunny] from leather or what?
[YAN] or other things or Heis romantic
[Adam] george, don't be shy
[Hunny-Bunny] candle light
[YAN] of course leather black
[george] yea
>> Sugar-babe has joined channel #infoviolence
[YAN] what about the music
[Hunny-Bunny] hi sweety
[george] love songs
[Adam] again?
[Hunny-Bunny] Eros Ramazotti
[Sugar-babe] hi everyone
[Lorka] welcome!!!
[george] * to you dear bunny
[Adam] welcome! say something interesting!
[george] helooo
[YAN] Ehoo
[george] celine dion is better
[Lorka] Where you from Sugar?
[Hunny-Bunny] I ll lick your nipples dear
[Sugar-babe] I like Rammstein!
[george] ok honey
[YAN] ehh I prefer Ramshtain
[Hunny-Bunny] or some Chopin?
[YAN] Bethoven
[Adam] i like bjork
[YAN] terrible voice
[george] every think what you like i like
AniF> Chopin is good but must be cold
[Hunny-Bunny] even ....?

[george] everything for you my bee
[Hunny-Bunny] ok come here and we ll manage it
[george] or you can here
[george] are you alone
[Adam] where is here?
[YAN] right now or we are going to wait the International evening
[Hunny-Bunny] will u suck me?
[george] my bad
[Hunny-Bunny] and where is it?
[Adam] in the international evening, it would be fun!
[george] right now
AniF> international orgy!!!! yeah
[george] you shuld know
[Hunny-Bunny] make it hot 4 me
[YAN] come on wait untill the Intern Evening we want to have fun too\
[Lorka] I'm writing a song now
[Adam] yeah!
[Adam] another one???
[Lorka] yes
[Lorka] You want to read it
AniF> kewl! another songie!!!
[YAN] waht about sex sex sex
[Adam] what you get inspired from, lorka?
[Hunny-Bunny] what should I know?
AniF> what's the song?\
[YAN] from you Adam
[Lorka] from tequila
[george] wher is my bed
[george] bunny have a good time
AniF> tequilla is like vanilla
.....

"UNISEX" confrontation game

The current society and the unlimited space of Internet undergo reordering and significant changes of visions. The battle of the sexes, the traditional moral steering mechanism and the old stereotypes are strongly modified and we see the contours of "Unisex culture". The slight borders between male and female hairstyles, male and female perfumes, male and female accessories, between male and female professions, male and female roles in the business and family leads to melting into universal "uni"-culture.

This topic was discussed from participants in the workshop during the confrontation game "UNISEX". The rules of the game are simple. First the room is divided in tree sectors - I agree, I disagree and abstention. The group has to stay on one line and think about the printed statement that are putted on the wall. After a while every participant takes the chosen position and explains the arguments that have in mind. The main aim is to discuss the topic and to convince the others to change position.

Statements:

1. There is no difference between male and female jobs.
2. Men and women have equal social roles.
3. There are no special males and female clothes, wear styles, hairstyles.
4. The "unisex culture" thrives only in the virtual space of Internet.
5. In the chatrooms women are men and men are women.

Evaluations

At the end of the event all participants filled the following questionnaires.

This is the summary of their answers.

1. *How do you find the organization of the event and the program?*

   ...Efficient, interesting, professional, excellent, perfect organization ...but the time was too short to discuss all the details about the items of the event..

2. *Are you satisfied with the social program?*

   ...Just a little more time for creating better contacts...

3. *How do you estimate the workshops ?*

   ...Very interesting and hot topics ...but not enough time to work on the items...

4. *What do you think about the food and accommodation?*

   ...Perfect, the restaurants are very good....

5. *Did you establish useful contacts and did you develop your ideas for future projects?*

   ...Hope that the all the ideas will come in to reality...

6. *Do you think this meeting will empower our contacts?*

   ...yes, but we hope to work on it....

List of participants

Greece: Maria Xatzichristodoulou

Yugoslavia: Zoran Dojic

Macedonia: Ruzica Apostolova

Hungary: Gabriella Popova

Turkey: Derya Buyuktanir

Italy: Silvia Toffolon and Cristian Manca

The Netherlads: Allan Prosser and Michael Carrier

Czech Republic: Michal Victora

Romania: Madalina Mocanu

Poland: Krzysztof Trybowski

Slovenia: Blazka Srekl

Spain: Diego Marin Romera and Marisol Lorente Marin

Bulgaria: Rossen Petkov, Svetoslav Dimov, Gergana Roumianova, Diliana Ikonomova, Emilia Nikolova.

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