

'Ten Keys to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions'

Open Space Working Groups during 32nd meeting of the EMU General Assembly and Conference 'Music Education in Eastern Countries' on 17 and 18 May 2007 in Pécs, Hungary

Main theme of the working groups was the 'Ten Keys to the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions' adopted by the UNESCO in 2005.

The theme was introduced by Paolo Ponzecchi, vice-president.

Main questions for the working groups were:

1. What is the role of cultural diversity in the programme of your school?
2. What does cultural diversity mean for your country?
3. What does cultural diversity mean for EMU? For instance for the festival, the General Assembly and other activities by EMU.

After that the working groups reported their results in a plenary session.

Timo Klemettinen (presidium) reported on the 'English speaking' working group led by Marion van der Hoeven (presidium)

"Music in itself is a result of cultural diversity"

. As a starting point we have to recognize cultural diversity in our societies. After we understand cultural diversity in our society, the right and open attitude is the most important tool to foster multicultural society. We must fight for equality and get rid of musical boundaries.

. Cultural diversity can be seen as a threat, all that is unknown causes fear. Our task is to help people understand the huge benefits, possibilities and richness we can gain from different cultures.

. In different European countries there are huge differences in cultural diversity, but all the European countries have to face the challenges of multicultural society. Some countries are in a situation of not being able to take care of cultural diversity. For instance, Serbia is not actively working for multicultural society because of the social and historical situation, even though there are 22 minority groups in Serbia.

. There are at least two ways to foster migrants' participation in society. We can help people to keep their own cultures and keep them more or less separated from the majority culture or we can help people to come together and create platforms where people are able to learn from each other. However, it is a great challenge to at the same time keep one's own culture and to assimilate into the society you are living in.

. It is very important that migrants take part in cultural management and planning. Unfortunately, in many cases it is middle-aged, middle class persons from the majority culture that are making decisions on behalf of migrants.

. In music education, children from different cultural backgrounds are not the problem, but in many cases the families are. How can we contact parents and help them see the opportunity that music education offers their children? And when talking with people from different cultural background we always have to pay attention to religious questions. One of the best ways to get in contact with families is to hire a teacher who comes from a different cultural area.

. Multicultural music education is a great challenge for music teachers and teacher training in universities. How to teach Chinese music? Multicultural music education is also a challenge for music pre-education. What do

you sing, play and dance when a group consists of 20 children from different cultural backgrounds and there is no common cultural heritage at all?

. To be able to work as a multicultural music teacher one needs suitable teaching rooms, instruments and other teaching equipment.

“Mobility is the oxygen of cultural diversity”

. In order to foster understanding and multicultural society we have to create –especially for young people – the opportunity to travel and meet different cultures. The challenge is that travelling costs money and time. Music schools, national music school unions and the European Music School Union should engage more in co-operation and work harder to get more financial support for the exchange programmes.

. Globalization is seen as a possibility and threat. The mainstream entertainment music and “Americanization” are making the world more and more “mono-cultural”. On the other hand, globalization makes it easier to meet different cultures and to learn from them.

. Music and cultural organizations can play a key role in developing cultural diversity. It is very important for the cultural institutions to consider their role in society. One of the shining examples is the *Concertgebouw* in Amsterdam, which has been running marvellous community programmes for children and adults and multicultural music programmes.

. There is a strong need for co-operation between music schools and other cultural institutes. Music schools can be of great help in developing non-formal music education.

. In the coming meetings, EMU should collect examples of good experiences, like a project in Norway where culture schools engage in co-operating with families that come from different cultural areas, or the Many Musics Programme in Finland which aims to research the situations of different music education target groups in Finland.

Finally, taking care of cultural diversity is a political question and EMU should play a key role in various cultural dialogue platforms in order to foster multicultural music education.

Philippe Dalarun (France) reported (Helena Maffli written report) on the ‘French speaking’ working group led by Helena Maffli (presidium)

The group completely agreed with the principles and the values of the UNESCO document.

. Italy: Mirco Besutti made an important principal statement that was strongly echoed by the group:

Music is perhaps the most important means of social and cultural integration, because it always comes very close and implies a strong personal aspect.

This conviction is based on his experiences with disabled children. Italy has a great human and cultural diversity within its own population, but also new ethnic communities (Chinese population), whose needs have to be met in the future.

. France: A nation with 62 million inhabitants with regional diversities (Corsica) and a very important immigrant population from North Africa. There are explosive social problems in suburbs and it is urgent to solve them rapidly. In music and art education, the French state demands that schools make room for diversity and mutual recognition of different cultures. Teachers coming from the whole country are trained in six big training centres (CEFEDEM) in urban and ethnic music styles and the pedagogical approach to go with it. At the same time, the classical curriculum is maintained.

. Portugal: Regional diversity (north-south) and significant immigration.

Example from Porto: the Conservatory offers a classical curriculum, but also alternative curricula for world music and new urban musics. In addition, the institution actively goes out to meet other communities and to respond to their needs in music education (workshops, courses).

. Spain: Great social and political diversity, tensions and difficult language issues.

In music education, the regions are free to introduce regional music traditions, but there is little awareness of the necessity to include foreign cultures.

. Switzerland and Luxembourg

A long tradition of diversity and a strong foreign population with only minor problems of integration. The state of Luxembourg makes efforts to integrate the foreign cultures in music education, but these communities often want to stay in their own clubs (football, folklore, dance and music). The numerous Portuguese accordion students prefer to learn this instrument in their own circles rather than in music schools.

. In Switzerland, there are numerous experiences, depending on the population in the different communities. Example from the multicultural Geneva: “Ateliers d’ethnomusicologie” offering regular music and dance lessons with native teachers coming from all over the world.

Practical means of action in EMU

The European Youth Music Festival is EMU's show window, reflecting the realities of our countries and music schools. We expect to see more diverse music styles in the future, as well as interactive productions (dance, theatre, music). Productions of groups with disabled children and young persons should also find their place in the festival programme.

The country that hosts the festival could give room to its own national productions and specifically promote them during the festival. It should be made sure that a maximum of groups gets to see and hear these productions. Actually, many groups don't get enough opportunity to listen to the others because they are busy with their own organization. How can this problem be solved in the future?

Gerhard Gutschik (Austria) reported on his own ‘German speaking’ working group

- . There are lots of questions – some of them answered in the “Ten Keys”.
- . We see the “Convention on the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions” as belonging to the same category of documents like the “Declaration of Human Rights” and the “Declaration of Weimar”, and it is the responsibility of the music schools to bring these words to life.
- . Music has no borders, but there are political and economic limits.
- . The integration of the culture of migrants brings variety and diversity, but also tensions.
- . To integrate the music of various cultures into the music schools means to bring in various cultural backgrounds and various forms of learning. Terms like “school” or “learning” have different meanings in different cultures. It is sometimes not easy to integrate these different meanings into the concept of “one music school”.
- . Intercultural learning would not only mean teaching new instruments but also learning from and with each other on an equal level. Cultural work in a music school should always look behind the scenes, should be more than only teaching an instrument.
- . There are positive examples of this approach, but of course it is not easy. Music schools need more teachers with a multicultural background and special training for the teachers to work seriously in these fields.
- . Some minorities are very sensitive about their musical and ethnic (or national) identity. They fear the loss of their culture and their cultural heritage when it is taught in schools.
- . There are also social borders. It is the responsibility of politicians and music schools to give children of disadvantaged families the possibility to learn music. Sometimes social handicap and a different cultural background come together to make it even more difficult for the children.
- . We also see the phenomenon of “parallel worlds”. One person (pupil) can live in many “musical universes” at the same time – playing classical music in the music school, playing hip hop in a band and listening to ethnic music at home. All these musical universes live together on an equal level.
- . We see it as an important responsibility of the music schools in Europe to find new solutions and answers to the “Ten Keys” every year.
- . EMU and Europe are examples for this way ...

Utrecht, The Netherlands, 1 September 2007