

WP2 Summary Report

Document Analysis at the European Level

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Objective

The objective of workpackage 2 was 1) to examine the intercultural education component in the European official documents that focus on Human Rights and Citizenship Education 2) to identify different and complementary contributions from projects in this area at the European level, and 3) to make a critical analysis of the above based on the relevant bibliography.

Methodology

The analysis itself was based on a list of relevant documents (recommendations, resolutions, declarations and studies) made jointly by all project partners. As CoE was known to have given priority to Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) policies, as well as policy documents related to human rights and intercultural education, mainly Council of Europe documents were chosen for the study. Since a number of significant policy documents on Human Rights and Citizenship Education had been initiated in the 80s and 90s, the analysis concentrated on policy documents from the period 1978 to 2003.

Following the framework suggested by the lead participants, we pulled out references in the documents to the following concepts: *identity, citizenship (education), human rights (education) and intercultural education*. In addition to this a number of related concepts were sought for, i.e. *multicultural, diversity, democracy, equality, inequality, peace, justice, race, ethnicity, racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism, islamophobia, tolerance, intolerance, responsibility (responsibilities)*. Following the core concepts and recommendations in the documents, we added the concept *participation* to the second list, and we decided to pay special attention to clusters of concepts associated with citizenship, human rights and intercultural education.

The report focuses on two clusters of concepts, namely *human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic society* found mainly in the early documents (1978-95), and *rights, responsibilities, participation and social cohesion* found mainly in the recent documents (mid-90s to 2000s).

Education for Democratic Citizenship

Education for democratic citizenship (EDC) was initiated by CoE in the mid-1990s and set out in a number of key recommendations between 1997-2000 (the first phase). Through the 90s and into the 2000s CoE has initiated a number of activities to promote and develop EDC in member states. Policy papers have sought to provide key recommendations for the implementation in member states with regard to both policy and practice. Of these the *Resolution adopted by the Council of Europe Ministers of Education in Cracow, 2000* (DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 40) is a central policy document providing definitions and context for the EDC project. Another more recent EDC key policy document is the *Recommendation adopted by the Committee of Ministers on Education for Democratic Citizenship (2002)*¹² (Kerr 2003).

According to the 2000 resolution, EDC is characterized by a multifaceted and process-focus approach to citizenship that comprises six dimensions of citizenship. These are:

- *a political dimension* - participation in the decision-making process and exercise of political power;
- *a legal dimension* - being aware of and exercising citizens' rights and responsibilities;

- *a cultural dimension* - respect for all peoples, fundamental democratic values, both a shared and divergent history and heritage, and contributing to peaceful intercultural relations;
- *a social and economic dimension* – in particular, the fight against poverty and exclusion, considering new forms of work and community development, and how the economy can foster a democratic society;
- *a European dimension* - being aware of the unity and diversity of European culture, and learning to live in a European context;
- *a global dimension* – recognizing and promoting global interdependence and solidarity.

Human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic society

As EDC originated in CoE policies of the mid-90s, early policy documents (1978-1995) refer only sporadically and indirectly to citizenship issues. Central concepts throughout the 80s and early 90s are therefore *human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy* and *democratic society*, based on established CoE human rights policies.

Human rights education is fundamentally tied to respectively European and international conventions on human rights and to social and political education for young people. Schools are recommended to teach pupils about social and political issues, but also to provide opportunities for affective involvement through for instance drama, art and creative writing. Human rights education is therefore a cognitive as well as an affective field, drawing on knowledge, experience, feelings as well as agency.

In the early documents, there is a strong concern with promoting education and information in the field of human rights and democratic values. Through their focus on human rights, fundamental freedoms and democratic values, early documents (late 70s to mid-90s) generally prioritise *cultural dimensions* of citizenship education, understood as “respect for all peoples, fundamental democratic values...and contributing to peaceful intercultural relations”. *Legal* and *political* dimensions of citizenship education are represented in the emphasis on for instance social skills, justice, equality and rights as well as international agreements.

Central concerns in the early documents are the teaching and learning of human rights in schools with a strong emphasis on European and international covenants. Cognitive, affective and experience-based approaches are recommended for human rights and democratic learning, representing both a broad spectrum of educational methods as well as innovative initiatives in educational environments.

Rights and responsibilities, participation and social cohesion

Human rights and democratic values are central concepts in the early CoE documents but are also strongly emphasised in the documents on Education for Democratic Citizenship, i.e. “Education for Democratic Citizenship is based on the fundamental principles of *human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law*” (DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 40, our emphasis). However, whereas human rights education is centrally based on the values of democratic and pluralistic societies as well as on European and international conventions and covenants, EDC is comprehensive term, involving human rights and democracy learning as well as intercultural learning. EDC thus both integrates and develops the aspects of human rights and democracy learning, with a central focus on the *rights, responsibilities* and *participation* of European citizens.

Citizenship is thus, in addition to the issues involved in human rights and democracy learning, strongly associated with *political* and *legal* issues, i.e. issues of “participation in the decision-making process” and the “exercise of political power and being aware of and exercising citizens’ rights and responsibilities” (DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 40). This stress on *participation, rights and responsibilities* in democratic societies is moreover frequently associated with the role of young people as citizens, that is, the importance of engaging young people in democratic processes in the face of “economic, social and political changes“ (R 78 (1999)).

EDC stresses the citizenship perspectives of human rights, democratic learning and intercultural education and highlights the social and political aspects of citizenship education. In the European documents initiated in the late 90s and 2000s issues of rights and responsibilities as well as participation are seen as central to both citizenship education and to educational practices, i.e. “skills and competencies for democratic citizenship imply that citizens should learn to be free, autonomous and creative, to think critically and be aware of their *rights and responsibilities*, and be able to *participate* in teamwork, peaceful dialogue and negotiation” (DGIV/EDU/CIT (2000) 40, our emphasis). EDC is therefore a comprehensive approach to citizenship education that involves holistic approaches to learning and curricula as well as innovative methods in education.

Intercultural aspects of citizenship and human rights education

Whereas citizenship education, democratic learning and human rights are central concepts in the European documents in terms of explicit references to these terms and their related concepts, intercultural issues are less prominent in terms of reference. In continuation of this there seems to be no clear definition of what the term intercultural education entails.

In the documents referring to intercultural education a number of contexts for intercultural approaches can be identified. These are mainly issues of *immigration, social cohesion* and *educational reform*. There is a specific emphasis on migrants and the integration of ethnic minorities in the documents on intercultural education.

The consequences of globalisation and immigration is a theme often associated with intercultural education in the CoE documents. Though the diversity of European communities is generally seen as an asset and a source of enrichment for European culture, it is also recognised that multicultural societies and immigration issues can create intolerance, racism and xenophobia. Thus, a number of CoE documents refer to the multicultural nature of European communities, as well as to the need for “intercultural and international understanding”(R(85)7) and “open-mindedness and an understanding of cultural differences” (R(84)18). In this context, intercultural education is generally understood as an initiative that can counteract “ethnocentric attitudes and stereotyping” (R (84)18) as well as contribute to “mutual respect among all groups of a society” (R 1089 (1988)). A specific aspect of this is the education and integration of immigrants and their children.

In the CoE documents intercultural education is often understood as a core component of educational reform. Teacher-training is explicitly mentioned as a priority area for intercultural policies, as developments of professional competencies for the teaching profession can “prepare teachers to manage the new situations arising in our schools as a result of discrimination, racism, xenophobia, sexism and marginalisation, and to resolve conflicts in a non-violent way” (MED21-7 (2003)).

Whereas educational reform in the CoE documents are related to the values and knowledge of teachers, considerable significance is also given to methodology, teaching aids, and classroom practice.

Though intercultural dimensions of EDC are not specifically highlighted in many of the documents analysed, intercultural approaches to citizenship education are central to several of the dimensions of citizenship education, notably the legal, cultural, social and European dimensions. Intercultural education is implicated in issues of integration and migration, democracy and social cohesion as well as teacher training and educational reform. In addition to these, intercultural education is a significant factor in language learning, in youth policies and in community relations. Finally, there is a significant request made by the European ministers of education (2003) to relaunch conceptual research on intercultural education with a view to adapting terminology and clearly defining the content and context of intercultural education.