

A PORTFOLIO OF COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE



Younger learners version



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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Introduction

The Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) is a set of materials that can be used by education systems to help people to acquire the competences that are needed to take action to:

- ▶ defend and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law;
- ▶ participate effectively in a culture of democracy;
- ▶ engage in intercultural dialogue; and
- ▶ live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse societies.

The RFCDC is intended for use by education policy makers and by teachers and other education practitioners in all sectors of education systems, from pre-school through primary and secondary schooling to higher education, including adult education and vocational education.

The Framework provides a systematic approach to designing the teaching, learning and assessment of competences for democratic culture and intercultural dialogue, and introducing them into education systems in ways that are coherent, comprehensive and transparent.

The portfolio

The portfolio that is presented here is a means of using the RFCDC. It provides learners with the opportunity to reflect on their competences, to collect data and documents which support and stimulate their reflections, and to think about how they will further develop their competences in the future. As such, it provides an invaluable tool that can be used to foster and support the development of democratic and intercultural competences in learners.

The portfolio also provides evidence about how a learner's proficiency in the use of their competences is developing. Users of the portfolio can thus assess their own progress and identify where and how they can improve. The evidence can also be used by teachers and others to assess the progress of learners in achieving proficiency and to advise and help them in the use of their democratic and intercultural competences. Assessments using the portfolio may therefore be made for either formative or summative purposes.

Versions of the portfolio

There are two versions of the portfolio, one for younger learners (children up to approximately the age of 10/11 years) and a second standard version (for learners from approximately 10/11 years upwards). Each version is accompanied by a guide for teachers. Both versions of the portfolio have been piloted successfully by teachers in a number of countries.

While the portfolio documents and the feedback questionnaire are available in English, all of these materials may be translated and used by teachers and learners in their own language(s). Teachers are also free to adapt and alter the suggested contents of the portfolio to make them more suitable for their own education system and needs as they wish, based on their own professional judgments. However, two features need to be retained when changes are made to the portfolio. It is important to ensure that learners always provide:

- ▶ adequate documentation on their uses of competences;
- ▶ critical reflections on their uses of competences.

These two features are crucial in enabling the portfolio to support and facilitate the development of learners' competences.

Portfolio contents in brief

The materials presented in the current document are twofold:

- ▶ a blank template, which is intended to display the overall structure of the portfolio in a relatively straightforward format;
- ▶ a guide for teachers, which explains how teachers can help learners compile an RFCDC Portfolio using the template.

The portfolio may be compiled in traditional hard copy (for example, using binders, folders or box files), or it may be implemented digitally as an e-portfolio. Digital implementation has several advantages. These include:

- ▶ allowing learners to be highly creative in how they compile, organise and cross-reference the contents of their portfolios; and
- ▶ facilitating the collection and storage of videos, audio-recordings and digital images as part of the documentation.

The choice between hard copy and digital implementation is one for teachers and learners to make according to their particular circumstances.

Teachers who use the portfolio are invited to provide feedback on their experience to the authoring team. An online form through which this feedback may be provided is available on the Council of Europe's RFCDC Portfolio webpage: www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/portfolios.

Template

Section 1 – Title page

This should display:

- ▶ the child's name and age;
- ▶ the name of the school, kindergarten or other provider of early childhood education;
- ▶ the name(s) of the teacher(s) who have assisted the child to compile the portfolio;
- ▶ the names of any other people who have assisted the child to compile the portfolio (for example parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents or other people in the local community who are important to the child).

The child may personalise the title page, for example by adding drawings, photos, voice recordings or written texts.

Section 2 – List of contents

This section should provide a list of the contents of the portfolio. The list should be clearly structured. It should also contain either electronic links (if an e-portfolio has been compiled), page numbers (if a paper-based portfolio has been compiled) or another referencing system (if another type of multi-media portfolio has been compiled), to enable the reader to understand and read the contents of the portfolio easily.

The following overall structure should be used in the contents list:

- ▶ personal statement
- ▶ context statement
- ▶ statement of purpose
- ▶ evidence of developing competences
- ▶ reflections
- ▶ concluding statement.

For the evidence of developing competences and reflections sections, sub-headings should also be provided for the contents that are presented within these sections.

Section 3 – Personal statement

This section should contain a personal statement that provides background information about the child, especially information that is pertinent to the child's democratic and intercultural competences. Teachers can produce their own specific guidelines about precisely what type of information should be included in the personal statement, according to the educational, cultural and national context of the school.

Section 4 – Context statement

This section should contain the child's description of relevant aspects of the local context in which they are living, the extent to which features of their environment encourage or hinder them and other people from exercising their democratic and intercultural competences, and how their own behaviour is influenced and shaped by aspects of their environment.

Section 5 – Statement of purpose

Against the background of the personal and context information that has been captured in Sections 3 and 4, this section should then contain an introductory statement that is constructed by the child and the teacher working together, about how and why the child is compiling the portfolio.

Section 6 – Evidence of developing competences

This section should contain evidence of the child's developing competences for democratic culture across a wide range of contexts, both within and beyond the classroom. This requires collecting examples of the child's behaviour in many different settings.

Importantly, this evidence should document not only the child's current proficiency – it should also document developments and advances (and regressions, where these occur) in the child's behaviour over time and across varieties of situations and contexts. This evidence can be drawn from activities that take place in the classroom, in other school settings such as the playground or school canteen, in children's clubs or organisations, while taking a course or training programme outside the school, on visits to community organisations, on encountering other people in the street, on visits to other countries, in the family home, in the peer group, while consuming mass media content, and while interacting with others through social media.

Other adults such as parents or grandparents, as well as older sisters or brothers, may assist the child in collecting suitable evidence for inclusion in the portfolio, particularly evidence of activities that take place in contexts outside the classroom and school.

The evidence can be provided in multiple formats. For example, it can consist of artefacts (for example documents that have been produced by the child such as essays, reports, reviews, projects), recordings (for example photographs, videos, audio recordings, drawings), and various forms of assessments of the child's competences (for example self-assessments, peer-assessments, teacher-assessments, parent-assessments, assessments by youth or community leaders, assessments by others in the local community).

It is crucial that each piece of evidence presented in the portfolio is clearly labelled with explanatory text to describe what the evidence is and what it means about the child's competences.

Section 7 – Reflections

This section should contain the child's reflections on the evidence provided in Section 6. Although it is likely that the child will have produced some reflections on their own behaviour in the preceding section (particularly in the labels that will have been used to describe each item of evidence and to explain what the item means about the child's competences), this section provides the child with the opportunity to engage in more extensive and systematic reflections on the evidence that has been collected.

The reflections contained in this section should be produced throughout the process of constructing the portfolio, rather than at the end. In this way, the reflection process will help the child to identify their own learning needs, the areas that require further development and the actions that need to be taken to advance the child's learning further, while the evidence for the portfolio is still being compiled.

Section 8 – Concluding statement

In some cases, there may not be an end point to the process of collecting evidence and reflections for the portfolio. This is because the development of democratic and intercultural competences is a lifelong process – new democratic situations and intercultural encounters continue to be experienced throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood. In such cases, the portfolio may never require the addition of a concluding statement.

However, in other cases, the provider of education may wish to conclude the portfolio process (for example because the child is about to move on to a new educational institution or because the school year is coming to an end). In such cases, it is helpful for the child, with the teacher's support, to produce a concluding statement with which to end the portfolio process. The concluding statement should be used as an opportunity for the child to reflect more broadly on the portfolio process as a whole.

A guide for teachers

Overview

This guide is for teachers,¹ that is all who educate whether in pre-school, school or any other educational institution. It is intended for use with the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC).

The guide explains how teachers can help learners compile an RFCDC Portfolio. Compiling a portfolio requires learners to collect documents (images, recordings, texts, etc., from multiple sources in school and beyond) which show their competences for democratic culture, and to reflect critically on their competences. Documentation and reflection help in further developing learners' competences.

There are two versions of the RFCDC Portfolio and two guides:

- ▶ the portfolio and guide for "younger learners", aged up to 10/11 years; and
- ▶ the "standard" portfolio and guide for learners from 10/11 years upwards.

Although there are two guides, both cover the same issues.

Each guide begins by explaining what the portfolio is and its purposes. The guide then provides the teacher with detailed guidance about the different sections of the portfolio and how the teacher can help learners to construct their portfolios.

Pedagogy: by encouraging learners to document and reflect critically on their competences, the portfolio is, first, a powerful pedagogical tool for developing learners' competences.

Assessment: the portfolio can be used for assessment and the guide discusses how the portfolio can be used for both self-assessment and assessment by teachers.

Legal and ethical questions: when learners compile portfolios, there are legal and ethical issues that need to be considered by teachers. The guide includes a discussion of these issues.

Appendices: there are two appendices. The first appendix is a list of the principles that underlie the design of the portfolio. The second appendix contains an example of an information sheet for parents that can be used to obtain consent from parents, guardians or carers for a learner to participate in the portfolio process.

1. The term "teacher" is used here in a generic sense to refer to all who educate whether in pre-school, school, university, vocational education or any other educational institution. In the text the word "school" is also used generically to refer to all kinds of educational institution.

Before its publication, the RFCDC Portfolio was piloted successfully by 139 teachers in seven European countries. Here are some reactions from teachers who helped us pilot and prepare the portfolio:

Often when working with young people, we forget what is essential, and that is to prepare them for life. The portfolio is now here to help us conceptualise learning to develop their democratic competences.

(Standard version)

In my opinion, the portfolio consists of everything needed for children's development and improvement in democratic society.

(Younger learners version)

This portfolio can encourage students to take more ownership and responsibility over the learning process. It helped students to reflect on where they started a project, how they developed, and where they ended up at the conclusion of the project.

(Younger learners version)

I am not a devotee of portfolios ... but gradually, after studying the guide, when we started with the assessment of experience from such school subjects as History, Social Studies, Literature, English, and the teachers who teach these subjects joined us, we could get the full picture of whether we reach the education goals we set or just provide the students with knowledge.

(Standard version)

I think it's extremely useful because it prepares the students for real life and to think both creatively and critically and to problem solve. It gives them a more global perspective while working on their confidence and inclusion in their communities and in the world as a whole.

(Younger learners version)

The format is useful because it is very flexible and it challenges students to think about some ideas they are not given a chance to reflect in their education.

(Standard version)

The authors hope that teachers and learners will enjoy using the portfolio and find it helpful in becoming competent democratic and intercultural citizens.

1. What is the portfolio?

The portfolio is a means of using the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) (www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/). The RFCDC is a set of materials that can be used by education systems to equip young people with the competences required to take action to defend and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law; to participate effectively in a culture of democracy; and to live peacefully together with others in culturally diverse societies. The Framework consists of three main components: a model of the competences that democratic citizens need to be active, effective and respectful members of society; a set of descriptors that help to define the competences in detail at three different levels of proficiency; and a collection of guidance documents for education policy makers and practitioners who wish to use the RFCDC.

The portfolio provides learners with the opportunity to reflect on their democratic and intercultural competences. They do this by:

- ▶ collecting data and documents which stimulate their reflections; and
- ▶ thinking about how they will develop their competences in the future.

These processes help to promote the development of learners' democratic and intercultural competences. In addition, the portfolio provides evidence about how a learner's proficiency in the use of those competences is developing. This evidence may be used for formative, diagnostic, monitoring or summative assessment purposes.

Purposes of the portfolio and the two versions

The portfolio is one practical means of bringing the RFCDC to people, young and old, in all social groups, to help and encourage them to become aware of the competences they have, and the competences they might yet acquire, as the basis for being an active and interculturally competent democratic citizen.

There are two versions of the RFCDC portfolio:

- ▶ a version for younger learners, aged up to 10/11 years, and
- ▶ a standard version, for learners from 10/11 years upwards.

Purposes of this guide for teachers

This guide has three main purposes:

- ▶ to introduce and explain the portfolio to teachers who may be considering using it in their teaching;
- ▶ to provide guidance on the respective roles of the teacher and learner in the use of the portfolio;
- ▶ to offer suggestions on how the contents of the portfolio may be compiled by learners.

Teachers understand the portfolio best when they themselves create a portfolio of the same kind as their learners, documenting and reflecting on their own competences, whether during a training course, as an individual activity before or in parallel with their learners, or in co-operation with another teacher. Teachers who wish to compile a portfolio themselves should use the standard version of the RFCDC Portfolio, rather than the younger learners version.

2. What is the younger learners version of the portfolio?

The younger learners version of the portfolio has been designed for use in teaching and learning activities with children in either pre-primary or primary education up to the age of about 10/11 years old. The design of the younger learners version has been based on a set of general principles, which are listed in Appendix 1 of this guide.

The intention is for the portfolio to be co-constructed by the child and the teacher working together with the aim of promoting and supporting learning and reflection in the child. The portfolio should provide evidence of developments (and regressions, where these occur) in the child's democratic and intercultural competences and behaviour over time and in various situations, both within and beyond the classroom.

The contents of the portfolio can be developed in multiple ways, following children's different ways of expressing themselves. The portfolio can include audio- and video-recordings, drawings, photographs and written texts.

The younger learners portfolio, when completed, should normally contain the following eight sections, which will be explained in more detail below:

1. a title page
2. a list of contents
3. a personal statement
4. a context statement
5. a statement of purpose
6. evidence of developing competences
7. reflections
8. a concluding statement.

While some of these contents may appear to be beyond the capacities of children, some concrete suggestions on how children can be helped in compiling the contents of the portfolio are given below. These suggestions (which appear in boxes below) can be used to generate the contents of the portfolio. However, these are only suggestions. The materials included in the boxes are intended only to provide illustrations and indications of the types of activities and questions that can be used to compile the portfolio.

Teachers are free to adapt and alter these suggested activities and questions to make them more suitable for their own education system and needs as they wish. Teachers can also create and design their own activities for generating materials for inclusion in all sections of the portfolio, based on their own professional judgment.

Teachers are also free to adapt and alter the suggested sections of the portfolio to make them more suitable for their own educational context, based on their own professional judgment.

However, whatever form the portfolio takes, it is important to retain two features:

- ▶ evidence of developing competence (Section 6);
- ▶ learners' reflections on the evidence (Section 7), based on the documentation provided in Section 6.

The completion of the portfolio will probably require a lot of one-to-one work between the child and the teacher. However, teachers can first explain the portfolio to the whole class of children together.

In addition, group work may be used to generate some of the contents of the portfolio, especially the evidence of developing competences, which will need to be entered into Section 6 of the portfolio.

In cases where one-to-one work takes place outside the classroom, with the child working with someone other than the teacher (such as a parent), it may well be the case that the other person does not have much expertise either in the contents of the RFCDC or in compiling a portfolio. In such cases, the teacher will need to provide some guidance to that person, and may also need to act as an interpreter of the materials that the child and parent produce before they are included in the portfolio.

3. The eight sections of the younger learners portfolio

Section 1 – Title page

This should display:

- ▶ the child's name and age;
- ▶ the name of the school, kindergarten or other provider of early childhood education;
- ▶ the name(s) of the teacher(s) who has/have assisted the child to compile the portfolio;
- ▶ the names of any other people who have assisted the child to compile the portfolio (for example, parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents or other people in the local community who are important to the child).

Suggestion #1 regarding the title page

The child should be allowed to personalise the title page of the portfolio, for example by adding drawings, photos or written texts to the page. Digital photos and recordings can be added to an e-portfolio.

Section 2 – List of contents

This section should provide a list of the contents of the portfolio. The list should be clearly structured. It should also contain either electronic links (if an e-portfolio has been compiled), page numbers (if a paper-based portfolio has been compiled) or other referencing system (if another type of multimedia portfolio has been compiled). This enables the reader to understand and read the contents of the portfolio easily.

The following overall structure should be used in the contents list:

- ▶ personal statement
- ▶ context statement
- ▶ statement of purpose
- ▶ evidence of developing competences
- ▶ reflections
- ▶ concluding statement.

For the evidence of developing competences and reflections sections, sub-headings should also be provided for the contents that are presented within these sections.

Suggestion #1 regarding the contents list

The contents list may be constructed by the teacher having a discussion with the child. Examples of other children's portfolios can also be used if the child and those responsible for them have given consent. However, the teacher should think about the need to involve the child actively in the process of constructing the contents list so that they keep a sense of ownership and authorship of the portfolio.

Suggestion #2 regarding the contents list

It can be helpful to only begin work on constructing the contents list after some of the work on the other sections of the portfolio has commenced. In addition, work on the list can continue as and when new contents are added to the portfolio.

If and when the process of compiling the portfolio comes to an end, the contents list (especially the sub-headings for the evidence of developing competences and reflections sections) can be revisited and finalised.

Section 3 – Personal statement

This section should contain a personal statement that provides background information about the child, especially information that is pertinent to the child's democratic and intercultural competences. Teachers can produce their own specific guidelines about precisely what type of information should be included in the personal statement, according to the educational, cultural and national context of the school.

Suggestion #1 regarding the personal statement

The teacher can begin by asking the child to identify their own personal goals for the future. These can be in a variety of different areas such as:

- ▶ things they want to do with their friends;
- ▶ things they want to do at home either on their own or with their family;
- ▶ things they want to learn or achieve at school;
- ▶ things they want to learn about the world (for example, about people, cultures, languages);
- ▶ things they want to do to help other people;
- ▶ things they want to do to help the environment;
- ▶ things they want to do to make the world a better place.

The last four goals in particular are especially relevant to the development of the child's democratic and intercultural competences, and can be used for discussing the purpose of the portfolio when the statement of purpose is constructed later on.

The child can be asked to discuss their list of goals with their parents, other family members or their friends before it is finalised.

On completion of the list of personal goals, the teacher (or other important person in the child's life) and the child can then discuss the list together, and the discussion can be recorded for inclusion in the portfolio. Alternatively, in the case of children nearing the end of primary education, they can produce the personal statement in a written format.

Suggestion #2 regarding the personal statement

A "Who am I?" task, in which the child is asked to describe themselves, can be useful for eliciting the personal statement, especially if carried out via dialogue between the teacher and the child; this can then be recorded for inclusion in the portfolio.

To begin this task, the child is first asked a question such as:

- ▶ How would you describe yourself? Tell me five things about yourself.

Additional prompts can also be used, such as:

- ▶ What do you think are the most important things about yourself?
- ▶ When you meet someone else for the first time, what are the most important things that you want them to know about you?
- ▶ Here are some things that you can use to describe yourself: your name, your age, the country you live in, your religion, the language you speak, etc. Would you include any of these things in your list?
- ▶ Here are some further things that you can use to describe yourself: you are a son/daughter, a brother/sister, a school student, a member of a sports team, a member of any other type of club, etc. Would you include any of these things in your list?

Further questions can then be used to elicit the child's attitudes towards democratic citizenship and intercultural activities. For example, the child can be asked:

- ▶ Do you like meeting people who are different from yourself? Please explain your answer.
- ▶ Do you like to play with other children who are different from yourself? Please explain your answer.
- ▶ Do you like learning about people who are different from yourself? Please explain your answer.
- ▶ Do you like working with other people, or do you prefer to work on your own?
- ▶ Are you happy for other people to tell you what to do? Or do you like to make your own decisions about what you do? Please explain your answer.
- ▶ Do you like to have a say in the decisions that other people make about you? Please explain your answer.

Suggestion #3 regarding the personal statement

Another way to elicit a personal statement is to ask the child to list five things that they like doing and five things that they do not like doing, and to explain why they do or do not like doing these things.

The child can then be asked to discuss their lists with two classmates in turn, one who is a friend, the other who is someone they do not usually play or interact with. In these discussions, they need to identify the things that they share with the other child and the things that make them different from the other child.

They can then have an individual discussion with the teacher (or with another adult) about what they have found out about themselves. This discussion can focus on:

- ▶ what they have found out about their similarities to and differences from other people;
- ▶ why they think other people are similar to and/or different from themselves;

- ▶ whether they think it is a good or bad thing that people have these similarities and differences;
- ▶ who decides whether they can or cannot do the things that they like or do not like doing;
- ▶ whether it is fair that it is sometimes other people who decide what they can and cannot do;
- ▶ what they would do if they were in charge of making the decisions about what other people can and cannot do.

The discussion with the teacher (or other adult) can be recorded for inclusion in the portfolio.

If the personal statement is produced at an early stage of compiling the portfolio, it can be revisited and revised or added to as the contents of the portfolio develop over time. Alternatively, an additional personal statement can be produced at a later point in time. The differences between initial and later personal statements can be used to document how the child's understanding of themselves has developed and changed over time.

Section 4 – Context statement

This section should contain the child's description of relevant aspects of the local context in which they are living, the extent to which features of their environment encourage or hinder them and other people from exercising their democratic and intercultural competences, and how their own behaviour is influenced and shaped by aspects of their environment.

This description should be elicited by the teacher engaging in dialogue with the child, in order to support their thinking about their context and the institutional structures, arrangements and constraints that affect their behaviour.

Suggestion #1 regarding the context statement

It can be particularly helpful to address these issues concerning the context with reference to the specific settings with which the child has direct personal contact (for example the family, the school, an after-school club, the playground, place of religious worship).

The teacher can begin by asking the child about the different settings in which they play and learn. Minimally, these settings should include both the family and the school.

The child can then be asked about their own roles (the things they do), rights (the things they can do if they wish to do them) and responsibilities (the things they have to do) within each of these settings.

They can also be asked about anything that they would like to change about these settings, including changes that they would like to make to their own roles, rights and responsibilities, and why they would like to make these changes.

They can then be asked about the things within each setting that help or prevent them from making these changes, and from doing what they really want to do.

[NB If the issue of other people deciding what the child can and cannot do was discussed as part of the process of constructing the personal statement (see "Suggestion #3 regarding the personal statement" above), this prior conversation can be drawn upon and used for constructing the context statement.]

The context statement can also be revisited and revised as the contents of the portfolio develop over time. Alternatively, new context statements can be produced at later points in time, so that the differences between the initial and later context statements can be used to document how the child's understanding has developed and changed over time.

Section 5 – Statement of purpose

Against the background of the personal and context information that has been captured in Sections 3 and 4, this section should then contain an introductory statement that is constructed by the child and the teacher working together, about how and why the child is compiling the portfolio.

It is likely that the teacher will play the leading role in constructing this statement, but the child should be involved as much as possible in the process. This will help to give the child a sense of ownership of the statement.

It will also help to ensure that they understand the purpose of the portfolio and what they themselves will have to do in compiling and committing to it.

Minimally, the statement should mention:

- ▶ that the portfolio will be used to collect examples of the child's behaviour in a lot of different situations, not only in the school but also in the other settings that have been discussed in the preceding context statement (for example the family, the school, an after-school club, the playground, place of religious worship);
- ▶ that these examples can be collected by the child writing about their behaviour or making drawings of themselves in those settings, or through photographs or recordings that have been made within those settings;
- ▶ that the aim of the portfolio is to support the child in thinking about their behaviour;
- ▶ that the portfolio will help the child to learn from their experiences and documentation activities.

Suggestion #1 regarding the statement of purpose

Once again, the statement of purpose can be elicited through dialogue between the child and teacher, and audio-recorded for inclusion in the portfolio.

It will probably be most helpful if the teacher begins by explaining the purpose of the portfolio to the child. After providing this explanation, the following questions can be used to involve the child in the process of constructing the statement of purpose.

- ▶ What sort of things do you think you will put into the portfolio?
- ▶ Do you think you will write about yourself and the things that you have done at home, at school, at your after-school club, in the playground, at your place of religious worship, etc.?
- ▶ Do you think you will make drawings of yourself and the things that you have done at home, at school, at your after-school club, in the playground, at your place of religious worship, etc.?
- ▶ Do you think either you or somebody else will take photographs or make recordings of the things that you have done at home, at school, at your after-school club, in the playground, at your place of religious worship, etc.?
- ▶ What will help you to think about the things that you put in your portfolio? Will it help for you and me to talk together about them? It is really important for you to think about the things in your portfolio, so that you can learn from them. Is there anyone else you would like to talk to about the things in your portfolio? How about your mother, father, sister, brother or grandparents? Is there anyone else you would like to talk to, to help you to think about the things in your portfolio?
- ▶ If the child's personal goals were discussed as part of constructing the personal statement: Earlier on, you said that you wanted to do X (refer back to what the child said when the personal statement was constructed). Do you think the portfolio will help you to do X?
- ▶ What do you think you will learn from putting your portfolio together?
- ▶ Do you think the portfolio will help you to get on well with other people, or to be kind to other people? If yes: How do you think the portfolio will help you to get on with other people or be kind to other people or care about other people?

If an initial statement of purpose is produced early in the process of compiling the portfolio, it can be revisited and revised subsequently as the contents of the portfolio develop over time. Alternatively, a new statement of purpose can be produced at a later point in time, so that the differences between the initial and the later statements can be used to document how the child's understanding of the purpose of the portfolio has developed and changed over time.

Section 6 – Evidence of developing competences

This section should contain evidence of the child's developing competences for democratic culture across a wide range of contexts, both within and beyond the classroom. This requires collecting examples of the child's behaviour in many different settings.

Importantly, this evidence should document not only the child's current proficiency but also developments and advances (and regressions, where these occur) in the child's behaviour over time and across varieties of situations and contexts. This evidence can be drawn from activities that take place in the classroom, in other school settings such as the playground or school canteen, in children's clubs or organisations, while taking a course or training programme outside the school, on visits to community organisations, on encountering other people in the street, on visits to other countries, in the family home, in the peer group, while consuming mass media content and while interacting with others through social media.

Other adults such as parents or grandparents, as well as older sisters or brothers, may assist the child in collecting suitable evidence for inclusion in the portfolio, particularly evidence of activities that take place in contexts outside the classroom and school. When others assist the child in this way, it will be helpful if the teacher provides them with some guidance (for example in the form of an information sheet) about the types of evidence that are required for the portfolio. The teacher may also need to act as an interpreter of the materials that are collected before they are included in the portfolio.

The evidence can be provided in multiple formats. For example, it can consist of artefacts (for example documents that have been produced by the child such as essays, reports, reviews, projects), recordings (for example photographs, videos, audio recordings, drawings) and various forms of assessments of the child's competences (for example self-assessments, peer-assessments, teacher-assessments, parent-assessments, assessments by youth or community leaders, assessments by others in the local community).

It is crucial that each piece of evidence presented in the portfolio is clearly labelled with some explanatory text to describe what the evidence is and what it means about the child's competences. The teacher should assist with the process of labelling the evidence, but should be mindful that the child needs to participate actively in this process so that they retain a sense of authorship of the contents of their own portfolio.

In order to advise the child about appropriate activities and experiences that can be used to generate the evidence for inclusion in the portfolio, it will be useful for the teacher to first examine the descriptors for younger learners and the basic level descriptors that are available as part of the RFCDC. The descriptors provide clear, explicit and concise statements or descriptions of the observable behaviours that a child will display if they have achieved a certain level of proficiency in a given competence. Thus, if the child does not yet display those behaviours (as established through formative or diagnostic assessment), the descriptors can be used as specific learning outcomes at which the child should be aiming through the use of the portfolio. The descriptors can also be used by the teacher as the basis for selecting and recommending suitable learning activities and situations that might lead to the achievement of those outcomes.

In providing advice to the child, it should be borne in mind that individual activities and situations usually require the child to use a number of competences in a dynamic and adaptive manner. Activities and situations should therefore be chosen for the child on the basis that those chosen will provide evidence of the use of multiple competences, and of the child's ability to use these competences flexibly and appropriately.

Suggestion #1 regarding evidence of developing competences

There are many different classroom activities through which the child's developing competences for democratic culture can be elicited and displayed. Teachers will find plenty of suggestions for suitable classroom activities in the following three references:

Compasito – Manual on human rights education for children (2nd edition), Council of Europe, Strasbourg. [Available in English, French, Hungarian and Russian from www.coe.int/en/web/youth/manuals-and-handbooks]

Gollob R., Krapf P. and Weidinger W. (eds) (2010), *Growing up in democracy: lesson plans for primary level on democratic citizenship and human rights* (EDC/HRE Volume II), Council of Europe, Strasbourg. [Available in English, French, Georgian, Icelandic, Russian and Ukrainian from www.coe.int/en/web/edc/living-democracy-manuals]

Gollob R. and Krapf P. (2007), *Exploring children's rights: nine short projects for primary level* (EDC/HRE Volume V), Council of Europe, Strasbourg. [Available in English, French, Albanian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, German, Hungarian, Macedonian and Russian, from www.coe.int/en/web/edc/living-democracy-manuals]

Suggestion #2 regarding evidence of developing competences

However, evidence for inclusion in the portfolio should not be generated solely through activities in the classroom. Evidence also needs to be collected from other settings, such as the playground, the family home, youth clubs, encounters with other people in the street, visits to other countries, when consuming mass media content and when interacting with others on social media. Evidence should be gathered from a wide range of settings in which activities and experiences that are relevant to the child exercising democratic and intercultural competences take place, and any or all of these can be used to generate evidence for inclusion in the portfolio.

The following are some common situations from which evidence can be collected. Specific situations should be selected and recommended to the child depending on the child's interests, goals and learning needs. In this list, we have tried to indicate some of the most relevant competences that are likely to be involved in each situation, and for which the situation may therefore be generating evidence that can be included in the portfolio (the competences that are included here are intended to be indicative rather than exhaustive – in all cases, the situation could also involve other competences, and not all of the competences that are indicated here may be involved).

- ▶ Playing or working together with other children in a game, task or project. (Relevant competences: co-operation skills, skills of listening and observing, linguistic and communicative skills, empathy, conflict-resolution skills)
- ▶ Participating in a group discussion or group decision making. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, linguistic and communicative skills, analytical and critical thinking skills, conflict-resolution skills, empathy, respect, civic-mindedness)
- ▶ Talking about an issue with one or more other people where there is a difference of opinion. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, linguistic and communicative skills, conflict-resolution skills, analytical and critical thinking skills, empathy, respect, tolerance of ambiguity)
- ▶ Experiencing a situation in which a conflict between people is either resolved or not resolved – this might be in the classroom, in the playground or at home. (Relevant competences: conflict-resolution skills, empathy, tolerance of ambiguity, skills of listening and observing, linguistic and communicative skills)
- ▶ Taking on a leadership, organisational or representative role, either at school or in a youth group or hobby club. (Relevant competences: self-efficacy, civic-mindedness, responsibility, linguistic and communicative skills)
- ▶ Participating in an organised vote for or against something or someone (for example electing someone from within their class to take on a particular role). (Relevant competences: valuing democracy, civic-mindedness, responsibility)
- ▶ Undertaking volunteer work or a service learning project in the local community to help other people (for example visiting or helping sick or elderly people) or to address a specific cause (for example littering, recycling, renovating a neighbourhood facility). (Relevant competences: civic-mindedness, responsibility, self-efficacy)
- ▶ Contacting an elected representative or an official about an issue of concern (for example litter, graffiti, children's facilities in the neighbourhood). (Relevant competences: valuing democracy, civic-mindedness, responsibility, self-efficacy, linguistic and communicative skills)
- ▶ Supporting a victim in a bullying situation. (Relevant competences: valuing human dignity and human rights, valuing justice and fairness, civic-mindedness, responsibility, self-efficacy, empathy)
- ▶ Hearing a story or watching a programme or film about someone being bullied. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, valuing human dignity and human rights, valuing justice and fairness, civic-mindedness, empathy)
- ▶ Hearing hurtful language being used about someone else. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, valuing human dignity and human rights, valuing justice and fairness, civic-mindedness, empathy)
- ▶ Visiting a community organisation or place of religious worship in the neighbourhood. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, valuing human dignity and human rights, valuing cultural diversity, civic-mindedness, respect, empathy)

- ▶ Observing other people's behaviour in the local community. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, valuing human dignity and human rights, respect, empathy)
- ▶ Talking to or interviewing people beyond the classroom about things that they have seen or experienced in their lives. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, valuing human dignity and human rights, respect, empathy)
- ▶ Engaging in a role play, simulation or drama performance in which the child takes on the role of someone else in a specific situation. (Relevant competences: flexibility and adaptability, empathy, linguistic and communicative skills)
- ▶ Conducting research into the histories, cultural practices, beliefs and contributions that have been made by minority cultural groups within the country in which they are living. (Relevant competences: valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, autonomous learning skills, analytical and critical thinking skills, knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures, religions and history)
- ▶ Visiting another country or another region of their own country. (Relevant competences: valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, analytical and critical thinking skills, knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures)
- ▶ Interacting with another person or people who have a different cultural background from the child. (Relevant competences: valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, analytical and critical thinking skills, knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures, skills of listening and observing, linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills, flexibility and adaptability)
- ▶ Seeing a picture, hearing a story, or watching a programme or film about people who have different cultural backgrounds from the child. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, analytical and critical thinking skills, knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures)
- ▶ Hearing a story or watching a programme or film about other people from the child's own cultural group being friendly with other people who have different cultural backgrounds from the child. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, analytical and critical thinking skills, valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures)
- ▶ Producing a story (using either words, pictures or puppets) in which the child has to depict themselves interacting positively with people who have different cultural backgrounds from themselves. (Relevant competences: empathy, respect, flexibility and adaptability, linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures)
- ▶ Communicating and exchanging information with children from other cultural backgrounds through video conferencing or social media. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills, valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility and adaptability, analytical and critical thinking skills, knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures)
- ▶ Conducting a collaborative project with children in another country, or in another region of the same country, through video conferencing or social media. (Relevant competences: skills of listening and observing, linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills, valuing cultural diversity, openness to cultural otherness, empathy, respect, tolerance of ambiguity, flexibility and adaptability, autonomous learning skills, analytical and critical thinking skills, co-operation skills, conflict-resolution skills, knowledge and critical understanding of the self, knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication, knowledge and critical understanding of culture and cultures)

Suggestion #3 regarding evidence of developing competences

As the list included under Suggestion #2 indicates, encounters with people who have different cultural backgrounds from the child can be particularly useful for generating evidence. Intercultural encounters can consist of face-to-face meetings with people who have different cultural backgrounds from the child, or they can take place through social media on the internet. Alternatively, the child might see an image or a representation of someone from another cultural background in a picture or in a programme or film, a magazine or newspaper, etc. The encounter might be with someone from a different country, someone from a different region within the same country or someone who speaks a different language from themselves. Or the encounter can be with someone from a different ethnic group or someone who has a different religion from their own.

In such cases, the child can be encouraged to think about the encounter and their own reactions to it, and their reflections can be captured for inclusion in the portfolio.

Three tools are available to support children's thinking about an intercultural encounter that they have experienced:

- ▶ the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE) (for face-to-face encounters);
- ▶ the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters Through the Internet (AIETI) (for encounters that have taken place through social media and the internet);
- ▶ the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM) (for encounters that have taken place through visual images encountered on television or in the cinema, magazines, newspapers, etc.).

These tools enable a record of the child's behaviour, thoughts and feelings, and their reflections on the encounter, to be captured for inclusion in the portfolio.

All three tools consist of a structured series of questions about the intercultural encounter. The questions take the child back over the encounter, how they responded, how they thought others in the encounter responded, how they thought and felt about it then and now, and what conclusions they can draw from it for the future. There are younger learners versions of all three tools, which are suitable for use with primary school children.

The tools can be used repeatedly over a substantial period of time (for example an entire school year, or even longer), in which case the repeated use should reveal advances and progressions across that period of time in the child's intercultural competences.

All three tools are available from www.coe.int/autobiography. The AIE is available in English, French, Italian, Polish, Spanish and Russian, while the AIETI and AIEVM are available in English and French.

Suggestion #4 regarding evidence of developing competences

A wide range of different types of formative, diagnostic, monitoring and summative assessments can also be included in this section of the portfolio. These assessments can use methods such as open-ended journals or logbooks that are kept by the child, observational assessments, project-based assessments and dynamic assessments (in which the teacher or another adult actively supports the child during the assessment process in order to enable the child to reveal their maximum level of proficiency). Further information about these various methods is available in Chapter 3 on assessment in Volume 3 of the RFCDC.

Any evidence about the child's democratic and intercultural competences that has been generated by the teacher for assessment purposes can be included in this section of the portfolio, together with the achieved results. However, assessments need not be carried out by the teacher only. They can also be carried out by the child themselves, or by one or more peers, or co-assessment can be used (which enables the child or peers to conduct the assessment but allows the teacher to maintain some control over the final assessment). Self-assessment and peer-assessment are very useful insofar as they can help children to acquire a better and clearer understanding of their own and other people's behaviour, and of the expectations that are held about the development of their own competences. Self-assessment and peer-assessment can also help to improve the child's engagement with the educational process.

Assessments for inclusion in the portfolio can also be made by parents, brothers or sisters, grandparents, youth or community leaders, and other people in the local community.

Section 7 – Reflections

This section should contain the child's reflections on the evidence provided in Section 6. Although it is likely that the child will have produced some reflections on their own behaviour in the preceding section (particularly in the labels that will have been used to describe each item of evidence and to explain what the item means about the child's competences), this section provides the child with the opportunity to engage in more extensive and systematic reflections on the evidence that has been collected.

The reflections contained in this section should be produced throughout the process of constructing the portfolio, rather than at the end. In this way, the reflection process will help the child to identify their own learning needs, the areas that require further development, and the actions that need to be taken to advance the child's learning further, while the evidence for the portfolio is still being compiled.

Reflections can be elicited by the teacher engaging in dialogue with the child about the materials in their portfolio, so that the child's reflections are supported and scaffolded. In this case, the reflections will be oral rather than written, and they can be audio-recorded for inclusion in the portfolio. Alternatively, a reflection video can be produced, with the child talking about and explaining the contents of the portfolio, with the teacher asking questions in order to prompt the child's reflections. Reflection videos are particularly useful if the portfolio contains visual materials such as photographs and drawings.

Reflections, feedback or commentaries that have been produced by other people (for example, teachers, parents or peers) on the child's development and progress can also be included in this section. If reflections from other people are included, then the child can provide further reflections on how they have used these reflections and feedback from others in order to progress their own learning.

In addition, collaborative reflections on the contents of the portfolio should take place through dialogue between the child and the teacher. Collaborative reflections entail both parties to the dialogue jointly reflecting on and evaluating the contents of the portfolio together.

Collaborative reflections can also take place between the child and a parent, the child and a peer, or the child, parents and one or more teachers together.

Suggestion #1 regarding reflections

Possible questions that can be used to stimulate the child's reflections about items of evidence in the portfolio include those set out below. The teacher can select a subset of these questions according to the type of evidence that is being discussed (not all questions are relevant to all types of evidence). In doing so, they will need to adapt the wording of the questions to make them relevant to the evidence being discussed. Alternatively, teachers can generate their own questions for eliciting the child's reflections.

General questions that can be used to elicit the child's reflection on the evidence:

- ▶ What is this showing us?
- ▶ Is it showing us anything about you? If yes: What is it showing?
- ▶ What were you trying to do when you did this?
- ▶ Were you successful? If yes: Why were you successful? If no: Why weren't you successful?
- ▶ How did you feel at the time? Did you enjoy doing this, or not? If yes: What did you enjoy about doing it?
- ▶ Was there anything you didn't like about doing this? If yes: What was it you didn't like?
- ▶ How do you feel about it now?
- ▶ What were you thinking at the time? Did you think it was interesting, important, strange or silly or what?
- ▶ What do you think now about what you did?
- ▶ If you did this again, would you do anything differently? If yes: What would you do differently?

When comparing two (or more) items of evidence that were produced at different points in time, which together show that the child has developed, changed or regressed over time, the following questions can be used:

- ▶ What do you think is the difference between these?
- ▶ How do you think you changed between the first and second time?

- ▶ Did you learn anything new between the first and second time? If yes: What did you learn?
- ▶ Do you like the way that you changed? If yes: Why do you like the way you changed? If no: Why don't you like the way you changed?

If other people were involved in the situation:

- ▶ How do you think they were feeling at the time? Why do you think they felt that way?
- ▶ What do you think they were thinking at the time? Why do you think they were thinking this?
- ▶ How do you feel about them? Do you like them, or not like them, or what? Why, what makes you say that?
- ▶ Have you seen them since then? If yes: What happened when you saw them again? Was anything different from the previous time? Did you behave differently when you saw them again? If yes: What was the difference?
- ▶ If the child has not seen them since: Would you like to see them again? If yes: Why would you like to see them again? If no: Why wouldn't you like to see them again?

Questions to elicit the child's reflections on the learning process and to prompt further learning (NB The questions in this sub-section are particularly important for supporting and encouraging the child's development):

- ▶ What do you think you learned by doing this? Did you learn anything new? If yes: What did you learn?
- ▶ Do you think doing this has changed you in any way? If yes: How has it changed you? If no: Are you sure?
- ▶ Could you have tried doing this in any better way? If yes: What could you have done?
- ▶ Is there anything about the way you behaved at the time that puzzles you? If yes: What is it that puzzles you?
- ▶ Since that time, have you tried to learn more about how to do this? If yes: What did you do to try to learn more?
- ▶ Is there anything else that you still need to learn in order to do this better? If yes: What do you still need to learn?
- ▶ Will you try to learn more about how to do this in the future? If yes: What will you do to learn more?
- ▶ If they say they would ask someone else for either information or advice: Who would you ask? What sort of questions would you ask?
- ▶ Do you think you will do anything as a result of you and me having this talk? If yes: What will you do?

To encourage the child to involve other people in the portfolio process, the following questions can be asked:

- ▶ Have you looked at this with your parents? If yes: What did they say about it? If no: Why not?
- ▶ Have you looked at this with anyone else, for example your friends, brothers, sisters or grandparents? If yes: What did they say about it? If no: Why not?

If the child only gives short answers to any questions or gets stuck, the following additional prompts can be used after any of the preceding questions:

- ▶ What else can you tell me?
- ▶ Tell me a little bit more.

Section 8 – Concluding statement

In some cases, there may not be an end point to the process of collecting evidence and reflections for the portfolio. This is because the development of democratic and intercultural competences is a lifelong process – new democratic situations and intercultural encounters continue to be experienced throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood. In such cases, the portfolio may never require the addition of a concluding statement.

However, in other cases, the provider of education may wish to conclude the portfolio process (for example because the child is about to move on to a new educational institution or because the school year is coming to an end). In such cases, it is helpful for the child, with the teacher's support, to produce a concluding statement with which to end the portfolio process. The concluding statement should be used as an opportunity for the child to reflect more broadly on the portfolio process as a whole.

Suggestion #1 regarding the concluding statement

The concluding statement can be produced in a written format if the child's writing abilities are sufficiently developed. Alternatively, it can be produced by the teacher engaging in dialogue with the child in order to support their thinking and reflections – in such cases, the dialogue can be audio-recorded for inclusion in the portfolio.

The concluding statement should reflect on the portfolio process as a whole. The following questions (or adaptations of these questions) can be used to elicit the child's reflections:

- ▶ Which activities did you like or enjoy the most in putting your portfolio together?
- ▶ Which activities were the most important ones for really making you think?
- ▶ Which activities were the most important ones for making you change the way in which you do things?
- ▶ What are the most important things that you have experienced and learned through putting your portfolio together?
- ▶ How has compiling the portfolio changed the way you think about other people?
- ▶ How has compiling the portfolio changed the way you feel about other people?
- ▶ What are the things about the portfolio that you feel most proud about or think were really good? Why do you like these things in particular?
- ▶ What are the things about the portfolio that you didn't like or think were not good? Why didn't you like these things?
- ▶ Will you do anything further in the future as a result of compiling the portfolio? If yes: What will you do?
- ▶ Would you like to engage in more portfolio work in the future? If yes: Why? If no: Why not?
- ▶ Do you have any advice for your teachers on how to create a portfolio in the future?

4. Assessment and the portfolio

The portfolio can be used as the basis for the assessment of learners' competences for democratic culture. Assessment can be either "achievement assessment" or "proficiency assessment".

Achievement assessment is closely linked to specific teaching and learning events, and a learner can include in their portfolio experiences in which one or more competences for democratic culture have been the objectives of teaching and learning. In this case, it is the learner's degree of achievement which is assessed.

Proficiency assessment is instead focused on the competences a learner has at a specific moment, whatever the source of their competences, whether this is inside or outside the school. This means that learners can include experiences which are unrelated to school learning – or even entirely unrelated to school life – in their portfolios. In this case, it is their proficiency which is assessed.

For further discussion of the distinction between achievement and proficiency, see the discussion in Chapter 3 on assessment in Volume 3 of the RFCDC.

Both achievement and proficiency are important elements of assessment and learners should include examples of both in their portfolios.

Self-assessment

The purpose and spirit of the portfolio is to stimulate learners to reflect on and evaluate their competences, actions and learning. Section 7 of the portfolio is dedicated specifically to this purpose, which is why this section must always be included (together with Section 6), whatever changes are made to the contents of the portfolio.

In particular, the reflections that are likely to be elicited through the use of the questions in the Suggestions box in Section 7 above are especially important, because these questions have been deliberately designed to elicit the child's self-assessments of their own competences and learning processes.

Teacher assessment

Assessment by the teacher can serve a variety of purposes. It can be used for formative purposes (that is, to identify learners' present progress and future learning goals), diagnostic purposes (that is, to identify specific learning obstacles or difficulties that learners might be experiencing), monitoring purposes (that is, to monitor whether learners are making expected or sufficient progress) or summative purposes (that is, to obtain a description of the extent to which learners' have achieved the intended learning goals at the end of a period of learning).

Because education systems and schools differ from country to country and region to region, it is possible that summative assessment and the allocation of a grade or mark by the teacher is not always necessary. However, when teacher-assessments are conducted, for whatever purpose, then the following principles and recommendations apply.

When using the portfolio for assessment, steps should be taken to ensure that the assessment is valid, reliable, equitable, transparent and respectful (for an explanation of these concepts in relation to assessment, see the discussion in Chapter 3 on assessment in Volume 3 of the RFCDC). Equity and respectfulness are especially important, and they require that all assessments conducted by the teacher are both respectful and fair towards learners and do not favour or disadvantage any particular group or individual. Thus, all members of a class or group should have a fair and equal opportunity to display their levels of achievement and proficiency through their portfolios.

The documentation that the teacher produces from an assessment may be included in Section 6 of the portfolio (under evidence of developing competences; see Suggestion #4 in Section 6 above). For example, the results of knowledge tests may be included within this section.

It is possible for the teacher to use the descriptors that are provided by the RFCDC to assess children and their progression. If teachers choose to do this, there are certain issues that need to be taken into consideration.

Use of descriptors for assessment

Descriptors are statements or descriptions of what a child is able to do if they have mastered a particular competence to a particular level in a particular context. They provide examples of the concrete observable behaviours that a child will display if they have achieved a certain level of proficiency in a given competence. Where the child has not yet mastered the behaviour specified by a particular descriptor, this lack of mastery may be used to identify goals for further learning by that child.

The RFCDC descriptors use the language of learning outcomes. Each descriptor contains an action verb and the object of that verb, and the behaviour that is described is concrete and observable within an educational setting.

It is likely that with younger learners the set of RFCDC descriptors developed specifically for younger learners and the basic level descriptors listed in the RFCDC will be the most suitable.

Assessments should ideally be based on observations of behaviours that take place over a reasonable period of time and in several different contexts. This is because it is possible that a child displays a behaviour in a single context, for example in the context of a particular learning activity, without displaying this behaviour in any other context.

It should be noted that the RFCDC descriptors are all formulated in positive terms – the descriptors therefore allow recognition of what children can do in a positive way.

Finally, it is worth observing that there may be difficulties in communicating some of the concepts of the RFCDC to young children. For example, the concept of human dignity is highly abstract and may be hard to explain to very young children. In such situations, the teacher may need to translate from the formal language of the competences into more informal language that the child can understand. In such cases, the descriptors may be used to assist with this translation of some of the competences into simpler and more concrete terminology for the child.

5. Legal and ethical issues

The provisions of the (EU) General Data Protection Regulation

It should be noted that, if digital data about a child are being stored by a school that is in the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), this storage is subject to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The GDPR is an EU regulation on data protection and privacy that covers all citizens in the EU and EEA, and it protects individual citizens with regard to the storage and processing of their personal data. Personal data are any information relating to a person where that person can be identified directly or indirectly from those data, or any information held about an individual the processing of which could intrude on that individual's privacy. This information might include, for example, a person's name, date of birth, contact details, political opinions, and religious or philosophical beliefs.

The contents of a portfolio are highly likely to fall into this category. It is recommended that all schools that use the portfolio, irrespective of whether or not their countries are members of the EU or the EEA, comply with the principles of the GDPR. These principles are as follows.

Those who store personal data about children (for example the teacher and the school) must adhere to data protection principles, provide safeguards to protect the data and use the highest possible privacy settings by default. The data controller or processor must also receive consent from the individual whose data are being stored, and that individual has the right to withdraw this consent at any time. The individual also has the right to request a copy of the data that have been collected and the right to have their data erased under certain circumstances. The consent of the individual to have data about them stored must be freely given, specific to the purposes for which the data are being collected and informed so that the purpose(s) of the data are made explicit to the individual.

In the case of children, there is a two-stage process. In the first stage, informed consent for storing data about them should first be obtained from parents, guardians or others with a legal duty of care for the child. This consent should not be interpreted as meaning that the child has consented to participate, but instead allows consent to be sought from the child. In the second stage, active informed consent to participate in the portfolio process should then also be obtained from the child, before work on the portfolio commences.

An example of an information sheet that can be used for obtaining consent from parents, guardians or carers for their child to participate in the portfolio process is provided in Appendix 2.

Freedom of expression and assessment of values and attitudes

A crucial and frequently asked question in assessment is whether it is appropriate to assess learners' values and attitudes. The key word here is "respect". It is crucial that teachers respect the values and attitudes of learners, as explained below.

One view is that assessing values and attitudes is inappropriate, because it infringes children's rights to freedom of thought and expression. This view is supported by the fact that the European Convention on Human Rights explicitly grants everyone the rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of expression, and freedom from discrimination. The Convention also states that the "Freedom to manifest one's ... beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others" (Article 9.2).

In order to acknowledge this position, teachers should censure children if and only if the expression of their views spreads, incites or justifies hatred based on intolerance, which has the potential to undermine the rights and freedoms of others. Otherwise, there should be no censoring of learners in an assessment if they express views that are deemed contrary to the values and attitudes contained in the RFCDC.

Another view is that assessment helps to stimulate further learning. For example, learners might develop more nuanced formulations of their values and attitudes as a consequence of feedback from assessment. Questions of values and attitudes and their assessment thus also have pedagogical implications. If learners' values and attitudes are assessed in order to assist in fostering their development, teachers must respect the values and attitudes of learners, provided they do not violate the rights of others or incite hatred.

Ethical issues may arise as a consequence of assessment or at other moments of teaching and learning, especially if the learner expresses negativity or hostility. Extreme negativity will need to be followed up at a later

time in consultation with others such as school authorities. However, milder negative reactions may eventually assist the learner in their learning, and teachers need to discuss – preferably in the team who have access to the portfolio – how they wish to deal with such matters.

Some useful resources

A detailed treatment of all the ethical issues which could arise is beyond the scope of this guide. However, it may be useful for teachers to be aware of the following resources for dealing with racism and intolerance towards others, which are available from the Council of Europe:

Compassito – Manual on human rights education for children (2nd edition), Council of Europe, Strasbourg. [Available in English, French, Hungarian and Russian from www.coe.int/en/web/youth/manuals-and-handbooks]

Gollob R., Krapf P. and Weidinger W. (eds) (2010), *Growing up in democracy: lesson plans for primary level on democratic citizenship and human rights* (EDC/HRE Volume II), Council of Europe, Strasbourg. [Available in English, French, Georgian, Icelandic, Russian and Ukrainian from www.coe.int/en/web/edc/living-democracy-manuals]

Gollob R. and Krapf P. (2007), *Exploring children's rights: nine short projects for primary level* (EDC/HRE Volume V), Council of Europe, Strasbourg. [Available in English, French, Albanian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, German, Hungarian, Macedonian and Russian, from www.coe.int/en/web/edc/living-democracy-manuals]

Appendix 1

The underlying principles of the younger learners portfolio

The portfolio may² be used for teaching, learning and assessment purposes

The RFCDC portfolio is intended to assist learners in developing their own competences for democratic culture (CDCs), and to enable teachers to support and promote the development of learners' CDCs.

The portfolio is also intended to enable the teacher, or the teacher and learner working together, to assess the learner's emerging proficiency in the use of CDCs across a range of situations and contexts and over time.

The portfolio should be co-constructed by the learner and the teacher

The portfolio should be co-constructed by the learner and the teacher working together towards the goal of promoting, supporting and enhancing the processes of learning and reflection in the learner. The teacher should work with the learner to help them to compile the portfolio, and the teacher may also add particular activities and assignments to the portfolio for the learner to work on that are specifically designed to foster the learner's ongoing development.

It is helpful if the teacher and the learner begin by mutually establishing the learning needs of the learner and identifying areas for further development. On this basis, the teacher can then provide guidance on the learning outcomes that the learner is expected to achieve through the use of the portfolio, and on the activities that the learner can undertake in order to achieve those outcomes.

In addition, the teacher should provide guidance about:

- ▶ ways in which material may be collected or generated for inclusion in the portfolio;
- ▶ the criteria that should be used for selecting material for inclusion in the portfolio;
- ▶ the ways in which the contents of the portfolio may be organised and presented.

The learner should actively engage in:

- ▶ generating, collecting and selecting documentary material for inclusion in the portfolio as evidence of their proficiency in the use of CDCs;
- ▶ critically reflecting on the contents of the portfolio, especially in relation to the expected learning outcomes and their own learning processes;
- ▶ organising and presenting the contents of the portfolio.

Additional documentary evidence may be generated by the teacher specifically for assessment purposes (for example by using a written or oral test). This additional assessment material, together with the achieved results, may be included in the portfolio and used by the teacher and the learner to reflect further on the learner's current level of proficiency and the future learning outcomes that they are expected to achieve.

Crucially, the portfolio should be viewed as a tool that not only documents, but also creates opportunities for, the learner's own active agency, learning and reflection. In particular, it should support the learner in making sense of, interpreting and evaluating their own performance, learning progressions, achievements and proficiency. Furthermore, learners should be allowed to be innovative and imaginative in creating their portfolios, so that their portfolios genuinely reflect and express their own personal perspective and voice.

2. In this appendix, the term "may" is used to denote an optional feature of the RFCDC Portfolio, whereas the term "should" is used to denote an obligatory feature.

Based on the right to respect for private and family life, the learner has the right to withhold any materials that they do not wish to disclose through the portfolio

Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights states that everyone has the right to respect for their private and family life, their home and their correspondence, and that there should be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right (except in a range of specific areas such as the prevention of disorder or crime, the protection of health, and the protection of the rights and freedoms of others). This means that, under the Convention, the learner has the right to withhold information about their private and family life which they do not wish to disclose in their portfolio, and education authorities cannot compel the learner to disclose information which they wish to withhold. This right of the learner must be respected by the teacher.

The portfolio should be based explicitly on the competences that are specified by the RFCDC

For the portfolio to be used for teaching, learning or assessment purposes in relationship to the RFCDC, the contents of the portfolio need to provide evidence of the learner's proficiency in the use of the CDCs that are specified by the RFCDC, and reflections on the learning processes that have led to that proficiency.

The portfolio should record evidence concerning the dynamic, fluid and adaptive mobilisation and deployment of clusters of competences within specific situations

The RFCDC proposes that, in real-life situations, CDCs are rarely mobilised and used individually. Instead, they are much more likely to be used in clusters. Depending on the situation and the specific demands, challenges and opportunities which that situation presents, as well as the specific needs of the individual within the situation, different subsets of competences are likely to be activated and deployed (see RFCDC, Volume 1, pp. 32–35). Furthermore, any given situation also changes over time. Consequently, an effective and adaptive response requires constant monitoring of the situation and appropriate ongoing adjustment of the competences being used. In other words, according to the RFCDC, a competent individual will mobilise and deploy competences in a fluid, dynamic and adaptive manner in order to meet the constantly shifting demands, challenges and opportunities that arise in democratic and intercultural situations. For these reasons, the portfolio should record evidence of the dynamic and adaptive mobilisation and deployment of entire clusters of CDCs within particular situations by the learner. Project work, extracurricular activities and service learning are all extremely rich and productive contexts in which learners can learn to apply clusters of CDCs in practice.

That said, there may be some circumstances in which an individual competence (for example, analytical and critical thinking skills) may be demonstrated on its own (for example through the learner's analysis of a specific problem), rather than alongside other CDCs as part of a cluster. Evidence concerning the learner's ability to deploy and utilise a single specific competence appropriately and effectively within a given context may also be included within the portfolio.

Crucially, however, the portfolio overall should be viewed as a tool that allows for a holistic understanding of learning as a contextually situated, practice-based and emerging process. As such, the portfolio has the potential to capture the fundamentally dynamic and contextualised nature of both learning and competence.

Finally, it should be noted that democratic and intercultural experiences are not limited to situations that occur only at the local, regional or national level. They can also have an international dimension in terms of the democratic institutions that are involved or the intercultural encounters that occur. Evidence recorded in the portfolio may cover situations, experiences and encounters at the local, regional, national or international level.

The RFCDC descriptors should be used as learning outcomes

The descriptors for the 20 competences provided as part of the RFCDC (see Volume 2) should be used to determine expected learning outcomes for learners. The descriptors have been formulated using the language of learning outcomes – thus, each descriptor contains an action verb and the object of that verb, and the behaviour that is described is observable and assessable with use of the descriptors. The descriptors for older learners have also been scaled to one of three levels of proficiency (basic, intermediate or advanced). Because the portfolio needs to provide evidence of and reflections on the learner's proficiency in mobilising and using the 20 CDCs that are specified by the RFCDC, the descriptors may be used to determine the specific learning outcomes at which the learner should be aiming through the use of the portfolio. The descriptors

may also be used to identify specific areas for further learning, and to support the assessment of patterns of proficiency through the portfolio after a period of learning has taken place.

The materials that are compiled in the portfolio should focus not only on the development of learners' skills, knowledge and critical understanding, but also on the development of learners' values and attitudes

The RFCDC posits that democratic competence requires not only skills, knowledge and critical understanding, it also requires a range of values and attitudes. Furthermore, the empirical work that was used to validate and scale the descriptors for the values and attitudes in the RFCDC revealed that it is not only skills, knowledge and critical understanding that may be displayed at either a basic, intermediate or advanced level of proficiency – values and attitudes may also be displayed at any one of these three levels of proficiency.

For this reason, the portfolio should be used to capture evidence about, and reflections on, the learner's levels of proficiency in values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and critical understanding alike. In other words, the materials that are compiled in the portfolio should document the learner's levels of proficiency in all four categories of CDCs, including values and attitudes, and the learner should be encouraged to reflect on their proficiency in all four categories of competence.

The evidence that is compiled in the portfolio should be derived from multiple sources

The evidence that is collected in the portfolio should be drawn from formal, non-formal and informal educational settings.³ In other words, the evidence may be drawn from activities that take place in the classroom, in other school settings such as the playground, in youth clubs or organisations, while taking a course or training programme outside the school, on visits to community organisations, on encountering other people in the street, on visits to other countries, in the family home, in the peer group, while consuming mass media content while interacting with others through social media. Because the RFCDC construes proficiency as the mobilisation and deployment of CDCs across a range of situations, both within and beyond the classroom, evidence concerning proficiency should be derived from a wide range of varied sources.

The portfolio should document the development of the learner's proficiency and the changes in the learner's behaviour that have occurred over time across varieties of situations and contexts

The portfolio should document not only the learner's current proficiency; it should also document developments and advances (and regressions, where these occur) in the learner's proficiency and behaviour over time and across varieties of situations and contexts. In short, the portfolio should be a "progress portfolio" that displays evidence of development, change and achievement over time (rather than a "showcase portfolio" in which only the learner's best work or evidence of attainment is compiled).

The portfolio should contain evidence about both proficiency and achievement

Proficiency and achievement are two distinct but related concepts (see RFCDC, Volume 3, p. 60). As already noted, proficiency is construed by the RFCDC as the mobilisation and deployment of CDCs (including values and attitudes) across a range of different situations. By contrast, achievement is construed by the RFCDC as what the learner has acquired from a particular course of study and is more closely tied to a specific syllabus or programme of learning. Achievement concerns the improvement in the learner's CDCs that has occurred as a result of participating in that course of study, and how they have progressed since the start of the course.

3. The RFCDC defines formal, non-formal and informal education in the following way (see RFCDC, Volume 1, footnote, p. 19): "Formal education" is the structured education and training system that runs from pre-primary and primary through secondary school and on to university; it takes place, as a rule, at general or vocational educational institutions and leads to certification. "Non-formal education" is any planned programme of education designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational setting. "Informal education" is the lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in their own environment and from daily experience (family, peer group, neighbours, encounters, library, mass media, work, play, etc.). These definitions are taken from the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education www.coe.int/en/web/educ-charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education.

The portfolio should include evidence of both proficiency and achievement. Evidence of achievement may be derived solely from the school context, whereas evidence of proficiency should be obtained across a wider range of varied situations, including situations beyond the classroom and the school.

The portfolio should document the efforts that the learner has made to develop proficiency

In addition to documenting the learner's progress, the portfolio should contain evidence of the efforts that the learner has made to enhance their CDCs. For example, it could include evidence of: self-generated efforts that have been made to exercise, extend or consolidate CDCs in novel contexts and situations; non-formal educational courses that have been voluntarily undertaken; voluntary activities that have been undertaken in the community; and efforts to engage in intercultural activities and encounters.

The portfolio should document obstacles that the learner has faced in the use of CDCs

The portfolio should be viewed as a place for documenting not only proficiency, achievement and attainment, but also for documenting unsolved challenges or obstacles to learning and progress in developing the CDCs. The portfolio should provide an inclusive, open and "honest" space for the learner to reflect on their failures and on the role that these failures may have played in promoting their progress and development.

The materials that are compiled in the portfolio may be provided in multiple formats

Because the materials that are assembled in the portfolio should present compelling evidence about the learner's levels of proficiency across a range of diverse situations, they may be provided in multiple formats. For example, the evidence may consist of artefacts (documents that have been produced by the learner such as essays, reports, reviews, projects, etc.) recordings (photographs, videos, audio recordings, drawings, etc.), and various forms of assessments of the learner's competences (self-assessments, peer-assessments, teacher-assessments, parent-assessments, assessments by youth or community leaders, assessments by others in the local community, etc.).

The portfolio should facilitate and stimulate the learner's critical reflections on their competences

The portfolio should contain not only evidence of the learner's proficiency in the use of CDCs, but also reflections produced by the learner in which subsets of the evidence are summarised and critically evaluated and assessed with the help of the descriptors. It is of most benefit to learners' development if they produce these reflections throughout the period in which they are working on their portfolios (rather than only at the end), so that the reflection process helps them to identify their own learning needs, the areas that require further development, and the actions that they should undertake in the future to develop their proficiency further.

These reflections should contain the learner's critical reflections on:

- ▶ the learning outcomes that were expected;
- ▶ the progress that has been made towards reaching those outcomes, as indexed by the evidence presented;
- ▶ the learning process in which the learner engaged (for example whether and how it involved concrete experience, evidence gathering, observation, analysis, generalisation, active experimentation, feedback) in order to progress towards those outcomes;
- ▶ the patterns of proficiency that have been reached in the use of CDCs across diverse situations and contexts;
- ▶ learning goals for the future.

Reflections should therefore contain not only the learner's account of the history or trajectory of their learning experience as they see it, and an account of their current proficiency, but also an account of their future learning goals (using the competences and the descriptors as a guide to identifying these goals).

The portfolio may also contain reflections, feedback or commentaries that have been produced by other people (for example teachers, parents or peers) on the learner's development and progress. If the portfolio does include reflections from other people, then the learner should provide further reflections on how they have used these reflections and feedback from others in order to progress their own learning.

In addition, collaborative reflections on the contents of the portfolio should take place through dialogue between the learner and the teacher. Collaborative reflections may also take place between the learner and a parent, the learner and a peer, or the learner, parents and one or more teachers together. In a collaborative reflection, all parties to the dialogue jointly reflect on and evaluate the contents of the portfolio. Such collectively generated reflections can be extremely useful for eliciting additional perspectives on the progress made by the learner, and can help to stimulate further development and progress in the learner. Collaborative reflection is also a particularly useful opportunity for teachers to provide the learner with positive and affirmative feedback on their achievements to date.

The portfolio may be used within a single-subject, integrated or cross-curricular approach to citizenship education

Citizenship education is taught in three main ways in European countries: as a separate subject; integrated into broader subjects or learning areas such as the social sciences or language studies; or through a cross-curricular approach that is taught by all teachers within the school. The portfolio may be used in conjunction with all of these approaches. However, when citizenship education is taught through either an integrated or cross-curricular approach, this will require the teachers in all of the subjects involved to co-operate with each other in order to ensure that the learner receives consistent advice and support from all teachers. The precise manner in which learners are supported in compiling their portfolios within an integrated or cross-curricular system is a matter for the school and the teachers involved to decide, but in all cases it should involve active collaboration between teachers.

The portfolio may be used within a whole-school approach

A whole-school approach to the RFCDC ensures that all aspects of school life – curricula, teaching methods, teaching resources, leadership, decision-making structures and processes, policies, codes of behaviour, extracurricular activities, links with the community, and teacher–teacher, teacher–learner and learner–learner relationships – reflect democratic, intercultural and human rights principles (see RFCDC, Volume 3, Chapter 5). A whole-school approach requires the active involvement and commitment of all stakeholders in the school, and the joint effort and co-operation of school principals, teachers, learners, parents, administrative and support staff, and members of the local community with whom the school has links.

The portfolio lends itself readily to use within a whole-school approach because, in such an approach, the classroom, the wider school environment and links with the local community will all operate on the basis of democratic, intercultural and human rights principles. As a consequence, not only the classroom and the school but also the local community can provide suitable places in which learners can acquire relevant experience and exercise their CDCs. Thus, evidence for the portfolio may be readily generated by learners through their experience of, for example, elections of class representatives, the functioning of school councils, learner involvement in school decision making and governance, voluntary service performed within the local community, and intercultural experiences obtained in the local community.

Appendix 2

Example of an information sheet for obtaining consent

Example of an information sheet for obtaining consent from parents, guardians or carers for their child to participate in the portfolio process

*** Note that this information sheet may be adapted according to local, educational and legal circumstances, needs and practices ***

You are being invited to enable your child to take part in the portfolio project. Before you decide whether to allow them to take part in the project, it is important for you to understand why the portfolio work is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the portfolio?

The purpose of the portfolio is to help your child to develop the competences that will enable them to act as a responsible and respectful democratic citizen. It will also enable your child's teacher(s) to help your child to develop these competences. In addition, the portfolio will enable your child's teacher(s) to assess your child's proficiency in using their competences across a range of situations.

The portfolio work will take place from xxxx to xxxx [fill in the start and end dates of the portfolio work].

Why has my child been chosen?

We are approaching all parents of children in xxxx [fill in the names of all the classes in the school in which children are being recruited to work on the portfolio] of your child's school to volunteer for the portfolio project.

Does my child have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not your child should take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep, and you will be asked to sign the consent slip that is appended to the bottom of this form. You can still withdraw your child at any time without it affecting any benefits that you or your child are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

What will happen if my child takes part?

Your child will take part in the portfolio project in the school. Information about your child's citizenship competences will be collected through various means. Teachers will talk to your child about their activities, and may record their responses either on a voice recorder or on video. Teachers and children may also take photographs of various chosen activities.

All relevant ethical, health and safety regulations will be adhered to throughout the portfolio project. Your child can stop participating in the portfolio work at any point.

All adults working with children will be subject to relevant safeguarding checks, as appropriate to the institution in which the project takes place.

Your child's portfolio data will be stored securely at school on xxxx [fill in details of how the data will be stored].

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your child will acquire new competences that will enable them to behave with confidence as a responsible and respectful citizen at school, at home and in the wider community. They may also enjoy taking part in the portfolio project activities.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

We cannot identify any disadvantages or risks associated with taking part in the portfolio project, only benefits.

Will my child’s taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that we collect about your child during the course of the portfolio project will be kept strictly confidential. Data on your child will only be shared between the teacher, child and parents/guardians.

Will my child be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

Your child can be recorded using a digital voice recorder and a camcorder. Your child’s photographs may also be taken. The portfolio content will not be shared outside the classroom. It will be used only by the teacher, the child and their family. The same applies to digital portfolios that fulfil the conditions of EU data protection policy.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about the portfolio project, please contact the following person at your child’s school for further information:

xxxx [complete the name and contact details of the relevant contact person]

.....

Consent slip

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information about the portfolio project, and I freely consent to my child participating in this project.

.....

Name of child

.....

Name of parent or guardian

Signature

Date

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This portfolio is intended for use in conjunction with the Council of Europe's *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (RFCDC). It requires learners to compile documents – such as recordings, texts and images – which demonstrate how they are using their competences for democratic culture in diverse situations within and beyond school. The portfolio supports learners in reflecting critically on their developing competences, and in thinking about how they will further develop their competences in the future. The contents of the portfolio also provide evidence about how a learner's proficiency in the use of these competences is developing, evidence which may be used for either formative or summative assessment purposes.

There are two versions of the portfolio: a version for younger learners, that is, children up to approximately the age of 10-11 years; and a standard version, for learners from approximately 10-11 years upwards. Each version is accompanied by a guide for teachers. The present volume contains the younger learners version.

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