European education and culture: a community of best practice

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In times when the resilience of our common European project is put to the test by several crises, the need to act to defend and promote our European values is now more pressing than ever before.

The CoR has launched an online map of activities and experiences constituting a first concrete step towards a community of best practices at local and regional level to promote European values through education and culture.

With more than 100 examples and contributions provided by the CoR's elected local and regional representatives and partners, its aim is to serve as an inspiration for further valuable ideas and projects, while also providing various opportunities to share experiences, exchange knowledge and start cooperation.

Already in 2017, on the occasion of the Social Summit in Gothenburg, it was underlined that "Education, culture and sport have a pivotal role in promoting active citizenship and common values amongst the youngest generations". But an imperative call to action became evident during the CoR plenary debates with Margaritis Schinas, Commission Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life (in June 2021) and French President Emmanuel Macron (in December 2021) on European values and the renewal of democracy.

On these occasions, VP Schinas welcomed the fact that "the Commission together with the European Committee of the Regions will be joining forces and call on regions and cities across the Union to make pledges for the development of European classrooms", while President Macron underlined that regional elected representatives are the heart of European democracy and he spoke of the need to build a 'European demos' with local and regional authorities.

Indeed, the local and regional leaders are responsible for empowering young people to understand the importance of these values and of the

European Union, which promotes and secures peace and prosperity. Considering the particularly favourable context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, encouraged by the support from CoR members, and building on the existing examples from many regions, the President of the CoR and the Chair of SEDEC commission suggested that a community of best practice be set up, to facilitate dialogue and the exchange of these good practices.

The CoR President Tzitzikostas summarized the purpose of the project during the June debate: "It is our responsibility – as parents and leaders – to offer our young generations the tools to realise that the EU made possible today's peace and unity. This is what we must do today, if we want to have a tomorrow. Together [...] we want to launch a pilot project to promote our common European values in classrooms. This will be done on voluntary basis and in full respect of subsidiarity, while using the momentum of the Conference on the Future of Europe."

The project is also part of the Joint Action Plan between the European Committee of the Regions and the European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture, Directorate General for Research and Innovation, and the Joint Research Centre, signed in November 2020 by Commissioner Gabriel, the CoR President Tzitzikostas, and the SEDEC Chair Karjalainen.

You can visit the new map online via desktop or mobile following this link:

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