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

**Learning and living democracy – the way
forward**

**Evaluation Conference
of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship
through Education,
Sinaia, 27-28 April 2006**

CONCLUSIONS



The Evaluation Conference of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education was held in Sinaia on 27-28 April 2006 at the invitation of the Romanian authorities, in the framework of the Romanian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

At the Evaluation Conference, representatives of the 48 states party to the European Cultural Convention, as well as of European and international governmental and non-governmental organisations shared their experiences regarding the implementation of the “Year” and discussed ways and means for ensuring sustainability of the actions taken.

The participants at the conference:

- Welcoming the holding of this Conference in Sinaia ;
- Welcoming the member states’ commitment and support to the “Year” and taking note with satisfaction of the variety and outreach of actions undertaken in the framework of the “Year” at local, regional, national and international level;
- Considering the “Year” to be part of a continuous process aiming at building or developing sustainable democratic culture in all the member states of the Council of Europe;
- Recalling the Recommendation (2002) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for democratic citizenship which sets out guidelines for policies and practices in Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) and strategies to implement these;
- Welcoming the recognition by the Third Summit of the Heads of State and Governments of the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005) of the fundamental role of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) and their request to the Council of Europe to increase its efforts in this field;
- Recalling that the 3rd Summit strengthened the commitment of member states to the core values of the Council of Europe, democracy, human rights and the rule of law and consider that EDC/HRE are instrumental to building societies based on these values;
- Taking note with satisfaction of the adoption by the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Education of the Programme of Activities 2006-2009 in the field of EDC/HRE;
- Welcoming the development of co-operation between the Council of Europe and several international organisations during the “Year”, in particular UNESCO and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), highlighting the fundamental role of the Council of Europe in encouraging and monitoring the national implementation of the Plan of Action of the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-

ongoing) dedicated to the integration of human rights education into the primary and secondary school systems;

- Recalling that the year 2005 marked both the beginning of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) and of the United Nations' Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and considering that strong links should be made with EDC/HRE, as both programmes concern questions of participatory democracy, based on responsibility, the development of the individual's competences and social skills as well as respect for human rights, the environment and diversity and other core issues for sustainable development;
- Considering that Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights is a requirement for more democratic and inclusive societies and that it provides young people and adults with the necessary capabilities (knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes, human rights values and behaviour) they need to live, actively participate and act responsibly at many levels in a modern society;

Agreed on the following conclusions :

1. They consider that the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education has had a genuinely positive effect on the development of EDC/HRE policies and practices in member states. The wealth of actions undertaken bear witness to a strong commitment by education authorities and education professionals at all levels. The present challenge is to consolidate and guarantee the sustainability of this work and make it an integral part of education policies and practices in formal and non-formal educational systems;
2. They emphasise that the following strategic policy lines are essential in order to further promote and strengthen Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights in a lifelong learning perspective for all:

- EDC/HRE should be given priority as an educational policy aim;
- The role of EDC/HRE in promoting social cohesion, equality, including gender equality participation and intercultural dialogue should be emphasised;
- Value oriented education, based on democratic and human rights values as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights should be supported;
- Citizenship competencies for all should be provided;
- Appropriate support systems, in the field of educational staff development, training and awareness-raising as well as pedagogical material, such as the EDC Pack, should be developed;
- The lifelong learning perspective, the role of youth in social change and the inter-generational approach should be emphasised;
- Emphasise the complementarity of formal and non-formal education;
- Inter-institutional co-operation should be further strengthened;
- Interdisciplinary approach and cross-curricular competences should be encouraged.

3. In the same context, the participants emphasise the importance of implementing these policy lines by the following actions:

- To develop and adopt European framework policy documents setting out the basic principles in EDC/HRE, providing guidelines for action and outlining a follow-up mechanism;
- To give support to practices in EDC/HRE in order to favour policy implementation, by promoting research on EDC/HRE and collecting and disseminating information and documentation on EDC/HRE;
- To strengthen democracy in educational institutions through the development of democratic governance and accountability and the setting up of a comprehensive quality assurance system in EDC/HRE based on on-going monitoring and evaluation of the policy development and implementation of EDC/HRE. This would include self-evaluation mechanisms for educational institutions, preparation of qualitative and quantitative indicators and the encouragement of institution development on a step-by-step basis, taking into account the local context;
- To improve the development of and access to practical tools, manuals and guidelines on EDC/HRE and organise their piloting and testing ;
- To promote networks of education professionals, pupils/students, Media, NGOs and volunteers working in the field of EDC/HRE;
- To support co-operation both at the international and at member states level among stakeholders in EDC/HRE, such as decision-makers, educational professionals, students/pupils, educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, and the media;
- To foster European exchange and co-operation in the field of teacher training in EDC/HRE as regards e.g. skills and professional profiles;
- To encourage local and regional authorities to participate in the implementation of EDC/HRE policies;
- To raise awareness among the general public and specialists, including through the media, on EDC/HRE and educational institutions as “sites of citizenship” ;
- To promote and extend co-operation between partners from the formal and non-formal education sectors at European and at member states level, especially those working with or representing young people;

Bearing in mind the above, the participants:

4. Invite the Council of Europe to:

- Promote democratic governance of educational institutions, through supporting the development of participatory teaching and learning methods and decision-making, links with the community, gender mainstreaming and other attributes of democratic school climate;
- Promote educational development for teachers, trainers, leaders of educational institutions and other educational staff in the formal and non-formal sector in member states and develop a network/centre of excellence on EDC/HRE expertise, including teacher training and establishing links with relevant teacher and school leader associations;
- Consider setting up an on-line data bank of EDC/HRE experts and trainers;
- Further develop its work in the field of quality assurance and development of indicators;
- Encourage research and reflection on EDC/HRE issues;
- Strengthen inter-sectorial co-operation within the Council of Europe on issues of EDC/HRE, as well as with the Forum on the Future of Democracy in Europe;
- Develop an on-line database of tested tools and materials for formal and non-formal education in the field of EDC/HRE;
- Maintain, beyond 2005, the on-line database of activities established by the Council of Europe, its member States, international institutions and organisations;
- Hold a regular NGO Forum on EDC/HRE;
- Redefine the role of the EDC/HRE coordinators' network, with a view to developing the network as an important tool for the success of EDC/HRE policies and practices throughout Europe;
- Encourage and monitor the national implementation of the Plan of Action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing);
- Continue and strengthen further inter-institutional co-operation in the fields of EDC/HRE and education for sustainable development (ESD);
- Contribute to other global and European programmes related to EDC/HRE, including by developing joint initiatives;
- Further develop the on-line access and translation of existing educational materials and tools relevant for EDC/HRE in formal and non-formal education settings;

5. Invite other international institutions to :

- Give priority to EDC/HRE in their current programmes, providing support to existing networks and facilitating information sharing, research and training;
- Further develop their co-operation with the Council of Europe in the field of EDC/HRE by regularly sharing information on relevant programmes and by developing joint initiatives and to this end organise regular meetings on EDC/HRE;
- Co-operate with NGOs working in the field;

6. Invite governments of the Council of Europe member states to:

- Uphold their commitments to EDC/HRE as set out in the Action Plan of the Third Summit of the Heads of State and Governments of the Council of Europe;
- Strengthen the link between the 3rd phase of the EDC/HRE Council of Europe Programme and the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) and the United Nations' Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014);
- Help to anchor EDC/HRE in a lifelong learning perspective that encourages sharing of policies and methods between formal, non-formal and informal education and training;
- Provide adequate support to the EDC/HRE coordinators so as to allow them to fulfil their terms of reference;
- Support NGOs working in the field of EDC/HRE;
- Broaden the involvement of public authorities in carrying out EDC/HRE programmes;
- Initiate and support awareness-raising events in favour of EDC/HRE;
- Actively support the European Youth Campaign "All different, all equal" for Diversity, Human Rights and Participation and use the campaign committees and networks for mainstreaming EDC/HRE through the campaign.

7. Invite local and regional authorities to:

- Support EDC/HRE by implementing the Revised Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life ;
- Promote opportunities for people to participate in EDC/HRE projects, e.g. through active co-operation with educational institutions;
- Provide support for projects run by young people and their organisations in relation to EDC/HRE;

8. Invite educational institutions to:

- Promote democracy within the institution/school, through the organisation of EDC/HRE activities, democratic learning and teaching methods and democratic governance;
- Develop closer co-operation with various bodies and institutions at all levels, such as NGOs, local and regional authorities;

9. Invite NGOs to:

- Build strong partnerships with those involved with EDC/HRE at local, regional, national and international level;
- Contribute to the actions of the Council of Europe, governments, international institutions and local and regional authorities,
- Assist educational institutions in building links to communities, particularly the local community, beyond institution/school;
- Ensure young people's participation in the implementation of EDC/HRE within the NGOs concerned.

10. The participants express their commitment to contribute to the strengthening and sustainability of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights for all people, particularly children and young people, at all levels of modern society, in particular through the new Council of Europe programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights for 2006-2009.