



School provision for gypsy and traveller children: distance learning and pedagogical follow-up

European Teachers' Seminar
Aix-en-Provence, France, 10-13 December 1990

Report

Council for Cultural Co-operation
Teacher Bursaries Scheme

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- the protection, reinforcement and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy;
- the promotion of an awareness of European identity;
- the search for common responses to the great challenges facing European society.

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COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

THE CDCC TEACHER BURSARIES SCHEME

European Seminar

**School provision for gypsy and traveller children:
distance learning and pedagogical follow-up**

10-13 December 1990

(Aix-en-Provence, Académie de Marseille, France)



Report by

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I. INTRODUCTION

The fourth Council of Europe seminar on school provision for gypsy and traveller children took place from 10-13 December 1990 at the teacher-training college of the Bouches-du-Rhône *Département* at Aix-en-Provence, Académie de Marseille, France. The previous seminars had been held in 1983 and 1987 (both at Donaueschingen, Federal Republic of Germany) and in 1989 (Benidorm, Alicante province, Valencia, Spain). The *Direction des Ecoles* of the French Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, and the *Direction des Affaires Générales, Internationales et de la Coopération* of the same Ministry proposed this seminar to the Council of Europe under the Council for Cultural Co-operation Teacher Bursaries Scheme, and undertook the organising of it. Focusing on the theme "School provision for gypsy and traveller children: distance learning and pedagogical follow-up", the seminar brought together some 60 participants - teachers, teacher trainers, education consultants, inspectors - from nine countries: Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Each plenary session enabled the participants:

- to familiarise themselves with current practice, and with possible directions for future development, by hearing reports from practising specialists in distance learning;
- to assess the importance - but also, sometimes, the difficulties - of using new information and communication technologies (NICT) by hearing from teachers and other personnel involved in school provision, as well as from members of gypsy communities.

There were also workshop sessions, at which topics touched on in the plenary sessions were taken further. These allowed participants to share their own experiences and expectations, to analyse them and draw from them useful guidelines for the present and future. Some participants have maintained the contacts first established at the seminar, and are already developing joint projects for the use of NICT.

The seminar was opened by Mr Caillaud, Academy Inspector of the Bouches-du-Rhône *Département*, representing the Rector of the Aix-Marseille Academy, and Mr Janain, *Inspecteur de l'Education nationale*, in charge of organising the seminar at local level. A message of support from Maura Rolandi Ricci, head of the School and Out-of-School Education Section of the Council of Europe, was read out, after which the director of the seminar, Mr Jean-Pierre Liègeois, spoke about the context, objectives and importance of the seminar. Mr Lachapelle, representing the Schools Directorate of the French Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, and Mr Gualdaroni, of the Directorate of Lycées and Colleges, also attended.

This seminar report, published by the Council of Europe, is subject to limitations of space, and cannot therefore reproduce the full texts of the papers read in plenary session, or to record the full richness of dialogue between the participants. Most of the texts given here are extracts or synopses, but the summary reports produced by the workshops are printed in full.

II. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

by Jean-Pierre Liègeois, *Centre de recherches tsiganes*,
Paris

Before addressing the topic on which we shall be focusing over the next few days, I want to thank the Academy authorities who have provided us with favourable conditions for our work together.

I would also like to thank all those who are attending this seminar, and in particular the gypsies and travellers: the institutional framework (in France as elsewhere, participation in seminars of this kind is normally restricted to professional educationalists) makes it hard for them to register, and they thus deserve special thanks for the trouble they have taken to participate in the work of the next few days.

The number of participants gathered here today, and the even greater number of people who wanted to attend, but for whom there was no room, shows the extent of the interest and expectations raised by our theme. The same is true of the speakers: think of the National Institute for Educational Research, the Liaison Centre for Teaching and Information Media, the network of educational documentation centres, new streams of thought in education, such as the Freinet movement, etc, all of which have accumulated experience in the field covered by this seminar.

We have had to curtail numbers: neither the institutional framework nor the means at our disposal allowed us to make this an open symposium. I am not complaining, merely stating a fact - and pointing out that we must spend the next four days working intensively on a precise theme in small groups. This is certainly the most effective formula, since we shall have to do the basic groundwork on distance learning within the broader framework of school provision for gypsy and traveller children and clarify the topic generally, before we start thinking - perhaps - about holding a symposium on the question.

CONTEXT

To ensure that our work in the next few days complements other activities in the field and does not simply repeat them, and also that it provides a realistic starting point for future action, we must remind ourselves of the context in which it takes place. I shall outline this context briefly - and in broad strokes. I do not doubt, however, that those present here today - who were nominated by their authorities for their competence, experience and involvement - are already familiar with all this, and have read the reference documents mentioned in the preparatory text.

Briefly, then, we are operating in a triple context:

1. an institutional context,
2. the context of previous Council of Europe seminars on school provision for gypsy and traveller children,
3. the context of work on distance learning and educational follow-up.

1. On the first point: this seminar, proposed by the French Ministry of Education and organised by three partners (the French Schools Directorate, the Directorate of General International and Co-operation Affairs and the authorities of the Academy of the *Département* which is hosting us) is part of the Teacher Bursaries Scheme of the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) of the Council of Europe. This opens up participation to representatives of different states (9 in the present case). The Council for Cultural Co-operation includes all the states which have signed the European Cultural Convention. These comprise all the Council of Europe's Member states (24 at present, the most recent addition being Hungary, which joined last month), as well as Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and the Holy See: 28 in all. This institutional and geographical framework, which is constantly expanding (the USSR will probably be joining the CDCC soon, and the latter may well include every state in Europe in the near future) is very important for gypsy communities.

The theme we are discussing - distance learning and pedagogical follow-up within the context of school provision for gypsy and traveller children (covering communities throughout Europe) - is one which calls particularly for international comparison and co-operation. This has been amply demonstrated in the work undertaken by both the Council of Europe and the European Community, as has the necessity of a global, structural (as opposed to a piecemeal, one-off) approach if there is to be progress (see published analyses). This seminar thus provides an ideal opportunity to compare the results obtained, within different institutional frameworks, by the policies which underlie those frameworks and the structures which derive from them. Comparative analysis of initiatives which are simultaneously contrasting and complementary will enable us to evaluate their pedagogical results and social consequences. Taking place as it does at a time when most states are moving towards new policies and practices with regard to school provision for gypsy and traveller children, a seminar of this type takes on a particular relevance.

2. With regard to the second context, the CDCC has sponsored three previous seminars, each of which has given rise to a published report:

- a. "The training of teachers of gypsy children", Donaueschingen 1983. This being the first ever European meeting of its type, the issues had to be identified and explored in broad terms without being strictly confined to the theme of the seminar; this is no longer the case.
- b. "Schooling for gypsies' and travellers' children: evaluating innovation", Donaueschingen 1987. This seminar looked in some detail at the conditions governing the introduction, evaluation and consolidation of innovation; you will find many useful indications for your work in the next few days in its conclusions.
- c. "Towards intercultural education: training for teachers of gypsy pupils", Benidorm 1989. Focusing again on teacher training, this seminar went further than that held in 1983: I refer you to the lectures and workshop reports published in English and French by the Council of Europe and in Spanish unabridged by the Valencia authorities.

Our seminar today is thus the fourth organised by the CDCC. I say this to emphasise that its high quality and detailed treatment of its theme must add once again to the knowledge we need, and provide practical recommendations to supplement those in the existing documentation. As I have said on previous occasions, these European seminars must, given the opportunities they offer, enable us to open up new territory and plan for the future; they must set things moving - open up new paths, inspire innovation. They are meant to be more than simple training courses - all the more so since national and regional training courses are, thankfully, more and more numerous.

In addition to the three seminars already held within the CDCC Teacher Bursaries Scheme, the Council of Europe has also published the book "Gypsies and Travellers", aimed mostly at teachers, and the report, "gypsy children in school: training for teachers and other personnel", based on a "summer university" held in Montauban, France, in 1988. You are already familiar with the work of the European Community, which I will mention briefly later on.

3. Now for the third aspect of our seminary context: the theory and practice of distance learning. For the moment, I shall simplify matters by restricting myself to distance learning per se; pedagogical follow-up can, I feel, be seen in technical terms as a subsidiary aspect of the whole question of distance learning (the workshops will have to consider this, along with the deontological aspects of follow-up).

To give these introductory remarks some unity, I shall draw on European data mainly taken from the texts prepared for the 16th (and latest) session of the Standing Conference of

European Ministers of Education, which was held in October 1989 on: "The information society: a challenge to education policies".

A Danish report distinguishes three models of distance learning, "historically linked with technological progress:

- a. Correspondence learning, which experienced a boom in the late 19th century with the advent of new printing techniques and the railways.
- b. Multi-media distance learning, which has been developing since the 1960s with the combined use of printed material, radio, cassettes and, to some degree, computers. Telephone counselling is sometimes provided and face-to-face tutorials are arranged.

A feature of both these periods is the practically one-way direction of information: it is sent to the learner, whose interaction with his instructors is minimal. The distance marker either approves or disapproves, the student attempting to give whatever answers he thinks will please the tutor. The result has been a social bias - those who are already well educated benefit from the opportunities offered.

- c. Communication is the key-word of the third-generation model. Thanks to interactivity, pupils can at last use their own language."
(doc. M ED-16-5 pp. 33-34)

This new, interactive approach is recognised as both fundamental and positive. The summary of the national reports emphasises that "there is unanimity: prescriptive, one-way teaching which transmits knowledge, skills and ready-made rules of conduct to be swallowed whole or applied unthinkingly must give way to active learning where the learner, in accordance with Piaget's theories, builds up his own knowledge by functionally interacting with the environment, whether near or far. Because of their almost inevitably multidisciplinary nature, educational projects which open a window on to the outside world enable account to be taken of manifold sources of information to which pupils are exposed: study of the press, televised messages, etc. The multi-media approach sharpens interest; the degree of concentration displayed by pupils working, for instance, on the creation and operation of a database has come as a surprise to many observers. Wherever students have such freedom of access to media-transmitted information and data, their intellectual autonomy grows visibly. Furthermore, the sheer diversification of teaching material (texts, audio material, video, computer programmes) is breaking down the unidirectional character of traditional teaching by encouraging the development of a variety of types of communication between teachers and pupils. NIT is also amplifying the long-standing active methods of teaching and

giving them a new lease of life" (M ED 16-5 p. 27).

The document compiled by the Committee of Senior Officials in preparation for the Ministerial Conference emphasises that the omnipresence of NICT is becoming increasingly marked and warns that "knowledge and skills relating to the NICT, their applications, possibilities and limitations must be treated on a par with literacy and numeracy as fundamental for all members of society". While pointing out that the role of education is not reduced by, but complementary to, the use of NICT, the committee states that "the NICT hold great promise for improving the effectiveness of the teaching, and especially the learning, process. But this improvement is unlikely to materialise without far-sighted, co-ordinated policies and strategies relating to the curriculum, hardware, software, teaching training, the organisation and the financing of education" (M ED 16-3, p.2).

The Committee of Senior Officials also emphasises - and this is particularly relevant to us - that "open, distance learning utilising NICT offers new possibilities for the education of immigrants in their own mother tongue, thus reinforcing their cultural and national identity." (ibid)

Another text stresses that "differences in receptivity inherent in social and cultural differences and between generations must be respected when working with NICT. It must be kept in mind that an information society must also remain a humanistic one in which all benefit from technological advances".

The term "electronic gulag" may be used, but information can make for an improved "knowledge of other peoples. Several NICT-related objectives are suggested:

- teach pupils the capacity to synthesise what they hear and see in the media;
- develop and exercise critical faculties;
- preserve cultural heritage and distinctions;
- teach discrimination and judgment in choosing media resources;
- offer equal educational opportunity for all;
- teach self-expression" (M ED 15-5, pp. 1 and 2).

It is also "a democratic act to guarantee individuals as well as society as a whole access to a growing volume of data essential to their autonomy of choice and decision-making" (M ED 16-5, p. 23). Moreover, NICT can facilitate the emergence and consolidation of cultural identity: "thus, the order of any media-rich society will henceforth follow this twofold trend, under the influence of the combined effects of

technologies and the utopias they inspire: on the one hand, a preference for telecommunications rather than television broadcasting, on the other, the possibility more liberally offered to each individual to choose new social attachments, other than those imposed upon him.

(...) Propagation of an identity institutionalises groups hitherto condemned to interpersonal relations only; it establishes them by transposing them from a latent to a patent state" (M ED 16-4, p. 13).

On the basis of all this, I would say that the broad theme of distance learning, which is presently engaging the attention of educationalists, can, in conjunction with the idea of intercultural education, which has been gaining ground in the last few years, lead to significant advances by providing teachers with the support and tools which they generally lack in order to implement intercultural pedagogy. In May 1990, the Ministers of Education of the 12 Member states of the European Community stressed the necessity of determining the main aims concerning distance learning and training. At their 4th Conference in 1988, the Ministers of Education of the member states of UNESCO's European region adopted a recommendation on distance learning, specifying that it should be individualised, modular, interdisciplinary and flexible. As for the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, whose preparatory documents I have quoted at length above, it adopted, during its October 1989 session, a detailed resolution on "The information society: a challenge for education policies".

Following this overview of the Council of Europe's work on school provision for gypsy and traveller children, I turn to that of the European Community. The consolidated report School provision for gypsy and traveller children contains, in its 100-point "Summary and recommendations" section, a number of observations on distance learning, which were later included after discussion with gypsy and traveller representatives and government representatives, in the Orientation Document for Discussion and for Action. Finally, the resolution adopted on 22 May 1989 by the Council and Ministers of Education refers explicitly ("experiments with distance teaching", "pedagogical follow-up", "use of new electronic and video methods") or implicitly ("the development of forms of educational follow-up") to distance learning in several paragraphs.

Quite apart from these high-level discussions and policy guidelines, there is a long and growing list of practical initiatives by regional, national and international public and private bodies. The lectures at this seminar will give us a number of examples. We are all familiar with the pioneers, the classics such as the United Kingdom's Open University with 120,000 students in a system which permits inter-student communication, or France's CNED, with some 250,000 students at

all levels. There is hardly a state today without first-hand experience. We are also familiar with the classics at European level, such as the COMETT technological training programme, and DELTA, which is concerned with using advanced technologies to promote learning in Europe and with the establishment of a European norm: we see, for example, that, because of system compatibility, English pupils can and do communicate more easily with their Australian peers than with their French ones.

Those who work in this field are increasingly pooling their efforts. Universities and private institutions are forming international associations. "A process of transformation is indubitably occurring, as it displays relationships which did not exist in the traditional academic systems, particularly with the media, with the production sector and with other countries International partnership is an innovation which has an eminently structural effect" (CDCC (90) 12, p. 24).

In May 1990 most institutions involved in distance learning were represented at a meeting organised in Budapest by the International Council for Distance Education; a platform for co-operation was thus created, and this will fill the gap until the institutions concerned can develop more formal ties. A twinning programme for primary classes, School Links International, has been developed under Council of Europe auspices ... I could give many more examples of practical links, and of conferences on this theme.

Having mentioned the classroom, we come to the teacher. "At long last!", you will say, since all these European references and considerations seem very far removed from the reality of the classroom and the children in it. Teachers are directly concerned. The technology is there, and it is better to use it consciously and intelligently than simply to accept it because one has to. Moreover, needs are not only changing qualitatively, but quantitatively too: there are not enough teachers to meet the demand for "direct contact" teaching - hence the increasing and semi-forced reliance on new systems. We have gone beyond the old opposition "between the education system and the communications system, which tend to ignore each other or to fight", as a 1982 UNESCO report emphasised. "It is therefore legitimate to ask whether distance education is being perfected and developed or whether we are witnessing the emergence of a radically different system for storing and apportioning knowledge which at present settles for distance teaching methods but will develop on its own pattern" (CDCC (90) 12, p. 11). "The real issue today is how to develop the most productive and harmonious relationship between education and the media. The future lies in the stocking and supply of select audio-visual products to be used in a local educational context" (M ED 16-4, p. 3). "We can foresee a probable revolution which will affect intellectual work as profoundly as the Industrial Revolution changed the

physical dimensions of human labour. We shall then observe a total upheaval in the functions of knowledge upstream of the contents of our learning. Teaching is bound to be transformed as a result in three difference respects: in its curricula, its methods and its aims" (M ED 16-4, p. 24). The fundamental task of the school becomes less that of putting ideas back into order than "the infinitely more difficult and important task of commenting on values" (idem, p. 24). In other words, the teacher "no longer conveys (the) fund of basic knowledge, but helps people to assimilate it" (CDCC (90) 12, p. 13).

Obviously, this has implications for teacher training. An OCDE/CERI report (1986) highlights this question: "We face the need to train, as rapidly as possible, the entirety of the teaching profession to use the new technologies. Given the rapid evolution of the whole NIT area, it is scarcely any exaggeration to say that the whole profession would need, by some means or another, to be placed in semi-permanent retraining. There are many reasons why it is wildly impracticable to think in these terms; not least a lack of trained trainers, economic constraints, insufficiently clear agreement on the directions to be followed. The logistics of such an exercise, too, would be overwhelming. Yet this is, in fact, the fundamental task facing the various agencies of teacher in-service training and its seriousness should not be ignored" (quoted in M ED 16-6, p. 54).

Teachers, without waiting about for grand programmes, are already at work in the field, and some of them have made their own innovations. I will give you only one example, from France: the ICEM-Freinet approach particularly in the field of inter-class communication. Here are a few lines from a brochure on telematics recently published by the Freinet movement (Telematics in the Pedagogy of Communication, by the Telematics Section of ICEM, January 1989):

"Schools would be greatly mistaken to neglect the precious and providential auxiliary tool which telematics gives us. All the more so since the writing which it obliges us to develop is modern: precise, concise, vigorous, efficient, and well-tuned to the age we live in" (Alex Lafosse). "Telematics is, along with newspapers, the medium of the written word. Nowhere, even in the Freinet approach, have we succeeded in creating an environment as strong and reality-based as the telematic correspondence networks." "The use of telematics in a communication network places children in one of the strongest possible reading situations" (teachers' statements). "Telematics would seem to be both one means of communication among others and a means which facilitates command of the others ... Obviously the various ways of communicating also interpenetrate: an article can extend a message, or give the gist of it" (Michelle Harari). "Traditional baulking at books, writing, text correction, learning other languages et al, crumbles before the appeal of sending telematic messages (...) there is

something magic in the speed of telematics, in the possibilities of enjoyable exchange with young people in other regions or other countries which it opens up, and this has helped some of our pupils to overcome their writing inhibitions and has given all of them a desire to exchange ideas, to use the written word creatively (texts, poems ...), to risk trying out their English for real, and to correct the mistakes made in French by their English, Hawaiian, Australian etc correspondents ..." (Monique Chichet).

We must insist yet again on the fact stressed by NICT users: the interactivity already referred to in the documents for the European Ministers' Conference serves both to express and transmit individual and social characteristics (eg regional or minority languages and cultures) and makes for mutual recognition and solidarity, permitting the consolidation and sharing of identities regardless of how widely dispersed or how far from one another those who share them are. This is one very significant effect of NICT which supplements and backs the uses which can be made of them in schools. As one of the European reports puts it "this horizontal basing of communication offers new prospects" (CDCC (90) 12, p. 22).

I shall conclude my consideration of our context by quoting from a document compiled by the Committee of Senior Officials for the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education (M ED 16-3), a document which largely bears out what teachers themselves say: "Media education should play an empowering and liberating role. Thus pupils should be given an understanding of the structures, mechanisms and messages of the mass media. In particular, pupils should develop the independent capacity to apply critical judgment to media content. One means to this end, and an objective in its own right, should be to encourage creative expression and the construction of pupils' own media messages, so that they are equipped to take advantage of opportunities for the expression of particular interests in the context of participation at local level. The fostering of critical independence is, in this sense, closely linked with the development of more active and pupil-centred teaching methods. Use of the NICT and the media and the development of knowledge and skills relating to them appear to be of benefit at all levels and in all types of education."

AN OUTLINE OF OUR SEMINAR

And now, having looked briefly at all these major trends, let us turn to the work which we shall be doing in the next four days. One of you wrote to me that "thinking that distance learning can, under present circumstances, be a radical means - indeed the radical means - of solving the problem of school provision for gypsy and traveller children, seems bold indeed. The idea is highly attractive, and it must be explored today so that it can be applied tomorrow." Here

is a clear objective for our work: exploring the idea today, so that we can apply it tomorrow.

In the introductory note you received, I indicated the objectives of our meeting. Current communications and information practice and technology have opened up possibilities for the development of forms of teaching and support at a distance, as well as the pedagogical follow-up of pupils who may be isolated or dispersed. These possibilities, currently under development, can be used and useful for the whole school-going population at all ages and levels, and it is clear that they hold particular promise with regard to school provision for gypsy and traveller children. It is therefore fitting that we should examine and publicise exactly how these new formulas can be of aid to school provision for gypsy and traveller children, and how this can in turn aid the new formulas to be applied in the interests of the general good.

To put it another way, at a time when NICT uses in schools are increasingly diversifying, we must not overlook the advantages they may hold for us. I shall cite the Committee of Senior Officials once again, because what they way provides a solid basis for our work here, and for its future application: "Policies to promote greater social justice and equality of opportunity could be jeopardised if the least privileged members of society are inadequately equipped for a world that depends increasingly on intensive communication by means of the new technologies, as they are now too often left behind in the literacy and numeracy stakes. The knowledge gap must not be allowed to widen. This consideration applies to every category of the population liable to suffer from social or cultural disadvantage - whether based on poverty, physical disability, national or ethnic background, age, gender or geography. On the other hand, with suitable policies, the NICT could greatly help to bridge such gaps and to build educational equality and solidarity" (M ED 16-3, p. 2).

I repeat: at a seminar of this kind we must engage in discovery, chart the future, open up new paths, inspire innovation, and emerge with analyses and arguments which will help both to guide administrators and encourage politicians, to ensure that follow-up action is taken on discussions of the next four days, and to give them a form that will enable them to be used as a basis for shared projects.

We are thus aiming (and I shall be giving the workshops a document repeating these points and a few more besides, to guide them in their work):

- to take stock of current developments, by describing and evaluating them;
- to highlight the proved usefulness of NICT with regard to

school provision for gypsy and traveller children (specifically, distance learning and pedagogical follow-up); on the basis of papers and of dialogue with distance learning specialists, to analyse the techniques and practices which seem capable of improving the conditions and results of school provision;

- building on this examination, and on your professional experience, to draw up a list of your needs, and the help or progress which NICT could bring to teaching, pedagogical follow-up support, the development of intercultural teaching methods, the use of elements of gypsy culture, interaction between classes (be they within a single state or in different states) etc;
- on the basis of this inventory, to make proposals for implementation and identify the requisite approaches (ie inclusion in a broader programme which has already been founded on the preparation of application for funding to the relevant bodies; experimental research into the use of certain NICT - for example, should the theme of this seminar be given a priority if the European Community is able to launch pilot projects involving teams from several states in working on this subject and culminating in proposals for co-operative projects?);
- to formulate practical proposals and recommendations for states and the European organisations, so that NICT can be applied genuinely and realistically in school provision for gypsy and traveller children; through in-depth studies of technical aspects, content, etc;
- projects to be worked out together by the participants ensuring practical follow-up action on this seminar: to maintain and develop these contacts, and to promote a pooling of efforts, taking advantage of our meeting's broadly European character; to do the groundwork for one or more joint projects, since there is no reason why we should remain on the sidelines of present or future national or European programmes.

And now, before we get down to work, a few preliminary points.

Our task here is to clear the undergrowth surrounding this topic. Our seminar is centred on technical questions, but it does not claim to deal with them exhaustively. We shall have to carry on our work, look at current projects in detail and develop new ones, after this seminar.

Obviously, we cannot examine technical media, as we shall be doing here, without also examining what they mediate. At future meetings and in the wake of meetings which have already taken place, we shall have to consider the content - particularly the cultural and linguistic content - of

teaching, looking first and foremost at gypsies' own policies and aspirations in the matter. Teachers are coming increasingly round to the idea that technology should serve a curriculum and not vice-versa, and we should bear this in mind in the next few days, while remaining aware that we cannot cover everything in the space of a few hours. Numerous teachers' and administrators' meetings have already studied curricula; indeed, many states are currently engaged in a complete overhaul of school curricula, and we shall have, at a second stage, to identify in detail those curriculum elements - especially cultural elements - which can best use NICT to start with.

Distance learning must be understood in the broad sense, including the various means which enable the pupil, and the teacher working with him, to access the essential aids quickly and efficiently: basic documentation, a range of teaching materials, the tools for monitoring the child's progress, etc. It must be stressed that distance learning is not necessarily synonymous with technological sophistication: in many cases, the post is still an excellent channel.

Distance learning in various forms is particularly suited to the educational support and monitoring of nomadic children. Quite apart from the fact that - as frequently testified by teachers themselves - nomadism and good school results are not incompatible, these new teaching methods will make it harder to make school attendance a pretext for settling nomads, and/or nomadism an excuse for not providing schooling. Yet it must be emphasised that distance learning is also very useful for gypsy and traveller children, who are settled and dispersed through a number of classes; it can give them access to aspects of their own culture and language, ensuring high quality and wide distribution of those elements and so confirming the identity of communities which are mainly non-sedentary and enabling them to share the things which unite them.

This consideration turns technology into a means of bringing back the human and the cultural. As a European report puts it, "communication is the expression of a will, of a will to be or live together, which almost invariably pre-exists it. In one sense, it is the community which precedes communication and not the reverse, even if communication may eventually reinforce the community. What good is a telephone without an address book?" (M ED 16-4, p. 20).

Our work should also help us to resist the commercial tendencies behind certain aspects of mass communication which are largely incompatible with the objectives of education. José Vidal-Beneyto pointed this out when preparatory work for the last session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education began: "the communication society is based on three main principles: emphasis on bad news rather than on constructive or positive aspects; repetition,

particularly in advertising and publicity, rather than innovation; a preference for the immediate and the ephemeral, rather than the durable and the well-established" (quoted in M ED 16-5, p. 5).

Let us try to bear all of this in mind in the course of our work.

III. LECTURES

1. OUR EXPERIENCE IN THE BOUCHES-DU-RHÔNE DÉPARTEMENT

by Jean-Marc Janain, National Education Inspector,
Aix-en-Provence (Regional School Adjustment and
Integration Inspectorate)

The following is a brief account of our experience over a period of three school years (1987-1990) in a collaboration with AREAT (the Regional Gypsy Study and Action Association).

A. The situation in the Département

"Our region seems from the outset to be one of the Travelling People's favourite parts of France" (L'accueil des Tsiganes en Région Provence/Alpes/Côte d'Azur Region, AREAT report p. 15). The Bouches-du-Rhône Département has a significant gypsy population, which can be divided into three categories depending on travel patterns:

- "long-distance travellers" account for about 10% of the caravans in the region over the course of the year (about 8% Rom and 2% Manouche). Lengths of stay vary considerably, from simply "passing through" to a stay of a month or two;
- nomads who winter in the region and, more particularly, in the Département: the wintering period lasts around 4-5 months. The majority of both Rom and Manouches set up winter quarters near urban centres where they can practise their various trades;
- regional travellers: the region's big cities and mild winters explain why many families have chosen to move around within it. Marseilles, traditionally a centre for trade and commerce, allows gypsies to pursue commercial activities here in the winter, moving on to run fairground stalls in the Alps and/or seaside resorts in the summer months.

These last two categories account for 90% of the caravans in the Département. We try to provide schooling for the children of families in this situation. We also try provide educational follow-up from school to school during the school year and from one year to the next, in order to ensure continuity in acquisition of the basics: reading, writing, arithmetic.

B. School provision for gypsy children in the Département

The Département strategy for accommodating nomadic children is based on a double network of schools:

- on-site schools, with a teacher who provides educational follow-up either in the classroom or in the form of special support. Children are assigned to classes according to their level of achievement. These schools form a cohesive network, so children and families know that there will be continuity from one site to another.
- schools which take gypsy children into ordinary classes at their family's request.

Placement within this double network is managed by computer. This system serves a dual purpose:

- it ensures optimum distribution of children within the double network, the aim being to meet the significant demand for places during the four-month wintering period;
- it uses the *département* strategy as a basis for educational follow-up. At present this is based on two simple, general criteria: length of time spent in school, and degree of literacy (literate/non-literate).

These arrangements are still being developed, and future prospects need to be explored.

C. Prospects for educational monitoring of gypsy children

The telematic network facilitates placings management, providing a swift response to demands for school provision; it also permits comprehensive educational monitoring. Today's telematic tools could be applied in other ways, too: specifically, a telematic link could be used simultaneously on-site and in schools. It would be enough to incorporate teaching materials which would be available both to teachers in schools and teachers dealing on-site with gypsies.

Finally, I would say that we need a new product, an "electronic school record" - a computer diskette which would make it possible to monitor schooling while also having a pedagogic content. This is rendered necessary partly by new elementary school structures in France (organised in cycles), and partly by individualisation of the child's work resulting from increased autonomy. A product of this type could be used in schools, but also by on-site gypsy educators. Taking the idea a step further, it could also be the subject of a project involving several European partners. The standardisation of computer materials allows us to think in terms today of an "electronic school record" which would be, first and foremost, a teaching programme for gypsy children. I feel that this idea is well worth developing, and implementing: it provides educational follow-up and a form of distance learning which transcends regional and state boundaries. The devising of an "electronic school record" system would be a fitting sequel to this seminar.

APPENDIX

Some statistical data covering the September 1989 - June 1990 school year, for 252 pupils (47% girls, 53% boys) throughout the *Département* (computer graphics by Jean-Louis Laurent).

**Total school attendance
over the school year**

Literacy by gender

2. ANALYSING THE SITUATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**a. West Midlands education authorities education service for travellers' children**

by Mike Baldwin, representative of the National Association of Teachers of Travellers, educational adviser with the West Midlands Education Authorities

The National Association of Teachers of Travellers

I am attending this seminar as the representative of the National Association of Teachers of Travellers (NATT), a voluntary organisation with some 150 members throughout the United Kingdom. At the Association's last meeting, in London on 6 October 1990, this conference was discussed and members were asked to communicate their experiences of distance learning and educational follow-up to the Association's representative. Little documentation was forthcoming and this perhaps accurately represents the relative inactivity in this area of traveller education at present.

The NATT works in conjunction with other bodies to promote and improve formal education for traveller children. It wants them recognised as an ethnic minority and included within the framework of multi-cultural education. The Association believes that it is essential to provide for their needs within mainstream education so that they can have access to a broadly-based curriculum. It recognises that distance learning could be a useful tool in certain circumstances, but believes it would be preferable for the majority of traveller children to pursue an education within mainstream provision. Distance learning, when conceived as a correspondence course, would not be appropriate for a child in the formative stages. The NATT's aim is to see concrete action resulting from European co-operation and it would like its European representative to take part in a special conference organised under the aegis of Jean-Pierre Liégeois, to guarantee practical progress.

The term, "distance learning"

For the West Midlands team, distance learning is one of several strategies used to ensure educational continuity for some groups within the travelling community whose travel is seasonal or whose schooling is intermittent.

Strategies employed by the Service to ensure continuity

1. The West Midlands service is responsible for regional co-operation between 10 local authorities. This co-operation enables us to cross local authority boundaries to support educational continuity for children of families who travel,

whether voluntarily in pursuit of work or for family reasons, or because of eviction. The region has approximately 2,000 gypsy and traveller children in local schools, about 200 of whom are children from the showmen's (fairground) community.

2. The education record transfer scheme: All gypsy and traveller children known to the service have education record cards detailing their formal educational achievements and skills. Parents carry a gold card detailing that their child's education records are stored at the service's headquarters. They hand the gold card in to each school their child attends and the school can easily contact the service to acquire the child's records. The record card helps the teacher to plan the child's learning programme more appropriately to the child's needs.

3. Transport support: The service operates four minibuses and a substantial transport budget to enable children who live in isolated areas or who experience frequent enforced movement to maintain attendance in schools in which they are registered. This allows for continuous and continued schooling despite the external pressures on families and children.

4. Literacy Trail: an introductory reading programme. This was developed in 1980 by teachers in the service wishing to address the lack of continuity in early reading materials and practices/methods for teaching reading between schools. There are as yet no commercially published schemes taking account of travelling children's lifestyle and experiences. Literacy Trail books can be made available to any school receiving gypsy and traveller children.

5. Distance learning packs (DLPs) are compiled for the 200 children from the fairground community attending local schools from their winter quarters between November and the end of March each year. From March the families travel regionally or nationally with their fairground equipment, rides etc. The distance learning packs contain material based on the children's classwork in the winter school, provided by the class teacher and the support teacher from the West Midlands service. The work is provided in monthly packages. Parents meet with teachers before they leave the winter quarters to discuss the time children should spend working on their packs each day when they are travelling.

When the children are out on the fairs in the West Midlands region, teachers from the service will visit and support them. When the child has finished a pack it is returned to the school by post or by personal visit. The work will be marked and a new monthly pack distributed. The fairground community are organised around a particular business interest and have representation through the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain. There is a growing level of motivation and commitment to education by families whose

businesses are becoming increasingly governed by new technology and who will meet increased competition post-1992 with the introduction of the Single European Market.

Two rivercraft children also currently operate with DLPs. A group of 10 gypsy women attend an adult literacy class, but those from mobile families are often unable to attend. When they are travelling they carry DLPs and work on them until they are able to get back to class or they make contact with the staff. One or two highly motivated gypsy and traveller families operate DLPs when they travel for seasonal work and again this assists the children in maintaining contact with classwork in the winter school.

The teaching resources to support the distance learning of the above groups are extremely limited in the service, but families committed to DLPs are highly motivated and convinced of the value of educational continuity. Yet much remains to be done. In our experience the lack of a tradition of formal education in the gypsy and Irish traveller communities, coupled with the limited resources in the service to support distance learning makes this strategy largely inaccessible to their children. It is felt that until the existing structures are resourced appropriately, new structures put in place, and co-ordination undertaken at national level to eliminate the unevenness or even absence of provision which currently characterises the situation in the United Kingdom, then distance learning as we presently perceive it in the West Midlands, or indeed correspondence courses such as those provided by the French CNED system, will not be an option for the majority of children from the travelling community.

I do not want to end on a pessimistic note. Each year more children register in nursery schools or five-year-old level and maintain attendance through primary education. More children transfer from primary to secondary school and more children at secondary school continue to attend over the age of 13. There are some interesting work experience opportunities developing, with gypsy businessmen as partners with school work experience programmes enabling gypsy and traveller children to gain work experience in preferred trades/work areas. Some children are also taking up access and training programmes in local community colleges.

Summary: In Britain, we are in a situation where distance learning is only beginning to take shape, and as a result we are greatly interested to learn about current developments in Europe. The West Midlands service urges a lead at European level in identifying the common ground which will enable the different factions at member state level to co-operate.

B. CONTINUITY IN EDUCATION: A PROJECT TO FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF SCHOOL RECORDS

by Margaret Wood, advisory teacher, Cambridgeshire

A record card scheme has been in operation for a considerable length of time in the West Midlands. However, following consultations with gypsy and traveller representatives, and other interested parties, the Department of Education and Science decided to request a minimum of information on their pilot record reference cards. Furthermore, no information concerning pupils was to be held centrally.

Fifteen months ago, in the autumn of 1989, the Department of Education and Science, the DES, launched a pilot project concerning the education of gypsy and traveller children, whose movements are less predictable than those of fairground families. This project directly addressed the problem of continuity.

In seven counties in the eastern part of the country the DES had decided to study, for two school terms (up to Easter 1990), the introduction and use of a small green card, a kind of school identity card, one for each pupil. The card bears only a minimum of information: on one side are the first name, surname and date of birth of the child and on the other are the name, address and telephone number of each school attended.

Printed on the card is a letter to the parents. It explains to them that the card will help the education of their child, who may change schools more often than other children because of their nomadic lifestyle. The card will enable schools to obtain school records as rapidly as possible. We know that this is sometimes extremely difficult because the parents often fail to note the name and the exact location of the previous school. The card also explains that whenever they move they should show the card at the school of their choice and ask the head teacher to fill it in. He or she should immediately hand the card back to the parents. As soon as a child enrolls at a school, records are kept for a traveller as for any other child. The school keeps the records until the child changes school. The card asks the parents to inform the school if they are intending to move. In fact, this does not always occur. The card also explains that it is the property of the family and that it is confidential.

On the other side of the card its purpose is explained to the head teacher. This explanation is particularly useful if a family travels outside the seven counties involved in the pilot scheme.

The small green card is kept in a plastic wallet, inside which families can, if they wish, keep other useful information relating to their children's education. For example, they might keep there the telephone number of travellers' support teams or maybe a few notes explaining what the child has done at school; these may be helpful until the full records arrive from the previous school.

The DES asked head teachers to hand out the cards as soon as traveller children arrive, since one obviously cannot know how long they will be staying. In practice, it is often the secretary who welcomes new children and during the pilot project it was often the travellers' support teachers who took responsibility for distributing the cards, especially if there was a need to deliver the cards at home. It was necessary to stress the positive aspects of the cards and to explain that they were not compulsory. They contain no reference number, no kind of identification and no copy of them is kept. They are only identity cards in so far as they speed up the transfer of educational information from one school to another so that the child loses as little time as possible each time the family moves.

As I have already explained, this was a pilot scheme. It is currently being evaluated and the results have not yet been published. However, during the experimental period, representatives of each county met and the head teachers filled in evaluation sheets.

The head teachers were asked to give the following information:

1. number of cards distributed;
2. parents' attitude: enthusiastic, passive or negative;
3. number of cards refused;
4. number of traveller pupils issued with cards leaving school;
5. cases where records were requested in under three months;
6. number of cards presented having been issued elsewhere;
7. whether the child subsequently registered at school;
8. whether the previous school was in the pilot area;
9. whether it was easy to contact the previous school;
10. number of days taken to receive records;
11. attitude of parents and schools to the card's design; suggested changes?

The administration of this pilot scheme was not always easy; at several levels in most of the participating counties travellers are not a priority and there were some delays in the distribution of the cards and in the completion of the evaluation sheets. Nevertheless, on the whole, the reaction of parents and of the schools was favourable.

A professor from the University of London Institute of Education has been appointed to carry out an independent

evaluation of the scheme. She is now involved in interviewing travellers' support teachers, head teachers, gypsy and traveller parents and LEA representatives in each county.

As I have already explained, the evaluation has not yet been completed. I can, however, give you some idea of the reactions of those involved in the scheme. Altogether, over 1,000 cards were distributed and very few parents refused them. Some families, particularly those who are settled, did not feel they were necessary, but they could appreciate that they are useful for more mobile families who often move without being able or willing to announce their departure.

The teachers with whom I have spoken have the impression that the cards have improved the transfer of school records, but the pilot scheme was not long enough for them to be sure. It would be interesting to consider its benefits after one or two years.

As we know, it can be difficult for traveller parents to find schools which will accept their children, in spite of legislation which gives all children a right to education. It would seem that the cards may serve to improve the situation by underlining the fact that the child does attend school more or less regularly, in spite of travelling from place to place. The cards will help teachers to realise that the work a child does with them is not in vain and that it represents part of a larger whole. A much more centralised National Curriculum has recently been introduced here with syllabuses laid down by the DES. In the main subject areas there will be tests for seven, eleven, fourteen and sixteen year olds. We are hoping that these record reference cards will enable children to pick up their studies as easily as possible each time they change school so that they may build on their previous experience rather than continually having to start again from the beginning.

C. THE FUTURE OF TEACHING TRAVELLER CHILDREN IN EALING: A TENTATIVE RESPONSE

by Bob Carvell, General Inspector (Design Technique, Art and Traveller Education), Ealing Education Service

The present situation: 1.11.90

The halting site is situated not far from John Perryn School. A bus provides daily transport between the two; today it brings 32 traveller children, the majority of them Irish. Our goal is to integrate the children into school life as much as possible, with the support of a teacher who maintains ongoing contact with their families and, by plugging into this family structure, facilitates the children's success in school.

The school has accumulated an amount of specialised

pedagogical material, and this is put to good use in support for traveller children. The teacher also has access, when required, to a special area shared with three other specialised teachers, for intensive work in basic literacy and numeracy. Whenever possible, however, the teacher provides special support within the classroom itself, in the framework of general school activities.

The recognition of traveller children's special needs at John Perryn has resulted in a rapid rise in literacy levels in children from the Basley Road site whose families are by and large illiterate, as well as in having a clear and tangible effect on the general population of the site.

Travelling children in Ealing schools

A survey carried out in 1989 among 119 schools in the Ealing district revealed that there were traveller children in attendance at 22 of these. These statistics are a useful indicator of numbers of traveller children requiring special support, but shed no light on traveller children whose families are sedentary most of the year, travelling only for a month or two. There are a great many such children in Ealing, and there is recognition that they need special support similar but not entirely identical to that provided for traveller children living in caravans all the year round and who, by virtue of this lifestyle, have the benefit of a strong cultural matrix. There is also a significant but undetermined number of traveller children in Ealing who are not enrolled in school and have never attended school at all.

The Ealing education project for traveller children

As from 1 November 1990, the support teacher with responsibility for traveller children at John Perryn School was partly detached from this post in order to take on duties as a mobile advisory teacher to other schools in the Ealing district, helping them to obtain and produce their own teaching materials adapted to the needs of the traveller children in their care, with a view to forming beneficial ties between school and caravan.

The resource centre

Thanks to grants from the authorities at both national (Department of Education and Science: 75%) and local (25%) levels, John Perryn has been enabled to set up a Resource Centre for the education of traveller children. The centre will concentrate on designing and producing teaching aids adapted to the needs of traveller children and, where possible, integrated into the objectives of the National Curriculum. Material specifically geared towards the needs of sedentary traveller children - often more isolated than their nomadic peers, facing hostility and rancour on their own - will be produced for distribution in the schools of the Ealing

district, especially in the Southall area where a great many such families reside.

A registration system keeping track of the traveller child's scholastic progress from school to school and district to district could be organised from the centre. Literacy courses for traveller adults will also be available, in order to improve the generally very high illiteracy rate of this community. It is to be hoped that, by encouraging traveller adolescents and adults to take part in off-site educational activities, they will also be encouraged to take part actively and positively in the general life of the community, and to undertake projects of their own. At the moment the only liaison between on-site families and the surrounding area is provided by the John Perryn support teacher and some social workers, who decipher letters and communiqués from the outside world.

The centre will also provide training for teachers in the Ealing district who are in contact with traveller children but to date have had no training or classroom support. Special materials can be explored, and methods and materials adapted to traveller children can be discussed and exchanged. A documentary base on traveller-related themes will be at teachers' disposal at the centre. There are also plans for a series of regular meetings between a school nurse and traveller mothers and toddlers.

Neighbouring local authorities

It is also hoped to organise structured visits from neighbouring local authorities, with the objective of stimulating dialogue between the concerned parties, exchanging information and ideas, and developing the registration system which the John Perryn Centre will be setting up.

CONCLUSIONS

Given greater funding, we could implement a more exhaustive registration and scholastic continuity scheme than that outlined above: for example, a data base linked to a national network which would allow scholastic continuity for traveller children throughout the United Kingdom. There is a real need for a system ensuring continuity regardless of the number of schools the child attends, or their geographic dispersal, so that his scholastic progress can be recorded and transmitted from school to school.

Surrounded as they are by rancour and hostility, school is a uniquely positive factor in the lives of travellers. Their favourable reactions, and the support they give to the special teacher at John Perryn School, seem to confirm that the travellers themselves realise that schooling offers the best guarantee for their survival in the 21st century.

This seminar provides me with an opportunity to acquire broader knowledge through formal and informal discussion with my European colleagues. These exchanges will enable me to outline the need to develop distance learning materials for traveller children in the United Kingdom and for their teachers, one of the basic points of the question being, "for the teacher, or for the child?" and thus, "for the school, or for the house/caravan?"

Directly following this seminar, I hope to encourage the production and distribution of distance learning materials for traveller children in my own local authority area and in collaboration with other British local authorities, in connection with the setting up of the John Perryn Resource Centre. I also hope to participate in projects on a broader United Kingdom or European scale, concerning the development of distance learning materials and the use of modern technological resources. It appears to me that the use of too large a quantity of written materials is debatable. Indeed, I feel that it would be desirable to plug into travellers' oral tradition, and that distance learning materials for their use should incorporate many visual and aural elements.

Following this seminar I hope to pursue exchanges, especially with France (by pooling our material on the French minitel network) and with Hungary and Czechoslovakia through twinnings, correspondence, exchanging photographs, cassettes, videos, drawings and written work. Groups of travellers show a great interest in the lives of similar groups in other countries, and we hope that this initiative will be the first of many to come. Moreover, many travellers in the Easing group are in very frequent contact with Ireland, and thanks to them we will have an opportunity to test the usefulness of various distance learning materials, when the families travel from London to Dublin.

It would be desirable for working groups (sponsored by the Council of Europe) to be set up in every country, with the principal objective of studying the role that distance learning materials should play in the schooling process for traveller children. The possibility of direct liaison between countries via NICT should also be studied, and a framework established to facilitate dialogue, the exchange of viewpoints, and the circulation of information, as well as project evaluation and the establishment of a network.

3. CNED: THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

by Jean-Christian Plessis, Director of the CNED, Toulouse

School provision for gypsy and traveller children is an old and paradoxical problem, and one with which it is particularly difficult to come to terms.

It is an old problem because human migration is an old

phenomenon, and one which often inspires reactions of rejection, even violent rejection, from immigration countries. This in turn helps to perpetuate cultures and behaviour which are resolutely hostile to what we conventionally term "integration" today.

The problem is paradoxical, because the content of education (even the term "education" is problematical) itself automatically embodies a cultural reality determined by a specific history and political context, the values and evolution of which are not shared by nomadic populations, and because it may seem incongruous to undertake the schooling of such children without making some attempt to integrate them within "the archetypes of a society" in which they feel totally alien, and which often practices de facto segregation.

Finally, the problem is a complex one, since now more than ever the schools are no longer the main place where children learn. This is particularly evident in the case of gypsy and traveller children. Well-adjusted to a type of society in which the family - often very large - remains a powerful cultural binding agent and to a way of life which is direct, convivial and very flexible, these children are so ill at ease in our traditional schools that many families deliberately decide not to send them to school. These children, who also contribute at an early age to their families' economic well-being, are uncomfortable in the educational structures we provide for them.

The illiteracy rate among those over compulsory school age is between 65-95%. Among those attending school, backwardness increases as the level rises.

- 70% fall behind during the Preparatory Course
- 79% during Elementary Course I
- 93% during Elementary Course II
- 86% during Intermediate Course I
- 94% during Intermediate Course II

This is serious because the gaps - which can be anything from one year to six or seven at a given level - make the general school problem even more dramatic, since the educational approaches to imparting basic knowledge adopted for pupils at a certain stage in their development soon become irrelevant when the child passes into adolescence. At this point, school will almost inevitably be rejected, since it is no longer capable of rousing the learner's curiosity and holding his interest.

Over 210 gypsy and traveller children are enrolled in the CNED's elementary classes, and as many again in the Cours préparatoire. The CNED's strategy for gypsy and traveller children is based on experienced reality and aims at an individualised approach which can be divided into modules.

To accept the traveller's way of life is to concede that the school should go with him, and allow him to reconcile the various constraints of a shifting base, travel, and unconventional living conditions (schedules-seasons-space-environment). The CNED is prepared to send working materials and corrected homework to various addresses and PO boxes, or to contacts at permanent addresses (associations, grandparents, settled travellers, etc) who will forward them.

The CNED is also special in providing personalised educational follow-up. In spite of being on the road, traveller children have their work corrected and are followed throughout the year by the same teacher or teachers, who are thus able to evaluate their progress, establish genuine dialogue with them and their families, advise them and finally to guide them in their best interests given their environment. This sustained follow-up can go beyond a single school year, continuing over a full cycle (elementary or intermediate).

The teaching materials themselves are designed for individual use. The child receives very complete working materials which he can use on his own. The purchase of books or reference texts is kept to a minimum, or is unnecessary. From the time a child enrolls, the CNED supplies course materials, homework, self-correcting exercises, writing paper and envelopes.

The materials provided are becoming increasingly diversified: while most of what we do is on paper, we also have significant recourse to audio cassettes, particularly for the teaching of French and other modern languages. Pictures, colour, slides, and sometimes video and Minitel are all part of the CNED approach to education, without losing sight of the financial strains which schooling can impose on those of limited means.

Learning rates and timetables can also be adjusted to suit children:

- staggering a single year's course over two years,
- staggering two years' work over a three-year period,
- a "mixed bag" of class attendance and distance learning.

Yet the technical solutions outlined above would be mere window-dressing if teaching content and teaching methods were not themselves rethought in terms of mobility

Content first and foremost

Geared to the needs of people living in isolation, content rejects those implicit cultural values which, in the guise of uniformity, lead to the exclusion of those whose living conditions and habits are not those of the majority.

It is best to begin with familiar realities and skills already mastered: the barge, the circus, the caravan, the camp, and to work on themes where time and space count for more.

It is necessary to build on analogies and to stress such fundamental educational tools as the dictionary, the grammar-book, chronological tables, tables of contents and so on, which provide strong, reassuring anchorage and reference points.

Texts and homework subjects must be carefully chosen and clearly explained: students' research will be discreetly guided to ensure that good study habits are acquired.

The urge to communicate must be systematically exploited in the case of children whose normal companions are adults.

A constant effort will be made to familiarise learners with order, since order holds the key to mental structures, which facilitate learning: alphabetical order, chronological order, logical order.

To prepare the child for learning before he begins to learn is an absolute necessity if blockages and failures are to be avoided. This is why the educationalists who devise and prepare work materials must pay special attention to presentation, to making them legible in the broad sense of the term. Piaget, Montessori and Richaudeau all gave a great deal of thought to this aspect of things, and some of our authors at CNED have heeded what they said.

Squared layout facilitates reading because it is associated with composition in a finite framework. Left-hand margins are justified, and important words or groups of words, phrases or portions of phrases highlighted, the right-hand margin remaining unjustified. The child will reproduce these models spontaneously, and gradually learn to marshal his arguments, develop them, and put them in logical order.

When teaching materials are planned as carefully as this, the teachers who correct the pupil's work later on must obviously be rigorously chosen. They must themselves master the techniques, take responsibility for a limited number of pupils and stay with them throughout the year, and pool their experience in dialogue with other educators. The CNED has developed structures of this type under the title Individualised Classes. It has also set up Guidance Classes, which have the merit of removing the child from the infernal cycle of having to repeat and reject teaching materials which are too childish.

In this type of class, ability testing measures pupils' maturity as soon as they enrol, and indicates module courses suitable for each. The themes chosen are based on the adolescent's or adult's own experience (cf *Lutte contre*

l'illettrisme). In recent years, the CNED has come up with original products likely to interest travelling populations because they rely on a horizontal approach which goes to the heart of the subject, while allowing the learner to seek aid in ways which are not perceived as regression or failure. The main means of doing this is summer courses which are enjoying a lively success: the "aim-based" teaching approach. These summer courses set out to reactivate what has already been learned for the purpose of getting pupils up to par by the beginning of the school year. The CNED also offers support courses in elementary and primary cycle classes. These courses function autonomously and have strongly play-oriented, individualised connotations. They take as their starting point the idea that other routes, situations and approaches must be used to get round failure at school.

Finally, it may be worth pointing out, in the European context of our meeting, that the CNED has been running an early-learning English course (from age 8 up) since the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year, and is now setting up teaching teams to extend the early-learning programme to other modern European languages: Spanish, Italian and German. A quick course in French in two age-groups (7-11 and 11-15) makes it possible to integrate children who do not speak French immediately into the right classes for their age.

The CNED must also keep in touch with the progress of communication technology and provide nomadic children with products which are up-to-date and easily accessible. The success of videos, CDs, microcomputers and telematics must be allowed for. These tools have obvious educational applications, and the CNED has been working for some years on the following developments:

- producing video cassettes, with possibility of video transmissions from the Futureoscope site at Poitiers;
- ongoing testing of educational software suitable for a maximum number of learners;
- telematic classes and the use of E-mail are now operational.

This opens the door to human contact and satisfied the demands of socialisation we mentioned at the beginning of this talk. In conclusion, I would stress the originality of the CNED approach, which builds on the situation of travelling families in adapting its resources, means, methods and functioning for the purpose of integrating the children entrusted to it:

- involving families in the education process;
- broadening and enriching the child's cultural field by providing high-quality materials;

- ensuring follow-up and positive validation;
- developing the child's own autonomy and reversing the terms of the problem by emphasising the personal work and individual approach, which can fit neatly into a rhythm of life which is quite different from that of sedentary pupils, but without neglecting the essentials of training and qualifications;
- and finally, providing a second chance for young gypsies and travellers who, having reached adulthood, require vocational qualifications, and so need a reliable, individualised, low-cost teaching system.

4. TEACHING GYPSY PUPILS

The view from Eastern Europe: HUNGARY

by Tibor Derdák

The author is a teacher and a member of the Hungarian parliament, President of *Fii cui noi* (a cultural organisation for Romanian-speaking gypsies), and President of the Raoul Wallenberg Association (an organisation for the defence of minority rights). Discussion attended by Zsuzsanna Ortös, a teacher at Pecs.

Differences

There are a great many more gypsies in Eastern than in Western Europe: in some regions they represent 5-10% of the population.

The overwhelming majority are sedentary: there are few nomads nowadays.

Gypsies have settled mainly in the country: to date, few have settled in cities.

The diversity of mother tongues spoken by the different gypsy communities (for example, there are some 30,000 Romanian-speaking Baias in Hungary) means that education must inevitably take place through the mother tongue.

Interests common to the nations of Europe

The process of European unification is already a source of sufficient social tension; no one needs a massive influx of people with no vocational training. Gypsies must therefore be integrated in the countries where they are presently living.

Statistics show that the gypsies constitute Europe's third world; thankfully, this third world is relatively small, and therefore easy to help.

Hungary 1971: age-group percentages

<u>Age groups</u>	<u>Gypsies</u>	<u>Hungarian population as a whole</u>
0-14	44.2%	22.3%
15-59	48.0%	61.3%
over 60	7.8%	16.4%

Hungary 1980: proportions of gypsies attending various types of schools

Pre-school	3.2%
General school (6-14 age group)	6.0%
- first year of general school (age 6)	7.7%
- eighth year of general school (age 14)	3.8%
Special schools for slow learners	32.0%
Secondary school (14-18 age group)	0.2%

Distance learning

Distance learning is indispensable for nomadic children. But it is also useful for children who - although sedentary - are so far removed from 20th century civilisation that communication between them and the school systems causes serious problems. For example, there is a need for teaching materials in the languages of the various gypsy communities. These could be used in schools where gypsy children and teachers have different mother tongues.

Distance learning and education follow-up are worthless if follow-up is purely technical and simply means posting off copy-books, textbooks, and audio or video cassettes. Real teaching requires the regular or at least part-time - but at any rate personal - presence of a teacher with a personality of his own, with whom the pupil can form an emotional bond. A united Europe will need courageous, polyglot teachers who cross national boundaries to ensure that personal relationships of this kind develop between pupils and voluntary teachers. This mobile team should make sure that every travelling child is in touch with a voluntary teacher

5. DISTANCE LEARNING: THE OPTE EXPERIENCE

Guy Gouardères, Director of the API Laboratory,
University of Toulouse

I. OPTE and the promotion of new education technologies for distance learning

I.1 OPTE's objectives: media-based distance learning. OPTE was set up in 1987. It tries to co-ordinate the resources and skills of partners from universities and industry for the purpose of promoting mastery of education technologies based on the multi-media approach and computers. This general

objective finds its justification in the problems caused by delocalisation of teaching. To this end, OPTE has set up a pragmatic and open partnership structure, and its operations reflect this policy.

The challenge:

* Basic, in-service and vocational training is having to cover ever-vaster, more complex and rapidly changing fields. Faced with this challenge, public and private bodies and particularly medium-sized businesses, are having great difficulty in ensuring that training does what it is meant to do.

* In France, the predicted number of secondary school-leavers in the year 2000, and the prospect of pan-European training from 1992, mean that the structures, methods and resources of today's education system will have to change completely.

Distance learning, with the assistance of new tools for mass communication, can help to solve these problems.

The advantages:

* Geographical "delocalisation" of both teachers and taught reduces costs and increases the potential teaching area.

* Temporal "delocalisation" can remove the incompatibility between learning activity and doing a job.

* Making the teacher an indirect presence can help to relieve certain economic, social and psychological obstacles.

* Quantity - with no increase in resources, the amount of training provided can be doubled or trebled.

* Quality - this is improved by making teaching more "personal".

The drawbacks:

These may seem to outweigh the advantages. However, if techniques are properly mastered and used, the significance of these negative factors should be greatly reduced.

* The dehumanising effects of lack of dialogue and inter-personal exchange between teachers and taught cannot be eliminated, but they can be alleviated (ie by aural input and output, "smart" tutors ...).

* Lack of interaction and "hands on" practice (little immediate feedback and contact with the field of study, especially in the experimental sciences) can be partially

overcome by combining various media, and "opening up" the products, enabling them to connect and interlink directly.

- * It should be possible to prevent "fossilisation" of methods and content, caused by the media's difficulties in adapting, by broadening the potential consumer base, targeting training programmes, and using software engineering techniques.

I.2 OPTE: a flexible training organisation

OPTE exists at three levels, the first two of which are operational.

- * An agreement linking French and Spanish universities in the Pyrenean region;

- * Participation by firms which produce and/or use CAL in the broad sense;

- * An association for producers and users in the CAL and related technical fields.

The function of this partnership is to co-ordinate an international programme for the production of educational software, the training of personnel and firms developing and/or using these tools, and support for firms. The participants draw on their work on new types of training and on teaching aids for this training. They offer a coherent package of transfrontier operations to cover the setting-up of delocalised multi-media services.

OPTE at the service of local and regional authorities and firms: OPTE's task here is to provide information for elected representatives and to help them in their decisions on distance learning and educational technology. More specifically, under the heading "Technology Watch", it has:

- * done research on the functions and techniques of a distance learning centre,

- * organised seminars in the Haute Garonne, Ariège and Tarn,

- * established contacts with the european SATURN and ERASMUS programmes,

- * produced reports and studies on various meetings of education technology experts.

Moreover, within the framework of SATURN and other research projects:

- * OPTE oversees the planning and production of teaching aids and arranges the necessary technology transfers;

* OPTE structures and supports the participation of its university and business partners in European projects (ie COMETT, SPRINT, DELTA ...);

* OPTE offers services, expert guidance and training. It could supervise the planning of a media-based distance learning centre.

I.3 The media-based distance learning centre

In some fields where training personnel are in short supply, where technical aspects predominate, and where part of the training process can be "delegated" to computers, CAL (computer-assisted learning) can become a factor in economic and social progress. Another essential factor is delocalisation both in time (staggered training) and space (distance learning), bringing the best institutional and professional training to the greatest possible number and thus the least well-off.

New technologies which can be used in distance learning:

* office automation and desk-top publishing: word-processing, computer-assisted publishing, telephone, telex, fax, the memory card;

* educational applications of computers. The "classic" applications: teaching data-processing, office automation etc ... computer-assisted learning (CAL), simulation, analysis et al. The computer as communication instrument: local, national and international networks; telematics (Minitel) and electronic courier service (E-mail); computer-assisted teleconferencing (CATC); computer-structured communication (CSE: generalised data bases, texts, sound, pictures ...);

* telecommunications and video: television, video both classic and interactive (computer-assisted), digital imagery giving pictures a new role in training.

Every one of these media has its own advantages and drawbacks but, taken as a whole, these various elements constitute a very powerful new instrument which seems well-suited to the needs of a large but widely dispersed body of users.

Multi-media teaching today

Immersed in a rapidly developing communication society, confronting increasingly complex technological challenges, training in Europe is on the move. The recent success of major European multi-media training projects linking universities and businesses (such as COMETT '88, COMETT '89, DELTA etc) shows that the aims are clearly perceived and accepted. This general approach is echoed in the following national initiatives:

* the general theme of the *Université du Ministère de l'Education nationale* at Carcans-Maubuisson: "The school of tomorrow: on the threshold of a Europe of education" (2/9/88);

* the PROTEE Foundation for the promotion of educational technology;

* the setting up of a working party on this theme at AFCET; the first French-language association of computer experts.

The regions have also grasped the need to develop the new kind of training to keep pace with media developments:

* in the Rhône-Alpes region, the ARDEMI programme for the development of CAL (computer-assisted learning) has a catalogue of educational software for vocational training;

* in the Lorraine region, CLEO (Lorraine CAL centre) is an association of firms which set out to provide assistance with the production of educational software;

* in the Midi-Pyrénées region, the "Ville Franches 2000" programme covers a rapid access "Numéris" network for training purposes;

* in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region, ORCEP is a research, counselling and experimental structure for the mastery of new education technologies.

II. EXPERIENCE OF TEACHING USING NEW EDUCATION TECHNOLOGIES

Instead of looking at a wide range of experiences with different technologies and media, we think it better to sketch the development of computer networks as a means of distance learning. We will start by considering some of the best-known examples in the world, and then describe the state-of-the-art in Europe, including our own experience in providing training and information for distance learning.

II.1 Computer networks and education

The international context

The following examples have been chosen to illustrate a wide range of regional, national and international applications, as well as a broad diversity of uses in fields which differ in subject, level or complexity:

* In England and the United States, computer networks have been in use since 1986 for educational communication purposes, using an E-mail system between children at both primary and secondary levels. Results in terms of distance:cost are encouraging, but co-ordinating programmes and teaching teams remains a major problem. Classes and

structures in traditional schools are not geared to distance teaching, and the computer cannot be the preferred interlocutor under these circumstances. There are also similar projects on a smaller scale, such as "Campus 2000" (Derbyshire), which uses E-mail as a sort of educational "time out" centred on group discovery games, especially in connection with language learning;

* In the United States a programme of this type, the "Inter-cultural network", allows American, Israeli and Japanese pupils to participate in activities, focusing on environmental and ecological problems - water, for example. There are plans to extend the programme to include pollution, eating habits, etc ... In the state of Michigan, there is a "massive" programme involving 200 schools, which seems to gear approaches to educational problems to the needs of different sectors of the population (urban/rural, blue collar/white collar ...). The University of Michigan provided scientific and logistic back-up, notably by organising "case study simulations", a sort of scaled-up socio-cultural version of "Monopoly". A full-scale experiment involving schoolchildren, adults and the authorities, took place on similar themes in Santa Monica (California). On this occasion, one major defect distorted the experiment to a certain degree: the relative sophistication of the E-mail system, which pupils and administrative personnel were well able to manage, mystified many elected representatives and ordinary citizens. Yet another American experiment, this time at university level, involves setting up a "class" shared by two groups of students, one at the Uppsala Teacher Training College and the other at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. This class is based on broader inter-computer communication than E-mail. Teleloading and messaging (direct links between several participants) play an important part in this system, as does traditional CAL for individual activities;

* There are also many experiments in Europe. England has a definite lead here with some hundred projects, some of which (ie the Open University) have been operational for a number of years. A few deserving special mention are:

- the 100 Schools Network Project, similar to Campus 2000 mentioned above, but involving Scottish schools only,
- Chatback, specially designed for the blind,
- British Telecom Electronic Writing Board, which is operated by telephone connected to a writing board and television screen.

But teacher training colleges and universities are the main beneficiaries of major programmes - so much so that most English universities now have at least one education programme with a multi-media base. The leader is still the Open University, which has over 130,000 distance learners

throughout the world, and makes a very wide use of audio and video aids and of micro-computer networks.

Most European countries are setting up similar establishments of their own: the Dutch Open University, Universidade Aberta at Lisbon, Jutland Open University (Denmark) etc. In France, a report recently submitted to the Minister for National Education recommends the setting up of regional open universities based on new technologies and especially computer networks. Some experiments are already under way, few in number but using very advanced technologies.

In France, a number of significant factors have favoured the development of these technologies. First of all videotex, via teletel, provides a unique platform for the development of varied education services at a relatively lower cost than in other countries. A favourable climate was created by the convergence of initiatives taken by the public sector (inter-ministerial tenders for multi-media training), producers of media-based teaching aids (such as DIDAO, INA, IMEDIA) and private concerns (Vendôme, EDF-GDF, Nathan, Hatier ...). The best-known experiments are:

- "Educable" cable television and the Teletel network managed by the CNDP. This programme operates on the Montpellier site, and links 15 schools to a 400-film video library service (CNDP) transmitted by cable and backed by a videotex service which can be accessed by Minitel;
- CNED, supported by the CCETT (France Telecom and Télévision de France). This is a comprehensive experiment in the use of computer networks, since all the available multi-media instruments (CD-ROM, videodiscs) are used in conjunction with local networks and hi-speed links at 64 Kb/sec for the simultaneous transmission of text, picture and sound.

The most important videotex experiments are those conducted by DIDAO and CNAM, and particularly that initiated by PPST-CNAM in Toulouse and implemented by the API Laboratory:

* DIDAO TEL, a teletel service service which provides some 5,000 subscribers with several hundred hours of secondary level instruction (in French, maths ...). An increase in videotex charges has, however, reduced the demand for this service.

* In the Pays de la Loire district, the CNAM has, on Alain Meyer's initiative, introduced a teletel service for its auditors by linking a traditional learning centre with a local activity centre via teletel and connecting them to the main centre in Nantes by computer network.

II.2 Multi-media and distance learning in OPTE

The experience of the API Laboratory

The Université Paul Sabatier set up the API Laboratory (API = Apprentissage, Pédagogie, Intelligence artificielle: learning, educational science, artificial intelligence) to develop research in these areas. The laboratory itself concluded the OPTE agreement, linking:

- 4 French universities (Toulouse III, Pau, Bordeaux I, Montpellier);
- 4 Spanish universities (Saragossa, San Sebastian, Barcelona, Bilbao);
- and the universities of Northern Portugal (Graga, Porto, Villa Real).

The laboratory has been working since 1987 on learning system design, and is studying the automated production of learning environments using artificial intelligence (Smart Tutor Systems) and multi-media (local networks connected to interactive videodisc). At the request of the IPST-CNAM Centre in Toulouse, the laboratory has developed a videotex service for distance training in accountancy: SEMIEC I (an acronym for Integrated Multi-media Service for Accountancy training).

The goal is to set up a complete training service in accountancy and business administration. This is intended for CNAM students who are prevented by work commitments, and particularly distance, from attending normal evening classes. It is based on schemes already carried out by OPTE (SVI-SVE) and on similar projects by other OPTE partners. More specifically, the media and resources deployed consist of:

1. a data-bank of teleloadable courses, a data-bank of courses directly available via TP or Minitel;
2. a bank of exercise data;
3. a lexicographic base;
4. a bibliographical base;
5. a press review service;
6. a news digest service;
7. an exercise correction base;
8. a courier service: electronic notice board;
9. E-mail message service.

Each aspect of this environment corresponds to a teaching structure (a course). The overall environment enables independent structures to coexist harmoniously, and makes it possible to manage access as author, teacher, administrator and student. This application will have to be made portable so that distance learning access points can be multiplied.

SEMIEC I was evaluated with reference to 190 auditors in the Toulouse, Montpellier and Mende regions. Analysis of the questionnaires shows a high degree of satisfaction (70% "very satisfied", with keen appreciation of the quality/price ratio (the annual subscription to the service was 200 FF). There was some criticism of the Minitel response delay, and of the time taken by teachers to respond (sometimes 24 hours or more) when asked for help via the electronic notice board. Results obtained through conscientious use of the service were also cross-checked against a control sample (traditional methods). Here too, those who used the service fully had better results than those who used it very little or not at all.

Among other products, we have produced an interactive videodisc combining pictures and programming and opening the way to active learning with verification of results. We have also devised a product which hunting associations can use to train new members and prepare them for their examinations. This is mainly intended, however, as the prototype of a series of similar products which can be used in a wide range of varied fields. In technical terms, the product comprises a half hour of video images, on which an hour-long computerised programme of questions and answers in graphic or text form is superimposed. The visual content was largely based on existing material in the API Laboratory's VIDEOINDEX system, and this allowed us to keep maximum resources both for direct filming and video montage. Video production costs are significantly lowered by drawing on videotheque material and using computers to work out and plan scenarios and shooting scripts. Total production costs for an hour-long interactive video, ready to use and with its own accompanying computer programme, come to about 200,000 FF. This may seem enormous, but becomes reasonable when one considers the number of images (over 100,000), the audio back-up (40 minutes of direct, voice-over commentary, and the accompanying textual information bank.

SEAO (*Système d'Enseignement Assisté par Ordinateur*: computer-assisted learning system) is the computerised piloting programme produced for the videodisc by the API laboratory. It was modified by adding a user-friendly interface of the "mouse" or joystick type, which can replace the keyboard for use by non-specialists. The programme is fully modular and can pilot several video discs and/or other audio-visual peripherals (slides, video cassettes). An expert system can also be used to analyse student responses or to pilot training sequences. Although not part of the prototype described, an expert systems generator can also be supplied

with SEAO. The whole system provides a learning environment which is original and, to the best of our knowledge, unique in combining exceptional multi-media capacity with the possibility given the student of generating "smart" dialogue.

In short, the interactive videodisc clearly illustrates the potential of the new multi-media technologies for both professional and non-specialised training. Production costs for the "matrix" are still relatively high, but the unit cost for 20 copies is exactly the same as that of traditional training methods, and becomes considerably less after 50 copies.

III. SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

As it now operates, OPTE has shown that it is capable of bringing together and providing the technical skills needed by institutions, local and regional authorities and businesses in the matter of distance learning and New Education Technologies. OPTE has also adapted successfully to new developments, such as the increased involvement of young people or analysis of problems associated with use of computers for teaching purposes in teacher training colleges. In the medium term, OPTE aims to strengthen its involvement in local projects such as Villes Franches 2000, and participate in European programmes such as ERASMUS, DELTA, LINGUA. In the long term, its contribution to establishment of a Regional Mediopolis as an aid to multi-media distance learning will mark full realisation of the aims it has set itself.

6. THE SITUATION OF THE ROM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by Stanislav Zeman, Counsellor to the Chancellor of State
in Václav Havel's Private Office

It is my pleasant duty to tell you that our President, Václav Havel, has sent a message to this conference. I am thus speaking for him when I tell you that several nationalities are represented in our country: Polish, Hungarian, German, Russian and Gypsy. Our President is a champion of the rights of peoples, and feels strongly that every nationality in Czechoslovakia, and throughout the world, must be guaranteed its rights: the right to develop its own political, social and cultural system. "As President of Czechoslovakia, a country free after 42 years, I venture to wish you the best of luck. Yours, Václav Havel."

The essence of democracy is peaceful and egalitarian co-existence of all citizens, regardless of their affiliations. The proclaiming of the Czechoslovak Government presupposes protection of civil rights regardless of a person's origin. This is a very real issue for the Rom in Czechoslovakia. For them, it means solving a number of political, economic, social and cultural problems in a broad new sense. We want to play an active part in the social and

democratic process, but the government must provide the conditions which allow us to do so.

In the educational field, we want to develop a new system, and this will involve training teams of specialists - psychologists, sociologists, educationalists, ethnologists and doctors - in order to gain a better understanding of all aspects of gypsy life. There are certain problems:

- in Slovakia, some gypsy communities do not speak Slovak, and this leads to illiteracy: since the language is unfamiliar, comprehension is difficult;
- gypsy children cannot prepare for school: their home situation is a difficult one, in dark, unhealthy, overcrowded conditions;
- living standards are low; adult illiteracy runs at about 70%, which means that parents cannot help their children;
- gypsy children are restless, and need to express themselves in music and movement.

To deal with all these factors, a new system must be developed at all three levels: preschool, primary and secondary.

At pre-school level, Rom children must be integrated into nursery schools. To overcome language problems, teachers should have gypsy assistants - young girls with educational training who can act as intermediaries and especially interpreters. Teaching will be geared to intensive development of Czech or Slovak, allowing gypsy children to attain the proficiency of their Czech and Slovak peers. Nursery schools will need the help of specialists here, because the pronunciation of Romani is very different from that of Czech and Slovak, and children need to be prepared for this. The children will also be taught hygiene and will attend regularly. They will attend nursery school between the ages of 4 and 6.

When a child's level is already such that he does not need to attend the Romani class, he can be integrated into a Czech or Slovak class. Nursery schools can encourage parental involvement by organising activity programmes and entertainment for the children. The high point of the year will be a 15-day holiday camp for pre-school children and their parents, especially the mothers. There will be programmes for parents as well as children at these camps, and this will ensure that mothers also get some instructions. Several camps are held during the school year, and a session attended by the teacher who will be taking first class is held before the beginning of the school year. This introduces parents and children to the subjects taught in first class,

and to the teacher herself, making the transition to school less of a leap in the dark for the children. The teacher's next task is to develop the child's confidence in himself and in his abilities.

At primary level, children who are behind will have to be given continued special tuition by the teacher and the gypsy assistant with teacher training. The children will have many hours of physical and musical education, and intensive language preparation. In learning to read and write, they will have to use materials based on Romani. While the teacher tries to make Czech or Slovak accessible to the children, the assistant will teach them something about nationality and traditions. Children will not be burdened with homework, which they would not be able to do, but the first hour of every school day will always be devoted to going over the material covered the previous day.

Classes follow this pattern for the first three years of primary school, while children are overcoming the problems caused by their different social background. Rom children who do not complete the third year successfully will repeat, under stricter conditions and with special tuition; alternatively, they may be sent to a special school. From fourth class onwards, the study of Romani - in a standardised, literary form - may be introduced in classes with a significant number of Rom children. In the last two or three weeks of the summer holiday, children who are entering second or third class attend a summer camp, where the teacher informally reviews the material covered the previous year and prepares them for the year ahead. This camp is run in conjunction with the camp for pre-schoolers and their mothers.

At present, there is also a need, particularly for gypsy children in primary schools but also for children in special schools, for school clubs and school sponsorship schemes throughout the school year, with tutors providing special help for Rom pupils, especially with homework when the child's home situation makes it hard for him to work there. From the second half-year of first class, special music classes should be provided wherever there are significant numbers of Rom children, allowing them to study music and dance. Many specialists, especially professional musicians and members of folk ensembles, will be needed to run these classes, which will be operative from the second half of 1991.

Secondary education must develop rapidly in two different directions. The first involves preparing Rom pupils, building on their talents, and providing them with non-traditional instruction, and especially a gypsy conservatoire which would develop their musical abilities. School should provide a forum for the training of pupils of professional musicians, and this will condition the development of musical talent among the young.

The second derives from the fact that not all gypsy pupils are academically successful, and that many do not even complete primary schooling - especially girls between the ages of 14 and 17, many of whom are pregnant at this age. Girls can attend a three-year high school, with boarding facilities for those from outside the locality. Girls must attend school nearly every day, with the afternoons given over to sports and club activities. Emphasis is placed on mastering the Czech or Slovak language. Other subjects include music, the arts, psychology, educational science, domestic science, child care, preparation for motherhood, cooking, aesthetics, physical education, dancing, sport, etc.

Fourth year classes must work with specialists to secure diplomas in such fields as cookery, educational science, and health education. In this way the Rom can overcome social inequality in a single generation. For many years they have been viewed negatively on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes. In future, these conceptions must be dropped, and the Rom's needs satisfied in a positive way: the heart of the new vision of society must be realisation that gypsy difference is ethnic, not social or pathological.

I want to go back to what our President said about this conference, about co-operation. We want to draw on the wealth of experience which you have accumulated, and, for this purpose, I would like to invite the Council of Europe representatives and other participants to visit our country. I can also speak for our President in welcoming anyone who can work together with us. Mr Havel is no mere formal head of state, but a true representative who is always prepared to talk to people, be they factory workers or university rectors.

* * *

Ondrej Gina, General Secretary of the Gypsy Party of the Czech Republic, member of the Czech parliament

We want to preserve our Rom identity, but we also want our gypsies to play a full part in the social and political life of the community.

We do not want to forget all our traditions and our culture. That is why we are eager to know everything about them. That is why we have drawn up programmes telling the Government what it is we want to do.

I am a member of the Czech parliament, and I have already put all these ideas to the government. Of course we are willing to do everything that any other Czech citizen does, but we also want a life of our own. For example, with regard to education, I have already been in contact with various bodies to explain our concept of the education system.

We are telling you exactly what we think ourselves, but

this does not mean that we are not interested in your criticisms - far from it! As a member of parliament, I - like other gypsies - am very grateful for the thought that our Government is putting into education for gypsies. Co-operative projects may develop, and the Czech Government may join in setting up a gypsy cultural centre.

I expect a great deal from the Government - and not just the Czechoslovak Government. I have been listening. I am pleased that we are being thought about, that something is being done for us. And everything that I have learned here, I will tell my people.

(Ondrej Gina's talk was given in Romani and interpreted by Vania de Gila Kochanowski, who also distributed a text "The Four Gypsy Enigmas" to participants, and commented on it. Its opening lines referred to the seminar: "None of us will deny the usefulness of distance learning nor, in general, of modern technology, a wonderful means of diffusing knowledge in the service of research and education. But you will agree with me when I say that computers and other technological tools are, after all, only tools; they must be handled by specialists and, in the case of distance learning for gypsy children, by specialists in that particular type of teaching.")

IV. CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOPS

Group 1

Chairperson	Arlette Laurent-Fahier	France
Rapporteur	Jos Carrette	Belgium
	Vania de Gila-Kochanowski	France
	Antoine Fernández	France
	Jean-Paul Gerbaud	France
	Georges Kautzmann	France
	Jean-Louis Lipovac	France
	Lourdes Gil	Portugal
	Maggy Maurin	France
	Françoise Mingot	France
	Elisabeth Perrin	France
	Georges Viccini	France
	Sacha Zanki	France

1. It is urgently necessary that the various states should implement the resolution of 22 May 1989 on school provision for gypsy and traveller children; they have done nothing to date, and a significant influx can be expected from Eastern Europe. A European funding programme is thus indispensable.

School provision for gypsy and traveller children is not just a matter for Ministries of Education. The difficulties involved are essentially due to the parents' socio-economic difficulties, and to their lifestyle if they are nomadic (unfamiliarity with the language of the host country).

The various statements and reports, especially the account of the Portuguese experiment with teaching which accepts and encourages bilingualism, special school hours (afternoons), literacy training for women, and the use of audiovisual aids (by television), suggest that the following are the priorities:

- ensuring that policy-makers and the general public in every country are given full and accurate information;
- providing properly equipped guidance centres;
- recruiting and training specialist trainers and community workers, both gypsy and non-gypsy.

2. School provision for gypsy and traveller children involves:

- first, learning to read with the help of primary teachers and community workers specially trained for this work, with adequate materials at their disposal;
- secondly, integration in the school systems of the

various countries whose languages the children need to learn.

3. Distance learning also presupposes this preliminary literacy training with a primary teacher. Distance learning can meet all the child's schooling needs only in cases where the child has no access to an on-the-spot school network. Every country must impart the whole of its culture to all its citizens, gypsies and travellers included. Gypsies must also acquire gypsy culture via family tradition and also via person-to-person and distance instruction.

Distance learning should enable gypsies and travellers to learn about their own culture, present it to others and so engage in exchange with the various communities they encounter.

Distance learning will particularly be used to provide in-service training for teachers, educationalists and community workers who will be working on-site or dealing with young gypsies and travellers in the classroom. A teaching programme geared to distance learning and aimed at such personnel should be developed as a priority. This programme should also ensure pedagogical follow-up when locations change.

4. This programme is on a European scale: both in origins and lifestyle these communities transcend national boundaries, and their story parallels the transformation and growth of Europe past, present and future.

Most gypsies may at present live within a single country, but tomorrow's context will be the whole of Europe, finally freed of the age-old constraint of national frontiers.

4.2 The project would have three aims:

- to provide specialised training for primary teachers and community workers;
- to help to make all gypsies and travellers literate by providing long-range educational follow-up;
- to encourage research on the history, language and culture, and also the economic influence of gypsies, so as to facilitate harmonious exchange with sedentary populations in various parts of Europe.

4.3 The project will be run by a special commission with maximum participation of gypsy and traveller organisations and representatives of the various ministries concerned.

4.4 Course content and teaching methods will have to be defined in a specification drawn up by the commission in collaboration with the various specialised authorities.

4.5 Technical resources and their ever-increasing sophistication will have to be adjusted to match field realities and each of the projects objectives.

Group 2

Joint chair-)	Danielle Mercier	France
manship and)	Zsuzsanna Orsös	Hungary
compilation)	Margaret Wood	United Kingdom
of report by:)		
	Tibor Derdák	Hungary
	Ondrej Gina	Czechoslovakia
	Guy Gouardères	France
	Alain Guichard	France
	Françoise Ventresque	France
	Jean-Piere Vialettes	France
	Jean Vilane	France
	Stanislav Zeman	Czechoslovakia

Although lack of a common language caused some communication problems, we felt that the discussions in our group were extremely valuable for us all. We wish to make the following proposals:

A. Where educational follow-up is concerned, we think that maximum use should be made of existing resources and of the following:

- *exchanges, twinning, postal contacts etc between schools, within a broadened European context;

- *school records, data-sheets and textbooks which foster continuity of learning;

- *formal and informal networks of teachers and resource persons;

- *development of modern technologies adapted to gypsy and traveller cultural content (history, Romani and other languages) aimed at promoting an intercultural approach.

B. We would also like to see the following developed:

- *the training of gypsy and non-gypsy teachers in a common, interactive framework;

- *the training of resource persons (youth educators, nursery school assistants etc) from the gypsy communities, all paid on the same scales;

- *paired learning for children and young people from different communities, using new approaches which allow for family mobility and discontinuity in schooling.

C. We would like to see:

*an international training centre specialising in gypsy culture and languages, and awarding a European diploma which the various national authorities would recognise and ratify;

*European bursaries for training and exchanges.

D. We feel that it is essential to meet the educational needs of adolescents who have so far benefited very little from formal education. Here we recommend use of the new technologies in flexible, modular forms, which seem to us well-suited to the needs of travellers:

*greater temporal or locational flexibility;

*evening classes;

*mobile education units with modern equipment (Minitel, television, computers) run by trained staff with adequate budgets. (Such a project would have the advantage of catering for children and adults who travel in groups at certain times or year-round, depending on their needs.)

E. Finally, we suggest that a European competition be organised in consultation with gypsy organisations and gypsy parliamentarians to highlight the creativity of young gypsies in the following fields: music, dance, singing, painting, cooking, poetry, sculpture, etc.

Group 3

Chairperson	Françoise Malique	France
Rapporteur	Jesús Arzubialde	Spain
	Michael Baldwin	United Kingdom
	Jean-Hughes Brinon	France
	Françoise Daudignon	France
	Solange Denègre	France
	Patricia Doublet	France
	Benoît Gramond	France
	Joël Grimaud	France
	Fabienne Haziza	France
	Rosa Madeiros	Portugal
	André Morzel	France
	Bernadette Richard	France

Proposals

- need for effective co-ordination between those who frame national educational policies and manage European funds to ensure that individual pupil needs are catered for more effectively in consultation with gypsies and practitioners;

- a committee to ensure that the Council of Europe's recommendations are implemented as soon as possible in every member state;

- the training needs of NITC (new information and communication technology) users would seem to be a priority, so that they can link into the European network (trying out methods, training sessions, pupil follow-up etc);

- NICT can now be used to inform, increase awareness among, train and provide follow-up at European level for all policy-makers, and to help non-gypsy society to improve its attitudes. The intercultural programmes developed in a European co-ordinating centre equipped with NITC would be distributed (with Romani translations) in the various countries;

- cross-disciplinary working groups (leaving methodological disputes behind) should be established; the various partners must be involved.

Follow-up

- the goal of organising school provision in consultation with the families is to provide gypsy children, whether in school or not, with classes which will allow them to take their studies as far as they can. Cultural values and ways of life will be taken into account while aiming for positive integration into ordinary schools. NICT-assisted teaching would be used to complement schooling which is inevitably discontinuous. This distance learning would - with or without the help of a mediator, gypsy or non-gypsy - give the child more control over his own studies;

- family involvement is indispensable in co-ordinating the various forms of educational follow-up (using NITC or other media). Consultation between teachers and gypsy parents will also undoubtedly lead to better schooling through mutual agreement;

- it is fundamental that research (university or other) on transdisciplinary education should underlie teacher training. This training would give teachers a whole range of educational approaches, allowing the child to choose his own learning strategies as his career progresses;

- a European campaign highlighting the whole issue of school provision for gypsy and traveller children should also be organised at all levels (multi-media).

Group 4

Rapporteur	Michel Martin	France
	Maria Alcaloïde	France
	Pascale Anglade	France
	Marie Cannizzo	France
	Robert Carvell	United Kingdom
	Pascal Colon	France
	Eva Danysz	France
	Jennie Ducloux	France
	Nicole Duzelier	France
	Alain Gazio	France
	Marianne Hauser	Switzerland
	Annie Huvet	France
	Christian Nau	France
	Breandan O'Coingheallaigh	Ireland
	Koen Van Ryckeghem	Belgium
	Suzanne Westermann	Switzerland

PRELIMINARY

The predicted influx of some 12,000 people from Eastern Europe should impress upon us the urgency of the situation.

Our workshop accordingly thinks it more necessary and opportune than ever that the European institutions should acquire the resources essential to structured school provision, including distance learning, for gypsy and traveller children.

The Carcassonne Resolution

See report of the group on "Co-ordination in the European Community" in School Provision for Gypsy and Traveller Children: Action-Research and Co-ordination, Aude Teacher Training College, Carcassonne, France, 5-12 July 1989, p. 249). No action has been taken at Community level. The required co-ordination has not been implemented.

The Aix-en-Provence Resolution (seminar, December 1990)

Establishment of a European Co-ordinating and Resource Centre for Distance Learning; this will be consulted on matters relating to school provision for gypsy and traveller children.

Responsibilities

1. Co-ordination of training and information programmes, production of teaching aids, distribution;
2. Consultation on matters relating to school provision for gypsy and traveller children.

Structure

- central headquarters
- national offices
- regional, provincial, county etc sub-offices (depending on national structures).

Finance

In order to develop distance learning, it is essential that the Council of Europe provides funding for establishment of this centre. The centre will control its own expenditure.

Permanent staff

- a co-ordinator
- a financial administrator
- a technical expert
- interpreters/translators
- educationalists

to be appointed by a management board set up for this purpose.

Expectations 1991

The members of the workshop hope that the present resolution will be looked at carefully by the authorities concerned.

Evaluation

To be arranged later at some future international meeting.

A P P E N D I X 1

Documentation: texts published by the Commission of the European Communities and by the Council of Europe on school provision for gypsy and traveller children

1. School provision for gypsy and traveller children, Jean-Pierre Liégeois, summary report on a study carried out in the states of the European Community. Commission of the European Communities, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Documents Series, 1987, for the English language version. (Also available in French, German, Italian and Spanish*.)
2. School provision for gypsy and traveller children: orientation document for reflection and for action, published by the Commission of the European Communities, Document V/500/88, generally distributed and published in several European journals. (Also available in Castillian, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Valencian.)
3. Gypsies and travellers: socio-cultural data, socio-political data, Jean-Pierre Liégeois, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 1987**. Original French edition, *Tsiganes et voyageurs*, Council of Europe, 1985**. Spanish edition, *Gitanos y itinerantes*, Presencia Gitana, Madrid; Italian edition, *Zingari e Viaggianti*, Lacio Drom, Roma; Portuguese edition, *Ciganos e Itinerantes*, Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa, Lisbon. Other language versions in preparation.
4. The training of teachers of gypsy children, report of the 20th Council of Europe seminar, Donaueschingen 20-25 June 1983. Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, DECS/EGT (83) 63. (English, French and German editions, Council of Europe, Strasbourg***; Spanish edition, Presencia Gitana, Madrid; Italian edition, Lacio Drom, Roma.)
5. Schooling for gypsies' and travellers' children: evaluating innovation, report of the 35th Council of Europe seminar, Donaueschingen, 18-23 May 1987. Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, DECS/EGT (87) 36. (English, French and German editions, Council of Europe, Strasbourg***; Spanish edition, Presencia Gitana, Madrid; Italian version, Lacio Drom, Roma.)
6. Gypsy children in school: training for teachers and other personnel, report of a summer university organised by the Gypsy Research Centre (Centre de recherches tsiganes) at Montauban, France, 4-8 July 1988. English and French editions, Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, DECS/EGT (88) 42***. Companion report, Les enfants tsiganes à l'école: la formation des personnels de l'Education nationale, summer university held in Montauban, July 1988 by the Centre de recherches tsiganes. Available, in French only,

from the Centre départemental de Documentation pédagogique du Tarn-et-Garonne, 65 avenue de Beausoleil, F-82013 - Montauban Cedex, France. Published 1988.

7. Towards multicultural education: training for teachers of gypsy pupils, report of a seminar held in Benidorm (Valencia, Spain), 9-13 June 1989. English and French editions, Council for Cultural Co-operation, Council of Europe, DECS/EGT (89) 31***; available in Castillian and Valencian, Conselleria de Cultura, Educació i Ciència de Valence, Direcció General de Centres i Promoció Educativa.

8. La scolarisation des enfants tsiganes et voyageurs: recherche-action et coordination, report of a meeting organised by the *Centre de recherches tsiganes* for the Commission of the European Communities and the French Ministry of Education, Carcassonne, France, 5-12 July 1989. Available, in French only, from the Centre départemental de Documentation pédagogique de l'Aude, 56 avenue Henri Goût, BP 583, 11009-Carcassonne Cedex, France.

9. Interface, free quarterly, published with the assistance of the Commission of the European Communities as part of the implementation of the resolution of 22 May 1989 of the Council and the Ministers of Education. (Available in English and French from the Centre de recherches tsiganes, 106 Quai de Clichy, F-92110, Clichy, France.

* Available nationally from sales agents for official publications of the European Communities, or from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2 rue Mercier, L-2985, Luxembourg.

** Available nationally from sales agents for Council of Europe publications, or from the Publications Section, Council of Europe, F-67006, Strasbourg, Cedex, France.

*** Available free of charge from the Schools and Out-of-School Education Section, Council of Europe, BP 431 R6, F-67006 Strasbourg Cedex, France.

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SEMINAR PROGRAMME

10.00	Opening addresses:	Mr Guillaume, representing the Rector Mr Caillaud, Academy Inspector
	Introduction on organisation of the seminar:	J-M Janain, National Education Inspector
	Keynote address:	J-P Liégeois
11.15	Break	
11.30	Achievements in the United Kingdom (by a UK team)	
12.45	Aperitifs at the Teacher Training College	
13.15	Lunch at the Teacher Training College	
14.30	Distance learning: the practice of the National Centre for Distance Learning with regard to school provision for isolated and nomadic children (by J C Plessis, Director of Toulouse CNED)	
16.00	Break	
16.30	Workshops	
19.00	Departure by coach for CREPS (for participants opting to dine there)	
19.30	Dinner at CREPS	

09.30	Hungary: The school situation and reflections on distance learning and pedagogical follow-up (by Tibor Derdák, teacher, member of parliament, President of "Fii cu noi" (cultural organisation for Romanian-speaking gypsies)), and President of the Raoul Wallenberg Association (an organisation for the defence of minorities); in collaboration with Zsuzsanna Orsós, a teacher at Pecs)
11.00	Break
11.15	Workshops
13.00	Lunch at the Teacher Training College

- 14.30 Local experience: projects and achievements in fields relevant to the seminar (J-M Janain)
- 16.00 Break
- 16.30 Workshops
- 18.15 Aperitifs at the Town Hall, courtesy of the city of Aix-en-Provence
- 19.15 Departure, by coach, for CREPS
- 19.30 Dinner at CREPS (for participants opting to dine there)

Wednesday 12 December

- 09.30 Workshops
- 11.00 Break
- 11.15 Workshops
- 13.00 Lunch at the Teacher Training College
- 14.30 An analysis of some examples of distance learning (by G Gouardères, Director of the API Laboratory at the University of Toulouse, Director of Data Processing Research at the University of Pau, Editor of "Revue d'Ingénierie Educative")
- 16.00 Break
- 16.30 Workshops
- 19.00 Departure by coach for dinner for all participants at Cadeneaux-Les Pennes Mirabeau

Thursday 13 December

- 09.30 Czechoslovakia: The school situation and reflections on distance learning and pedagogical follow-up (by Stanislav Zeman, lawyer, and Ondrej Gina, General Secretary of the Gypsy Party of the Czech Republic and member of the Czech parliament)
- 11.00 Break
- 11.15 Projects in the Val-d'Oise: a brief overview (by a team from the Paris region)
Commentary on the text, "The Four Gypsy Enigmas", by Vania de Gila Kochanowski
Workshops: preparation of reports
- 13.00 Lunch at the Teacher Training College

- 14.30 Plenary session: workshops summarise their conclusions
- 16.00 Break
- 16.30 Discussion of workshop reports, and round table with the participation of M Lachapelle, representing the Schools Directorate of the National Ministry of Education, and M Gualdaroni, representing the Directorate of lycées and colleges of the National Ministry of Education
- 18.30 Work concludes
- 19.00 Departure by coach for CREPS, for those opting to dine there
- 19.30 Dinner at CREPS

A P P E N D I X 3List of Participants

Maria Alcaloïde	France
Pascale Anglade	France
Jesús Arzubialde	Spain
Michael Baldwin	United Kingdom
Jean-Hughes Brinon	France
Marie Cannizzo	France
Jos Carrette	Belgium
Robert Carvell	United Kingdom
Pascal Colon	France
Eva Danyisz	France
Françoise Daudignon	France
Vania De Gila-Kochanowski	France
Solange Denègre	France
Tibor Derdák	Hungary
Patricia Doublet	France
Jennie Ducloux	France
Nicole Duzelier	France
Antoine Fernández	France
Alain Gazio	France
Jean-Paul Gerbaud	France
Lourdes Gil	Portugal
Ondrej Gina	Czechoslovakia
Guy Gouardères	France
Benoît Gramond	France
Joël Grimaud	France
Raphaël Gualdaroni	France
Alain Guichard	France
Marianne Hauser	Switzerland
Fabienne Haziza	France
Annie Huvet	France
Jean-Marc Janain	France
Georges Kautzmann	France
Jean-Marc Lachapelle	France
Arlette Laurent-Fahier	France
Jean-Pierre Liégeois	France
Jean-Louis Lipovac	France
Françoise Malique	France
Michel Martin	France
Maggy Maurin	France
Rosa Medeiros	Portugal
Danielle Mercier	France
Françoise Mingot	France
André Morzel	France
Christian Nau	France
Breandan O'Coingheallaigh	Ireland
Zsuzsanna Orsős	Hungary
Elisabeth Perrin	France
Jean-Christian Plessis	France
Bernadette Richard	France
Koen Van Ryckeghem	Belgium
Françoise Ventresque	France
Jean-Pierre Vialettes	France
Georges Viccini	France
Jean Vilane	France
Suzanne Westermann	Switzerland
Margaret Wood	United Kingdom
Sacha Zanko	France
Stanislav Zeman	Czechoslovakia