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A history of the CiCe Academic Network – Part 3: the network consolidates

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Abstract

Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe – commonly abbreviated to CiCe – is one of the longest established Academic Networks in European higher education supported by the European Commission's Education and Culture Directorate. This paper traces the second phase of CiCe, from 2002 to 2005, covering the conferences in Braga, Krakow and Ljubljana and the development of the CiCe MA project - and much more. The paper uses unique archival evidence to trace this stage of the Network.

Keywords: CiCe Network, History, European Academic Networks

(This is the third in a projected series of eight papers that will trace the history and development of the Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) network. Papers at the 2012 Conference in York (Ross, 2012) and at the 2013 Conference in Lisbon (Ross, 2013) outlined the origins of the Network and its first phase up to the Budapest conference of 2002.)

The autumn of 2002 saw a different spirit develop in the CiCe Network. Hitherto there had been an ever-present sense of precariousness about the Network, a feeling that we were on a temporary lease from the European Commission, and might end, or not be funded, at relatively short notice. Now we realised that Networks were not necessarily short-term projects, but could, with suitably re-defined and extended objectives, take on a more permanent existence. The new funding regime (with a three year budget, rather than annual subventions) gave stability, and, more importantly, the political leadership provided by the Department of Education and Culture at the Commission – particularly that of Ettore Deodato – gave us confidence in both our mission and in the Commission's support for this.

Our new working model was to produce more systematic support and guidance for members and to achieve this through a more systematic use of specialist groups that would involve more members in working parties that would produce guidance. We had, in our proposals for CiCe2, outlined an ambitious set of guideline documents. Nine general *CiCe Guidelines* (the dark green series) were produced in this phase, at the rate of three per year (on topics such as *Teaching Controversial Issues*, *Active Learning and Citizenship Education*, *Identity in Multicultural and Multilingual Contexts*, *Cross-professional issues*, *Equal Opportunities* and *Aesthetics and the arts in citizenship education*).

A second series – *Guidelines on the Design of Higher Education Courses* (the light blue series) consisted of four booklets – on undergraduate, masters, doctoral and in-service education respectively. And a third series, Professional Guidelines (the orange series) produced three publications, clumsily titled *Professional Guidance: Citizenship Education and Identity in course for those who will work with Pre-school children (... Primary-aged children, ... Secondary aged pupils)*.

This was ambitious – each booklet was produced by a different small working party of three or four members (selected from volunteers, but constructed with an intention to reflect European diversities), working over 12 to 18 months, and then edited, designed and printed in London. In order to ensure that the groups worked together – and produced their work in time to satisfy the Commission’s deadlines – the Steering Group instigated a programme that brought together all the members of current working parties with the Steering Group at what we called ‘Invitation Seminars’ in the October of each academic year. At these, the Steering Group would hold its autumn meeting, but the various groups were introduced to their tasks, invited to start planning, raise questions and proffer potential structures to the whole seminar in plenary meetings which were interspersed between group meetings. Each working party had a Steering Group member called ‘a shepherd’, expected to encourage and support their group over the year. And the Steering Group produced a concise guideline document for each group, setting out the intended range of the content, as well as information about timetables and production lengths. These invitation seminars thus became complex organisational challenges, as eight or more groups would detach into separate meetings and then coalesce into a plenary at various points over the two days. Working groups were encouraged to seek feedback on their plans from other members of the seminar.

The working parties would then meet once or twice independently, and again in a set of meetings that took place just before the May conference – where the plenary/small group/shepherding process began again. The groups made short presentations to the conference delegates, where they could seek out further information and views. Finally, in July they were expected to produce their final report, which was produced over the summer and distributed to the Network members in the autumn. All this was an organisational challenge: the process involved a large number of members, particularly because of the way that groups turned over each year. But it worked, and the concept of launching each academic year with a seminar for those Network members who were to have key roles in the coming year has persisted to the present, as has the annual conference to ‘wrap the year up’ in May/June.

The Master’s programme

We spent part of the first year in preparing a Curriculum Development (CD) bid to write and validate a European Master’s level course in Citizenship Education. This was an extremely ambitious programme – with hindsight, perhaps over-ambitious. The concept was to organise a joint Master’s programme, validated, organised and taught by six different Universities in six different countries. Joint European Master’s were very new creatures at this time, and there was much political and educational interest in developing these: the use of the European Credit Model system, of transcripts of

achievement, of joint validation programmes, etc. were eager discussed at European level. For an added complication, we decided that our programme would be largely distance learning and part-time, so modules would need to be written that could be studied on-line, with the pattern of learning designed to accommodate the vagaries of combining study with employment. It would also address all the requirements of the Tuning process, with defined competencies and ECTS ratings.

The proposal was made by six Universities – London Metropolitan (North London University had changed its name following a merger), Norkopping, Frankfurt (eventually replaced by Roma La Sapienza), Szeged (replaced fairly soon by Budapest), Patras and KATHO – who submitted plans to involve a further 30 institutions in developing the curriculum. It was submitted in late October 2002, and we heard that the proposal was successful in July the following year, with two year's funding from the October. CiCe itself had a shadow MA team already in place (it was they who prepared the CD bid), and there was an intense planning seminar in Paris that month that made key decisions about the learning structure. These fed into an initial 'kick-off' meeting in October, also in Paris. This brought together members of all the curriculum module writing groups – some 40 people in all, who began to learn about how on-line courses needed to be written, the sorts of materials that were possible, the learning platform, and how to use it – as well as beginning to grapple with writing their own modules.

The structure was relatively simple. There were two compulsory core modules – one with a sociological emphasis, the other a psychological focus. Students would then take two of six optional modules (which considered different aspects of citizenship, such as environmental, political, economic, human rights, etc.). Then there would be an Intensive Programme (a two week face to face module, for which further European Commission bids would need to be made), and finally a dissertation.

More complex was the process of negotiating a European Joint Degree. This involved trying to harmonise six different sets of University regulations, each of which had evolved in very different cultural circumstances. For example, the question of a tuition fee had to be addressed. The UK university had to have such a fee, because this was the only way in which they could be funded. The Greek university was specifically prohibited from offering a course in which any student was required to pay a fee. The French and Swedes were able to determine the costs of their part of laying on their parts of the course, based on staff salaries: the Hungarians couldn't do this, but although they had much lower staff costs, saw no reason why they should have any less of a fee income than the French and Swedes. The Italians were adamant that ECTS units represented specific and exact hours of study, while the UK argued that they represented attainment to a specified level of competence.

Eventually, we got there. By the summer of 2005, the curriculum was written and 'on line', and we had hammered out a joint regulatory framework that would work. A validation meeting was arranged, to be held at London Metropolitan University on July 8th: representatives from France, Greece and Hungary were to attend, and two external validators were appointed to scrutinise the proposal – Ian Davies from York, and Elisabet Näsman from Uppsalla. On the morning of 7th July 2005 four terrorist bombs were exploded in the city. The University was closed down for the rest of the day, but

after much e-mailing (all phone systems were out of order) it was decided to try and go ahead with the event, and see who could turn up. The French were already in the UK, and had no problem. Most affected was the Hungarian delegate, who had arrived on the 6th July and checked in at the Tavistock Hotel – the entrance of which was less than 100 metres from where the fourth bomb exploded on a bus on the opposite side of the square, killing 13 people. The Hungarian delegate was trapped in the hotel all that day by security staff. The Greek delegation found their flight delayed at Athens and on arriving at a London airport were advised by security services not to travel to London. Ian Davies found that all trains in to London from York were curtailed for three days (but he e-mailed in his evaluation comments for the meeting). Elisabet Näsman, the Swedish evaluator, arrived safely at Heathrow, but the underground stopped at 0.30 am, leaving her in west London: she made her way on foot, past diversions and ambulances, fifteen kilometres to her hotel near the university. The evaluation event the next day was straightforward.

To conclude the story of the MA, by moving on beyond 2005 and out of this chapter's timeframe: eight students were recruited for the first intake in the autumn of 2005 but by the end of the year this had fallen to two students, both educators in Malta. Personal reasons and career moves decimated the intake. The two remaining students persisted: they took somewhat longer than we had intended, but eventually graduated in 2012. There were no further intakes.

The MA development was one of the Network's contributions to the Bologna process. We also threw ourselves into the Tuning process, where the intention was to develop common core competencies for degrees at each level in the '2-2-3' model of Higher Education. The working groups on higher education course design were asked to modify their work to take account of the Tuning demands, and of the Commission's request to establish appropriate competency statements.

Conferences

The high point of each year continued to be the annual conference. In 2003 the theme was 'A Europe of Many Cultures', and was based in the northern Portuguese city of Braga. New traditions were established: the conference dinners began to end with a cabaret turn by Sören Hegstrüp, a Steering Group member, with Wim Kratsborn, who introduced sing-along sessions with CiCe-adapted words with his guitar: over the years the 'CiCe Brothers' developed as an established group (with tracks on the web still available to be downloaded). Each conference was successively larger, with more papers and a fatter conference volume being produced.

2004 marked the accession of a host of new countries into the European Union - Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia. To mark this, the conference was held in the historic buildings at the University of Kraków. The final conference in this phase in 2005 was in the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana. Between these were the invitation seminars, at London, Kortrijk and Barcelona respectively.

As had happened in the previous phase (Part 2), before we were half way through this phase we were already very actively planning for CiCe3, putting outline plans before the network members at the second conference in Kraków in May 2004. These included the development of an independent association, something the Commission was urging on all the Academic Networks at this point (probably as a way of ensuring that we moved away from needing financial support from the Commission). There was broad support for the idea, but also some wariness: most members realised that to establish an association with the resources that the CiCe Network had would require very substantial subscription levels, and members had a degree of scepticism about whether they would be able to get the support of their University institutions for this. They also questioned what value the association would bring that the network lacked: an association academic journal was suggested as one possibility.

Other suggestions for CiCe3 also began to take shape at this time: the possibility of some support for research (though not direct funding of research) was now possible under the more liberal and realistic regime present in the Commission, coupled with the realisation that 'research' would need to be construed across a wide spectrum that included the practical and applied research associated with education as well as more 'blue-skies' academic research. There were also suggestions from the commission that we might include a global dimension: a new programme, Erasmus Mundi, was in development, primarily a strategy to increase the inward flow of international students to the European Union (in the face of growing competition from the USA and Australia as popular international study destinations).

The Association concept and democratisation

At the Steering Group meeting in Uppsala held in June 2004, just after the Kraków Conference, the Association was discussed. It was agreed that any Association would run closely in parallel with the Thematic Network, with as far as possible a shared leadership. This would be called an Executive Committee, rather than a Steering Group; and it would be chaired by a President, who might (or might not) be the same person as the Academic Network Coordinator (who had to be a member of the Coordinating Institution, that held the contract for the Network administration with the European Commission). It was agreed that – as organisations focussing on aspects of citizenship – the Association and the Network ought to be organised on democratic principles, and that therefore the President and Executive should largely be elected by the membership. We thought that it would be necessary to hold the elections well in advance of the new phase of CiCe, so that we could put the names of the individuals and their institutions in the proposal to be made to the European Commission in March 2005.

We also realised that we would need to try to ensure that we still managed to ensure that there was a reasonably wide distribution of representation in the Executive – we had to this point taken pains to ensure that no country had more than one member on the Steering Group, that we had members from some of the larger states and from some of the less populous states, and that we had members from north, south, east and west.

So a fairly complex voting system was devised, with a multiple transferable vote system for most of the Executive members, that took place after the Presidential vote. As the count proceeded, we determined that as each candidate was elected from the most popular then remaining candidates from the same country were eliminated from the count (so there would be no two people from the same country, only the most popular candidate from a country). This would be for the President and five members of the Executive: they would then co-opt two or three more members who would be selected to ensure the regional and gender balance of the whole. The election was billed as being primarily for the leadership of the Network, but it was also made clear that if – or rather when – an Association could be formed in parallel to the Network, then this group would also be charged with the leadership of the Association.

The elections took place over the autumn: there was only one nomination for the role of President, but the Executive member elections were contested by a number of nominated members. Ballot papers were sent out, to be returned to a neutral returning officer – Kathy Isaacs, the Coordinator of another Erasmus Network (Clio-NET, the historian's group). Nearly every member institution voted, and the results were duly aggregated by Kathy at the University of Pisa, in Italy.

President:	Alistair Ross (UK)
Executive:	Soren Hegstrup (DK)
	Riitta Korhonen (FI)
	Anne-Marie van den Dries (BE)

The fourth and fifth place were a dead heat between Marta Fulop (HU), Beata Krywosz-Rynkiewicz (PL), and Julia Spinthourakis (GR). The four clearly-elected members decided that they would declare all three as members – two (unspecified) as 'elected', the third (also unspecified) to be co-opted. The new group decided to also co-opt the leader of the MA group, Christine Roland-Levy (FR) as a member in order to maintain strong links with the MA. Democracy thus achieved, this became the group that took the planning application forward for CiCe3 in the spring of 2005.

Meanwhile, another development in the history of the Networks was taking place: the various Erasmus Thematic Networks that operated in the area of the Humanities (including CiCe) began to cooperate in the development of what was termed an archipelago, a collection of associated islands. Led by Kathy Isaacs of Clio-NET), some dozen networks held a two-day meeting in Brussels in November 2004, that became the first of a series. Five members from each eligible Network participated, and a very fruitful exchange was organised. Ettore Deodato, from the Commission, was closely involved and a key supporter. The Archipelago meeting took off from this, and met again in 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Towards CiCe3

The plans for the third phase of CiCe, to run from September 2005 to August 2008, were for a yet more diverse and intricate set of activities. Two major innovations were to be a

new emphasis on supporting education for research and the launch of an independent Association.

We decided to initiate a series of Doctoral Research Conferences, for a small number of registered PhD students, that would combine workshops, lectures and student presentations, led by experience doctoral supervisors from the Network. This would take place just before the main summer conference, so that the students could stay on for this. The application for CiCe3 included proposed funding for a series of bursaries to support student attendance. The group organising the student conference would also publish a series of guides for doctoral students and their supervisors.

But we also recognised that there was a considerable body of professional research taking place in the field, as well as the more ‘academic’ research of doctoral studies. A parallel group was to be set up to support professional-based research work, with workshops in the main conference, and a set of guidance booklets for this kind of research.

The other major innovation was to be the establishment of an Association. This was to take place over the course of CiCe3, but there was a keen debate on the nature and direction of the Association at the final conference of CiCe2, held in Ljubljana in Slovenia in May 2005. It was suggested that the new Executive should bring a draft constitution and a formal proposal to the first conference of the new phase, which was planned to be held in May 2006 in Riga, Latvia. The Association was to be funded by individual and institutional members, all of whom would pay a membership fee. While the Association would in some ways parallel the Network, it was to be independent, and to provide additional benefits to those of the Network. One of these, it was felt, should be an Association Journal. One of our members, Ian Davies of the University of York (UK) was already involved in the establishment of a bi-annual journal for a global citizenship education group, Citiz-ED, of which he would be editor. At the time called the *International Journal of Citizenship Teacher Education*, this seemed to the conference to potentially be a journal that the Association might be able to co-sponsor with Citiz-ED, and the Executive were also asked to explore this possibility and to report back the following year.

Thus by the end of CiCe2 much had been achieved; not just a substantial publishing programme of booklets and the Trentham Series, and the three conferences supported by an invitation seminar, but now plans to transform the network by the addition of an association with its own journal. The new Executive Committee held its final meeting of CiCe 2 in late June in Helsinki, and set out to plan the implementation of the new programme to start in the autumn – and for the President and the Administrator to cross over to Riga to plan the eighth conference in Riga. But just before the meeting, Cass Mitchell-Riddle, the Administrator who had managed all the coordination, finances, travel and publications for us, was again taken sick, and instructed not to fly by her doctors. So we met at the end of CiCe2 without her.

Over the summer, her cancer took much more substantial hold, and she was hospitalised at various stages. She seemed to recover – at the beginning of September she was convalescing at home in September, starting to prepare the Ljubljana conference

proceedings, but her health deteriorated, and she went back into hospital on September the 15th, where she almost immediately had a stroke. She did not recover consciousness, and died peacefully on September 20th. She was cremated on October 6th. CiCe was to be represented there by Soren Hegstrup, Riitta Korhonen and her husband, Timo, Nanny Hartsmar, Miquel Essomba and Alistair Ross. Dozens of CiCe members sent tributes, which were compiled into a booklet, and passed on to her friends. It was the end of an era: the notice in the CiCe Newsletter in September recalled how that:

... when the Network project was first suggested, she became our administrative organiser, setting up membership lists and organising data-bases. She soon became involved in running our Conferences, which is where most CiCe members will recall meeting her – welcoming us as friends, telling us where to go, sorting programmes, hotels, flights, and keeping us all in order. She was also heavily involved in our publications, carefully proof-reading, organising texts, and stopping us write too much!

Cass first suffered from cancer soon after we started CiCe, but fought it off with courage and determination. She was soon back in the office, managing our expenses claims, trying to sort out directives and regulations from Brussels, and keeping the Network going. She acted as Secretary to the Steering Group for nearly all its meetings, missing just two sessions in seven years. Her last conference was this May in Ljubljana, where many of us will remember her customary efficiency and organisation.