

Appeal

to consider Education as a fundamental force to unite people in the Adriatic Area

We, institutional decision makers, school authorities representatives, school directors, teachers and students of the Adriatic Area, gathered today in Trieste to reflect upon the future of Secondary Education in our regions which share a rich and extraordinary historical, cultural, and social background.

We all agree that young people are one of the richest resources of the Adriatic Area and that investing in progressive education systems, based on a common platform which embraces the needs of the whole Region, will offer a unique opportunity for a more united Adriatic, with a common understanding of its diverse cultural identities.

Regardless of our differences, we believe Education can be a force to unite people in the Adriatic.

We believe that students of the Adriatic should have a deep understanding and knowledge of their own culture and language, while developing their natural curiosity to know more about the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities, including minority groups.

We would like them to have the opportunity to better know each other, to learn from one and other, and to have opportunities to travel within the whole Adriatic Area, because we are convinced that such an approach will contribute to a sense of a shared Adriatic identity.

We would like our schools to aspire to a shared level of quality by supporting each other and collaborating whenever possible. We would like our schools to be well equipped in order to give students the opportunity to apply knowledge and learn from practical work.

Students, in our Area, must learn to think critically and creatively, to recognize and approach complex problems, and to make reasoned, ethical decisions. The school systems should educate students to become principled, honest, empathetic and creative individuals by giving them the opportunity to learn from different sources, including real world situations and experiences. Our goal is not to isolate our students from the rest of the world; on the contrary, we want them to be better equipped to confront together the immense challenges facing humankind.

Schools play a critical role in the development of local communities, and offering students quality education should be a priority in the Adriatic Area.

We welcome pilot projects aimed at giving access to quality education to minorities groups such as Roma and Sinti students.

We firmly believe that the project to create an Adriatic School Authorities Platform (ASAP) should be supported and funded as it will provide the means for us to continue our cooperation aimed at improving secondary education across the Adriatic.

With today's meeting in Trieste, we would like to launch an appeal to policy makers: globalization without education runs the risk of dividing communities as much as unifying them. A shared Educational Platform has the potential to bring people together in a way that markets cannot.

When young people share an education experience that puts them at the centre and learn to understand each other despite their differences, then education becomes a true force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

Trieste, 29 April 2010

**To the European, National and Regional Decision Makers who
define policies for the Adriatic Area.**