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**AD HOC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS  
FOR THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENSHIP  
THROUGH EDUCATION  
(CAHCIT)**

**Education for Democratic Citizenship and  
Human Rights**

**Programme of Activities (2006-2009)  
“Learning and living democracy for all”**

*Learning and living  
democracy*



## **Background**

The first phase of the EDC Project (1997-2000) was conceived as an exploratory project, in a global and lifelong learning perspective. During this phase the main objectives were to explore and develop definitions of education for democratic citizenship. The necessary skills and competencies for practising effective democratic citizenship were identified, discussion began on how to teach these skills and a wide range of activities to support and promote the development of EDC across member states was undertaken. Among these efforts, the promotion of “sites of citizenship” at grassroots level in communities and schools should be mentioned. A series of basic publications on EDC were produced and networks of experts established.

The second phase of the EDC Project (2001-2004) was re-centred around the following pillars: a) policy development; b) creation of networks; c) communication and dissemination of the outcomes of the first phase. The main objective was to bridge the gap between policy and practice. The focus was mostly on schools. A network of EDC coordinators was set up in the framework of the Council of Europe, studies to map the state of EDC policies in member states were made and inter-sectorial and inter-institutional co-operation developed. A Recommendation on EDC to member states was adopted by the Committee of Ministers and work began on a set of tools – the EDC Pack – to facilitate the implementation of EDC/HRE. The EDC website was considerably developed.

The 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education, the general objective of which was to “bridge policy and practice by empowering policy makers and practitioners at all levels to set up and develop sustainable programmes for EDC/HRE”<sup>1</sup>, followed directly on from phase 2. It was seen as a political framework for actions to be taken at the level of member states, as the beginning of a sustainable process which is expected to continue over the years to come.

The Third Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005) gave a clear mandate to the Organisation to continue and intensify the work on EDC/HRE. The Action Plan adopted at this occasion states the following, under the heading “Education: promoting democratic citizenship in Europe”:

*“The tasks of building a knowledge- based society and promoting a democratic culture among our citizens require increased efforts of the Council of Europe in the field of education aimed at ensuring access to education for all young people across Europe, improving its quality and promoting, inter alia, comprehensive human rights education.*

*We will make full use of the opportunity to raise public awareness of European standards and values provided by the European Year of Citizenship through Education... The Council of Europe will enhance all opportunities for the training of educators, in the fields of education for democratic citizenship, human rights, history and intercultural education.”*

The programme for the third phase is based on the experience of the first two phases and of the “Year”, as well as on this strong commitment of Heads of State and Government. The reflection which has taken place within the expert groups and networks dealing with EDC/HRE has been crucial for the preparation of the programme. Much attention has been

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<sup>1</sup> Ad Hoc Committee of Experts for the European Year of Citizenship through Education (CAHCIT), **Concept paper**, DGIV/EDU/CAHCIT (2004) 13 rev4

given to the suggestions of the EDC Steering Group (2001-2004) and of the Ad Hoc Committee for the European Year of Citizenship through Education (CAHCIT), but other inputs have also been useful, such as EDC coordinators' meeting reports and the report of the Launching Conference of the "Year". All these contributions point to the following issues:

- the third phase should build on the first two and be a combination of both – this means that the lifelong learning perspective, formal and non-formal education should be taken into account;
- a stronger focus on the linkages between Citizenship Education and Human Rights Education is needed, in the perspective of ensuring social cohesion and of combating terrorism and violence, intolerance, racism and social exclusion;
- the target groups should be maintained and extended and include not only pupils, students and teachers but also families, NGOs, enterprises, local authorities, youth workers, leaders and organisations;
- there should be a strong multidisciplinary focus, which would mean involving many sectors of the Council of Europe in the project;
- special attention should be given to inter-institutional co-operation, notably with the UN Agencies in the framework of the Action Plan of the World HRE Programme and the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Synergy and complementarity will also be the basis for co-operation with the European Union and OSCE;
- the results and the evaluation of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education will be key to defining the actual activities to be undertaken during the third phase.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The main goals and objectives of the third phase of the EDC Project are:

- to continue and strengthen policy development and implementation of EDC/HRE, with a particular focus on social cohesion, social inclusion and respect for human rights, and, in this context, pay special attention to the democratic governance of educational institutions, especially schools;
- to strengthen the capacity for teacher training and development within and across member states both in education and in partnership with those in civil society, particularly communities and NGOs;
- to improve communication and information sharing with specific focus on the collection, referencing and dissemination of know-how and successful practice in EDC/HRE in order to lay the foundations for building a strong evidence base;
- to develop and promote sustainable frameworks and mechanisms that make EDC part of everyday practices and processes at all levels of society;
- to promote working methods which should be based on sharing of information and successful practice, through a multidisciplinary and transversal/cross-sectorial approach, with partners such as member states, international/European/national/ local organisations and institutions.

The programme is presented within the three main lines which appear hereunder, under the title

### **“Learning and living democracy for all”**

***Line of Action 1: Education policy development and implementation for democratic citizenship and social inclusion***

**Background**

The two first phases of the EDC Project showed that EDC and HRE need to become a permanent strategic goal for the Council of Europe and its member states, in active partnership with other European and international organisations. Capacity-building and sustainability are at the heart of the EDC Project and should remain so beyond 2005. Efforts to bridge the gap between policy declarations and practice should be strengthened. For democratic citizenship to work successfully, the following aspects should be taken into account:

- the need for civic competencies, i.e. develop and promote competencies for democratic citizenship and social inclusion (life skills) in a lifelong learning perspective;
- the right to education for every citizen in every member state;
- the necessity to develop equity measures for vulnerable groups.

**Aims**

This part of the project is intended to assist member states to build capacity for and sustain, among their citizens, an effective ability for democratic citizenship and social inclusion in a lifelong learning perspective. It aims at further defining the necessary competencies, such as the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed for all individuals, regardless of the type and level of education, profession or age, to participate meaningfully in society. In order to achieve this aim, appropriate mechanisms need to be developed and/or set up. The ultimate aim of the project would be achieved through:

1. the implementation of sustainable policies in member states, as curricula, profiles, criteria for competencies and quality assurance in education for democratic citizenship and human rights are concerned throughout Europe;
2. the development of effective practices in member states in a range of institutions, contexts and 'sites' of EDC/HRE;
3. the building of a strong evidence base of 'what works' in a range of contexts and 'sites' that can be shared at member state, European and international levels;
4. an intensified involvement of civil society, e.g. by the means of the organisation of an annual or bi-annual NGO Forum on democratic citizenship and human rights education.

**Specific objectives**

- to identify and set out in guidelines/tools for member states, the citizenship competencies needed for different age and social groups to promote social cohesion and inclusion as well as respect for human rights;

- to prepare tools containing criteria for learners' assessment and achievement in EDC;
- to continue and develop work on quality assurance in EDC/HRE in schools, in partnership with communities and NGOs;
- to conduct a study on the feasibility of a reference framework for EDC/HRE, (appropriate conventional mechanisms) and on a centre of excellence for expertise and the training of teacher trainers as proposed by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and in the 2004 Wroclaw Declaration, taking into account both formal and non-formal education, in a lifelong learning perspective;
- to encourage dialogue and co-operation between member states through networks, e.g. networks of schools, the network of EDC coordinators, the pooling and sharing of information and expertise/know-how and the setting up of databases of experts and of effective EDC/HRE practice;
- to promote co-operation with NGOs and IGOs in the field of EDC/HRE;
- to undertake a Scoping Study of 'what works' and best practices in EDC/HRE in member states in relation to policy, practice in 'sites' and research/evaluation as a stimulus to the pooling and sharing of expertise and know-how.

### **Expected results**

Guidelines / tools are developed and serve as a reference for the member states policy and practice in the field of EDC, including:

- guidelines on EDC/HRE competencies for various age and social groups are prepared;
- guidelines on learners' assessment and achievement in EDC/HRE are prepared;
- guidelines on Quality Assurance in EDC/HRE are developed and implemented in schools, perhaps through a network of schools;

Best practice in EDC/HRE is collected and shared for the promotion of strong evidence base for EDC/HRE. The sharing is done through a Council of Europe website with links to other databases and sites.

The development of a European reference framework for EDC/HRE is facilitated.

Mechanisms, such as school networks and the network of EDC coordinators for European exchange and co-operation in EDC are strengthened and made sustainable.

### **Working methods/support structures**

Ad hoc Advisory Group on EDC/HRE;

Network of EDC/HRE coordinators;

Workshops, studies, meetings, seminars and conferences;

Development of pools of experts, development of school networks, databases and websites;

Co-operation within the Education Directorate with the Directorate of Youth and Sport (DG IV), Directorates General of Human Rights (DG II) and Social Cohesion (DG III) of the Council of Europe.

***Line of Action 2:*      **New roles and competences of teachers and other educational staff in EDC/HRE****

### **Background**

It is widely acknowledged that the role of teachers and other educational staff, particularly school leaders, in promoting democracy learning through active, participatory approaches is crucial, and that the success of EDC/HRE depends largely on the teaching profession. While the situation as teacher training is concerned differs considerably in the Council of Europe member states, improvements of varied nature and scope are required in all the countries. One of the main findings of the All European Study on EDC Policies<sup>2</sup> is that in many member states very little systematic support is provided for initial or in-service teacher professional development in EDC/HRE. The in-service teacher training activities appeared often to be the result of *ad hoc* initiatives, school-based schemes or collaboration between school and civil society. As stated in the *Tool on Teacher Training for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*,<sup>3</sup> “it is they (the teachers) who introduce and explain new concepts and values to learners, facilitate the development of new skills and competencies, and create the conditions which allow them to apply these skills and competencies in their everyday life at home, in school and in the local community.” The Council of Europe has already done some important work in this field. Particular attention should be drawn to the recommendations coming from the “Conference on Teacher Training for Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) and Human Rights Education (HRE)” organised from 15 to 17 June 2005. They have been taken into account when developing the aims and specific objectives for this part of the project. In order to make this work - indicated as a priority by the member states – sustainable, serious efforts need to be undertaken over the next years. Such efforts should include training of teacher trainers and other multipliers, taking into account the “whole school approach” and setting up of the network/centre/pôle of excellence mentioned under Line of action 1.

### Aims

Define competencies and roles of teachers and other educational staff, particularly school leaders, that are crucial for the protection of human rights and social cohesion, for the promotion of active citizenship and effective participation in society. Contribute to enhance the qualifications and professionalism of teachers/educational staff in the formal and non-formal sector in member states.

### Specific objectives

- to improve existing Council of Europe instruments on Teacher Training on EDC/HRE and prepare new ones if need be;
- to identify standards/guidelines for specific curricula related to education for democratic citizenship and human rights in the framework of the reform or the improvement of initial and in-service teacher training systems;
- to prepare and disseminate guidelines/successful practice and awareness-raising material on the principles, objectives and methods of EDC/HRE in initial and in-service training programmes for teachers of all disciplines and all subjects;
- to develop/encourage the exchange and development of methodological and educational resources, such as handbook and manuals for all actors involved in EDC/HRE in schools and communities;
- to provide training for multipliers in EDC/HRE, taking care to link formal and non-formal learning;

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<sup>2</sup> All-European Study on EDC Policies, Council of Europe, 2004

<sup>3</sup> DGIV/EDU/CIT (2004) 44rev3

- study the feasibility of setting up a network/centre/pôle of excellence for teacher training in EDC/HRE or set up other sustainable mechanisms to ensure such training for multipliers as a long term goal.

### **Expected results**

Guidelines / tools are developed and serve as a reference for the member states policy and practice in the field of EDC, including:

- Guidelines on curricula for initial and in-service teacher training systems, if appropriate through the drafting of a recommendation setting out some general principles and examples of such curricula;
- Guidelines on awareness-raising material and educational resources for educators and educational staff;
- Methodological and educational resources, such as handbooks and manuals are made available to educators;
- The possibility of creating/organising sustainable mechanisms for training multipliers is explored and made available for member states;
- Member states give higher priorities to teacher training in EDC/HRE.

A network of multipliers to train teachers in EDC/HRE is set up and maintained.

### **Working methods/support structures**

- Ad hoc Advisory Group on EDC/HRE;
- Network of EDC/HRE coordinators;
- Training seminars/courses;
- Co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors, with international organisations/institutions and with NGOs active in the field.

## ***Line of Action 3: Democratic governance of educational institutions***

### **Background**

Democratic educational environments and democratic governance in education are crucial for EDC/HRE. The learning environment - schools in particular - needs to respect democracy and human rights, be empowering and free of violence, notably as educational practices and the organisation of learning is concerned. It should provide the opportunity for all actors, pupils/students, parents, teachers, staff and administrators to be involved in decision-making regarding the school, feel responsible and express their opinions freely. Last but not least, educational institutions need to open up to the outside world and work in partnership with communities and NGOs. An interaction/co-operation between these actors should be promoted.

These questions, especially pupils/students participation, have already been studied to some extent within the EDC project. However, they now need to be thoroughly examined with a view to preparing tools and mechanisms for a more systematic and clear approach to the issues involved.

### **Aims**

This line of action is intended to strengthen the capacity and/or readiness for participation and involvement of the main stakeholders (local education administrators, enterprises, teachers, heads of educational institutions, pupils/students, parents...) in education governance. It also aims at assisting member states to create democratic and ethical educational environments, both in school and out-of-school. All educational institutions, from primary school to universities are concerned, and higher education institutions should be strongly involved in the implementation of this line of action.

### **Specific objectives**

- Examples of innovative/successful practice for the implementation of democratic governance in education are identified and shared;
- Publications on the different facets of democratic governance in education are prepared on the basis of these examples (the involvement of local authorities, enterprises, pupils/students, parents, teachers, heads of educational institutions);
- Tools and guidelines (including handbooks and school charters containing indicators, criteria and checklists) describing and reflecting on participation in school governance for the various stakeholders are prepared;
- The “whole school approach” (participation, school environment, teaching methods etc.) is analysed and developed with a view to preparing guidelines to assist ministries, head teachers and teachers to develop a democratic school governance approach through self-evaluation, review and action;
- Gender mainstreaming in education institutions is promoted;
- Participation of all social groups, especially the most vulnerable ones, in school governance is facilitated.

### **Expected results**

Useful material is collected, prepared and developed to serve as a reference for the member states’ policy and practice in the field of democratic governance of educational institutions.

- A special tool on democratic governance of educational institutions is prepared, made available to and used in member states;
- An overview of European policies and practice of democratic governance in education is made available to the member states practitioners and decision-makers;
- Member states give higher priority to democratic governance in education, eg through the adoption of a Council of Europe recommendation on this issue.
- a European network of democratic schools is created, with the assistance of other institutions/foundations/organisations.

**Working methods/support structures**

- Ad hoc Advisory Group on EDC/HRE;
- Network of EDC/HRE Coordinators;
- Working group on democratic school governance;
- European workshops, seminars/conferences;
- Cooperation with the Higher Education Division, the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.