

Briefing note on CEJI and its activities

I. Introduction

1. As a result of the enlargement of the European Union, and current trends in (im)migration, we are witnessing a period of social and economic transformation in most European countries. An extremely diverse social environment, with increased risks of conflict, discrimination and biases, is emerging.
2. In 1997 (“The European Year Against Racism”), results from a Eurobarometer survey were presented, measuring the majority of the population’s attitudes towards minorities and migrants. The results showed a worrying level of negative attitudes in the 15 Member States. The Annual Report, 2002, produced by the European Union Monitoring Centre on racism and xenophobia, outlined that 2001 was greatly affected by the September 11th tragic attack in the United States, which brought about a greater fear of Islam and hostility towards Muslims across the EU. More generalised forms of racism and xenophobia found new impetus and activated existing racist and xenophobic attitudes and behaviour in Europe. 2002 also sadly witnessed a resurgence of one of the most worrying waves of anti-Jewish demonstrations since the end of the Second World War.
3. In view of this situation it has become widely acknowledged that diversity education is an important component in the development of citizenship skills because it addresses the prejudices, inequities, and intercultural conflicts which can impede the full and active participation of groups and individuals in society.

II. The Challenges of citizenship Education

It has been widely demonstrated that:

- discrimination, sexism, racism and any other negative pattern of thoughts (prejudice) are learned unconsciously
- it is possible to develop effective skills to challenge stereotypes and negative information that prohibit positive inter-group relations
- respect for others implies an appreciation of one’s own personal identity

Although it is widely recognised that the development of citizenship and intercultural skills are an educational priority, public authorities and other influential actors are falling behind in implementing adequate awareness and educational programs. To fill this gap, the informal education sector, mostly financed by non-governmental funds, is considered to be a crucial third party in the building of a European citizenship, respectful of diversity.

III. Activities

CEJI, an international non-profit, non-political association set up in 1990, aims to “*provide the relevant players in the EU with projects and policies in the field of basic rights, education, training and social integration in order to contribute to a democratic, responsible and caring Europe and to promote the involvement of European Jews and Jewish values in the process*”.

Working in partnership with EU institutions and other international and national partner organisations, CEJI has implemented a series of educational and networking activities that contribute to the evolution of a European civil society. There are 2 major activities:

- ***Education to combat racism and xenophobia and promote better group relations through citizenship education.*** The primary instrument to achieve this is the ADL A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® programmes, developed in the US. Since 1996, CEJI has trained thousands of youngsters and teachers of all religions, ethnic background, and gender through these very successful programmes, which are run in most of the EU countries. 2003 is witnessing the extension of these programmes to three candidate countries.
- ***Policy making, consultation and dialogue with the EU institutions and EU networks.*** CEJI contributes actively to the debate in Europe about democracy, equality, human rights and tolerance. It has been very successful in the fight for harmonisation of the EU legislation against discrimination within the framework of Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam. It participates in a wide spectrum of networks on human rights and equality of people.

III. Management

CEJI has staff of 6 people, an executive board of 5 persons and a Council composed of 54 members, and is partnering with a large number of national and international institutions.

The management of the organization is currently being reviewed to include the set up of an Honorary Committee designed to enhance and support the work of the organization within the European scene and in the EU member states.

IV. Financial structure

The organization resources rely mainly on donations coming from private donors and foundations. The European Union, foundations and corporations finance the trans-European projects developed by CEJI. These companies and private donors have included: the European Levi-Strauss Foundation, the Citibank foundation, the Anti-Defamation League, the European Cultural Foundation, the Evens Foundation (Belgium), the Bernheim Foundation (Belgium), Fortis, ING, AEGON and the Parthenon Trust. The annual operational budget of the organization is 800.000 Euros.

V. CEJI Board

Chairman	Baron Alain Philippson
Vice Chairman	Theo Klein
Secretary General	Daniel Kropf
Executive Vice Chairman	Ronny Naftaniel
Treasurer	Madeleine Feher
Members	Georges Bloch, David Blomberg, Jean Bornet, Annette Bosscher, Lord Clinton-Davis, Jacques Graubart, Gérard Grosjean, Jean-Pierre Haber, Bernd Knobloch, Abraham Laub, Rabbi David Meir, Minos Mordohai, Michael Rosen, Stephen Rubin, Georges Schnek, Reinold Simon, Roman Skoblo, David Susskind.

VI. CEJI Network of partners

Alliance Israélite Universelle	Bernheim Foundation	European Commission
Anne Frank Stichting	Evens Foundation	European Parliament
Anti-Defamation League	Levi Strauss Foundation	Service Social Juif
B'nai B'rith Europe	King Baudouin Foundation	Compagnia di San Paolo
Cellule d'Education Interculturelle du Cifful – Université de Liège	Charles Leopold Meyer Foundation	European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia
Central Board of Dutch Jews	Fondation Auschwitz	Migration Policy Group
Centre Communautaire Laïc Juif	Focus Consultancy	Jewish Care
Centre for Applied Policy Research	Conseil Exécutif des Musulmans de Belgique	Notern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
Centre for Intercultural Education	European Network Against Racism	IARD
Education for Life	European Cultural Foundation	Pisanu Consultants

For further information contact:

CEJI, Centre Europeen Juif d'Information

Pascale Charhon

Director

319, Avenue Brugman – 1180 Brussels – Belgium

Tel: + 32(0)2 – 344 34 44 – Fax: +32(0) 2 – 344 67 35

Email: ceji@ceji.org