

# Which Citizen for Which Europe?

## Balancing the economic and socio-cultural objectives of education and training

A Commission staff development seminar in cooperation with the NESSE network of experts

Education and training are crucial for achieving both economic and social goals. However, in the current global economic crisis, there is a risk that economic imperatives will eclipse socio-cultural and civic goals - which are just as fundamental for the cohesion, success and well-being of our societies and are best promoted through education and training. At this seminar, professors [Kathleen Lynch](#) (University College Dublin), [Catherine Casey](#) (University of Leicester) and [Ides Nicaise](#) (University of Leuven, as discussant) engaged with the questions:

1. In the current situation, is it a luxury to speak about the socio-cultural and civic aims of education?
2. How can the traditional strengths of European education and training systems be reframed to meet both economic and social challenges?

The seminar left little doubt that the model of the citizen that informs our educational thinking is crucial. Also that striking a better balance between the economic and the socio-cultural goals of learning is necessary in Europe and world-wide.

### *The need for Care-Full education*

Summary of presentation by [Prof. Kathleen Lynch](#).



Education curricula and assessment world-wide have been driven by a narrow set of employment objectives under the influence of human capital theory. But education is more than preparing individuals for the labour market. **Education and**

**training are not just about jobs, competitiveness and growth.** They are also about cultural development, personal fulfilment, social inclusion, better health, and environmental responsibility. They can turn people into active citizens and give them happier, more fulfilling lives. They can and do improve democracy, tolerance and respect of diversity. They promote intercultural understanding, care and solidarity, equality and social cohesion.

**Learners are not only economic actors.** Children and adult learners are more than rational actors

educated to perform and contribute to the economy. They are also cultural, social and political players as well as profoundly emotional and sentient relational human beings whose memories and feelings about schooling and education often outlive their cognitive gains (or failures).

**The hidden curriculum is important.** While the development of cross-curricular competences such as the desire to learn, interpersonal and civic competence and being creative and innovative can be encouraged and promoted through the formal curriculum (Cohen, 2006), **they are also learned indirectly through the hidden curriculum of schooling** (Lynch, 1989). That is to say that the pedagogical style employed in teaching, how learners are organised (whether they are streamed, grouped or banded by attainment or not), how they are assessed, and whether or not they participate in school planning and decision-making (whether they are defined as active learning citizens or as passive subjects in which knowledge is banked) all impact on their attitudes to learning throughout life.

Developing cross-curricular competences demands a review of how the processes of schooling, the hidden curriculum, functions to develop these, as well as the formal curriculum. *How we teach and organise schooling is as important as what we teach in developing democratic, caring, critical and solidaristic citizens* (John Dewey).

**Multiple intelligences and Capabilities.** While research shows that there are multiple forms of human intelligence<sup>1</sup>, formal education fails to recognise many of these capabilities –especially those that are not easily measured in linguistically or mathematically-based tests but are nonetheless vital for our economic and social survival. **This failure results in the exclusion and labelling of children in schools.** It also provides justification for tracking, a practice shown by research to have negative effects on the achievement levels of disadvantaged children. **There is a need to recognise the multiple forms of human intelligence and capabilities, and to promote their development in education,** not only because they enhance labour market skills but because of their salience to all spheres of human life. There is a need to recognise all human potential in education and to develop intelligence-fair tests to recognise the diversity of human capabilities. This includes the need to **recognise the importance of the affective dimension** (what Goleman terms *emotional intelligences*) which plays a crucial role in the public sphere –not least in education.

**Citizenship and Education – Care-Full education.** Educating *the carer citizen* is as important a task as educating the economic citizen. However, *care* is an inadmissible subject in the "strong" politics of formal education. The educated person is not assumed to be educated in the affective (relational) or emotional domains of life. Schooling is largely

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<sup>1</sup> Devlin et al. 1997; Gardner 1983, 1999; Goleman, 1995, 1998; Sternberg 1998. The work of Howard Gardner and the Harvard Zero project on human intelligences shows that intelligence is not measurable by a simple numerical score as it is a biophysical potential used to process information that can be activated in different cultural settings to solve problems. Drawing on research from neurology, biology, psychology, education and anthropology, the Harvard team have shown that there are at least 8 discrete intelligences many of which are given little recognition in formal education (bodily kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical, spatial, mathematical, naturalist and linguistic)

indifferent to other-centred care and solidarity-related work arising from our interdependencies and dependencies as affective (feeling and caring), interdependent beings (Nussbaum, 2001, Noddings, 2003). Yet, in a world riddled by war and conflict, the need to promote education that enhances autonomy but also recognises human interdependencies seems essential. To promote solidarity between peoples, co-operation rather than competition, both within and beyond Europe, **there is a need for formal education on the subject of solidarity** and a need to create a culture in schooling that enhances children's sense of other-centredness. Evidence from research shows that solidarity-focused education matters. Also, evidence shows how developing socio-emotional competencies is vital for lifelong learning, and how education in the socio-emotional domain improves attitudes to school and enhances performance<sup>2</sup>.

The institutionalisation of Bloom's taxonomy of *cognitive* objectives (closely aligned with human capital theory) in education systems in the Post-WWII era<sup>3</sup> undermined the many skills and capabilities of people that cannot be measured in pen-and-paper tests. It also led to a disregard for children's feelings about schooling, and of their needs at different stages<sup>4</sup>. The lack of attention to children's feelings about schooling and the failure to listen to their voices about how the whole process of schooling impacts on them as persons has alienated many from education. The levels of alienation are evident in the high levels of early school leavers and the low levels of attainment in many EU countries.

An indifference to the affective domain is endemic to the Cartesian Rationalism<sup>5</sup> that dominates formal

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<sup>2</sup> Bar-On et al. (2003); LeDoux (1998), Gardner (1983); Cohen (2001, 2006); Diekstra (2008).

<sup>3</sup> His taxonomy of emotional objectives for example was largely ignored (Lynch et al., 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Noddings, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> *Cogito Ergo Sum* – I think therefore I am (René Descartes). Cartesian rationalism is the assumption that rational thinking is the defining feature of humanity and that it is separate from emotions. Nussbaum's (2001) work on the intelligence of the emotions challenges this view on philosophical grounds while

education (Nussbaum, 2001; Lynch et al., 2007). Cartesian thinking glorifies the education of the *autonomous* citizen and the public citizen, and in recent times, the *employable public citizen*. Recognising the intelligence of the emotions is a real challenge for educators as we know so little about this field. Yet we do know that learning is an emotional as well as an intellectual experience, (Nussbaum, 2001; Noddings, 2003, 2005) and that learning is never neutral.

**Knowledge is never neutral.** Positivist thinking dominates our view of knowledge and within it there is a false dichotomy created between facts and values. We cannot teach skills detached from values, regardless of how objective we profess to be. In educational terms, there is no view from nowhere (Freire, 1973). Within education, we need a critical engagement with the subjects we teach, not just in terms of the values implicit in them, but also in terms of how we teach them and in terms of how we assess learning.

Tests/examinations control the curriculum so **tests should be intelligence-fair and appropriate for all children**. There are growing concerns internationally re the use of so-called aptitude tests. The US Commission on Civil Rights (2002) reported that 300 higher education colleges have made the use of SAT tests optional due to racial, ethnic, gender and social class biases in SAT-type tests.

**Education for democratic engagement.** Education is not only about curriculum and assessment, products or outcomes; it is also about process and pedagogy. Those affected by school decisions need to be directly involved in planning. If we are to educate students to engage in public life as democratic citizens, it is essential that they learn how to participate democratically in the public domain of school itself. Research (such as Apple, 1999) shows that dialogue-based and democratic forms of education enhance educational engagement and lower drop out rates especially among young people from marginalised communities. Research demonstrates that **promoting dialogue is also effective pedagogically** as it enables the student to become an active participant in their own learning.

Promoting more egalitarian relations between children and teachers also matters because it shows respect for children as persons. Research with children (not on them) shows that they have a voice of their own that they want heard directly rather than mediated by adults: **in the eyes of children, schooling is not just a preparation for life; it is life itself** – 14 years of life in most EU countries.

**Conclusions.** The model of the citizen that informs our educational thinking is crucial; it reflects our vision of the "social Europe" that we aspire to build. Education is not only about preparing people for the labour market. We cannot afford neglecting inclusion, equality, solidarity and active citizenship objectives which are just as fundamental for the cohesion, success and well-being of our societies and are best promoted through education and training. In order to promote a socially inclusive Europe, there is a need to:

1. Recognise citizens not only as economic actors but also as social, political, emotional and cultural beings –also in education.
2. Educate about Care, Solidarity, Equality and Diversity *per se*.
3. Recognise the multiple forms of intelligence and capabilities (competences) that children have and promote their development in education. Also develop intelligence-fair tests to recognise the diversity of human capabilities.
4. Develop a *critical orientation* to all teaching and learning not only with regard to the values implicit in subjects, but also in terms of how they are taught and how they are assessed.
5. Create more internally democratic education structures and systems so that children's needs are met and their voices are heard.
6. Guide education by a Care-full view of citizenship that *recognises* not only human autonomy but also *the inevitable dependencies and interdependencies* that are endemic to the human condition.

# Education and Economy: Learners, Workers, Citizens

Summary of presentation by [Prof. Catherine Casey](#).



Prevailing economic views toward education hold that education and training increase the wealth of nations and improve the skills, knowledge, and

employment prospects of individuals. People with higher skill levels are better able to fend for themselves in labour markets and are less dependent on the welfare state. Therefore, more education and training should be provided so that economies are more productive and competitive, and individuals more self-reliant.

Critics worry that too much emphasis on economic outcomes under-values and weakens Education's social and cultural dimensions. Too much economic emphasis threatens traditional strengths in European education that foster human development and cultural enrichment. The neglect of these social values and cultural resources, as well as too much emphasis on economic participation through the labour market, **weakens social cohesion and solidarity**. Europe risks losing vitally important socio-cultural accomplishments. In recognition of these social and cultural problems and risks, European leaders and policy-makers turn a new attention to a more "social Europe" that seeks the renewal of the EU's social agenda.

Turning to a renewal of the social agenda poses many rich possibilities for Europe and its citizens. But this challenge is now made even more difficult by the very real concern over the current economic crisis that now faces us. **In this situation, therefore, can we realistically speak of the vital need for social citizens, non-market imperatives, and socio-cultural goods of Education now?**

Yes, we can -and we must speak of this vital need. We can make this argument not only from a moral humanistic basis – which in itself is entirely valid – but also by drawing on evidence from economic arenas. Considerable **research evidence** from both economic as well as social spheres points to the vital need for the continuing development, integration,

and application of the socio-cultural goods of Education in today's European societies. The socio-cultural goods of Education are needed at the heart of economic areas: businesses, markets, organisations, workplaces, boards of governance.

An extensive body of research points to a number of significant problems and **paradoxes of education-rich, higher skilled economies**:

- increased managerial systems' control
- increased individualist, competitive action
- constrained, highly rationalised, agenda of learning at work
- skill "wasting"
- diminished intra-organisational trust and cooperation
- diminished social capital
- diminished organizational cohesion
- obstructed learning and poorer jobs in some sectors

All of these now **seriously impede innovation as well as erode citizen participation and solidarity**.

People very often think that innovation – which is at the core of the Knowledge-based Economy and its *sustained* competitiveness – requires high levels of technical knowledge and skill. But complex knowledge-based production requires *high levels of diffuse cooperation and collaboration*. These qualities cannot be commanded or traded. The generation of innovation requires what social analysts call "non-market regulative principals". In other words, neither hierarchies of management nor markets are sufficient to bring out the qualities in workers that will generate innovation. Socio-cultural qualities and "community regulative principals" are vital. These are best promoted through education.

In sum, we can observe **limits, risks, and necessities** resulting from the economic and political pathways taken in recent times. From the research evidence, it can be concluded that:

- The over-emphasised economic rationalities pose serious limitations in KBE sectors.
- The "social capital" – which refers to qualities of trust, collaboration, inter-personal knowledge and skill sharing, respect, emotional intelligence, et al. – required for more cooperative, congenial, innovative and productive organizations is lacking.
- As the EU pursues greater economic integration and as trans-national business and employment strategies extend toward more and more workers in the EU, the bases of social integration and cohesion gained in earlier generations are threatened and weakened. As the EU's workers are increasingly mobile and multi-ethnic the social bases of solidarity are weakened. An integrating EU economy without social solidarity is unsustainable.
- Risk to both economic goals, and "social Europe" goals are readily visible.
- Education has a long tradition in the development and transmission of socio-cultural goods. These are needed more than ever for persons, society and economy.

**Policies that are not working towards the dual Lisbon goal.** E&T policy directions pursued in recent years that are not working toward the conjoint Lisbon goals are those that:

- Put too much emphasis on technical, instrumental and quantifiable skills in E&T programmes, and similarly too much emphasis on technical systems and production rationalities<sup>6</sup> in pursuit of competitiveness.
- Emphasise a one-sided, narrow, skills base result in a trend toward over-skilled, under-educated workers (that lack the social capital

qualities learned in more comprehensive E&T provisions).

- Are based on an acceptance of business demands (such as the demand for more technically skilled workers) but without sustained evidence for those needs.

Policies of this sort are not working because they over-emphasise one set of criteria: those based on economic rationalities. Education of this nature prepares people for jobs rather than for the multiple dimensions of human life. Also, its one-sidedness fails to give workers the necessary skills for working in innovative knowledge-based economy sectors. In addition, it prepares people for jobs that labour markets unevenly provide (the labour markets across the EU require workers for a wide range of jobs that do not include high skills levels).

**Policies that work.** There is also evidence of policies that are working toward achieving social and economic goals. Some of these are:

- Policy programmes that encourage more collaborative and cooperative engagement
- Policies recognising plural interests and pursuing common ground
- Policies stimulating participation, cross-national integration, cross-cultural understandings
- Policies pursuing joined-up/holistic approaches and coordinated policy initiatives across several fields of social and economic policy.
- Institutional innovations – e.g. traditional, national-oriented trade unions learning EU level of solidarity, identity, participation.

**Policy recommendations.** The over-arching conclusion from research is that economic and social objectives are not mutually exclusive but heavily interdependent. Also that education and training build the critical foundation for the achievement of both economic **and** social goals. Toward this end, there is a need to:

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<sup>6</sup> Production rationalities means organising and doing things in workplaces that focus most on measurable efficiencies such as cost reductions, tightening up and routinising as many processes as possible, intensifying management control, treating people as "resources" that can be utilised like non-living components of production.

- Link lifelong learning strategies with EU directives on worker participation and consultation, representation in rule setting, e.g. 2002/14/EC.
- Develop comprehensive lifelong learning strategies to integrate "social capital" (collaborative action, trust, negotiation, "emotional intelligence" and cross-cultural understandings) with technical skills development in secondary and VET levels.
- Promote the recognition of non-quantifiable, incalculable qualities of social capital currently not formally taught in E&T systems.
- Promote the integration of lifelong learning's social capital dimensions with existing programmes: e.g. (with the *New Skills for New Jobs* 2007 EC Resolution); with the *Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs 2008-2010* Council resolution, etc.). For example, the CEDEFOP's Green Economy initiatives directing the practical design of green skills learning programmes in a wide range of medium skills occupations are immensely promising.
- Strengthen the Education and Training 2010 programme to encourage employer and management learning for social capital, shared participation in rule setting, in organization design (e.g. from gender equity to "non-market regulation principals" on boards).
- Integrate lifelong learning strategies with industrial (including firm governance) policies (e.g. Corporate Social Responsibility actions).
- Build lifelong learning strategies that recognise limits to high-productivity sectors: that include people working in jobs requiring low technical skills. We need to build LLL and VET strategies that include socio-cultural qualities that make "better jobs" even out of low-skilled jobs.

- Policy development in Higher Education: Promotion of wider curriculum of "liberal arts" or "general education" across all degree programmes. Promote emphasis of socio-cultural qualities in Economics, Management, Science and Technology curricula. Accelerate the expansion of Erasmus.

**Conclusions.** We need to strike a better balance between the economic and the socio-cultural goals of learning in Europe and globally. Extensive social, economic, education and industrial research reveals that the current deficit of influence of the socio-cultural dimensions of education in society and economy weakens social cohesion and erodes the collaborative systems necessary in knowledge-based production organizations. Research indicates that the humanistic rationale for the development of socio-cultural dimensions of education is *strongly interdependent* with the economic rationale. It is evident that **developing stronger policy linkages of lifelong learning, with employment policies, industrial practices and firm governance, will advance the aim of "social Europe" agenda as well as economic prosperity for a wider population.** Education's role in achieving the EU's social and economic goals is crucial.

The way Europe will debate questions about the purposes of education and training in a world where the global and the local inflect each other, and where citizens must be prepared as actors within multicultural democracies, will generate resources not only for Europe but also for the rest of the world. Such resources which can inform policies that support global-local democratic ("post-national") politics, and the learning processes that form citizens who understand and enact their entitlements and duties within the framework of democratic decision-making, are critical not just to the project of European integration but to democratic politics on a global scale.

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