



THE ROLE OF SCOUTING IN STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY

"No man can be called educated who has not the willingness and a desire, as well as a trained ability, to do his part in the world's work."

Lord Baden-Powell

Introduction

Since 1997, WOSM has played a crucial role at world level in defending the interests of the non-formal education sector. The publication of two documents entitled *"The Education of Young People: A Statement at the Dawn of the 21st Century"* and *"National Youth Policies - Towards an Autonomous, Supportive, Responsible and Committed Youth"* was one of the most important steps.

These two documents have had a strong impact on the work undertaken by the European Scout Region vis-à-vis European institutions and youth platforms to obtain real youth policies.

In addition to this work, there has been a real awakening as to the role of our Movement in the rebirth of civil society in post-Communist societies and in strengthening civil society in the Western world.

This issue of *Euro.Scout.Doc* aims to investigate more closely how - starting from our Mission - Scouts can take action at local, national and international levels so as to support the structuring and implementation of the networking needed to strengthen civil society.

This falls within the priority "Promoting and Developing our Movement" of the European Regional Plan 2001-2004 that led the European Scout Region to take action in this field. In particular, two seminars have been held, one on the role of Scouting within civil society

(Valencia, Spain - June 2002), and another on implementing youth policies at national level, (Ermelo, The Netherlands - November 2002). The content of this *Euro.Scout.Doc* is the result of the experience acquired during these events. ●



European seminar on the role of the Civil Society, June 2002

Euro.Scout.Doc is published by the European Scout Office (ESO). Its aim is to provide members of national Scout associations with an update on key developments in the five areas of the European Scout Plan 1999-2007, as well as results of seminars and events:

- Developing and promoting our Movement (Strategy) - purple;
- Better Scouting for more young people (Youth Programme) - orange;
- The adults we need (Adult Resources) - red;
- Developing and promoting our Movement (Youth Policies) - purple;
- Support to the development of national Scout associations (Support and Finance) - green.

Each issue will focus on one of these areas, as indicated in its sub-title, using input from the European Scout Committee, European working groups and national associations. It will be distributed via EuroPak and made available on the regional web site: www.scout.org/europe. We hope that you will find *Euro.Scout.Doc* interesting, informative and attractive, and that it will inspire you not only to contribute your own ideas and experiences, but also to try out some of the new ideas you will find here.

Please address all comments and suggestions to: eurobureau@euro.scout.org

2. The social aim of Scouting

The concept of social involvement can be found in each fundamental element of Scouting. Let's take a look.

Our Constitution

The Scout Movement is based on certain principles, including:

- Duty to others.
- Participation in the development of society with recognition and respect for the dignity of one's fellow man and for the integrity of the natural world.

Article II, Constitution of the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

The Scout Law:

- A Scout's honour is to be trusted.
- A Scout is loyal.
- A Scout's duty is to be useful and to help others.
- A Scout is a friend to all and a brother/sister to every other Scout.
- A Scout is courteous.
- A Scout is a friend to animals.
- A Scout obeys orders of his parents, Patrol Leader or Scoutmaster without question.
- A Scout smiles and whistles under all difficulties.
- A Scout is thrifty.
- A Scout is pure in thought, word and deed.

The Scout Promise:

"On my honour, I promise that I will do my best:

- To do my duty to God and the King/Country;
- To help other people at all times;
- To obey the Scout Law."

The Mission of Scouting:

"The mission of Scouting is to

contribute to the education of young people, through a value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

This is achieved by:

- Involving them throughout their formative years in a non-formal educational process.
- Using a specific method that makes each individual the principal agent in his or her development as a self-reliant, supportive, responsible and committed person.
- Assisting them to estab-

lish a value system based upon spiritual, social and personal principles as expressed in the Promise and Law."

The Scout Law expresses what we are

The Scout Promise expresses what we are committed to doing

Scouting's Mission expresses what we should do

All of them confirm that Scouting is an important "agent of change" for our societies, that it is committed to values and to helping young people to grow as responsible individuals within their social environment.



Reaching out: a priority and an ambition to target new segments of society

Food for reflection and training:

You as a Scout and a citizen of your town/country/world

This brief outline aims to present how Scouting is an asset in citizenship-building. It can serve as a basis for developing one's own outline, which will help clarify Scouting's contribution to developing constructive attitudes towards society.

You, as a human being

You are connected with:

- Family
- Territory
- Environment
- Education
- Friends
- Faith, spirituality
- Thoughts and Ideas
- (...)

You as a Social being/citizen

You are connected with:

- Family
- Educational system
- Political institutions
- Churches
- Associations
- Media
- (...)

Who are you?

Your value system - your culture:

- Your territory/environment
- Your relationships
- Your faith
- Your social experience
- Your wishes / vision
- (...)

Your territory:

- Your house
- Your school/university/work
- Your clubs/association
- Your neighbourhood
- Your town/country
- The places you have explored
- The ideas you have discovered
- (...)

Your commitments are based on:

- Your value system
- Your culture
- Your physical and mental territory (ies)
- Your social relations
- Your social environment
- (...)

As a result of Scouting

- Are you a different human being?
- Are you a different citizen?
- Do you feel that you have a specific responsibility towards society and the world?

Could you express the influence of Scouting?

- On your social life
- On your territories
- On your culture
- On your political, religious, social beliefs
- On your value system
- On your own development
- On your citizenship

3. Citizenship and civil society

*Scouting can and must be a role model in civil society, this growing 'third power' between government and business. Civil society is an ectoplasmic magma... and that is both its strength and its weakness. It has no borders and little structure. It is a network of networks with varying – indeed opposing – trends, which is only defined by what is not: neither government, nor business.*¹

Here is a working definition to help identify the characteristics, actors and functions of civil society⁴ more easily:

- Civil society exists between the public sector and the private sector.
- It represents the space in which we find ourselves when we are involved in activities that do not belong to the governmental or commercial spheres.
- It is a civic space in which individuals are willing to be "social beings", and share an interest with the government in building a better society.
- It is organised by groups and by freely associated individuals.
- While the private sector seeks private benefit, civil society seeks agreement and ways of working towards integration and co-operation. It is thanks to the countervailing power of civil society that the world moves forward socially.

The functions of civil society:

- To act as a mediator
- To provide a countervailing power, thus increasing the accountability of the state
- To be a vehicle for the participation of citizens
- To promote social cohesion



Scouts from oversea French territory meet Jacques Chirac, President of France

Civil society: Towards a definition of the concept

There are many possible definitions of civil society according to different points of view, as outlined in the history of political philosophy². "Civil society" has been a "buzzword" for several years because it has become synonymous with what is "good" and "desirable"³. As a result, different social actors have been eager to use the term, although what each means by it can vary considerably.



The famous world gathering of Porto Alegre

- and social equality
- To contribute to a sense of community
- To promote learning and socialisation
- To stimulate plurality
- To create social capacity

4. Sustainable development and governance

Over the past 20 years, the role of civil society has become increasingly important as it has been regarded as one of the agents that can respond to the need for new models of development and democracy in a globalised world, often identified with sustainable development and governance.

Sustainable development may have a very global approach by including social, cultural, economical, environmental and political dimensions.

This development takes place through a new way of governing which is "governance".



Richard Amalvy, WOSM Representative and Giacomo Filibek, President of the European Youth Forum debate with James Wolfenshon, President of the World Bank.

The most common definition of **sustainable development** is the one that has been used by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development since 1987:

"...a development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".⁵

Governance goes beyond democracy because it also implies that efficiency should serve democracy and development at the same time. It includes a notion of participation by inviting civil society to be part of the public debate on social development.

Governance is the capacity of the state, social actors and economic agents to guarantee the systematic management of democracy, markets and equity.

It refers to the mechanisms of international relations and concerns the executive systems in charge of setting and applying international rules.

5. Scouting and civil society

The World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) is an international non-governmental organization (INGO). As such it is a member of international civil society and is recognised as such by intergovernmental organisations including the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations system⁶.

WOSM works in association with other INGOs in a variety of social areas such as: education, youth policy, co-operation & development, promotion of peace, and so on.

National Scout associations are (or should be) non-governmental organisations as well. They are members of national civil society and are recognised as

such by the state and local authorities. They work in association with other NGOs in different social areas and are members of various representative platforms such as national youth councils.

The Movement helps civil society to grow by:

- Providing youth information services
- Providing education for democracy
- Practising equal opportunities
- Seeking and creating partnerships with those who are marginalised
- Helping young people overcome barriers to their mobility
- Challenging xenophobia and racism
- Actively contributing to the development of better and more effective youth policies

in Europe, for the benefit of all Europe's youth population and not just for the benefit of our members.

- Building bridges of friendship in and beyond its borders

Scouting constantly puts these objectives⁷ into practice at different levels. At European level, as stated in the introduction, this is a priority focus included in the Regional Plan and Action Plan. At grassroots level these objectives are included in the Scout Method itself, which means that we are already using valid educational tools that allow Scouts to have a concrete and durable impact on the development of civil society. The challenge is to recognise this and enrich what already exists with innovative ideas and projects.



European seminar on the role of the Civil Society, June 2002.

6. Education for democracy and participation

The Scout Method is a model of education for democracy and participation and active citizenship, adapted to different age ranges and organisational levels. This helps to accomplish the main aim of Scouting, which is to help form happy and useful citizens.

A fundamental challenge for Scout educators is to ensure that young Scouts, and the groups they belong to, are considered as "political" actors in the reality they live in. In other words, young people need help to raise awareness of their rights and responsibilities within society through concrete action.



Scout and Guide Representatives within the youth platforms

This could be achieved, for example, by using a project approach that includes: a **critical analysis** of the situations in which young Scouts are involved in their daily life; **planning** possible solutions to identified problems, together with the unit and with other actors present in their territory (other NGOs, institutions, etc.); **personal participation** in the implementation of planned activities aiming to solve identified problems. At different stages of personal development and of age range, this leads to different kinds of concrete activities: in the **Cub Scout** age section - games, getting to know their town/village - in the **Venture Scout** age section - providing greater scope and opportunities for discussion and participation in decision-making - or in the **Rover** age section - stimulating a greater, and more personal and mature involvement in the life of the community.

Here are some more examples:

Inside the Movement:

- The patrol system
- The youth-adult relationship
- The decision-making process at group/regional/national level
- The international structures

Outside the Movement:

- The participation of Scouts in the youth sector of civil society
- Service to the community
- Partnerships with associations and NGOs for the development of special projects
- Institutional relations

7. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning our involvement in civil society

During the seminar entitled "The Role of Youth Sector in Strengthening Civil society", held in Valencia in June 2002, the participants worked on a SWOT analysis⁶ to define strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning Scouting's involvement in civil society.

Here are the results of the exercise:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representing our organization at other levels (e.g. youth councils) - Funding - Training - Projects - New inputs / new ideas - Good reputation/publicity - Sharing the same values with other sectors of civil society 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tying up resources - Losing control/ compromise - No real chain of co-ordination - Institutional influences (government, religious authorities, etc.)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achieving our Mission - Spreading our message and Method - Better image - Developing global links - Funding - Influencing institutions - Learning best practices - Recognition 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Losing our focus - Losing our independence - Losing resources - Bad image - Narrowing interests - Bureaucracy

This exercise clearly underlines the connections between the role of Scouting in civil society and a series of other priorities for the Movement, such as the Profile of Scouting, Reaching Out, the Image of Scouting, as well as External Relations within Scout associations. All these topics are linked to the European Scout Plan priority "Promoting and Developing our Movement".

Furthermore, this analysis highlights some challenging questions about the role of partnerships with entities external to the Scout Movement. How do we cope with this? To what extent we should open our Movement? What are the handicaps and the benefits? How can the partnerships strength our strategic priorities?

As a general rule the Mission and the values of Scouting guide the Movement in choosing genuine partnerships, while keeping in mind Scouting's specificity and the need to carry out our Mission to help build a better world. But this very delicate issue is beyond the scope of this publication. In order to examine it in depth, the

European Scout Region is carrying out research in this field, and the results of the study, based on concrete experiences, will be published soon.



The European Social Forum, a space for civil society

8. The Moba project: A concrete example of our approach

The word "Moba" means a tradition whereby neighbouring farmers - especially young men and women - club together to help each other at times when extra hands are urgently needed.

Moba is the title of a project for local development in South-East Europe. The first activities of the project started late in the summer of 2002, which is when this custom used to be practised. This additional symbolism has added specific colour to the activities.

What is the Moba project?

The aim of the project is to contribute to the development of the region by offering high-quality programmes for young people, based on the experience of national Scout associations acting as local development NGOs through a vast network of volunteers.

Moba also involves a strong commitment on the part of the European Scout Region, national Scout associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, FYROM, Scouts de France and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to expand co-operation and regional activities, strengthen the participants' capacity for action, and develop local projects together with others involved in youth work.

The project was designed as a result of the analysis of the needs of young people, and on the basis of experiences of fruitful co-operation in other areas of crisis in the world.

It is a three-year project, which is due to end in 2004.

An innovative working method:

The Moba project involves an innovative approach of Scout associations vis-à-vis institutions and organisations at different levels, from support at international level, to co-ordination at national level, and projects at local level.

It is a good example of how the Scout Movement can successfully build partnerships in order to reinforce the youth sector of civil society; it opens out to others while keeping its specificity at the same time.



Moba, a unique experience for supporting local development.

National co-ordinating committees were created in each of the targeted countries, and an international monitoring group leads the whole project.

The network that is being built through the project is increasing the capacity of young volunteers leading youth organisations, of local government officials and of employees of the NGOs involved at local, regional and national level.

9. Scouting: A Way for Development?

In view of all the elements presented so far, and as a conclusion, we can establish a list of questions:

Are we a vehicle for the participation of citizens? Are we acting as mediators? Do we promote social cohesion and social equality? Do we contribute to a sense of community? Do we create a capacity for social action? Do we promote learning and socialisation? What is the impact of our action on the local, national and international communities?

All of these questions are important in order to measure the impact of the educational work carried out by the Movement at every level, and to constantly measure the relevance of the action undertaken in terms of achieving Scouting's Mission.

A legitimate question that non-Scouts could ask is: "In what ways can Scouting really be a tool for social development?" In order to answer this question, we need to get back to the



Some partnerships illustrate the implication of the Scout Movement for universal causes.

essence of Scouting, which is to educate people as active and useful citizens and who are ready to take on responsibility in society. Scouting's international dimension offers a means of developing awareness of the crucial question of the humanisation of globalisation.

From the individual to society

In Scouting, everything starts with the individual person. Furthermore, the educational

purpose of the Movement is to achieve the global development of the human being (physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual). This method includes social, cultural, economic, environmental and political dimensions.

We could even conclude that Scouting has been practising the principle of good governance long before the term was known. As we have seen, Scouting's educational method uses the rules of democracy



A peace demonstration in Italy. Scouts from AGESCI commit themselves every year.

through a participatory approach to decision-making processes and one of the educational goals of Scouting is to raise global awareness of citizenship.

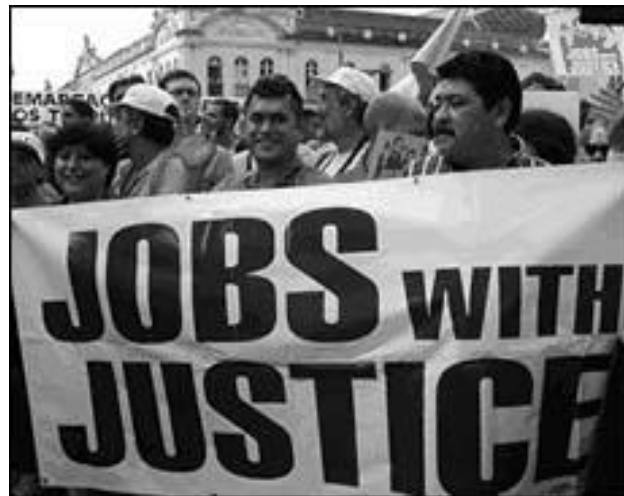
It is this capacity for providing young people with real-life situations in which they make decisions - and assume responsibility for those decisions - concerning their activities and on action to take that leads them to become aware of what real life is about. Social change cannot occur without people who are of the need for it, and there can be no human development without committed people who undertake the responsibility of establishing it.

It is hoped that the enormous potential of our Movement in a changing society has become clearer. It is a potential that starts with the individual, through the Promise and the Law, and goes straight to associations and the World Organization, through the Mission.

A global responsibility in a global society

Baden-Powell invited Scouts to *leave the world better than they found it*. This ideal is close to the definition of sustainable development used by the United Nations. In a way we could say that our Founder already understood the importance of inter-generational justice as one of the pillars of the concept of sustainable development⁹.

At the World Scout Conference in Thessaloniki, Jacques Moreillon, former Secretary General of WOSM, offered the following thoughts: "... belonging to a worldwide movement in a globalised world creates a global responsibility for each of us as well as for the movement. For we have, through Scouting, the means not only to become



What are the challenges that Scouting could propose for humanising the effects of globalisation?

aware of problems much bigger than any of us, but also to do something about these problems, either through Scouting or otherwise".

If we believe that the Movement's educational method can help young people to become agents of change and of development then, through the social force that our Movement constitutes, they can effectively - and voluntarily - tackle the challenges facing humanity today.

The challenge of social development

We need to go beyond words and the official documents in order to analyse the situation in each of our organisations and groups, and to understand what role we are concretely playing in our environment.

Carrying out concrete action in terms of development takes place first and foremost in everyday life. For Scouting, local development is a real challenge, which implies involvement in local communities through the bodies of civil society, in dialogue with authorities. This challenge also requires the tools of good governance for which Scouting prepares its members.

As a youth movement, Scouting can give hope to adolescents who are frustrated with their lives. As an educational movement, it can offer that extra something that they cannot acquire anywhere else. As a non-governmental organization, Scouting offers room for social expression and creation. Finally, as an actor in civil society, Scouting transmits the fundamental elements that help them to become men and women who have their eyes wide open, a caring heart and hands that are capable of using the tools that forge a better world. •

Resources:

- Assemblée des Conseils économiques et sociaux de France (2002), *De la représentation institutionnelle de la société civile*, Actes des débats, p. 25.
- Big 6 (1999), *National Youth policies: Towards an Autonomous, Supportive and Committed Youth*.
- Bobbio N., Matteucci N., Pasquino G. (1990), *Dizionario di Politica*, TEA, Milano.
- Brundtland G. (1987), *Our Common Future*, ONU.
- European Scout region (2000), *European Regional Plan and Action Plan 2001-2004*.
- Euro.Scout.Doc, *From Vision to Reality – Implementation at Local Level*, 2002, No. 1, p. 3.
- Nye J, Donahue J.D. (2000), *Governance in a Globalising World*, Brookings, Washington D.C.
- OECD (1998), *Civil society and International Development*.

On the web:

www.civicus.org
www.youthforum.org
www.coe.int
www.nscentre.org
www.MobaProject.net
www.oecd.org

Notes:

¹ 36th World Scout Conference, 2002, Thessaloniki, Jacques Moreillon, Secretary General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

² For a summary of the history of theories related to the concept: Bobbio N., Matteucci N., Pasquino G. (1990), *Dizionario di Politica*, TEA, Milano.

³ Assemblée des Conseils économiques et sociaux de France (2002), *De la représentation institutionnelle de la société civile*, Actes des débats, p. 25.

⁴ OCDE (1998), *Civil Society and International Development*.

⁵ Brundtland (1987), *Our Common Future*, UN.

⁶ A *Euro.Scout.Doc* on youth policies is being prepared.

⁷ From the "European Charter of Scouting and Guiding", 1995.

⁸ Euro.Scout.Doc, *From Vision to Reality – Implementation at Local Level*, 2002, No. 1, p. 3.

⁹ The introduction of "inter-generational" justice constitutes one of the major innovations brought to development theories by sustainable development. It is important because it is the basis of environmental and social policies for the preservation and reproduction of ecosystems.

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World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout