Le groupement européen pour la Recherche et la Formation des enseignants de toutes Convictions
**Aims**

GERFEC aims at:

- Developing a pedagogy for a multicultural dialogue between people from different cultures and convictions in schools and in educational institutions;
- Promoting an education for democracy, citizenship and Human Rights in the context of Europe of today;
- «Living together» in a multicultural Europe;
- Respect and support of all individuals to be able to develop her/his full potential as a human being;

The main aim is to contribute to construct a culture of peace starting form school-age both in Europe and in the world of today.

**Approaches**

- Encourage exchanges between teachers in schools and teachers in teacher education institutions in the countries members of The Council of Europe
- Promote a cooperation of research concerning intercultural and interconvictional education in Europe
- Organise international courses for teachers and teacher educators

**Organisation**

Le Groupement Européen d’Etude et de Recherche pour la Formation des Enseignants Chrétiens, Croyants et de toutes Convictions (GERFEC), is an association « Law 1908, modified by the law of 1st of August 2003 ». Declared at the Tribunal d’Instance in Strasbourg, in 1979, it is declared as an association, French with a European vocation.

Today 16 countries are members of GERFEC: Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey, UK.

In each member country there is an «antenne nationale», a national responsible who works to promote the spirit, the aims and the actions of GERFEC in a national context.

These representatives meet once a year for a General Assembly to discuss and evaluate their actions and plan new ones in the year ahead.
Actions

From its creation in 1979, GERFEC offers a meeting place for European educators, future teachers and teacher educators by organising an annual course dealing with the actual challenges in the education of peace, Human Rights, intercultural and interconvictional dialogue and education for democracy and citizenship.

In this way hundreds of educators, future teachers and teacher educators have learnt by experience to integrate these dimensions in their daily teaching and learning activities both on the personal and professional level.

In 2013, GERFEC obtained the status of NGO participant of the Council of Europe for the following reasons:

a. GERFEC works in the priority areas of the Council of Europe; intercultural dialogue and education of Human Rights.

b. GERFEC has developed a co-operation with The Council of Europe, particularly within the areas mentioned above and with employees engaged in these areas for participations in seminaries and regular events in the Council of Europe and at NGO conferences.

c. GERFEC publishes these activities on the website; www.gerfec.eu, study-tours and workshops.

GERFEC actions are organised from the following three perspectives:

1. Research and development

After the publication of the « White book » by the Council of Europe « Living together in mutual dignity, from 2008, in the context of the NGO-conferences and in cooperation with other NGOs a manual called : « Lessons of a teacher education experience: A pedagogy of an intercultural, interreligious and interconvictional dialogue » This document from 2008 presents the pedagogies developed and implemented in the contexts of the GERFEC activities.

In 2013, GERFEC has started the writing of a book with the aim of presenting the work created and developed for the GERFEC activities, engineering and animation of seminars and workshops and propose a professional methodology and a pedagogical approach for the implementation of a dialogue between people from different cultures and convictions in the classroom and beyond.
2. Training of educators

GERFEC organises every year training seminars for educators on all levels (see attached a list of seminars organised the last fifteen years)

In February 2014 a seminar with the following title: « Learning to live differently as a European citizen », was organised in Coimbra in Portugal with about twenty participants, all engaged in adults’ learning. The main focus in this seminar was soft skills or transversal competences. Participants were able to elaborate a portfolio of transversal competences as a network of skills: attitudes and knowledge, soft skills, how to develop relational capacities, intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

In addition to the annual seminars for all GERFEC members, some countries have organised seminars and workshops about interconvictional dialogue, peace education, intercultural dialogue, particularly in France, Hungary, Poland and Portugal. In cooperation with the Pestalozzi programme in the Council of Europe, Norway organised a workshop in 2010 in Bergen, about Library and information literacy and will organise a new one in October 2014 about Hate speech linked to the No Hate Speech Online campaign.

3. GERFEC and The Council of Europe

The participative status accorded to GERFEC implies a development of a closer contact with the Council of Europe.

The Board of GERFEC

Roseline Moreau, France, President of GERFEC and permanent delegate to the NGO-conferences in the Council of Europe

Kari Flornes, Norway, vice-president, represents GERFEC in the NGO conferences of the Council of Europe

Monique Chauvet, France, secretary, represents GERFEC in the NGO conferences of the Council of Europe

GERFEC took part in the conference called: “The professional image and ethos of teachers”, organized in April 2014 by the Commission for Education and Culture (The NGO conferences in the Council of Europe) and the Pestalozzi programme. Prior to this conference a working group coordinated by the GERFEC president, Roseline Moreau, organised an extended survey among European educators about the challenges that they meet on a daily basis in our multicultural societies. This work has resulted in a document of 115 pages about: «The
work of teachers in the 21st century». This document has initiated and inspired the reflection during this conference.

In Norway, Kari Flornes, vice-president of GERFEC, cooperates with Claudia Lenz from the European Wergeland Center for the Pestalozzi workshop in October. As this center is a resource center for intercultural education, Human Rights education and education for democracy and citizenship, there is a possibility for GERFEC to initiate a cooperation with this center.

**Communication of GERFEC**

The GERFEC communication is primarily done by our web-site: [www.gerfec.eu](http://www.gerfec.eu), currently in construction. We have also a Newsletter which is published regularly. In this way our activities are made known. In addition we publish the activities of the Council of Europe in the area of education.
### Themes of the GERFEC seminars the last 15 years

#### Annexe 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date and Location</th>
<th>Theme(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22nd to 26th of July 1999 Coimbra Portugal</td>
<td>Giving a soul to Europe</td>
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<td>• Giving a soul to Europe</td>
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<td>• Intercultural education</td>
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<td>• Spirituality and interreligious dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-25 of August 2000 Walbourg France (16-24 of August 2001 Walbourg France)</td>
<td>Education in Europe</td>
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<td>• Intercultural issues</td>
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<td>• Human Rights in education</td>
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<td>• Educational systems in Europe</td>
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<td>• European institutions: The Council of Europe, The Court of Human Rights</td>
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<td>• Interreligiousity in education</td>
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<td>• European projects</td>
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<td>21st-25th of February 2001 Barcelona</td>
<td>Education for interreligious dialogue in a multicultural Europe</td>
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<td>• The challenge of interreligious dialogue in a multicultural Europe</td>
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<td>• Religious traditions facing essential existential questions of humanity</td>
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<td>• The experiences of the Bayt Al Thaqafa center</td>
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<td>• How can diversity be accepted as an enrichment in the interreligious context?</td>
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<td>• Are the main religions in Europe promoting dialogue?</td>
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<td>8th to 12nd of July 2002 Garaison France</td>
<td>Promote intercultural education in European schools by and education based on values and cooperation</td>
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<td>• The role of the school in an extended Europe</td>
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<td>• Value education in this extended Europe</td>
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<td>• Promotion of intercultural education</td>
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<td>• Cooperative work for the construction of the extended Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>27th July to 4th of August 2002 Walbourg France</td>
<td>Living in peace within multicultural and multireligious societies</td>
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<td>The intercultural situation</td>
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<td>• Human Rights in education</td>
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<td>• Educational systems of Europe</td>
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<td>• European institutions: The Council of Europe, The Court of Human Rights</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Diversity</td>
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<td>• Construction of Peace Education, intercultural education and interreligious dialogue</td>
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<tr>
<td>27th June to Monday 1st. Of July 2003 ZSAMBEEK Hungary</td>
<td>Learning to construct Peace in a Europe open to the World</td>
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<td>26th July to 3rd of August 2003 Walbourg France (24th July to 1st of August 2004 Walbourg France)</td>
<td>What education for what kind of Europe?</td>
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<td>• Intercultural education and its implications for educational</td>
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<td>• Cultural richnesses and values in our respective educational systems</td>
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<td>• European institutions: The Council of Europe, The Court of Human Rights</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The perspectives of peace education, respect of human rights, interreligious dialogue and citizenship education</td>
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<td>• Promoting and application of a pedagogy for intercultural and interreligious education</td>
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<tr>
<td>24th to 26th February 2005 the Council of Europe Strasbourg</td>
<td>Seminar organised by the Council of Europe, the General Direction of Political affairs (DGAP), the European Parliament and GERFEC in co-operation</td>
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<td>• The political role of The Council of Europe</td>
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<td>• Actual projects of the Council of Europe in the area of Education</td>
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<td>• Questions related to religion and society in Europe</td>
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<td>• History education</td>
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<td>• The widening of the European Union and the perspectives of the European Constitution</td>
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<td>• The religious dimension in intercultural education</td>
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<td>8-11th of July 2006 CHN Leeuwarden Pays-Bas</td>
<td>Intercultural and interreligious pedagogies in Europe</td>
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<td>2nd to 9th July 2009 Klingenthal France</td>
<td>Constructing Europe in our schools</td>
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<td>• Intercultural experience and its implications for school practices</td>
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<td>• The perspectives of an education for peace and Human Rights education, interreligious dialogue and democracy and citizenship education</td>
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</table>
| | • Implementing a pedagogy and an appropriate approach for intercultural and
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Event Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22nd to 28th of July 2009</td>
<td>Coimbra Portugal</td>
<td>Learning to discuss and debate in schools, paying attention to our various cultures and convictions. The white paper/book on intercultural dialogue; « Living together in mutual dignity» The aims of intercultural dialogue The key-words of the dialogue The methods of intercultural and interconvictionnal dialogue in schools Developing joint projects in European schools.</td>
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<td>9th to 17th of July 2010</td>
<td>Avrillé France</td>
<td>How to live according to the Human Rights in European educational institutions; a means to fight against social exclusion. «The contribution of all teachers to an education for human rights, democracy and citizenship »</td>
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<td>20th to 24th of July 2011</td>
<td>Strasbourg France</td>
<td>Preparatory visit with the aim of constructing a Comenius multilateral project. «Training European educators for an Education for Human Right (HRE) and an Education for Democracy and Citizenship (EDC): Aims: Identify, from lived experiences by the participants, educational needs of European educators in the areas of HRE and EDC. Define the competences to acquire and develop by teacher educators in these two areas using the manual published by the Council of Europe « How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences». Develop a Comenius multilateral project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th to 22nd of February 2014</td>
<td>Coimbra Portugal</td>
<td>Learning to live differently as a European citizen: Valuating and strengthening of transversal competences in adult education. Share experiences of adult education teachers in the area of transversal competences or soft skills (non-technical). Identify various levels of competences of soft skills. Develop theoretical perspectives of soft skills achieved and presented by participants. Evaluate tools aiming at increasing soft skills among adults. Evaluate various tools connected to the use of Europass to increase soft skills, non-technical competences.</td>
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