

## **Background**

Based on deliberations during and after the World Conference on Arts Education, which took place from 6 to 9 March 2006 in Lisbon, Portugal, this “Road Map for Arts Education” aims to explore the role of Arts Education in meeting the need for creativity and cultural awareness in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and places emphasis on the strategies required to introduce or promote Arts Education in the learning environment.

This document is designed to promote a common understanding among all stakeholders of the importance of Arts Education and its essential role in improving the quality of education. It endeavours to define concepts and identify good practices in the field of Arts Education. In terms of its practical aspects, it is meant to serve as an evolving reference document which outlines concrete changes and steps required to introduce or promote Arts Education in educational settings (formal and non-formal) and to establish a solid framework for future decisions and actions in this field. This Road Map therefore aims to communicate a vision and develop a consensus on the importance of Arts Education for building a creative and culturally aware society; encourage collaborative reflection and action; and garner the necessary financial and human resources to ensure the more complete integration of Arts Education into education systems and schools.

There is much debate concerning the many possible aims of Arts Education. This debate leads to questions such as: “Is Arts Education taught for appreciation alone or should it be seen as a means to enhance learning in other subjects?”; “Should art be taught as a discipline for its own sake or for the body of knowledge, skills and values to be derived from it (or both)?”; “Is Arts Education for a gifted few in selected disciplines or is Arts Education for all?”. These remain central issues in shaping the approach of arts practitioners, teachers, students and policy makers alike. The Road Map attempts a comprehensive response to these questions and emphasizes that creative and cultural development should be a basic function of education.