



# NEF Newsletter

## Editorial

For European societies, for the first time in their history, it will be their paradox, that in order to lay the ground for the future, they will have to rely more and more on ageing generations, as the demographic balance will have shifted to their side. How can Europe cope with these increasing challenges to avoid becoming a home for old people? This question federates the interest of several partners at NEF and its joint exploration at the European level is underway.

On the other side of the spectrum, we are also interested in reaching out to youngsters through their own channels of communication, in their own language, to sensitize them on crucial societal issues. With that in mind, a "serious" video game is being developed, to be used in pedagogical settings for awareness raising on what it means to be poor (the PING project). We expect that the experience will be carried out in different European countries and will contribute to the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Finally we are happy to ask you to mark the NEF partnership session (Brussels, 1st June, during the EFC organised Foundations week) in your calendar. The session will be dedicated to the "dissemination/advocacy" at the EU level with a view to encouraging transfer of practices amongst NEF initiatives.

Additionally, we would like to congratulate the participants of a few NEF projects such as the Religion and Democracy initiative, as they have managed to provide policy makers and the media with cutting edge information and therefore expand the NEF brand.

**Dieter Berg – NEF Chairman**

## Religion and Democracy Framing the European debate

The Religion and Democracy in Europe initiative (RelDem) has successfully concluded the second phase of activities (2008-2009) with the publication through Alliance Magazine of a series of reports addressing specific aspects of the interaction between the state and religion as well as religion and society.

These reports, drafted by acknowledged experts, map existing practices and different approaches to specific issues, set in the broader context of the religion and democracy debate. They target practitioners, policy makers and civil society actors.

The reports address the following questions:

- Religion and Healthcare in the European Union, by Dimitrina Petrova
- Teaching about Religions in European School Systems, by Luce Pépin
- Conflicts over Mosques in Europe, by Stefano Allievi
- Religion and Prejudice, by Beate Küpper and Andreas Zick will be released shortly

The RelDem initiative has raised a lot of interest among the public, as the recent publication of the reports, their signposting on prominent websites and their increasing demand demonstrate. The press all across Europe has been particularly interested in drawing from the different reports providing an objective and non prescriptive state of play on the different issues.

The output of the reports has been presented in a number of international events, the latest one being the high level

*Continued on page 2*

## 2010 NEF Calendar of meetings

ILDE SC	<b>25 January Brussels</b>
PING SC	<b>5 February Lisbon</b>
AIDS confe- rence	<b>4-5 February Brussels</b>
REF SC	<b>12 January Weinheim</b>
YEPP SC	<b>23-24 February Warsaw</b>
NEF Board	<b>16 March Stuttgart</b>
EPIM Work shop	<b>15-17 March Lisbon</b>
EFB SC	<b>March – TBC</b>
EPIM SC	<b>29 April Brussels</b>
NEF GA	<b>1st June Brussels</b>
NEF Partner- ship session	<b>1st June Brussels</b>

## Religion and Democracy Looking ahead



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### Contact persons for the Reldem initiative:

**Rien van Gendt**  
(Chairman)

**Cristina Pineda**  
(Coordinator)

More information  
at  
[www.nefic.org](http://www.nefic.org)

An initiative of the  
Van Leer Group  
Foundation,  
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*Continued from page 1*

international conference organised by the CLIP network (European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants) on December 1st in cooperation with the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Committee of the Regions. This conference brings together around 200 participants from EU representatives, local policy makers, civil society, religious and migrant groups.

With a view to drawing the main conclusions of the four reports together and to reflect on the follow up of the initiative, a meeting with the authors of the reports took place in Brussels on 27 October.

The NEF GA has been invited to explore the interest of the foundations in launching a new phase of the project.



*Prof. Stefano Allievi, University of Padua,  
Author of the dossier Conflict over Mosques in  
Europe*

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Each topic covered by the RelDem reports could be developed through further research, and/or expert seminars over the next years with a view to producing further findings so as to respond to the growing demand for a better informed debate on religion and democracy in key policy areas.

A wide range of organisations have been associated in different stages of the initiative. These organisations are keen on continuing their cooperation. Networks of experts, journalist and civil society have been progressively set up and provide a promising platform for further debate and dissemination of the outputs of the initiative as well as for a possible new project. Strong links have been established with the EU institutions, which provide an opportunity for enhancing the debate on Religion and Democracy at European Level.

The taking office of the new European Commission in early 2010, the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty that confers legal value to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and includes a new provision on 'Dialogue with Religions, Churches and Communities of Conviction' as well as the working priorities of the European Parliamentary Platform for the Secularism in Politics offer multiple opportunities to engage EU officials and politicians in a new range of activities on reldem

Regarding the future development of the reports as a package, three areas have been identified:

- **Media:**  
engaging further journalists as one of the main constituencies of the initiative and leveraging their dissemination role
- **European Union dimension:**  
linking with the Council, the new Commission and the European Parliamentary Platform
- **Local dimension:**  
organising training courses at the local level, possibly in collaboration with organisations such as Eurocities or the CLIP network.

## Interview with Saïda Sakali, project coordinator– PING

### What was the reason for starting this project?

Poverty remains one of the most important problems faced by Western society today. Hence, it remains an important field of action for the foundations in this consortium. A major task in the battle against poverty is raising awareness: as many groups in society as possible must be sensitised concerning what it means to be poor. Computer and video games are presently the ideal channel for reaching out to young people. Since their creation, they have grown from a niche into a creative and mainstream culture product for youth.

In developing a so-called ‘serious game’, the partners in this project also intend to contribute to the societal debate on the use of computer games in schools. This fits with the growing attention paid in society to the phenomenon of ‘gaming’. Games can have a negative image. In the debate, specific effects of games are scarcely mentioned (including the ability to solve problems better, tapping creativity, learning to make decisions, command of languages, etc.)

That’s why attention will also be paid to writing and distribution of a manual on the use of games in schools. Furthermore, the project partners will organise a European conference in the autumn of 2010 focused on highlighting the developed game and on the debate concerning the meaningfulness or lack thereof, of using games in education. This conference will take place in the context of the Belgian EU Presidency and the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

### In what way is the approach of this project innovative?

Poverty and working with schools, teachers and pupils is of course nothing new for the foundations that collaborate in this project. But developing a serious game as a way to bring content to a target group and to support societal discussion in what is a key issue for foundations, is really innovative. What is also quite special about this project is the combination of goals: to develop a game to discuss poverty in classrooms and, by doing this, to raise awareness about the possibilities and advantages of using serious games in schools.



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### What kind of impact are you aiming for?

The PING game should be used in the schools of as many European countries as possible. The collaboration with European Schoolnet and the European Anti-Poverty Network will make it possible to present the PING-game (that will be freely available online in different languages) to all European Ministries of Education and many of the national poverty organizations in Europe. The issue of the use of serious games in educational settings must be placed on the European political agenda for the role they can play in the innovation of European economy (Lisbon agenda).

An initiative of the King Baudouin Foundation (Belgium), in collaboration with The Network of European Foundations, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian (Portugal), Compagnia di San Paolo (Italy), Robert Bosch Stiftung (Germany) and the Interdisciplinary Institute of Broadband Technology (Belgium)

More information on events and activities mentioned in this newsletter at

[www.nefic.org](http://www.nefic.org)

#### More information on

**PING Poverty is Not a Game**  
**A ‘serious game’ about poverty**  
***Giving European youth the chance to reflect on what it means to be poor***

at

[www.nefic.org/projects](http://www.nefic.org/projects)

Other partners involved: European Schoolnet and the European Anti-Poverty Network



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FOR INNOVATIVE COOPERATION**

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**List of current projects**

**Alliance magazine**  
**European HIV/AIDS Funders Group**  
**PING project**  
**Initiative for Learning Democracy in Europe (ILDE)**  
**European Citizens Consultations**  
**The European Mercator Fund**  
**The European Fund for the Balkans**  
**The European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM)**  
**Religion and Democracy**  
**Youth Empowerment Partnership Programme**  
**The Roma Education Fund**  
**Strategies for Impact in Philanthropy**

**Opportunities to collaborate:**

Foundations and partners interested in collaborating on one of the initiatives listed above or in initiating others, are invited to contact the NEF office :

[Peggy.sailler@nefic.org](mailto:Peggy.sailler@nefic.org)

The Network of European Foundations (NEF) is a flexible not-for-profit international organisation. Its headquarters are located in Brussels (Belgium).

Consisting of 12 foundations as its core, NEF acts as an operational platform to promote the development of joint initiatives by foundations and other types of organised philanthropy as well as other giving programmes related to Europe and the role of Europe on the global stage.

NEF was created so as to strengthen the potential for cooperation between foundations at European level. NEF provides its members with the ability to identify common goals and, as an open structure, to join forces with other foundations in Europe which may share similar concerns and objectives.

Covering a broad spectrum of social and cultural initiatives, more than 60 foundations from all over Europe are now partnering through NEF.

**NEF General Assembly 2010**

<i>The Netherlands</i>	<b>European Cultural Foudation</b>
<i>Belgium</i>	<b>King Baudouin Foundation</b>
<i>USA</i>	<b>Charles Stewart Mott Foundation</b>
<i>Portugal</i>	<b>Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian</b>
<i>Norway</i>	<b>Institusjonen Fritt Ord</b>
<i>France</i>	<b>Fondation de France</b>
<i>France</i>	<b>Gabriel Foundation</b>
<i>Germany</i>	<b>Robert Bosch Stiftung</b>
<i>The Netherlands</i>	<b>Bernard Van Leer Foundation</b>
<i>Italy</i>	<b>Compagnia di San Paolo</b>
<i>Austria</i>	<b>Erste Stiftung</b>
<i>UK</i>	<b>Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust</b>

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