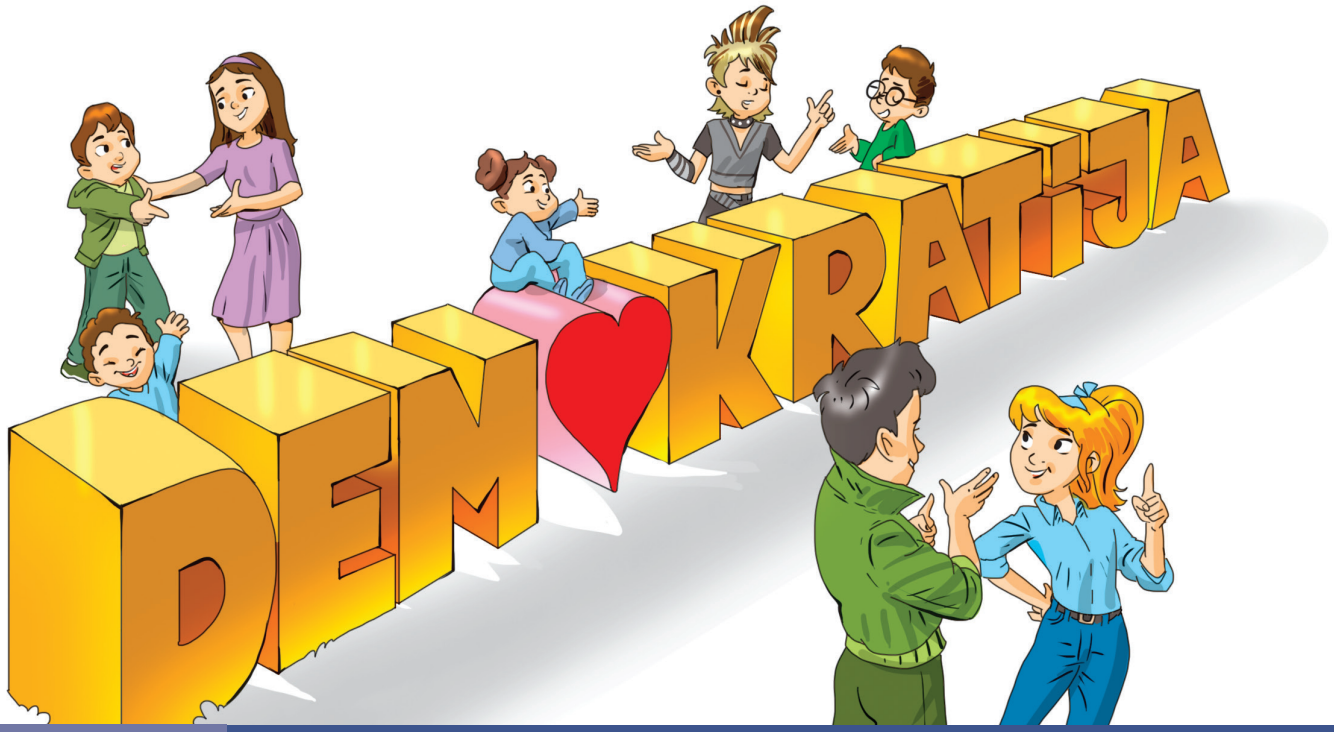

INVOLVING FAMILIES IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE IN SCHOOLS

5 TOOLKIT FOR A DEMOCRATIC AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Council of Europe

All other correspondence concerning this document should be addressed to the Education Department, Council of Europe, Agora Building, 1 Quai Jacoutot, F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex, France, E-mail: education@coe.int

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Contents

Introduction and overview: all children learn together

This tool addresses the question of how democracy and a democratic culture can become an everyday approach in schools, while also touching upon the role of families, considering the intertwined relationship between formal and informal education. To this end, various materials have been developed as part of a range of projects in different member countries of the Council of Europe.

This tool is based on the conviction that a school with a democratic ethos understands inclusion not simply as a didactic-methodological measure but as the basis of democratic coexistence. A school is thus understood as a place where students are prepared for a society in which everyone can truly participate, help shape and take responsibility, which is central to the continued existence of a functioning democracy. As an institution that was established to guard human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the Council of Europe has supported, facilitated and initiated many projects that have resulted in the wide range of materials on which this tool is based.

The empowerment of all children to exercise their rights and duties in a democratic state must be and remain the fundamental idea underpinning state school systems. The question of who belongs to a mainstream class in a state school and is thus included is the subject of intense discussion worldwide. In principle, inclusive schooling means that all children living in a catchment area have access to schooling that supports their learning needs. It is important to ensure that all those involved in providing education, at whatever level, prioritise children's learning, needs, safety and well-being.

All recommendations, training and further education materials, teaching suggestions and policy papers must be measured and evaluated in terms of whether the learners are really at the centre and whether the measures and supportive intentions generate an inclusive school culture. To achieve this, it is crucial that all children, with all their differences and similarities, can learn together, leading them to practise democratic coexistence in diverse societies.

The Council of Europe considers "inclusion" and "democracy" as intertwined and mutually reinforcing. This tool aims to promote understanding and the importance of this interconnection for school governance and pedagogical practice. All curricular, school-based and extracurricular activities and processes on the topic of democracy seek to foster democracy as a form of life, society and government, to develop democratic judgment and decision making and to teach, practise and consolidate democratic action.

The inclusion–democracy nexus requires that all children and young people be involved, so that schools become places of participation. The question then arises as to how school institutions must be organised and understood so that everyone experiences school as a place of lived democracy where the dignity of each other is maintained, tolerance and respect for other people and opinions are practised, civil courage is strengthened, democratic procedures and rules are adhered to and conflicts are resolved non-violently. In a democratic society, inclusion in schools means that young people learn to deal with controversies, contradictions and risks, mistakes, educational challenges and judgments in the context of their everyday school life. For example, schools have a duty to support the integration of students with a migration background by teaching intercultural skills and mutual respect and to counter xenophobic attitudes.

Intercultural education, which is firmly anchored within many national curricula, forms, thanks to the approach that we are proposing, an integral part of democratic and inclusive education. With this in mind, the member states of the Council of Europe created the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), a tool that brings together intercultural education and education for democratic citizenship in a careful and participatory process to develop a framework that offers the possibility of identifying and evaluating the quality of citizenship education. The starting point for the development of this reference framework is the conviction that all people should know and understand

present and future challenges and the consequences of their decisions. According to the RFCDC, they need not only knowledge but also the necessary skills to tackle these challenges. The framework defines the knowledges, skills, attitudes and values that are needed to sustain a democratic and inclusive culture. In other words, the RFCDC provides a systematic approach that can be used to promote the competences that are needed by all to actively participate in democratic culture, respect, promote and defend human rights and participate in effective, appropriate and respectful intercultural dialogue. The framework synthesises and integrates the work previously conducted by the Council of Europe on intercultural education and education for democratic citizenship/human rights education (EDC/HRE).

Problem awareness: inclusive democratic society; inclusive democratic school

The idea of educating all learners about democracy and human rights is not new. Citizenship education has been part of many curricula for many years. The problem is that, in most cases, the emphasis has been on theoretical knowledge, with a focus on the constitutional order of a nation and the structure of the state, conveyed through a conventional teaching style. This didactic approach has been accompanied by a limited concept of participation, assigning a passive role to citizens whose main duty it is to abide by the law and whose main right it is to vote in elections.

Plurality of interests: turmoil, problems and conflicts have changed the world

However, turmoil and a series of problems and conflicts have led to this traditional model of the role of a citizen in Europe being increasingly called into question in recent years. These include:

- the emergence of new forms of previously suppressed collective identities;
- the demand for increasing personal autonomy and for new forms of equality and participation;
- ethnic conflicts and nationalism;
- the weakening of social cohesion and solidarity;
- global (health) threats and security policy challenges;
- growing interdependence and mutual dependency – politically, economically and culturally, regionally and globally;
- the development of new information and communication technologies;
- environmental problems;
- population movements and migration;
- mistrust of political institutions, political leadership and political elites.

In the face of such challenges, the role of citizens has to continue to develop along with the challenges confronting societies and, thus, with it the corresponding educational approaches. Citizens should certainly know and understand their institutionally enshrined rights and duties. However, it is crucial that everyone is able and willing to contribute to their community, country or the global community on their own initiative. This active citizenship is characterised by the courage to stand up for human rights, democracy and the rule of law and by the expression of personal perspectives and interests to contribute to the solving of problems and conflicts.

A society in which every person is accepted and able to participate

This is where the aspect of an all-inclusive approach comes into play. Anyone involved in democratic learning can learn from the basic understanding of an inclusive society, as the concept of inclusion describes a society in which every person is accepted and can participate in it on an equal and self-determined basis – regardless of gender, age or origin, religious affiliation or education, possible disabilities or other individual characteristics. In an inclusive democratic society, there is no defined norm that members must meet in order to fit in or succeed; rather, differences are upheld as vital resources for the thriving of plurality, innovation and exchange.

To become empowered democratic citizens, young people must grow aware and knowledgeable about the world and their relationship to it and be able to actively shape that relationship. While some awareness can emerge from daily (reflected) experiences of democratic and undemocratic coexistence, formal education has a crucial role to play in conveying learning about, for and through democratic citizenship and human rights. The expression "about, for and through" indicates that not merely is focus placed on the imparting of intellectual knowledge but also on effecting positive change beyond the school context while providing a participatory school culture in which students develop into critical thinkers and actors.

In the face of such challenges, a new kind of democratic citizenship is needed. There is a demand for democratically educated citizens who are not only informed and aware of their formal duties as citizens but are also active – able to freely contribute to the life of their community, country and the world and to participate in ways that express their individuality and help solve problems.

The term "citizen" must be rethought

All European countries are migration societies in which emigration and immigration are shaping everyday life. The image of the nation as a homogeneous group of citizens who possess civil rights because of a common origin has functioned as a myth, engineered by both far-right and far-left states across history with detrimental consequences for individuals, democracy and humanity. The term "citizen" must therefore be rethought, understood and implemented accordingly, since political inclusion means that as many people as possible living in a community should be included in the decision-making process. Therefore, the concept of civil rights must be viewed and understood in a differentiated way. What are civil rights and what do they have to do with citizenship?

Civil rights include:

- political rights (e.g. the right to vote or the right to stand for election);
- social rights (e.g. the right to retirement or a survivor's pension or to unemployment benefits);
- political freedoms (e.g. freedom of assembly, freedom of expression or freedom of association).

With the exception of political participation rights, migrants with a right to permanent residence are granted almost the same civil rights as national citizens across most European countries today. Nevertheless, civil rights are repeatedly fought for. The rights written into and guaranteed by many constitutions today paint the picture of an inclusive society. However, the reality often looks different.

Democracy and human rights education is based on the central principle of teaching and learning through, about and for democracy and human rights in schools. Schools are understood as a "society in miniature", characterised by formal rules and procedures, decision-making processes and a network of relationships that affect the quality of everyday life. But can schools really be understood as a miniature democracy?

School is not a small democracy

A look at the characteristics of democracies as political systems shows that conventional schools today are not small states in which elections take place and teachers act as members of a government, or in which the school administration corresponds to a president. So, what can schools do to promote inclusive democracy education? In the Council of Europe's "Democratic governance of schools" handbook (Council of Europe 2009), the authors point out that while students can experience democratic participation at school, the school remains an institution for education and training. It is not a miniature state, but, rather, a miniature society. Schools are of great importance for the political socialisation of students. However, the everyday experiences of students are often quite different. As shown in the tool on bullying, for many children, school is a place of psychological oppression and exclusion and sometimes even of physical peer violence. Those who are excluded no longer belong to a group. Children and young people experience many forms of exclusion. These can be, for example, rules that only serve to keep other people out of a group. Sometimes these rules are made on purpose, other times they exist as unspoken norms and codes, with students from marginalised groups being at higher risk of harm and exclusion. According to the experiences of children and young people, exclusion in everyday school life can affect anyone who belongs to a particular religious group, has a particular gender or belongs to a specific social group.

Recognising the need: living and learning democracy

What kind of society will our children live in tomorrow? An important part of the answer to that question lies in formal and non-formal education as well as in informal education. Knowledge, beliefs and cultural heritage are passed through generations within the context of the family. For centuries, obedience to the family was considered the highest educational goal. It was to be ensured that the children fulfilled the demands of their parents, both in terms of their legacy and in terms of their care. Interests were directed towards the community, not to the individual person. The main focus of families was to raise children in such a way that they could successfully work and maintain family values and wealth.

The family versus the state

Membership of a family, which often provides the only protection and necessary support to individuals, tends to be deemed stronger than the bonds within the political community, especially in neo-liberal contexts. Because of the cohesion of large families, many attempts at implementing democratic practices fail and during times in which much power was held by an aristocratic elite, community politics were dominated by a few family networks, even when the community had democratic practices in place. Important posts were preferentially given to relatives, and family members were favoured wherever possible. Even in democracies that have existed for some time, there are still very influential families in which political and financial power correlate. For centuries, democracy had to assert itself not only against tyrannies and dictators but also against the rule of the aristocracy. Large families formed a political power, incompatible with democracy. Breaking the chain from one generation to the next is one of the existential conditions of democracy.

Council of Europe: three pillars

Education plays an essential role in building the future. Democracy is one of the three pillars of the Council of Europe that should be actively pursued and protected by member states for it to remain a key foundation for our future societies. Although our institutions may be solid, they will only function in a truly democratic manner if our citizens are fully aware not only of their voting rights but also of the values that our institutions embody.

Education systems and schools need to prepare young people to become active, participative and responsible individuals who can thrive in complex, multicultural and rapidly evolving societies. At the dawn of quantum computing and artificial intelligence, it is all the more important that children should be equipped with the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding that will enable them to make responsible decisions about their futures.

Living in a democratic family

Democracy means sharing power. This applies to the school and to the community as well as to the family. In the patriarchal family, only the male head of the family rules. The other members are to be subordinates. An unrestricted autocracy that deprives citizens of their political freedom was considered reprehensible by ancient philosophers as *tyrannis*. For the family, however, the same philosophers demanded it. Political freedom includes the right to self-determination. It is only when this is guaranteed for every citizen that power comes from the people, from *demos*. Unlike all other forms of political rule, democracy is the only one in which the exercise of power is linked to the consent and participation of those subjected to state power. In ancient democracy, this was enacted by large assemblies in which citizens – those who were free and male – had the right to speak and vote. In the direct democracy of antiquity, the independence of each individual citizen was to be asserted. The domestic conditions of this autonomy consisted of patriarchal autocracy. Thus, the right to speak publicly in the assembly and the power to call the shots in the domestic sphere were directly linked.

However, children form new, personal views of the world that did not exist before. With every new experience and at every stage of learning, children make their own judgments. Moreover, children want to have their opinions heard long before they grow up and become involved in the political world.

Children, just like adults, need clear rules. But education does not take place in only one direction. Today, in a fast-paced world, the family has to be a learning community. Parents change alongside children, as they grow up and develop. It can be painful for parents when a child refuses to follow: they no longer want to

sit on their chair, no longer want to put their shoes on, etc. What was fine yesterday is a problem today. It can often take a while before the reasons for these sudden changes can be understood. The goal of parents should be to teach their children to control themselves. Importantly, self-control is not the same as discipline, something which is beginning to be demanded by society and education again today. Self-control means knowing what is good for you and what is not and children need to be able to make their own decisions based on informed judgments. To achieve this, adults must also give children the right to have a say. In dealing with children, one can experience the effectiveness of democracy first-hand. Parents cannot demand anything of their children anymore. Listening is a political virtue, which is why speech and counter-speech are crucial mutual foundations in the democratic family, just as they are in democratic politics.

Political democratisation, which was first seen in modern Europe with the execution of the absolutist during the French Revolution, has not only led to the political self-determination of men and, later, of women, but it has also freed families from the structures containing authoritarian figures of domination. This breakaway from the paternal family structure shifted focus away from family origins and towards the individual futures of children. While in the ancient *familia* the key focus was on the preservation of paternal power, the modern family is geared towards enabling and supporting the next generation. The fall of the despotic father benefits not only women and children, but also men. Only in a democratic family structure can all family members actively participate and take responsibility.

What to avoid: participation should not be a pretence

In order to be truly democratic, schools must not be reduced to the function of reproducing the societal status quo, but rather should serve to empower individuals and democratise societies by:

- guaranteeing equality of access to education and promoting the best possible education for each individual;
- continually improving educational achievement levels;
- imparting competences for democratic citizenship.

Of course, the school is not the only player in this task. The most appropriate, familiar and, in principle, demanding environment is undoubtedly the family. However, children and young people create their own freedoms in the transition from one environment to another (family, the school environment of schoolmates, the school environment of teachers, other groups and the media). In a democracy, the school, considered as a community (teachers, students, parents, administrative and service staff), is not authorised to advocate a society based on a particular morality. Rather, the school has the task of promoting ethics and a democratic culture, thus contributing to the democratisation of society by teaching and applying the corresponding freedoms and responsibilities.

To build a democratic school culture

The most challenging task in schools is to build a democratic school culture that is characterised by democratic values and forms of communication. The public school is the only institution that offers all young people a wide range of opportunities to have a say, to help shape and to participate in important issues and topics. Recognition, participation and responsibility, educational justice and tolerance across all social or individual boundaries provide guidance for school practice and school development. This means that learning about democracy in a democratic school is not just part of the curriculum or that democracy is experienced through participation in in-school and out-of-school projects. A democratic school culture means that democracy in school becomes a way of life. A key prerequisite for such a school culture is a consensus among the teaching staff that democratic school development is part of the pedagogical concept. Only then can instruments such as participatory performance assessment and lesson design, which are explicitly permitted by school laws, be successfully implemented. Institutionally anchored procedures are also part of a democratic school culture.

Long-term processes

Democratic structures must be constituted not only for dealings between students and teachers but also among students. The student council and other participatory bodies must not only exist on paper but must be able to actively participate in school development. Experience shows that many schools have much more freedom in shaping school life than they actually exercise. These freedoms can and should

be utilised and developed together with students and parents. However, it should also be noted that the development of democratic schools takes time, long-term and clear commitment from those involved in the school. The relatively high levels of dissatisfaction in many countries with the formal structure and institutions of democracy could be one reason for the declining voter turnout and volunteer work. In schools with democratic and inclusive leadership, children and young people experience self-efficacy and notice that active participation, taking responsibility and co-operation can make a difference.

Building a democratic family culture

Since much of children's learning and development occurs in the home, establishing a democratic culture within the family is crucial for democratising schools. However, democratic family relationships only develop if all members, taking into account age and experience, have the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. For example, regular family meetings or family conferences enable everyone involved to practise democratic behaviour. A family meeting is a regular meeting of all family members. The topics of discussion include matters such as beliefs, values, desires, complaints, plans, questions and suggestions. It is an opportunity for everyone to make themselves heard on topics that arise in the family.

Family meetings are a good time to plan joint activities and share positive experiences and feelings. Regular meetings can promote harmony in the family by providing time to set rules, make decisions, recognise positive events in the family and highlight the strengths of each member.

If family meetings do not take place, the question arises as to where it is regularly possible to:

- be heard;
- express positive feelings for each other and to encourage each other;
- divide tasks fairly among members;
- express concerns, feelings and complaints;
- resolve conflicts and deal with recurring problems;
- plan family trips.

Family gatherings also develop a child's ability to communicate, express their thoughts and ideas, ask questions and expect answers, listen to each other and other relevant life skills. They also strengthen children's ability to withstand difficult life situations.

Taking action at the school level: acceptance of other opinions

Co-determination and self-determination can take place in all areas of school life, be it during breaks or lessons, or in the joint development of class or school rules. The idea that adults know better than young people what is good for them is a lasting barrier to a democratic structure in schools. Democratic schools, on the other hand, show in their various forms that students can determine for themselves when knowledge is tested, what play equipment is purchased or what unit should be addressed next.

For such a process to get off the ground, teachers and school administrators must first ask in which areas and on which issues children and young people want to have a say. Of course, to do this, young people must already know their rights and have learned to deliberate and negotiate.

Every opinion counts

It is important to start early on making it clear to all children and young people that they have opinions that count. However, in many school parliaments, it is often the children of the social elite who are represented who will have had access to prior training in assuming leadership roles. The argument is that they are the ones who volunteer or that only these children are able to speak well and are self-confident enough. But if all children from all social groups recognised that they have a voice, that the concerns and needs of their groups are heard, they would learn to use it responsibly. Building on this, students, parents and teachers should work together to develop a way to ensure that everyone in the school has a lasting say. Only if all groups represented at the school work together and are taken along the path to more democracy can the school become more democratic in the long term.

If children and young people are given real opportunities to shape their school, this has a variety of effects. First of all, they experience appreciation. Their judgment is recognised and students can feel like an important part of the school community and wider society. In addition, they learn what it means to take responsibility for decisions. Students learn that there is not just one right way (as prescribed by adults). This promotes acceptance of other opinions and diversity. This decisively strengthens not only cohesion within the school but might in the longer term also influence the democratic culture in a country. The more diverse the student body, the more it reflects social realities, preparing students to accommodate diversity within their communities.

Democracy requires a high degree of communication

In addition to the responsibility that schools have towards society as a whole, lived democracy in schools also has concrete advantages for everyday school life. First, democratic elements require a high degree of communication. Students, teachers and the school management team must exchange perspectives and discuss problems. This can create mutual understanding for the other groups' points of view. In particular, it helps adults to focus on the problems and wishes of the students. If the students' wishes and demands are taken seriously and implemented through co-determination, this significantly improves the school and learning environment.

A more democratic school also contributes to quality development. Through regular grassroots participation, problems and ideas emerge more quickly than if students and their achievements are only problematised. If young people are asked and feel that they are being taken seriously, they will also express their dissatisfaction and make suggestions for improvement.

Democratic culture as school reality

The Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture is a model of 20 competences for democratic culture, which describes how the values of democracy can be implemented in schools and in everyday life (Council of Europe 2018a). In every teaching and learning situation, some of these elements are visible. In every school, many of them are already being implemented, even when teachers are not consciously aware of this.

Students should be supported to understand what is happening in their schools concerning the development of the competences for democratic culture in order to become part of democratic society.

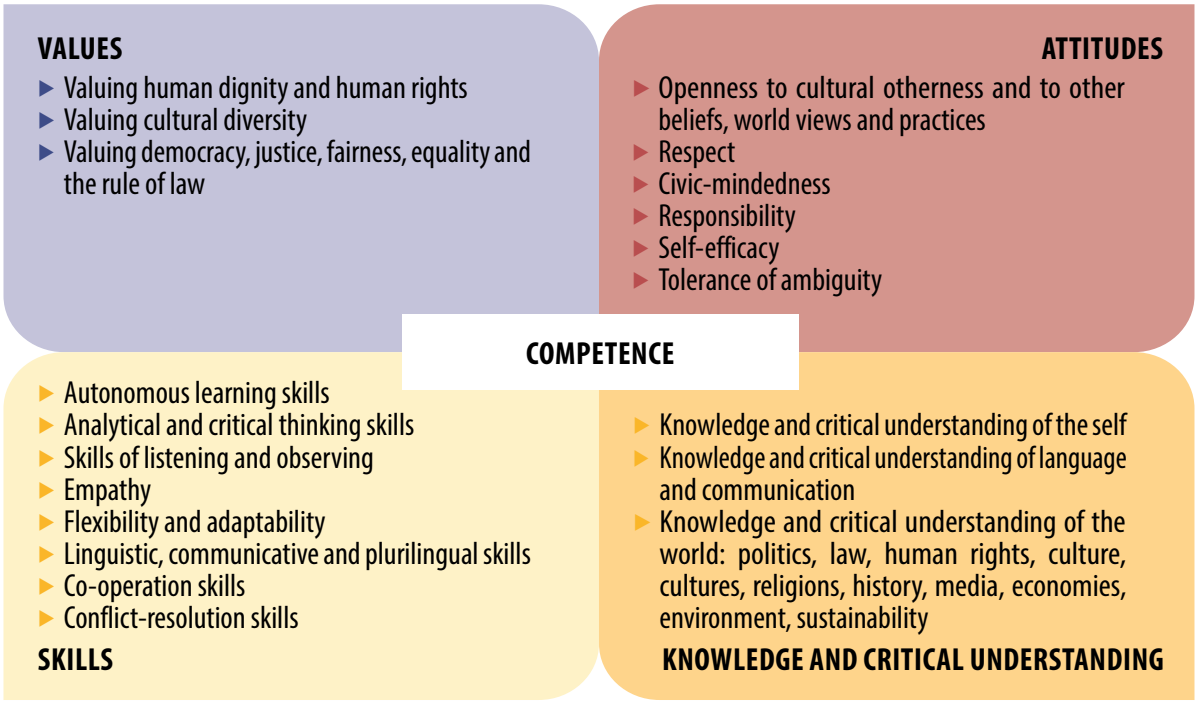

Figure 1. The Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe 2018a).

The need for competence descriptors

A democratic culture relies on citizens having the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding described in the competence model above. Accordingly, the framework provides detailed descriptors for each of the 20 competences. These descriptors help to make each competence visible, while providing a useful tool with which to evaluate competence-oriented teaching and learning.

Competence descriptors describe observable behaviours that show when a person has achieved a certain level of a particular competence. This is relevant for the development of a democracy, because when we see the competences and descriptors being applied in schools and daily life, we know that society is not just a democracy on paper but one with real actions and results. The school is an important training place for this: in school, students experience democracy in action as a daily matter. The following 135 descriptors can be used as a checklist for very different purposes and key players (Council of Europe 2018b). In designing lessons or activities that focus on both process and content, teachers will find the descriptors very helpful. Special attention should be given to the fact that in most cases descriptors corresponding to a cluster of competences need to be combined in the development of a learning activity. The following questions might lead educators through the teaching processes.

- Which competences are more visible and which less so?
- What strengths and weaknesses do you see within the class/overall school culture/individual students?
- Where do you see a need for further training? How do you plan for this?

Three values and the matching descriptors of competence

1. Valuing human dignity and human rights

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

1.	argues that human rights should always be protected and respected.
2.	argues that the specific rights of children should be respected and protected by society.
3.	defends the view that no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
4.	argues that all public institutions should respect, protect and implement human rights.
5.	defends the view that when people are imprisoned, although they are subject to restrictions, this does not mean that they are less deserving of respect and dignity than anyone else.
6.	expresses the view that all laws should be consistent with international human rights norms and standards.

2. Valuing cultural diversity

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

7.	promotes the view that we should be tolerant of the different beliefs that are held by others in society.
8.	promotes the view that one should always strive for mutual understanding and meaningful dialogue between people and groups who are perceived to be "different" from one another.
9.	expresses the view that cultural diversity within a society should be positively valued and appreciated.
10.	argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to help us recognise our different identities and cultural affiliations.
11.	argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to develop respect and a culture of "living together".

3. Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

12.	argues that schools should teach participants about democracy and how to act as a democratic citizen.
13.	expresses the view that all citizens should be treated equally and impartially under the law.
14.	argues that laws should always be fairly applied and enforced.
15.	argues that democratic elections should always be conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation and without any fraud.
16.	expresses the view that, whenever a public official exercises power, he or she should not misuse that power and cross the boundaries of their legal authority.
17.	expresses support for the view that courts of law should be accessible to everyone so that people are not denied the opportunity to take a case to court because it is too expensive, troublesome or complicated to do so.
18.	expresses support for the view that those to whom legislative power is entrusted should be subject to the law and to appropriate constitutional oversight.
19.	expresses the view that information on public policies and their implementation should be made available to the public.
20.	argues that there should be effective remedies against the actions of public authorities which infringe upon civil rights.

Six attitudes and the matching descriptors

1. Openness to cultural otherness

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

21.	shows interest in learning about people's beliefs, values, traditions and world views.
22.	expresses interest in travelling to other countries.
23.	expresses curiosity about other beliefs and interpretations and other cultural orientations and affiliations.
24.	expresses an appreciation of the opportunity to have experiences of other cultures.
25.	seeks and welcomes opportunities for encountering people with different values, customs and behaviours.
26.	seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture.

2. Respect

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

27.	gives space to others to express themselves.
28.	expresses respect for other people as equal human beings.
29.	treats all people with respect regardless of their cultural background.
30.	expresses respect towards people who are of a different socio-economic status from himself/herself.
31.	expresses respect for religious differences.
32.	expresses respect for people who hold different political opinions from himself/herself.

3. Civic-mindedness

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

33.	expresses a willingness to co-operate and work with others.
34.	collaborates with other people for common interest causes.
35.	expresses commitment to not being a bystander when the dignity and rights of others are violated.
36.	discusses what can be done to help make the community a better place.
37.	exercises the obligations and responsibilities of active citizenship at the local, national or global level.
38.	takes action to stay informed about civic issues.

4. Responsibility

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

39.	shows that he or she accepts responsibility for his or her actions.
40.	if he or she hurts someone's feelings, he or she apologises.
41.	submits required work on time.
42.	shows that he or she takes responsibility for his/her own mistakes.
43.	consistently meets commitments to others.

5. Self-efficacy

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

44.	expresses a belief in his or her own ability to understand issues.
45.	expresses the belief that he or she can carry out activities that he or she has planned.
46.	expresses a belief in his or her own ability to navigate obstacles when pursuing a goal.
47.	if he or she wants to change, he or she expresses confidence that he or she can do it.
48.	shows that he or she feels secure in his or her abilities to meet life's challenges.
49.	shows confidence that he or she knows how to handle unforeseen situations as a result of his or her resourcefulness.

6. Tolerance of ambiguity

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

50.	engages well with other people who have different points of view.
51.	shows that he or she can suspend judgments about other people temporarily.
52.	is comfortable in unfamiliar situations.
53.	deals with uncertainty in a positive and constructive manner.
54.	works well in unpredictable circumstances.
55.	expresses a desire to have his or her own ideas and values challenged.
56.	enjoys the challenge of tackling ambiguous problems.
57.	expresses enjoyment of tackling situations that are complicated.

Eight skills and the matching descriptors

1. Autonomous learning skills

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

58.	shows ability to identify resources for learning (e.g. people, books, the internet).
59.	seeks clarification of new information from other people when needed.
60.	can learn about new topics with minimal supervision.
61.	can assess the quality of his or her own work.
62.	can select the most reliable sources of information or advice from the range available.
63.	shows an ability to monitor, define, prioritise and complete tasks without direct oversight.

2. Analytical and critical thinking skills

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

64.	can identify similarities and differences between new information and what is already known.
65.	uses evidence to support his or her opinions.
66.	can assess the risks associated with different options.
67.	shows that he or she thinks about whether the information he or she uses is correct.
68.	can identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies or divergences in materials being analysed.
69.	can use explicit and specifiable criteria, principles or values to make judgments.

3. Skills of listening and observing

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

70.	listens carefully to differing opinions.
71.	listens attentively to other people.
72.	watches speakers' gestures and general body language to help figure out the meaning of what they are saying.
73.	can listen effectively in order to decipher another person's meanings and intentions.
74.	pays attention to what other people imply but do not say.
75.	notices how people with other cultural affiliations react in different ways to the same situation.

4. Empathy

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

76.	can recognise when a companion needs his or her help.
77.	expresses sympathy for the bad things that he or she has seen happen to other people.
78.	tries to understand his or her friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
79.	takes other people's feelings into account when making decisions.
80.	expresses the view that, when he/she thinks about people in other countries, he/she shares their joys and sorrows.
81.	accurately identifies the feelings of others, even when they do not want to show them.

5. Flexibility and adaptability

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

82.	modifies his or her opinions if he or she is shown through rational argument that this is required.
83.	can change the decisions that he or she has made if the consequences of those decisions show that this is required.
84.	adapts to new situations by using a new skill.
85.	adapts to new situations by applying knowledge in a different way.
86.	adopts the sociocultural conventions of other cultural target groups when interacting with members of those groups.
87.	can modify his or her own behaviour to make it appropriate to other cultures.

6. Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

88.	can express his or her thoughts on a problem.
89.	asks speakers to repeat what they have said if it wasn't clear to them.
90.	asks questions that show his or her understanding of other people's positions.
91.	can adopt different ways of expressing politeness in another language.
92.	can mediate linguistically in intercultural exchanges by translating, interpreting or explaining.
93.	can successfully avoid or resolve intercultural misunderstandings.

7. Co-operation skills

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

94.	builds positive relationships with other people in a group.
95.	when working as a member of a group, does his or her share of the group's work.
96.	works to build consensus to achieve group goals.
97.	when working as a member of a group, keeps others informed about any relevant or useful information.
98.	generates enthusiasm among group members for accomplishing shared goals.
99.	when working with others, supports other people despite differences in points of view.

8. Conflict-resolution skills

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

100.	can communicate with conflicting parties in a respectful manner.
101.	can identify options for resolving conflicts.
102.	can assist others to resolve conflicts by enhancing their understanding of the available options.
103.	can encourage the parties involved in conflicts to actively listen to each other and share their issues and concerns.
104.	regularly initiates communication to help solve interpersonal conflicts.
105.	can deal effectively with other people's emotional stress, anxiety and insecurity in situations involving conflict.

Three competences of knowledge and critical understanding

1. Knowledge and critical understanding of the self

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

106. can describe his or her own motivations.

107. can describe the ways in which his or her thoughts and emotions influence his or her behaviour.

108. can reflect critically on his or her own values and beliefs.

109. can self-reflect critically from a number of different perspectives.

110. can reflect critically on his or her own prejudices and stereotypes and what lies behind them.

111. can reflect critically on his or her own emotions and feelings in a wide range of situations.

2. Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

112. can explain how tone of voice, eye contact and body language can aid communication.

113. can describe the social impact and effects on others of different communication styles.

114. can explain how social relationships are sometimes encoded in the linguistic forms that are used in conversations (e.g. in greetings, forms of address, use of expletives).

115. can explain why people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective.

116. can reflect critically on the different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture.

3. Knowledge and critical understanding of the world

To demonstrate this competence, the learner:

117. can explain the meaning of basic political concepts, including democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and responsibilities.

118. can explain why everybody has a responsibility to respect the human rights of others.

119. can describe basic cultural practices (e.g. eating habits, greeting practices, ways of addressing people, politeness) in one other culture.

120. can reflect critically on how his or her own world view is just one of many world views.

121. can assess society's impact on the natural world, for example in terms of population growth, population development or resource consumption.

122. can reflect critically on the risks associated with environmental damage.

123. can explain the universal, inalienable and indivisible nature of human rights.

124. can reflect critically on the relationship between human rights, democracy, peace and security in a globalised world.

125. can reflect critically on the root causes of human rights violations, including the role of stereotypes and prejudice in processes that lead to human rights abuses.

126. can explain the dangers of generalising from individual behaviours to an entire culture.

127. can reflect critically on religious symbols, religious rituals and the religious uses of language.

128.	can describe the effects that propaganda has in the contemporary world.
129.	can explain how people can guard and protect themselves against propaganda.
130.	can describe the diverse ways in which citizens can influence policy.
131.	can reflect critically on the evolving nature of the human rights framework and the ongoing development of human rights in different regions of the world.
132.	can explain why there are no cultural groups that have fixed inherent characteristics.
133.	can explain why all religious groups are constantly evolving and changing.
134.	can reflect critically on how histories are often presented and taught from an ethnocentric point of view.
135.	can explain national economies and how economic and financial processes affect the functioning of society.

Taking action at the family level: practising democratic life at home

The Council of Europe has developed a series of learning and discussion materials to help parents rethink everyday educational issues in the context of a democratic society (Council of Europe 2021b; Council of Europe 2021c). The multilingual digital presentation on the website living-democracy.com shows that not only teachers and head teachers but also parents need to think about educating their children to become democratically active citizens. In the following, we will briefly present the part of the website that is specifically aimed at parents and that focuses on questions of democratic and participatory communication between children of different ages and their parents.

Various situations form a starting point for discussion and the development of joint solutions. For example, the oldest child of a family is about to choose a career and has no idea which profession might suit them. Recently, there has been more frequent feedback from school about a child's unfinished homework and the youngest child in the family regularly makes shopping difficult when his favourite cookies do not end up in the basket. Do these situations sound familiar? Do you sometimes feel that you need to find new ways to engage in conversation with your children?

living-democracy.com

The website living-democracy.com offers various tips and tricks for everyday life with children of different ages (Council of Europe and Zurich University of Teacher Training and Kanton Zürich Gemeinnütziger Fonds 2025). In addition, the website provides tips on parenting that particularly promote democratic thinking, action and communication. Only those who experience democratic communication and action in their daily lives can develop a democratic attitude themselves and practise democratic communication and action.

For toddlers (1-3 years), children (4-12 years) and adolescents (13-18 years), there are several situations in everyday life that can be challenging for parents, such as cleaning up after toddlers, teaching table manners to the youngest, helping the children with their homework, regulating the media use of teenagers and sex education: how do I talk to children and teenagers about it? The approach to the different topics is always roughly the same and based on the principle of "problem-oriented learning". An entertaining cartoon with a description introduces each topic and the problem (or the problematic behaviour) is made clear.

"How would you react as a parent?"

Now the user is confronted with the question: "How would you react as a parent?" Further small cartoon drawings follow, each showing a different way in which parents could react. The user selects the reaction that most closely matches their own reaction in this situation and clicks on the image. The advantages and disadvantages of this reaction are then discussed: Does this reaction solve the problem? How will the situation continue? How does the child feel? How does an adult feel? Will the situation change? These and similar reflective questions guide the assessment of the adult's reaction.

The next step is to identify alternative measures that can help to solve the problem. Here, modern pedagogical theories and approaches (such as sending text messages, non-violent and open communication) are linked to the specific situation. However, the user not only has the opportunity to receive theoretical information about the alternatives for action but is also encouraged to practise these new communication methods with the help of suitable exercises. Some exercises can and should be integrated directly into everyday life, such as filtering destructive messages from one's own communication style as a parent. This is because one's own behaviour can only be changed if it is first observed and practically recognised. This approach makes abstract theory tangible and transforms it into immediate, new practical knowledge for parents. The new patterns of action or conversation suggestions are not only relevant in the selected, exemplary situations but can also be immediately applied to other challenging parenting situations at home.

Some of the suggested communication strategies may seem unusual, if not strange and inappropriate, but trying something new is often the only way to address problems and make progress. If different strategies are incorporated into everyday teaching, parents and their children can experience the time they spend together as valuable moments that are crucial for moving forward on the exciting path of growing up in a democratic society.

Practical guide for teachers: methodology and teaching examples

Methodology

Conventional political or social studies classes used to be designed to impart knowledge about the state's constitutional and legal order. Such course content is comparatively timeless and ideally suited for knowledge queries and lesson planning is straightforward. In this respect, it is understandable that institutional studies were popular with teachers and to some extent still are today.

Learning for assessment, not for life

From the students' point of view, there is hardly any difference between learning facts about parliament or the names of various freshwater fish: both are memorised for the exam and the material often does not enter the long-term memory (context-free "parrot knowledge"). Traditional civic education does not answer the question of why and for what purpose students need knowledge about the state; this didactic approach contributes little to the education of responsible citizens in democratic communities committed to human rights. Action-oriented learning or problem-based learning is therefore increasingly being employed.

An action-oriented approach shifts the focus from reception to the development and generation of knowledge and insights. Experience shows that learners appreciate the freedom to work in an action- and problem-oriented way and understand the teacher trusts them to use the available time efficiently and responsibly. Students only learn to take responsibility for their learning and actions if given the freedom to do so and are exposed to the risk of making mistakes or failing. However, without this risk, no knowledge and no learning progress are possible – in school, in science or in social life.

Teachers rethink their role

Teachers can organise a variety of pedagogical approaches that are suitable for developing a lived democracy in school. They help create more pleasant and safe learning environments, including by addressing and dealing with violent, discriminatory and anti-democratic structures within learning environments. By planning, following up the development of democratic competences in learners and evaluating their activities, teachers focus on the principles of the reference framework and implement pedagogical approaches and methods that encourage learners to actively engage in experiences, discoveries, challenges, analysis, comparisons, reflections and collaboration.

They rethink their role in the educational institution to better address learners as whole persons, reaching children with minds, hearts and hands and developing practices best suited to foster learner autonomy and responsibility in relation to the competences for democratic culture (CDC).

To answer an often-heard question: developing democratic competences can be understood both explicitly as a topic and implicitly as a transversal concern integrated into the general learning processes that take place in training courses as part of shared responsibility.

No teacher can demand attention or a willingness to learn. These approaches must be facilitated through careful design of the training or event. It is all the more important, then, that teachers are aware of the relevant learning processes and approaches. These ultimately help ensure that democratic competences do not remain just empty words but fulfil their potential.

How to organise the learning process

The following questions can serve as a guide for reflecting on how to facilitate children's and young people's development of the competences for democratic culture.

To what extent would you say your teaching contributes towards learners becoming active citizens/respecting human rights?
How often do your participants have an opportunity to express their own ideas, listen to different views or discuss their differences?
How often are questions relevant to human rights, democratic citizenship, justice, equality or the rule of law raised?
How is your current practice facilitating the development of intellectual, personal and social resources that will enable all to participate as active citizens?
How are you providing time for participants to work with each other to strengthen their understanding, as well as practise social skills, thus fostering both individual and social processes and outcomes?
How often are you including practical activities and experiential approaches?
Do you effectively bring participants' previous experience into your activities?

Planning principles

The following planning principles can help teachers promote the development of CDC.

Experience. An effective way to develop attitudes of respect and openness, as well as empathy, is by providing opportunities for learning through experience, which can be either real or imagined; learners are able to experience these attitudes through, for example, games, activities, traditional media and social media, face-to-face interaction with others or through correspondence.
Comparison. Learners can benefit from exposure to "difference". Learners often compare what is unfamiliar with what is familiar and might judge the unfamiliar as "bizarre", as "worse" or even as "uncivilised". Facilitators need to be aware of this kind of comparison of value and replace it with comparison for understanding, which involves seeing similarities and differences in a non-judgmental manner and taking the perspective of the other. Learners reflect on and are engaged in a conscious comparison of their own values and attitudes with different ones in order to become more aware of how they construct reality.
Analysis. Behind similarities and differences there are explanations for practices, thoughts, values and beliefs. Facilitators can support their learners in the analysis of what may lie beneath what they can see others doing and saying. This can be achieved, for example, by careful discussion and analysis, through inquiry-based methods, of written or audio/video sources.
Reflection. Comparison, analysis and experience need to be accompanied by time and space for reflection and the development of critical awareness and understanding. Facilitators, especially in non-formal and formal education, need to ensure that such time and space is provided in a deliberate and planned way.
Action. Reflection can and should be the basis for taking action, for engagement with others through dialogue and for becoming involved in co-operative activities with others. Facilitators may take responsibility for encouraging and even managing co-operative action, for example in making improvements in the social and physical environment through "whole-school" approaches or school partnerships.

Five approaches to taking action

The following five approaches or methods (it depends on the professional pedagogical tradition on how the terms are used in different countries) can help teachers take action. These approaches or methods concentrate on the process of learning itself.

Process-oriented methods and approaches:

a. modelling democratic attitudes and behaviours;

b. democratic processes during teaching;

c. co-operative learning;

d. project-based learning;

e. service learning.

a. Modelling democratic attitudes and behaviours

The way in which educators communicate and interact with students has a major influence on the values, attitudes and skills that learners acquire. Democratic values, attitudes and skills cannot be acquired through formal instruction on democracy alone; they must be practised. Values are implicitly taught through the way in which teachers act and communicate. Educators can develop stronger awareness of the values they convey and that are reflected in their daily practice, as well as the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding that need to be developed. Educators' decisions can support – or hinder – the development of a democratic ethos in learners. Learning by doing and experiential learning engage students in a process of experience, challenge and reflection that has important potential for developing the CDC. Through their attitudes, behaviours and practices, teachers can create safe learning environments, address discrimination and support the individualised learning of a broad base or humanistic core components. Teachers might reflect on how the values of the CDC model are maintained in their practice. For example, a teacher who is examining how their value of "fairness" plays out in their daily activities with students can try out a new practice based on that value, test it and reflect on it.

Learning environments influence student engagement and learning outcomes. It is important to create open, safe spaces for inclusive and effective learning and to manage difficult dialogues or emotional confrontations in which learners dare to express their thoughts and disagreements. When teachers use inclusive methods, they send a meaningful message to learners: they say, "You are all important and valuable", "We can all learn from each other". This is especially important in culturally and linguistically diverse training institutions, where pedagogical approaches are needed that take into account specific cultural backgrounds of learners.

When teachers incorporate democratic attitudes and behaviours into their daily practice, they implement the CDC values. They consciously develop an awareness of their own values, align practices and values and support the development of competence clusters such as the following, which could describe a classroom discussion about a recent controversy in society like same-sex marriage:

- valuing human dignity and human rights;
- valuing cultural diversity;
- valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law;
- empathy, respect and positive regard for other people;
- listening and observing in a non-judgmental way;
- openness to others;
- tolerance for ambiguity.

b. Democratic processes during teaching

There are many everyday situations in which decisions need to be made in an educational institution. Evidently, within a democratic culture, decisions should be made following democratic principles and procedures. A conflict or disagreement can be decided by the strongest, or a win-win solution can be sought and achieved through negotiation or mediation. The rules of the educational institution can be set by the educator or democratically adopted through reflection and discussion with the students. Students who take on specific tasks as part of the training can be appointed by the trainer or democratically elected by their peers. The voice of the students can be increased through simple means such as a suggestion box (which can also be an online tool) set up so that any student can contribute ideas, perhaps even anonymously. In this way, teachers effectively contribute to the development of students' CDC by

implementing and operating institutional procedures that ensure fairness, equity and non-discrimination, as well as inclusivity, providing opportunities for all young people.

Democratic processes can also be applied as part of teaching and learning methods in a wide range of subjects. Educational activities may include electoral simulations, possibly accompanied by the simulation of a political campaign, mock parliaments, mock trials, defining and applying fair procedures for decision making when choosing between different options, role plays and simulations, including trying out positions of authority (a day as a mayor), freedom of expression (simulating the work of journalists), etc. All these methods can serve specific learning goals in the curriculum while also developing CDC.

c. Co-operative learning

Studies have shown that applying co-operative principles for at least two hours per day in school can reduce tension and aggression among students and prevent violence.

The learning process is structured around four specific co-operative principles that help in examining, evaluating and improving learning activities:

Positive interdependence: everyone must contribute. In a training facility without co-operative structures, a facilitator may have participants working alone on individual worksheets. When working alone, in a competitive setting, participants are not engaged in helping their peers do well. In fact, such an environment might feed anxiety around competition, while leaving students isolated. Participants working in a training facility using co-operative structures complete work together, each taking turns to solve a problem while their partner serves as coach. They have a common goal of reaching solutions, answers and explanations.

Individual accountability: no hiding! In a co-operative structure, when the facilitator asks a question or gives a task, each participant is given the opportunity to take part in completing the task, hence the individual participant's input and effort is valued. This process requires every participant to prepare an individual public performance in every round. Participants who in other settings would not engage become engaged.

Equal access: non-discriminatory participation. A facilitator has presented a topic and asks participants to "discuss the issue in teams". The result is predictable: the more articulate, extroverted participants or participants who feel strongly about the topic will do most or all of the talking. The facilitator who structures the activity co-operatively enables each participant to contribute equally by having each participant in turn stand for a minute while being interviewed by their teammates.

Simultaneous interaction: increased per participation. When a facilitator wants participants to practise reading so that, one at a time, each participant reads aloud and the facilitator can evaluate and coach. In a group of 30 participants engaged for a period of 50 minutes, the maximum amount of oral reading per hour for each participant is less than two minutes! In a co-operative setting, the facilitator pairs participants, who take turns reading to each other. Each participant can read aloud for a substantial amount of time and the facilitator has increased the number of opportunities for assessment and coaching by listening to the small teams.

By engaging in co-operative learning settings, learners usually develop the following cluster of competences.

- Openness to others' beliefs and thoughts.
- Responsibility for one's own actions.
- Autonomous learning skills.
- Empathy and relating to others' thoughts, beliefs and feelings.
- Flexibility and adaptability.
- Co-operation skills.
- Conflict-resolution skills.
- Critical understanding of the self.

d. Project-based learning

Project work, or learning through projects, is a pedagogical approach particularly appropriate for the development of CDC because it contributes to acquiring a combination of attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding, as well as to developing values. It can be used within a specific subject area but it is also very appropriate for a cross-curricular approach and for addressing cross-cutting issues. Project-based learning offers its best potential when conducted in small groups and/or by a whole group. It is usually structured in a sequence of steps spread over several weeks.

Choice of a topic of study or of an open question and planning of the work.
Collection of information, organisation of the information collected and decision making (implying both individual responsibility, co-operation in a group and managing potential differences of views or disagreements).
Preparation of a product (which can take various forms, such as a poster, video, podcast, publication, website, portfolio, text, performance or event).
Presentation of the product.
Reflection on the learning experience.

Depending on the topic selected, the elements of knowledge and critical understanding of the world in the CDC model can also be developed. When the topic involves linguistic and cultural diversity, the process can also stimulate valuing diversity and openness to difference and otherness. The role of the facilitator in a project-based learning process is that of a facilitator of the learning process. Participants follow the instructions given by the facilitator concerning the steps to go through, but, in terms of content, the decision should remain largely with the participants. The facilitator's main instrument is the question, not the answer. The principles described above still apply and the facilitator monitors how collaboration in the groups is taking place. The facilitator should encourage participants to co-operate, support each other, give each other feedback and reflect on what they discover as well as on their interactions.

By engaging in project-based learning, regardless of the topic chosen and besides acquiring knowledge and skills about the topic, the learners most probably will develop the following cluster of competences.

- Autonomous learning skills and self-efficacy: the learners set out to identify sources of information, check their reliability and organise the data-collection process and the design of the product themselves.
- Analytical and critical thinking skills: related to understanding, processing and organising information, but also to reflection on the learning experience.
- Listening and observing skills, particularly in the phase of information gathering.
- Empathy, flexibility and adaptability, co-operation skills and conflict-resolution skills, as well as respect, responsibility and tolerance of ambiguity.
- Communication skills: oral, written, public speaking, plurilingualism.
- Knowledge and critical understanding of the self, of language and communication, particularly during the phase of reflection on the learning experience.

e. Service learning

Service learning is also an effective way to develop the full range of CDC because it gives learners opportunities to connect the knowledge and critical understanding and skills acquired in a training facility setting with meaningful action targeting a real-world issue. Service learning is more than community service. It implies providing a community service in the context of a structured set of steps, in which the facilitator plays an important role as organiser and facilitator, while maintaining a strong learner-centred approach and empowering learners to make decisions and act on their own will in co-operation with peers.

As service learning is a form of project-based learning, a similar sequence of steps will serve as a reference for the process.

Assessment of community needs and identification of the improvement or change to be envisaged.
Preparation of the task to be undertaken by collecting information, identifying and contacting key community stakeholders, analysing options to address the issue and planning the intervention.
Taking action by engaging in a community service activity that is meaningful for the learners and enhances learning and the development of values, attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding. The action can be of several types, including the following two steps.
Presentation of the work and its outcomes to the community and celebration of the achievements.
Reflection on the learning experience, preferably throughout the whole process and evaluation of the work done leading to conclusions and recommendations for improving the effectiveness of future similar activities.

Effective service learning has several characteristics that contribute to the development of the full range of values, attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding included in the CDC model:

- civic-mindedness but also responsibility, openness, empathy and observation skills;
- self-efficacy, analytical and critical thinking skills;
- tolerance of ambiguity, autonomous learning skills and critical thinking;
- co-operation and conflict-resolution skills, together with flexibility and adaptability and communication skills;
- knowledge and critical understanding of the world;
- openness to cultural otherness, listening skills, linguistic and communicative skills;
- reflection on values and knowledge and critical understanding of the self.

Assessment of competences for democratic culture and descriptors

The basic principles presented here, assessing the 20 democratic competences, were taken from Volume 3 of the RFCDC (Council of Europe 2018c). Since among stakeholders in education there have always been fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of assessment, we take this opportunity to present the basic principles published in the context of discussions on the RFCDC. In addition, we would like to draw attention to the Council of Europe's 2021 publication *Assessing competences for democratic culture* (Council of Europe 2021a), which provides a systematic overview of the assessment principles and concrete examples of assessment methods already in use in some member states of the Council of Europe. The book seeks to support practitioners in selecting assessment methods that are appropriate for use in the context of the RFCDC and in developing and implementing their own assessments. At its core, the publication defends the importance of respect towards learners as the basis for assessment.

a. Assessment of competences

One difficulty in assessing democratic and intercultural competences is that individuals must mobilise and use their competences in dynamic ways if they are to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands and opportunities that arise from a particular context. Democratic and intercultural situations are not static. They change and develop fluidly as people interact and adapt their behaviour to the different demands of the situation. In making these adjustments, they often need to adapt their behaviour by mobilising and employing additional competences, while they may no longer use others because the situation has changed. This presents challenges for assessment. Learners must not only be able to apply their competences in democratic and intercultural situations but also be able to adapt their competences to new situational circumstances as they arise. Consequently, assessment needs to determine the degree to which learners are capable of mobilising and applying a range of relevant competences in a range of contexts as well as the extent to which they are able to adapt these competences as circumstances within those contexts change. This means that assessment methods that only provide a static description of a learner's competences at a single point in time are unlikely to be appropriate.

b. Assessment of descriptors

In the RFCDC, descriptors were developed for all 20 competences for lower secondary learners. These descriptors provide a set of positive descriptions of observable behaviour that indicate that an individual has achieved a certain level of proficiency in a particular competence. They have been formulated using the language of "learning outcomes". This means that they can be used not only for assessment purposes but also for curriculum development and pedagogical planning, thus contributing to coherence.

Assessments based on observation of the behaviours specified in the descriptors can reveal learners' competences when they develop over an extended period of time and in a variety of settings. Such assessments can also reveal the topics on which teachers need to focus their interventions and can serve as a basis for designing educational activities.

Principles of assessment

Assessment must be built on assessment criteria. These criteria might include validity, reliability, fairness, transparency, practicability and respectfulness.

a. Validity

Validity means that an assessment should accurately describe and/or measure a learner's level of proficiency or achievement of the intended learning outcomes. A valid assessment is one that assesses what it is designed to assess. For example, an assessment task designed to assess a range of competences for democratic culture might require the learner to understand linguistic material and provide an oral response. However, in practice, such a task might assess the learner's linguistic competence rather than their democratic competence, with the result that only the more linguistically capable learners are credited with a high level of democratic competence. Similarly, if the frequency of students' contributions is measured in an assessment task in which learners have to work, interact and speak with their peers, the learners' personality could be assessed rather than their democratic competence. In this case, the personality of these learners could be assessed rather than their democratic competence. It is a common misconception that validity only applies to quantitative assessment. However, it is not only grades or scores that are invalid. Qualitative assessments can also be invalid if the assessment is influenced by irrelevant factors.

b. Reliability

Reliability means that assessment should produce consistent and stable results. A reliable assessment is one whose results are dependable and should be reproducible when the same assessment procedure is applied again to the same learner and by a different assessor. There are various reasons that could make an assessment unreliable. For example, an assessor might be tired or unclear about the precise meaning of the learning outcomes being assessed. If the same assessor were less tired or more knowledgeable about the meaning of all the learning outcomes, different results might be obtained. Reliability is not the same as validity. Even if an assessment method is known to be reliable, it does not necessarily follow that it is valid. On the other hand, if an assessment is unreliable, it cannot be valid. This is because, in an unreliable assessment procedure, something other than the learner's level of competence influences the outcome of the assessment.

c. Fairness

Fairness means that the assessment should be equitable and should neither favour nor disadvantage any particular group or individual. A fair assessment method ensures that all learners, regardless of their demographic or other characteristics, have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their level of proficiency. Assessment unfairness can arise for a variety of reasons. For example, an assessment requiring learners to have access to a wide variety of information sources at home could discriminate against those who do not have such opportunities. An assessment requiring learners to have background knowledge about the majority culture group's culture could discriminate against learners from minority groups. Assessment methods that disadvantage and discriminate against learners in disadvantaged situations or members of various minority groups should not be used.

d. Transparency

Transparency means that learners should receive clear, accurate and unambiguous information about the assessment in advance. A transparent assessment procedure is one in which learners are informed in advance of the purpose of the assessment, the learning outcomes to be assessed, the type of assessment procedure to be used and the assessment criteria. Methods that require learners to guess what is being required of them are not transparent.

Transparency is an important principle that characterises democratic processes and culture. For this reason, CDC assessment should always follow this principle and use methods that are understandable to learners.

e. Practicability

The principle of practicability means that any assessment method used should be feasible given the resources, time and practical constraints available. A practical assessment procedure does not place unreasonable demands on the resources or time available to the learner or the assessor. The constraints that make a method impractical are also likely to make that method unreliable and invalid.

f. Respectfulness

Another principle that is of particular importance in the context of developing competences for democratic culture is respect. Respectful assessment can motivate those being assessed to accept and understand the assessment and its purposes. This principle applies to all assessments that take place in the context of the framework. As the principle of respect is not usually included in the principles of assessment, it is discussed in more detail here than the other principles. Assessment procedures should always respect the dignity and rights of the learner being assessed. Learners' rights are set out in the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The principle of respect means that learners should not be penalised or censored in an assessment just because the views they express in that assessment are offensive, shocking or disturbing. However, learners may be censored in an assessment if the expression of their views promotes, incites or justifies hatred on grounds of intolerance.

Five methods of assessment

There are many assessment methods that are potentially available for assessing learners' values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding. They include checklists, ranking and sorting tasks, Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, constructed-response questions, situational judgment tests, computer-based assessments, open-ended diaries, reflective journals, structured autobiographical reflections, observational assessment, dynamic assessment, project-based assessment and portfolio assessment.

However, some of these methods fail to describe the dynamic of mobilisation, deployment and flexible adjustment of clusters of competences across contexts. This renders them unsuitable for assessing learners' competences as described in the RFCDC. Methods that may be excluded on these grounds are checklists, ranking and sorting tasks, Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, constructed-response questions and situational judgment tests. In principle, computer-based assessments may be appropriate, but the necessary software needs to be available. All of the remaining methods can meet the needs of assessing the activation, application and flexible adjustment of clusters of competences across multiple contexts.

The descriptors provided by the framework can be used to systematise assessment. This is because they provide a coherent reference base through which a learner's behaviour can be assessed against criteria specifying three different levels of proficiency for each of 20 competences.

a. Open-ended diaries, reflective journals and autobiographical reflections

These methods require the learner to record and reflect on their own behaviour, learning and personal development. The record produced is usually a written text, but it could also include non-verbal self-expressions or art works. The reflections may be freely structured by the learner or they may be structured through the use of a pre-specified format that has been designed to ensure that the reflections provide evidence of the specific learning outcomes that are being assessed. In using these methods to assess CDC,

the format could therefore require learners to structure their narratives or reflections in such a way that they record and reflect on the full range of competences that they have deployed across a range of situations or contexts and how they adapted or adjusted the competences that they were using as those situations developed.

However, a difficulty with using diaries, journals and autobiographical reflections is that they are prone to socially desirable responses. In other words, learners might only record content that they think will be viewed favourably by an assessor. For this reason, ensuring satisfactory validity can be a challenge when using diaries, journals or autobiographies for assessment purposes when the assessments are to be carried out by anyone other than the learner.

b. Observational assessment

Observational assessment involves a facilitator or other assessor observing learners' behaviours in a range of different situations in order to ascertain the extent to which the learner is deploying clusters of competences appropriately and is actively adjusting those clusters according to changing situational circumstances. Using such a method requires the assessor to develop a plan of the range of situations to which the learner is to be exposed and to make a record of the learner's behaviour in those situations. This could be a written record using either a structured observation sheet or a more open-ended logbook in which a description of the learner's behaviour is captured. Alternatively, a direct record can be made of the behaviour that is being observed using an audio or video recording so that the assessment can be made after the event.

A potential shortcoming of observational assessment is that it can be affected by the attentiveness, preconceptions and expectations of the assessor, which can lead to selective perception and inappropriate conclusions being drawn about the learner. Here, group size can be an important factor. There can also be inconsistency in the assessments that are made across different situations or contexts. In other words, ensuring satisfactory reliability can be a challenge for observational assessment.

c. Dynamic assessment

Dynamic assessment involves the facilitator or other assessor actively supporting the learner during the assessment process in order to enable the learner to reveal his or her maximum level of proficiency. This is accomplished by exposing the learner to a planned range of situations or contexts in which the facilitator interacts with the learner. The learner has to provide an ongoing commentary about their behaviour, the competences they are using and how they are adjusting their competences as the situation shifts and changes. The assessor probes the learner's commentary using questions and implicit and explicit prompts; the assessor also analyses and interprets the learner's performance and provides feedback as required. The assessor's behaviour may lead the learner to perform at a higher level of proficiency than he or she might have displayed if no support had been provided.

This method has more restricted uses than observational assessment, because the situations that can be used for dynamic assessment will need to be ones that allow interaction with the assessor to occur. Furthermore, if the elicited performance requires assessor support to be sustained, the general validity of the method may be limited. Dynamic assessment is also subject to the same challenges to its reliability as observational assessment.

d. Project-based assessment

For the purposes of this chapter, project-based assessment is defined as an integral part of project-based learning (in contrast to assessment done at the end of participant projects). It can be used to ensure that learners engage in an activity not only in the classroom but also in the wider social, civic or political world. Thus, project-based learning is a very suitable approach for combining learning and assessment within the same process.

To maximise learner performance, projects need to be based on issues or situations that are meaningful and engaging to the learners themselves, to have validity. They also need to be constructed in such a way that learners have to apply values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding across a wide range of situations. Projects can be undertaken either independently or in collaboration with other learners and they can require learners themselves to undertake the planning and design work, decision making, investigative activities and problem-solving as part of the project. A project normally leads to the creation of substantial

products. Learners can also be required to provide documentation on the process of conducting the project and on the learning process, as well as critical self-reflections. In order to use this method, the project needs to be structured in such a way that the products and the accompanying documentation provide information about how clusters of competences have been mobilised and deployed across contexts and about how they have been adjusted over time according to the situations encountered during the project.

However, project-based assessment also has its disadvantages. It is, for example, difficult to know whether the competences that are deployed during the project are deployed by the learner in situations beyond the project itself. This is a problem of validity. In addition, facilitators and other assessors may find it difficult to assess the products and documentation that result from projects and assessments can also be very time-consuming. Assessments may have low reliability if facilitators have not been adequately trained to carry them out.

e. Portfolio assessment

A portfolio is a systematic, cumulative and ongoing collection of materials that is produced by the learner as evidence of his or her learning, progress, performance, efforts and proficiency. The materials are selected for inclusion following a set of guidelines and the learner must explain and reflect on the content of the portfolio. The guidelines specify the competences that are being assessed, as well as the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for which the portfolio needs to provide evidence. They may also specify the range of contexts from which the portfolio content need to be derived. In addition, the guidelines might specify that the portfolio entries should comply with a particular format and that they should contain particular types of evidence. Thus, the guidelines can be constructed to ensure that learners provide evidence of the mobilisation, deployment and flexible adjustment of competences across a range of contexts and situations. The use of an e-portfolio has the additional benefit of enabling learners to include electronic entries such as audio and multimedia files. Portfolios can be tailored to the needs of particular learners, levels of education, education programmes and education contexts.

One disadvantage associated with portfolios is that they are potentially vulnerable to social desirability effects, when learners select or change the content of their portfolios so that they only contain material they think will be viewed favourably by an assessor.

Assessment of portfolios requires specific training for assessors and can therefore be very difficult for facilitators without training, with the result that reliability may be low. Portfolio assessments can also be very time-consuming to conduct.

Teaching and learning examples

Introduction

As part of a long-term joint development phase, teaching materials on EDC/HRE were developed in collaboration with many member states of the Council of Europe. The materials were tested and adapted in a variety of classrooms under a wide range of conditions, class sizes, intercultural compositions and language requirements. The result is a six-volume series that is freely available in many European languages on the living-democracy.com website.

The following teaching examples are taken from this series and show that democracy can only be learned if a democratic and participatory learning atmosphere prevails in schools and classrooms. In 2005, the Council of Europe proclaimed the European Year of Political Education under the motto "Learning and Living Democracy". The year 2005 was thus a special moment for raising awareness in the member states of democracy education and human rights education and to show, through the slogan, that you can only learn something if you live and experience it. Almost all member states had participated in the action year in different ways and feedback from various partners was overwhelmingly positive. The year-long co-operative development process of the website living-democracy.com, providing learning materials for teachers and guidelines for school principals and recommendations for parents, was a direct result of this year.

Selected teaching examples are presented in the categories of "classroom atmosphere", "clarifying values", "learning about human rights", "perceiving others", "taking part in politics" and "dealing with conflicts", to help teachers focus on their area of need.

1. Classroom atmosphere

The exercises of this chapter focus on how to create, or restore, an atmosphere in class that allows students to feel comfortable, safe and ready for learning. This basic requirement supports efficiency of teaching and learning, and aims to mitigate disruptions.

1.1. MATCHING CARDS

Educational objective

This exercise enables students to make contact with others in a safe way.

Resources

A set of cards with matching pairs (see Materials below).

Procedure

1. The teacher deals out the cards randomly and asks the students to find the matching other half.
2. When they have found each other, the students spend 5 to 10 minutes finding out some basic information about each other. Below are some examples, but prompts should be adapted to the group.
    - Their name
    - Their family
    - Where they live
    - Their favourite animal, pop group, football team, colour, etc.
3. The students return to the plenary. Each student has the opportunity to briefly introduce their partner to the rest of the group.
4. The students sit in a circle. In order to generate some feedback, the teacher encourages the students to comment on what was new to them or what struck them in particular.

Extension

This activity can be developed further by asking, at primary school level for example, all those students whose favourite colour is red to get together, so that small discussion groups can be formed.

Variation

The students explore different ways of presenting their information, for instance through mime, by making a poster, "advertising" their partner or by writing a poem.

Materials

A set of cards, with pairs of opposites, one depicting an object and the other giving the name of the object, prompting students to match up.

The cards should show a picture of the object as well as give the name of the object to enable younger students and those with learning difficulties to take full part in the exercise.

rose – thorn	day – night	knife – fork	shoe – sock
light – dark	salt – pepper	pen – paper	table – chair
hot – cold	high – low	strong – weak	up – down
on – off	open – closed	big – small	fast – slow
clean – dirty	rough – smooth	stop – go	start – finish
good – bad	yes – no	friend – enemy	fat – thin
sun – moon	brother – sister	boy – girl	

1.2. IDENTITY COAT OF ARMS

Educational objective

Enhancement of self-esteem; individuals are encouraged to recognise and celebrate positive traits of themselves and each other. Groups find their common goals.

Resources

Outlines of coat of arms.

Procedure

1. Using a group-forming "game" (for example by handing out matching cards to form groups of jugglers, violinists, etc.) the class is divided into three, six or nine groups depending on the class size. There should be no more than five students in each group. Each group is either A, B or C.
2. The students work in groups of four. Each student is given an outline of a coat of arms, which is divided into four sections and has a scroll beneath it. The parts may already be cut out from a second copy so that they can be glued on the main coat when finished.
3. Task.

Individual preparation:

Take notes answering the following questions (these should be age-appropriate):

- How do you perceive yourself?
- What do you need?
- What are you capable of doing?
- What do you regret when you think about your own life?

Draw (or select) a symbol or symbols that represent your notes (colours, coloured paper, magazine pictures, etc.).

Group work:

- explain your symbol(s) to your group members;
- glue all parts on your coat of arms;
- find a common symbol for your group (centre), a motto for your ideas (top flag) and a name for your group (bottom flag).

The completed coats of arms are presented by a group member to the plenary and are displayed alongside everyone else's on the wall.

Materials

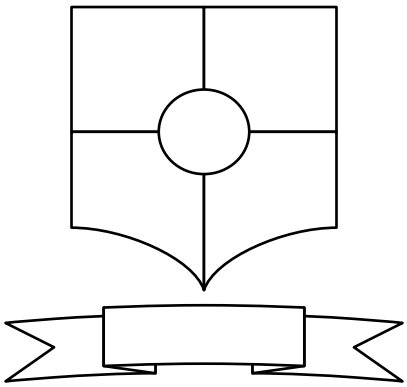

Figure 2. Coat of arms model (Council of Europe 2010).

1.3. A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS

Educational objective

The objective of the exercise is to support group cohesion and enhance self-esteem.

The students appreciate that while individuals in a group are unique and different they also contribute to the overall strength of the group.

Resources

A small portrait photograph of each student no larger than 3 cm by 3 cm (a drawn self-portrait is possible too). Yellow or orange paper cut into round pieces of approximately 6 cm in diameter to create the centre of the flower. Paper in bright colours cut into the shape of petals, coloured ribbon, if at hand, markers or pencils in several colours, two large sheets of flipchart size paper, glue or other adhesive.

Procedure

- Each student has a round piece of paper onto which they stick their photograph.
- Each student takes six petals and on each writes one or two positive words about the following.
    - What a teacher might say about them.
    - What a male member of their family might say about them.
    - What a female member of their family might say about them.
    - What they say about themselves.
    - What a friend might say about them.
    - What somebody else in the room, school or community might say about them.
- The student pastes the petals around the edge of the photograph to create a flower head.
- The teacher or the students arrange each flower head on the display paper.
- The teacher or the students draw the stems and leaves of each flower to create a bouquet. Attaching a bow of ribbon makes the bouquet look very special!

Debrief

Sat in a circle, the students provide comments. This helps the students to understand the symbolic meaning: the bouquet would lose its beauty if some flowers were missing (community); each flower is different and adds something unique (dignity of person); at the same time, all flowers are similar and therefore each one is as important as all the others (equality). The concepts in brackets may be included in classes with older students.

2. Clarifying values

In modern society, we may – and must – choose the values that are important and meaningful for us. In making such choices, we are using our freedom of the person, thought and belief and also our freedom of expression when we confess to our views in public. Therefore, the exercises in this chapter address a key principle of human rights: personal freedom.

2.1. THE RAFT GAME

Educational objective

The students are introduced to the notion of values.

The students learn how to identify prejudices.

Resources

Cards giving information about characters.

Procedure

Nine people are adrift on a raft in the open sea. They do not know their exact position. The raft is too small for all of them. Four of them must be thrown into the sea. Who will they be and why?

Each student receives a card giving some information about the character that she or he is to represent.

This is not only a role play but also a matter of identifying with a character by finding reasons why he or she deserves to survive more than the others. They must always use the first person, "I". The situation and what is at stake are also indicated on the card. There must be complete silence during this first 10-minute phase.

1. The students work in groups of four to six.
   Each group decides who should be saved according to arguments put forward by each student. To increase interaction, each person must not only defend his or her character but should also attack another. A collective decision must, however, be reached within 20 minutes.
2. Each group reports their choices and compares with the other groups.
3. The whole class identifies the values and prejudices that have arisen.

Materials

Some examples of different characters.

A 35-year-old decorator, single, who is active in a political movement.	A Roma person who has just come out of prison.
A Ukrainian pianist, father of two children.	An English man who had a few drinks.
A 15-year-old teenager, winner of an important literature award.	An old famous American baseball player.
An ambassador working for the United Nations.	A young mother who has a broken leg.
A soldier coming back from time off-duty.	

2.2. VALUE SYSTEMS

Educational objective

The students discover that different values are a possible source of conflict.

Resources

Paper and pens, a worksheet containing a list of different values.

Procedure

A list of 20 values, not in any particular order, is given to each student: social success, love, obedience, security, peace, order, human dignity, feeling good about oneself, equality, respect for others, honesty, family, solidarity, responsibility, justice, tolerance, freedom, competition, health, patriotism.

1. The students work in pairs.
2. The teacher asks the students to group the values on the list into three categories. "In the first, put those that seem most important to you; in the second, the least important; and finally those that are unclassifiable." This work should be done slowly and with thought.
3. Feedback takes place in groups of alternating pairs, by discussion.

   No hierarchy is preferable to another. No assessment or mark will be given for the activity. The teacher should emphasise the difference between simple ideal values and effective values – those that take account of a type of behaviour.
4. Ask the students to keep their list with their first choices.

Extension

The students form groups of three and compare their respective systems by answering the following questions.

- Why have I chosen this value as being the most important?
- Is this value of any importance for my practical behaviour?
- What are the obstacles to its realisation?
- What is my main conflict?
- What can I do to resolve it?
- Which are the individualistic attitudes as opposed to genuine collective commitments?

3. Learning about human rights

The exercises in this chapter address human rights – the core topic of human rights education. Meanwhile, other chapters, such as the one on values, emphasise teaching *through* human rights, following a human rights-based pedagogical approach. However, the exercises below focus on teaching *about* human rights.

- Knowing human rights: the students know one or several of the human rights in detail and understand the basic principles.
- Reading and discussing individual human rights slowly and carefully.
- Linking human rights to everyday life; viewing personal experience, wants and needs through a human rights lens.

3.1. THE HUMAN RIGHTS POSTER

Educational objective

The students understand the following aspects of human rights:

- their basic structure (who enjoys a human right, content, means of enforcement);
- the problem of violating human rights.

The students practise their reading skills and develop their creative skills.

Resources

Large sheets of paper, A4 size paper in a variety of colours, felt pens, scissors, glue, old magazines and newspapers, pictures and photographs, text of the European Convention on Human Rights or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Procedure

1. The students form groups of four.

2. The teacher assigns one article representing a human right to each group. Older students can decide which article they wish to deal with and explain their choice (see step 4).

3. Each group prepares a poster on a human right. The poster consists of the following parts:

a. the title of the human right;

b. the text from the European Convention on Human Rights or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

c. a picture symbolising the human right (for example, a car may stand for freedom of movement or a closed front door could stand for privacy);

d. an analysis of the structure of the human right (for advanced classes), referring to:

– the persons who enjoy this right;

– the content (what the right protects or grants);

– the means of implementation or enforcement;

e. a symbol (for example, a wheel for freedom of movement or lips for freedom of expression).

4. The groups present and discuss their posters in class.

Extension

The poster can also contain examples of violations of the human right in question and how the violation could be stopped.

3.2. THE HUMAN RIGHTS TREE

Educational objective

The students develop a conceptual framework to judge human rights.

Resources

Coloured pens, large sheets of paper to put on the wall.

Procedure

1. The teacher divides the students into small groups of three to five people.
2. He/she asks them to draw a tree and call it "our human rights tree". Near the bottom of the trunk of the tree they should write "human rights".
3. The tree should have some main branches with some of the key concepts the students think are, or should be, included in human rights. Around these main branches there can be a number of smaller branches with things they think are connected to the main ones.
4. After a given amount of time, the groups put their drawings on the wall and explain what they have written on it. These posters can be left on the wall for some time. They will serve as reminders and could be built upon in later lessons.

Extension

After having learned about the students' ideas about human rights, students could progress to studying human rights or children's rights in more detail and find out to what extent the rights enshrined in different conventions correspond with what the students have written.

3.3. THE BALLOON RIDE

Educational objective

The students become aware of universal values in human rights.

They understand that some human rights are implicitly contained in others but, within the system of human rights, it makes a difference if specific human rights are protected or not.

The students understand that human rights are inalienable and that the abolition of human rights is a violation against human dignity, democracy and the rule of law.

Resources

Pens and paper, preferably large sheets to be put on the wall; list of the rights to be thrown away/prioritised.

Procedure

1. The teacher manages the game. The students form groups of five to six. Each group receives a poster and marker pens. The students draw a hot air balloon above the ocean or the local scenery. The sand ballast sacks symbolising 10 human rights are stuck on to the poster (see list below).
2. Now the game begins. The students are to imagine themselves travelling with the "human rights balloon". The balloon starts to sink and the passengers have to drop some ballast to avoid a serious accident. The task for the students is to prioritise the human rights represented by the ballast sacks. They will use criteria such as the following. Is one right implicitly contained in another? Is one right of particular importance for democracy or our personal needs?
3. However, the balloon keeps sinking and more ballast has to be thrown out at regular intervals. The students need to drop more ballast sacks. After four or five sacks have been thrown overboard the balloon reaches the ground safely.

4. Reflection in the plenary round. Each group presents their list to the whole class/group and explains their priorities. Then, the lists can be compared. Are there many differences? There should also be a debriefing about the work in the groups. Was it difficult to agree? Was it difficult to give priority to some human rights rather than to others? Hopefully it can be agreed that all the human rights listed are important, but that people might differ in their priorities if they had to choose.

In a functioning constitution, the abolition of any of these rights would cause serious damage to democracy. Human rights are interdependent and inalienable. The balloon ride was therefore a simulation that must be prevented.

It is when the students come to question the rules of the game on these grounds that the learning objective has been fully achieved.

The ballast in the balloon consists of the following rights.

- Free elections
- Freedom of property
- Equality of men and women
- A clean and healthy environment
- Access to healthy food and clean water
- The right to education
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Clothing and housing for all citizens
- Private life without interference
- Freedom of movement.

4. Perceiving others

The exercises in this chapter help students to become aware of their perceptions and prejudices towards others, to reflect on them critically and, if necessary, to correct them. Our mutual perceptions, our prejudices and the way we interact form the basis on which democracy and human rights must be anchored.

4.1. ALL DIFFERENT, ALL EQUAL

Educational objective

The students learn to know and accept each other in a group and discover what they were not aware of.

Resources

A piece of chalk or a string to make a line on the ground.

Procedure

1. The teacher calls out a series of characteristics one by one. As soon as it is mentioned, those who recognise that they have the characteristic cross the line.

   Examples: all those who:

   - are wearing jeans;
   - have blue eyes;
   - are old;
   - have visited other countries in Europe;
   - regularly read a newspaper;
   - have been subjected to discrimination;
   - have homosexual friends;
   - have prejudices.

   The students can be asked to suggest characteristics, but the teacher must be aware of what might be sensitive.

2. The students discuss the following issues.
   - Did anyone find themselves in a group with someone with whom they thought they had nothing in common?
   - How does it feel to be part of a large group?
   - How does it feel to be alone?

Variation

As soon as a characteristic is mentioned, students move in the class to form groups composed of people with the same characteristics and discuss what they have in common.

4.2. DIFFERENCE

Educational objective

The students experience difference and understand that difference is socially constructed.

Differences that matter between people are rooted in society – for example by values, social status or social change. The exercise is particularly suited for classes with students from cultural minorities.

Resources

A large sheet of paper.

Procedure

1. The teacher lists as many types of differences between people as possible on a large sheet of paper.
2. The class is divided into four groups. Each team lists a particular type of difference:
    - physical differences;
    - psychological differences;
    - social differences;
    - cultural differences.
3. Assessment: students think about the differences between people:
    - "I realise that I know …;
    - … But I've learned …;
    - My greatest surprise was …".

Extension

The teacher explains why human beings are both similar and different.

Students imagine, in writing, two situations in which it is difficult to experience difference. This can then be discussed with the whole class.

4.3. TRUE OR FALSE

Educational objective

The students become aware of the stereotypes in their minds and reflect on them critically. They understand that simplifications and stereotypes help us cope with the complexity of the world in which we live. The students develop their abilities to make judgments and decisions. In doing so, they are encouraged to develop a critical attitude.

Resources

The classroom must be cleared of desks and chairs. A "true" and a "false" space are defined in opposite corners of the class.

Procedure

1. The students stand in the middle of the room. The teacher reads a series of factual and stereotypical statements about women, men, various nationalities, etc. Reacting to each statement, the students go to one corner or the other according to what they believe is true or false. The students with no opinion stay in the middle.
2. The teacher invites the students to explain their choices. The teacher provides the correct answer. It is essential that this step is never omitted.
3. The students respond to the teacher's input. The teacher encourages them to explain how they have perceived others, particularly if these perceptions have been proved incorrect.

Extension

The students analyse the manner in which the media deal with issues related to minorities, gender, violence, etc. They identify examples of stereotypes, prejudice or superficiality found in the media. The students try to correct information that they believe is wrong or incomplete.

4.4. WE ARE ALL EQUAL, BUT SOME ARE MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS

Educational objective

The students identify and analyse the reasons and motives behind discriminating against others.

This exercise focuses on how socio-economic factors affect opportunity.

Resources

Large thick sheets of paper and marker pens.

Procedure

1. The teacher divides the students up into groups no larger than six. The groups must be made up of an even number of students. Each group receives a sheet of paper and a marker.
2. The teacher asks half of the groups to draw a caricature of a social winner, the other half to draw a caricature of a loser.
3. The teacher asks the groups to list the characteristics of their model: socio-economic level, profession, sex, ethnic group, leisure activities, choice of clothing, basic outlook, way of life, type of housing, consumer habits.
4. The teacher asks the groups to exchange their drawings and interpret them.
5. The drawings are displayed on the wall. Each group is asked to interpret the drawing they have received to the whole class.
6. The "artists" comment on their intentions. By communicating the ideas behind the drawings and the effect of the drawings on the viewer, the students may be expected to touch on the following questions.
    - What are the main characteristics of success?
    - What are the main characteristics of failure?
    - What are the factors that make the difference between "winners" and "losers"?
    - Are the people represented from certain groups?
    - Do all people have the same chances of success, regardless of their social background?

Extension

What are the reasons for discrimination against and exclusion of people who are different because of their culture, origin, sexual behaviour, language, etc.?

What are the reasons for inequality among humans? Is equality possible and desirable?

5. Taking part in politics

The exercises in this chapter focus on the conditions and forms of political participation. This helps students to recognise their opportunities for participation in their community and to learn that in democratic schools as well as in a democratic society arguments and controversies, even disputes and conflicts, arise naturally and are necessary for democracy. Controversies and conflicts are not harmful if they are embedded in and supported by a culture of argumentation, conflict resolution and compromise.

5.1. THE WALL OF SILENCE

Educational objective

The students become aware of their concepts of democracy.

Resources

Pieces of flipchart paper fixed to the wall and markers (for groups of five).

Procedure

1. The students form groups of five. Each group is seated in a semi-circle facing a flipchart fixed to the wall. They are asked to write, in silence and within a time limit, a sentence, completing the prompt: "Democracy is …".
2. The students respond to sentences or words already written down.
3. After the time limit for writing on the poster has been reached, each student chooses and reads out a sentence written by a peer. The students share their results in class.
4. Thoughts are shared:
    - "I have learned …"
    - "I have discovered …"
    - "I would like to discuss …".

Variation

Instead of using posters on the wall, the students sit round a table writing on a large sheet of paper.

General information

"The wall of silence" is a brainstorming method that may be used at the beginning of a lesson sequence on key concepts such as democracy, dictatorship, justice, peace, education, equality, liberty, etc.

The method supports students who are less comfortable to speak or wish to take time to think carefully before saying something. Often these students are at a disadvantage in oral and class settings.

5.2. WE AND THE WORLD

Educational objective

The students examine how other countries and remote events affect their community. The students understand interdependent world structures better. The unequal distribution of power and the unequal process of development call for worldwide understanding and co-operation in the spirit of human rights.

Resources

Current local newspapers, a map of the world, tape and coloured markers, thread, needles.

Procedure

1. The students form groups of four. They cut out articles that show that another part of the world has an effect on their local community and that their country and other countries mutually affect one another.
2. The issues:
    - economic problems;
    - political problems;
    - problems of migration;
    - pollution;
    - cultural exchange;
    - tourism;
    - pandemics;
    - military action, etc.
3. The students classify articles according to keywords that they can choose to indicate certain types of influence and attribute colours to the keywords.
4. The students choose the most significant articles and tape them onto the map of the world on the wall. They trace lines linking each article with thread and needles to their countries.
5. Plenary session.
    - What part of the world have you established most links with?
    - What kinds of links are most common? Why?
    - Is there a part of the world with which you find no links? Why?

Extension

The students find information about the political and/or economic systems in force in the countries with which there are links.

They can see whether other links existed in the past.

In foreign language teaching, materials from foreign newspapers or the internet can be used.

This exercise may serve as an introduction to the problem of unequal development and power distribution in the world.

5.3. SHOULD WE TAKE PART IN POLITICS?

Educational objective

The students form their opinions as to whether it is important to participate in government. Participation can take place in many ways. We define participation as taking part in the public life of your community and society. Some people think that it is important to participate, while others do not. The students should understand that political decisions affect them, regardless of whether they participate in decision making or not.

Resources

Role-play descriptions.

Procedure

1. Four students role-play the conversation between some newly arrived citizens in a nation that is in the process of being formed.
2. The students discuss, guided by the teacher if necessary, questions raised by the role play such as the following.
    - What are the four main views expressed by the citizens about participation? Do you agree? Why or why not?
    - What will the four citizens lose by not participating? What benefits do you think individuals will gain from participating?
    - What benefits do you think the new country would gain from individuals participating?
    - What are the possible risks or losses involved if one chooses to participate?
    - Weighing up the benefits and risks, do you think it is worthwhile participating?
3. Through discussion or lecture, the students could arrive at the following conclusion: government affects people's lives in lots of ways. By participating in government, people can have a voice in decisions made by the government. In every society someone is going to make the decisions. If people choose not to participate, they will not have a say in those decisions. These decisions can include such things as:
    - how much people will have to pay in taxes;
    - whether the nation might get involved in a war;
    - who is going to own and control the country's natural resources.

Depending on how the government is structured, decisions can be made at different levels, including national, regional and local. Some decisions, such as those about military power, are often made nationally, while others, such as those concerning transport and roads, are often made regionally. Others still, such as those about rubbish collection, are frequently made locally.

Materials

Role play: four citizens arrive in a newly formed country.

Assume you have just arrived in a newly formed country. You are eager to get started, to get to work building a new society. You have heard that there are all kinds of possibilities to create good government. Then you overhear the following conversation among a group of your fellow new arrivals.

Citizen 1: *"Where I came from, no one cared much about politics and government. We were always too busy with our daily lives. So here I probably won't want to bother about politics either."*

Citizen 2: *"That's the way it is in our country … and I never really understood what was going on among the leaders. They made it seem so complicated and made it very easy for us not to bother trying to understand."*

Citizen 3: *"Well, it was different in our country. We tried but people who had power wouldn't let us get involved and we were threatened if we did try. So, finally, we gave up trying to participate."*

Citizen 4: *"In my country we had elections and our leaders promised us good government. But it never turned out that way. The leaders used government to get rich. All leaders are corrupt."*

6. Dealing with conflict

Conflict resolution is to some extent a skill that can be learned. This is one of the focuses of the exercises in this chapter. They provide learners with tools, structured procedural schemes for conflict resolution and mediation. Second, fairness in conflict resolution is important and this relates to the values and culture of conflict behaviour. Ideally, conflict should be overcome by a win-win situation. If this is not possible, care must be taken to ensure that no one is left as a loser, but that a compromise is found that maintains a balance in the distribution of advantages and disadvantages.

6.1. WIN-WIN

Educational objective

The students understand that a conflict can be resolved in different ways. The parties involved may be in the position of winners or losers or may have agreed to a compromise. Ultimately, no party should feel that they are a loser, as this risks causing a new outbreak of conflict.

Resources

Blackboard or flipchart.

Procedure

1. The teacher explains to the students that there can be three different types of solution to a conflict:
   - win-win
   - win-lose
   - lose-lose.

2. The teacher illustrates these principles of conflict resolution on the blackboard or a flipchart:
   - win-win: solutions that allow both parties to benefit;
   - win-lose: solutions in which only one party benefits at the expense of the other;
   - lose-lose: solutions in which neither party benefits.

3. The teacher gives an example of the different approaches to conflict resolution, involving a boy and a girl quarrelling over a ball. An adult intervenes and makes them play together with the ball or gives them equal time to use it. They both benefit. If the adult gives the ball just to one of them, of course only one benefits. If the adult takes the ball away since the children cannot agree, neither benefits.

   In pairs or in groups the students explore their personal experience to find further examples of conflict. They may discuss their experience of conflict at home and at school and may move on to the larger conflicts involving groups of people and whole states.

   The students analyse examples of conflict resolution, identifying them using the model presented above, asking which party will benefit from the solution. Who can find solutions that allow all/both parties to benefit?

4. Plenary session: students share the results of their analysis.

6.2. A STRUCTURED APPROACH TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Educational objective

The students learn a technique of conflict resolution. They understand that resolving conflicts depends to a certain degree on skills that can be learned.

Resources

A set of student handouts: "Resolution of conflicts in six stages". Newspapers and magazines.

Procedure

1. The teacher describes a situation of conflict to which there is no straightforward solution (example: one student makes fun of another student who comes from a foreign country and speaks with a strong accent). The situation may be presented by a role play. The students discuss how to resolve the conflict. In doing so, they may anticipate parts of the model they will use in this lesson or ask questions that the model may provide an answer for.
2. The worksheet "Resolution of conflicts in six stages" is distributed to half the students, who study it in silence. The other half of the class selects a report on a conflict from a newspaper or magazine. They may also draw on personal experience or first-hand knowledge.
3. The students form groups of four consisting of two students who have read the resolution of problems and two who have identified possible conflicts.
4. The students choose one conflict and test the ideas of conflict resolution. Two are adversaries, the other two act as mediators, using the sheet to find a solution.
5. Follow-up plenary session.
    - Which conflicts did you try to solve?
    - How did you try to solve them?
    - (How) did the model of conflict resolution help you?

Materials

Student handout: "Resolution of conflicts in six stages".

1. Identify needs. *"What do you need (what exactly do you want?)"*	Each person involved in the conflict should answer this question without accusing or blaming the other.
2. Define the problem. *"What do you believe to be the problem in this case?"*	The whole class can help to find an answer that meets the needs of those concerned. The adversaries must be able to accept the definition.
3. Seek a number of solutions. *"Who can think of a possible way of solving the problem?"*	All members of the class can contribute answers. These should be written down, without comment, judgment or assessment. The aim at this stage is to produce as many solutions as possible.
4. Evaluate solutions. *"Would you be pleased with this solution?"*	Each party in the conflict reviews the alternatives, explaining which are, or are not, acceptable.
5. Decide which solution is best. *"Do you both accept this solution? Has the problem been solved?"*	It must be clear that both parties accept the solution. Their efforts to find a solution should be appreciated.
6. See how the solution is applied. *"Let us talk once more about this situation and make sure that the problem really has been solved."*	A plan should be devised to evaluate the solution. Depending on the nature of the conflict and the age of the adversaries, an assessment may be carried out minutes, hours or a day later.

6.3. THE STATUES

Educational objective

The students are able to identify situations of oppression, to develop creativity in non-violent conflict resolution, using body language as a means of expression.

Resources

None.

Procedure

1. The students carry out the following preliminary exercises in pairs.
    - One student strikes a pose; the other has to imitate. They reverse roles.
    - One student places his hand a few centimetres from his/her partner's hand. When he/she moves his/her hand the other has to twist into whatever (uncomfortable) position is necessary to keep the same distance.

These exercises train students to take notice of each other.

2. In the plenary, the students present and discuss situations of oppression.
    - Two or more students agree on an idea and then form a group of statues to represent a situation of oppression (example: a kneeling child polishing the shoes of a seated rich man).
    - If a member of the audience thinks of a way of resolving the situation and making it more equal, he/she rearranges the actors according to his/her new model.

    Ideally the exercise should be conducted in silence, to encourage the students to mime and develop expressiveness.
3. More actors may participate in the scene progressively.
4. The teacher reserves the last 10 to 15 minutes of the lesson for a debrief. The students give feedback and may come forward with questions that can lead to further study.

6.4. MINORITIES

Educational objective

The students understand that the sense of exclusion can be the result not only of the way other members of society see you but also of the way members of your own group see you.

Resources

A set of positive cards and a set of negative cards for each group, two flipchart sheets for each group, one bearing the word "FEELINGS" and the other the word "ACTIONS", marker pens.

Procedure

At the beginning of the game, it is essential that the students have no idea of what they represent, otherwise they might immediately resort to preconceived ideas which would distort the course of the game.

1. The students form groups of four to six (preferably not more).
2. Each group receives a set of positive cards, a marker pen and two sheets of flipchart paper. The teacher asks them to appoint a writer to record the group's comments and reactions on the flipcharts.
3. The teacher tells the students that they will not represent themselves during the exercise but will act as members of a minority group. For the moment, they should enquire who they are, but also consider the messages on the cards as describing them and their situation.

4. In turn, the students read one of the cards out to the other members of the group. When they have read all six cards, they write their answers to the question, "How do you feel as a member of this group?" on the "FEELINGS" sheet.
5. The teacher distributes the six negative cards to each group and they repeat step 4.
6. The teacher asks the students to answer the following question, "What would you do if you were in a similar situation?" The answers are to be written on the "ACTIONS" sheet.
7. Plenary session.
    - Each group presents their feelings as set out on the sheet headed "FEELINGS" to the rest of the class.
    - When all the groups have completed this part, the teacher asks them to present their suggestions on their "ACTIONS" sheet. The class should identify constructive actions and acts of violence and differences between and within groups.
8. The teacher asks the students how they worked in the group and whether they encountered any problems while doing the exercise (co-operation, leadership, etc.).
9. Last, the teacher tells the students that the group that they represented is the group of Tinkers, otherwise known as Roma. Depending on the context, previous knowledge and students' backgrounds, further study of the Roma people might be required.

Materials

A set of positive and negative cards.

Our houses are unlike those of other people. They are special and we are very fond of them. We like to keep our traditions.	Television programmes and the press do not teil the truth about us. They say that we are a problem. They do not let us tell our part of the story.
We have many skills. We do all kinds of manual and craft work. Our work is a major contribution to the country we live in.	Some people treat us badly and give us bad names. Sometimes we are attacked without reason. Thousands of our people were murdered abroad, not very long ago.
In the past, our people performed many brave acts. We like to remember our history.	We never have running water, our refuse is rarely collected.
We are very independent. We prefer to look after ourselves. We do not owe anything to anybody.	Some doctors do not want to treat us when we are sick. It is difficult for us to receive social security benefits.
We like getting together and telling stories and singing songs. We think this is very important to enjoy life.	People do not want us in their neighbourhood. Some people do not want to give us a job because of what we are.
We try to live near our family and friends. We look after the old people in our community very well. We adore our children.	We have problems with the police and the municipal authorities because of the place we happen to be.

Practical guide for teacher trainers: fostering a democratic school culture

Introduction: how materials were collected

As part of a larger project in North Macedonia, training modules for teachers and school teams were developed. These modules might be particularly useful to schools (or pre- or in-service training institutions) that prepare teachers specifically for working with democracy and democratic skills, as the modules' specific goal is to support school teams to improve the inclusivity and democratic understanding of the school culture in line with the RFCDC.

The programme recommends that schools designate four staff members to be part of the school's core training team and participate in in-depth professional development training. The school teams should consist of a principal, two teachers and a school professional (psychologist, pedagogue, social pedagogue).

The training programme consists of several interrelated parts, referring to the content of the course and the methodology applied to ensure the improvement of the inclusivity and democracy level of the school culture.

The programme encompasses four main topics.

- School culture as a tool for (de)activating the acceptance of all students and their families.
- The Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) as a tool for improving the inclusiveness and the degree of democracy of the school culture and beyond.
- Handling controversial issues in a democratic school.
- Using a whole-school approach for planning school-level change.

Throughout the training programme, various active learning methods are used to take into account the experiences of teachers as adult learners and to promote exchange and shared understanding among school teams and all participants.

School teams receive training through a combination of workshops, lectures and mentoring by experts. The training is conducted in a combination of on-site and online formats.

Each on-site module is followed by tasks for the school team to improve the school environment with the extended school team. The extended school team, which is involved in the planning process for developing an inclusive and democratic school culture, should include about 10 people (core team + 2 students + 1 parent + 2 additional teachers + 1 community member).

The contextualisation of the tasks by each school should be discussed in online meetings. In addition, the school teams will be supervised by a mentor who will monitor their progress and support them with their school tasks.

Three workshop examples

WORKSHOP 1 – Competences for democratic culture

Outcomes

Participants will:

- discuss the competences that need to be developed in order to ensure democracy in school and society;
- get to know the content of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture.

Materials

- Sheets of paper
- Pencils
- Flipchart
- Worksheet 4 – the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture.

Duration: 60 minutes

ACTIVITY 1 (20 MINUTES):

Each of the heterogeneous groups selects a list of critical competences (knowledge, skills or attitudes) that must be developed by students in school to ensure a democratic culture in a diverse society within the school and in society.

MINI LECTURE (20 MINUTES):

The content and the structure of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture.

The term "competence" is defined as the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and/or understanding in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities that are presented by a given type of context.

Democratic situations are one such type of context. Thus, "democratic competence" is the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant psychological resources (namely values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and/or understanding) in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by democratic situations. Likewise, "intercultural competence" is the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant psychological resources in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities presented by intercultural situations. In the case of citizens who live within culturally diverse democratic societies, intercultural competence is construed by the RFCDC as an integral component of democratic competence.

The model consists of 20 competences in total. These competences are subdivided into four: values; attitudes; skills; and knowledge and critical understanding. The 20 competences are summarised diagrammatically, forming the image of a butterfly.

Values are general beliefs that individuals hold about the desirable goals that should be striven for in life.

An attitude is the overall mental orientation that an individual adopts towards someone or something (for example a person, a group, an institution, an issue, an event, a symbol). Attitudes usually consist of four components: a belief or opinion about the object of the attitude; an emotion or feeling towards the object; an evaluation (either positive or negative) of the object; and a tendency to behave in a particular way towards that object.

A skill is a capacity for carrying out complex, well-organised patterns of either thinking or behaviour in an adaptive manner in order to achieve a particular end or goal.

Knowledge is the body of information that is possessed by a person while understanding is the comprehension and appreciation of meanings. The term "critical understanding" is used to emphasise the need for comprehension and appreciation of meanings in the context of democratic processes and intercultural dialogue to involve active reflection on and critical evaluation of that which is being understood and interpreted (as opposed to automatic, habitual and unreflective interpretation).

ACTIVITY 2: COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE (20 MINUTES):

- **In heterogeneous groups**: participants in groups compare a list of competences that they created with the competences highlighted in the RFCDC (what is the same, what they missed, what they added and what belong to other "groups"). Additionally, they can make a list of probing questions.
- **In the whole group**: groups share what they found out. The facilitator ensures the understanding of the four RFCDC concepts (for example, attitudes vs knowledge).

WORKSHOP 2 – Developing CDC: the whole-school approach

Outcomes

Participants will:

- rethink competences for democratic culture within each school context.

Materials

- List of competences
- List of the descriptors.

Duration: 90 minutes

ACTIVITY 1 (20 MINUTES):

- **In heterogeneous groups**. One person starts a story – either a word, phrase or sentence (this can be negotiated with the group or predetermined by the facilitator) and texts this to the next group member who adds a word, phrase or sentence. When it gets to the last person, s/he reads the story aloud.
- **In whole groups**. Read several stories.

ACTIVITY 2 (50 MINUTES):

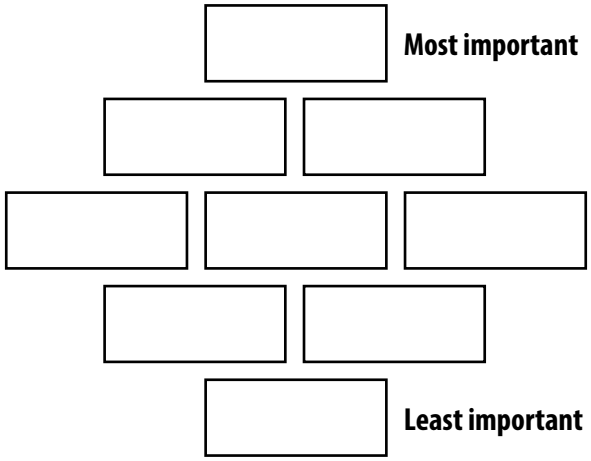

Figure 3. Competence organiser.

- **School teams**. School teams should think about what competences are the most urgent to be tackled in their school context as well as the least important to be improved in the context of their school. According to their ranking, they must "arrange" all nine competences onto a diamond shape, with the most important at the top of the diamond and the least important at the bottom.
- **In the whole group**. School teams share how they perceive (and reason) the urgency of working on the development of different democratic competences by RFCDC in their school context.

MINI LECTURE – DESCRIPTORS (20 MINUTES):

Democratic culture relies on citizens having the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding that are described by the competence model. Two elements are essential to ensuring the development of CDC in learners.

1. The possibility to assess learners' competence levels in view of identifying their learning needs and areas for further development.
2. References for educators that can help them design, implement and evaluate educational interventions in formal and non-formal settings.

Descriptors are statements referring to the specific observable behaviour of a person with a certain level of competence. These descriptors were progressively reduced in number and refined in their wording using a series of feedback and rating tasks, validation tasks and scaling tasks, in which 3 094 educational practitioners from across Europe participated.

There are two sets of descriptors that resulted from the piloting of the descriptors.

- A set of 135 key descriptors, consisting of a limited number of descriptors for each competence that indicate clearly one of the three levels of proficiency: basic, intermediate and advanced.
- A more developed list of 447 descriptors, including, besides the key descriptors, additional validated descriptors, some of them connected with a specific level of proficiency and others located in between basic and intermediate, or intermediate and advanced.

The three levels of proficiency (basic, intermediate and advanced) into which the descriptors of competence have been categorised should not be strictly associated with educational levels. There are certainly elements, regarding in particular knowledge and critical understanding, that are more advanced and more likely to be reached in higher levels of education. However, many values, attitudes and skills can be acquired from an early age, even if they are deepened only at a later stage.

WORKSHOP 3 – Values that we promote

Outcomes

Participants will:

- reflect on the meaning of their professional life;
- discuss and come to an agreement on school values.

Materials

- A PowerPoint presentation.

Duration: 120 minutes

ACTIVITY 1: 60:40 (20 MINUTES)

In pairs. This exercise trains and develops the ability to divide our attention between ourselves and another person, by drawing attention inwards, to our body. At the same time, we try to read the other person's needs. We frequently do this at the expense of our own needs.

Sometimes we ignore or do not recognise our own needs. Our awareness is placed outside of ourselves rather than attuned to the inside. This exercise trains us to keep some awareness focused on ourselves, when we find ourselves in a situation that has the potential to create uncertainty and prompts us to adapt.

Round 1

Person A moves their hand in different directions and in varying patterns. Person B follows, keeping their head at the same distance to A's hand, with their attention on the hand. A is responsible for leading B safely around without bumping into other people, or other obstacles in the room.

Switch roles and repeat.

A short reflection:

- What did you notice? Where was your attention? What did you notice in your body, breath, feelings and thoughts?

Round 2

Start the second round by standing. You can put your hands on your stomach to feel how your breath is moving your body.

Focus your attention on your breathing.

Now repeat round 1, but this time be aware of your breathing while doing the exercise. Divide your attention between awareness of your breathing and of the hand. The breath serves as an anchor that keeps some of your attention within you. The attention of the person who leads is divided into three parts: themselves, the other person and the room.

Reflection:

- Did you feel any difference when your focus was on your breathing?
- When do you experience the concept 60:40 in your work? When do you miss it?

ACTIVITY 2: WHAT MAKES YOUR WORK MEANINGFUL? (30 MINUTES)

Heterogeneous pairs. Pairs decide who is A and who is B. They can place themselves in a position where their shoulders are aligned and you are looking in opposite directions, but they can still look at each other if needed.

Round 1 (5 minutes)**: A reflects on the following questions.**

- What makes your work meaningful?
- What motivates you to get up in the morning and go to work?
- What preoccupies you so much at work that is important to you that you cannot fall asleep?
- When do you have the most energy at work?

There are no rules for any specific way of answering the question. Be aware of only saying what feels right for you to share, you are not forced to say anything. If you come to a point where you do not have any more words to say, you can simply sit in silence. Maybe something else will arise after a while, maybe not.

B just listens. Not commenting, not interrupting, not helping the other person with questions if A is silent. Just listening. B can show interest and make it clear that they are listening, but not with words.

Round 2 (3 minutes)

B repeats what A just said, as closely to what was actually said as possible. "The task for B is to repeat in as neutral a way as possible and without interpretations. At the same time trusting that what they remembered is what is important. It doesn't matter if something is missed out or that something may be wrongly understood. The exercise is to repeat what was heard, which might not be the exact same thing that was said. A listens without commenting, even if B has misunderstood something."

Round 3 (3 minutes)

"Again, A talks and reflects on the question: When do I find my job satisfying and meaningful? Maybe something needs to be corrected, maybe some new insights arose while listening and some elaboration is needed."

Reflection in the whole group (10 minutes)

- What did you notice when you were talking without being interrupted?
- How did it feel just to listen?
- What did you notice when your partner repeated what you just said?
- How did you experience gaps of silence, if any appeared?

Mini lecture: values (5 minutes)

Values are general beliefs that individuals hold about the desirable goals that should be striven for in life. Values have a normative prescriptive quality about what should be done or thought. Values offer standards or criteria for: making evaluations; justifying opinions, attitudes and conduct; choosing behaviour and deciding between alternatives; attempting to influence others; and presenting oneself to others. Values are linked to emotions that, when they are activated, are infused with feeling. They also provide structures around which more specific attitudes are organised. They influence attitudes; assessing people's values can help predict their attitudes and their behaviour. People organise their values into hierarchies in terms of their relative importance, which might change across time.

There are codes or general principles guiding action that are not the actions themselves nor specific checklists of what to do and when to do it. Values underlie the sanctions for some behavioural choices and the rewards for others. A value system presents what is expected and hoped for, what is required and what is forbidden.

ACTIVITY 3: SCHOOL VALUES (50 MINUTES)

Individually:

Each participant draws a shape of their own hand on paper. In each finger, they write down one value they recognise from the dialogue in pairs (previous activity) that is important to them in their work.

School team groups:

School team members share the values they wrote down and think about what values they share and what they do not share in three aspects.

- Meaning: What does this value mean to you? How do you understand it and define it?
- Behaviour: What situations and behaviours are a manifestation of a chosen value? What exactly do we expect from colleagues/children/parents in this regard?
- Consequences: What are the consequences of a particular behaviour? How do we react to desirable and undesirable behaviours related to a given value?

School groups compare the list of their personal/school values with the sets of values from the RFCDC with the task of identifying:

- values they recognise;
- values they did not mention in their previous task.

Each group discusses which values from the RFCDC are present in their school and which are not.

At the end, the school teams share their impressions in a plenary session.

Example of a training day: democratic and inclusive classroom development

As a second example, we show here what an entire workshop day for training teaching teams might look like. This example shows how a successful training day may be structured and planned. There are three sessions.

1. Development of different types of educational strategies promoting a democratic and inclusive classroom.
2. Strategies, methods and activities enhancing social interaction and inclusion at classroom level.
3. Enhancing skills for conflict resolution.

SESSION 1 – Development of different types of educational strategies promoting a democratic and inclusive classroom

Learning outcomes

The participants will:

- recall the competences framework (the "butterfly" model of competences for democratic culture);
- provide an overview of basic strategies, methods and types of activities for promoting a democratic and inclusive classroom development;
- improve practical skills for diversity management at classroom level.

Agenda

PART 1 – EXAMPLE OF AN INTERACTIVE EXERCISE (25 MINUTES)

Step 1 – "Getting to know each other – Speed dating" (rotation circle) (15 minutes)

Participants form an inner circle and an outer circle with two people facing each other. After each statement both share their views, while respecting the right of the other partners to express their views. Then, the outer circle moves on to the next partner and the facilitator gives the next statement. The activity ends when all participants face their first partner again.

Statements and questions:

1. Greet your partner in as many languages as possible.
2. What are your hobbies? (Music, a song you like/dances, etc.)
3. What is the meaning of your name?
4. What do you do in your free time?
5. Let us talk about your strengths: something you are good at …
6. Do you have any special talents?
7. If you were an animal, a plant, a tree or a building, what would you be?
8. Three things you would take to an isolated island …
9. What do you like about your work? Being a teacher/a student /a …?
10. What has been your biggest success?
11. What do you like about the city you live in?
12. Is it a diverse place? And in what sense?
13. Think about your city, village, town: do you face any challenges that are difficult to solve?
14. Try to describe the links between your school and the community. How is your school integrated into the social environment?
15. Do you co-operate with other schools? Do you co-operate with any local initiatives or NGOs?

16. Three commonalities – three things you have in common with the person you are talking to.
17. Three expectations for the seminar that you have in common with …
18. Please complete the sentence: this training will be a good experience for me if …

Step 2 – Debriefing (10 minutes)

Focused on:

- process and interaction;
- practical use in the classroom;
- suggestions for various situations at school (beginning of school year; recalling knowledge; learning about differences and similarities; integrating new children).

Suggestion: the facilitator may change statements according to workshop objectives.

PART 2 – BRIEF THEORETICAL INPUT: THREE MAIN EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING DEMOCRATIC COMPETENCES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION (35 MINUTES)

Step 1 – Presentation of the main approaches (20 minutes)

- Strategies fostering contact, interaction and meaningful co-operation.
- Strategies fostering critical understanding and thinking.
- Strategies fostering skills for conflict resolution.

Input based on a PowerPoint presentation, summary of educational strategies for social inclusion.

Step 2 – Questions and discussion (10 minutes)

Step 3 – Application of educational strategies

Brief explanation by a trainer that one group will continue in Part 3 with practical work on these three key strategies and start with strategies fostering contact, interaction and co-operation (5 minutes).

PART 3 – PRACTICAL WORK ON STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING CONTACT, INTERACTION AND MEANINGFUL CO-OPERATION (30 MINUTES)

Step 1 – Produce a small activity that will include three categories (three approaches) for different age groups (10 minutes)

The RFCDC needs to be included – plan the development of some competences (at least two).

Group work: preferably teachers from the same subject areas or the same schools.

Step 2 – Presentations and agreement on testing. Specific activity is chosen for testing in the following session (20 minutes)

Resources needed

Pointer, flipchart, paper, a PowerPoint presentation, a summary of educational strategies for social inclusion and the RFCDC "Butterfly" model.

SESSION 2 – Strategies, methods and activities enhancing social interaction and inclusion at classroom level

Learning outcomes

The participants will:

- improve practical skills for social inclusion at classroom level;
- practise experiential learning;
- develop skills for setting up groups in classrooms;
- develop skills of encouraging students to communicate with each other;
- prepare a package of methods and activities for the classroom and schools;
- draw attention to the inclusion of minority children and children with special needs.

Agenda

PART 1 – TESTING OF EXAMPLES FOR ENHANCING CONTACT AND INTERACTION AND DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS IN SESSION 1 (20 MINUTES)

PART 2 – METHODS FOR ENHANCING GROUP BUILDING AND CO-OPERATION (30 MINUTES)

Step 1 – Simulation game "Let's form groups" (15 minutes)

Participants form a class and sit in a circle.

Activity description

This is a game about forming and reforming groups as quickly as possible. The trainer will direct the group to form smaller groups, based upon some criterion announced to the group, on a signal. The goal is to get as many people to introduce themselves to as many other people as possible. It is not designed to see how fast or successfully the group can accomplish the trainer's directive. The trainer needs to give the group enough time to get into teams and then introduce themselves to one another if the team activity calls for it. It is important to keep the pace of the activity rather fast.

Examples

1. Get into a group of three and introduce yourself.
2. Get into a different group of five people and introduce yourself.
3. Get into a group of two people who have shirts that are the "same" colours and introduce yourself.
4. Get into a group of three people who have the "same" or similar interests and introduce yourself.
5. Get into a group of people whose names have the same vowel come first in their first name and share your first names.
6. Get into a group of four people who were born in the same season (autumn, winter, spring, summer).
7. In your season group, arrange yourselves by birth date (month and day).
8. Think of the last digit of your telephone number and assemble with every person who has the same last digit.
9. Find another person who lives about the same distance from school as you.
10. Find someone who has family in another country.
11. Find at least three people who love pizza.
12. Find two people who love the same music.

Step 2 – Reflection round with questions (10 minutes)

General question: Which competences of the RFCDC model have been used?

Content (cognitive learning):

- Why is it important to get into your groups quickly?
- Why is it important to get to know other students in the class?

Social skills (social learning):

- How did this activity help our class become better acquainted?
- What are some of the benefits of working with others rather than alone?

Personal learning:

- What were you feeling when you were speaking or listening?
- What did you enjoy most about this activity?

Step 3 – The trainer summarises the positive effects of group-building activities for learning and teaching (5 minutes)

PART 3 – STRATEGIES AND METHODS FOR ENHANCING CO-OPERATION IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN SCHOOLS (25 MINUTES)

Step 1 – Structured discussion of the benefits and challenges (10 minutes)

- In my personal teaching practice I prefer …
- How do I ensure the genuine co-operation of students?
- What techniques do we apply for every student to give his/her contribution?
- How does a well-organised co-operative learning activity contribute to the development of CDC?

Step 2 – Preparing a package of strategies for social inclusion (15 minutes)

The participants are asked to take into account various approaches:

- the composition of groups: three examples (5 minutes);
- opportunities for social interaction: three suggestions (5 minutes);
- group work activities: basic arrangements (5 minutes).

Resources needed

Paper, flipchart.

SESSION 3 – Enhancing skills for conflict resolution

Learning outcomes

The participants will:

- stimulate exchanges of experiences and communication between participants;
- initiate a situation of conflict about interests and needs;
- identify specific needs and communication strategies that can help to solve conflicts;
- develop skills for peaceful conflict resolution;
- discuss classroom situations where the activity can be used for setting ground rules.

Agenda

PART 1 – CONFLICT-RESOLUTION ACTIVITY "HOUSE OF MY DREAMS" (1 HOUR AND 15 MINUTES).

Step 1 – The course participants will be split into four small groups. The small groups will be required to draw their personal dream house on a sheet of paper (10 minutes).

Step 2 – After 10 minutes, the participants will be asked to present and describe their picture to the rest of their group (10 minutes).

Step 3 – Then, two groups will be asked to combine to glue their dream houses all together on a separate sheet of paper. As this sheet is smaller than all of their sheets put together, the participants will need to make their houses smaller. They will be allowed 10 minutes.

Step 4 – The results are presented in plenary (15 minutes).

Step 5 – Now they will be given a smaller sheet of paper, which should contain the houses of both groups (15 minutes).

Step 6 – Plenary discussion on the results.

PART 2 – EXPLORING DEMOCRATIC CONFLICT-RESOLUTION STRATEGIES

Step 1 – The debriefing process is centred on CDC and finding creative solutions instead of using power or violence.

Step 2 – The following guidelines for conflict resolution should be summarised.

- To experience not only the solution to a problem, but the ways in which problems are solved.
- Get to know your own needs.
- Understand the need for equality.
- Experience the conditions under which a willingness to accept restrictions exists.
- Experience the conditions under which a willingness to communicate exists.
- Develop awareness of the factors that can encourage or hinder the search for creative solutions.
- Understand that our culture is frequently solution-oriented and less needs-oriented.

Suggestions are written on the chart.

PART 3: HOW CAN WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER? (30 MINUTES)

- The charts are displayed on the walls in the training room.
- Silent reading. Comments are written by all participants on small sticky notes and attached to the flipcharts of the other teams.
- Plenary discussion:
    - How do we react to the comments of the others?
    - What needs to be clarified?
    - What did I learn from the solutions of the other teams?

Resources needed

Pencils, sheets of paper in different sizes, scissors and glue, chart table, chart paper, marker, sticky papers.

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Fax: 351 21 3224044
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This tool explores how democracy and democratic culture can be woven not only into teaching practices but into the everyday life of schools more generally. It is based on the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC), a model of competences that includes the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding that are needed for effective participation in democratic and culturally diverse societies. This tool focuses particularly on the involvement of families. It provides a set of practical workshops, lesson plans, extracurricular activities and materials that support the implementation of the RFCDC.

The implementation of the RFCDC requires an ongoing commitment to human rights education, intercultural dialogue and the promotion of democratic practices. As the tool outlines, inclusion in schools is not merely about access but about creating an environment where all children can thrive, learn from each other and actively contribute to the school community and wider society.

Ultimately, this tool aims to equip schools and educators to facilitate action-oriented learning and to promote an inclusive, democratic school culture that is experienced by all members of the school community as an everyday reality.

The cover illustration featuring the word "democracy" in Serbian is taken from the Council of Europe publication "Living in a Democratic Family" (2021), which was created in Serbia.

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