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Contribution of the Council of Europe

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education

Education plays a crucial role in the promotion and development of democracy and human rights. The Council of Europe supports cooperation activities on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education (EDC/HRE), in the framework of which reference texts are developed, exchange and mutual assistance are facilitated, and a broad range of publications and materials are produced, with a view to encourage and support relevant educational reforms in the 50 States Party to the European Cultural Convention.

A. Reference texts: Support to the implementation

In 2015, the preparation of the 2nd review cycle of the implementation of the **Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education** (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7) was initiated. The Charter is the latest and the most comprehensive text adopted by the Council of Europe member states in this area. It is an important reference point for all of Europe and provides a common framework, a focus and catalyst for action. The first **review cycle** of the implementation of the Charter, which was organised in 2012, provided an overview of the current situation in this area. The next review cycle will include a report (2016) and a major conference (2017), the aim of which is to facilitate a broad debate, support exchange of good practice and promote stronger commitment in this area.

In 2014-2015 four projects are supported by the Council of Europe and the European Union in the framework of “**Human Rights and Democracy in Action**” Pilot Projects Scheme. The projects deal with the topics of teaching controversial issues, developing the ability of students for the assessment of information from media and social networks and addressing violence at schools. The Pilot Projects Scheme supports cooperation

initiatives among States party to the European Cultural Convention which aim to put the Charter's principles into practice. The scheme fosters **peer-to-peer learning among and within the countries**, and facilitates the collection and sharing of information on all existing forms citizenship and human rights education.

B. Networking

On 15-16 April 2015 the 23rd meeting of the Council of Europe Network of Coordinators for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education was hosted by the Turkish authorities in Istanbul. The participants discussed assessment of progress in the area of citizenship and human rights education, teaching case law of the European court of human rights at school, a new project on digital citizenship education and on-going cooperation in the framework of the EU/CoE programme "Human Rights and Democracy in Action". Examples of good practice in respect of addressing violence and radicalisation through Education were also shared at this meeting. The **EDC/HRE co-ordinators** are appointed by the States Party to the European Cultural Convention. The co-ordinators are major contributors to the CoE's work, on the one hand, and to the development of citizenship and human rights education in their countries on the other. Many of the coordinators are currently working on reforms in their countries regarding EDC/HRE, or have recently been involved in preparing and implementing such reforms. Through the network of the coordinators, support on specific questions (ex. curricula, teacher training) related to EDC/HRE is provided on a regular basis.

Other events in 2015 will include a conference on "Human Rights and Democracy in Action: Addressing Extremism and Radicalisation through Education" (Strasbourg, 24-25 September 2015) and an expert meeting on "Assessment of progress in the area of citizenship and human rights education" (Strasbourg, 15-16 October 2015).

In 2015, regional **Summer Academies** on citizenship and human rights education were organised in Poland and Montenegro in cooperation with the host countries and the European Wergeland Centre¹. The Academies are organised on an annual basis, with financial contributions from Norway and Andorra.

C. Communication and dissemination

The Council of Europe has produced a wealth of materials, which are available for download in many languages on the EDC/HRE website (www.coe.int/edc). Examples include a comprehensive '**EDC/HRE Pack**', composed of manuals for various target audiences on a broad range of topics from policy development and democratic governance to teachers' competences and quality assurance, "Living Democracy" – a series of **manuals for teachers** for use in the classroom and "Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: a **Compendium of Good Practice**" published by the OSCE/ODIHR, OHCHR, UNESCO and Council of Europe.

¹ *The European Wergeland Centre is a European resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship set up by Norway in close co-operation with the Council of Europe*

The publication “**Democracy and Human Rights Start with Us: Charter for All**” is the child-friendly version of the the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. It comprises a brochure for children, a guide for teachers and a poster².

The Council of Europe's film “**Beat Bullying**” shows how whole-school human rights and citizenship education programmes equip students and pupils with the understanding, skills and confidence they need to help stop bullying and violence at school, including cyberbullying. The video is available on YouTube in English, French, German and Russian.

A series of videos on “**Democracy at School**”, which was inspired by a comic strip competition on this topic, aims to raise awareness of relevance of the principles of democracy and human rights for the everyday life at school. ³.

D. Bilateral support

On 14 April 2015, about 350 participants from Turkey and from other member states of the Council of Europe met in Istanbul to celebrate the achievements and to reflect on the lessons learned from the four-year comprehensive project on “Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education” supported by the European Union and the Council of Europe. This programme aimed to put into practice the Council of Europe Charter on Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Turkey, based on the expertise developed in the framework of intergovernmental cooperation programmes of the Council of Europe. The results of this project include the piloting of a new elective curriculum for secondary school on human rights and democracy, a democratic school culture framework and accompanying manuals as well as training for teachers.

E. Inter-institutional Co-operation

On 16 October 2015, the Council of Europe will host the 4th meeting of the **International contact group on citizenship and human rights education (ICG)**, which brings together the OHCHR, UNESCO, European Commission, EU Fundamental Rights Agency, OSCE/ODIHR, ALECSO, the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Council of Europe. The aim of the Contact Group is to ensure close cooperation among the regional and international initiatives in this field.

In 2015, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, OSCE/ODIHR and the Organization of American States will launch a joint **publication on the curriculum reform** for education for democratic citizenship and human rights.

Further information is available at the following address: www.coe.int/edc .

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² These materials were produced jointly by the Council of Europe Youth and Education Departments, and in cooperation with the Programme “Building Europe for and with Children”, with a financial contribution from Finland.

³ Funded in the framework of the CoE/EC Pilot Projects Scheme “Human Rights and Democracy in Action”

LEARNING THE KEY PRINCIPLES AND THE FUNCTIONING OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION SYSTEM

The project aims to enable European secondary school students to become familiar with the key principles of European law relating to human rights and to understand how the European Court of Human Rights and other important Council of Europe monitoring bodies are functioning.

The case law of the Court and its landmark judgments are the main focus of the project and form a concrete basis for building learning activities for the classroom within the current national school programmes for Human rights Education and Citizenship Education in member States.

The various teaching materials (offline and online), lesson plans and/or school and out of school activities that are proposed within the framework of the project are aimed at helping students in the classes concerned to understand how judgments implement key human rights instruments, how they help establishing European case-law in this field, where they stand in comparison with existing legislation in the member states and how the latter has had to be adapted where necessary.

The project should increase awareness of young Europeans and their teachers (and school heads) about the work done by the Court; introduce European Human rights law to them and help them understanding its links with national law as well as its impact for European societies.

The project aims to encourage participation, dialogue and synergies in the process of implementation among all actors involved: students, teachers, education professionals and policy-makers, judges.

In particular, the documents make accessible to a young readership a number of judgments by the Court, which are of key significance for the evolution of European law, and hence develop a culture of human rights among pupils.

In 2014, the Manual *Learning activities for secondary schools on the Case-law of the European Court of Human Rights*, presenting 12 learning activities linked to 12 selected landmark judgments by the ECHR, together with general presentations about the Convention on Human Rights, the functioning of the ECHR, and an introduction to Human Rights education, was finalised. A research database portal on pedagogical resources and teaching materials on Human Rights education and Education for Democratic Citizenship was also made available. . Around 1000 teaching resources (in English and French) developed over the past 10 years by the Council of Europe were digitalized and the same amounts of metadata were prepared. Other pedagogical resources, such as videos and animations explaining the selected judgements of the ECHR in a simple way, were also made available on the website.

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Human Rights Education and Youth

The youth sector of the Council of Europe has made human rights education with, for and by young people a priority and a pillar of its youth policy. It was underlined as one of the priorities set out by the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for youth affairs (Kyiv, October 2008) and the subsequent Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The aim is to improve the capacity of youth organisations and multipliers, involved in human rights education and democratic participation and citizenship, to develop standards and tools in this regard for youth policy and youth work actors.

In 2015, the Youth Department together with the with the Education Department of the Council of Europe have initiated the preparations for the upcoming conference and review process on the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (foreseen 2017), as well as the Human Rights Education Youth Forum (foreseen 2016). For this conference, a second survey among governments and non-governmental partners on the implementation of the Charter will be launched.

Every year, more than 700 youth leaders and multipliers participate at international and national level in activities promoting human rights education (including gender equality and sustainable development) and youth participation. Educational resources, particularly the "Compass" and "Compasito" manuals (human rights education manuals for young people and children) are distributed in member states and in regions outside Europe.

In 2014-5, new translations of Compass manual have been made available, notably in Ukrainian, Italian, Russian and French, while several others are in process. The online website of the revised version is also available to public and will also host online versions of the translations and it has been designed to be highly accessible to young people with disabilities. (<http://compass.coe.int>)

A programme of national and regional training courses held in member states of the Council of Europe has been implemented with the aim to promote human rights education and education for democratic citizenship, notably by associating youth organisations and other actors in non-formal learning to human rights education. The programme is a contribution to the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. In 2015, courses are taking place in Ukraine, France, Spain, the Russian Federation, Lithuania, and Italy addressing youth trainers, multipliers and leaders as well as teachers and teacher trainers.

Human rights education is also a major element of the youth dimension of the Action Plan on Ukraine, in 2015 training courses on access to social rights and transition to autonomy of young people, as well as on youth participation have been organised.

Human rights education also has a central role in the youth campaign for human rights online, the No Hate Speech Movement. The No Hate Speech Movement campaign has

been prolonged by the decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and is expected to continue until the end of 2017. A conference gathering stakeholders involved in the campaign was organised in May 2015 to evaluate the results of the campaign so far, but as well to propose ways to follow-up.

The manual for addressing hate speech through human rights education, Bookmarks, developed in the framework of the NO Hate Speech Movement, was translated in several languages, and regional training courses for multipliers were organised in Belgium for the French speakers (October 2014) and the Russian Federation (May 2015). A revised version of Bookmarks is currently being prepared to incorporate updated information on the human rights of Internet users.

As part of its agenda on access to social rights for young people, the Youth Department trained in 2013 – 2015 multipliers involved in youth work to develop human rights based initiatives with young people from disadvantaged areas. In June 2015, the Council of Europe invited 200 young people and youth work actors to be associated with its policy work on promoting social rights.

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