



## OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Conference

Warsaw, 24 September – 5 October 2012

### Working Session 2: Fundamental Freedoms II

#### Contribution of the Council of Europe

#### **Democratic citizenship and human rights education**

Education plays a crucial role in the promotion and development of democracy and human rights. Since 1997, the Council of Europe has been supporting a programme of activities on citizenship and human rights education, in the framework of which reference texts were developed, exchange and co-operation were facilitated, and high quality materials were produced.

#### A. Reference texts

The most recent and the most comprehensive text developed on this topic in the Council of Europe framework is Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the **Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education**. It was adopted on 11 May 2010 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and representatives of the 47 Council of Europe member states at the 120th Session of the Committee of Ministers. The Charter – which was developed over a period of several years with wide consultations - is an important reference point for all of Europe and is being used as a basis for the Council of Europe's work in this field.

In 2012, a report on the implementation of the Charter in the states Party to the European Cultural Convention will be prepared, based on governments' replies to a questionnaire. The conclusions of the report and future co-operation activities will be discussed at a conference on "Human Rights and Democracy in Action - Looking Ahead: The impact of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education", which will be organised by the Council of Europe in cooperation with the European Commission and the European Wergeland Centre in Strasbourg on 29-30 November 2012.

#### B. Networking

The CoE supports a **network of EDC/HRE co-ordinators** appointed by the Ministries of Education. These co-ordinators meet at least once 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. Through the network of the 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.

In addition, the CoE supports **regional networks** on EDC/HRE, including a South East Europe EDC/HRE Network, a Baltic/Black Sea Network and a Nordic Network. In 2012, 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 Centre, 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.

### C. Materials

The CoE has produced a wealth of materials. Examples are:

- 1) A comprehensive '**EDC/HRE Pack**', which includes manuals for various target audiences on a broad range of topics from policy development and democratic governance to teachers' competences and quality assurance.
- 2) "Living Democracy" – a series of **manuals for teachers** for use in the classroom
- 3) "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

### 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 Turkey and Kosovo.<sup>1</sup>

### E. Inter-institutional Co-operation

The Council of Europe works closely with other major organisations working in the field of citizenship and human rights education in order to avoid overlap and create synergies. In 2011, an **International contact group on citizenship and human rights education** was set up following the initiative of the Council of Europe, and a letter of cooperation was signed by 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. It meets once a year and publishes a biannual newsletter.

In 2012, the Council of Europe hosted a launching event of the "Guidelines for Educators on Countering Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims: Addressing Islamophobia through Education" (published jointly by OSCE/ODIHR, UNESCO and the Council of Europe) at the margins of the Parliamentary Assembly June session. The Council of

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<sup>1</sup> 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

Europe will also host one of the three regional round tables on this topic in 2012-2013, in cooperation with the other partner institutions.

Further information is available at the following address: [www.coe.int/edc](http://www.coe.int/edc) .

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

The project “Learning the Key Principles and the Functioning of the Human Rights Protection System” is one of the nine projects developed within the framework of the new education programme of the Directorate of Education of the Council of Europe.

It was launched at the end of 2010 and is aiming 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 CoE monitoring bodies are functioning. The case law of the Court and its landmark judgments will be the main focus of the project and 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 will be proposed within the framework of the project will help 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; In particular, the documents should make accessible to a young readership a number of judgments by the Court, which are of key significance for the evolution of European law.

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## **Human Rights Education and Youth**

Human rights education with non-governmental youth organisations has been a strong element of the Council of Europe youth policy for many years. It was underlined as one of the priorities set down by the 8<sup>th</sup> 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. Supporting youth organisations in their educational activities through training courses, seminars and the development of educational material is the overall objective. 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.

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 "Composito" manuals (human rights education manuals for young people and children) are distributed in member states and in regions outside Europe.

A European training course for trainers on human rights education with young people is held every year. The 2011-2012 course started in September 2011 and ran until 1 May 2012; 45 trainers and multipliers from across Europe who in turn develop human rights education activities with young people were involved in the course. The course made use of the educational facilities of the European Youth Centres and was based on blended-learning, combining intercultural training seminar methods with e-learning approaches and technology. An evaluation meeting of the training course will be held in September 2012 to analyse the achievements and challenges of the course, and propose guidelines for the next courses. The next Training for trainers in human rights education is planned to start in the second half of 2013 and last until 2014.

Eight national and regional training courses in human rights education for trainers and education professional are co-organised with partners in Cyprus and Greece, Georgia, France, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and "The former Republic of Macedonia. A training course with participants from the Russian Federation is also planned to take place in the European Youth Centres later this year, being organised in partnership with the National Youth Council. The courses support also advocacy work of NGOs for the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship And Human Rights Education in the member states, namely through youth work and non-formal education.

Human rights education is also a major element of the youth dimension of the Action Plan on Ukraine, namely through the publication of "Compass" in Ukrainian and the preparation of training course for trainers and youth leaders from Ukraine.

The *Compass* manual has been revised by a team of experts to be fully in tune with the recent developments in human rights and human rights education. The revision includes an update of information, inclusion of new themes, such as Disabilism or Remembrance, and introduction and revision of activities based on user feedback. The manual will be available at the end of 2012 in English and French language. "Composito" enjoys a similar success and has recently been published in Greek and Finnish

The manual has been also widely translated into European languages, now being available in more than 30 languages, the latest editions being Basque and Latvian. The launch of the new version will also lead to a new wave of translations across Europe.

The Youth Department cooperates closely with the Education sector in organising the conference "Human rights and democracy in action – Looking Ahead. The impact of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education" (see above). In preparation of the conference, the Youth Department launched a survey among youth organisations and non-governmental partners working in the field of citizenship and human rights education. The survey results will be made available before the conference in November; they are expected to give a detailed overview of the state of play in respect to the impact of the Charter.

In all these activities, the Council of Europe co-operates closely with national authorities in member states and with youth organisations.

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