

Issue No. 1

Education Policy *Newsletter of Education Policy Centers*

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EDITORIAL

Why the Network of Education Policy Centers?

Why the Newsletter?

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Network of Education Policy Centers

The Education Policy Centers (EPC) emerged in the region in the last couple of years addressing the need for independent and information based policy analysis, advocacy for equity, and effective, sustainable solutions in education policy processes. They took on the role of an independent voice in maturing democracies and open societies. The Centers are diverse in nature, organizational structure, professional background, scope, size, and role in education change. Most of the Centers established social partnerships with key stakeholders in education in their countries. The common feature of the Centers is that they are based on strong local knowledge, have developed international contacts, and have built links with key international organizations. ESP mapped and helped bring the Education Policy Centers from a wide geographic area.

Role of Education Policy Centers

Large number of EPCs are OSI-related and contribute to open, democratic and participatory policy processes. They promote and monitor transparent, nondiscriminatory, nonselective education for all by offering quality research and analysis. Centers are successful in providing alternative sources of information and alternative policy options and facilitating open public debate and raising awareness through advocating for policies aimed at equal access to all levels of education.

ESP and EPCs: Strengthening the Strategic Partnership

The OSI Education Support Program in 2003 began to lay the foundation for the networking of OSI related Education Policy Centers and initiated two meetings where participants shared their centers' experiences and also discussed joint projects and future cooperation. An

initial meeting of five Education Policy Centers of EU accession countries was held in May 2003.

ESP has started to map out the education policy centers (and public policy centers with education policy activities) and has facilitated the exchange of information and expertise among the centers.

A meeting of OSI network related Education Policy Centers was held in Bratislava from November 28-29, 2003 followed by a training session on Education Policy on November 30th. The OSI Education Support Program together with the Education Policy Center at Orava Association, Slovakia, organized the meeting. (You can find more information about the centers and the meeting at the ESP online resource center.)

Planned Activities of the network of Education Policy Centers in 2004

Joint activities of the network of OSI related Education Policy Centers in 2004:

- ✓ Development of the Directory of OSI network related Education Policy Centers, managed by CEPA, Hungary;
- ✓ Newsletter of Education Policy, developed jointly by EPCs, managed by the Center Education 2000+, Romania;
- ✓ Joint Initiative of Open Society Education Monitoring on the topics of School Dropouts and Private Tutoring;
- ✓ The next meeting of the network of the Education Policy Centers related to OSI will be organized in Tbilisi, Georgia July 2-4.

Moving forward

The Education Policy Centers through networking will have opportunities to gain new ideas and contacts, plan joint projects and learning events, develop education policy analysis and advocacy capacity. The OSI ESP will continue to encourage development of the EPC network and professional communication on education change in respective countries in line with the open society education agenda.

The Newsletter, initiated by the Education Policy Centers, brings much hope that it will become an important tool for the exchange of information and experiences thus strengthening capacities of the centers and will serve as a good information source for the wider educational community. We hope that the centers will actively engage themselves into further development of the Newsletter and contribute to it with innovative ideas and information regularly. This is where the participatory policy processes begin.



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NEWS & EVENTS

Turkey

- **Best Practices Conference held by Education Reform Initiative of Turkey at Sabanci University on January 17, 2004**

450 participants from schools, universities, NGOs and Ministry of National Education (MoNE) attended the conference to see 62 oral and 34 poster presentations that were selected from among 240 applications by the conference jury earlier in December. 'Best Practices in K-12 Education 2004' brought best practices together to motivate their owners and let them share their insights, encourage others to take initiatives, and provide a networking and communication platform. In line with the context of the current education reform agenda in Turkey, this year's conference emphasized innovative curriculum applications, alternative textbooks, classroom management and teacher training.

Interesting and innovative applications and materials in Science, Mathematics and Social Sciences were presented during the conference. Practices including use of drama in all subject fields, constructive learning, ICTs and standards-based curriculum became very popular among the participants. Overall, discussions were lively. The conference aimed to strengthen a dialogue between education policy and grassroots practices through a bottom-up approach and was successful in bringing policymakers, who are working to reform

the existing curriculum in MoNE, and teachers, who are seeking and developing more innovative and effective ways of teaching the existing curricula, together in a positive environment.

ERI intends to follow this conference with subsequent teacher training workshops aiming public school teachers in different provinces, beginning with Istanbul (for more about this topic contact baydagul@sabanciuniv.edu).

Ukraine

- **Reform Strategy for Education in Ukraine**

A milestone document "Reform Strategy for Education in Ukraine" has been recently published. The document contains ten policy papers that give an analysis of current problems and provide recommendations for policy interventions in education sector. The document is a real breakthrough in education policy making in the country because it represents a joint effort by a wide range of education stakeholders including local and international experts, inter governmental representatives, NGOs, bilateral and other donors. This process began in 2001 when the International Renaissance Foundation started, with the ESP support, a policy project that aimed at building consensus on education reform priorities. The initial IRF/ESP partnership later embraced two other main partners, the UNDP and the Ministry of Education and Science, who brought along British Council, UNICEF, and others. Over the course of three years, local and international education communities were involved in a process to identify new priority policy directions for the education sector in Ukraine providing critical input into important strategic documents. Another important document that was issued by the Ministry of Education and supported by this initiative was "National Concept for Education Development" (2001). The document identified the need to improve equal access in education, to develop the system of quality monitoring, and make provisions in education systems for continuous and life-long education. These new priorities were placed on government's agenda as a result of advocacy by the local and international experts participating in the project. You can visit UNDP press-room to read more about presentation of the "Reform Strategy for Education in Ukraine"

<http://www.un.kiev.ua/en/pressroom/news/302/>

To access this document go to http://www.irf.kiev.ua/files/ukr/programs_edu_ep_409_ua_ref_strategy.pdf.

Georgia

- **Memorandum of Collaboration with the Tbilisi City Council**

On February 17, 2004, the International Institute for Education Policy, Planning and Management (EPPM) signed *Memorandum of Collaboration* with the Tbilisi City Council.

The basis for this joint effort became the decree "Main Directions for the Development of the Tbilisi Education System (2004-2006)", adopted by the Tbilisi City Council in January 2004.

The development of this document was launched at the initiative of the Tbilisi City Council, when Mr. Mikheil Saakashvili (chairman of the Council at the time and current President of Georgia) approached our Institute to prepare long-term program for the Tbilisi education system development. The document envisages the elaboration of the three-year action plan (2004-2006) aimed at promoting reform of the Tbilisi education system according to modern standards and codes of good practice. The program components are designed to improve management of the capital's education system, increase transparency and effectiveness of the system (for more about this topic contact www.eppm.org.ge)

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

European Union

- **Reform of education: the Commission sees the bottle half empty, the Council half full (click for more)**

In short:

While the Commission aims to highlight the shortcomings in the reforms towards making education and training systems more efficient, the Council wants to emphasize the progress made so far in the report they will jointly present to the Spring European

Council.

Brief news:

On 26 February 2004, the Education Council and the Commission will adopt a joint progress report on the achievement of the objectives set under the Lisbon strategy for education and training systems in Europe. This report will be presented to the Spring European Council taking place on 25-26 March 2004. The institutions have diverging views on the content of this report. The Commission aims to highlight the shortcomings in implementing the work programmed on the reforms of the education and training systems, whereas the Council wants to emphasize the progress made by the Member States, such as ICT and language skills.

OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)

- **OECD Identifies "Disappointing" Use of ICT in Upper Secondary Schools** ([click for more](#))

Major investment outlays over the past 20 years have brought modern Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) into nearly all schools in the most advanced OECD countries, but the extent to which computers are in day-to-day use in these schools remains disappointing, according to a new OECD report. An OECD survey of Upper Secondary Schools, draws on data from 14 OECD countries - Belgium (Flanders), Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland -- to review the structural barriers preventing full and effective use of ICT in upper secondary schools. Its conclusions raise important issues for the scheduling of teachers' time, class-room organization and teachers' professional development.

Future news & events

The third Knowledge Economy Forum

- **Improving Competitiveness through a Knowledge-based Economy** ([click for more](#)).

The World Bank and the Government of Hungary have announced the third Knowledge Economy Forum, "Improving Competitiveness through a Knowledge-Based Economy," which will take place in Budapest from March 23-26, 2004. KEF III will focus on the competitiveness agenda and on how a more dynamic, knowledge-intensive economic context can support innovation, competitiveness, and economic growth.

Meeting of the Network of Education Policy Centers

- The third meeting of OSI related Network of Education Policy Centers will be organized in Tbilisi, Georgia July 2-4. The meeting will be co-organized by International Institute for Education Policy, Planning & Management (EPPM) Tbilisi, Georgia and OSI Education Support Program.



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Education Policy Center UNDER THE SPOT LIGHT

This month: Center Education 2000+, Romania

33, Caderea Bastiliei Street, Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania; Zip Code 010613, cedu2000@cedu.ro, www.cedu.ro

Alexandru Crisan – Executive President, acrisan@cedu.ro

Monica Dvorski – Programs Director, mdvorski@cedu.ro

Center Education 2000+ is a non-governmental, apolitical and independent organization offering educational consultancy. The Center – founded in December 1999 – is part of the **Soros Open Network**, the most important network of non-governmental and

civic organizations in Romania.

The mission of the Center is to promote the values of a knowledge-based global open society by:

Supporting the development of an open and democratic public education system in Romania, whose characteristics are: transparent and fair competition, cooperation, support for individual initiative and innovation in this field;

Promoting the initiatives that aim at equal chances in education, student-centered learning activities, a broader community involvement in school life and the development of educational reform implementation patterns that can be replicated nationwide.

Fields of Expertise

- **Educational policies - analysis, development and implementation**

Consultancy and specialized expertise services for analyzing and developing educational policies – national and local, global and sector; training for development and implementation of institutional education policies; developing and implementing local strategies for education-based sustainable development; management for various educational programs.

- **Institutional capacity building**

Consultancy for school development and school improvement processes; school and community issues; parental involvement; improving education in disadvantaged areas and in multicultural settings; rural education; vocational education and training; improving education for Roma community.

- **Human resources development in/for education**

Training of trainers and teacher training for Romanian and foreign experts in different areas such as: curriculum development, assessment, active learning, school-based curriculum, student guidance, educational management and reform implementation processes; teacher support in designing and implementing innovation. Training foreign experts in reform design and implementation issues; book development.

- **European and regional integration through education**

Adult education; community learning; distance learning; peer counseling; e-learning; study tours and experience exchanges for teachers and experts from Romania and from other countries, etc.

Services

The Center has developed a wide range of educational services - consultancy and technical assistance.

Consultancy Services:

- Educational policy analysis and development;
- Educational program management and implementation;
- Educational consultancy: curriculum, human resource training and development; assessment; textbooks;
- Study tours for educational experts and education system managers from various countries;
- Institutional capacity building;
- Vocational education and training;
- Image and promotion campaigns for educational institutions and organizations;
- Market research for educational institutions and organizations;
- Educational program design and implementation based on request from Romanian and international institutions, companies and consortia.

Training Services:

- Professional training and development in various education fields – developing training policies for institutions; building infrastructure for continuous professional development; training program management; training methodology; training teachers for new abilities and skills; training for creative teaching; in-service and pre-service teacher training.

Consultancy and Training Services for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

For more information please contact Mr. Ciprian Ciucu, PR Manager at cciucu@cedu.ro, and visit the web page www.cedu.ro

NEW PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Czech Republic

- In March, **Institute for Social and Economic Analyses, Prague**, started to work on an alternative White Paper. The project has two parts. In the first part the current state of the Czech education system will be described, the second part will contain an outline of measures that should be adopted. The project is financed by Open Society Fund in Prague. ISEA started a co-operation with NGO Ano pro Evropu (Yes for Europe) in order to prepare a nation-wide conference on education. The aim of the conference is to show Czech education in the European context, to bring attention to its weaknesses and to set up priorities for its improvement. The conference will take place at the end of May in 3 towns in Eastern Bohemia. In its everyday activity ISEA sees its main role in reacting and commenting on up-to-date topics of school policy. Currently the main attention is paid to financing of higher education where ISEA tries to explain the necessity of student involvement and to assessment of basic school students where ISEA highlights the weaknesses and risks of the system of large-scale tests proposed currently by the Ministry of Education (for more about this topic contact xstrakovaj@seznam.cz).

Turkey

- **Education Reform Initiative of Turkey assumes a critical role in the Turkish Economic Congress.** Turkish State Planning Organization had commissioned ERI to form and lead the working group on education and human resources for the 4th Turkish Economic Congress. The Turkish Economic Congress series, the first of which has met in Izmir in February 1923, have always been an academically and politically highly prestigious event, constituting an arena for debates on macro economic policy as well as a platform for intellectual exchange on economics. ERI has completed and delivered the report of the working group on education and human resources by mid-December. The preparation of this report proved to be a good opportunity for ERI in two ways: Firstly, the project team took a step back and had a macro look at education and training in Turkey. As a consequence, a report similar to a detailed and sound vision paper, including stock analysis, projections and strategy development, was produced. Second, the brainstorming session and working group meetings that were held during the preparation process became good opportunities for networking and meeting people representing various stakeholders with different opinions. The Turkish Economic Congress, which will be held on 5th – 9th May, 2004, will constitute another important networking and advocacy opportunity for ERI (for more about this topic contact baydagul@sabanciuniv.edu).

Education Support Program, OSI-Budapest

- **Transparency, accountability and anti-corruption initiatives in general education.** Education Support Program, OSI-Budapest is inviting all interested Education Policy Centers to submit information and pull together the online resources on the topic of "Transparency, accountability and anti-corruption initiatives in general education". The first collection of materials and links is available online at ESP Resource center, of which address is: www.osi.hu/esp/resource. Please, use as your password and user name 'policy' (lower case letters only). Under the OSI logo you can find two labels, one of them is "Welcome", and the other is "Programs and Resource Packs". If you click on the latter the Contents Catalog appears. Here there are more options from which you have to choose "All Programs and Resource Packs". All resource packs are listed here, the only thing you have to do is click on TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND ANTI-CORRUPTION INITIATIVES IN GENERAL EDUCATION. You managed to get into the Resource Pack, where a range of possibilities is offered. As a guest you can have access to the Documents, and share your information, ideas, and comments. (Contact person at ESP is Virginija Budiene - vbudiene@osi.hu).



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DONORS, FINANCIAL& BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

European Commission funding

- [Cooperation EU-USA and EU-Canada in higher Education: Calls 2004 launched at the end of January](#)

DG Education and Culture will publish at the end of January the guidelines for participation in 2004

Useful documents should be published on the DG EAC website on 31 January 2004.

The provisional deadline for submission of proposals is 30 April 2004.

Caution, this dates are only provisional and can be modified later. Only information available in the 2004 Guidelines will have legal value.

More information:

DG Education and Culture

- [Erasmus Mundus: First call launched in April 2004](#)

The Erasmus Mundus participation modalities for the two next years have been defined. A draft documents for the Implementation modalities for 2004-2005 have been published.

Information concerning priorities, participation modalities and deadlines are available on the DG EAC website at the above-mentioned address. Caution, this document is not definitive and the information in it could be modified in the future.

- [SOCRATES General call 2004](#)
- [TACIS http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/tender/data/AOF44876.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/tender/data/AOF44876.htm)



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PUBLICATIONS

Report on gender equity in education in Central and South Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union

"Open Minds: Opportunities for Gender Equity in Education," a joint publication from the Education Support Program (ESP) and the Network Women's Program of the Open Society Institute, are available from the ESP office in Budapest. The report presents a regional overview of gender equity in education in Central and South Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, as part of the effort to promote educational reform. The report has been well received at a number of international forums. To obtain copies, contact: Marian Gaspar: mgaspar@osi.hu.

"Open Minds" is also available online at:

http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/articles_publications/publications/open_minds_20040130



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USEFUL LINKS

OSI Related Education Policy Centers

On-line information about the Network of Education Policy Centres

- OSI Education Support Program has gathered and pasted on the web information about OSI related Education Policy Centres. Please, log-in with password and user name 'policy' (lower case letters only) at www.osi.hu/esp/resource_. This will lead you to the centre as a guest. Under the OSI logo you can find two labels, one of them is "Welcome", the other is "Programs and Resource Packs". If you click on the latter the Contents Catalogue appears. Here there are more options from which you have to choose "All Programs and Resource Packs". All resource packs are listed here, the only thing you have to look for the "Network of Education Policy Centres".

Links to the websites of the Education Policy Centers:

Center for Democratic Education, **Albania**, www.cde-ct.org
Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD), **Croatia**, www.idi.hr/cerd
Center for Educational Policy (CEP), **Czech Republic**, http://alfa.pedf.cuni.cz/~www_svp/
Institute for Economic and Social Analysis, **Czech Republic**, www.isea.cz
Center for Policy Studies PRAXIS, **Estonia**, www.praxis.ee
International Institute for Education Policy, Planning and Management, **Georgia**, <http://www.eppm.org.ge>
Center for Educational Policy Analysis, **Hungary**, <http://www.oki.hu>
Educational Policy Analysis Center, **Kazakhstan**
Kosova Education Center (KEC), **Kosova**, <http://www.kec-ks.org>
Public Policy Center, **Kyrgyzstan**, cpp@users.kyrnet.kg
Education Laboratory, **Kyrgyzstan**
Center for Public Policy PROVIDUS, **Latvia**, <http://www.politika.lv>
Center for Education Policy, **Lithuania**, spc@svietimas.lt
Institute for Public Policy, **Moldova**, www.ipp.md
Institute of Public Affairs (IPA), **Poland**, www.isp.org.pl
National Institute of Education (NIE), **Bulgaria**, <http://www.nie.bg>
Center Education 2000+, **Romania**, www.cedu.ro
Centre for Educational Policy Studies, **Russian Federation**, <http://www.msses.ru>
Educational Forum, **Serbia**, apesikan@f.bg.ac.yu /or/ zavram@eunet.yu
Education Policy Center at Orava Association for Democratic Education, **Slovakia**, www.zdruzenieorava.sk
Slovak Governance Institute, **Slovakia**, www.governance.sk
Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS), **Slovenia**, <http://ceps.pef.uni-lj.si>
Educational Reform Support Unit «Pulse», **Tajikistan**, <http://www.ersu-pulse.by.ru>
Turkey Education Reform Initiative, **Turkey**, neyyir@sabanciuniv.edu
Educational Studies Center, **Ukraine**, www.megacenter.org.ua
International Centre for Policy Studies, **Ukraine**, www.icps.kiev.ua
The Institute for Policy Studies, **Ukraine**, http://www.ipt.iatp.org.ua/english/index_eng.htm
Center for Modern Education Information Technologies, **Uzbekistan**

Other OSI related professional and regional education networks

South East Europe Education Co-operation Network

Contact person: Igor Repac, Ceps.Ljubljana@Uni-Lj.si

Central Asian Education Co-operation Network
Contact person: Jana Huttova, jhuttova@osi.hu

International Step by Step Association, ISSA,
Contact person: Sarah Klaus, sklaus@sorosny.org

Coalition of RWCT programs and institutions:
Contact: Daiva Penkauskienė, daiva.dc@vpu.lt

Debate association, IDEA
Contact person: Noel Selegzi, nselegzi@sorosny.org

Networks of OSI related programs and partner NGOs dedicated to education for social justice.
Contact person: Christina McDonald cmcdonald@osi.hu

International Research and Evaluation Network (IRENE) (under development).
Contact person: Hugh Mclean mclean@osi.hu



EDITOR'S NOTE

The sponsor of the Newsletter

Education Support Program at OSI-Budapest www.soros.org

The Open Society Institute (OSI) is a private operating and grant making foundation that develops and implements a range of programs in civil society, education, media, public health, human rights and promote legal, social, economic reforms. OSI is a center of an informal network of foundations and organizations active in more than 50 countries.

Education Support Program (ESP) at OSI facilitates change in educational national policy development in line with the Soros foundations network's mission of promoting open society. ESP approach to education emphasizes open teaching and learning that develops humanistic values and adaptability of human potential, systemic change towards transparent and accountable education systems, democratic governance, The primary focus of ESP is on equal access to education at all levels and participatory policy processes in education change. ESP is engaged in enhancing professional development, resourcing education reform and supporting regional and local educational networks.

- **This issue of the Newsletter is based on the information, submitted by the Education Policy Centers**
- **Please provide news & information for the next issue until 1st of April 2004 to: epcnews@hotmail.com**

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