

OSCE 2010 Review Conference

Warsaw, 30 September to 8 October 2010

Working Session 6: Humanitarian issues and other commitments

Contribution of the Council of Europe

INTERCULTURAL AND INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE THROUGH EDUCATION

- In order to consolidate its longstanding work in the field of intercultural education and, at the same time, to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue through education, the Steering Committee for Education of the Council of Europe implemented the project "The challenge of intercultural education today: religious diversity and dialogue in Europe" from 2002 to 2006. The project's objective was to raise the awareness of decision makers and teaching staff of the implications of the religious dimension of intercultural education, and to identify good practice, new methods for and approaches to intercultural education, both in school and out-of-school education.

"Religious diversity and intercultural education: a reference book for schools" (ISBN 978-92-871-6223-6), published in 2006, is one of the main outcomes of the project. Its purpose is to help teachers and other education practitioners to address religious diversity based on respect for human rights. The various methods and practices presented in this book focus on the development of intercultural competence in the case of pupils with widely differing social, cultural and religious backgrounds. Intercultural competence presupposes other specific competences such as sensitivity to cultural facts and sources of human diversity; ability to communicate and enter into dialogue; skills required for learning to live together such as teamwork, cooperative learning, empathic communication, peaceful conflict resolution and confidence building. It also entails capacity to explore symbols and deal with sensitive and controversial issues, and critical thinking and individual deliberation.

The Reference Book addresses intercultural education at three levels: at the level of education policies, in the form of clear-cut education aims; at the level of institutions, through democratic governance, student participation, open learning settings and inclusive policies, and at teaching-staff level, through the methods proposed in the book.

Unlike traditional approaches to intercultural education, promoted in the '80s, the methods described in the Reference Book do not focus on the link between the dominant culture (e.g. dominant religion) and minority cultures (e.g. minority religions), but instead on learning to live

together. The reference is no longer the community and the differences between several cultural communities but on how common issues can be resolved together through e.g joint projects.

The project also entailed the preparation of a legal instrument focusing on the recognition of religious diversity in European education systems. As a result, in 2008 the Committee of Ministers adopted [Recommendation CM / Rec \(2008\) 12 on the dimension of religions and non-religious convictions within intercultural education](#) (ISBN 978-92-871-6594-7). This policy recommendation defines the perspective from which religions and non-religious convictions are to be taken into account in a framework of intercultural education, while setting out a number of principles, objectives and teaching and learning methods. The Recommendation can be used as a reference by policy makers, curricula designers, trainers and teachers in their everyday work to develop competences for intercultural dialogue and understanding and to remove obstacles that prevent appropriate treatment of religious diversity and non religious convictions in school settings.

Contact: Mr Villano Qiriazzi (villano.qiriazzi@coe.int)

http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/education/Intercultural_education/Intro.asp#TopOfPage

- In 2008 and 2009, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe organised two meetings entitled “Exchanges on the religious dimension of intercultural education”. These exchanges - which were not intended to be a platform for inter-faith dialogue as such - were designed as an exchange forum to discuss the possible contribution of the religious communities and other components of civil society to the implementation of the Council of Europe’s fundamental values. The 2008 exchange was organised on an experimental basis on the theme “Teaching religious and convictional facts: a tool for acquiring knowledge about religions and beliefs in education; a contribution to education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural dialogue” (Strasbourg, 8 April 2008). The second exchange, organised on the same theme (Strasbourg, 29-30 June 2009), focused on the legal framework of the Council of Europe (see [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2008\)12](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the dimension of religions and non-religious convictions within intercultural education) and the use of various tools developed by the Council of Europe (see “[Religious diversity and intercultural education: a reference book for schools](#)”, “[Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity - Concepts, principles and challenges in teacher education](#)”, and the “[White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue : Living together as equals in dignity](#)” adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2008).

For further information, please consult the [web site of the Committee of Ministers](#)

- In 2010 a new project entitled “[Education and Religious Diversity in the Western Mediterranean](#)” was launched by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the UNESCO Chairs of the Universities of Bergamo, Rioja, Tunis and Marrakech. The project aims at improving educators’ understanding of the issues of religious diversity and non-religious convictions in education systems in a range of countries in the western Mediterranean region, namely Spain, Italy, Morocco and Tunisia.

Contact : Mr Villano Qiriazzi (villano.qiriazzi@coe.int)

THE PESTALOZZI PROGRAMME, THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME FOR THE TRAINING OF EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS, 2010

Background

The Pestalozzi Programme situates itself at the interface between policy and practice. It looks at how education policy can best be transposed into the everyday practice of teaching and learning so that the desired change influences the day-to-day experience of all learners. In doing so it acknowledges the vital and crucial role of education professionals in the process of change. Since it is important that all learners develop the competences – knowledge, skills, attitudes and values - which are necessary to make societies democratic and sustainable, all teachers in different educational settings need to contribute and need to be trained. This is why the Pestalozzi Programme potentially targets all education professionals and societal actors with an educational role.

Training approach

The Pestalozzi Programme seeks to promote effective change and adopts an approach builds on the expertise and experience of the trainees. It is interactive, learner-centred, and offers an opportunity to learn by doing, to work together over time to collaboratively find fit solutions for diverse contexts. Training is organised and delivered in a way that is coherent with the content of the training and the competences which it seeks to develop. The training intends to cover the main domains of competence development: the development of sensitivity and awareness, knowledge and understanding, individual practice and societal practice.

Programme structure

With its workshops, seminars and modules, the programme offers training for education professionals from across Europe. Co-operation international organisations, or targeted assistance activities in particular countries round off the action of the programme.

Themes

The “Pestalozzi” programme offers training activities for different categories of education professionals and on priority themes of the Council of Europe such as

- Education for democratic citizenship and human rights
- Intercultural education and education for cultural diversity
- History teaching
- Remembrance and education for the prevention of crimes against humanity
- Education of Roma children in Europe
- Children’s rights and the prevention of violence
- Plurilingualism
- Gender equality and equality in education
- Media literacy based on human rights
- Teaching and learning concepts and methods

Specific examples in 2010 related to freedom of thought, conscience , religion or belief and media

In the framework of its **Modules of trainer training** a network of expert trainers as well as a collection of training resources have been established and developed focusing amongst others on the following themes

- Education for democratic citizenship and human rights
- Multiperspectivity in the history classroom
- Education for intercultural understanding and diversity
- Media literacy: responsible use of media based on human rights
- Prevention of crimes against humanity

In 2010 a module series on “Education for diversity of world views and world knowledge in the classroom” has started the results of which will be available in the second half of 2011.

Once finalised these resources are made available for download on the web site www.coe.int/pestalozzi.

Several Pestalozzi **training workshops** in 2010 deal with the crucial issue of responsible media use

- “Media literacy: Internet Literacy Guidelines“, Cyprus
- “Educación, Medios de Comunicación y Web 2.0 : Presente y futuro“, Spain
- “Promoting information literacy in European classrooms - teaching the Google-generation – challenges for teachers and teacher educators“, Norway
- “Media literacy based on human rights“, Romania

In the framework of its cooperation with the Anna-Lindh Foundation, the Pestalozzi Programme has substantially contributed to the elaboration of teaching material for an **intercultural approach to religious diversity**. The teaching material is available through the [Anna-Lindh Foundation](#).

Contact: Mr Josef Huber (E-mail: Josef.huber@coe.int)

Lisbon Forum “Freedom of expression, conscience and religion”, 4-5 November 2010

The Lisbon Forum is a platform for dialogue and for sharing experiences, expertise and good practices between Europe and the other continents, especially the Middle East, Africa and the countries on the south side of the Mediterranean. The Forum has been held by the North-South Centre since 1994. It focuses on issues at the heart of the mandate and actions of the Council of Europe: human rights, democratic governance and the rule of law. It has been enriched since 2006 by partnerships with the Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) and the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights.

In 2008, a new process has been launched, in partnership with the Alliance of Civilizations, devoted to a particularly topical issue: the principle of universality of human rights and its implementation at international and regional level. The Forum, which took place on 10-11

November in Lisbon, was devoted to a general analysis of the situation 60 years after the proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. On the basis of this analysis, a work programme was adopted for the upcoming years, focussing on the promotion, understanding and strengthening of human rights, as well as on present and future challenges in this field.

The theme for the 2010 session is “Freedom of expression, conscience and religion”. The aim is to build on the conclusions of the Cordoba Conference on “Religious Freedom in Democratic Societies”, organised in May 2010 by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, in partnership with the Alliance of Civilizations, which laid down the following themes to serve as inspiration to European policies in the area:

- Religious pluralism in democratic societies;
- The role of religious leaders in the promotion of a culture of peace;
- Prevention of religious radicalisation and extremism;
- Co-operation for the promotion of religious freedom.

It is hoped that the 2010 Forum can pursue this dialogue, both by deepening the reflection of the issues discussed in Cordoba, and by sharing/comparing the European point of view with the experience of other continents.

Contacts are underway with ODHIR regarding this year’s event and it is hoped that Ambassador Lenaric will be able to participate.

Contact: Mrs Paula Smith (paula.smith@coe.int)