



Leonardo da Vinci
Reference material

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
DEMOCRACY, CITIZENSHIP AND HIGHER EDUCATION:
Dialogue between Universities and Community

23-24 NOVEMBER 2006
VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY
KAUNAS, LITHUANIA

CALL FOR PAPERS

What is the mission of the university?
Are universities democratic and innovative in teaching methods and their relationship to society?
What are the obligations of the university to society and its communities?
How do students, educators and university partners understand the virtues of university education?
What shall we do about the partnership between universities and civil society?
These are the questions to discuss during the conference.

Background

Today universities must assume a leading responsibility for research and education for democracy on a global scale. They have become critical to the development of democratic values, practices and the civil education of the young. It is not enough to rely on the transference of knowledge, ideas or development of skills through traditional mechanisms of scholarly writing and research. Universities today are the key actors in strengthening the local communities and their role in wider society and internalization of civic values. Democratic development in Europe and post-soviet societies in particular, is the primary challenge of society, yet most institutions of higher education have remained trapped by their own inertia of traditional practices in administration, teaching and research throughout Europe.

Citizenship education and civic engagement in universities became common goals of education policies in Europe in the late 1990s. The main forces pushing today's universities toward civic engagement include an effort to deal with increasing criticisms of higher education and its mission in contemporary society. Disengagement of many European citizens from political processes and democratic participation as well as the weak roots of civil society in post Soviet countries also suggest that citizenship education should become the core issue at all levels of the educational system. In 2004, an international research project funded by EU Leonardo da Vinci Program was set up to address the issues of a dialogue between academia and community, including teaching and learning citizenship skills, civic values and civic engagement at university level. More information on the project is available on the project's website www.civicus.lt.

Purpose of the Conference

- To present the main findings of the research done in Lithuania, Sweden, Hungary, Netherlands, Greece and Spain. The research analysed the good practice of university-community collaboration in these countries, organizational aspects of the partnership and the impact of community oriented teaching/learning on students' citizenship performance.
- To discuss the overall project results among the experts from European countries.
- To raise active discussions on democracy, citizenship and higher education among the academic community, decision-makers and community organizations.
- To provide proper grounds for developing the possible follow-up activities as well as dissemination of experience in the field of citizenship education in higher education on international level by cooperation between academic community and different state as well as non-governmental actors.

Participants

- Academic community (students, teachers, administrators)
- Civil servants
- Decision and policy makers
- Employers
- NGO representatives
- Media professionals

Conference Workshops

The conference will be organized in the following workshops:

- The Mission of University in Local Community
- Organizational Issues of Community-based Learning
- Partnership between University and Civil Society - Good Practices
- Impacts of Citizenship Education
- Citizenship Education Practices in Europe and USA

Please submit your paper proposals (max. 250 words) together with a registration form by 1 October 2006.

Working Language

The working language of the conference will be English with an English/Lithuanian interpretation during the panel discussions.

Conference Proceedings

Selected paper presentations will be published in the conference proceedings. Please submit full papers (approx. 40-60 thousand characters) at arrival to the conference. Publication is due by 31 January 2007.

Fee

The conference is free of charge. Organizers will cover the costs of conference materials, reception and refreshments. The participants are responsible for covering their own travel, accommodation and other expenses.

Registration

We kindly request you to complete the registration form and return it before **1 October 2006** to Mr. Dainius Genys, Conference Administrator, phone: +370 37 327 822, fax: +370 37 327 823, e-mail: d.genys@smf.vdu.lt

Confirmation

Confirmation of registration will be forwarded to participants on receipt of the completed registration form.

Hotel Reservations

The organizers of the conference will be pleased to make reservations for you at a hotel in Kaunas. Should you wish to make use of this possibility, please indicate the dates of arrival and departure on the registration form. Payment is to be made directly and personally to the hotel on checking out. Please note that if you register after the closing date, hotel reservations cannot be guaranteed. The list of suggested hotels will be sent to the registered participants after 1 October 2006.

Executive Committee

Assoc. Prof. Arnas Zdanevičius, Department of Sociology and Social Research Centre, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Assoc. Prof. Jolanta Reingardienė, Head of the Social Research Centre, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Prof. Marie-Louise Sanden, Department of Behavioural Sciences, Linköping University, Sweden

Rita Galambos, Director of the Foundation for Democratic Youth (DIA), Hungary

Assoc. Prof. Judit Kozma, Sociology and Social Policy Department, University of Debrecen, Hungary

Dr. Kristina Juraitė, Department of Sociology, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Rocio Blanco, General Foundation of the University of Valladolid, Spain

Wilma Huveneers, Centre for Active Learning (ECAL), Maastricht University, the Netherlands

George Tziallas, European Enterprise Organization, Greece

Contact Information

If you have any questions, please contact:

Dainius Genys

Vytautas Magnus University

Department of Sociology

Donelaičio 52-309

LT-44244 Kaunas, Lithuania

Tel: +370 37 327 822

Fax: +370 37 327 823

E-mail: d.genys@smf.vdu.lt

www.civicus.lt