

Pestalozzi workshop: Democracy in basic education

General approach and framework:

The general aim of the training activities of the Pestalozzi Programme is to train education professionals to become multipliers for Council of Europe standards and values in education.

The work was based on three main pillars:

- ❖ Content : standards and principles as well as project results of the Council of Europe
- ❖ Methodology: learner-centered, peer-training, collaborative work on issues of common concerns to find fit solutions for diverse contexts
- ❖ Four-fold concept of competences development: developing sensitivity and awareness, knowledge and understanding, individual practice, societal practice.

Related Council of Europe Project:

- ❖ Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education
- ❖ **Recommendation 1849 (2008) of the Parliamentary Assembly for the promotion of a culture of democracy and human rights through teacher education**
- ❖ 'Learning and Living Democracy For All'.

The workshop focused on the best practices and activities in teaching and learning about democracy, the different forms of democracy in every day's schooling life especially from the following points of views:

- ❖ Children's rights and participation in school's operational culture
- ❖ Different cases on how the Rights of the Child are promoted all around Europe
- ❖ The role of student boards and student associations in basic education.

Participants commit themselves to actively participate in all phases of the work:

- ❖ preparatory tasks before the workshop
- ❖ active participation throughout the whole duration of the workshop
- ❖ reporting, follow-up and dissemination after the workshop.

Expected results were:

- ❖ To strengthen democracy as a basic value in education
- ❖ To implement the participation practices and activities in everyday school life in basic education
- ❖ To get innovative ideas and share best practices between the participating countries concerning child activating philosophy and appropriate methods on active participation in school's operational culture
- ❖ Co-operation on fostering democracy and child participation with NGO's and other out-of-school networks.

The programme consisted of introductory lectures and visits to a local lower secondary school. Co-operative learning was the working method throughout the workshop: the participants shared their experiences and professional practices with peers from other participating countries.



Programme

Tuesday 1 October

Arrival of the participants

Check-in at Hotel Cumulus Hakaniemi (address: Siltasaarenkatu 14, 00530 Helsinki)

18.15

Meeting with Mr Matti Pietilä, Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Mr Marko van den Berg at the hotel reception. **Walk to the restaurant.**

18.30 – 21.00

Warm-Up dinner at restaurant Bridges (address: Stenberginranta 4)

During the dinner there will be the possibility to get to know each other.

Wednesday 2 October

9.00

Meeting at hotel reception. Walk together to the course venue:

Finnish National Board of Education (address: Hakaniemenranta 6, 00531 Helsinki)

9.15 - 10.00 *FNBE (1067)*

Workshop opening

Experiences in Module training and the objectives of workshop working

Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Mr Marko van den Berg

10.00 - 11.00

Introduction to the Pestalozzi programme, the Council of Europe and the Finnish Education System

Mr Jorma Kauppinen, Director, General Education, Finnish National Board of Education, Chair of Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Education and Practice (CDPPE)

11.00 – 11.15

Break

11.15 – 12.15

Finland's human rights-based approach to development

Mr Jussi Karakoski, Development Policy Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland

12.15 – 12.45

Reflection and discussion of Mr Jussi Karakoski's presentation

12.45 - 13.30

Lunch at restaurant Lasiranta (FNBE)

13.30 - 14.30

KiVa: a research-based anti-bullying program

Ms Cristina Salmivalli, Professor, University of Turku

14.30 - 15.00

Reflection and discussion of Ms Cristina Salmivalli's presentation

Refreshments (FNBE)

15.00 - 17.00

Workshop

Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Mr Marko van den Berg

19.00 -

Departure for dinner from Hotel reception

19.15

Dinner at restaurant Graniittilinna (address: Säästöpankinranta 6)

Thursday 3 October

8.30

Departure from hotel

9.00 - 12.00

Visit to *Helsingin normaalilyseo* (basic school with grades 7-9)

- Introduction of the school (principal Markku Pyysiäinen)
- Democracy in Finnish Basic Education (Ms Kristina Kaihari, Counsellor of Education, FNBE)
- School mediation (Maija Gellin)
- School mediators (pupils & teacher)
- Pupil's association
- Support & Tutor pupils.

12.30 – 13.05

School lunch

13.05 - 14.20

School visit continues

14.20 – 15.00

Reflection and discussion of school visit

15.00 –

Free time for shopping etc.

18.00 –

Meeting with Mr Matti Pietilä, Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Mr Marko van den Berg at the hotel reception. **Walk to the restaurant.**

18.30 -

Finnish evening at restaurant Saaga (address: Bulevardi 34)

Friday 4 October

9.00 – 11.30

Workshop

Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Mr Marko van den Berg

Democracy and participation across Europe

- Group work continues
- Summary
 - ➔ Groups presentations on fore-mentioned topics

11.30 - 12.30

Presentations and conclusions

Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Mr Marko van den Berg

Report on the European Workshop

Mr Matti Pietilä, Counsellor of Education, Finnish National Board of Education

Closing of the seminar

12.30 - 13.30

Farewell lunch / FNBE

Departures



List of participants and workshop organizers

Participants:



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ms Arnela Pandur



Bulgaria

Ms Rumjana Angelova



Croatia

Ms Branka Peric



Cyprus

Mr Andreas Tsiakkiros



Italy

Ms Maria Rebecchi



Montenegro

Ms Nada Dubljevic



Poland

Ms Jolanta Mrowiec



Portugal

Ms Graça Dias



Romania

Ms Lacramioara Alexandrescu



Slovenia

Ms Anastazija Avsec



Spain

Ms Maria Henriques Dias



Turkey

Mr Sirri Demirel

Trainers

Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio, FL, University of Helsinki

Mr Marko van den Berg, Ph.D, University of Helsinki

Finnish National Board of Education -staff

Mr Jorma Kauppinen, Director, General Education, Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE)

Chairman of Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE)

Ms Kristina Kaihari, Counsellor of Education, FNBE

Mr Veli-Matti Malinen, Head of General Upper Secondary & Basic Education in the Arts Unit, FNBE

Ms Jaana Järventausta, secretary, FNBE

Ms Mirja Kuorttinen, assistant, FNBE

Ms Inkeri Gröhn, secretary, FNBE

Mr Hannu Ylilehto, Head of Information, FNBE

Mr Matti Pietilä, Counsellor of Education, FNBE (Pestalozzi NLO of Finland)

Visiting lecturers

Ms Cristina Salmivalli, Professor, University of Turku

Mr Jussi Karakoski, Development Policy Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland

School visit / Helsingin Normaalilyseo

Principal Markku Pyysiäinen (Helsingin Normaalilyseo)

Ms Maija Gellin (Finnish Forum for Mediation)

Pretasks

Pretask for participants

The pretask needed to be sent to the trainers i.e. to Mr Marko van den Berg and to Ms Najat Ouakrim-Soivio before the participants came to Finland.

The pre-task were to be written in English (word–document, font: Calibri 12), and the optimal length of the work was 1 500 words.

Participants were to choose from one of the three following pretask options:

Option number 1:

Give us some examples of the best practices and activities in teaching and learning about school democracy. You can also bring out a project that you have been involved. You can also describe the best practices from your country.

OR

Option number 2:

How the children's participation or the children's rights are shown in practice in your school's or your country's everyday life? You can also bring out a project that you have been involved or you can describe the best practices from your country.

OR

Option number 3:

The role of student boards or student associations in your school or in your country. Bring us some examples or your personal experiences how the student boards works in everyday schooling life.

Option number 1:

Give us some examples of the best practices and activities in teaching and learning about school democracy. You can also bring out a project that you have been involved. You can also describe the best practices from your country.

Bulgaria _Rumjana Angelova

Examples of the best practices and activities in teaching and learning about school democracy

Is it possible to achieve complete education and democracy in school? This is the question that made all of us take part in the Helsinki workshop "Democracy in basic education".

On one hand it must be realized that school is not only "school", but a social entity, a small community, a place for the life of children and adults, where we can find all problems that exist in the political and social reality. Democracy as such may be in effect only if there is no king relationship threat and coercion, where there are enough people who feel responsible for the legality, justice and right. The contradiction between intention and reality in the learning of democracy in school life is especially true for the idea of participation.

We would like to make clear what the term "democracy" means.

Democracy in school begins with everyday things. In this section we present workable examples.

First of all democracy in school means learning together and living together in order to organize more self-awareness and personal responsibility. For example, in our school there are various clubs. Each student may choose to participate in the management and operation of several clubs. The students also have to take positions. The basic idea is gradually in small increments students to be trusted. But this responsibility also extends to other more difficult areas, and here it is the case for education for democratic citizenship in the narrow sense. This aims to engage students in the planning, decision making, and solving conflicts between them.

"Class council", "club board", "student council" at the school level, whose representatives participate with teachers at the Pedagogical Council and decide important class, club and school issues.

These examples relate to the interior of the school. They were chosen because their implementation and testing is relatively easy, and because "Democracy in Schools" should start inside the school. But it should not be limited there, and it must be constantly enriched by the liberation of the school, as well as welcoming different initiatives at various levels (local, global).

Taking responsibility

Often the practice of "democracy" in the school is limited to just voting on an issue. Clearly, this is not enough. It is a common fallacy that students learn self-reliance and consistency by continuous voting for the best, even if it seems particularly democratic. To decide in the end always means to take responsibility for themselves and others. This includes certain basic rules that can not be

eliminated even by majority decision. Or such that the strong ones are not allowed to humiliate the weak ones in any circumstances or that school violence can not be allowed in any form.

The Difficult role of the teacher

It is obvious that a tool such as a class council can not simply be introduced, expecting that it will immediately work. A lot of patience and courage are needed, as well as keeping in mind the probability of a failure in the initial phase. The teacher must supervise this process very closely. In this situation, teachers have to maintain a difficult balance. On one hand, especially during the first weeks and months of their authority, they guarantee the keeping of "good order". On the other hand, they must ensure that the class really learn to solve their problems and conflicts.

Clear rules

The objective of the efforts of the school is students to live and study in their school in the most independent way possible. They need to take responsibility. It is based on the premise that they can participate in decision-making. In the beginning of the academic year, every class choose a Student Council. Each Council consists of two members and a chairman. The Council takes care of the good communication between the class and the schoolboard. In our school there are a lot of extracurricular clubs. Each student may take part in several clubs. When the club starts working, the members choose leaders.

I am a head of **Maths&Art Club "One and a half percent"**. More than 100 students are club members. The management of the club consist of:

Section "Project activity"

Section: "Personal creativity"

Section: "WEB space"

Section: "Activities Up"

Section: "Promote the club"

Section: "Mathematical routes".

Each section chooses their own leader. At the beginning of the school year a chairman is voted for. The chairman and the section leaders are in the forefront of the club. The Board offers sections for working on various project planned activities, interaction between sections; supervising the using of tasks; organizing events, connecting to other clubs. Structure and clear rules build the organic fundament of the club.

Our club is works on the **principles** of:

- Opportunity for participation;
- Voluntariness;
- Autonomy in choosing;
- Responsibility;
- Right to vote and to be elected;
- Right to participate in the debate on the structure of the club, for the planning and implementation of activities;
- Competitive process to participate in the promotion;
- Representation - a collective member of the Union of students in Bulgaria.

Representatives of every class and club meet once or twice a month. They discuss different issues, they solve problems, they research and analyse what is important at school for the students. It works actively with the cooperation of the students councilor at the school. They have established the methods of students selfgovernment. It can be seen working on the last Friday of March - **The day of selfgovernment**. On this day all school positions are taken by students.

And how does it work?

Every student who wants to apply for a position has to submit an essay giving the reasons for their participation. Students Council examines, hear and decide.

The Youth parliament in Pazardzhik is entirely youth organization. In it everyone can actively participate unless they are over 18 years old. The Youth parliament is managed by two people - a president of the Youth parliament and a president of the board members. In the moment there are three commissions: Ecology, Sport and entertainment and Social activities.

The funding is carried out by Pazardzhik's municipality. In parliament all who want, can participate!

The election for that who will be the two presidents is done by vote of the all members who have participated at least six months in the parliament. There are no mandates - new president is selected if the old one leaves or there is a vote against him.

The same practice is applied on 9th May – The Day of Europe. Students from every school in Pazardzhik are elected for The Youth Parliament. This way they get the chance to be a mayor for a day.

Some school in Bulgaria have a special subject called “Democracy education in class”. It is included in the schedule of students in their last year at the high school. The main objective of the program is to obtain comprehensive knowledge about social, political and economic foundations of democracy.

Other objectives are:

- To increase the knowledge of students about human rights;
- To build skills in young people to assert their own rights without violating the rights of others;
- To create opportunities for the dissemination of information and experience between youth organizations in Pazardzhik between similar organizations at home and abroad.

To sum up, I would like to say that participation of all groups of school-community in the processes of decision-making is key to any democratic process. In this sense, students are a very important group in this community. Because in fact the school is mainly a territory for children. Offering solutions by someone who plays the role of an expert, a teacher or principle puts with children and their parents in a position where they just have to agree with those decisions, depriving parents and children of the ability to recognize them as their own. And that is not what democracy is all about.

Croatia_Branka Perić

In Croatia, the programs of the education for democratic citizenship and related programs have been sporadically occurring since the early 90's as part of informal educational efforts triggered primarily by civil society organizations, as well as some higher education institutions and individuals.

Croatian government adopted the National Programme of Education for Human Rights in 1999, which consists of a program of human rights for preschool, for classroom and for subject teaching in primary schools and the Human Rights Program for high school. Even though the education for democratic citizenship is not a separate subject, it is a part of the Croatian National School Curriculum, and can be implemented through a series of courses and projects. The civic education as a separate subject is currently being carried out experimentally in four secondary and eight primary schools, and from 2014/2015 will become part of the school education system in all schools. At the level of pre-school education, education for human rights is already part of the mandatory content.

People's knowledge of human rights and a form of a democratic society in which the rights are exercised and developed are basic requirements for achieving human rights. This is the reason why I designed a workshop regarding that topic. Its content can be adapted to different age groups of pupils. It consists of the introduction to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and examples of actions individuals and organizations are taking in order to solve rights of the child. The part of the workshop is a "quiz" with some questions like What every student can do to protect the rights of the child?, What can I do in my family?, What can I do in my classroom?, What do my parents / my family give to me?, My obligations to my parents / my family, Examples of good behaviour in family, Examples of bad behavior in the family...

I designed some projects in which the school democracy was (partially) an issue. The first one I want to mention is an introduction of the compulsory wearing of school uniforms in our school. We hold a discussion on this topic in each classroom on advantages and disadvantages of the proposal. We also had to agree on the requirements for the uniform. Then the pupils had a task (that was optionally) to design a school uniform and we run a competition in each class for the best uniform and then for the best one in the school. Then we conducted a survey among all students and parents if they should accept that wearing school uniforms be mandatory. Although more than half of the respondents were in favor of a uniform, we realized that some students and parents would not have accepted it. In this case, we believed that the introduction of the compulsory wearing of school uniforms would not achieve its purpose, so we rejected that idea.

One of my areas of interest is the extent to which schools meet the needs of students. I wanted to explore the students' attitudes towards school. By then I was interested in how much the school satisfies the students' needs, does the feeling of satisfaction change regarding to the age of students and are there differences between boys and girls. I conducted the poll in my school, and included the sample of 98 students (5th - 8th grades): 54 boys and 44 girls. The differences regarding the age and the gender were found. The attitudes of the older students were more negative than the attitudes of the younger ones, and boys' attitudes were more negative than girls' attitudes. I presented the achieved results to the teachers in my school and in a school in our local community and also published it in a form of a professional paper in a professional magazine.

The achieved results have prompted me to conduct another survey. I conducted the research on the topic "Differences in Achievements of Girls and Boys in Primary School", which one of the main aims was to promote rights of the child. My main idea was that the school is the only system that it gathers all the children and where they spend a considerable part of their time and as such is undoubtedly of great importance in the lives of children. Therefore, it should be in a function of the development of human resources and allow everyone a feeling of success. That obliges us also the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which in Article 29 says that "the education of the child shall be directed to the full development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities," or, in other words, the child has a right to a quality education with the aim of developing his personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent possible.

My work tried to direct the attention to differences in academic achievements of girls and boys and to their possible causes and ways to deal with the cause of this phenomenon. It also gave samples what governments of some countries have done to deal with this problem. I also presented the differences in achievement of girls and boys in my school, and the data regarding data on gender representation of the teachers in the school. Obtained results showed difference in achievements in all ages in favour of girls, as well as a higher representation of women in teaching staff of the school. I suggested the measures, based on other countries experiences, which could help to increase achievements of boys in school.

In collaboration with a colleague and students, I designed project "Our Rules", which was based on an idea how to make class/school rules and responsibilities more interesting, understandable and popular to pupils. Firstly, we made sketches which were related to everyday situations in the classroom. Each sketch also refers to one class rule. Later, we composed a class anthem on the subject and connected the sketches into the play.

As the project leader and in partnership of seven European schools, I am currently working on the project Euroball. Some of the issues addressed by this project are to combat racism, prejudice and xenophobia, to make provision for learners with special needs, to promote equality between men and women and contributing to combat all forms of discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief and disability.

The state conference of projects in the field of civic education is held for many years in Croatia. This year my project "Active Citizen: *Misto u srid srca moga*" (A Place in My Heart) was invited and presented to the state conference. My colleague and I together with the 4th grade pupils have created this project with the idea that active citizens must undergo the experience of taking part in decision-making processes affecting their own situation. The aim of the project was the development of regional identity and consciousness of environmental protection of the homeland, with an emphasis on tourism as the main industry and the related development of entrepreneurial competencies. We conducted many activities like exhibition in a local museum of photographs taken by students with examples of good and bad ecological practices in their homeland.

The aim was to raise environmental awareness in the local community. The next activities were cleaning of the school playground; designing and making souvenirs of the driftwood; a proposal to the mayor on setting eco beach showers; making and selling the calendars with photos taken by

students... The project encouraged development of the personal responsibility for the environment, as well as taking personal initiatives.

Through making the calendars, pupils have acquired certain competences for entrepreneurship. The proposals to the mayor about installing eco showers, placing more containers for solid waste and changing times of emptying containers and his acceptance of the proposals, also encouraged developing the responsibility for their environment and taking initiative for the change in their environment.

Italy_Maria Angela Rebecchi

I have been a head teacher for 6 years now and my priority has always been to create a democratic and involving working environment. School is an organization and team work is crucial. This is the main idea of my decision making process as a leader. I have gradually realized that my role is very important, not only because I have to make decisions but also because I must embody cultural and relational values, crucial elements at the basis of educational processes.

That is why I think that an effective approach to school governance is the democratic and distributed leadership model. I have been able to reach this goal by asking capable and willing teachers to work in a more focused way, participating in the school's decision-making processes; that is generate passion for accomplishing goals. This has been and it is possible by reminding my teachers of the laws they have to accomplish to, pinpointing the negative consequences when not observed.

Teachers have become gradually aware of this by tackling not only the problems of their classes but of problems regarding school policies in general. At the beginning I had to face a part(luckily a minority) of the board of teachers who shared a passive approach towards their working environment. This group of teachers sometimes arrived late, they didn't always control their students when in class, they happened to change their time table without any kind of permission, their way of judging their students' behaviour was not always impartial.

The initial idea was to make them remind the set of Ministry of Education rules. The most meaningful rules for the specific situation of my schools are:

1. Your timetable should meet your students requirements and not your needs
2. You should work as often as possible in teams
3. You should always be with your students
4. You should evaluate your students by using objective criteria and parents must be informed about them
5. You should plan school trips or travels by stating the highest benefits for your students' competence.

Two of the above listed rules are compulsory for any public employee (number 3 and 4) the others are a direct consequence of the students' rights to reach the maximum level of competence when attending school.

The Italian law for Public Education states now that any student, whatever problem he/she may have, has the right to have the best opportunities to learn. As a head teacher I have the duty to make it possible, but I can't select my teachers and I am required to enforce laws not always matching each other, for instance the rights of the teachers as workers and the rights of the students. Moreover the laws of the Ministry of Education are generic and you have to interpret them on the several occasions. This is why I think that you have to get your teachers to accept laws by making them aware of their crucial importance.

Therefore I published the disciplinary code for teachers on the school web site and I asked them to read it... then I started to walk along the corridors of my main school (I have other 5 schools on the territory) and I noticed that some of my teachers were very dutiful, others much less. What stroke my attention was the fact they seemed perfectly at their ease.

I started to make them notice that their behaviour was not consistent with the law. They accepted my considerations but their behaviour sometimes was still lacking. One day an accident occurred to a student, he was pushed against a window by a school fellow, he was slightly injured by the broken glass and the teacher was not there.

I helped the teacher with first aid and then I asked him to come to my office and with my deputy I reminded him of the rule he had not followed and the obvious consequence, being specifically required to a teacher to continuously attend his/her classroom and being legally responsible for anything should happen . A record was written and signed by the teacher, myself and my deputy. Together with the teacher, I talked to the parents and assuring them that the fact would never happen again I managed to avoid legal consequences.

My behaviour might have been much stricter but I chose not to give civil penalty at once, to make the teacher understand that enforcing rules is essential. This fact helped other teachers to improve their behaviour and now things are getting better.

Similarly, when evaluating students, some teachers evaluated some of them in a not clear way and without defining common objective criteria. Some parents whose children had unexpected grades complained with me about the fact. I called the teacher coordinator of the class and asked her to account for the mark. She was not able to provide a motivation, and to preserve the school reputation we tried to explain the parents that the class teachers wanted to improve the students behaviour and not to condemn them. Talking together we found out that something in the communication didn't work properly and this prevented parents from denouncing the school.

I had a meeting with all the teachers and asked them to find common clear and objective criteria of how to evaluate students' behaviour. I also added that a good way in relating with parents is to make always their intentions clear. Moreover good relationships are built on reciprocal honesty and capacity to admit when a mistake is made.

I think that most teachers have appreciated my attitude and some of them came and told me that they felt guaranteed by my school policy. At present I'm working to get teachers aware of the necessity of having a timetable which respects students' learning times, of the advantages of working in teams and of planning interesting school trips.

I do work with a group of sensible teachers on the idea of building coherence between the mission and vision of the school and what is actually being implemented at school every day. I hope to be able to see that rule and law respect has become an acquainted behavioural model. That builds a democratic school as everybody respects rules not because they are compelled to, but because they think rules are necessary for the defence of everybody's rights.

Project 2

What I am trying to do as a head teacher is part of a project that some Primary teachers are carrying out with the help of Professor Boero and the Maths Department of the University of Genoa.

The objectives for these 3rd classes were:

- Improve relationships among children
- Make them aware of rules
- Develop positive interdependence
- Help them evaluate themselves by reflecting on their experiences
- Develop their listening capacity
- Get them to exchange views to obtain shared choices.

The starting idea was to have more accurate rules to be followed during lunch at school. When not unruly, children usually do what they are asked to in a passive way or follow common behaviour just because they have to.

Teachers can make their pupils do what they are asked also by punishing them when they do not follow rules: so they can prevent them from playing for a while or make them sit down and think of what they did, but this was not proved effective.

The teachers designed a project which involved:

1. A didactic agreement aiming at an aware building of personal and shared knowledge. The process requires mutual respect and trust
2. Individual and team tasks (cooperative learning)
3. Texts comparison
4. A guided debate

Activities

Reading of a passage from "Ann is angry" by Christine Nostlinger
Brainstorming about the idea of "rules"

Stimuli

- *If I say the word rule what comes up to you?*
- *Which rules do we know?*
- *Rules at home?*
- *Rules at the park?*
- *Rules in the street?*
- *Rules in class?*
- *Rules in the canteen?*

Children can express their ideas by holding their hands up
Then they choose a rule to discuss and give their opinion
The class is divided into groups and in each group there is:

- someone who takes care of the volume of the voice
- someone who controls time
- an observer(with an evaluation sheet)
- a presenter

The group discusses and chooses the answer which reflects the group's opinion

The teacher interviews the groups. They give their opinions without repeating what has just been said(evaluation of their listening skill). The rules are written on a poster and a contract is drawn up and signed. At this point the chosen rules are accepted and understood, because motivated by the children who have to respect them.

Montenegro_Nada Dubljevic

I shall try to present the best practices and activities in teaching and learning about school democracy in Montenegro, being aware that there might be more activities about which I am not informed.

Elementary school "Luka Simonovic" had a chance to be involved in project "Democratic workshops", which are organized in the framework of the "Open Parliament" of the Parliament of Montenegro, in order to contribute to strengthening the link between Parliament and the young, especially the elementary school population.

Democratic workshops are designed to be a program of civic education for elementary school students, which gain knowledge of parliamentary democracy, the functioning of parliament, as well as the development and implementation of the law. The project is implemented in the form of workshops, through which children between the ages of eight to fifteen years old learn how democracy functions, using carefully selected and trained teachers / trainers, and through interactive content in a manner suited to their age. The project aims to encourage the interest of young people in democratic processes and to contribute to their understanding. The knowledge and experience of children and young people implement in a newspaper, radio or TV report that is later published at the website of Democratic workshops.

The Parliament of Montenegro conducted "Democratic workshops" with professional and technical implementation of the NGO Forum of Youth and Informal Education (Forum MNE), supported by the Ministry of Education and the financial support of the Erste Foundation.

During the four-hour workshop a team of skilled trainers (youth workers) work with children, through interactive content and in a manner suited to their age, present the basis of democracy and why it is important to be an active citizen in society.

By creative methods in small groups (through associations, examples from children's lives, discussions, etc.), experienced trainers approach these topics to children to keep them interested and encourage them to acquire further knowledge in this area. Part of the interactive and accessible ways of working with children involves writing stories and poems, drawings, comics, interviews and / or photo – stories.

Through the project, the Parliament of Montenegro seeks to ensure, whenever possible, the visit of MPs of the Parliament to Democratic workshops, where participants of the workshops have the opportunity to discuss the issues about their work and the work of Parliament as an institution.

During the four-hour workshop, children also have the opportunity to visit the building of the Parliament, become acquainted with the methods of work, responsibilities and the history of institution, to feel the atmosphere of the discussion and adoption of the law from a press room.

At the end of the workshop, the children receive their own copies of newspaper (in a later stage of the project, children will incorporate their knowledge in a radio or TV broadcast), whose content is their own work developed during the four-hour work and published on the website of the democratic workshops.

In the previous year, two classes from our school visited Democratic workshops, and shared their experience with their peers and families. We have organized workshops in school to see what are the lessons learned and can some of the gained knowledge about parliamentary democracy be implemented in schools and in which way, especially within a students' parliament.

In previous two years, I have followed the editions of Council of Europe, especially Pestalozzi programs, and the colleagues from the school who has participated in the summer academy "Human rights in action" shared the resources with our school. So, I have had a chance to read through manuals "Democratic governance of schools" and "How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of the competencies", as well as manual "Living in democracy" with lesson plans for elementary school.

All those resources are available in electronic version for all interested teachers in Montenegro. The only, if I can call it, disadvantage is that only first two manuals are offered in our mother tongue. Mostly all resources which can be found about democratic school governance are in English, and that makes them less applicable in our educational system.

I have found the manual about school governance very useful and it gave me food for thoughts. I couldn't help trying to position 'my' school in key areas: governance, leadership and public accountability; value-centred education; cooperation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and school determination; student discipline.

Governing school in democratic way is a process, which is not the responsibility only of the head of the school, but of other stakeholders participating in the life of school as well. The aspiration of every head teacher is to implement and promote democratic school governance, but as I have already said, it is a process, full of challenges, hard work and cooperation.

I'm aware that we have started this process but there is a lot of job ahead. One of the reasons that I'm very excited to be on these workshops is that I will meet other colleagues and hear from them their experiences. With the experiences of other colleagues and from other countries I expect that I will be in possibility to bring new energy to our process and to inspire other school stakeholders to promote and implement democracy governance in schools in Montenegro.

Option number 2:

How the children's participation or the children's rights are shown in practice in your school's or your country's everyday life? You can also bring out a project that you have been involved or you can describe the best practices from your country.

Cyprus_Andreas Tsiakkiros

Children's participation and children's rights in the Cyprus Educational System

The ongoing Educational Reform that takes place in Cyprus is an effort for a comprehensive introduction of changes and innovations at all levels and aspects of the educational system, since education is regarded as an individual and human right of every child. The main objective of this effort is to create a democratic and pupil-focused educational system, which includes all pupils irrespective of social, racial or ethnic background, gender, physical or mental ability and offers high quality education to pupils, thus assisting them to maximize their potential and acquire skills and knowledge which will enable them to become active and democratic citizens.

All educational policies related to school governance, management, discipline procedures and inclusion promote a human rights-based approach and pupils and their teachers are in the centre of policy design and implementation. All regulations and practices that affect the school culture and access to education take into account, after close consultation, the opinions of all stakeholders. The different actions designed, developed and implemented by the school units include activities on human rights and democratic citizenship. In each school a central pupils' council is made up of members elected by the members of each class committee with the aim of promoting democratic procedures and fostering self-control, discipline and cooperation between pupils. Pupils also participate in forming the code of behaviour of their class and are actively involved in the daily school life by undertaking various responsibilities. Pupils are encouraged to actively participate in the teaching procedure and contribute to the improvement of the learning environment.

The new Curriculum is based on the principle that children should not only be aware of their rights and responsibilities but also be able to safeguard, respect, accept and tolerate the rights of others. A key point for this approach is the appreciation of the personality of every child and the commitment to the respect and the implementation of human rights. An example of this approach is the Health Education Curriculum to which we will refer in detail in the following paragraphs. Its underpinning goal, which integrates health promotion principles, is to encourage pupils' participation as active health agents. This is basically achieved through the adoption of the participatory approach: investigation-vision-action-change. This approach encourages both pupils and teachers to explore living conditions and facilitates their creative skills in order to work collectively and initiate and sustain real life changes within their immediate environment. The challenge is to develop a curriculum which encourages pupils, parents, staff and others, within the community to work together and bring changes that are beneficial to their own and to others' health. The emphasis is not on how to persuade the individual to change behavior, but how to

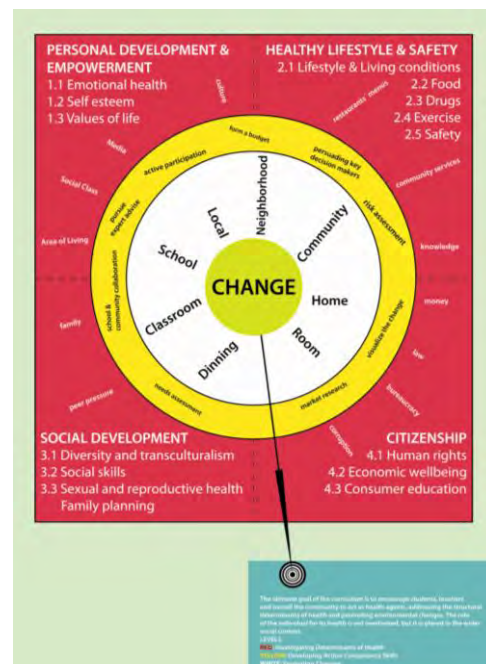
empower individuals to collaborate, develop partnerships and create supportive environments conducive to health.

The Health Education Curriculum provides solutions towards the empowerment of individuals and the development of a collective sense of responsibility towards the sustainability of the society, thus contributing in the interaction with other structural components of the school. For this purpose, it refers to educational and managerial actions not only in the classroom but also in policy development (for example: diet, bullying), as well as partnerships within the community, and collaboration with parents. All these promote participation and empowerment of the whole school community and the community in general.

The Curriculum also gives teachers guidelines for the basic knowledge and skills to be promoted, as well as for the teaching methods to be used (active participation, problem solving, exploring local environment etc.). Its structure consists of three levels which correspond to learning objectives (three concentric circles) and four main thematic areas that are related to content, as shown in Figure 1, in the next page. All topics of the Curriculum are classified into four thematic areas that provide a holistic perspective of health, since they include all its dimensions:

- (1) Development and empowerment of one's self;
- (2) Development of a healthy and safe lifestyle;
- (3) Development and improvement of one's social self;
- (4) Development of an active citizen.

The curriculum content and its objectives do not concentrate only on the transmission of knowledge of what is "good" for health or not, but on identifying with the pupils the factors that influence healthy behaviour through different actions. The whole idea is that pupils have the right to participate in decisions that affect them; the degree and form of participation can differ according to their age, interests and competences.



As part of the Curriculum, a new school subject has been introduced during 2011-2012, titled "*Health Education*". A basic success indicator for the Health Education subject in all grades is the emphasis placed upon topics such as developing life skills, cooperation and participation in school and class decision making. Pupils are therefore encouraged to actively exercise participatory democracy. Through the Health Education subject pupils are engaged in a range of democratic activities. For example, they develop project plans with budgets to bring about the environmental changes they envision, during their earlier investigations. They also write letters to local politicians and businesses, organise fundraising activities, present their ideas to the local community, organise petitions and surveys and discuss issues of interest with their parents and families. By engaging in these types of activities, pupils develop skills and knowledge about local decision making processes, collective action and active participation that motivates them and fosters their learning and development.

The Health Education Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture is funding health promotion activities or projects initiated and implemented by the schools themselves, thus promoting children's participation. The whole idea is to support schools that act as health agents and tackle social determinants of poor health. The funding provided gives the opportunity to pupils, teachers and parents to develop partnerships for health and with its criteria of assessment, encourages all stakeholders to collaborate and make changes based on their own circumstances regarding matters that are important to them. Pupils, teachers and parents become health agents together for their own school, neighbourhood and community.

Written applications are submitted that include the following: rationale, coordination, target groups, cooperation with other stakeholders, time frame, duration and frequency of the activities, allocation of the budget, expected results and evaluation tools. Codified indicator criteria are then used to evaluate the schools' applications. Two of the criteria used are that the action emanates from the needs of the school unit, the teachers or the children and is based on active learning methods (e.g. active involvement of pupils in decision making, collaborative learning, hands-on learning, critical thinking and problem solving). The following examples that were approved for funding in the past give an idea of the actions undertaken in schools:

- *Funding the operation of a multipurpose cultural venue in the community:* The funding was for the operation of a quality multipurpose venue for children living in a deprived area, to keep them away from dangers outside the school area and offer them a quality programme of creative and educational activities throughout the week.
- *Quality recreation during the break:* Special equipment purchased for games in the schoolyard during breaks as part of an intervention programme used throughout the school year to give children opportunities to communicate and succeed, to improve language skills and subsequently to reduce social exclusion.
- *Creative occupation in the afternoon:* Dealing with extremely aggressive behaviours which are uncontrollable or intensified in the family atmosphere, by channeling this energy and self-expression in sports or in other activities that are of interest to children.
- *Offering creative occupation to high-risk pupils during the summer:* The activities which were funded included meetings of children with fine-art therapists, participation in various academies, attending courses that addressed specific academic needs or other interests and participation in camps and/or summer schools.

Both the Curriculum as well as the subject of Health Education, as previously described, promote health and sustainable development by capitalising on the pupils' voice and a sense of collective ownership of the context. The ultimate aim of this effort is to address the structural determinants of poor health and bring about changes in living conditions which can support changes in lifestyles. The experience has shown that if we actively involve children, listen to their voice and turn their ideas and suggestions into actions, then the results will be more beneficial and valuable to them.

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Poland_Jolanta Mrowiec

As my contribution to the European workshop entitled "Democracy in basic education" I'd like to touch upon the following 7 points related to my experience in education:

1) NURSERY SCHOOLS - THE CRADLE OF DEMOCRACY IN BASIC EDUCATION AS „WHAT LITTLE JOHN HAVEN'T LEARNT, OLD JOHN WON'T KNOW"

Nursery school is the first institution out of doors where children enter the world of universal values. Children's rights concern first and foremost children themselves, so they should be made aware of them from an early age. There is need to raise awareness of adults about children rights as they take care about their own rights, but often forget that children have also rights to recreation and leisure or to be free from physical or mental violence, exploitation, sexual abuse and all cruelty. To overcome the economic barrier in access of every child to pre-school education since 1 September 2013 the Ministry of National Education has limited to maximum 1,00 PLN fees charged by the municipalities from parents for children care in kindergartens for each additional hour over a minimum five hours a day free of charge.

2) "REST IN REAL NOT VIRTUAL WORLD"- THE BEST OPTION OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

The school year 2013/2014 was announced by the Minister of National Education "The year of school that promotes physical activities of children in the open air".

The Department of Social Affairs, Promotion and Twinning in Municipality of Żywiec cooperates with:

- The Municipal Management Board of Schools and Nursery Schools
- The Commission of Education, Culture, Sport and Tourism in City Council and supervises the annual program of cooperation with NGO's among others in the scope of touristic and recreational activities for children.

XV ACTION „TRIPS FOR 1,00 PLN”- SUMMER'2013”

This summer 8 TRIPS= 431 CHILDREN

15 YEARS of activity since 1999 = 128 TRIPS = 6489 CHILDREN

Motto: "TO TAKE EXERCISES MEANS TO BE HEALTHY”

Every child pays symbolic 1,00 PLN for one trip to cover only the cost of insurance. Travel, entrance fees and guide services are covered by the organizer. The tutors taking care of children during the trips work on a voluntary basis. For the most of children the trip for 1,00 PLN is the only chance for attractive holidays outside the town.

3) LOCAL POLICY IN THE AREA OF EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY: THINK GLOBALLY – ACT LOCALLY

In Poland local authorities are responsible for the management of schools, therefore all initiatives aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system depend heavily on their ability to finance and implement the required changes.

The initial conception of The Strategy for Development of Basic Education in Żywiec 2014-2020 postulates education for democratic citizenship to empower children to exercise and defend their rights in society, to value diversity and to play an active part in democratic life. Local education policy is linked with social policy and supports local development. It is based on the following guidelines and strategic documents:

THE STRATEGY OF DEVELOPMENT OF SILESIA PROVINCE „SILESIA 2020”

Objective: To ensure versatile development of children with particular emphasis on educational and patriotic attitudes, regional identity and ecological awareness.

REPORT "POLAND 2030”

to set directions of development of intellectual capital for the next 20 years

Barriers: The educational process in Poland is more conducive to deepening social differences than in the other countries and the choice of children's "educational path" often is not directed by their skills, but by the economic status of their parents.

THE PROGRAMME “DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AND COMPETENCES IN THE REGIONS”

to reduce inequalities in access to education between rural and urban areas thanks to regional pre-school education programs and more effective teaching of key competences indispensable in the labor market.

4) GOOD PRACTICES IN THE REGION - GLANCE AT EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

The most valuable way for children to learn and understand their rights is participation in educational projects in the region implemented by The Municipal Management Board of Schools and Nursery Schools in Żywiec:

PROJECTS:

- ❖ Operational Program Human Capital,
- ❖ Priority IX Development of education and competences in regions,
- ❖ Action: 9.1 Equal educational opportunities and ensuring high quality of educational services provided in the system of education,
- ❖ Action 9.1.1. Reducing inequalities in the dissemination of pre-school education.
- ❖ „NURSERY SCHOOL IS THE BEST PLACE FOR CHILDREN”
to increase the number of children aged 3-5 years, with limited access to pre-school education, attending nursery facilities.
- ❖ Action: 9.1.2 Equal educational opportunities for children from groups with limited access to education and reducing disparities in the quality of educational services.

“BEFORE CHOOSING AN EDUCATIONAL PATH FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE CARRIER”: English with a native-speaker, learning outside the classroom (open learning), educational and vocational counseling

„ACADEMY OF YOUNG INTELLECTUALS”: extra-curricular and outdoor activities to enable children from primary schools to choose educational paths in the context of situation in the local labor market.

„INDIVIDUALIZATION OF THE PROCESS OF TEACHING AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN”: activities of interest for talented children, classes for children with specific difficulties in reading and writing, including children at-risk of dyslexia.

„TO SPREAD THE WINGS”: to bridge the disparities in educational achievements of children thanks to innovative educational offers: "The wise child" and "Children with Character".

5) THE WAYS TO DEMOCRACY IN BASIC EDUCATION IN “COMMON ŻYWIEC” –PROJECTS FOR ROMA INCLUSION

Article 70 of the new Constitution of the Republic of Poland, adopted on 2 April 1997, stipulates that everyone shall have the right to free of charge education in public schools; and public authorities shall ensure universal and equal access to education for citizens.

Local authorities pay special attention to particularly vulnerable children: children being raised without parental care, with disabilities, in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

The process of Roma integration into society includes projects of Ministerial National Program for the Roma Community since 2005:

- ❖ • „My knowledge - my future” - purchasing textbooks for Roma children and employing Roma Teaching Assistants.
- ❖ • „Together” - educational and pedagogical activities to adapt the Roma in local community;
- ❖ • „Summer Camp” - integration camp for Roma children and young people associated in the Polish Scouting Association.

6) RECENT INSTITUTIONAL MOBILITY PROJECTS IN EDUCATION

European Social Fund - Operational Program Human Capital - LLP

Institutional mobility of educational staff

"THE YOUTH OF A NATION ARE THE TRUSTEES OF POSTERITY"

Partners: Municipality of Żywiec (Poland) and Municipality of Real Sitio de San Ildefonso - La Granja (Spain)

Participants: teaching staff and decision-makers responsible for realization of local education policy.

Good practices:

- ❖ early childhood education as a learning stage of particular importance for the child development in the perspective of the process of lowering the age of children obliged to start the school duty;
- ❖ initial vocational education as a phase of education with priority significance for personal development of child;
- ❖ education for sustainable development of natural environment;
- ❖ educational programs for ethnic minorities;
- ❖ education in the period of economic crisis and population decrease.

Comenius Regio Partnerships

„ANTIENT ROMANS SAID: IGNORANCE OF THE LAW HARMS"

Partners:

Poland - Municipality of Żywiec, Gymnasium Nr 1, SMS - the Local Law Consultancy

Turkey - Trabzon Provincial Directorate of National Education, Elementary school, Technical and Vocational High School, Association for The Support of Social Research and Development (TARGETED)

Good practices: law education, law information and counseling, pragmatic classes with using modern teaching techniques such as mock trial or cases analysis.

7) THE IDEA OF LOCALITY IN EDUCATION EXPRESSED IN EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

Already in XVI c. Jan Zamoyski - a nobleman, diplomat, politician and statesman- said: "The youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity" and this maxim is still up to date. In order to turn ideas about increasing children's active participation in the civic, political, social, economic, legal and cultural spheres of society into practice, education policy makers, teachers, parents, NGO, youth organizations, media and the general public should integrate and cooperate in solidarity spirit as

we all live together in a democratic and multicultural society and share responsibility for defense and promotion of children's rights.

Partnership and local debate about democracy in education can help to recognize needs and problems faced by schools and to choose educational priorities and build such relationship in the community that will help to implement them.

The great challenge for the local governments is to build "open schools" and to change the training programs adapted to the demographic decrease. Many policy makers need to change their mind-set, attitude and mentality to eradicate misconceptions that there is nothing more one can do in the area of democratic citizenship and human rights education. The mutual understanding between education authorities and educational staff is a precondition for the promotion of democracy in basic education. We all should remember that children are our future and we are obliged to educate them properly and prepare them for the future challenges.

Portugal_Graça Dias

As a language teacher, and a European citizen, I am always involved in teaching, and shown, children's rights because I deal with different people, teachers and students with different views, values education, ethics, religious and identities due to their cultural and religious background. And in Portugal (and in the Madeira Island) we promoted teachers, and the programs, to the children's rights in our schools, and to enable them to use methods, materials, instruments of human rights education – Manual of Human Rights Education from the Council of Europe - in their classrooms. In schools it is expected the teachers and all the school staff to undertake the Rights of the Child education within their classrooms. One of the role of the teachers will be multipliers of child rights education within their schools (or schools), the impact of teaching is the mainstreaming of children rights education.

With the trainings activities it is expect that a teacher and the school staff become multipliers for Human Rights Education and the values education. They undertake information, methods, materials and instruments of human rights education to use in their classrooms. In schools they will be a multiplication trough the meetings which they have with the parents and the others colleagues. I think the goal to all of us is to acquire and develop sensitivity and awareness, knowledge and understanding, individual practice and societal practice to promote the different cases on how the Rights of the Child are shown.

The Children's rights and participation in school's operational culture is commemorate in the 20th November (International Day of the Rights of the Child) or in the 4th December (Human's Rights), some teachers and students show the Rights in different forms and to remind all the school community.

With the exposition or workshop we approached the issues of a pluralistic school, ethics education and values from the perspective of intercultural, of human rights, of children's rights and of religion participating in different activities that encourage all the educational community to reflect on their personal core values, the students' lives and identities and to acknowledge the unique identities of others, how their core values plays a crucial role in my methodology

regarding the education of the students and what are the ambitious we would like to achieve as a teacher.

In my school, we have a Children's bill of rights and responsibilities for our students.

It is intended to serve as a guide in the education system. We hope that it is useful in considering how one develops a working, respectful and constructive dialogue and relationship with any child. We hope that all of us share this with our children and family, with teachers, and with friends. And the target group isn't only the teachers of history, geography, economics, law, languages, ethics, religion, home economics, sports, and the one's involved in teaching human rights but all of us the Rights of the Child are in every day school life and in life operational culture.

Each of us should explaining that every right comes with responsibility; and the list of the rights and the responsibilities should be in language simple enough for most children to understand.

In my opinion an important right of the child is the following one: each child/student should know that he/she have the responsibility to look around, be interested, and to try many things; the responsibility to be honest about the things he/she is not interested in, so that the parents and others do not waste time helping he/she learn about them; have the responsibility to take the things that do interest he/she seriously, have fun with them, but to also really make an effort to learn about them.

But for the old and the authoritarian people the right "Play and Leisure" is the most important, because every child has the right to a reasonable amount of leisure ("free") time; this time should be used as the child wishes. Every child has the right to enjoy some sort of outdoor activities and play, and as close to every day as is possible.

As an European teacher I must know something about the Council of Europe, so I have learned and I have listened information's given by some speakers, such as, "Cooperation Programme", which there is a lot of information about "Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights" and the "Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education adopted", an excellent education contents for Europeans teachers or for Europeans citizenships and a good resource material to promote and incorporate the principles of human rights, democracy, tolerance and mutual respect, the rule of law and peaceful resolution of conflicts into the daily practice of teaching and learning. And some speakers told us that Council of Europe structures can also issue recommendations, which represent important standard setting documents. That recommendations or codes are excellent tools for good practice in various fields, such as, the role of student boards and student associations in basic education.

The subjects touched on the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, values and identities, improve always my educational work aimed at developing intercultural competence and into an intercultural educational context with my students, colleagues and young people. After reading all the Children's Rights, I have the benefit of mutual exchange of ideas with myself and with my students and I always learned how to interact with diversity, different behaviors', thoughts and feelings that's why I feel better equipped to improve my educational work and with news tools needed to further into today's society and to build a better world for equal treatment for all young people/students.

The rights exposed through the declaration were based on the balance between theory, shared experience and on practical parts and active participants' contribution to discussed subjects and themes. I think each person had to be an "equipment" available during the whole duration of the reading to ensure the concrete practical experience which can be reused later again. And I had an interactive presentations, and after a presentation of a right, we were actively involved and developed – in small groups – their own interactive presentation using their own knowledge and personal values.

Romania_Lacramioara Alexandrescu

Romania is a country with a very young democracy. There are only 23 years since Romanian society, including the education system, has started to learn and to live democracy.

The first and easiest step was to include democratic notions in the curriculum. There are several subjects - at different grades - which topic includes themes concerning democratic everyday life (e.g. "Civic Education"–7th grade). An important part of Romanian curriculum (30%) is assigned by optional subjects, proposed by teachers and selected by students and parents. Such subjects (e.g. "Education for democracy") develop knowledge and practice concerning democracy. What is really difficult is to pass from theory to practice democracy.

Democratic living and thinking should be taught from primary school and practiced by everyone in everyday life.

Romanian educational system has suffered many changes during the latest 23 years. One of them concerns the role of the "actors" (teacher – student – parent) in the educational process. It wasn't easy at all to make everyone understand (and especially "experienced" teachers) that student should be in the centre of teaching and learning process. There is no more place for "magister dixit". Student is called now "the beneficiary" of education. We have to make an educational offer, to do our best in order to prepare students for their future life and integration on the labour market and social life and to measure our beneficiary's satisfaction. Student should be our partner and has an active role in his education.

On the other side, we try to make students understand that they have both rights and obligations. Students should understand that there is a balance between rights and duties.

Both students' rights and duties are stipulated in the National Education Law of 2011 and in each School Interior Regulation (SIG), adopted with students' agreement. At the beginning of every school year students and parents are informed about SIG's content.

We try to apply democracy in school management bodies, which include students' representatives and to involve students in school decisions, but I think we should go further in changing people mentality and in making democracy one of the main society values. Usually secondary school students are involved in management decisions, while younger students have "to obey" adults' opinions and decisions. I think the next step should be the try to make democratic thinking and doing to be interiorized by very young children.

In each Romanian high school there is a Students' School Council, including representative students of every grade. The council has its president, a vice-president and some students who are in charge with different commissions. The president and vice-president are selected by vote after a very competitive election campaign, which supposes for each candidate a platform posted on the school web-site and an election process.

We considered that our students have to practice democracy in order to understand its mechanisms. The best way to do it is by different projects. During the last 5 years we have had several projects concerning democracy:

1. **"The CITIZEN"**, a project in partnership with British Council and the Intercultural Institute of Timisoara, was implemented in our school with the support of Centre for Civic Education USA included in CIVITAS Project.

Objectives:

- ❖ To get students familiar to the government problems
- ❖ To get students familiar to the government participation
- ❖ To develop students' skills in order to influence public policies
- ❖ To grow the implication level in making decisions
- ❖ To form an active and responsible citizen.

This project introduced a method of civic education for students in the 7th grade, based on a portfolio. It was based on cooperative learning and was focussed on civic local and regional participation. Learning started from real problems identified by students. The activities proposed by students supposed active methods. The aim was to encourage students' active direct participation and also indirect participation of parents, teachers and local authorities. A benefit of the project was better relationships between school, local authorities, NGOs and other local actors.

One grade students worked together to identify and to analyze a problem of the local community and proposed a solution (public policy). The fields of interest were: urbanism, public transportation, environment protection, local infrastructure, public communication, disadvantaged groups, etc.

They drew an action plan which aim was to influence local authorities to apply the solution proposed by students. Students learned how to monitor and to influence public policies, acting as responsible citizens.

Activities:

1. Identification of the problems of community
2. Selection of one problem
3. Collection of information related to the problem; Examination of different possible solutions; Selection of one of them; Development of an action plan.
4. Elaboration of the portfolio
5. Presentation of the portfolio at school and at different local and regional public events
6. Reflection on experience and feed-back.

Results:

Some solutions were adopted by local authorities; mass-media presented the activities and solutions, with a positive impact of improving school public perception; future partnerships between school and NGOs or public institutions were established.

Students of the 7th grade of Technical College of Electronics and Telecommunications of Iasi were interested in improving disadvantaged children's life. Their project referred to organising a lecture club to satisfy the needs of communicating and socialising of the children from Nicolina neighbourhood in Iasi and to increase the children's from this community interest in reading. The activities were organised as a weekly club: lecture classes, debates, games, simulations, using IT, etc. In the second part of the project, it was organised a "BOOK English Club", activity through which lecture and conversation in English were promoted. Special events that took place as part of the project (e.g. Book Day, The Book of a Generation) determined the adults (parents, grandparents) to get involved in organising children's free time. To increase the budget of the project, an entrepreneurial „Mărțișor Fair", with cards and jewellery was organised.

2. „My World in Development” Project period: December 2008 - April 2009

The aim of the project, developed in partnership with the Association Pro Democracy, was to promote the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the development of young people's capacity to get involved in the community they live in.

Objectives:

- ❖ Informing the target group about the MDG and Romania's role as a donor country;
- ❖ Debating the role young people have in fighting poverty and sustaining the local and global development process;
- ❖ Promoting MDG through courses for high school and university students.

Partners: Education institutions: „Petre Andrei” University of Iași, Technical College of Electronics and Telecommunications Iași, “Costache Negruzzi” National College, “Ioan C. Ștefănescu” Technical College Iași

Activities:

- ❖ The debate “My world in development” that launched the project, Iasi, December 10, 2008. The Human Rights Day was celebrated the same day;
- ❖ Promoting the Millennium Development Goals in high schools and universities by organizing courses and lectures;
- ❖ The photographic competition “My world in development”.

Results:

The subject of the Millennium Development Goals was put on the public agenda for the first time in Iași;

A TV spot promoting international development, the MDG and Romania's role as a donor state;
One teaching methodology (Course objectives, Course structure, Course plan, Methodological guide) for teachers on the topic of international development, MDGs and Romania's role as a donor state;

2.000 flyers for promoting the MDGs disseminated by the campaign volunteers;

350 high school pupils and 150 students attending the courses on MDGs;
31 participants and 79 photos registered for the contest;
A mesh promoting the project displayed in a very busy area of Iasi for three weeks;

Target Group: Young people (14-30 years old).

Beneficiaries:

92 persons that attended the launching events and 89 that attended the final events
2.000 youth that received the materials produced within the project (flyers, posters);
350 high school pupils and 150 students who attended the classes and courses on
MDGs;
31 youth that participated to the photo contest.

Financial support: United Nations Development Program Romania with the support of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Romania.

3. EU Exercises Project period: December 2008 - October 2009

The aim of this project was to stimulate the interest of the young people in Romania in the way of electing the Romanian representatives in the European Parliament and their interest in European issues.

Target Group: students of 11 and 12 grade (17-18 years old)

Objectives:

- ❖ ***Increasing youngsters' level of information regarding the decisional process in the EU.***
The project intended to augment the level of information among the young people concerning the mechanisms of decision-making in EU and to stimulate their interest in the activities of the European institutions, using interactive methods of learning and participation in concrete activities. The Component EU Model helped the participating students to understand the role of the European authorities, the mission of the national representatives and how the institutional system functions. There were presentations, informative materials, lectures, debates. The most important moment was the simulation of European elections.
- ❖ ***Stimulating youngsters to participate in the elections for the European Parliament of 2009.*** The aim was to increase the participation in elections among young people. The youngsters' low presence to vote is caused by the weak level of information regarding the electoral programs of the parties and candidates. Students were informed about the electoral programs and the attributions of the European Members of Parliament and there were organized dialogues between the electors and candidates.
- ❖ ***Increasing the level of information of young people about the European context in which they live and the development of their sense of belonging in the EU, through the component Tour Debates.***

Youngsters were informed regarding current European subjects. The project aim was to determine them to move beyond their superficial level of understanding, to inform themselves properly, and to be able to support with arguments their pro or against positions in a debate.

Activities: Presentation of EU institutions, components, mission, role, activities, simulation of elections, debates.

Beneficiaries: 100 participants in EU Model (first objective) , over 1.500 youngsters , who received informative materials and were urged to participate in the simulation of elections (second objective), 42 students, members of a Debate Association, (debaters) and 7 instructing-professors (arbiters), who participated in the tournament (third objective).

Slovenia_Anastazija Avsec

Elementary education in Slovenia

All children living in Slovenia have the right to compulsory elementary school education under equal and non-discriminatory conditions. Compulsory elementary school education lasts for 9 years and begins when the child reaches the age of 6. Parents can choose between the elementary education programmes provided by public nine-year elementary schools, private elementary schools or home-schooling. In practice almost all of children attend public nine-year single structure elementary schools within the school district of their residence.

Education is compulsory for pupils between 6 and 15 years of age. It is organised as a single structure (without distinction between primary and lower secondary levels). At the end of basic education, pupils have the choice to advance to general, technical or vocational upper secondary education.

Younger children and children with special needs are entitled to free transportation. All children are entitled to free school transportation if their school is located more than 4 km from their place of residence. Schools are required to provide school meals. Children from socially and economically disadvantaged families are entitled to school meals for free. The geographical distribution of schools provides all children in Slovenia with the opportunity to receive basic education as close to their home as possible.

The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia (1991) stipulates freedom of choice in education and regulates fundamental rights in the area of education by determining that:

- Education is free.
- Compulsory basic education is the responsibility of the state.
- The state must finance compulsory education with public funds.
- It is the responsibility of the state to give its citizens the opportunity to obtain adequate education.

The right at elementary school

According to the provisions of the Primary School Act in Slovenia, the class community is the basic form of organisation of pupils. Within the framework of the class community, pupils may, among other things, participate in the assessment process, propose to the class teacher the assessing of the suitability of a specific mark or grade, and formulate proposals for commendations and prizes for members of the class community. Via secret ballot each class community elects two representatives to the pupils' community at the school level. Its main competences are: monitoring the exercising of rights and duties of pupils, drawing the attention of the headmaster and school council to any violations of pupils' rights, proposing improvements of the living environment, organisation of school events, etc. The executive body of the pupils' community is the children's parliament, which is elected by the pupils' community.

Children`s parliament in Slovenia

One important form of freedom of expression and participation of children in Slovenia is the children`s parliament, organized by the Friends of Youth of Slovenia Association. The Slovenian children`s parliament is unique in that these electoral processes begin once each child starts school and thus encapsulates all the children in the country. Since 24 years the children`s parliament has met for a number of sessions with children presenting their demands for e.g. improved road safety and for a friendlier and less polluted environment, discussing leisure activities, expressing their desire for less violence and more friendships among peers, debating school life, drawing attention to relations between children and adults, identifying how children can say no alcohol, cigarettes, drugs and all forms of intolerance.

The children`s parliament of Slovenia is primarily organized within home class communities or school classrooms. According to the provisions of the Primary School Act in Slovenia half an hour per week must be provided for these home class communities, as part of the primary school curriculum. These sessions constitute the basis for the children`s parliament. All school headmasters are obliged to provide the opportunity for children`s parliament to take place in their schools at least twice a year and involving different classes. Upon conclusion of the children`s parliament in class, the children elect the young person who they think should present their class in the children`s parliament of the school.

At the regional level, community children`s parliaments comprise elected representatives from the various school parliaments. These parliaments operate in much the same manner as the school parliament, with the only difference being that the mayor and municipal council`s representatives attend instead of the teachers. At this level of children`s parliament delegates are again elected to go to the annual national children`s parliament which is held in The National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia, the main house of the parliament. The national`s children parliament is presented over by the children`s president who conducts the discussions according to a strict agenda.

Briefly about Primary School Kapela

Primary school Kapela is a rural, public primary school with 170 pupils aged 6-15, and 21 teachers, located in the eastern part of the country. The pupils live in a socially underprivileged area. They often come from a non-stimulating environment which doesn`t provide support needed for the expected learning outcome. There are many pupils with learning disabilities who demand teachers` extra knowledge and effort.

The school has some experience in different national and international projects and give the pupils and teachers opportunities to broaden their views in a greater European context due to work in different European projects.

Examples of the children`s participation in everyday at school

- ❖ Celebration of special annual events (the first and the last school day, Christmas, Valentine`s Day post - children write letters and the school` post office` delivers their post to the addressees).
- ❖ All pupils assemble in the gym hall after school holidays (autumn holiday, Christmas / New Year Holiday, winter holiday and the first of May holiday).
- ❖ Each year on the first meeting the headmaster makes suggestion to the school community about their adult leader. They can choose their adult leader.
- ❖ Representatives of the school community (each classroom has two representatives) attend regular meetings with their mentor and evaluate school work and make plans for the new year.
- ❖ An award is given to the best pupils (one boy and one girl) every year; suggestions are provided by all class communities and via secret ballot election.
- ❖ School community evaluates the special activity days and planned activities and makes new suggestions.
- ❖ All pupils have were involved in creating Golden rules and one diamond rule: pupils created their own good behaviour school manner rules and the school community chose the 10 top rules and one diamond rule from all classrooms` communities.
- ❖ Pupils` school council chooses music on the school`s radio to announce the beginning and the end of the school lessons.
- ❖ We have a school dance for pupils from 4th - 9th grade organized by pupils of ninth grade.
- ❖ Every year the pupils` school council distributes among other classes important international days which should be marked during the school year (e.g. world`s health day, world`s earth day,..).
- ❖ Every year we have a festive acceptance in the school community for the first grade pupils in the children`s week.
- ❖ Pupils make suggestions to embetter the comfort of the learning environment.

Spain_Maria Angels Hernandez

Education for Citizenship and Human Rights Educación para la Ciudadanía y los Derechos Humanos

It is difficult to find school teaching materials for students` participation in Spanish schools. The closest teaching materials are those of Education for Citizenship and Human Rights. Education for Citizenship and Human Rights (Educación para la Ciudadanía y los Derechos Humanos)is the name of a school subject designed for the last cycle of primary education and all secondary education in Spain, introduced by the government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. This subject was born upon a recommendation of the Council of Europe that states the necessity of education for citizenship, in order to promote civic and human values. Education for Citizenship and Human Rights was one of the most important new elements of the Organic Education Law of 2006.

Schooling in Spain is compulsory and free of charge for all children from age six to age sixteen. In Spain, it is illegal not to send a child of six years upwards to school, so home-schooling is not an option.

Secondary education (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria* - ESO) begins at the age of 12 and lasts for four years. It is divided into two cycles, the first for students from age 12 to 14 and the second for students from 14 to 16.

Compulsory subjects include Education for Citizenship and Human Rights. The Catholic religion is an optional subject for all four years; non-Catholics may choose study periods instead.

Education for Citizenship and Human Rights curriculum

Block 1. - Respectful approach to diversity

Block 2. – Citizenship in society. Coexistence and values

Block 3. - Duties and rights of citizens

Block 4. - The XXI century democratic societies

Block 5. - Citizenship in a Global World

Education for Citizenship and Human Rights is not an exclusive competence of the education system; it also belongs to parents, families and society in general. Learning about citizenship starts at home, continues at school and conditions a person's development on a community level. The course that we present is open to families, teachers and all citizens who want to help young people and adolescents to develop the way they learn about citizenship.

This type of citizenship is not the exclusive consequence of the will of legislators or the state; rather it is the will of all free citizens and free societies. Democratic citizenship is not a by-product of the state, its legislators or politicians; it is the result of the effort of society as a whole.

We want our citizenship education to be active. In line with European Union guidelines, democratic citizenship demands active citizens, and this means that the people who make up a political community must not passively conform to the duties outlined in the laws of their respective countries, but that they must also take shared responsibility for everything that happens in public spaces. Citizenship is active when it appeals for, motivates and promotes the participation of citizens. It's not enough to develop feelings of belonging and to learn about rights; active citizenship generates ways of participation and the learning of responsibilities. Citizenship education cannot exist if there is no teaching of shared responsibility, because rights are accompanied by duties. To learn about citizenship is, at the same time, to learn about rights and responsibilities. To learn about citizenship is to be trained in civic responsibility, urbanity and good behaviour, it is to teach sensitivity, intelligence and good taste so that we can aspire to the most noble side of the human soul.

The development of the subject curriculum follows a model of active citizenship featured in the Spanish Constitution of 1978 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The active citizenship model that appears in the Spanish Constitution is still applicable today. The approach has been guided by the higher values of the constitutional legislation, just as they appear in Article 1.1 of the Preliminary Title. By using the higher values of the constitution as a guide, the material has been created to respond to the new ethical, political and cultural challenges that all democratic citizenships must face. Instead of structuring the way citizenship is learned in strictly legal terms, it tries to propose some materials that facilitate its understanding in all of its dimensions, from legal aspects to the social, economic or cultural dimensions. Furthermore, it wants our students to not only make local commitments but also approach their citizenship with a global frame of mind.

Links to teaching materials in Catalan:

<http://www.xtec.cat/web/recursos/edciutadania>

http://www.edu365.cat/eso/muds/ed_ciutadania/index.htm

<http://www.amnistiacatalunya.org/edu/cat/objectius-1.html>

<http://www.xtec.cat/~lvallmaj/sumedupo.htm>

http://www.coneixelsteusdrets.cat/home_drets_3.html

Removal of Education for Citizenship and Human Rights from compulsory curriculum

Conservative elements in Spain have opposed this subject especially the Catholic Church. Several sectors as the conservative Partido Popular with Ignacio Wert, Spanish Education minister, have announced the suppression of Education for Citizenship and Human Rights. Outstanding leaders of the Catholic Church have been against it, labelling it as totalitarian, other sectors such as CEAPA (Spanish Confederation of Student's Parents) do not disapprove of Education for Citizenship and Human Rights, understanding that the curriculum proposed by the government does not overflow the mere education of the most elementary human rights. In some chartered catholic schools parents exist who have asked for the conscientious objection before the new subject. This group received high publicity, especially by the Spanish, but as of September 2007 only 80 students have been asked for conscientious objection. As of January 2009, the Spanish Supreme Court has ruled that attendance of the Education for Citizenship course will be mandatory for all students.

Report from Nils Muižnieks, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights about planned changes concerning civic education

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Council-of-Europe-Commissioner-for-Human-Rights/118705514972034>

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2072787&Site=DC&BackColorInternet=F5CA75&BackColorIntranet=F5CA75&BackColorLogged=A9BACE>

Press release - CommDH016(2013)

Spain: Human rights need particular protection in times of economic crisis and austerity budgets

Madrid, 7/6/2013 - "All efforts should be made by the Spanish authorities to assess and limit the negative impact of budgetary cuts on the most vulnerable groups, in particular children and persons with disabilities" stated Nils Muižnieks, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights at the end of a five day visit to Madrid and Seville.

Lastly, the Commissioner is concerned about the lack of clarity in the planned changes concerning civic education, stressing that "human rights education is key to combat all forms of discrimination and intolerance and to develop generations of active and responsible citizens in a democratic society."

Answer to Nils Muižnieks from Spanish Catholic Family Forum

The Commissioner made statements expressing his concern over the removal of the subject of Education for Citizenship from the school curriculum and the "danger of its contents being diluted". Nils Muiznieks seems unaware of the fact that the removal was motivated by the enormous amount of conflict produced in education on its introduction by the former

administration. Said subject amounted to an illegitimate interference with the parental right to educate their children in accordance with their own convictions, and brought about a movement for conscientious objection backed by thousands of families. In the words of Family Forum Director General Ignacio García Juliá, "it is unfortunate that the Commissioner is unaware of Article 2 of the additional protocol to the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties Accord, which protects parents' right to 'educate their children according to their religious and philosophical convictions'. Not wanting to meet with family associations shows a lack of interest in finding out the true causes of the conflict and the means of solving it. Spanish society and families overall need responsible politicians, both inside and outside our borders, capable of protecting them from ideological whims that cause tensions amongst people and from the failure we are currently experiencing of the educational system.". Family Forum hopes that in his next visit Mr. Muiznieks will show greater receptivity and respect for Spanish families, in particular for the parents, who are the main actors in this conflict.

Attached to this document there is a sample of *Block 2. - Citizenship in society. Coexistence and values* activities for the classroom which I hope would help to understand how we work in Spain concerning democratic education.

Option number 3:

The role of student boards or student associations in your school or in your country. Bring us some examples or your personal experiences how the student boards works in everyday schooling life.

Bosnia and Herzegovina_Arnella Pandur

The role of the student board in my school

Reform of education has brought great changes in our educational system. This means that students and parents are more involved in the organisation and realisation of the teaching process. One of the promises of the reform is modern and democratic management of schools. As result of this the new school law allows schools (students and their teachers) to organise student boards and parent boards as well.

In this work I will explain the function/role of the student board in my school and bring you some examples of how it works in everyday schooling life. (The other two topics were interesting as well, but since I work at school where we have a very active student board, I chose this one). Student board in my school (Druga gimnazija Mostar) was first organised in 2004.

Today, our student board consists of 34 students. There are 17 classes of students from the 1st to the 4th grade and each class can choose two members for the **Council** of our student board. Members of the Council then choose their president, vice president, secretary, and a cashier. It means that each student board has its own „steering committee“, which consists of :
-a president

- a vice president
- a secretary
- a cashier
- coordinators from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade.

President's role is to organise and prepare meetings, to lead meetings, to sign boards' documents, to represent the student board at school and outside school as well.

Vice president does all these jobs if the president is (from some reasons) not able to do them, and helps the president in his work.

Secretary takes notes during the meetings; informs the members about the place, time and date of the next meeting, informs other students about the decisions made during the meetings and prepares information which the representatives from different classes will deliver to their colleagues.

Student board has also a teacher coordinator whose role is to serve as a kind of link between school management and students themselves. Members of the student board have meetings at least once a week. Secretary takes notes during the meetings and then writes a record of each meeting in a special register. At the beginning of each new school year student board has to prepare their annual plan (for that school year) and monthly plans for their activities.

Student board is the „voice“ of students. We can simply say that it is an organisation which serves both students and the community at large. It enables all students to learn how democracy in their school functions, how to participate in making some important decisions regarding school and teaching, and finally how to make their everyday school life more interesting.

Student board functions

The main functions of the student board in our school (and in most schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina) are:

- to promote school interests in the local area
- to represent students' attitudes and opinions
- to encourage students to participate in making decisions
- to inform school board about students' attitudes regarding school issues
- to organise some activities which are relevant at that moment.

Student board organises different activities, such as: information campaign about drug addiction, sports events (tournaments), exhibitions, quizzes, school celebrations, excursions, gives lectures, prints school magazines etc...

Student board often organises **roundtable / discussions** about relevant topics. (For example, two years ago we had a serious problem regarding absences from school). Our student board organised a discussion and invited parents, form teachers, headmaster, school pedagogue and a representative from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and tried to solve the problem. They have also organised discussions about assessment (assessment criteria), about the relationship between students and teachers, about how to improve students' marks and their behaviour at school...

Recently, there have been some serious examples of violence at school, so our school management took initiative to create a **Protocol (laws and rules) how to behave if violence occurs at school** (how to punish guilty students and even teachers or parents involved in the crime and violence). So, the members of our student board also participated in the process of making this Protocol.

Last school year, members of the board also talked with police officers from the Police station Mostar about the problem of drug addiction among young people.

School celebrations are very entertaining and they give the opportunity to students, teachers and parents to get to know each other better beyond classes and in that way they also give a feeling of „togetherness“. So, members of our student board also participate in the organisation of such celebrations. Every school year we organise „school parties“ to celebrate the National Day of Bosnia, 25th November, and to celebrate the Day of our school, 22nd April (which is a symbolic date, since 22nd April is the Day of our planet Earth).

Often, students in the final year classes are not well informed about the opportunities to study at different universities, so student board members often do their best to inform them. They collect information about universities, conditions, education fees, number of free places, etc. and they print the information in the form of brochures and then distribute them to students.

They often organise **sports events**, such as football matches, basketball matches and similar events.

Unfortunately, **school excursions** are not often organised because of bad financial situation of our students. The members of the student board try to solve this as well. They form teams whose task is to go out and contact some companies and big firms which can donate money to school and in that way support these students and enable them to travel as well.

Humanitarian activities

Last school year (2012/2013.) one of our students from a 3rd grade (Dalida Bebanic) fell ill from a rare, inherited disease. She had to have an operation in Egypt, which would cost about 150 000 KM (about €75 000). Members of our student board took part in this humanitarian action and raised about 17 000 KM. They also organised an exhibition of their school paintings and craftwork and the money they earned through selling these things was donated to our sick student.

In December 2012 the members of student boards all around the country organised a humanitarian action which they called „A candy for a smile“. The purpose of this action was to collect sweets and toys for children without parents. Our student board collected about 1000 boxes of sweets and toys and took them to an orphanage „Egipatsko selo“, together with us teachers, on New Year's Day.

This week (from 16th September to 20th September, 2013) our student board members have invited students, teachers, parents and other citizens to take part in the humanitarian activity „**5000 blankets for children of Syria**“. The aim of this action is to collect 5000 blankets and to send them to children of Syria.

Promoting peace and tolerance

Each year in April, our student board organises a trip to the capital, Sarajevo, in order to visit the Book Fair on Skenderija. Last November four student board members, together with their teacher coordinator, participated in the cultural manifestation „If I were somebody“, which took place in Banja Luka.

Our school has recently joined the large project „**Education for Peace**“. Board members take part in this project as well, by organising different activities for the third week of May (each school year), which is also called „The Week of Peace“. Last school year they also recorded a short film about the life of Roma children in Salakovac, a refugee camp near Mostar and showed it to other students at school.

This school year our student board members have also plans to participate in the action of collecting old paper and recycling it and to participate in an eco action „**Save the Neretva River**“.

Student boards' network

In November 2008 the first „mreVUK“ was organised. It is a common name for the student boards' network, set up in different cantons in Bosnia and Hercegovina. The program of this network is conducted by Youth Culture Centre Banjaluka, supported by some governmental institutions (from the area of education) and international donor organisations. These networks represent the model of involving secondary school students in the process of making decisions on the cantonal, entity and state level.

The network consists of all student boards that it covers. The presidents of the student boards represent their own student boards in the network. The network is exclusively lead by secondary school students who choose their own representatives, create their own work plans, realise network activities and in that way brings student boards together as well as represents students' interests.

In April 2011 our student board joined Hercegovina-Neretvan Canton network (mreVUK) and we think that this „pattern“ in which students themselves represent other students and their interests and attitudes is very effective and useful.

What do our students know and think about student boards?

In the year 2007/ 2008 our school pedagogue, teacher coordinator and I conducted this survey in order to see what students at our school know and think about student board and its functions.

As aforementioned, reform of education has brought a lot of changes. Things are changing even now. We did this little “survey” five years ago. Since then we have done a lot to inform students about school boards, about the network of student boards, about the benefits of such associations/ unions, and finally about the opportunities which they offer to students.

It would be interesting to do the same survey this year as well, five years after, because I am sure that our students today know a lot more about this topic. Student board has existed in our school for almost 10 years now, and this survey was done in the school year 2007/2008, only three years after the board was first set up.

Turkey_Salih Sirri DEMİREL

Student Boards in Turkey

Student Board system in Turkish schools are just like general elections. Stages of forming school boards in Turkish schools:

- ❖ School board of election and poll board are founded by the school management in teachers board which is held before the school started.
- ❖ Election board announce the poll timetable
- ❖ Students who want to be class representatives apply the election board as candidates.
- ❖ Then the propaganda process starts. The candidates prepare leaflets or make speeches to be able to win the election for being class representative.
- ❖ Poll board prepares the poll papers for each class
- ❖ When the election day comes each class votes for the candidates in their class.
- ❖ The winners in each class are announced.
- ❖ These winners as class representatives form school board.
- ❖ In the first meeting of the school board, the board of directors is founded. Then the candidates who want to be the chairman announce their being candidates. These candidates choose their team for the board of directors. Another election is made to choose the chairman by the class representatives.
- ❖ Then the process of forming student board in the district starts. The chairmans of each school can nominate themselves as chairman of student board in the district. Each candidate prepare his list as board of director for district student board.
- ❖ The chairmans of each school student board vote for the candidates. According to poll results the student board of the district is formed. The student who is elected as the chairman represents the district in the province.
- ❖ The provinces are made up of districts in Turkey. Total number of provinces are 81 and total number of districts are 919 in Turkey. The number of district for the provinces is changed.
- ❖ The student board in the provinces are made up of the chairmans of the districts. The chairmans in the districts vote for the candidates.
- ❖ Then finally Turkish student board is elected between the candidates of the provinces.
- ❖ The board of directors of Turkey Student Board makes its first meeting in Turkish Grand National Assembly

The decisions taken by these student boards are advisory. They forward the wishes of the students to school administration. If these wishes are eligible and convenient to our laws they are fulfilled. Also the chairman of student boards in schools can join the teachers' meeting in school. They act as a bridge between students and the administration in school.

As for the democracy. We have a lesson in our curriculum as Human rights, citizenship and democracy. This lesson is taught in the 4th grade.

Workshop -results

Workshop on Wednesday 2.10.2013:

- 1) Every group member will present their pre-task to the other members of the group.
- 2) While presenting your work tell the others at least:
 - ❖ The them/ subject you were working with,
 - ❖ Why did you choose this theme/subject?
 - ❖ What kinds of experiences you have had in your school and/or in your country?
 - ❖ What would you think that'll be valuable to the others to know and to understand about your school/ your country about democratic school?
- 3) While discussing and listening the presentations the group will raise at least three similarities and three differences they have found.
- 4) According to your discussions, how would you define as a group the term "democratic school"?

Do the poster that will also present either the identity of your group or its' members. Present the group work for the other participants. (Tasks 3 and 4).

...And finally we will discuss together about the similarities, differences and experiences, which appeared in your pre-tasks and Work.

ANSWERS WERE:

Differences

Group 1

- ❖ Willingness in involvement
- ❖ Student Parliament / Union
- ❖ Student strike.

Group 2

- ❖ Implementation varies from country to country
- ❖ How successful we are in achieving that (the ways to achieve that)
- ❖ Different policies take into account the local context.

Group 3

- ❖ Different act as in implementation of the project
- ❖ Policies
- ❖ The same aim but different perspectives.

Similarities

Group 1

- ❖ Student Board (elected)
- ❖ School Board with students (boys and girls)
- ❖ Students make suggestions.

Group 2

- ❖ All our educational systems have incorporated democratic education
- ❖ Principle of actively involved children
- ❖ Knowledge of rights and responsibilities.

Group 3

- ❖ Children are given the opportunity to choose and to practice what they are being taught
- ❖ Aim to raise children's awareness of their rights
- ❖ Negative teacher's attitude → trying to improve their level of motivation.

Final workshop session 4.10.2013: Democratic School in Basic Education

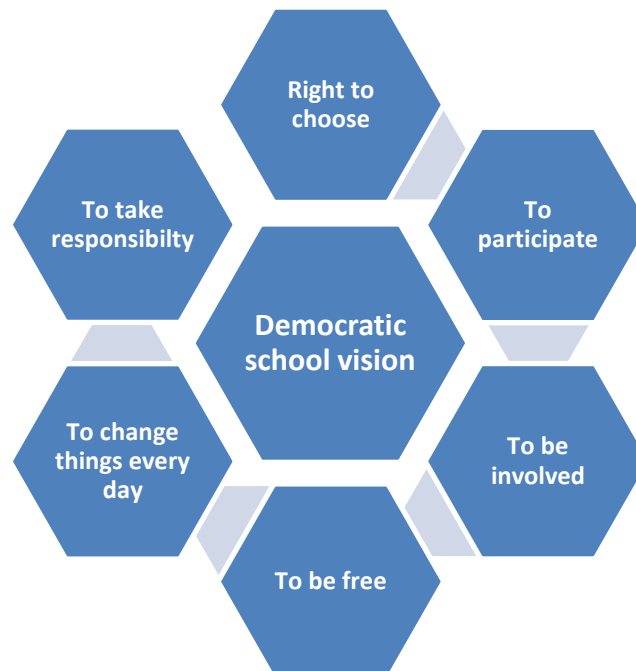
Warm-up from Thursday's school visit:

Discuss shortly with your pair what do you mean by democratic school?

(= What is your idea of democratic school?)

- ❖ *How does it work?*
- ❖ *Is there something you would like to underline?*

One of our participants presented a nice example of a democratic school:



During two days we have been working, discussing, listening and visiting how democratic school, children's rights and participation are taking in consideration in everyday school life.

Now is the time for reflections!

Try to think and reflect the questions below at first individually:

- 1) Would you take some Finnish or other countries practices at home with you? Which ones and why?**
- 2) Which of your own practices might be valuable to the other countries/schools/participants? Why?**
- 3) Summary of what is left on the trip.**

Then with your group:

- 4) Discuss with your group members of your reflections.**
- 5) Team discussion from previous issues.**

Answers on the final session were...

Group 1:

Would you take some Finnish or other countries practices at home with you? Which ones and why?

- ❖ 'Shadow elections' from Finland
- ❖ 'Wishes box' from Portugal
- ❖ Italy and Montenegro would take the optative/optional subject – in Spain and Portugal we have the choice
- ❖ Montenegro would like the craftwork included in the curriculum (from Finland)
- ❖ Italy, Portugal and Montenegro would like to have a better recruiting process for teachers (from Finland)
- ❖ Italy wish to import co-operative learning in classroom.

Which of your own practices might be valuable to the other countries/schools/participants? Why?

- ❖ Spain will export Student's right to go on a strike as in Italy
- ❖ Montenegro and Italy will export shared responsibility in making decisions
- ❖ Portugal will export the 'wishes box'
- ❖ Hospitality.

SUMMARY OF WHAT IS LEFT ON THE TRIP:

- ❖ We are all eager to work and FIND OUT!

Group 2:

Would you take some Finnish or other countries practices at home with you? Which ones and why?

- ❖ School culture
- ❖ Democratic exercise
- ❖ School mediation project
- ❖ Motivation and trust.

Which of your own practices might be valuable to the other countries/schools/participants? Why?

- ❖ One week 'to be better'
- ❖ SMS system
- ❖ Trip for every child (to another space)
- ❖ The day of selfgovernment
- ❖ Data show (f.e. all the news shown on TV...)

Group 3:

Would you take some Finnish or other countries practices at home with you? Which ones and why?

- ❖ Participation, responsibility and trust in Finland
- ❖ Enthusiasm and commitment
- ❖ School mediation / KiVa
- ❖ Free education.

Which of your own practices might be valuable to the other countries/schools/participants? Why?

- ❖ Children's parliament (Slovenia)
- ❖ Project's at school level (Cyprus)
- ❖ Active citizenship projects (Herzegovina)
- ❖ Active student boards (Bosnia&Herzegovina).

SUMMARY OF WHAT IS LEFT ON THE TRIP:

- ❖ Well organized
- ❖ Friendly atmosphere
- ❖ Active participation
- ❖ Useful practices
- ❖ Exchange of useful ideas
- ❖ Expansion of professional horizons.

Feedback

Feedback of the workshop was asked on Saturday 6th October on workshop summary by the following questions. Participants marked their opinion by the following scale:

5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = below average, 1 = poor

	<u>Average mark</u>
The pretasks were	4,42
Did the content of the workshop meet your expectations	4,75
Did the content of the workshop meet your needs	4,58
Overall planning	4,91
General quality of lecturers	4,58
General atmosphere of the workshop	5,00
Documents and teaching materials	4,83
Accommodation	4,83
Food	5,00
Social activities	4,75
Organization of the workshop	5,00

On feedback participants were also given the possibility to express their 'roses and twigs' of workshop. Personal comments and opinions of Helsinki 2013 workshop:

- ❖ The organization team work very professionally. I can say a wonderful team. I think the duration of the seminar can be one more day. The more we do workshop together the more we learn a lot. Thank you very much for everything.
- ❖ This workshop was a real opportunity to know and to understand democratic school life. The advancement of all actors – students, teachers, local community, parents in producing a democratic education. It was an important source of professional improving for me. My admiration and warm thanks to the organizers – Najat, Matti and Marko. I would like my colleagues have the opportunity to participate to such workshops and improve their perception on education.

- ❖ The workshop was very well-organized. It was interesting, educational and I have only positive impressions about it. The tasks we had to do during the workshop were also interesting and useful for all of us. We had the opportunity to exchange different ideas, practices and to bring home on them (actually, a lot of them) back home. I'm really grateful for getting to opportunity to participate.
- ❖ This was an unique and unforgettable experience and a core step in my professional development. It opened my eyes and mind on many new ideas and opportunities in the range of children's rights and basic education. Thank you very much for giving me this chance. I will expand this experience in a wide society of my local community and partner countries.
- ❖ I'm glad to take part in Pestalozzi workshop – Helsinki 2013! For me this workshop is very important, very exciting: we had an opportunity to share valuable experience! Thank you, Matti! Thank you, Najat! Thank you, Marko!
- ❖ I'm happy I've had a chance to be here and meet all these dear people. New experience, very interesting and inspiring.
- ❖ The workshop was well-organized. The atmosphere was friendly from the beginning. The organizers were very committed to give us the best conditions for obtaining new knowledge. They also paid attention to (all) details. I would appreciate an opportunity to be present at some "regular" lessons in the school and to learn more about the school education in Finland.
- ❖ Thank you for beautiful and excellent Pestalozzi workshop here in Finland. For me it was the first time that I have applied for Pestalozzi workshop and I can assure you, not the last one. Thanks for you.
- ❖ Thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to participate in such an interesting workshop and "opening" your system to us to observe and learn. Keep up the good work!
- ❖ Thank you for the warmly time together. I would take home your practices, and of course the other countries practices. I will go home more rich as a person and as a teacher.
- ❖ I do not have a way to tell you how to improve the workshop, but I felt the first day that I would have rather spend more time with my colleagues exchanging ideas. The expert from MFA was not good enough of communicating. I don't know what the rest thinks, but I expected more interactivity from the group. Sometimes I had the feeling that I was always giving questions and this made me a little bit uncomfortable.
- ❖ I'd like to say that these occasions are crucial for the professional development of us educators. I think that you did an excellent work and I appreciated your commitment and your high level of competence. I believe that your attitude in approaching problems we had been emphatic, understanding and effective. I do hope that your professional career would improve further as I hope! Thank you!

Thank you all!

Pestalozzi Helsinki presentation materials on Finnish National Board of Education web-pages:
http://www.oph.fi/english/sources_of_information/conferences/pestalozzi_workshops_in_helsinki

Let's keep in touch! We are active in Facebook by the name of PESTALOZZI HELSINKI:
http://www.oph.fi/english/sources_of_information/conferences/pestalozzi_workshops_in_helsinki



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