

The European Centre for Modern Languages is moving

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) is moving and will have its new premises in the heart of the city of Graz from October 2000.

In other words, the ECML will be shifting from one system of activities comparable to the hundred metres hurdles to a more general system similar to a long distance race which relies on the

able to provide a service to its members based on two central axes: a medium-term programme of activities geared to the new requirements and priorities of Europe in language education matters and a resource centre which aims to become in the near future an essential reference point for all those who are seeking documents and up-to-date information on the state of languages in Europe.



"New premises of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz (Austria)"

This change of location has a very special meaning. It gives concrete expression to more than five years' worth of effort and commitment. It also symbolises a decisive stage in the evolution of the ECML's programme of activities, reflecting the shift from an annual programme to a medium-term programme based over three years.

Today the ECML is no longer identified with "one-off" workshops on specific subjects, but rather with projects which have been selected with the greatest care, comprising a number of elements such as studies, preparatory meetings, workshops, regional events and publications; added to this are the motivated teams of experts and participants from different countries who are prepared to commit themselves over several years.

continuity and monitoring of projects from their conception to their realisation.

The Centre's rapid expansion in terms of member states going from eight to twenty-eight,¹ has left the old premises in the "Schubertstrasse" short of space.

Thanks to nearly 1000 m² generously offered by the Austrian authorities, the ECML will be able to expand its capacity for the workshops and enable the working groups to have their own rooms. Offices are also available for co-ordinators, researchers, fellowship holders and trainees.

At four times its previous size, better than ever before, the new European Centre for Modern Languages will be

The ECML is also increasing its communication capacity and its influence by establishing a vast network of dissemination centres and through better structuring and development of its two web sites: one located in Strasbourg, providing general information on the ECML and the other in Graz, interactive and comprehensive, including a wide range of information, publications, networking tools and online databases.

Despite being some 900 km away from Strasbourg, the European Centre for Modern Languages feels very close to the headquarters thanks to the daily, numerous and strengthened links, particularly with the Modern Languages Division for the organisation of the European Year of Languages. ■

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¹ Members states of the ECML – GRAZ: Andorra, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

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2000



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The summer months are traditionally the time for those in the world of education to recharge their batteries, and look forward to the challenges ahead. This is also the case at the Council of Europe, although it is perhaps a reflection of the fast-moving times in which we live that this summer has seen no slowing down of activities in certain parts of Europe – and in particular in the South East.

The Council of Europe's role in supporting the regeneration of education in Kosovo has recently been underlined by the signing of a contract on higher education reform with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), funded by the World Bank. No time has been lost in implementation, with considerable work already being undertaken to provide a new legal basis for higher education in the territory, as well as to reform legal education. Further details on the scope of this project can be found in the press release on page 2.

Activities also continue apace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the crucial role of education in the process of refugee return and developing a democratic ethos in society has been recognised within the country and by the international community. The

educational reform agenda is being sustained by a mixture of incentives for the country to be fully integrated into European co-operation structures, and conditional financial support. Progress has been real and tangible over the past year, although much more remains to be done if human rights and genuine democracy are to become the driving force of society.

The Council of Europe has been at the forefront of educational change during the ongoing process of accession to the Organisation. The Parliamentary Assembly has adopted a recommendation on education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (see page 3), following a greatly appreciated report by the Spanish parliamentarian Lluís Maria de Puig. This is an important instrument to sustain continued progress.

Major work also continues elsewhere in the continent, including other troubled regions. The successful regional Conference of Ministers of Education in Georgia (see page 4), which brought together Education Ministers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine and produced a common declaration of educational intent, is a positive sign whose importance should not be underestimated in the