

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Conference

Warsaw, 30 September- 8 October 2010

Review Session 6: Humanitarian Issues and other commitments

Contribution of the Council of Europe

DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Citizenship and human rights education play a crucial role in the promotion of mutual respect and understanding. Since 1997, the Council of Europe has been supporting a programme of activities on this topic, in the framework of which reference texts were developed, exchange and co-operation were facilitated, and high quality materials were produced.

A. Reference texts

On 11 May 2010, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and representatives of the 47 Council of Europe member states adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education at the 120th Session of the Committee of Ministers. The Charter – which was developed over a period of several years with wide consultations and is non-binding - will be an important reference point for all of Europe and will be used as a basis for the Council of Europe's future work in this field in the coming years.

Other key texts in this area include the following:

- ▶ [Recommendation 1849 \(2008\) of the Parliamentary Assembly for the promotion of a culture of democracy and human rights through teacher education](#)
- ▶ [Recommendation \(2002\)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for democratic citizenship](#) (this recommendation was translated by the European Commission into the languages of all EU states)
- ▶ [Recommendation 1346 \(1997\) of the Parliamentary Assembly on human rights education](#)

B. Networking and Forums

The CoE supports a **network of EDC/HRE co-ordinators** appointed by the Ministries of Education. These co-ordinators meet twice a year and are a major contributor to both the CoE's work, on the one hand, and implementation within member states 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.

In addition, the CoE supports regional networks on EDC/HRE, including a South East Europe EDC/HRE Network, a Baltic/Black Sea Network and Nordic Network.

The CoE also organises regular **Forums** to bring together large numbers of key stakeholders on EDC/HRE issues, including NGOs active in this field. The last one was held in Strasbourg in October 2008 and entitled: [Civic Partnerships for Citizenship and Human Rights Education](#).

In 2010, a conference on “Learning democracy and human rights: evaluation and Evaluation 2006-2009 and the way ahead” was held in Strasbourg in the framework of the Swiss Chairmanship of the Council of Europe. It brought together representatives of the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention, decision makers, education practitioners, international institutions and civil society representatives. The participants discussed the results achieved under the Council of Europe Programme "Learning and Living Democracy for All" 2006-2009 and future co-operation activities in the field of EDC/HRE (2010-2014).

C. Materials

The CoE has produced a wealth of materials. The major ones, called the '[EDC/HRE Pack](#)' are the following:

Tool 1: Policy Tool for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) : Strategic Support for Decision Makers

[Tool 2: Democratic Governance of Schools](#)

[Tool 3: How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences](#)

[Tool 4: Quality Assurance of Education for Democratic Citizenship in Schools](#)

[Tool 5: School-Community-University Partnerships for a Sustainable Democracy: Education for Democratic Citizenship in Europe and the United States of America](#)

These instruments have been developed in consultation with a large number of experts from all member states, including the EDC/HRE coordinators.

A series of high quality [materials for teachers](#) for use in the classroom in the field of EDC/HRE were recently produced, including

[Teaching democracy](#) (collection of models for democratic citizenship and human rights education)

[Living in democracy](#) (lesson plans for lower secondary education)

[Exploring Children's Rights](#) (projects for primary schools)

D. Bilateral support

While most of the CoE's work is inter-governmental, some bilateral assistance has been provided in this field through joint programmes with the European Commission, in particular in Bosnia and Herzegovina and more recently in Kosovo.¹ Through the network of EDC/HRE

¹ All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo

coordinators, support on specific questions (curricula, teacher education) related to EDC/HRE is provided by the Council of Europe to its member states on a regular basis.

E. Inter-institutional Co-operation

The Council of Europe works closely with other major organisations working in the field of citizenship and human right education in order to avoid overlap and create synergies. For instance, it was agreed with the United Nations that the CoE would support the European region in the implementation of the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005; in this framework a [Regional European Meeting on the World Programme for Human Rights Education](#) was organised by the CoE and its partner institutions in 2007. The European Commission has asked for CoE assistance in this field, including when developing indicators for active citizenship.

At the initiative of ODIHR, the Council of Europe, OHCHR, UNESCO and OSCE/ODIHR have developed jointly a "Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: a **Compendium of Good Practice**" (published in 2009). Following another initiative from ODIHR in 2010, the Council of Europe and UNESCO joined forces in a project to develop "Guidelines for Educators and Policy Makers: Combating Intolerance against Muslims through Education".

The Council of Europe regularly hosts and organises [inter-institutional meetings](#) on EDC/HRE whereby 20 major international organisations, NGOs and foundations meet. The last meeting was organised in June 2009 and focused on teacher education.

In May 2009, the Norwegian government inaugurated the [European Wergeland Centre](#), a European resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship which is located in Oslo and has been set up in close cooperation with the Council of Europe and which is being governed in cooperation by the CoE and the Norwegian government.

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

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