

Draft

European and External Affairs Committee

European and Global Citizenship Education

February 2007

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 Communicating effectively with the citizens is a priority for the current European Commission (EC). Following the rejection of the EU Constitutional Treaty by French and Dutch voters in 2005, it became even more apparent that a new approach to communication and improving citizens' understanding of the EU was needed. Starting from what it perceived as a gap between the European Union and its citizens, the EC first produced an action plan with a list of specific measures "to improve the way it communicates with its citizens." Then, as a contribution to the ensuing "period of reflection" on the Constitutional Treaty it launched "Plan-D for democracy, dialogue and debate", which was intended "to involve citizens in a wide-ranging discussion on the European Union" – what it is for, where it is going and what it should be doing

1.2 But these initiatives would succeed only if all the "key players" were involved – the other EU institutions and bodies; the national, regional and local authorities in the Member States; European political parties; and civil society. Therefore, the EC decided to issue a White Paper, for consultation, on a European Communication Policy.

1.3 The White Paper was published in February 2006, with comments invited by early July. Whilst formulating its response to the consultation, the Committee agreed with the European Commission that citizenship education at schools plays a key role in engaging and improving citizens understanding of political processes. We therefore decided to undertake a review of European and global citizenship, with the following terms of reference:

Terms of Reference

1.4 To consider how European and global citizenship education is addressed in Wales and elsewhere in Europe.

1.5 In particular:

- To consider current arrangements for teaching European and global citizenship in schools in Wales and elsewhere in Europe.
- Ways in which this teaching can be strengthened and made more effective.
- To make recommendations for policy in this area.

Process

1.6 As the time available to carry out this review was limited, the Committee did not appoint an expert adviser but relied on support from its secretariat and also the Members' Research Service.

1.7 The Committee undertook a written consultation exercise from September 2006 to January 2007. In addition, various organisations were invited to make oral presentations and to engage in discussion during committee meetings between May and October 2006.

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1.8 A schedule of papers presented to the Committee is at Annex 1. Organisations consulted are listed at Annex 2 and a summary of their responses is at Annex 3. The Committee's response to European Commission's White Paper is at Annex 4.

1.9 All the papers and transcripts of meetings can be viewed on the National Assembly for Wales's website – www.wales.gov.uk

2. Summary of Evidence

School Curriculum

2.1 The starting point was a paper, prepared by the Members' Research Service, on European citizenship education in Wales. This summarised the key elements of the European Commission's white paper on communications policy and then outlined how citizenship education was incorporated in the school curriculum in Wales.

2.2 In Wales, citizenship is part of the statutory provision for personal and social education (PSE). Citizenship is currently delivered via Key Stage 1-4 (ages 5-16) of the PSE framework in Wales. Though PSE has been statutory in Wales since September 2003, the framework is non-statutory. It covers attitudes and values, skills and knowledge and understanding and has ten aspects, including social and community issues.

2.3 The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) has designated PSE as the main means of disseminating citizenship education. This can be delivered in a variety of ways; including, planned PSE sessions, projects and courses; existing subjects; interactive and experiential teaching and learning strategies; extra-curricular experiences; and pupil participation in decision-making. 'Wales, Europe and the World' is part of the learning core of the 'Learning Pathways 14-19', developed by the Welsh Assembly Government.

2.4 The Welsh Assembly Government is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of the national curriculum subject orders in Wales. A number of parallel consultations are being carried on the various subjects within the curriculum; including a consultation on a revised framework for PSE. It is intended that this report will be submitted as a response.

2.5 PSE is the process of helping learners to develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy, independent lives. Learners are also helped to clarify their personal values and attitudes in relation to those held by other people and society in general. The revised framework for PSE will be for 7–19-year-olds and identifies the learning opportunities that a school or college should provide to support and promote the personal and social development and well-being of its learners.

2.6 The framework for PSE has been revised and updated to reflect the continuum of personal and social development from the Foundation Phase to the 14 to 19 Learning Pathways. The revised framework follows the pattern of national curriculum subjects by dividing requirements into skills and age-range for each of the key stages. Development of skills has been given greater prominence and skills learning outcomes have been grouped under common headings from the Skills Framework and the wider key skills.

2.7 Following an assessment of the consultation responses, the new national curriculum orders will be introduced in September 2008.

Welsh Baccalaureate

2.8 The Committee received a presentation on this subject from the Welsh Joint Education Council. We learnt that two of the four core elements in the Welsh Baccalaureate – 'Wales, Europe and the World' and 'Personal and Social Education' – were relevant to our review. In Wales, Europe and the World, students learn about

political, economic, social and cultural issues. Student then discuss these issues, not just from a Welsh point of view, but also from a wider perspective. In this way they learn to form their own opinions on the relationship between Wales and Europe; and also between Europe and the rest of the world.

2.9 In PSE, students learn, amongst other things, about citizenship and sustainability. Again, in looking at these issues, they must consider the broader canvas. They are required carry out an investigation, involving private study and research, on a topic of their choice; we were given the following examples: *'How do we get more young people to vote in European elections?'*, *'How can we support the Celtic languages in Europe?'* and *'How does being a member of the European Union affect Wales in comparison with its effect on Italy?'*

2.10 Another requirement of the Welsh baccalaureate is that students have to undertake a period of work experience. We heard directly from a student from Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor who had undertaken work experience, as an assistant to Jill Evans MEP, in Brussels. In her own words; *"By taking the baccalaureate, I have learned much more about Europe, politics and the world than I would have done from just doing A-levels. It demonstrates far more how things impact on us in Wales, through comparing how we do things in Wales with how they are done in Europe and so on. It taught me a great deal."*

2.11 At present, relatively few students undertake the Welsh baccalaureate. However, from September 2007, it will be rolled out across Wales; initially for those aged 14 to 16. From September 2006, nine schools and colleges will pilot the Welsh baccalaureate from the age of 14, at key stage 4.

Practice elsewhere in the European Union

2.12 We received an informative paper from the Head of the European Commission's Office in Wales summarising the approach adopted by other member states of the European Union and, during the meeting, examples were produced of the type of materials used to educate school children on European citizenship. Many of these made imaginative use of illustrations and cartoons to convey key facts concerning the organisation, operation and history of the European Union.

2.13 The paper addressed the question of how European Citizenship is taught in other countries and what teaching material was produced to support it. One particularly interesting example which the EC Office brought to the attention of the Committee was that of Ireland. The EC Representation in Ireland has produced a workbook for primary school students called 'Your Passport to Europe', in both English and Irish. These are very popular with teachers.

2.14 The Committee was referred to a comparative study on citizenship education at school in Europe undertaken by Eurydice, the information network on education in Europe and completed in May 2005. This study, which covered 30 European countries, also included a chapter on the approaches in different countries to the European dimension of citizenship education.

2.15 The Eurydice report concludes that, *“in the curriculum, the European dimension of education in citizenship aims both to transmit formal knowledge (of the major stages of European integration, the rights and duties of citizens and the functioning of the European institutions), and to develop attitudes and values on the part of future citizens (learning to be capable of relating to major European and international issues and to promote tolerance vis-à-vis socio-cultural diversity, etc.).”*

2.16 The European dimension of citizenship education *“generally takes the form of promoting a sense of belonging to Europe and of involvement. The Flemish Community of Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Norway refer to the international or global dimension, rather than the European dimension specifically, even though the specific content of some subjects may include references to Europe.”*¹

2.17 The Committee would like to encourage the Welsh Assembly Government to consider the examples of good practice identified in the report by the European Commission’s Office in Wales and in the Eurydice report; e.g. the example of Ireland which could be more easily used in Wales.

The Role of the European Commission office in Wales

2.18 While European Commission and other EU institutions do try to assist Member States in their efforts by making information and promotion material available, in his evidence the European Commission representative in Wales emphasised that education, curriculum and providing teaching materials are the responsibility of EU Member States.

2.19 Nonetheless, some of the EC Representations in specific EU Member States have produced teaching materials themselves, or in close collaboration with national authorities. The European Commission’s central services produce a wide range of information brochures that could be used to inform young people, of various ages, about the European Union and what it does. However, this material is mostly of a factual information nature and does not constitute teaching material as such. This is an important distinction to make but in some countries they are used to complement the teaching materials provided nationally.

2.20 The EC Office in Wales is unable to distribute unsolicited materials directly to schools in the UK, because EU institutions are considered to be political or politicised institutions. The EC representative explained, *“We have to very much work together with national strategies and national authorities that would be willing to include these materials in whatever has been set up.”*

2.21 Information materials produced by the EU are generally only available in the EU’s official languages; which does not include Welsh. Over the past five years, three EU publications have been published in Welsh and in English, specifically by the EC Office in Wales. They acknowledged that this was quite a low number; however, during 2006-2007 the EC Office in Wales is preparing Welsh versions of their three most popular English language publications which could also possibly be used for educational purposes. The EC Office in Wales hopes to be able to provide a number of new titles in Welsh every year.

¹ Eurydice, *Citizenship Education at School in Europe 2005*, p52

2.22 The First Minister stated that as regards Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching classroom materials, the Welsh Assembly Government is exploring how the procurement programme might be able to support the development of a high-quality European teaching resource.

2.23 In Wales, the European Commission is now funding the Europe Direct Centres (see below) whose role is to provide information to the public on a continuous basis.

2.24 It is essential that young citizens are given easy access to good quality information, in a variety of media, to inform and also stimulate discussion. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government, in consultation with the European Commission, should commission similar bilingual material for use in schools.

2.25 We also believe that, the European Commission should consider making more funds available to its representative offices to translate into the official local languages, such as Welsh, even though they are not official EU languages. The Welsh Assembly Government should also consider whether it could support the European Commission Representation in Wales to make more publications about the EU available in Welsh and possibly other languages, relevant to particular local communities.

Critical Thinking

2.26 We heard a most informative presentation from the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC Cymru). They made the point that, when considering how to educate young people about Europe, it is important to understand our reasons for doing so. Do we want young people simply to turn up at polling stations and vote every five years, or do we want them to develop a deeper sense of European citizenship? Do we want young people to assume that the European Union is "a good thing", or to evaluate it critically? People do not vote in elections because their government tells them to, but because they think it will make a difference in their lives; therefore it is important to understand how the EU affects us; in areas as diverse as employment, trade, agriculture and justice.

2.27 CEWC Cymru warned against simply bombarding students with statistics about the European Union. The EU is a large organisation; and its remit and workings are a mystery to many teachers, let alone their students. We agree that teaching needs to reflect the reasons for educating about Europe in the first place. To understand the EU does not necessarily mean grasping the detailed workings of the common agricultural policy; it means understanding the day-to-day impact of those things on our lives and on important issues of the day. As an example, they referred to the lifting of the European ban on UK beef exports in May 2006 and pointed out that this could provide a useful starting point for teachers to initiate a discussion on how EU decisions affect the lives of farmers in Wales.

2.28 We believe that, in order to empower students to effect change, it is first necessary to develop the underlying skills; how to participate in a meeting, how to communicate opinions and how to think critically. It is also important to support pupils in their first steps towards voicing an opinion, which may be through art or drama rather than the traditional methods of speech-making or letter-writing. In addition, we agree that a more even balance should be struck in the school curriculum between acquiring relevant skills and acquiring knowledge. At present, we feel the scales are tilted too far towards the latter.

2.29 We consider that high quality teaching materials, focused on European issues, should be more widely available in primary and secondary schools.

2.30 CEWC Cymru informed us that they had been working on a project called philosophy for children. This is a way of trying to get young people to engage in philosophical thinking around a circle in the classroom. It aims to help teachers to impart learning in a different way, to accept that not every lesson needs a specific learning objective, but that there are sometimes lessons and conversations to be had which are valuable through being open-ended and not having a firm conclusion; to encourage more investigation, discussion and critical thinking. We were told that this approach was more successful in primary schools, due to the closer links between classroom teachers and pupils.

2.31 CEWC-Cymru organises a number of activities, some of which are outlined below, to give young people an opportunity to learn about the European Union and to develop the necessary skills required to evaluate issues and form opinions about them. We welcome these initiatives and encourage your people to participate in them.

2.32 European Youth Parliament (EYP): This is an EU-wide initiative to encourage young people to debate real, contemporary European issues. CEWC-Cymru organises EYP Forums in south and north Wales, inviting all secondary schools and further education colleges in Wales to participate. Issues discussed recently include urban redevelopment, terrorism, and trade with Asian ‘tiger’ economies. The south Wales event, which takes place in the former chamber of the National Assembly, is particularly popular.

2.33 ‘Citaware’ resources: CEWC Cymru, in collaboration with their parent body, the Welsh Centre for International Affairs, and with the on-line newspaper ‘Europa World’, has produced activity sheets for teachers wishing to introduce the EU to students; these were published in June 2006. Each sheet has an overall theme (for example, the EU’s role in human rights and religion), which is broken down into specific topics of interest to young people, such as torture and the use of religious symbols. They aim to avoid jargon and technical details about EU operations; instead, the focus is on discussion of the principles behind each issue, and activities designed to highlight differing viewpoints.

2.34 Classroom workshops on European issues: With the introduction of the Welsh baccalaureate, CEWC Cymru told us they were increasingly asked to visit schools and deliver sessions related to the theme ‘Wales, Europe and the World’. To engage students, they endeavour to link the content of workshops closely to their lives – for example, by identifying EU member countries by cultural or sporting figures, or by asking them to consider how they might act as individual European citizens on issues which affect them.

2.35 Given the limited time available to undertake this work, we were not able to receive detailed information about the extent of take-up across Wales of these kinds of activities. However, we believe that these opportunities should be available to all pupils, regardless of their background and that they are encouraged equally to participate in citizenship initiatives. This supports the recommendation of the Local Government and Public Services Committee policy review (see below).

Role of the Media

2.36 There was agreement that coverage of European issues in the media was generally negative; and that this might unduly influence young peoples' opinions. However, we were told by CEWC Cymru that negative articles in newspapers, magazines, on television or the internet, could be used by teachers to initiate a classroom discussion on what is the truth about Europe by analysing and, where necessary, criticising the media. We learnt that this method had been used, for example, to teach young people about refugees and asylum seekers.

2.37 In order to obtain some factual information, the Committee commissioned a paper from the Members' Research Service on coverage of European issues in the Welsh press, over a five month period from January to May 2006. The findings are summarised below, with illustrative examples.

2.38 Out of 289 EU news items during this period:

- 19% (55 items) focused on the development of bird 'flu across the EU.
- 13% (36 items) were about specific projects supported by the Structural Funds or agricultural funding schemes.
- 9% (27 items) concentrated on the EU's external relations.
- Eight items were about post-2006 Structural Funds, two of which focused on match funding.
- One article discussed the impact of the Services Directive.
- One article covered the issue of state aid to Airbus.

2.39 The reporting of EU issues was reasonably factually accurate, and positive where appropriate, with only two or three articles criticising the EU directly.

2.40 However, there was no coverage of the following issues, which were widely discussed at EU level during this period:

- Consultations on the Regional Aid map.
- The Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas.
- Progress with the Communication Strategy (Plan 'D').
- 'Subsidiarity' – the principle that decisions should be made at the most appropriate political level; EU, national, regional or local government.
- Discussions in the Committee of the Regions.
- The National Strategic Reference Framework – the UK strategy for the use of EU structural funds from 2007-2013, including Wales.
- World Trade Organisation trade rounds.

2.41 Below are a few examples of EU news stories covered in the Welsh press during this period: [is this really necessary?? Does not add anything to the above and it will be in the annex.]

2.42 **'EU funds offer huge reduction in university course costs for poorest areas'**
(Western Mail Business, 05.04.06, p9)

2.43. *"The latest initiative follows the launch of a programme by which women in 'Objective One' areas can study free-of-charge for an MSc in Entrepreneurship. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), if Welsh women were as entrepreneurial as men, 28,000 new businesses would have been launched last year.*

2.44. **'European aid to put firms online: Companies to get broadband internet access'** (Daily Post, 24.02.06, p23)

2.45. *"The business parks are Ty Mawr at Holyhead, Llandudno Junction, Parc Caer Seion in Conwy, St Asaph Business Park including the OpTIC Technium, North Wales Business Park, Deeside Industrial Park, Hawarden Industrial Park, Warren Hall at Broughton, St David's Park in Ewloe, Bangor's Parc Menai including the CAST Technium, Victoria Dock in Caernarfon, Parc Bryn Cegin at Bangor, Wrexham Industrial Estate and Wrexham Technology Park."*

2.46. **'EU tourism project to take people off the beaten track'** (Daily Post, 03.01.06)

2.47 *"More than 70 Denbighshire tourism businesses have joined a £1.3m EU project to improve visitors' experience of the county."*

2.48 *"Representatives from businesses signed up to the Cantata scheme at the launch held at Rhyl Pavilion and began the process of suggesting new ways for visitors to enjoy their visit to the county."*

2.49 *"The three-year programme will capitalise on the growing trend among tourists to head off the beaten track, seek out quieter rural and coastal locations and learn about different cultures and local customs."*

2.50. **'Is the EU about to extinguish our light ales?'** (Western Mail, 30.03.06 p5)

2.51 *"Campaigners fear the European Union is about to pass a law which would abolish the use of the name 'light ale' - in case people think it's a diet drink. The health claims regulation first appeared before the European Parliament ten months ago and has returned for its second reading. It is intended to regulate nutritional claims made on food labels. Products could only be labelled 'light' if they are genuinely low in calories."*

2.52 *"Light ale would fall foul of the proposals even though its name is indicative of its light colouring, rather than its calorific content. It would be especially strange for customers in Wales where generations of drinkers have ordered their beer by virtue of its dark or light colour."*

European Information Centres

2.53 The Committee received information about what European information services are publicly available in Wales. We are particularly interested in the new Europe Direct Centres which will have a more proactive approach to disseminating information about Europe. Various types of European information centres are described below.

European Documentation Centres

2.54 These are always based in universities and research institutes, with the aim of helping them "to promote and develop education and research on European integration encouraging them to take part in the debate on Europe and to do what they can to make Europe more transparent by helping ordinary citizens to learn about the Union's policies".

2.55 The first European Documentation Centres were set up in 1963; today there are 600 centres across the world, 366 of which are in the EU. There are 34 in England, four in Scotland, two in Wales and two in Northern Ireland. The Welsh centres are located in the University of Wales, Aberystwyth and the University of Wales, Cardiff.

European Information Centres

2.56. These are focused on helping business to access information on areas including European directives and regulations, public sector contract opportunities, business opportunities, funding, and research and development initiatives.

2.57 The network was established in 1987 and there are now over 250 centres, across the whole of Europe. It has a "privileged relationship" with the Commission; also, being part of "b2Europe" (an alliance of business support networks in the EU). These centres are able to put businesses in touch with other expert networks in specific fields.

2.58 The European Information Centre network has 19 offices in the UK; of which, one is in Cardiff, with a satellite office in Flintshire.

European Public Information Centres (EPICs)

2.59 These are members of a growing network of information outlets run by UK library authorities that work together, with the support of the European Commission Representation in the UK, to provide a better European information service to their library users. EPICs aim to:

- Improve access for the general public to EU information at a local level;
- Answer queries by drawing on their own expertise and that of other European information providers (including the Commission's own information officers);
- Provide access to official EU publications, and
- Carry a range of free leaflets published by the Commission.

2.61 Quite a few are listed across Wales on the EC UK website.

The Europe Direct Information Network

2.62 Five Europe Direct Centres have been established since July 2006 in Wales. These are part of a new network of 25 EU information outlets throughout the UK following the European Commission's open call for proposals, joining 400 existing centres in other EU member states. The network is part-financed by the European Commission, for a period of three years in Wales, starting in May 2006. The EC provides 50% of operational funding (up to €24,000 per centre) but this has to be matched; either by local authorities, local businesses or the National Assembly. The EC supports them through a variety of services including publications and training. The programme will be reviewed in 2009.

2.63 Europe Direct Centres provide answers to questions from the general public on Europe, their rights as EU citizens and access to information sources on policies, programmes and funding opportunities. They inform the media on EU matters at local, or regional, level and promote local and regional debate about the EU. They also facilitate cross-border partnerships with those engaged in European politics; giving the public the opportunity to send feedback to the EU institutions.

2.64 The Committee heard evidence from three of the five Europe Direct Centres based in Wales:

Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)

2.65 The WCVA Europe Direct Centre was established in May 2006 and operates in mid Wales (Powys and Ceredigion), providing EU information to people at a local level, with a mission to:

- Enable local people to obtain information, advice, assistance and answers to questions about European Union institutions, legislation, policies, programmes and funding opportunities.
- Actively promote local and regional debate about the EU and its policies.
- Give the public the opportunity to send feedback to the EU institutions.
- Assist the European institutions to improve the dissemination of information tailored to local and regional needs.

2.66 For a number of years, the WCVA has been actively involved in promoting awareness of structural funds and the European Union, particularly in the role of trying to raise the level of information and knowledge in civil society about the European Union. They are now aiming to open up the debate on the wider issues, such as Euro-governance, the role of civil society and its relationship with EU institutions and engagement with European non-governmental organisations.

2.67 The WCVA has been trying to persuade UK voluntary and civil society organisations to become more actively involved in analysing the policy implications of legislation emerging from the EU. They are also trying to collaborate with similar European voluntary sector bodies, to increase their lobbying power. We feel that the work of the voluntary sector will become increasingly important as a means of engaging citizens with EU issues.

European Centre for Training and Regional Co-operation (ECTARC)

2.68 The main objective of the ECTARC run Europe Direct Centre is to provide a European Information Service at local level through a north east Wales partnership with Denbighshire County, NEWI, (North East Wales Institute), Wrexham, the Dee Valley Lifelong Learning Partnership and Llangollen Town Council, reaching the heart of the urban and rural communities. ECTARC has been in existence for twenty years and became part of the Europe Direct Centre network in September 2006. ECTARC is based at Llangollen and provides information about Europe to citizens, schools and colleges.

2.69 Specific objectives:

- Providing a clearing house for the identification of trans-national partners for EU funded programmes.
- Providing business support for small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Disseminating general information on the European Union, its institutions and policies to a wider audience, i.e., schools, colleges, voluntary organisations.
- Informing and promoting participation in EU programmes, which could have an impact on urban/ rural life by providing workshops and information surgeries in outreach venues throughout north east Wales.
- Facilitating and stimulating dialogue and co-operation between the urban/rural societies.
- Providing a public 'drop-in' centre with access to resources and advice on European programmes and the dissemination of information regarding application processes and deadlines.
- Providing a comprehensive information service re: EU current debate within Europe.
- Providing feedback to the European Commission by sending the most salient questions, views and suggestions in the most appropriate form.
- Providing a general learning resource on Europe for schools, colleges and universities.

2.70 ECTARC explained how they were starting to visit local schools and colleges, in order to raise awareness of European issues and to provide basic information.

South Wales Europe Direct Information Centre (SWEDIC)

2.71 SWEDIC is based at Cardiff University and joined the European Direct Centre network in September 2006.

2.72 In their evidence, SWEDIC emphasised that information needs to be clear, objective, comprehensive, relevant and easy to find. They listed some of the positive developments towards achieving this objective in relation to access to information about the EU:

- Access to legislation ([Regulation 1049/2001](#)) has made possible access to many important EU documents. We believe that scrutiny of EU legislation entails allowing citizens to hold accountable those who take decisions in their name, by offering them access to all primary data.
- Such keys areas as [legislative](#) and [statistical](#) information have become 'freely' accessible through the internet in the last ten years: a true revolution in accessibility. Through [EU Bookshop](#), over time, all EU publications should become freely available.
- Previously internal databases such as the [Legislative Observatory](#) have been made available to the public to allow monitoring of the EU's policy making activities.

- The recognition and implementation of the principle that ‘communication’ is a two-way process and that the EU Institutions need to listen and consult, as well as to disseminate information ([Your Voice in Europe](#)).
- The recognition of the fact that many citizens use radio and television as their main format for receiving information. The development of [Europe by Satellite](#), financial support for [EuroNews](#), development of a dedicated European Parliament web streaming TV channel, and the publication in 2006 of an EU report ‘[Is there a case for an EU information television station](#)’.
- The recognition that providing information about the EU cannot be a massive centralised operation from ‘Brussels’, but that it must be ‘local’ using appropriate organisations, networks and agencies, both public and commercial, at the national, regional and local levels.
- The recent launch of the [Europe Direct Information Centre network](#) throughout the EU is an initiative by the European Commission to have a more visible presence throughout the regions to allow citizens find out about, debate and participate in EU activities.

2.73 SWEDIC outlined three initiatives they were developing, which aimed to help young Welsh people to access a range of information about Europe:

- Establishing a database and website called ‘**Wales and Europe**’, which will bring together information that has been published which deals with the European Union from a specifically Welsh perspective. This will highlight information provided by the Welsh Assembly Government and the National Assembly as a whole, including its committees - but it will also highlight information from local authorities, professional bodies, research and academic organisations, commercial publishers and the media.
- In collaboration with the Welsh Assembly Government, publishing ‘**European Sources Online**’ - a major electronic information service, allowing the user to find out information about the EU and the wider Europe in a ‘user friendly’ format.
- Offering training to individuals and groups who want to learn how to find out about Europe in a professional, informal and friendly way.

2.74 The contracts for the first five Europe Direct Centres in Wales had only just been awarded when we started our review. The Committee was heartened by the enthusiasm of the three centres that gave evidence and would encourage our successor committee to review progress of these Centres after their first year of operation.

Engaging Citizens in the Democratic Process

2.75 We acknowledge that it is not just the European Union that faces the challenge of engaging citizens, particularly the young, in the democratic process. Many governments at a national, regional and local level face a similar problem.

2.76 During 2006, the National Assembly's Local Government and Public Services (LGPS) Committee undertook a review of electoral arrangements in Wales in order to identify the reasons why people are not engaging with the democratic process, and to propose some solutions. The LGPS Committee published its report in December 2006 and submitted a 'paper to note' to our inquiry in January 2007; see Annex 1.

2.77 The level of voter turn-out, particularly by young people, was of particular concern to Members. To illustrate the scale of the problem, at the last National Assembly election in May 2003, only some 20% of registered voters in the 18-34 age range turned out to vote. Evidence of voter turn-out across Europe suggests that, if young people have not voted by their third election, then they never will.

2.78 The LGPS Committee made a number of recommendations about how young people in Wales are educated to develop political literacy. It wishes to see citizenship education in Wales delivered in a balanced and co-ordinated way that takes full account of the need to develop political understanding amongst young people, and to teach them about the roles, policies and positioning of political parties as well as political processes. The relevant recommendations (19-30) are listed below.

Relevant Local Government and Public Services Committee Recommendations:

19. We recommend that the Elections Planning Group considers regional and nation-wide approaches to the promotion of voting by young people.

20. We recommend that the Elections Planning Group considers rolling out targeted initiatives to encourage socially and economically excluded groups of young people to vote.

21. We recommend that the ongoing review of the curriculum, including the public consultation exercise, should pay particular attention to the need to develop political understanding amongst young people and to teach them about the roles, policies and positioning of political parties as well as political processes.

22. We recommend that guidance to schools on the teaching of 'political literacy' should specifically include teaching about political parties and young people's role in the democratic process as well as basic political concepts.

23. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government reviews guidance to senior school management and governors to ensure that the importance of promoting political literacy in the life of the school in a balanced and non-partisan manner is recognised and to encourage inviting voluntary, private and public service organisations, including political parties, into schools to facilitate debate amongst pupils.

24. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government takes a coordinated approach to the guidance it gives schools on the operation of school councils and on citizenship activities, to ensure that these are properly contributing to pupils' political understanding and appropriate links are being made between school council activities and other citizenship initiatives, such as inviting politicians into schools.

25. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government reviews its internal structures to ensure that a strategic co-ordinated approach is taken to the delivery of citizenship education, from curriculum development to teacher training and classroom activities.

26. We recommend that guidance and training should focus on ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their background, are encouraged equally to participate in school councils and other citizenship initiatives and that Estyn should monitor representation and participation from an equality perspective.

27. We recommend that measures are put in place to ensure that all secondary schools deliver Personal and Social Education (PSE) using specially trained and resourced teachers.

28. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government takes the lead in facilitating training of teachers in PSE, providing resource packs for such training and supporting teachers in the delivery of PSE.

29. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government ensures that existing examples of good practice in citizenship and political education are adequately disseminated to all schools and youth groups in Wales.

30. We recommend that the Assembly Commission and local authorities develop initiatives that provide young people from different backgrounds with opportunities to shadow elected politicians from the Assembly and Local Government, and to participate in debates with politicians. Such initiatives should take account of existing good practice in Wales and elsewhere.

2.79 We endorse the LGPS Committee's recommendations. We feel that the more young people learn about the democratic process, the more likely they are to participate in it.

Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

2.80 The Committee received thought provoking presentations from the British Council and Oxfam Cymru on this subject.

2.81 Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) is an approach which involves the whole curriculum and management of the school, not merely an 'add on' subject. It has its roots in environmental education and development education.

2.82 Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship encompasses the:

- Links between society, economy and environment and between our own lives and those of people throughout the world.
- Needs and rights of both present and future generations.
- Relationship between power, resources and human rights.
- Local and global implications of everything we do and the actions that individuals and organisations can take in response to local and global issues.

2.83 In order to facilitate the teaching of sustainable development in schools, in 2001, the Assembly Education Minister established in an education for sustainable development advisory panel; and a separate global citizenship working group. In 2004, it was decided that these bodies should merge to form one ESDGC panel to advise the Minister.

2.84 Membership of the ESDGC advisory panel includes representatives from the National Assembly's Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Estyn, the Environment Agency, the Countryside Council for Wales, Welsh Local Government Association, and a range of non-governmental and voluntary organisations, including; the British Council, Oxfam Cymru, Cyfanfyd, Wales Youth Forum and Keep Wales Tidy. Its principal responsibility is to consider how the concept of sustainable development and global citizenship can best be incorporated into education and training as a whole; while developing a long term vision for Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship.

2.85 A 'Strategy for Action' was published by the advisory panel in September 2006; this can be viewed at - www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills - this action plan covers a three-year period from 2006-2009; and was the result of a widespread consultation exercise. The consultation document can also be viewed on the National Assembly website.

2.86 The strategic action plan sets out a programme for developing ESDGC through the various levels of education and lifelong learning, including; schools, the youth sector, further education and work based learning, higher education and adult education. The overall aim of the action plan is to evaluate the current state-of-play of ESDGC in each sector, to disseminate good practice, and to establish a baseline against which progress can be measured.

2.87 ESDGC is founded on the premise that good education is not just about an acquisition of knowledge, but that all learning should be framed with the development of skills and an appreciation of attitudes and values. It is about questioning, critical thinking and exploration. Above all, it involves caring about issues of relevance to young people; for example, poverty, family, friends, pandas or the Brazilian rainforest; and moving beyond caring to thinking of ways of resolving such problems and participating in voluntary action.

2.88 We were interested to learn how ESDGC is taught in schools and Oxfam Cymru gave us several practical examples:

- Children in the infant department of Ysgol Penybryn in Caernarfon finding out about the life of an Ethiopian child, and exploring the similarities and differences between their lives and her life.
- Children at Ysgol Rhyd-y-grug in Rhondda Cynon Taf inviting their local MP, Dai Havard, to school as part of the global campaign for education, asking him why there is such a shortage of teachers in Africa and handing him a tree of hope—very simply, a list of rights that children should enjoy.
- Children from Ysgol Gwaungynfi in Gwynedd, exploring fair trade in bananas, tracing the journey of a banana and finding out how they reach their supermarket,

who is responsible for growing bananas, how they are transported, whether those responsible earn a sustainable wage and how banana growers benefit from belonging to fair trade co-operatives.

- Pupils from Bedwas Comprehensive School investigating organic vegetables with the help of the Organic Wales Centre in Aberystwyth; or making paper from recycled paper pulp with the Forestry Commission; or designing wind turbines as part of a technology project.

2.89 We agree with Oxfam Cymru that the real challenge for ESDGC is turning policy into practice. This challenge must be met by teachers, schools, colleges, institutions and organisations because it is not just about curriculum change. The strategic action plan advocates;

'...an integrated approach to the development of ESDGC from subject content through to teaching and learning and school ethos and management'.

2.90 The strategy embraces educational change. ESDGC features strongly in the foundation stage, in the learning pathways 14-19 framework, in the Welsh baccalaureate, the Welsh Joint Education Committee's AS and A2 on world development and in the AS in citizenship studies. ESDGC will feature more strongly in the national curriculum orders following the curriculum review, which will be implemented in September 2008.

2.91 We wanted to learn more about how ESDGC was taught in schools; in particular practical examples of good practice. In their presentation, Oxfam Cymru referred us to a recent Estyn report entitled *'Establishing a position statement for Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship in Wales'*. This document is Crown copyright and can be viewed at www.estyn.gov.uk - Estyn is Her Majesty's inspectorate for education and training in Wales.

2.92 The main findings of Estyn's report are reproduced below:

2.93 Teachers and advisers do not have a clear and consistent understanding of the definition, purpose and benefits of ESDGC. This presents a major challenge when trying to identify criteria to evaluate performance in this area. Schools, colleges and local education authorities (LEAs) are generally more confident *about, and focus more on, sustainable development than global citizenship*.

2.94 While schools are enthusiastic about promoting sustainable development, they are often less clear about identifying how and where they can develop associated skills and values. Key personnel in schools and colleges are generally familiar with the underlying key concepts in the curriculum guidance document, but other members of staff are largely unaware of them. Overall, teachers do not see the concepts as a helpful way to organise ESDGC work and activities.

2.95 The current position of ESDGC in schools in Wales is that:

- There is more work on sustainable development than on global citizenship;
- Work in primary schools is of better quality and more developed than in secondary schools;

- All schools are doing some work that is concerned with it;
- About three-quarters of schools give little coherent and consistent attention to it;
- About a fifth of schools, mainly primary schools, are starting to develop their work through better co-ordination; and
- It has a central and well-organised place in the life and work of less than a tenth of the total and these schools are almost exclusively primary schools.

2.96 The four colleges included in the survey are at different stages of development in their work on ESDGC. Two of them have audited their provision and are incorporating it into their curriculum, ethos and evaluation. One college is planning for more incorporation and the fourth is at an earlier stage of development. All of the colleges have a greater emphasis on sustainable development than on global citizenship.

2.97 LEA support for ESDGC is inconsistent across Wales. Where LEA support is available, it focuses on the provision of training events, often in association with the Enabling Effective Support (EES) initiative. LEAs are particularly active in promoting school participation in award schemes and similar initiatives, especially the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes.

2.98 Other than that received from LEAs, schools usually obtain useful guidance and support from:

- The Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes;
- The Eco-Schools Award Scheme, and similar environmental schemes;
- Development Education Centres; and
- International school linking schemes.

2.99 EES is active in building regional strategies and frameworks that enable schools to promote global connections and understanding of world poverty issues. However, few schools overall are aware of this work. Further Education colleges obtain support mainly from local Development Education Centres and from some community groups.

2.100 Most schools are involved with one or more award schemes relevant or related to ESDGC. Participating schools are generally positive about award schemes. In most cases, schemes focus on sustainable development and healthy living and do not pay enough attention to global citizenship. Overall, teachers find the following features of the schemes confusing:

- The number of different award schemes;
- The lack of co-ordination between them and other initiatives; and
- The schemes' different quality indicators and requirements.

2.101 Schools and colleges feel that it is important that there should be specific funding for ESDGC, especially for improving the co-ordination of activities. Schools referred to the positive impact of local co-ordinators for schemes such as the Welsh Network for Healthy School Scheme and PE and School Sports.

2.102 Estyn suggested that key opportunities to further develop ESDGC are:

- The potential of the current review of the national curriculum and the Welsh Assembly Government's Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Action Plan to raise its profile;
- The revision of examination specifications and the extension of the core of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification;
- The addition of global citizenship aspects to the Estyn inspection guidelines for further education; and
- The EES initiative, which can help to establish collaboration between different agencies and between statutory and non-statutory partners.

2.103 Estyn identified the key constraints to developing ESDGC as:

- The conflicting priorities for curriculum planning;
- The need to rationalise strategic priorities in curriculum planning in order to help schools and colleges to address Welsh Assembly Government initiatives;
- Inadequate prioritisation within schools;
- A lack of information on good practice, including access to straightforward ideas that are easy to understand;
- Perceived competition between non-government organisations and between different initiatives; and
- More limited support for education for global citizenship compared with education for sustainable development.

2.104 Estyn made several recommendations for the Welsh Assembly Government, to be implemented by the ESDGC advisory panel. The first group concerned the need to clarify the definition, purpose and rationale of ESDGC.

2.105 The other recommendations involved:

- Developing a strategy to support the local co-ordination of ESDGC work across voluntary and statutory authorities, and agencies.
- Providing guidelines to help providers to raise the quality of teaching and learning and the standards that learners achieve, and a framework to support the continuing professional development of teachers; and
- Establishing specific criteria to enable ESDGC providers to evaluate their work.

2.106 We were very interested to learn about the principles of ESDGC and agree that it is a valuable means of disseminating information about key issues, affecting the lives of young people in Wales and the wider world. More importantly, when taught well, it develops the important skill of critical thinking; helping young people to form their own opinions and to test these ideas in debate with their peers.

2.107 In their presentation, the **British Council** outlined a number of relevant programmes:

- **An annual award scheme** to promote ESDGC activities in schools.
- **Enabling Effective Support (EES)**; based on a UK-wide initiative, led by the Department for International Development, to support schools and other educational institutions in providing ESDGC in a more strategic way.
- **Comenius 1**; this programme supports a range of school partnerships that enables pupils, students and teachers from across Europe to work together on joint projects. Some 101 such projects were funded in Wales during 2006.
- **Comenius 2**; this programme provides continuous professional development opportunities for qualified and trainee teachers, to further increase their understanding of European issues. It also provides an opportunity to develop teaching resources. Only four such projects were funded in Wales during 2006.
- **DFID Global Schools Partnerships Programme**; this programme promotes partnerships between schools in the UK and schools in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The programme provides advice and guidance, professional development opportunities and grants to schools that use school partnerships as a means of developing a global dimension within their curriculum. It encourages the involvement of local communities in school partnerships, disseminates best practice and is introducing accreditation schemes for participating teachers. The programme aims to raise young people's awareness of global development issues and to equip them with the skills and knowledge to become active global citizens.
- **Workshops** for school staff that are considering starting a global school partnership or who have just initiated such a partnership. The National Assembly for Wales is currently the only devolved administration to supplement this programme by providing additional resources to allow Welsh schools to develop links with Lesotho. This work is managed in partnership with Dolen Cymru.
- **Connecting Classrooms**; provides cluster groups of three UK schools with the opportunity to form partnerships with schools from two different countries in sub-Saharan Africa, to increase knowledge and understanding of each other's societies.
- **Dreams + Teams, Africa**; this programme will facilitate partnerships between 200 schools in 19 African countries with schools in the UK. It will focus on using sport to achieve positive social and educational change in the schools and their wider community.
- **Global Gateway**; this is an online website that assists schools and further education colleges to find international partners for their programmes.
- **International School Award**; this scheme provides a framework within which schools can form and develop international partnerships to achieve curriculum goals.
- **Fulbright UK/USA Teacher Exchange**; this programme is run by the British Council, in collaboration with the US Department of State. It offers UK teachers the opportunity to trade places with American teachers for their mutual benefit.
- **Fulbright UK/USA Work Shadow**; provides an opportunity for head teachers, principals, their deputies and other senior managers in the education service,

covering all levels from nursery to further education, to exchange with colleagues in similar positions in the USA..

- **Arion**; provides opportunities for UK head teachers, deputies and local authority staff to investigate aspects of European education through a five day study visit.
- **Teacher Exchange Europe (modern foreign languages)**; provides a professional development opportunity for modern foreign language teachers to exchange with European colleagues.
- **Lesotho Teacher Placement Programme**; provides an opportunity to spend six months working in Lesotho at a local school and is open to newly qualified teachers, as well as more experienced colleagues.
- **Patagonia Teaching Programme**; provides an opportunity to teach Welsh in Patagonia for an academic year.
- **English Language Assistants**; provides opportunities to teach English abroad as a classroom assistant.
- **Comenius Language Assistants**; provides opportunities throughout Europe for students and graduates considering entering the teaching profession.
- **Foreign Language Assistants**; being taught by a foreign language assistant can bring learning to life for a student, or a small group of students, so improving their confidence in speaking and understanding a language.
- **E-twinning**; a new scheme enabling UK schools to collaborate with schools in the rest of Europe, using information and communications technology, on a range of curriculum projects.

2.108 We applaud the British Council for providing such a wide range of professional development and partnership opportunities for UK schools and further education colleges; and consider that the Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh local education authorities should encourage and facilitate greater participation in these programmes.

Welsh Assembly Government and Europe

2.109 The Assembly Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (Jane Davidson) made a presentation to update the Committee on developments in the European Union in the field of education and lifelong learning. Wales is a founder member of the European Association of Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL); a network of twenty European regions that work in partnership to develop new policies, strategies and methods of lifelong learning. The Minister stated that membership of EARLALL has provided Wales with a platform from which to make its voice heard in Europe. EARLALL is in the process of strengthening its links with the various EU institutions.

2.110 In her wide-ranging presentation, the Minister made the following points relevant to our inquiry:

- European and global citizenship issues are addressed in the Welsh Baccalaureate – most notably in the ‘Wales, Europe and the world’ and PSE components of the core certificate.
- The ‘Wales, Europe and the world’ element will be extended to all learners aged 14 to 19 from 2008.

- Other opportunities in the national curriculum occur in history, geography and PSE – all currently under review by the Welsh Assembly Government.
- ‘Funky Dragon’, the children and young people’s assembly for Wales, was heavily involved in the 2005 UK Presidency youth event and continues to raise its profile in Europe;
- ‘Clic’, the information and advice service for young people in Wales, has included a section ‘UK, Europe and the rest of the world’ on its website.
- The Welsh Assembly Government promotes a series of policies and projects aimed at promoting the participation of young people in their local communities
- Welsh involvement in European programmes, such as Comenius – to promote cultural and educational exchanges, has traditionally been high, compared with other parts of the UK. Although, as noted by the British Council, whilst schools in Wales enjoy the school linking aspect of the programme, relatively few teachers engage in the professional development aspect, to further increase their understanding of European issues.

2.111 In his report to the Committee on 24 January 2007, the First Minister stated – *“The issue of the communication of EU related matters has increasingly come to the fore. The importance of communication and the need to bridge the communication gap has been a recurrent theme of the European and External Affairs Committee during the past year. There is a clear need to raise awareness of EU matters and I have agreed with my officials a programme of initiatives to address this issue. The proposed activities will include both internal activities for Assembly Government officials and external activities for the wider Welsh public, such as the Wales Forum on European Affairs, the provision of information stands at key events and the hosting of events with guest speakers from EU institutions. Where appropriate they will form part of a recurring programme and not be limited to 2007. The actions will be kept under review.”* We welcome this commitment by the Welsh assembly Government.

Consultation

2.112 In October 2006, we distributed a questionnaire to organisations listed in Annex 2 and invited responses, either in writing or via e-mail, by 31 January 2007. The questionnaire was targeted at young people, defined as those aged 25 years or less.

2.113 Some 50 responses were received and these are tabulated in Annex 3.

2.114 The responses were encouraging, in that 71% of those responding cared about the European Union; although only 16% cared very much.

2.115 Interestingly, 80% of those responding thought that decisions made in Europe affected people living in Wales but only 53% thought that such decisions affected them personally.

2.116 Television (36%) was easily the most important means of obtaining information about the European Union, followed by school and the internet (tied at 10% each). Worryingly, some 16% of those responding did not bother to seek such information.

2.117 Suggestions were invited on how to make it easier to find out about the EU. Various proposals were received and these included:

- Discussion at school, either with teachers or guest speakers.
- Discussion with parents or other adults.
- Posters and leaflets.
- Newspapers, books, magazines and comics.
- Internet
- Television; one practical suggestion was to make international information television channels freely available, in collaboration with broadcasters.

3. Conclusions

3.1 It has become apparent, during the course of this inquiry, that a great deal of relevant activity has been completed or is ongoing; for example, developing PSE as the main means of delivering citizenship education in schools; piloting the Welsh Baccalaureate and extending it to all schools in Wales from September 2007; a 'Strategy for Action' for the delivery of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) in schools and colleges; the establishment, with funding from the European Commission, of five Europe Direct Centres to help disseminate European information to citizens, schools, colleges and businesses; and the current review of the national curriculum by the Welsh Assembly Government, including a revised PSE framework.

3.2 We acknowledge this work, together with the review by the Local Government and Public Services Committee of 'Electoral Arrangements in Wales'. We are grateful to all those individuals and organisations who submitted evidence, either in person or via our consultation exercise.

3.3 The European Commission's White Paper, referred to in Section 1, put forward several ideas under five main headings:

- Defining common principles of an EU Communications Policy, possibly in a framework document or charter.
- Developing tools and facilities for improved public access to information.
- More effective involvement of the media and the use of new technology in communicating EU issues in the public domain.
- Improving measures to gauge public opinion.
- Greater engagement between Member States, EU institutions and Civil Society Organisations.

3.4 In our response to the White Paper, we agreed with the Commission that the national education system plays an important role in relation to people's understanding of politics and their rights as citizens. We believe that the most effective route to changing perceptions is through civic education in schools.

3.5 Accordingly, we shall submit this report to the Assembly Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, in response to the current review of the school curriculum in Wales. We shall also submit a copy of the report to the First Minister, in his capacity as Minister for European and External Affairs. The report will also be laid in the National Assembly and placed on the website – www.wales.gov.uk

3.6 The Eurydice report gives identifies the key issues in relation to effective citizenship education which are:

- To what extent is it embedded in the curriculum;
- Teacher training on the European dimension of citizenship education;
- Support for teachers and teaching materials; and
- Activities in the wider school context.

3.7 We welcome the revised PSE framework; in particular, the fact the ten aspects from the existing framework have been rationalised into five key themes:

- Health and emotional well-being.
- Moral and spiritual development.
- Active citizenship.
- Sustainable development and global citizenship
- Preparing for lifelong learning.

3.8 We endorse the thinking skills that will be developed during PSE lessons, through the various key stages; for example, at key stage 2, learners should have opportunities to:

- Distinguish between facts, beliefs and opinions.
- Form personal opinions and make informed decisions
- Use appropriate techniques for personal reflection.

3.9 Within the framework, these thinking skills are complemented by communication skills and the opportunity to hone them by working with others; to exchange ideas, weigh evidence, form opinions and voice them. We consider that the revised PSE framework will go a long way towards addressing the issues raised during our inquiry and set out in Section 2. We recommend that, in addition, any lessons learned from the Welsh Baccalaureate pilots should be incorporated within the new PSE framework.

3.10 The recently published 'Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship - Strategy for Action' will be used by teachers in delivering the sustainable development and global citizenship component of PSE. This should be included in the revised PSE framework, currently subject to consultation.

3.11 We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government should commission Estyn to undertake an evaluation of the implementation of ESDGC in 2010, to measure progress since their 2006 baseline report.

3.12 Although we were shown some imaginative information leaflets produced by various Member States and the European Commission, we consider that one of the problems in reaching and engaging young people is the anodyne nature of much of the teaching material currently available. It is essential that young citizens are given easy access to good quality information, in a variety of media, to inform and also stimulate discussion. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government, possibly in consultation with the European Commission, should commission such material for use in schools.

3.13 We welcome the initiatives to address this challenge being undertaken by the new Europe Direct Centres and the British Council. We were particularly interested in the three initiatives being developed by SWEDIC and feel that the web-based 'European Sources Online' will be very useful for students and ordinary citizens. These new sources of information should be widely publicised.

3.14 To complement the work of teachers in delivering civic education, we recommend that the five Europe Direct Information Centres should work closely with schools and colleges to provide up-to-date factual information about the European Union; particularly on policies and directives of particular relevance to Wales. The Centres should also facilitate debates on EU issues, either in schools or their own premises, to give pupils an opportunity to develop thinking and communication skills.

3.15 As noted in our response to the European Commission's White Paper, we feel that raising awareness of people's rights as citizens of the EU should not be limited to the education system. All citizens should have access to relevant information and we feel that the Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities and Europe Direct Centres could facilitate this need.

3.16 We welcome the programme of initiatives which the Welsh Assembly Government is now beginning to undertake in relation to awareness raising and stimulating debate on the Europe, such as the Wales European Forum.

3.17 The successor European and External Affairs Committee in the Third Assembly may wish to consider what role the members of the European and External Affairs Committee can play to raise the profile of European and global issues in national and local debate on EU matters.

3.18 The Assembly Commission in the Third Assembly may also wish to consider to whether its public information centres could provide appropriate material to young people and the public who visit the centres about the EU and its political structures, alongside information about the Assembly.

3.19 The Europe Direct Centres in Wales have funding until 2009, at which time the whole UK programme will be reviewed. We recommend that the appropriate Assembly committee should review the activities of the five Welsh Europe Direct Centres after their first year of operation; to include, for example, the type of activities undertaken, the numbers and age profile of those seeking information, the number of links developed with schools and colleges, and suggestions for future improvement.

3.20 A recurring theme in our inquiry was the need for young people to develop the skill of critical thinking. CEWC Cymru warned against simply bombarding young people with facts and figures about the EU; this will turn many off them off the subject. Obviously, it is necessary to teach some basic facts about how the various EU institutions work together; and importantly, how decisions are made and by whom. But young people should be encouraged to seek their own information, possibly using the sources referred to above, and to make up their own minds on issues of interest to them.

3.21 We applaud CEWC Cymru and the Welsh Centre for International Affairs for their work in giving young people an opportunity to learn about the European Union and to develop their thinking and communication skills. The European Youth Parliaments held in north and south Wales have given young people an opportunity to debate current issues of importance to them. Also, the classroom workshops have been very useful and informative. We recommend that more schools and colleges should participate in these activities and that a European Youth Parliament should occasionally be held in mid Wales.

3.22 The British Council, as well as being a member of the Assembly Government's ESDGC advisory panel, provides a wide range of relevant training and development programmes for pupils and teachers in schools and colleges; see paragraph 2.95. We urge more schools and colleges to participate in these programmes; particularly those involving joint projects or partnerships with foreign schools and colleges.

3.23 It is vital that teachers keep abreast of developments in all aspects of their profession, through continuing professional development (CPD). We note that there has been a disappointing take up of Comenius 2 programme in Wales, and suggest that more teachers should be encouraged to participate; to improve their understanding of European matters, so that they are better able to teach and debate current issues with their pupils. We recommend that the General Teaching Council for Wales, when reviewing their CPD guidance for teachers, makes specific mention of opportunities to improve their understanding of European and global citizenship issues.

3.24 We feel that young people should be exposed to a broad spectrum of views on a wide range of European and global issues. We have seen that media coverage of European topics in Wales is generally rather patchy, although reasonably factually accurate. European news stories, whether positive or negative in tone, are a useful means of stimulating a classroom discussion, particularly if the news item is of local interest; for example, use of EU structural funds to support training at a local college to improve the skills of the local workforce. We recommend that senior school management should promote political literacy within schools in a non-partisan manner by inviting voluntary, private and public service organisations, including political parties and representatives of the media, into schools to facilitate debate amongst pupils.

3.25 We are grateful to the Assembly Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, for appearing in person before the Committee and for including a section in her paper of particular relevance to this inquiry. We acknowledge these initiatives by the Welsh Assembly Government and recommend that the appropriate Assembly committee, following the forthcoming election, evaluates these programmes; with the aim of widening participation by young people and also disseminating best practice.

3.26 Finally, one of the main objectives of European and global citizenship education is wider, and better informed, engagement by young people in the democratic process; in local, regional, national and European elections. We acknowledge that this is a daunting challenge but consider that, if young people can relate European and global problems to their own life experiences, then they are more likely to become active citizens. We welcome the scrutiny of electoral arrangements in Wales undertaken by the Local Government and Public Services Committee and endorse recommendations 19 – 30 in their report. These recommendations are included in Section 4. Some have been modified to reflect the evidence presented to our inquiry.

4. Recommendations

1. We recommend that the revised framework for Personal and Social Education (PSE), included in the current review of the school curriculum in Wales, should incorporate best practice from the 'Wales, Europe and the World' element of the Welsh Baccalaureate and the 'Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship – Strategy for Action'.
2. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government considers the examples of good practice in relation to teaching citizenship identified in the report by the European Commission's Office in Wales and in the Eurydice report.
3. We recommend that measures are put in place to ensure that all secondary schools deliver PSE using specially trained and resourced teachers.
4. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government takes the lead in facilitating training of teachers in PSE, providing resource packs for such training and supporting teachers in the delivery of PSE.
5. We recommend that the General Teaching Council for Wales, when reviewing their continuing professional development guidance for teachers, makes specific mention of opportunities to improve their understanding of European and global citizenship issues; for example, the Comenius programmes arranged by the British Council.
6. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government ensures that existing examples of good practice in citizenship and political education are adequately disseminated to all schools and youth groups in Wales.
7. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government should commission Estyn to undertake an evaluation of the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship in 2010, to measure progress since their 2006 baseline report.
8. We recommend that the review of the school curriculum in Wales, currently being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government, should pay particular attention to the need to develop political understanding amongst young people and to teach them about the roles, policies and positioning of political parties, as well as political processes at all levels of governance.
9. We recommend that guidance to schools on the teaching of political literacy should specifically include teaching about political parties, including those at the European level, and young people's role in the democratic process as well as basic political concepts.
10. We recommend that the five Europe Direct Centres in Wales should work closely with schools and colleges to provide up-to-date factual information about the European Union; particularly on policies and directives of particular relevance to Wales.
11. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government should consider supporting the development of further Europe Direct Centres in Wales.

12. We recommend that the appropriate Assembly committee reviews the activities of the five Welsh Europe Direct Centres during 2008; to include, for example, the range of activities undertaken, the numbers and age profile of those seeking information, the links developed with schools and colleges, and suggestions for future improvement.

13. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government, possibly in consultation with the European Commission, should commission high quality teaching materials in Welsh and English and in a variety of media, to inform young people about the European Union and to stimulate debate.

14. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government takes a coordinated approach to the guidance it gives to senior management in schools on the operation of school councils and on citizenship activities, to ensure that these are properly contributing to pupils' political understanding and appropriate links are being made between school council activities and other citizenship initiatives; such as inviting voluntary, private and public service organisations, including political parties and representatives of the media, into schools to facilitate debate amongst pupils.

15. We recommend that guidance and training should focus on ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their background, are encouraged equally to participate in school councils and other citizenship initiatives and that the Welsh Assembly Government should commission Estyn to monitor representation and participation from an equality perspective.

16. We recommend that the successor European and External Affairs Committee in the Third Assembly considers what role the members of the European and External Affairs Committee can play to raise the profile of European and global issues in national and local debate on EU matters.

17. We recommend that the Assembly Commission and local authorities develop initiatives that provide young people from different backgrounds with opportunities to shadow elected politicians from the Assembly, Local Government, and European Parliament and to participate in debates with politicians. Such initiatives should take account of existing good practice in Wales and elsewhere.

18. We recommend, in the Third Assembly, that the Assembly Commission considers whether its public information centres could provide appropriate material to young people and other citizens about the EU and its political structures, alongside information about the Assembly.

19. We recommend that the European Commission should consider making more funds available to its regional offices to translate its information material into the official local languages, such as Welsh, even if they are not official EU languages.

20. We recommend that the Welsh Assembly Government should support the European Commission Representation in Wales to make more publications about the EU available in Welsh and other languages.

21. We recommend that the Elections Planning Group considers regional and nation-wide approaches to the promotion of voting by young people.

22. We recommend that the Elections Planning Group considers rolling out targeted initiatives to encourage socially and economically excluded groups of young people to vote.

Schedule of Committee Papers

Date	Name of Paper/Organisation	Paper Reference Number	Transcript Paragraph Reference
10 May 2006	Citizenship Education on the European Union in Wales	EUR(2) 04-06 (p.2)	81 - 216
10 May 2006	Engaging Europe's Young Citizens	EUR(2) 04-06 (p.3)	81 – 216
22 June 2006	Committee's response to the White Paper on a European Communication Policy	EUR(2) 05-06 (p.2)	71 – 120
22 June 2006	Coverage of EU issues in Welsh media	EUR(2) 05-06 (p.3)	71 – 120
22 June 2006	WCVA Promoting awareness and information on the European Union	EUR(2) 05-06 (p.4)	121 – 140
22 June 2006	European Centre for Training and Regional Co-operation's workplan for the implementation of Europe Direct 2006	EUR(2) 05-06 (p.5)	140 – 194
22 June 2006	Terms of Reference	EUR(2) 05-06 (p.6)	22 – 65
12 July 2006	EU education in other Member States of the European Union	EUR(2) 06-06 (p.2)	14 – 116
12 July 2006	Education, lifelong learning issues in the European context	EUR(2) 06-06 (p.4)	166 - 214
12 July 2006	The Local Government and Public Services' Committee's Scrutiny Project on Electoral Arrangements	EUR(2) 06-06 (p.5)	Paper to note
27 September 2006	South Wales Europe Direct Direct Information Centre	EUR(2) 07-06 (p.3)	165 - 203
27 September 2006	British Council	EUR(2) 07-06 (p.4)	203 - 253
25 October 2006	Oxfam Cymru	EUR(2) 08-06 (p.3)	127 - 203

Schedule of Organisations Consulted

Access for Black and Minority Ethnic Children and Young People with Disabilities	Cardiff Youth Service
Age Alliance Wales	Care Council for Wales
All Wales Black & Minority Ethnic Mental Health Group	Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales
All Wales Saheli Association	Carers National Association in Wales
Area 41	Carmarthenshire CC
Asian Women's Group	Ceredigion Youth Service
Association of Muslim Professionals	Changing Attitudes Project
AWEMA Suite 1	Children & Young People
Bangladeshi Welfare Association (BWA)	Children and Young People's Framework
Bangladeshi Women's Association	Children and Young People's Services
Bangladeshi Women's Group	Children's Commissioner for Wales
Black Association of Women Step Out Ltd. (BAWSO)	Chinese Community Service Committee
Black Environment Network	Commission for Racial Equality (Wales)
Black Voluntary Sector Network	Continuing Education Centre
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	Conwy County Borough Council
Bridgend CBC	Crossroads Wales
c/o Monmouthshire Youth Service	Cultural Concerns
Caerphilly County Borough Council	Denbighshire County Council
Canolfan Ieuenctid Penrallt	Disability Rights Commission
Cardiff CC	Disability Wales
Cardiff Gypsy Sites Group	Displaced People in Action
Ferryside Education Centre	

	South Wales Vietnamese Association
Flintshire County Council	Sudanese Community Association
Gwynedd Council	Swansea Bay Race Equality Council
Gypsy and Traveller Law Reform Coalition	Swansea County Council Youth Forum
Integrated Children's Services	The Commission for Racial Equality Wales
Irish Traveller Movement Britain	The Gypsy Council
Isle of Anglesey County Council	The South East Wales Racial Equality Council
Joint Committee for Ethnic Minorities in Wales	The Vic
Maes y Fynnon	Torfaen County Borough Council
Minority Ethnic Womens Network (MEWN Cymru)	Traveller Times
Monmouthshire County Council	Treuddyn Youth Centre
National Association of Gypsy Women	Tros Gynnal
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	Vale of Glamorgan, Penarth Youth Project
Newport County Borough Council	Valleys Race Equality Council
North Wales Race Equality Network	Wales Audit Office
Pakistan Association Of Newport & Gwent Welsh Asian Council	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services	Wales TUC Cymru
Powys County Council	Welsh Consumer Council
Powys County Borough Council	Welsh Local Authorities Consortium for Refugees and Asylum Seekers
Race Equality First	Welsh Refugee Council
Somali Advice Centre	Wrexham County Borough Council

Percentage breakdown of consultation responses

1. How old are you?

Under 10	11-13	14-15	16-17	18-25
4%	37%	33%	14%	12%

2. How much do you care about things that happen in the European Union?

Very much	A bit	Don't care
16%	55%	29%

3. Do you think that decisions made in Europe have any effect on people living in Wales?

Yes, a big effect	Yes, but only a little	No effect at all	I don't know
21%	59%	6%	14%

4. Do you think that decisions made in Europe affect you personally?

Yes, a big effect	Yes, but only a little	No effect at all	I don't know
20%	33%	22%	25%

5. How do you find out about what's happening in the European Union?

School	Television	Internet	Other	I don't find out	More than one method
10%	36%	10%	8%	16%	20%

Dear Commissioner Wallström,

White Paper on a European Communication Policy

The European and External Affairs Committee of the National Assembly for Wales considered the European Commission's White Paper on a European Communication Policy at its meetings on 22 June and 10 May 2006. We trust you will take these comments into account when taking forward the European Communication Policy.

Reaching out to the citizen

1. The Committee welcomes the Commission's White Paper as a means of initiating debate on how the EU can be better communicated to citizens. Promoting better engagement of people in the political process is not only an issue for the EU's institutions, but a challenge which faces all political institutions, whether regional, national or European.
2. The Committee would welcome and support a strategy to improve awareness throughout Wales of what it means to be part of the European Union, both in terms of the impact that the EU can have on people's daily lives, as well as how they can engage with it politically – either directly or through regional or national institutions. The Committee recognises that there are many ways in which this could be done.
3. However, the Committee agrees with the Commission's analysis that the national education system plays an important role in relation to people's understanding of politics and their rights as citizens, and believes that the most effective route to changing perceptions and improving awareness of future generations is through civic education in schools.
4. As a result of discussions stimulated by the White Paper on Communication and the Commission's Plan D, the Committee is intending to review how civic education in relation to the EU is taught in schools both primary and secondary and how general awareness about the EU and its Member States is dealt with within the curriculum.
5. The Committee also agrees that raising awareness of people's rights as citizens of the EU should not be limited to the education system, and should be tackled beyond that. It should be a continuous sustained effort on behalf of all the EU's institutions and their representative in the Member States, and not centring on one-off initiatives or campaigns, for example, solely around the European elections. The Committee notes that the new Europe Direct Centres to be set up in Wales may be a step in the right direction in this respect.
6. The Committee is interested in exchanging good practice with other Member States and regions, and would welcome any support from the European Commission in facilitating this exercise in a structured way.
7. The Committee looks forward to continuing this dialogue with the European Commission and would be pleased to share the results of its review with the European Commission.

Working in partnership

8. Regional assemblies and parliaments such as the National Assembly for Wales can play an important role in acting as a bridge between citizens and the EU. People in Wales relate far more readily to the Assembly as an institution, than they do to the European Commission or Parliament. Despite the fact that it is relatively young, the Assembly is enjoying growing support.

9. Proceedings in the Assembly are also far more accessible and easier for Welsh stakeholders and the media to engage with than Brussels' Institutions.

10. Through the work that the Committees do in scrutinising the Welsh Assembly Government's actions on EU issues, and discussing key European issues of significance to Wales within Committees, the Assembly is well placed to bring greater transparency and understanding to the main EU issues of the day and to put European policies in a local context.

11. We value the participation of the European Commission's Representative in Wales in our European and External Affairs Committee meetings. Nonetheless, the Committee would welcome greater direct engagement with the European Commission in the debates which take place in the subject committees on specific European policy or legislative proposals e.g. getting the responsible Commission official to give presentations to committees when EU matters are discussed.

12. The European and External Affairs Committee is also looking at ways of involving Wales' MEPs more directly in Committee discussions as a way of improving communication with the EU's Institutions.

Communicating in the Welsh language with the EU institutions

13. The Committee notes that the European Commission's White Paper states that "all citizens should have access in their own language to information about matters of public concern".

14. While recognising that Wales is not one of the EU's official languages, the Committee welcomes the Council of Ministers' decision of 13 June 2005 which allows citizens the possibility of using their own language with the EU institutions where these languages have official status. The Committee reminds the European Commission that the Welsh language is an official language in Wales and is treated on an equal basis with English in public life in Wales.

15. The Committee welcomes the effort being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government to facilitate the potential use of the Welsh language in relation to the EU's institutions and encourages the EU institutions to co-operate to make this happen, and notes in particular the potential this could offer for the European Commission's Representation in Wales to undertake its activities and publications bilingually.

Sandy Mewies
Chair, European and External Affairs Committee