

# NICE-Mail

News and Information about Consumer Education

November 2005

No. 24

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[www.norden.org/nicemail](http://www.norden.org/nicemail)

# Greetings from the NICE-Mail Coordinator!

**NICE Mail Newsletter presents news and experiences about the Consumer Education activities in the Nordic and European countries directly on a web-site <http://www.norden.org>.**

## NICE Mail

- supports study projects on the Consumer Education
- shares and informs about the research work and publications on the consumer education field
- gives information about the consumer policy and legislation issues in the member countries dealing with CE
- offers articles and ideas to share from the schools, teachers and other experts
- advises tips about the conferences and other interesting meetings and projects
- it is an updated form to chat about the CE issues

Definitely there has been and will be a need for this kind of form to develop co-work in between the educators and discuss about the Consumer Education issues and spread CE news and articles to the network and many others interested in. As a coordinator I would like to see more co-work in between the various other networks dealing with the similar kinds of topics. In this issue, NICE Mail 24 the CCN project will be presented as a one possible partner.

A short survey was done in order to find out the members' opinions about NICE Mail and its function in the future. Such questions like

- Do we need the newsletter?
- Do you have any use for the newsletter?
- Should we replace it some over

way?

- How would you like to contribute the consumer education issues in the future?
- were presented to the few network members.

A newsletter was widely supported in order to be updated about what is going on the Consumer Education field. Also some more frequently published short news lists were wished on the web-site.

## Here are some more comments:

"Of course we need the newsletter. It is a good means to spread information about Consumer Education in Europe. My proposition is to include activities on Consumer Education which can be carried out by the pupils in and out of the classroom."

"In deed, we are waiting for some news from this European network. Now, there are several networks for Consumer Education: for adults (CEA-N), for university (CCN), for primary and secondary schools (E-CONS). Each one is editor for its newsletter about its network. That's why NICE Mail is very interesting: it makes a view over all the networks already existing and other projects or works about Consumer Education and concerning consumer educators. It's important for those who are not involved in one or other of these networks. NICE Mail contributes in connecting people."

"I like NICE, especially the theoretical and conceptual pieces on Consumer Education, consumer citizenship and adult consumer education. I use these pieces a lot and share with others. I think NICE serves the important function of keeping consumer education visible, relevant and legitimate. It reflects the voices of many different countries who also recognize the significance of educating people for their consumer role and for teaching the teachers about consumer ed. If you opened NICE up to some academic writing, to balance the front line work of educators, it might add a new dimension. There is not real Journal of Consumer Education (except at Illinois State and that is published sporadically). Hope these ideas help! I also use the website a lot!"

## Wishes about the content:

"general information, initiatives, promotion, benchmarking, more news from recently accessed and pre + accession countries, presentation of funding sources for consumer protection and quality promotion programs/ projects, a new section "towards an European quality promotion policy...."

For more about NICE-Mail and the previous issues, please look at <http://www.norden.org/konsum/>. Click for NICE Mail.

# Consumer citizenship network

## CCN is achieving its goals

In NICE-Mail 21, July 2004 there was an article about the project 'The Consumer Citizenship Network', an Erasmus 3 thematic network project (2003-2006).

The Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) was established as an interdisciplinary network focusing on how the individual's role as a consumer can contribute constructively to sustainable development and mutual solidarity. The CCN is composed of educators, researchers and representatives of non-governmental organisations from 135 institutions in 37 countries and includes UNESCO, UNEP and international citizenship and consumer organizations.

The participants have worked to develop interdisciplinary approaches to central issues dealing with the balance between material and non-material wellbeing and how one can translate ethical values into everyday practice through conscientious participation in the market.

The Consumer Citizenship Network has brought together expertise in the fields of citizenship-, environmental- and consumer education to develop good practice for teaching and accessing consumer citizenship education.

CCN provides channels for dialogue and cooperation in research and development work related to consumer citizenship education. The project targets lecturers, researchers and teacher trainers in higher education in Europe, students, professionals working with children and young people, public authorities, and associations dealing with citizenship training, sustainable development and consumer issues.

The main outputs are: the development of communication channels for dialogue and debate, curriculum surveys and competency analysis, teaching and learning guidelines about consumer citizenship education for higher education, annual conferences, reports, and development of the database of relevant literature, newsletters, maintenance of the CCN web-site, an intranet service and dissemination of the results to a wide audience.

The thematic groups have the important task of helping coordinate the network partners' initiatives.

**The program is divided into the six different work groups that are:**

### **Thematic group #1 (Ethics)**

How can the consumer citizen deal with the ethical challenges of prosperity?

This group has dealt with issues related to corporate social responsibility, the ethical dimensions of unsustainable consumption and value education as a part of consumer citizenship education.

One of the tasks for the third CCN project year (October 2005 – October 2006) for this group is the further development of a public appeal about consumer citizenship education and the implementation of strategies for spreading it. The group leader is Prof. Valentin Petrousenkko.

### **Thematic group #2 (Information Society)**

How can the media and ICT be constructive tools for the consumer citizen?

This group has dealt with various aspects of acquiring, evaluating and managing information. One of the tasks for the third CCN project year for this group is the development of an online version of the Guidelines for Consumer citizenship education vol 1 (Higher education). Group leader Prof. Declan Doyle

### **Thematic group #3 (Rights and responsibilities)**

What are the consumer citizen's rights and responsibilities as regards food, transport, housing, energy use and personal finances? Acquiring knowledge of consumer rights and responsibilities and developing the skills to apply these has been the main issues this group has focused on. One of the tasks for the third CCN project year will be compiling and editing volume 2 of The Guidelines for Consumer Citizenship Education in Secondary Education Group leaders Ilze Leipina/Mike Kitson

#### **Thematic group # 4 (Global Solidarity)**

What contributions can the European consumer citizen make towards the eradication of poverty in the world?

This group has been concerned with the topics of fair trade and the global consequences of consumption in Europe. One of the tasks for the third CCN project year is coordinating cooperation with the associated partners from countries outside of Europe who are interested in working with CCN. Group leader Anne Marie van den Dries

#### **Thematic group #5 (Social involvement)**

How can awareness and social involvement be stimulated in the consumer citizen?

This group has investigated both the pedagogical perspectives of consumer citizenship education (how it best can be integrated into the classroom) as well as how to the citizen can be assisted to participate more actively in society. One of the tasks for the third CCN project year will be to supervise the LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives) pilot project (searching for cases of social innovation as a didactic process to raise sustainability awareness)

Group leaders Katri Kerem/Peter Gnielczk

#### **Thematic group #6 (Sustainable Development)**

The Decade for education for sustainable development has begun and the CCN has taken an active role in launching the decade in numerous countries. One task for the third CCN project year for this group will be further stimulating activities connected to the Decade. Another task will be to initiating and carrying out a short consumer citizenship training course.

#### **The CCN CORE UNIT and the CCN STEERING GROUP has the basic project management.**

The Core Unit communicates between the partners, sets the administrative infrastructure and coordinates the CCN conferences and meetings. Its task is also the compilation and publication of the CCN network newsletter and all the reports. The dissemination of information and outcomes, financial transaction and reporting and maintaining CCN web site are taken care by the Core Unit. Also it searches for the sponsors that could support the network, connects other possible co-work networks, institutions and associations who are interested in cooperating with CCN.

The CCN Steering Group provides an academic direction for the project, maintains positive and constructive atmosphere for international cooperation. It also provides guidelines for the development work with the web site and databases, general guidelines for the preparation and carrying out of the annual conferences in cooperation with the Core Unit and the conference committee. Its task is also to contact dignitaries and media, to keep an overview of the publications of the network and prepare new three year proposal and budget plan. And last but not least it disseminates the project's outputs and maintains ongoing evaluation of the project.

The steering group and all the six thematic groups have had constructive meetings in which resources have been mobilized, strategies designed and priorities laid. In increasingly more of the public arena --be it politics, literature, media or education-- the issues central to the work of the Consumer Citizenship Network, have come into the foreground and become highly debated topics.

Processes, which the CCN has focused on in its three years, have proven to be of acute relevance for researchers, educators and civil society. Rethinking extravagance,

revising responsibilities, reviewing accountability and reshaping co-operation appear to be essential steps in stimulating the individual's awareness of the central role they play in forming society and in assisting them in finding constructive ways of doing so.

One of the main challenges the CCN faces is the further development of communication and collaboration between the network partners. The network partners represent a wide variety of diverse disciplines and the discourse and debate established so far show a willingness to become acquainted with each other's professional approaches and language. It reflects a common commitment to cooperative approaches to the more detailed goals of the network such as curriculum review and preparation of guidelines for consumer citizenship education.

Clarification of which topics are collectively considered to be given priority within consumer citizenship education has begun, as the list of further focus topics which was prepared by the thematic groups and the research presented in prior conferences. Cooperation concerning analysis of best practices in teaching consumer citizenship education has commenced. All CCN partners are encouraged to continue their contributions and try to involve colleagues at their institutions as well.

#### **Annual international conferences promote the CCN goals.**

**Using, choosing or creating** the future was the first international conference of the Consumer Citizenship Network. It was held 1-2 March 2004 at UNESCO in Paris, France. 165 participants from 33 countries came together to look more closely at how the individual in her/his role as a consumer as well as a citizen, can contribute to global solidarity and sustainable consumption. Responsible lifestyle choices, increased ecological awareness and just distribution of resources were central themes of

the first international conference of the CCN.

**Taking responsibility** at the second annual international gathering of the Consumer Citizenship Network, held May 26-27, 2005 at the University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia, 147 participants from 35 countries came together to examine the question of how to identify criteria for responsible action in the marketplace.

The record breaking heat-wave in the city did not stop the participants from spending evenings as well as daytime eagerly discussing together issues of government, corporate and individual responsibility. Guest speakers at the conference came from the USA, Canada, Argentina and Italy and spoke of the challenges of the placing of responsibility where it belongs, the dynamics of shared responsibility and the burden of bearing responsibility.

50 presentations were made describing research and development work about topics such as: peer pressure and self-image; acquiring knowledge of consumer rights; risk perception and labeling; act as tools for citizenship; Agenda 21 and consumer citizenship; corporate and consumer social responsibility; health and illness alienation; and teaching responsibility. Conference consultations focused on: how mature civic involvement can affect the development of a more just and caring global society.

Participants also exchanged experiences about how "taking responsibility" can be taught in higher education particularly in relation to consumer citizenship education. With feathers flying, water dripping and eggs breaking open on the floor, some even tested out concrete didactical methods during the pauses in the program. The Sustainable Everyday Project exhibition provided both the CCN conference and the public in Bratislava with an extensive, interactive presentation of scenarios, projects and real cases of sustainable solutions for responsible lifestyles. The exhibition described (via texts,

pictures and videos) scenarios of everyday life functions.

The third CCN Conference **Catalyzing Change** will take place in Hamar, Norway May 15-16 2006. It will focus on consumers as agents for change. In addition to the presentation of CCN partner research and development there will be several new features: more time for bringing forth and discussing special issues, an exhibition of cases of sustainable consumption created by CCN partners involved in LOLA, and an international reference library with examples of teaching materials related to consumer citizenship.

The following issues will be examined at the third international conference:

- Which incentives contribute to the development of consumer citizenship?
- What can be done to transform the consumer's frustrations and uncertainties into change-creating energy?
- How can consumer citizens contribute to improving public discourse and informed debate?
- How can responsiveness, transparency, and trust between the producer and the consumer be stimulated?
- How can consumer citizens use scientific research to create sustainable lifestyles?
- How can commitment and consistency to sustainable consumption be promoted?

### **Present activities and new developments**

The Consumer Citizenship Network partners have, during the two years since the start of the network, discussed and debated the concepts of sustainable development and consumer citizenship education. This has been done in thematic group meetings, at conferences, in online discussions and through a curriculum survey.

The cumulative impressions, in brief, have been that numerous aspects of sustainable development and consumer citizenship are

taught but that there is a general lack of cohesiveness and innovation.

On the conceptual level, the understanding of the vision of sustainable human development is vague or lacking. On the level of course content, some of what is presented is based on outdated material and models which have been proven to function poorly in real life.

On the didactical level, teachers struggle to combine theory, research and practice, finding it difficult to connect the course content to the everyday lives of the students. And on the level of student motivation, teachers encounter disillusionment, passivity, fatalism and a sense of powerlessness.

### **CCN's teaching/learning guidelines**

The first volume of the CCN teaching/learning guidelines for consumer citizenship education, which is now printed, provides examples of ways of bringing together diverse approaches to consumer citizenship education. It highlights the universal need for common awareness of the implications of "improved quality of life" and of the consequences of present consumption patterns.

The guidelines emphasize the value of developing quality courses in higher education which support the Bologna process by enhancing the relevance of European higher education to society's present needs as well as being compatible with the Lisbon strategy by contributing to the adaptability and responsiveness of higher education.

There will be two more CCN teaching/learning guidelines for teacher trainees and in-service teachers in the coming years; the second volume will focus on upper secondary education (2006) and the third volume on primary education (2007).

### **Important areas of further CCN focus**

Work with consumer citizenship has only begun. Much remains to

be accomplished and the CCN has plans which include the following items:

- Continued networking and transdisciplinary inquiry between academicians, researchers and representatives of civil society so as to continuously bring together different competences and knowledge about sustainable development.
- A greater emphasis on teaching generic competences related to communication skills, information handling, and social involvement.
- Increased inclusion of value education in all aspects of consumer citizenship in order to stimulate the taking of responsibility.
- Strengthening the processes of identifying social innovation, evaluating promising cases, clarifying the conditions requiring such innovations and reflecting on the consequences of such initiatives.
- Improving the use of act and multimedia to raise awareness of relevant cases of social innovation.

### Other CCN initiatives

The CCN has taken a number of practical steps in an attempt to stimulate some of the above items. The CCN has been:

- encouraging staff and student exchange between CCN institutions
- encouraging the use and translation of UNESCO/UNEP's YouthXchange materials
- disseminating a public appeal to educational authorities and leaders of institutions of higher education
- contributing to the planning and developing of modules on consumer citizenship related topics in higher education
- establishing cooperation with researchers, academicians in higher education and representatives of civil society organizations from continents other than Europe
- preparing for the creation of

a Mobile Mediatek for the UN Decade for education for Sustainable Development

- strengthening collaboration between initiatives dealing with "learning to learn" and initiatives concerned with learning to be a critical, aware, consumer citizen

### Proposed pilot project: LOLA, looking for likely alternatives

The CCN will carry out a twelve month pilot project focusing on: searching for cases of social innovation as a didactic process to raise sustainability awareness. This will be called Looking for likely alternatives (LOLA). It aims to adapt to the needs of higher education and specifically to the needs of consumer citizenship education, the results of the FP6 project "Creative Communities": EMUDE (Emerging user demands for sustainable solutions: social innovation as a driver for technological and system innovation) (<http://www.indaco.polimi.it/emude/>) and the experiences of the Sustainable Everyday Project ([www.sustainable-everyday.net](http://www.sustainable-everyday.net)).

This project will be done in a two part program by first involving 3 teacher training schools in the process of collecting cases of social innovation, documenting the didactic process (web based) and maintaining an open discussion on the experience amongst the CCN members (web based). The second part of the program will involve the visualisation and presentation of the results in order to further replication of the process and extensive use of the cases. This will involve an analysis of the open discussion and a written synthesis, a presentation at the forthcoming CCN conference and printed material to be displayed on the SEP exhibition at the coming CCN conference.

### International CCN partners

The CCN has received numerous requests from institutions of higher education; research centres and

civil society organizations outside of Europe who wish to join the network and participate in the CCN activities. At the moment CCN has associated partners in India, Malawi, Namibia, USA, Canada, Ukraine, Argentina, and Kenya. This is an important expansion of the work CCN does.

Economic and social conditions outside of Europe are integrally connected to consumer citizenship and consumer citizenship education. Understanding the interrelatedness of social and economic development is essential when dealing with issues of global responsibility. Having partners from Africa, Asia, South and North America with which to discuss and exchange experiences can enrich the CCN work.

### Staff and student exchange

How does one initiate and coordinate staff and student exchange between institutions of higher education, or between research centres or civil society organizations? This question has been posed repeatedly. Although staff and student exchange has increased between CCN partners within areas related to consumer citizenship, there is still uncertainty as to who to contact, what to do and how to pay for such exchanges. Some of the CCN thematic groups have begun preparing a small handbook with practical suggestions and information.

### Student study trips—a consumer citizen's nightmare?

A handbook about student trips in third world countries from the perspective of consumer citizenship is being prepared. This will include tips and suggestions to teachers in higher education about how to prepare and carryout visits in a manner which stimulates the student's understanding of the complexity of issues related to lifestyles, resource management, international trade and respect for diversity.

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If you are not yet a member of the ccn-project have a look of the website [www.hihm.no/concic](http://www.hihm.no/concic) in order to sign in.



## Catalyzing Change

Dramatic and rapid transitions characterize the world today. Triggering constructive change is a major challenge facing the global community. Yet many individuals do not have the opportunity, the knowledge or the competence to actively participate in the debates and decisions that shape their lives. Commercial and political pressures often convince people that they have no influence. Empowering people to play a more effective role in the development of a just and caring society involves creating new attitudes, spaces and mechanisms which can stimulate involvement and strengthen trust. The third international conference of the Consumer Citizenship Network will focus on consumers as agents for constructive change. The following issues will be examined:

- Which incentives contribute to the development of consumer citizenship?
- What can be done to transform the consumer's frustrations and uncertainties into change-creating energy?
- How can consumer citizens contribute to improving public discourse and informed debate?
- How can responsiveness, transparency, and trust between the producer and the consumer be stimulated?
- How can consumer citizens use scientific research to create sustainable lifestyles?
- How can commitment and consistency to sustainable consumption be promoted?

At the conference there will be guests and key-note speakers from Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America. The conference will include the presentation and discussion of relevant research and development work connected to the above issues. An important part of the conference will be to further the process of developing consumer citizenship education.

There will be displays; posters and sharing of materials as well as opportunities for networking at the conference. All CCN partners are invited to submit a proposal (abstract) of 250 words for a presentation, a paper, or a symposium for the upcoming third annual CCN conference 15-16 May 2006 in Hamar, Norway. The CCN selection committee will review the proposals.

**Abstracts must be submitted  
by December 1, 2005**

**Papers must be submitted  
March 1, 2006**

- Short presentations of about 10 minutes are welcome. There will be time allotted for questions and discussion after each presentation
- Papers Those presenting papers will be given 15 minutes for a presentation and 10 minutes for discussion. Abstracts will be posted on the CCN website and selected papers will be published in a book.
- Symposia are a group of partners who propose to present three or four linked papers on a common theme. Symposia will be given a 90 minute period for presentations and discussions. The proposal for a symposium should include the name of the organiser of the symposium and

those participating. A proposal of 250 words about the symposium must be submitted.

Issue corners and task groups will also be an important part of the third CCN conference. There will be ample time for bringing forth and discussing special issues, for viewing an exhibition of cases of sustainable consumption created by CCN partners involved in the project: LOLA (Looking for likely alternatives), for browsing through an international reference library with examples of teaching materials related to consumer citizenship and for contributing to some of the ongoing projects of the CCN.

Some practical things to note: The thematic group meetings and the steering group meetings will be held on Sunday the 14th May. The conference participants who will attend one of these meetings have to arrive on Saturday the 13th of May. A joint dinner will be arranged for Sunday. The conference opens

on Monday morning the 15th and ends Tuesday the 16th at 19 pm. The 17th of May is the Norwegian national day and is celebrated in a unique manner, quite unlike any other country. Those who want to stay until the 18th of May and participate in one of the two post-conference programs are welcome to do so. More details about these will soon be available on the CCN website.

Please also note that if you take a flight to Oslo South Torp airport you will have to take a bus and then a train (total trip of about 4 hours) whereas the main Oslo (Gardemoen) airport is only 60 minutes from Hamar.

Program details will be available soon.

**For more information** about the conference and online registration see: [www.hihm.no/concit](http://www.hihm.no/concit)

**Registration date for the  
conference: 15. January 2006**

## GERMANY

# Revis-portfolio is out now

Portfolios are not new, but have been an integral part of the graphic arts in tracking the professional development of artists. Since the 1990's they have been used in general as a means of encouraging reflective learning and assisting professional development both in education and teacher training (of all levels).

The REVIS-Portfolio (Reform of the nutrition and consumer educa-

tion in schools; see NICE-Mail 23, p. 4) is focussed on the collection, documentation, and reflection compiled by teaching staff concerning nutrition, health, and consumer education that exhibits the efforts, progress, and achievements in that area, including evidence of competency-based development of expertise and professionalism in nutrition, health, and consumer education.

The REVIS-Portfolio (German version only) can be downloaded for free from <http://www.evb-online.de> (go to: [Lehrerbildung/Portfolio](#)).

**For further information** please contact Werner Brandl M.A. Institutsrektor Staatsinstitut für die Ausbildung von Fachlehrern  
E-Mail [wbrandl@stif2.mhn.de](mailto:wbrandl@stif2.mhn.de)

# Current situation of consumer education in schools: Consumer Education must be taught as a separate subject

**Although quite successful in classical consumer policy, Austria has done a poor job of providing consumer education in schools. Even today, Austrian pupils still receive virtually no preparation for their later lives as consumers. The education system is failing completely in this regard, opting to shift the responsibility for consumer education to parents instead. Yet many parents are overwhelmed by the task, struggling as they do in their own capacity as consumers.**

The need to act has become all the more urgent in recent years, with young people being ever less critical of advertising and ever more enamored of brand products while having little real understanding of actual market conditions. About two thirds of young people equate “a well-known brand” or “a big price tag” with good quality according to a study commissioned by the AK (Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour). Moreover, young people are falling ever deeper in debt, particularly because of the new communication technologies (especially cell phones). Young people are also highly susceptible to becoming compulsive shoppers (“shopaholics”). The study just carried out by the AK shows that more than half of young women (aged 14 to 24) are at risk of acquiring this disorder.

School ministry blocking preparations of consumer education as a separate subject in schools

The government ministry responsible for consumer affairs responded to the appeal from the AK and set up a working group on consumer education. After meeting a matter of months, all the organizations represented in this working group (the business community included) came to realize that consumer education should be systematically established in schools. In other words, they agreed that

a separate subject of instruction should be developed to provide children and young people with the basic expertise and skills they need in their lives as consumers. Introducing a separate course of studies is the only way to assure the subsequent training of teachers and continual basic work in this area.

All relevant interest associations and institutions in Austria today agree to the need for establishing consumer education as a separate subject in schools, with one exception. The party currently blocking this initiative is the education ministry responsible for the school system, a ministry which incidentally dubs itself “Ministry for the Future” in its promotional materials.

The Austrian education system (schools and universities) has been reshaped in recent years along the lines of the neo-liberal Anglo-American model, complete with cutbacks in government spending on education. In the university sector, this shift is being pushed at European level.

## EU mistakes

In a number of cases, developments at European level are on the wrong track. There are myriad examples one could cite, genetic engineering and commercialization

(liberalization/privatization) of infrastructure services being but two of the most obvious. The EU is also pushing a new trend at schools, namely the use of new information technologies in education (e-learning, etc.). Less high-tech euphoria and a slow, careful approach would have been more apt, as we now know today. New German research points out quite clearly that the “computerization” of children does not have an edifying educational effect, but rather makes children dumb. In other words, the new trend that has been so passionately promoted has negative consequences.

However, both the EU and the individual EU Member States could do much to improve the situation. Rationally structured consumer education at schools would not only empower people to cope better in their capacity as consumers, it could also help to solve the set of problems created by the new media.

Incidentally, this problem is one that not only has to be solved in and for Austria. It is also a pressing issue in many other EU Member States and well beyond.

For more information please contact Univ. Prof. Ing. Dr. Karl Kollmann, Austrian Federal Chamber of Labour, Consumer Policy Department  
E-mail [Karl.KOLLMANN@akwien.at](mailto:Karl.KOLLMANN@akwien.at)

# Informed consumption is part of civic skills

**Consumer education is part of citizenship education and one of the Finnish National Board of Education's development areas. It is based on the Government's Decision in Principle on the Consumer Policy Programme, aiming to promote aspects such as consumers' financial security, markets for high-quality foodstuffs and awareness of the environmental effects of consumption.**

**Educating critical young consumers who are aware of market mechanisms is a challenge for school education. However, does the world of consumption as portrayed at school differ from young people's reality at home or with their friends? What does consumer education actually mean? Are any clear visions, pedagogical tools or teaching and learning methods available for consumer education?**

Consumer education is not an independent subject; instead, its contents, skills and knowledge are learnt as part of subjects such as home economics, biology and chemistry, mathematics, history and social studies, mother tongue and visual arts. Optional subjects provide schools with natural opportunities to handle the topic from different points of view. Various subject areas within consumer education are also dealt with in connection with individual and cross-curricular themes.

## The learning path to becoming a responsible consumer

Children need to learn everyday skills as soon as they start asking their parents to buy them things. This is the foundation on which they will later build their life skills, such as management of personal finances and media literacy. Adopting responsible consumer habits has a bearing from the perspectives of sustainable development and prevention of social exclusion, for example.

Pre-primary education for 6-

year-olds focuses on learning through play. Children learn to reflect on what is right and what is wrong and they become capable of understanding people's rights and responsibilities as members of groups and communities. It is important to aim to provide experiences that help children to make use of factual information and take responsibility for their own lives and the environment.

In 9-year basic education, covering primary and lower secondary levels, consumer education is linked to many cross-curricular themes and individual subjects. The objective for early school years is to help pupils to obtain tools and capabilities that will gradually enable them to understand and experience the diverse phenomena of consumerism and the market. In the upper grades, the curriculum should pay attention to practical everyday skills and knowledge, the role of an active consumer-citizen and an attitude towards entrepreneurship that also embraces the consumer perspective.

Schools need to equip pupils with knowledge that will enable young people, by the time they

finish school, to use resources sensibly and to manage their own finances, deal with commercial influences aimed at them, choose and prepare nourishing food that is appropriate in terms of the environment and organise their household sensibly. In addition, they should also be capable of assessing product safety and quality and making use of product information – and, ultimately, of assessing the effects of their own lifestyle and consumption on the environment from a global perspective.

## Financial education at schools

The target group for economics is considered to cover consumers of all ages, depending on their abilities at each stage of their development. It is of particular importance that children are already introduced to the basics of financial knowledge in early childhood education.

The starting point in pre-primary education is ethical education. During basic education and at upper secondary level, financial knowledge is provided as part of

different subjects. It is possible to begin financial education as early as the primary level of basic education (grades 1–6), starting from simple situations that are relevant to children's everyday lives. This is the best way for children to absorb the skills, knowledge and attitudes that they will need to manage their own finances.

At lower secondary level, the total number of lessons provided in social studies during grades 7–9 of basic education increased by 38 instruction hours as from 1st August 2004, as determined in the new Government Decree governing the allocation of lessons. Studying the basics of personal finances and reflecting on actual needs and sensible consumption form a good starting point for financial and consumer education during these upper grades.

In connection with the cross-curricular theme entitled 'participatory citizenship and entrepreneurship', financial education can be implemented from perspectives that are characteristic of different subjects. In home economics, for example, pupils can draw up their own spending plans. Schools also have the opportunity to provide optional courses in consumer and financial education and in entrepreneurship education. In addition, schools can organise projects, events, occasions, activity days, theme weeks, information briefings, competitions, etc. relating to the theme.

At general upper secondary school, provision of financial knowledge has clearly increased with the introduction of the new National Core Curriculum as from 1st August 2005. Economics is a compulsory social studies course with objectives and contents determined in the National Core Curriculum. In addition, a cross-curricular theme entitled 'active citizenship and entrepreneurship' provides op-

portunities for diverse co-operation with banks, businesses and other parties operating outside the world of school.

### **Development projects and materials**

The Finnish National Board of Education has co-ordinated implementation of various projects related to consumer education. The ENSI project is a project to promote sustainable development, involving teachers, researchers and administrative officials. The project has aimed to support educational institutions' efforts to improve the condition of the environment and to develop regional co-operation networks.

Sustainable development is a cross-curricular theme included in the National Core Curricula adopted by the Finnish National Board of Education in 2003 and 2004, which must be taken into account as part of instruction in all subjects in a way that is relevant for each specific subject.

A memorandum drawn up in co-operation between the Finnish National Board of Education and the Finnish Consumer Agency on marketing and sponsorship aimed at children was sent to all educational institutions in the autumn of 2004.

The 'Media Smart' material is being developed for use as learning material in media education for grades 1–6 of basic education in co-operation with the Association of Finnish Advertisers.

A joint Nordic competition for learning materials for consumer education has produced learning materials for consumer education and communication and media education as well as lesson plans for grades 7–9 in both Finnish and Swedish. The winner of the Finnish national competition was an-

nounced in Helsinki on 1st June 2005. First prize in Finland was awarded to an entry entitled 'Making something new from something old – consumer education teaching material for the upper grades of compulsory schools', which was produced by teacher Sari Noponen and her media team from the Mikkelin Lyseo school.

In co-operation with the Finnish Consumer Agency and the School Film Association, the Finnish National Board of Education has also developed learning material entitled 'Lifestyle, advertising and food culture – critical consumerism through media education' using the documentary 'Super Size Me' as a starting point.

The FNBE website ([www.edu.fi](http://www.edu.fi)) includes an entrepreneurship site, which has also invited readers to send good practices and ideas to facilitate planning and implementation of instruction in entrepreneurship education and business activities at educational institutions.

Content descriptions for different areas of consumer education are presented on the Finnish Consumer Agency website ([www.kuluttajavirasto.fi](http://www.kuluttajavirasto.fi)). Special Planner Taina Männistö has collected material entitled 'The learning path of consumer information from early childhood education to basic education and consumer education at upper secondary level towards life skills and occupation – initiatives for curricula'. The Finnish Consumer Agency also produces teaching materials for consumer education, which are available on its website.

For more information please contact Marjaana Manninen, [Marjaana.Manninen@oph.fi](mailto:Marjaana.Manninen@oph.fi), a Senior Adviser responsible for home economics instruction, consumer education and school meals at the Finnish National Board of Education.

# New study material on lifestyle, advertising and food culture

## Critical consumerism through media education

**This material is intended for media education using the film *Super Size Me* as a starting point. It employs film education techniques to achieve objectives in consumer and health education and critical thinking. The tasks have been designed to stimulate activity and a critical approach. The aim is not to provide ready-made models or opinions but to get pupils to notice phenomena in everyday life and evaluate them critically.**

Schools can divide the material and deal with it in different subjects. This includes art, language, social studies, home economics and health, for example.

Obesity is a growing problem in the United States. According to the film over half of Americans go out for a hamburger at least once a week. The main character in *Super Size Me*, Morgan, decides to investigate the effects of fast food on the body and begins a month of eating only junk food. He consumes several super size hamburger meals each day, which means an unbalanced diet and way too many calories. The film follows Morgan's life and changes in his health during this one-month period.

Obesity in Finnish children has increased significantly during the past twenty years. According to research, one reason behind spreading weight problems is eating habits, irregular mealtimes and insufficient exercise. There has been plenty of discussion concerning the role of the food industry in this regard. Marcos Kyprianou, the EU Commissioner who is responsible for Health and Consumer Protection, has called for the food industry to stop advertising targeted at children. In Finland regulations concerning advertising targeted at children are being re-

vised to include provisions on food marketing. The point of departure is shared responsibility for the environment in which children grow up.

Advertising shapes consumer behaviour. The purpose of regulation is to prevent forms of advertising that are beyond the comprehension of children and young people. Schools can help young people adopt a healthy lifestyle. Matters concerning lifestyle and everyday choices are discussed in different subjects as well as guidance work.

Choices regarding food and consumption habits are part of culture and identity. The media and advertising have a key impact on youth culture. Helping young people understand the culture we live in is just as important as teaching them about healthy living. Advertising literacy is part of media and consumer education. Nutrition and consumer and health education help pupils learn the basics of well-being.

This material promotes the following basic education objectives:

- Pupils should learn how to
- interpret other people's messages
  - develop information management skills and compare, select and use information

- take a critical view of claims presented in the media and consider related ethical and esthetic values in communications
- identify skills that are important for protecting health and well-being and evaluate the significance of lifestyle, culture and the media from the viewpoint of health
- consider links between nutrition and consumer education and personal choices and actions
- make wise choices that promote well-being
- use health-related concepts and methods of acquiring information and utilize them to promote personal health
- act in a rational and responsible way as a consumer
- be aware of issues concerning values
- be aware of national culture in the area of nutrition and new perspectives as a result of internationalization and cultural diversity
- apply information representing different viewpoints

*The material is found in web: <http://www.kuluttajavirasto.fi/>*

*Working group: School Film Association, Consumer Agency, National Board of Education  
Transparencies: Iiro Törmä*

# Analyzing pedagogical tools for consumer education

**Consumer education must be done as of the youth and concern as well the parents as the professionals of childhood. Beyond the tempting concept that the consumption represents, it is a question of promoting another way of consuming which takes into account not only the commercial criteria but also the social criteria, economic, environmental and cultural of the companies.**

Multiple organizations contribute to education with consumption, that they are private companies or organizations, associations, public communities or institutions. They contribute to produce and diffuse nearly a thousand teaching aids (booklets, plays, video-cassettes, exposures, folders, CD-Rom...) on this field of consumer education. The impact of these tools is all the more strong as their diffusion is done with more close to the targets concerned (children or teenagers but also parents, teachers, social workers...). However, the diffusion of these tools is often scattered and they appear insufficiently known or even been unaware of parents, trainers and teachers who are potential users.

Faithful to its mission of education, the French National Institute of Consumer (INC) lists and evaluates the teaching tools related to consumption, produced by the companies, organizations of consumers and the public communities : a Pedagotheque which is a unique database in this field of consumer education.

With the Joint Committee of Evaluation, which brings together nine representatives of the companies, the organizations of consumers, and the Administration (of which the Ministry for National Education), the INC carries out a critical analysis of each indexed document, starting from criteria relating to qualities of the contents of these

teaching aids, with their objectivity in particular compared to the possible, with technical qualities of the material, and of course advertising impact with corresponding teaching qualities (adequacy with the public concerned, clearness of the explanations or the images...). The treated topics are very wide (food-nutrition, economy, environment, domestic safety, health, insurance, publicity...). This work of analysis made of Pedagotheque a tool unique in France. They are these observations as well as a description and the conditions of obtaining the documents which you will find on the web <http://www.conso.net/education.htm>.

## Context

The renewal in 2004 of the Joint Committee of Evaluation of the teaching aids and the need for ensuring the continuity of its missions, the step quality engaged with the Pedagotheque, the profusion of the teaching aids in particular by Internet, all these elements result in proposing the use of a grid of formalized analysis. To date, this analysis rests on an overall assessment of the tool whose descriptive card is provided, the unit being used as discursive element at the committee. It is done in the respect of the "Charter of quality of the teaching documents" which was written by the Scientific Council of the INC, and which indicates

for these tools that they must:

- to respect the general principles of the public school and republican :
- not to contain any form of proselytism, whether it is of an ideological or religious nature.
- it must allow the taking into account of the diversity of the ways of life.
- to be in direct relationship to the programs of national Education, and to facilitate a transverse approach of the various disciplines concerned, starting from the central points of these programs.
- to guarantee to the teacher his share teaching freedom and of creativity. The document will have to make it possible to the teacher to use or not one or more its elements, according to the prospect which it will have chosen.
- to be clearly identifiable :
- the exhaustive list of the sleeping partners will have to be quoted at least once on the document, as well as the list of the various people or authorities having taken part in the development of the document.
- logos and slogans will have to be reproduced on the principal components of the document, but however in a sufficiently discrete way not to constitute an incentive to consume produced and services whatever they are.

- to comprise indicative mentions such as : councils of use, indications on the target people concerned, matters concerned...

This charter relates to only the teaching aids penetrating the school. The summary of the discussions of the committee is used then for the drafting of the cards of the data base before publication in Pedagotheque on Internet.

Objectives of the grid of analysis:

- To improve quality of the evaluation of the teaching aids.
- To determine if delivered information is reliable, interesting, relevant and useful for the education of the consumers.
- To take into account the criteria of the Charter of quality of the teaching documents, by extending them to the tools for nonschool educational use.

## Definition

For evaluating them, it is necessary to select the teaching aids intended to integrate Pedagotheque. This is why, the Joint Committee of Evaluation adopts the following definition of the selected teaching aids :

“the teaching aids are written, audio-visual, software creations or multimedias whose form and contents were designed either for an educational use in classroom or in leisure center, or intended for a broader use and non-school corresponding to the missions of education or information of the organizations or companies sleeping partners”

## Types of tools to be analyzed

Taking into account this diversity, it appears various types of tools to be analyzed : teaching, with teaching aiming, informative or promotional (promotional tool means promotion for commercial product or

firm). Moreover, the selected tools are classified according to several criteria of which in particular the topic or the target concerned ones. The topics, target people and type of material used for the classification of the teaching aids are as follows, knowing that a tool can be classified under several topics, to address themselves to several target people and to arise under several types of material.

The topics are : food, money, environment, sustainability, media information, advertising, health, safety. The target users are : adults, children less than 5 years, children 6 to 7 years, children 8 to 10 years, kids 11 to 14 years, young adults, seniors, teachers, trainers, social workers, professionals of health, and other specific potential users (migrants, disabled...). The types of material are : multi-media, websites, video, pedagogical kits, games,, paper medium, exposure.

## Questionnaire of evaluation

To evaluate the quality of a teaching aid amounts raising these 6 generic questions: WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN? WHY? HOW? and in detail, the following subjacent questions are :

Who? To identify the authors, the target users...

What? To wonder about the contents, the form and the bottom, the relevance of the document (teaching, with teaching, informative, promotional aiming), the adequacy with the title, the target users, the programs, if there is a booklet of accompaniment for the teacher or the organizer, if an indexing it is proposed...

Where? From which information comes, where to address itself.

When? To find the date of the document, if it is updated, if an actualization is necessary.

Why? Which are the had aims.

How? Information is it written clearly, document is it well structured, messages delivered are

they emphasized, sources are they indicated, how reach one the tool (free, paying...), being sensitive to the quality report/ratio (of the information and the shape of the tool) and cost (so paying), which is the frequency or the place of the logos or the slogans in order to measure the advertising proportioning inserted in the tool, if it about a multi-media tool his ergonomics i.e. navigation makes is a use easy, the use of this tool is it rather in matter individual.

Here it is the first version of the grid of analysis. It needs experiment during this year school and then with the joint committee of evaluation, a complete grid of analysis will be on line for teacher or any user who want to improve a pedagogical tool on consumer education.

## Outlines

This grid will be able to evolve/move by imagining a weighting aiming at privileging such or such criterion of evaluation. The grid thus balanced will give to the tool analyzed a teaching score of quality for a use within the framework of an action of education to consumption. The organization of a price of the best tool for education to consumption could be based on this notation in complement of the opinion of the jury. Beyond emphasizing such or such tool, this action is also intended to communicate on Pedagotheque, the Joint Committee of Evaluation of the teaching aids and more largely, on consumer education.

For further information, please contact Christophe Bernes, Education & Training projects manager, French National Institute of Consumer- Institut National de la Consommation (INC)  
E -mail [c.bernes@inc60.fr](mailto:c.bernes@inc60.fr)  
Web site <http://www.conso.net>

# Aurarád – Financial guidelines for adolescents

A new workbook about finances for teenagers (10th grade 15–16 years old) has been published by the Icelandic National Centre for Educational Materials. The author is Audur Pálsdóttir who is a teacher in Reykjavik.

The book aims at helping teenagers to cope with their financial matters by reading very short informative texts and then doing assignments to get a better understanding of the concepts and issues addressed in the book. The book is 40 pages long.

Content:

- About taxes that we pay if we

work and why we pay them.

- What do you get payed for your work?
- Debet cards or check accounts
- Saving money
- Overdraft on your bank account
- Credit cards and installment buying
- Loans
- Buying on the Internet
- To buy a car
- How much does it cost to own a car?
- What are the odds? – Lottery
- How much does your lifestyle cost?
- Housing – what does it cost?
- What happens if you do not pay

of loans?

- Why do we pay in the pension fund?
- Additional payments in the pension fund
- You start living on your own – run your own household
- To be economical and practical
- A young person who was overdue – a true story

The book is available in Icelandic.

**For more information** please contact Johannes Gunnarsson, a chairman of Neytendasamtökin (Consumer Association of Iceland) Phone number +354 545 1200 E-mail [jg@ns.is](mailto:jg@ns.is)

## SWEDEN

# The swedish consumer agency and consumer education

Consumer education is an important task for the Swedish Consumer Agency. We take part in several joint projects in order to carry out for example in- service training.

With focus on sustainable lifestyle was the title of a conference carried out on March 16th. The conference was held in collaboration with the Swedish Committee for Home Economics (The Swedish part of IFHE) and the target group was teachers. The national network for sustainable development and its work was presented; the new criteria for receiving “School for sustainable develop-

ment award” were explained. The subject Home- and consumer studies relates to sustainable development in many ways and that was presented to us. How media acts and what they communicate to the young audience was another big issue during the day and in the discussions about web as a tool we all agreed that there are opportunities – and problems.

Before autumn term begins in August in the Swedish schools the teachers have some days for planning and seminars. We took part of this by giving the material they asked for.

A seminar series beginning in October will be carried out as a joint project with the teacher training at Uppsala University. Questions about living and acting in a global society will be treated and the young ones as consumers will be at focus. Things taken for granted in every day life will be examined and put in relation to sustainable development.

**For more information** please contact Kiki Hark, Swedish Consumer Agency [Christina.hark@konsumentverket.se](mailto:Christina.hark@konsumentverket.se)

# Advertising factory in a new production

The Reklamfabriken (Advertising Factory) is a interactive website about advertising and has recently been launched in a totally new version with new layout and updated text and pictures. It can be reached at [www.reklamfabriken.konsumentverket.se](http://www.reklamfabriken.konsumentverket.se)

The Advertising Factory is focusing on how to make young people understand how advertis-

ing functions, by taking them on a trip through the world of media.

The Advertising Factory is divided into four different entrances and modules:

1. Analysing pictures
2. Advertising as a role play
3. Advertising and rhetoric
4. Advertising and sex roles

The website functions also as

a schoolbook in media for pupils in the gymnasium and college. It teaches young people how advertising is affecting them and helps them analyse the hidden messages from that powerful world.

The website is in the Swedish language.

**For more information** contact Lars Jönsson, Swedish Consumer

# New versions of consumer sites for young people

This autumn two thoroughly updated Swedish consumer sites directed toward young people is released.

The web site Konrad ([www.konrad.botkyrka.se](http://www.konrad.botkyrka.se)) has been around for two or three years, but has now become a fully fledged web magazine. New features include easier-to-find-in article index, new discussion forum, improved linking with the Swedish Consumer Agency's site plus more. Konrad has become something of a young people's entrance to consumer issues, a site where you can find

both basic facts about consumer rights as well as more lifestyle oriented articles.

Våga Handla ("Smart Shopper!"), [www.vagahandla.se](http://www.vagahandla.se), isn't either a new site. It was initiated as a cooperative effort between Swedish Consumer Agency and the Swedish Competition Authority a few years ago, with the purpose to make young people more aware of the workings of competition and the open market. The recent development shifts focus from the pure economic side of things, to also include material on ethics,

environment and sustainable development. The consumer's possibility to influence dealers and companies is stressed throughout, and hopefully this new version of Våga Handla! make the youth ask questions not only about the best bargain but also about codes of conducts and environmental issues.

**For more information** please contact Jonas Jersild, Swedish Consumer Agency  
[jonas.jersild@konsumentverket.se](mailto:jonas.jersild@konsumentverket.se)

## The philosophy and theoretical background of consumer education in the Nordic countries

# An approach from the consumer education angle within the compulsory and upper secondary school system

On March 18 this year Ms. Akemi Ohara received her doctor-diploma at the Kinjo Gakuin University in Nagoya.

The academic graduation of an associate participant of the European Network of Consumer Educators (ENCE) would in itself be an outstanding news of rare occasion. But a scholar from a Japanese university writing a doctoral thesis about „The Philosophy and Theoretical Background of Consumer Education in the Nordic Countries – An Approach from the Consumer Education Angle within the Compulsory and Upper Secondary School System“ (so the title of the 170 pages study ) seems something absolutely unique.

The term „Nordic Countries“ refers to the Scandinavian countries and reflects both an ambitious and successful attempt to elaborate the cross-cultural potential of the Nordic model of consumer education. As ENCEs we are well aware of the sometimes frustrating barriers impeding the export of (however „miraculous“ they might be) educational models from a country of origin to a recipient country. Even inside Europe the high cultural load of educational models would extremely limit its acceptability in other countries. Akemi Ohara did a great job in the theoretically high aiming and far reaching synthesis of the Japanese school-system and the essentials of the Nordic model, the implementation of which might take some time, yet.

Her strategy to raise the public awareness in that regard has been very sophisticated, indeed.

In late 2003 she published a Japanese translation of the book „The Objectives and Contents of and the Working Methods in Consumer Education for Teacher Training“ (author: Kaija Kärpijoki; edited by the Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen 2000) at Shinhyoron Company (ISBN 4-7948-0615-9). In summer 2004 Akemi Ohara paid a research visit to some of the Nordic countries, met and interviewed experts, for instance Prof. Dr. Ulla Suojanen/Finland, Eli Karlsen/Norway, Ass. Prof. Victoria W. Thoresen/ Norway and Prof. Dr. Heiko Steffens/Germany. The results of this research work served primarily to test her theoretical and practical assumptions and enabled her to finalize her thesis in due

course.

The enormous effort and lifetime investment of about 6 years work and the high quality of her doctoral thesis were positively recognized by Prof. Chikako Nakamori of Kinjo Gakuin University, who acted as the chief examiner of her thesis' examination.

In the name of all participants in the European Network of Consumer Educators I wish to congratulate Akemi Ohara for her PhD.

**Contact:**

Ms. Akemi Ohara PhD  
e-mail: [CXL03012@nifty.ne.jp](mailto:CXL03012@nifty.ne.jp)

*Heiko Steffens*



# Cantabria-consumer education

## We're celebrating a birthday

**The Government of Cantabria 4 Year Plan for Consumer Education celebrated its 10th anniversary in the 2004/5 school year, and to commemorate this, a book has been published containing extensive information on the 40 projects subsidised during the said school year, in which 315 teachers and 11,025 pupils have participated. Special mention is made to the didactic quality of the initial designs and the final reports. Likewise teachers were asked to take particular care as to permanent assessment in the development of the project and the whole of the educational process.**

The four year plan aims to develop Consumer Education projects in Schools and is directed at the different educative stages: Infants, Primary, Secondary, Baccalaureate, Professional Training, Special Education and Adult Education.

The results have been magnificent; the teaching staff has produced work of a high calibre. The projects selected were aided with incentives in the following way:

- a) Economic subsidy consisting of a grant, ranging between 250 and 800 euros, in order to cover possible expenses incurred for the development of each project.
- b) A training course, taking place in the European School of Consumers, the aim of which was to facilitate the development of projects, formative evaluation procedures and the creation of materials. Once the different stages of the project had been duly justified

and deemed to be in accordance with the assessment of the Centres for Educative Innovation and Teacher Training (CIEFPs) and the European School of Consumers, it was recognised as being training by the Education Department.

- c) The teacher responsible for each project is given a didactic material file, in order to help develop the activity. This material is also given to the Centres for Educative Innovation and Teacher Training (CIEFPs) who specifically ask for it, so that in this way it can be useful for other teachers.
- d) Practical workshops: teachers and pupils of the projects selected were given priority to participate in the practical workshops of the European School of Consumers throughout the 2004/5 school year, via prior inscription.
- e) The persons responsible for the projects were granted ac-

cess to the Consumer Education Network website, to which some sent proposals, exchanging experiences and participating in activities there set out. The most outstanding of such participation was at the E-CONS NETWORK [www.e-cons.net](http://www.e-cons.net) held in May 2005 in the Magdalena Palace, Santander with the presence of 250 people from 23 European countries.

- f) Some teachers participating in the Four Year Plans formed part of Teacher Training Work Groups accredited by the Centres for Educative Innovation and Teacher Training (CIEFPs) after their assessment along with the European School of Consumers. Likewise, a work group was set up in the European School with teaching staff participating in the Yomag.net project.
- g) This book is the report with information on all the projects,



with special mention given to the winners, which is the last incentive reflected in the Order calling the Four Year plan for 2004/5.

We consider that all the objectives set down have been fulfilled and this encourages us to continue with the Plan. In the present school year 2005/06 we have set in motion the 3rd Stage of the Third Four Year Plan and we have asked teaching staff to ensure that projects must continue the initiation of consumers in consumption that is responsible, sustainable and socially committed, bearing in mind the following subject blocks:

- Family and personal economy in the social framework. Handling money: generating money, the family and personal budget, saving, indebtedness... both in our cultural set-up as well as in others.
- The rational use of goods, services and products, with special focus on the use and consumption of energy and water.
- Telecommunications, telephone services and Internet (information, communication, trade, training, services) a challenge:

possibilities and difficulties.

- Personal care from a global (bio-psycho-social) and economic point of view.

All the subjects should be tackled bearing in mind the following objectives.

- Being capable of analysing (to a greater or lesser extent according to the educative level) the phenomena occurring in our local environment or further afield in terms of the subjects we are dealing with.
- Knowing their individual and collective rights and how to apply them to concrete situations.
- Knowing and assuming their responsibilities and in what way they can develop them in order to contribute to a consumer society more aware, critical, socially committed and in harmony with the environment.

Just as in the previous year a great deal of importance is placed on the quality of the initial designs and the final reports. It is also important to take special care of the permanent assessment of the development of the project and of the whole educational process.

Secondary school teachers who are already participating in or wish to participate in the European "Yomag.net" project may send their projects (on these same subjects) and "will be considered by the evaluation committee at the same level as the rest of the projects. In turn they may include as an activity, the development of articles in Spanish and/or English, in order to be included in the project's on-line magazine.

It is suggested that all projects should include a section titled "Looking towards the future," offering innovative ideas for the future, which represent an advance in subjects, contents and methodologies.

During the present school year 45 school projects will be subsidised, the Plan being granted a budget of 42,100 euros on the part of the Government of Cantabria, General Directorate of Consumer Affairs.

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# Agenda Europa: Jóvenes Consumidores

## European Agenda: Young Consumers

Being a consumer is turning into quite a complicated matter. There are issues, such as product safety, loans, on-line shopping and advertising, which affect us in a very direct way. In many cases we are talking about trans-national matters. This is the reason why the European Commission has commissioned the Europe Foundation the task of publishing the school diary titled – European Agenda: Young consumers, as a tool to help young Europeans know their rights and obligations as consumers.

The European School Of Consumers is responsible for coordinating the project for Spain (in representation of the Spanish consumer Education Network and with special backing from the National Institute of Consumer Affairs (INC), and a National Steering Commission, in which are also included : the General Sub Directorate for European Programmes, The Institute of Young Persons, Represen-

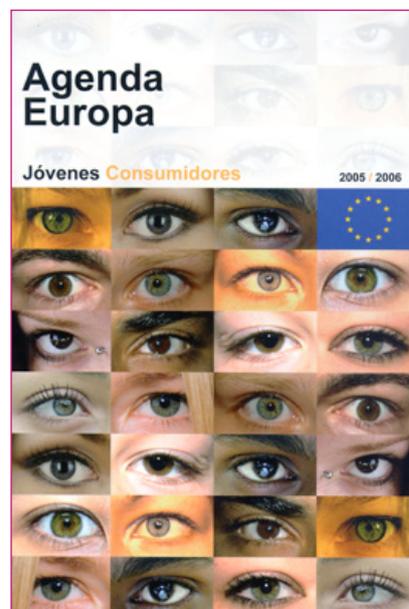
tation of the European Commission in Spain and the Office of the European Parliament in Spain.

The European Agenda is free for Spanish school centres. You only have to be aware of the order dates (normally in January and February), and orders, which can be made on-line entering the websites previously mentioned, are dealt with in order of receipt.

Generation Europe Foundation is the organisation responsible for this project for Europe, commissioned by the European Commission:

<http://www.generation-europe.org>

**In order** to know how to gain access to the Agenda for the 2006/7 school year you can also contact The European School of Consumers: [escuela@infoconsumo.es](mailto:escuela@infoconsumo.es) [www.infoconsumo.es/agendaeuropa](http://www.infoconsumo.es/agendaeuropa)



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