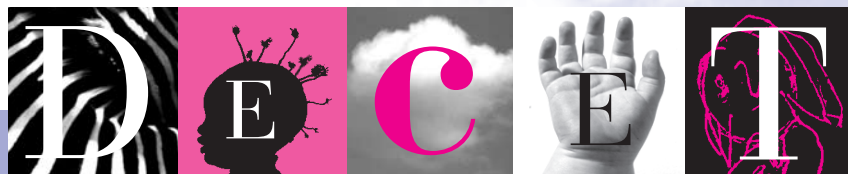


European Conference **DECET** Network

**Foundations for Equal Opportunities
for All
in Early Childhood Care and Education**

Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion

INVITATION CONFERENCE **BRUSSELS**



Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training

October 18th, 19th, 20th 2007

Kind & Gezin Academie, **Brussels**

Funded by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation



EUROPEAN YEAR FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL • 2007



AIM

The DECET Conference aims to support the construction of foundations in the Early Childhood Care and Education Sector with respect to diversity, social inclusion and in addressing discrimination. This is in keeping with the aim of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All 2007.



OBJECTIVES

- to raise awareness on the role of the early childhood sector in addressing diversity and discrimination at policy, research, training and practise levels
- to offer reflections, new tools and approaches for early childhood providers on how to address these issues
- to present local examples of good practice in a variety of countries
- to deepen the discussion and enhance the development of strategies to ensure high quality service provision is free of any form of discrimination
- to generate a new impetus within the early childhood sector to move forward in its efforts to address equality and nondiscrimination in terms of 'race', religion, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation, class



CONTEXT

European nation states are confronted with diversity in many fields:

- Ethnic and cultural diversity is growing through the mobility of individuals both within Europe and between continents.
- Poverty impacts disproportionately on the youngest children and their families and severely limits their life chances. A key challenge to be addressed is inequality between social classes.
- There are persistent gender gap differences in many fields. These include the employment of women, the balance of work and family life and the role of men, professionally and personally in child rearing and education.
- Important challenges remain in how children with differing abilities or special requirements may be included in the early childhood sector.

These and other diversity contexts raise new questions for all European Nation States, as well as civil society as they challenge our conceptions of identity and citizenship. Recent events in many different European cities indicate that actions such as **European Year of Equal Opportunites 2007** to address discrimination are relevant and necessary.



RATIONALE

The early years are a foundational stage for holistic development. Research has clearly demonstrated that prejudices and identity are founded in these years, but also that early childhood services can have a substantial effect, provided they offer 'high' quality well resourced care and education. It is fundamental to rethink European Early Childhood Provision in this context. It is also necessary to look at how diversity and the complexity of European societies are acknowledged in inclusive curricula, access policies and the professionalisation of the sector.

Early Childhood training and service provision that successfully addresses these issues can contribute substantially to combating poverty, tackling discrimination and social exclusion, to addressing gender equality in employment and in supporting community building. Ultimately it will support the foundational development of respect for diversity and solidarity for every child.



MISSION

All children and adults have the right to evolve and to develop in a context where there is equity and respect for diversity. Children, parents and educators have the right to good quality in early childhood education services, free from any form of – overt and covert, individual and structural – discrimination due to their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (in reference to Article 2, UN – Convention on the Rights of the Child).

OBJECTIVE

Therefore the **DECET** Network will promote knowledge, skills and attitudes which enables children and adults to construct together early childhood education services and communities where everyone

- feels that he/she belongs
- is empowered to develop the diverse aspects of his/her identity
- can learn from each other across cultural and other boundaries
- can participate as active citizens
- actively addresses bias through open communication
- displays a willingness to grow and to work together to challenge institutional forms of prejudice and discrimination.

The European network **DECET** (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training) consists of experts in the field in **Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Scotland, Spain and the Netherlands**. It works in close cooperation with other international networks. **DECET**'s contribution has been recognised by many independent authorities including the recent **OECD** (2006) review of early childhood education and care in 20 countries (*'Starting Strong: www.oecd.org/edu/startingstrong2*).

TARGET AUDIENCE

The conference will bring together a range of stakeholders to discuss issues and provide a space to reflect on them and to identify strategies to move forward. It will seek to include policy makers, university and college professionals, early childhood providers and NGO's working to promote inclusion in **ECCE**. The conference will seek to encourage an open and constructive dialogue between all stakeholders.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Thursday 18 October

- **Ms. Anastasia Crickley**, Chairperson of the Interim Board for the EU Fundamental Rights Agency and Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination of the OSCE: Ireland
Equality in Early Childhood Education within a Framework of Fundamental Rights and Equal Opportunities
- **Mr. John Bennett**, OECD
Early Childhood Services and Equal Opportunities: a Cross National Perspective
- **Dr. Michel Vandenbroeck**, University Ghent, Belgium
Diverse Aspects of Diversity. A European perspective

Friday 19 October

- **Prof. Dr. Glenda Mac Naughton**, University Melbourne, Australia
Strategies to Promote Equal Opportunities for Young Children in Early Childhood Settings
- **Dr. Christa Pressing**, University Berlin/ISTA, Germany & **Prof. Dr. Chris Pascal**, University Worcester/CREC, UK
Children Crossing Borders: Enhancing the Inclusion of Children in Pre-school Settings

Saturday 20 October

- **Dr. Jacqueline Hayden**, Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague, The Netherlands
Making a Difference: Promoting Inclusion and Respect in Early Childhood Services
- **Parmjit Dhanda MP**, Secretary of State for Children, Young People and Families, UK
Development and Implementation of Inclusive Policies for Children: 'Bridging the Gap'

PROGRAMME

The programme includes keynote speakers, interactive workshops, debates and visits.

TIME

Thursday 9.00 - 17.30 hrs

Friday 9.00 - 17.30 hrs

Saturday 9.00 - 13.00 hrs

VENUE

Kind & Gezin Academie

Hallepoortlaan 27

1060 Brussels.

The venue is in the historical centre of Brussels and within walking distance from the main train station Brussels Midi.

REGISTRATION

Conference fee: € 150, including the conference dinner on Friday night.

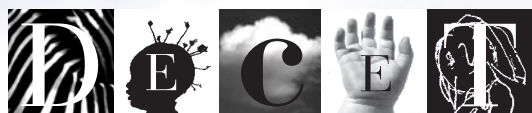
Please register for the Conference on the website:

www.decet.org

Further information on workshop themes, venue, map and hotels will be available on the website.

For further information please contact: info@vbjk.be

www.decet.org



Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training

DECET

Network Partners

BELGIUM

VBJK

Expertisecentrum voor opvoeding & kinderopvang, Ghent

Contact: veerle.vervaet@vbjk.be

www.vbjk.be

FRANCE

ESSSE

Ecole Santé Social Sud Est, Lyon

Contact: mony@essse.fr

www.essse.fr

ACEPP

Association Collectif Enfants Parents et Professionnels, Paris

Contact : emmanuelle.murcier@acepp.asso.fr

www.acepp.asso.fr

GERMANY

ISTA

Institut für den Situationsansatz

Internationale Akademie an der Freien

Universität Berlin

Contact: decet@ina-fu.org

www.ina-fu.org/ista

GREECE

Κέντρο Παιδαγωγικής και Καλλιτεχνικής Επιμόρφωσης «Σχεδία»

Centre for Artistic and Pedagogical Training

"Schedia" (Raft), Athens

Contact: schedia@ath.forthnet.gr

www.schedia-art.gr

IRELAND

Pavee Point Travellers' Centre, Dublin

Contact: ecce@pavee.iol.ie

www.paveepoint.ie

THE NETHERLANDS

MUTANT, Change Agents - Respect for Diversity, Utrecht

Contact: a.vankeulen@mutant.nl

www.mutant.nl

SPAIN

Associació de Mestres Rosa Sensat, Barcelona

Contact: mlucchetti@rosasensat.org

www.rosasensat.org

UK, ENGLAND

CREC

Centre for Research in Early Childhood, Birmingham

Contact: drtonybertram@compuserve.com

www.crec.co.uk

UK, SCOTLAND

CAF

Childhood and Families: Research and Development Centre, Glasgow

Contact: Jacque.fee@strath.ac.uk

www.strath.ac.uk/centres/caf/