

ECCE

ICCS

EAWRE

CoGREE

IV

**RE
Network**

EFTRE

Co-ordinating Group for Religious Education in Europe

EAWRE European Association for World Religions in Education

ECCE European Conference on Christian Education

EFTRE European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education

ICCS Intereuropean Commission on Church and School

IV International Association for Christian Education

RE Network for Christian Religious Education in Europe

Who does CoGREE represent?

CoGREE promotes the co-operation between six associations, organisations and networks which deal with a range of issues concerning the teaching of religions in schools and of Christian and religious responsibility in the area of European education policy.

The *Intereuropean Commission on Church and School (ICCS)* is a network of churches, institutes for education and religious education, and state organisations (from 18 European countries) which deal with education and RE. ICCS provides a forum especially to discuss the relations between church and school and the role and position of religion in education. ICCS has an ecumenical orientation with contacts to other religions.

The *International Association for Christian Education (IV)* is an umbrella organisation of Protestant national associations and organisations of teachers and schools with members from 8 countries. The self-understanding of IV is to act as a council, which represents the interests of its members on the European level. It encourages co-operation amongst its member organisations and works on issues of the realisation of Christian responsibility in education in Europe. Central aims of IV are to strengthen protestant schools in Europe and the protestant position in the discussion of education policy in Europe.

The *European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education (EFTRE)* supports the European cooperation of national and regional RE teachers' associations as well as of institutes and organisations which support RE (58 members from 19 countries). Its self-understanding is that of a non-confessional forum which represents the interests of RE teachers in Europe, independent of a specific structure and a confessional or non-confessional approach. EFTRE's aim is to serve and strengthen the work of all RE teachers associations, adopting a professional approach to RE.

These three organisations all have their own agendas, but at the same time they share a common interest in and a concern to contribute to activities, programmes and statements about religious education and general education at the European level.

Besides these more formal organisations which are authorised to act in a representative way through boards, general assemblies and other committees, there are three looser associations working at the European level in related areas.

The *European Conference on Christian Education (ECCE)* is a forum for the exchange of ideas, models and discussions about issues of Sunday school work in particular. Its aim is to support all those, who are involved with Sunday school work and Christian education.

The *European Association for World Religions in Education (EAWRE)* is an independent association of scholars and educators which fosters an accurate handling of world religions in school and education. EAWRE has a clear multi-religious orientation with emphasis on issues about world religions in education.

The *RE-Network for Christian Religious Education in Europe* gives practical support for the establishment of a Christian oriented RE in Middle and Eastern Europe, especially through seminars and providing information material. Its aim is to provide practical support of religious education in an ecumenical orientation (mainly protestant - orthodox).

The co-operation among these organisations was strengthened in **1998** by developing an existing yearly meeting to co-ordinate planned activities into a more structured co-ordinating group, called **CoGREE**. Its aim is to respect the 'commonalities' and differences of the six organisations and to develop ways of increasing co-operation.





A remarkable step forward was the **Consultation of CoGREE in May 2002 in Vienna**

Learning about and Learning from Religion

At the consultation the following common understanding was expressed:

- Schools should prepare children and young adults for living together in a plural and democratic society. It is the child's and young adult's right to experience what religion and religions can contribute to a successful living together. Therefore no school system should be organised without Religious Education.
- Democracy is in need of religions as collaborators and sources of meaning and common values. But religions in Europe exist only in plural forms, in the variety of Christian, Jewish, Islamic and other traditions. Simplistic solutions are not useful, they are not an adequate response to the existing plurality.
- Our co-operation in Europe is directed to the whole of Europe and not limited to specific existing political structures. In Europe different perspectives exist and all perspectives should provide space for the peaceful solution of conflicts. Furthermore Europe has also to be seen in the global context.

CoGREE material available:

-  **CD ROM**  with the contributions of the Consultation, 5 € plus postage.
-  **Reader**  **COMMITTED TO EUROPE'S FUTURE. CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EDUCATION AN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**, edited by Peter Schreiner, Hans Spinder, Jeremy Taylor and Wim Westerman, Münster 2002, 128 pages, 12 € plus postage.
The reader includes important texts and documents of the current debate about the future development of Europe, education and Religious Education.

Orders:

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⇒ **See also www.cogree.com** ⇐

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