

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Warsaw, 28 September – 9 October 2009

Working Session 8 : 'Human Rights Education'

Contribution of the Council of Europe

Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education

The Council of Europe is considered a leader organisation in the field of democratic citizenship and human rights education. The Council of Europe's flagship project, *Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* started in 1997 and is currently in its third phase. Through this programme, the Council of Europe has adopted reference texts, developed political frameworks, supported networks and forums and produced high quality materials in the area of citizenship and human rights education.

A. Political Framework

The following recommendations have been agreed upon by all member states through either the executive body of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers (representatives of Ministries of Foreign Affairs) or the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

- ▶ [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](#)

In addition, at the Council of Europe 21st Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, the 47 Ministers of Education adopted in 2003:

- ▶ [Declaration by the European Ministers of Education on intercultural education in the new European context](#) (2003)

Further, the CoE Steering Committee for Education (CDED), is currently preparing a draft **European Charter on Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education** with a view to its submission to the Committee of Ministers for adoption in 2010. Such a political framework instrument should support further the implementation of EDC/HRE in Europe and reaffirm the CoE's leading role in this field.

B. Networking and Forums

The CoE supports a **network of 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 this context many experts from the NGO side also work with the Education Directorate of the Council of Europe.

C. Materials

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

[Tool 1: Key issues for EDC/HRE Policies](#) (coming early 2010)

[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: Civic Partnerships for a Sustainable Democracy: A Guide to School-Community-University Co-operation](#) (coming early 2010)

These instruments have been negotiated and approved by a large number of experts from all member states, including the EDC/HRE coordinators.

Plus of host of **supplementary material** have been developed, all of which can be found on the website <http://www.coe.int/edc>

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)

Other materials for upper secondary and primary levels in these series will be issued in late 2009/early 2010.

The CoE Youth Directorate also has produced materials for non-formal education in the fields of EDC/HRE which have been widely translated and disseminated, such as Compass, manual for Human Rights Education for young people.

D. Bilateral support

While most of the CoE's work is inter-governmental, some bilateral assistance has been conducted 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 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**". The Compendium will be launched at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Working Session on "Education and awareness-raising in the promotion of human rights" (Warsaw, 2 October 2009). Other launching events will take place in the coming months.

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, in Oslo, the [European Wergeland Centre](#), a European resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship which 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.

The EDC/HRE Project will continue over the next few years.

Please see our website: www.coe.int/edc for more information and materials to download in many languages.

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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

Human Rights Education in Youth

Human rights education with nongovernmental youth organisations has been a strong element of the youth policy of the Council of Europe for many years, and recently underlined as one of the priorities set down by the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for youth affairs (Kyiv, October 2008) and a subsequent Resolution of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Supporting non-governmental 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 right 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. The project produces and distributes educational resources, particularly the "Compass" and "Compasito" manuals (human rights education manuals for young people and children) in member states and in regions outside Europe.

In 2009, the Council of Europe is organising the 2nd Human Rights Education Forum (Budapest, 14-18 October 2009), which will bring together some 150 policy-makers, experts and practitioners of human rights education, as well as representatives of institutional partners and civil society organisations engaged in this field of activity.

In these activities, the Council of Europe co-operates closely with national authorities in member states and with other international institutions, notably the European Commission, the UN "Alliance of Civilizations", the Iberoamerican Youth Organisation and the OSCE.

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Lisbon Forum "Creating a culture of Human Rights through Education, 13-14 November 2009

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, democracy, the rule of law. Intercultural dialogue plays a key role in this respect, both within European countries and in relation between Europe and the rest of the world.

Since 2006, the Lisbon Forum has been enriched by partnerships with the Council of Europe's Commission for Democracy through Law – also known as the Venice Commission - and the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and, most recently, with the Alliance of Civilisations, operating under the aegis of the United Nations. Participants include high-level representatives from Council of Europe, UN, EU, OSCE, regional structures and NGOs.

Aim and Objectives:

The overall aim of the Lisbon Forum 2009 is to promote the creation of a culture of human rights, through “quadrilogue” action, i.e. governments, parliamentarians, local and regional authorities and civil society.

The objectives are as follows:

- promote dialogue on human rights education and explore different understandings of human rights education;
- reinforce co-operation between international and regional organisations on the issue of human rights education;
- sharing of experiences, expertise and good practices between Europe and the other continents and identifying challenges that human rights education faces and elaborate joint action on how to meet these challenges;
- to explore ways to promote human rights education with young people and through youth organisations and to discuss strategies and approaches to human rights education in youth work;
- contribute to the ongoing consultation process that should lead to the adoption of a Recommendation by the Committee of Ministers supporting global education in the member States of the Council of Europe.

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