

# DEMOCRACY IN THE MAKING

Good practices from five years  
of Regional Summer Academies  
“Democracy at School  
and Human Rights in Action”

Compiled by the European Wergeland Centre

Editor **Ted Huddleston**

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# Foreword

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## Council of Europe

**T**he Council of Europe – sometimes called ‘the European watchdog on human rights’ – is an intergovernmental organisation with 47 member States. To promote the fundamental values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, the Council of Europe has developed throughout the sixty-five years of its existence numerous monitoring instruments, treaties and conventions, of which the European Convention on Human Rights is the most important.

However, the ‘watchdog’ function needs to be supported by competence-building and preventive action, notably through education. Learning about human rights and democracy, and how they function in practice, starts in childhood and advances throughout school and university. Only by developing our skills and competences over time can we become active citizens in a sustainable democratic society. The more we know about the principles of democracy, and the better we understand them, the more we are able to apply them in everyday life.

Translating the policy standards of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education into concrete action is exactly what the Regional Summer Academies have been doing for five years by bringing together students, teachers, parents and NGOs. The ambitious mission of the Summer Academies is to gradually change common perceptions and established practices particularly in schools, but also in society in general. The Academies are a model of an equal and free democratic environment.

This booklet is a fine illustration of what can be achieved through concrete action and co-operation. The examples of school projects show the challenges and celebrate the achievements. I strongly believe that they will inspire future generations of Academy participants.

The Summer Academies project owes a lot of its success to the commitment and dedication of the authorities of Poland and Montenegro, who host the annual Regional Summer Academies with open arms, and to our valued partner the European Wergeland Centre.

Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković  
Director General of Democracy  
Council of Europe

## Polish Ministry of Education and the Polish Centre for Education Development

Since 2010, five editions of the Summer Academy have been organised in Poland. The project was developed by the Ministry of National Education and the Centre for Education Development in Warsaw in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the European Wergeland Centre in Oslo.

In the framework of the project, the Council of Europe trainers have carried out training sessions for 51 teams composed of 3 education leaders (a director and a teacher from the same school and a representative from an NGO or a parents’ association or teacher training institution) from the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) as well as Russia and Poland.

Poland initiated the Summer Academy in order to promote and strengthen human rights, democracy and the rule of law in school environments – the values based on the legacy of the Solidarity movement and the principles of the Council of Europe.

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights education cannot be the sole responsibility of schools. The Summer Academies have a significant impact on understanding the role and value of education as an important element of teaching civic attitudes and laying down the basis of democracy, encouraging the school to give young people a possibility to acquire civic experience as well as on empowering different school partners to take community actions together.

Good practices, initiated and implemented by the former participants of the Summer Academies acting as multipliers and “leaders of changes” in their local environments, present an interesting picture of how the undertaken activities foster these values and contribute to the civil society development in the involved countries.

Selected examples also illustrate that the school could be both an institution and a community aimed at:

- ▶ helping to understand the modern world
- ▶ strengthening ties with local, regional, national and international community,
- ▶ supporting independent thinking and judgement
- ▶ encouraging participation in public life
- ▶ teaching solidarity, self-responsibility and responsibility for others
- ▶ enabling understanding of how important democratic institutions and procedures are
- ▶ teaching the rules of cooperation and participation in public life and helping students to believe in one's potential and teaching how to use it

As Ewa Dudek, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of National Education in Poland, puts it:

"The European identity of culture and education is already present in many declarations and undertakings of the Council of Europe. However, we devote little attention to the implementation of common principles of democratic societies. Therefore, our continent is not free from conflicts, intolerance and breach of democratic freedoms. Joint actions are also necessary in the area of education for the benefit of the civil society. I believe that the Summer Academies will actively and effectively support the process of building a peaceful and democratic Europe through education".

Ms Stefania Wilkiel  
Counsellor to the Minister, Ministry  
of National Education, Poland,  
Strategy and International  
Cooperation Department

Ms Marlena Fałkowska  
Deputy Director, Centre  
for Development Education, Poland  
Council of Europe coordinator for education  
for democratic citizenship and human rights

## European Wergeland Centre (EWC)

The Council of Europe Charter for All – the child-friendly version of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights – says it quite well in its introduction: "The Charter is a legal document about things that concern everyone".

It's that simple. It's that difficult.

Because even if issues of democracy and human rights concern everyone, it might be hard to see exactly how they concern your life, your school, your community. It might be even harder to know what to do about it. For five years the Regional Summer Academies have supported school heads, teachers, parents and local community representatives in their efforts to turn vague notions into concrete plans for specific actions for sustainable change in practice.

The people who share their experiences in this booklet all took part in a Regional Summer Academy. Their stories are an inspiration for everyone. Therefore, the European Wergeland Centre and our partners in the Council of Europe, Poland and Montenegro have compiled here some of the many strong examples of how teachers, school heads, parents and local community representatives acted to make human rights and democratic principles a living reality in school life.

These stories are prime examples of actual implementation of policy standards like the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights in practice. Equally important however, is how these practices in turn can and should inform policy. The European Wergeland Centre was established to bridge policy and practice. It is our task not only to bring policy into practice, but also to draw the attention of policymakers locally, nationally and regionally to how democratic innovation happens on the ground. We are proud to highlight here how these very competent and dedicated educational professionals and community actors have made positive changes in practice which resonate far beyond their schools and local communities.

The European Wergeland Centre wish to thank all participants of the Regional Summer Academies – both those featured here and the many that are not – for showing how these "things that concern everyone" are crucial in building a culture where principles of democracy and human rights can be learned and practiced.

Ms Ana Perona Fjeldstad  
Executive Director, European Wergeland Centre



Outreach of the Summer Academies: Democracy at School and Human Rights in Action

# Introduction

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In summer 2010, a regional training programme in citizenship and human rights education was piloted in Poland. It was a resounding success. This was the beginning of the Summer Academy – a new regional approach to school-based professional development - education for democratic citizenship and human rights education implemented by schools in close co-operation with partners from the local community. Two years later, a similar event was held in Montenegro to equal acclaim.

Since then, hundreds of participants from 21 countries from Eastern and South East Europe, Poland, Russia and South Caucasus have benefited from the carefully designed and customised training that has become the hallmark of the Summer Academy programme. It has inspired numerous educational initiatives in the participants' home countries and helped to make democracy and respect for human rights a living reality for hundreds of young people in schools across Europe.

## Poland

The first Summer Academy held in Poland was suggested by the Polish Ministry of Education at the inaugural ceremony of the European Wergeland Centre in Oslo, Norway in 2009. The Academy Democracy at School took place the following year as a joint project developed by the Ministry of Education, the Polish Centre for Education Development, the Council of Europe and the European Wergeland Centre. Since then, the Summer Academy has developed into an annual event involving teams from the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), Poland and Russia.

## Montenegro

The first South East Europe Summer Academy Human Rights in Action was held in Montenegro in 2012. It was organised, as a joint activity, by the Government of Montenegro (Ministry of Education and Sports and the Bureau of Educational Services), the Council of Europe and the European Wergeland Centre. Every year in summer, teams from South East Europe join the Academy, from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Kosovo<sup>1</sup>, "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Romania, Slovenia, Serbia and Turkey.

## The first five years

This booklet has been written to celebrate the first five years in the life of the Summer Academy and to highlight some of the innovative practice which has emerged during this time. It shows just what can be achieved when education for democratic citizenship and human rights is taken seriously in schools, and encourages educational practitioners and decision-makers to further action in this field.

Linking policy with practice, it also shows how the Council of Europe Charter can be used as a key reference point for all those dealing with citizenship and human rights education, and confirms the central role of this important political framework in raising awareness of core European values and encouraging the active engagement of Europe's citizens.

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1. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.



## Council of Europe Charter

“One of the fundamental goals of all education for democratic citizenship and human rights education is not just equipping learners with knowledge, understanding and skills, but also empowering them with the readiness to take action in society in the defence and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.”

Education plays an essential role in the promotion of the core European values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as in the prevention of human rights violations. It is also increasingly seen as a defence against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance.

It is for this reason that in 2010 the 47 member states of the Council of Europe adopted *the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*.

This non-binding Charter requires democracy and human rights education to be made available to all European citizens of whatever age – including in schools as a subject, a cross-curricular theme and an approach to learning and school governance, as well as in teacher education and inter-school and international co-operation.

Further information: [www.coe.int/edc](http://www.coe.int/edc)

## How do the Summer Academies work?

Summer Academies are organised jointly by the European Wergeland Centre, the Council of Europe and the government of the host country.

They offer specialised training in education for democratic citizenship and human rights for teams of school heads, teachers and representatives from the local community, such as parents, NGOs and teacher training institutions.

The format is simple but effective: a one-week, concentrated, face-to-face training seminar - preceded by a set of school-based preparatory tasks and followed up with personalised online support from the trainers via the European Wergeland Centre's online platform Share & Connect. During this time each team develops and implements an action plan with concrete activities and projects aimed at fostering a more democratic culture in their school.

## Share & Connect

Share & Connect is the European Wergeland Centre's online community of practice for anyone interested in education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural understanding. It is used by participants, trainers and organisers of the Summer Academies to facilitate communication, collaborative work, follow-up and sharing of experiences before, during and after the face-to-face training. More than 1300 education professionals from 100 countries worldwide are currently connected on Share & Connect.

To join Share& Connect, go to: [www.theewc.org](http://www.theewc.org)

The content of each Summer Academy programme is closely linked to the participants' own experiences and is customised, wherever possible, to reflect local and professional needs. The opportunity for teams to share their experiences and practices is built in at every stage of the programme, with a view to initiating and strengthening co-operation and intercultural understanding between participating countries.

“The most valuable learning experience from the Academy was to experience the way we worked together, for example during the activity the Ideal School. We are coming from different environments, but can have the same ideals.” Participant, South East Europe Summer Academy, 2012

## A “whole-school” approach

Although classroom teachers play a crucial role in equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to become active citizens, teachers cannot do this alone. For democracy and respect for human rights to become a reality in young people's lives it has to become a reality in the life of the school itself.

This is why the Summer Academy programme has adopted a ‘whole-school’ approach to training – addressing issues of democracy and human rights on a range of levels, from teacher competences and classroom methodologies to school ethos and governance, and the contribution of community partnerships.

It is an approach which encourages the active participation of all school stakeholders in school life – parents and community members as well as students, teachers and school administrators. To facilitate this, each school team represented at the Academy brings together a teacher, the school head and a local community actor



The first Summer Academy opened in Poland in 2010

to design and implement their school improvement plan. During the implementation stage, many teams also co-operate with their local or national authorities.

The Summer Academy was an exceptional training opportunity that provided me with incentive, skills, and knowledge to actively partake in school democratization process in Armenia – a process extremely vital in Armenia's development path towards European integration. NGO representative, Armenia, Yerevan

### The medium is the message

The Summer Academy approach to learning is predominantly an active and participatory one. This is another important aspect of the programme. By experiencing active and participatory methods of teaching and learning at first hand, participants become better able both to use such methods themselves and to understand their role in democratic and human rights education.

Training sessions are intended to be fun and enjoyable as well as informative. They are delivered by experienced teams of international trainers, using a range of Council of Europe training manuals and resources.

### Alumni Academy Network Online

In 2013, in response to overwhelming demand from Summer Academy alumni participants, an alumni network was set up on the online platform Share & Connect. The network enables alumni to build on what they had achieved in school and further their professional development. Today, this network involves over 130 Academy alumni, who come together to exchange new ideas and resources, organise workshops and events, and search for partner schools across Europe.

### Examples of good practice

The main part of this booklet is taken up with examples of school projects devised and implemented as part of the Academy process. It provides an opportunity for a range of former Academy participants from different countries to share some of their successes and the challenges they had to overcome in achieving these.

These examples are just a small selection from the large number of initiatives stimulated by the Summer Academies to date – many of which are still on-going and go from strength to strength. Together they testify to the exciting work which is currently being undertaken in European schools in the field of citizenship and human rights education and to the undoubted effectiveness and sustainability of the Summer Academy as a training model.

The booklet aims to facilitate exchange of experiences between education professionals and policy makers, and act as an inspiration for future action in this field.

### Selection criteria

The examples of good practice described in this booklet were selected according to a number of specific criteria, including:

- ▶ relevance to the principles and articles in the Council of Europe Charter,
- ▶ potential to reach a wide range of practitioners and stakeholders,
- ▶ sustainability beyond the life of the project itself,
- ▶ innovation and creativity of approach,
- ▶ range of countries and Summer Academy years.





Children sketching the city of their dreams

” Member states should include education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in the curricula for formal education

Article 6

# Curriculum

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**H**ow do you teach democracy and respect for human rights in school? Where do you begin? In the same way and where you begin to teach anything else - in the classroom with well-planned lessons that students find interesting and make them think.

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education puts lessons in democracy and human rights at the head of its policy recommendations. There are very good reasons for this. Making citizenship and human rights a formal curriculum requirement is a way of ensuring it is taken seriously by teachers and becomes a genuine entitlement for all students at school. It is also a way of ensuring students have the opportunity for in-depth and challenging learning experiences, which, in turn, helps them put their other learning – say, through taking part in a student council or community action – into perspective.

## Active learning

Making it a formal requirement doesn't mean that the teaching itself has to be formal. Quite the opposite: as the experience of the Lijepa naša School in Croatia shows, collaborative and experiential learning is the lifeblood of democracy and human rights teaching. In this subject, the medium is definitely the message. Students should not be encouraged to think of it as just another set of facts to memorise and repeat in an examination, but as relevant in their everyday lives.

## A separate subject?

A question that often arises is: Should education for democratic citizenship and human rights education be a separate subject? There are arguments for and against. Two things are clear, however. Firstly, it should always be more than a subject – a living experience in school life as a whole as well as in the classroom. Secondly, if it is to be taught in all subjects, it is essential that teachers concerned know what is involved and are comfortable with it. This is the aim of Summer Academy alumni in Risan in Montenegro, who, despite already having a subject called Civic Education in their school curriculum, think it is important for citizenship and human rights education to be a 'guiding point' for all teachers.

*Should education for democratic citizenship and human rights education be a separate subject?*





Children at the primary school in Tuhelj, Croatia

## Teaching for democracy and human rights – Croatia

At Lijepa naša primary school in Tuhelj, Croatia, teachers are using modern teaching methods to promote tolerance, non-violent conflict resolution and empathy in the classroom.

Following the Summer Academy in Montenegro, Natalija Knezić Medvedec (school head), Snježana Romić (homeroom teacher) and Ljiljana Žegrec (teacher of English) set up a project to promote education for democratic citizenship and human rights across their school curriculum.

Their first goal was to draw teachers' attention towards the subject and what it involves. An initial survey showed a lack of awareness about the subject, about active learning methods, and about appropriate learning resources and where they might be found. On the positive side, however, most of the teachers said they were willing to learn.

The Summer Academy team arranged some teacher workshops at school on methods and resources. Using their experience from Montenegro, they helped their fellow teachers to plan lessons of their own.

### Lesson planning

One group of homeroom teachers worked with Kompasito. They used an activity called Sailing to a new land, aimed at helping students think about

what is important for survival and human development, and consider the connection between human needs and human rights. Students were to work in groups, sharing ideas and reaching decisions collaboratively. Another developed an activity called The Battle for the Orange. This aimed at raising students' awareness of the importance of communication in conflict situations, and of strategies they might use for conflict resolution.

Meanwhile, teachers of subjects were encouraged to incorporate active learning methods into their everyday subject teaching – such as debates, role-play, text summaries and class presentations.

### Overwhelmingly positive response

The response was overwhelmingly positive. A 6<sup>th</sup>-grade student said, "It was interesting and fun, and it was nice to listen to others and work in pairs and groups." The teachers were just as enthusiastic. A 1<sup>st</sup>-grade teacher, observed, "I am extremely happy with these workshops. It gave me a lot of joy to observe motivated students who offered their opinions, discussed and reached group decisions".

In a follow-up survey, comments were received which suggested that the benefits of introducing democracy and human rights education into the curriculum went far beyond the subject itself. One said: "Using active learning and teaching methods proved to be an easier and more interesting way of acquiring new knowledge." Another, from a Maths teacher, was,

“Low-achieving students participated more than usually, and we could feel that they were satisfied with their achievements.”

*“It was interesting and fun and it was nice to listen to others and work in pairs and groups” Student, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Tuhelj, Croatia*

### **A “guiding point” for all teachers – Montenegro**

Dragutin Scekcic (school head), Nataša Dendić (NGO) and Tanja Rotković (Italian and English language teacher) returned from the Summer Academy in Montenegro to Risan enthused with the idea of establishing a common understanding of the principles of democracy and human rights education throughout their school.

There already was a separate subject called Civic Education in the Montenegrin school curriculum, but they felt this wasn’t enough. In Civic Education students learned about democracy and human rights issues - but it didn’t really empower them to think and feel like active citizens. To do this, education for democracy and human rights would need to be made a ‘guiding point’ for all the teachers.

Working with the Teachers’ Council, the team helped subject teachers to see how the aims of democracy and human rights education could be met through their everyday teaching. Within a short time elements of this were being included in English, Italian, Geography, History, Biology, Social Science, Science – yes, and even Civic Education classes!

### **Getting it on the agenda – Greece**

Summer Academy alumni from the 3<sup>rd</sup> High School of Egalea used the introduction of a new subject into the Greek high school curriculum as a way of getting democratic citizenship and human rights education on to the agenda at their school.

They organised a series of workshops on education on democracy and human rights which would also help teachers with the new subject, School and Social Life.

The workshops were based on the Council of Europe training manuals: All Different, All Equal; Compass; Compasito; and Learning and Living Democracy – with additional material from Amnesty International, UNESCO and UNHCR.

A large number of teachers participated even though the workshops were held outside school time. As a result, aspects of democracy and human rights now feature in a variety of subjects at the school, including: English, Language, Geography, Environmental Education, Careers Education, History and Art.

### **Democracy and Human Rights Curriculum at School – Armenia**

Armenian Online Academy graduates from the Physics-Mathematical Special School named after A Shahinyan have made their own local community the focus of the school’s democracy and human rights curriculum – by helping students to identify, research and work on the community issues they think most directly affect them.





Training activity at the Summer Academy in Poland 2011

” Member states should promote, with due respect for the principle of academic freedom, the inclusion of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in higher education institutions

Article 7

# Higher Education

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**W**hy is the teaching of democracy and human rights so important in higher education? What difference can it make to young people in general?

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education highlights the central role higher education has in the promotion of democracy and human rights education in schools and other institutions. It is in higher education that the teachers of tomorrow are trained. The training they receive today will affect the lives of school students for years to come

Schools look to higher education institutions to help them keep up to date with modern developments, but in some cases universities and training colleges find themselves locked into traditional forms of practice, unaware of what is happening outside their lecture halls. This was the experience of Madona Mikeladze, who, after taking part in one of the Summer Academies in Poland, completely changed the Civic Education syllabus for the 3<sup>rd</sup>- and 4<sup>th</sup>-year students at her university.

Bringing schools together with universities is one way of closing this gap between training institutions and the classroom. The inclusion of a professor from the local pedagogical university in the Summer Academy team from Novosibirsk shows just what can be achieved when schools and universities work closely together on teacher training – especially in a new field like education for democratic citizenship and human rights.

*It is in higher education that the teachers of tomorrow are trained.*

## Building bridges between academia and schools – Russia

A Russian team from the Summer Academy in Poland has been busy building bridges between academia and schools – by strengthening the position of human rights education and education for democratic citizenship in teacher training.

The team from Novosibirsk, was composed of Natalya Tyutyunnikova (school head), Varvara Antipenko (teacher) and Lidia Kotovich (associate professor, state pedagogical university).

Before the 1990s, university training and teachers' training courses did not address issues of education in democratic citizenship or human rights education. The team aimed to put this right, by doing all they could to ensure access to training in democracy and human rights education for future teachers.

## Council of Europe manuals

How did they do it? The project began with School #186 itself. First, the Council of Europe manuals were introduced to history and social studies teachers at a series of city and district seminars and at the school's Teachers Council meeting.

Compass materials were used at parent-teachers' planning meetings. The effect on the parents' community was immediate. The mother of a 6<sup>th</sup>-grade student said, "We moved here from Primorsky Krai and it is the first time in our six years experience that parents' meetings are so interesting and comfortable."



Next, third- and fifth-year university students were encouraged to incorporate Compass materials into their lesson plans for teaching practice. The Compasito manual was also presented at the Science Days in the Institute of Childhood for Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University graduate school students.

Then the university students had a chance to observe Compass and Compasito being used in the classroom at School #186, before going on to use them themselves on their teaching practice.

## A true find

The project in Novosibirsk shows just what can be achieved by a small dedicated team when they combine the resources of universities and schools. All together, some 150 teachers, 25 parents, 340 school students and 55 university students had direct involvement in the project.

For one fifth-year student at the university the experience was life-changing: "Compass is a true find for my graduation thesis," she said.

*"The Compass and Compasito manuals were also introduced to third, fourth and fifth year students of social studies and law"*

## "I changed the Civic Education syllabus completely" – Georgia

My name is Madona Mikeladze. I teach Civic Education to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students on the teacher training programme at the Shota Rustaveli Batumi State University in Georgia.

After attending the Summer Academy in Poland, I changed the Civic Education syllabus completely. The literature I brought back with me was a tremendous help - especially Compass and Compasito. I have been working in this way for a year now and the results have been very encouraging – you have only to look at the students' practical work in schools.

This year for the first time the compulsory certificate examination in Georgia can now be taken by civic education teachers. The Council of Europe manuals have come in useful for this, too.

I am drafting a letter about it to the President of the European Association of History Educators and a report for the President of the Association of History Teachers of Georgia as a way of further sharing my experiences with colleagues.



Madona Mikeladze



Some 150 teachers, 25 parents, 340 school students and 55 university students had direct involvement in the project in Novosibirsk.





Illustration photo from Riazan

” Member states should promote democratic governance in all educational institutions

Article 8

# Democratic School Governance

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**W**hy give students a say in the way their school is run? Or encourage parents and teachers or other stakeholders to become more involved in school decision-making?

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education emphasises the distinct advantages to school leaders of widening participation in school governance. Encouraging more people to take responsibility for and become involved in what happens in schools helps them to learn about democracy and respect for human rights in ways which are simply not possible in other ways – be they students, teachers, parents or other stakeholders.

Moreover, as participants in the Summer Academies have discovered, creating a democratic and rights-respecting school community is more than just a stimulus for learning: it leads to more effective school decision-making all round. Put simply, it makes for better-run schools. Young people experience school differently from adults, teachers differently from administrative and management staff, and parents differently again. Each has a unique insight into the life of their school and the potential to make a positive contribution to school improvement.

It is not always easy to engage people like these in school governance. They may not feel their contribution is welcome or know how they can get involved. This is why active encouragement is so important. As is the need for practical forms of involvement – such as questionnaires, surveys, forums, suggestion boxes, focus groups, working parties, class and student or school councils.

One innovative way of breaking down barriers is the project run by Summer Academy alumni from Mykhailo Kravchuk Lutsk Gymnasium in which local parents become teachers for a day!

More generally, alumni are finding that internet technology is an excellent vehicle for widening participation in school governance. Mykhailo Kravchuk Lutsk Gymnasium has developed a highly successful

parents' social media group. Alumni from the GLC School Lyceum in Zugidi are running a school-wide internet forum for exchange of opinions and decision-making. These are just two examples of ways in which Summer Academy alumni are leading the field in realizing the potential of technology to bring together a range of different stakeholders, young and old, in the shared governance of their school.

*Internet technology is an excellent vehicle for widening participation in school governance*

## Governing the school together – Ukraine

How can we say a school is governed democratically if the parents are not motivated to take part? Summer Academy alumni from the Mykhailo Kravchuk Lutsk Gymnasium in Ukraine realised they could not and decided to do something about it:

“Our school governing body was convinced that active involvement of parents in the school life would improve the quality of democratic school governance. At the Summer Academy we set out to come up with ideas on how to get the parents involved,” Oksana Koval, deputy director said.

## The project

The outcome was the project Governing the School Together. The project evolved around several activities. These included: training for representatives of parents' organisations in internet technology and social media; parents' workshops; and most importantly – a day of parents' self-government at school. During the day 42 parents took over the role of teachers and conducted lessons, and 54 parents and their children helped clean the schoolyard.

“We observed the school work in a different way!” said one of the parents who helped to conduct lessons. Another said, “Shared responsibility increases the confidence of all participants in the educational process.”



Some of the 54 parents who helped clean the schoolyard

## The triangle of democratic school governance

In Lutsk democratic school governance is seen as a triangle formed by teachers, students and parents. The lines forming the sides of the triangle represent stable relationships and communication. The different groups should know each other, and be able to interact and co-ordinate their efforts to achieve common goals.

Five hundred and eighty parents have registered on the electronic system Dnevnik.ua, 220 parents participated in discussions on the school website and 97 parents joined a social media group called Governing School Together.

Although the main target group was parents, it was interesting to see how student engagement also increased at the same time. More than a thousand high school students discussed how the school could be run democratically. One 10<sup>th</sup>-grade student said, "During the training it became clear that a democratic school is impossible without a student council."

## Improved school life

By the end of the project, parents' involvement in the running of the school had increased by 20 per cent. What was equally important was that everyone felt this was a good thing and made for a better school all round. A homeroom teacher said, "Participation in the project has proved again that only teachers-parents co-operation will improve school life."

*At the Summer Academy we set out to come up with ideas on how to get the parents involved.*

## Social network helps build a democratic school – Georgia

Thirty-five percent of the population of the Georgian city of Zugdidi is made up of internally displaced people from the bordering conflict zone of Abkhazia. In consequence, many of the students at the GLC School Lyceum in Zugdidi come from challenging economic and social backgrounds.

At the Summer Academy in Poland, Tea Lashkhia (teacher), Ivetta Rodonaia (NGO Association ATINATI representative) and Gia Khasia (school head) developed a project to increase the level of democracy in school decision-making as a way of addressing this problem.

Back from the Academy they presented their ideas to the rest of the school staff. Together they developed a school-wide action plan for 2011-2012, aimed at strengthening co-operation between administration, teachers, students and parents.

## School-wide internet forum

The way to achieve this, they decided, was to create a school-wide internet forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions between school stakeholders. To secure wide ownership for the project they held a student competition. It was won by a 12<sup>th</sup>-grade student who, in presenting his ideas to the school, said, "To open a barrier-less free communication is the basis for development of democratic society."

The internet forum was not well-received by everyone initially, though. Senior students feared it might compromise their personal freedom. However, all this changed when the forum was used to organise a special New Year's show. Around 100 people participated in the show which featured performances, quizzes and competitions – allaying everyone's fears!

A more difficult obstacle was access to the forum by students and some of the older teachers and parents. A basic training course was held for those wishing to improve their computer skills, using the expertise of the school's partner organisation, ATINATI – though, sadly, this could not help families without a computer at home.



ŽIVIMO V DEMOKRACIJI  
LIVING IN DEMOCRACY





The GLC School Lyceum created a school-wide internet forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions.

## A catalyst for student development

In spite of this, the project has been considered a great success. The forum has been used to revise the internal school regulations, to carry out the election campaign for the school's self governance and to organise events like the New Year's show. It has also been used to organise volunteering and community action in the city. In the process, both parents and students have become more active and engaged in the running of the school, and the forum has become a catalyst for student development – for example, some of the previously most disengaged students have been responsible for the internet forum design.

*"To open a barrier-less free communication is the basis for development of democratic society."*

## Living in democracy – Slovenia

Gornja Radgona primary school already had a school parliament and council, but the Slovenian alumni of the 2012 Summer Academy – Nika Forjanic Huber (school psychologist), Damijan Sovec (art teacher) and Dejan Kokol (teacher of citizenship, homeland and ethics) - felt there was more they could do.

For democratic and human rights principles to be properly integrated into the life of their school there needed to be more opportunities for student and parent participation in school life.

So they broadened the role of school parliament and school council representatives by giving each one a distinctive field on which to work and report. A link was established with the local municipality and student representatives took part in a meeting of the Board for Social Activities – an opportunity to learn how democracy works at the local level.

At a whole-school level, an activity day of workshops on the topic of Growing Up brought together teachers, pupils, parents and representatives of outside organisations as equal participants.

## A Human Rights Ombudsman for each class – Russia

In the school year 2011-2012, participants of the Online Academy from the Republic Khakassiya School #26 in Russia have recruited a student human rights ombudsman for each class in their school – showing how you can defend children's rights and teach about them at the same time.

## School rules survey – Slovenia

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights has been a priority for staff at the Simon Jenko Primary School in Kranj, Slovenia, for several years. So they were keen to attend the Summer Academy in Montenegro to learn new ideas and techniques. Creating a working environment based on human rights and where diversity is respected was particularly important to them. So the project they chose focused on a re-examination of their school rules.

Wanting to involve students and staff equally, they drew up two questionnaires – one for each group. The questionnaires contained a series of statements about existing school rules, inviting a response of agree/ partly agree/ disagree for each statement. This proved to be an exceptionally useful way of measuring levels of satisfaction with the system – for example, with rules about student-staff relations, bullying, respect for diversity and conflict resolution – and a good foundation for discussions on how it might be amended.



Training activities at a Summer Academy

” Member states should provide teachers, other educational staff, youth leaders and trainers with the necessary initial and ongoing training and development in education for democratic citizenship and human rights education

Article 9

# Training and Professional Development

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**W**hat kind of preparation do school teachers and others need to be able to teach democracy and respect for human rights successfully? Is it the same as in other subjects?

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education points out that citizenship and human rights teaching is different from traditional subjects and, as such, needs a different approach.

It is more than a classroom subject – it involves the whole life and work of a school. Also, the way it is taught is as important as what is taught. These are new ideas for many teachers, and, in some cases also for school leaders. This is why the Charter suggests starting from first principles in training. It recommends a dual approach, bringing knowledge and understanding about the aims and concepts of the discipline together with practical experience in appropriate teaching and learning methods. It is this approach which is found in the Council of Europe training manuals, *Compass*, *Compasito* and *Living in Democracy*.

As the team from Sarajevo found, a certain amount of scepticism may be encountered initially, particularly with in-school training. It is important, therefore, not to be too dogmatic, but to build on teachers' existing knowledge and practice and help them discover the benefits of democracy and human rights teaching for themselves and in their own way.

Where should training begin? This depends on the school and what is available by way of training resources and local expertise. One place to start is with school leaders: the School of Managers Lyceum in Novomoskovsk found that development work done with school leaders often trickles down to other groups of stakeholders in a school. Another is with the school staff as a whole, particularly subject teachers: the approach adopted by the Summer Academy alumni at the Melitopol Specialized School in Ukraine. Where Civic Education is already a separate curriculum subject, Civic Education teachers could be the starting-point.

Wherever you start, training in democracy and human rights education is likely to be most successful when theory and practice are combined, and where some form of continuing professional support is available after the training sessions are over – for example, through a dedicated section on the school website, or a long-term partnership with a higher education or pedagogical institution or relevant NGO.

*"It is refreshing to do work using new techniques and methods, students are more communicative and the atmosphere in the classroom is totally different"* Adisa, 8<sup>th</sup>-grade Maths teacher, Sarajevo

## Applying new knowledge across the school – Ukraine

Summer Academy alumni at Melitopol Specialized School in Ukraine returned to school intent on improving their skills in human rights education. They ended up applying what they had learned at the Academy across the whole school.

They began – as all good professional training does – by assessing their colleagues' existing knowledge and understanding. Using this assessment, the Summer Academy alumni were able to plan ways of developing each colleague's skills individually, using the method of case technology in a series of teacher workshops.

They also arranged for teachers to work together in groups to develop ways of incorporating elements of education for human rights and democratic citizenship into their specialised subjects. Fifty-four specialised subject lesson plans were developed, leading to 36 integrated pilot lessons being taught in a variety of subjects – from Ukrainian and World literature, English and Geography to Biology, Chemistry and History – involving 36 teachers and 366 school students.





Teachers worked together in groups to develop ways of incorporating elements of education for human rights and democratic citizenship into their specialised subjects

The training proved to be helpful as well as popular. Many of their colleagues noted how using the sort of active learning techniques that characterise democracy and human rights teaching helped to improve the working atmosphere in their classrooms. It also helped them to fulfil their formal responsibilities as classroom teachers more effectively.

An English teacher said, "I like the idea of complementing the curriculum with a component of education for democratic citizenship: the state standard only declares civil competence as one of the fundamentals, it does not contain any practical recommendations as to the implementation of this issue." An 8<sup>th</sup>-grade homeroom teacher said, "The children are working in teams, collaborating, discussing issues of citizenship and democratic behaviour in society, and defending their points of view. But the most interesting thing is that I am also learning a lot of new, useful, proactive, efficient things!"

To supplement the practical training the project team developed a democratic citizenship and human rights education resource centre on the school website. In presenting this work more widely, they have begun to attract a lot of interest from in-service teacher training institutions. Tatiana Babko, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Education and Psychology Zaporizhzhia Regional Institute of Postgraduate Education, says, "This project is impressive since it is so forward looking. In its own way it is unique for Ukraine and at least ten years ahead of the actual situation in schools. Prospects for the project are promising and multiple."

*"I am learning a lot of new, useful, proactive, and efficient things!"*

## Human rights training – Bosnia Herzegovina

Maida Agić (NGO "Life with Down's Syndrome"), Irma Pašić (school head assistant) and Azra Saković Colović (English teachers) from Ilidža, Sarajevo, went to the Summer Academy in Montenegro with the expectation of learning something new and passing that knowledge on to their colleagues.

In the event, they learned far more than they could have expected. "The experience of the Summer Academy completely changed our perspective on human rights and the role of schools in educating new generations on their rights", they say.

So, with the action plan devised in Montenegro, the team began arranging workshops and activities on learning styles and teaching methods for human rights education for others at their school.

## Human rights in school subjects

There was some scepticism at first, but within a short time most of their colleagues had understood and were keen to be involved. An Art teacher said, "I had doubts when I heard that we would learn more on how to incorporate human rights education into the curriculum of every subject. I found that amusing - I asked myself what have art lessons to do with it? But, after the presentations and workshops, I realised there is a lot of stuff I can discuss with my students during art classes. I am continuing with my research on human rights in art."



Illustration photo from Niksic

The Council of Europe manuals – Compass, Compasito and Living in Democracy - were particularly popular: “They found the Council of Europe manuals very useful and now they are in our school library in a special section for ‘Democracy and Human Rights’, so they can use them to enrich their lessons.”

### Widening participation

At the wider school level, letter boxes were installed where school employees, students and parents can pass on comments, suggestions and criticisms anonymously. Students are encouraged to share their ideas for improving school life by means of a questionnaire – resulting in new projects for school management and additions to the annual school plan.

A special event was organised for students to present topics which were important to them – which included, among other things, sign-language and the cultural traditions of the Roma.

### Future developments

The team is now planning to train teachers from neighbouring schools, through monthly workshops and team-building activities in their school. They are also planning a student visit to the municipality’s mayor, where students can ask questions and present their own ideas on community issues.

What is the secret of their success? One thing that has certainly helped has been their whole-school approach to training. Including representatives from different groups in their team – such as school management, teaching staff and the parents’ council – has contributed greatly towards this.

*The experience of the Summer Academy completely changed our perspective on human rights and the role of schools in educating new generations on their rights”*

### School leaders need training, too – Russia

School leaders are in a unique position. Their vision and strength of character is perhaps the most important factor in a school’s success.

It is for this reason that Summer Academy participants from the School of Managers Lyceum in Novomoskovsk, Russia, decided to make school leaders their prime target for training in education for democracy and human rights. The topic they chose was democratic school governance – clearly, a whole-school issue.

A seminar for 25 school heads, called Civic Socialization under Democratization of Education, was held, using materials from the Summer Academy. This led to the creation of a network of six partner schools, the heads of which led training on this same topic in their own schools – under the guidance of the Lyceum team. This in turn led to specialist training for homeroom and social studies teachers, and, in due course, also for student groups from the partner schools.





Illustration photo

” Member states should foster the role of non-governmental organisations and youth organisations in education for democratic citizenship and human rights education

Article 10

# NGOs and Youth Organisations

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**W**hy involve NGOs or other organisations? What do they have to offer?

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education highlights the important contribution of NGOs and other organisations can make to democracy and human rights teaching in school.

Outside organisations and agencies often have the kinds of resources and expertise which are not available in schools, making them particularly effective at training and professional development as well as providing resources and support for classroom teachers and general school improvement.

Some NGOs work on behalf of a particular stakeholder group – such as the School Students Unions' Alliance in Georgia. Others operate in a particular field and are able to provide specialised knowledge on specific aspects of democratic citizenship or human rights – for example, Polish Humanitarian Action and its work on human rights issues in developing countries. Others act as 'go-betweens' putting different groups in contact with each other. The Academy of Central European Schools was able to help the Milja Nikčevi School make links with a school in the Czech Republic, for instance, while the Nansen Dialogue Center provided an entry point for the school into the local community.

Small, local NGOs tend to have flexibility and grass roots knowledge. Larger NGOs have access to wider sources of funding and are most effective at campaigning on national or global issues, or on behalf of a particular disadvantaged or minority group. Each has the potential to contribute something different to democracy and human rights teaching.

The important thing is that any partnership a school enters into with an external organisation is made on the school's terms. It would be wrong to invite pressure groups into school simply to pursue their own agendas – however well-meaning they may appear. The aim should always be an educational one.

*Outside organisations and agencies often have the kinds of resources and expertise which are not available in schools*

## School as a community hub – Montenegro

Staff at Milja Nikčevi School in Niksic, Montenegro, wanted to teach their students about democracy and human rights by involving the whole community, but did not have the expertise or resources to do it all by themselves.

So they partnered with the Nansen Dialogue Center and went to the Summer Academy in Montenegro to develop a joint action plan. Back at school they shared their plan with the Teachers' Council, the Students' Parliament and the Parents' Council, and formed a Human Rights team made up of student, teacher and parent representatives.

## Promoting true life values through education

With the help of the Nansen Dialogue Center, the team ran workshops on human rights. They also conducted a student survey on human rights. Teachers were encouraged to include lessons on democratic citizenship and human rights in their annual plans. Much use was made of the Council of Europe manuals on democratic school governance and teacher competences, as well as the collections of human rights learning activities – such as Compass and Compasito, and the Council of Europe human rights posters.



The project was well-received by students and teachers alike. One 8<sup>th</sup> grade student said, "I realised that all changes start with ourselves. In order to promote human rights in our community we need first to be informed about our rights". A teacher noted, "This project brings out the importance of promoting true life values through education."

## School linking

The school was also able to benefit from a link with a school from Tabor in the Czech Republic. It was arranged by the Academy of Central European Schools. Conveniently, the Czech school was also running a project on human rights and diversities at the same time!

## A public debate

With the assistance of the Nansen Dialogue Center, the school Human Rights team carried out a local survey on human rights issues – interviewing a number of local officials. The results were presented at a public debate in the presence of a wide range of community representatives, including from: the Municipality, Ministry of Education, Bureau for Education Services, Police Department, School Board, Parents' Council, Teachers' Council, Students' Parliament, School Peer Mediation Club, local media and civil society organisations and other schools.

At the end of the debate, a representative from the local assembly in Niksic said, "We support this project as it contributes to development of democracy and human rights. It recognizes the necessity of involving local stakeholders."

*"I realised that all changes start with ourselves."*

## Democracy in Action – Georgia

Democracy in Action is the name of a collaborative project run jointly by the Tbilisi I. Vekua #42 Public School and the Georgian School Students Unions' Alliance.

It was set up following the Summer Academy in Poland. The aim was to encourage students, parents and staff to become more involved in decision-making at the school and thus improve school life for everyone.

Separate meetings were held for parents, school students and teachers. Each group was invited to identify what they thought the needs of the school were. Then the groups were put together to work on collective action plans for school improvement.

The collaboration with the Georgian School Students Unions' Alliance has already led to a number of positive developments at school - including a student- and parent-led service to monitor standards of catering in the school canteen, and an anti-bullying initiative devised by psychologists using occupational therapy.



Students at Milja Nikčević School in Niksic, Montenegro

### **Impossible to stay indifferent – Poland**

Staff from Władysław IV 8 High & 58 Middle School in Warsaw joined with Polish Humanitarian Action to promote human rights skills and awareness among their students. Polish Humanitarian Action is a local NGO working with communities affected by war, poverty and natural disasters.

A group of 30 students came together with Summer Academy alumni to promote human rights in their school. They created a Facebook group and began to research human rights organisations active in Poland. They made a multimedia presentation on this and created a poster for Human Rights Day. An activity from the Council of Europe manual, *Living in Democracy*, was translated into Polish for use by class tutors.

Finally, they arranged a meeting at school with representatives from Polish Humanitarian Action and the Polish division of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights – leading the discussion themselves. The students present were very affected by what they heard, even shocked. Now they say they feel it is impossible to stay indifferent.

### **‘School of public activity’ – Azerbaijan**

After the Summer Academy in Poland the NGO-school staff team from Baku developed an action plan to democratize their school community at General School No. 245. A parent-teacher association was set up and received state registration, and student leaders began to play an active part in implementing the plan.

Then the school leadership changed. The project team no longer had any official authority for their plans and work ground to halt. Without the agreement of their school director there was nothing they could do.

However, when a new Minister of Education was appointed, they saw a possible way forward. With the help of the organisation, NUR Civic Education Centre, they petitioned the new Minister. The entire school staff signed the petition and they collected about 2,000 signatures. Now with the support of the Minister they are busy developing what used to be an ordinary school into a ‘school of public activity’.



Illustration photo from Lutsk

” Member states should promote educational approaches and teaching methods which aim at learning to live together in a democratic and multicultural society

Article 13



# Social Cohesion, Diversity and Conflict Resolution

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**W**hat has democratic education to do with religious or racial hatred? Or human rights education with cyber-bullying?

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education warns us about taking too narrow a view of democracy and human rights education. The essence of it is not the acquisition of 'dry as dust' information needed to pass an exam, but learning how to live together in a diverse society, respecting differences and settling conflicts without violence. It is not principally about learning facts, but about acquiring skills and changing attitudes.

For this kind of learning the example set by the teacher is all important, as is the kind of atmosphere created in the classroom – how disputes are settled, differences respected and children of different backgrounds brought together, for example. This is just as true at the level of the school as a whole. How peoples' voices are heard (or not heard!), rules made and sanctions imposed can make a real impact on students' attitudes towards social cohesion, diversity and conflict resolution.

However, it is not enough for teachers and schools just to set a 'good' example - students should be taught how they can actively combat problems such as bullying, racism and discrimination, both in and beyond their school. They should have opportunities to put this learning into practice through taking on positions of responsibility in school. This includes electing students as class representatives and school council members or other roles in which they are able to influence the quality of life for others. It also includes encouraging them to take on voluntary roles, such as that of mediator, helping to promote a more peaceful approach to dispute resolution among their peers – as we have seen, for example, in the schools' network, Schools without violence, in the Russian city of Riazan.

Such roles are not for everyone, of course, and should not be forced on unwilling students. But if the opportunity is not there, no one can benefit from it. The opportunity to take on specific responsibilities – or to see others taking them on – is an important aspect of education for democracy and human rights. It reinforces what is taught in lessons and makes schools more harmonious and peaceful places in which to work.

*"By being aware of human rights and obligations, practising positive human values, interpersonal respect and trust, we can contribute to better well-being, higher education quality and a positive climate in the school"* Gornja Radgona, Slovenia

## Schools against violence – they said it couldn't be done! Russia

Schools in the Russian city of Riazan were experiencing an alarming escalation of violence and intolerance. Could something be done?

Irina Voznesenskaya (director, Municipal Education Institution), Viacheslav Zaichikov (NGO Interregional Centre of Extra-Curricular Education) and Valentina Rokunova (psychologist) believed the answer was yes. But where could they begin?

The answer presented itself in the form of a call for participants for the Summer Academy in Poland. There they discovered the Council of Europe training manuals and were able to meet and talk with peers from Eastern Europe, Russian and the South Caucasus, and learn new methods for solving school problems. This gave them the idea of creating a network of schools dedicated to combating violence and intolerance. They call it Schools against violence.





Schools in Riazan organised performances, games, role plays and case studies as a way of disseminating ideas about tolerance and non-violent interaction more widely

## Teams of mediators

"We returned to Riazan with new energy and better ideas which we presented at the city-wide teachers meeting in August. Six schools expressed interest in joining the project", says Voznesenskaya.

In October, they held a schools workshop, applying the ideas and methods they had learned at the Summer Academy, including educational approaches to non-violent conflict resolution.

With the teachers and a school psychologist onboard, the next step was to involve the students. They set up a team of mediators at each school, made up of volunteer students and teachers supported by school psychologists.

After training, each team identified their main target groups and planned activities to integrate the project into everyday school life. Some put up stands in the school yard; others wrote in the school newspaper or spoke about tolerance on school radio; others integrated mediation into their lessons. The teams organised performances, games, role plays and case studies as a way of disseminating ideas about tolerance and non-violent interaction more widely.

## Overcoming mutual distrust

It wasn't all plain sailing, however. At first, the teachers seemed to have little faith in their students – they couldn't see they had anything to offer. For their part, the students felt their teachers had simply given up on intolerance. They said things like: "This won't work", "It is too difficult" or "Teachers are not ready for this".

With time, however, this mutual distrust began to disappear, though it was difficult for a while. Now teachers and students speak with one voice on the subject, "It is great, it is important, it is worth doing. We can do it together."

"Now, after I have received the basic training and gained some experience, I can successfully help the elementary school students solve the conflicts that arise among them", says Anastasiya Mimonova, member of the school team of mediators at School #60.

Elena Kessler, Psychologist of the Municipal Education Institution "Centre of Psychological, Medical and Social Assistance to Children and Teenagers", who supervised the project at School#6 thinks the project has made a great impact: "Those students who have been members of the teams of mediation for two years or more, tend to choose the strategies of cooperation and tolerance, and they almost never resort to competition. Teachers who engage in the teams of mediation, become more tolerant and respectful in relation to other teachers and students", she says.

The initial project involved six schools, but another six have recently joined in, taking the total number of students involved to 6,464. The team from the Summer Academy believes that the project can be replicated by other schools as well and to help them do this has set up a website <http://schoolagainstvio-lence.blogspot.ru/>

*I can successfully help the elementary school students solve the conflicts that arise among them*

### **Civic Education Club – Moldova**

Summer Academy alumni from the Grigore Grigoriu Theoretical Lyceum in the Republic of Moldova found that a more democratic approach to school management helped to create an atmosphere of greater trust, tolerance and mutual respect between students, teachers and parents.

The school is in an area of high unemployment, with large numbers of parents working abroad and significant levels of alcoholism and crime among young people.

The way to deal with issues caused by problems such as these, the alumni concluded, is not to hide them from students, but to try to solve them together.

One concrete expression of this is the Civic Education Club they set up with students, parents and school staff. The Club gives students more of a say in how their school is run. It is complemented by classroom discussions such as How to Make our Lyceum Better, lessons on rights and responsibilities, essay competitions, and school debates like I am a citizen of the Republic of Moldova.



The Summer Academy in Poland 2013

” Member states should,  
where appropriate, co-  
operate with each other  
Article 15



# Co-operation

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**W**hat is there to be gained from working with another school? Surely every school is different and needs to solve its problems in its own way?

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education encourages European schools to co-operate with each other on democracy and human rights education. In fact, it places a duty on member state governments to foster and support co-operation between schools and other organisations within their territory – including NGOs, youth organisations and the Council of Europe network of coordinators for democratic citizenship and human rights education.

While every school is different, there is a great deal to be gained from partnership working. To begin with, it can save a lot of time and effort. Learning how another school tackles a problem saves you having to come up with a solution yourself.

Co-operating with other schools is also a way of improving practice. Sometimes just observing what another school does is enough – as the teachers and students from Čakovec discovered from their school visit to Slovenia. Sometimes, it is a case of ‘two heads are better than one’ – that is, two or more schools working together to solve a common problem. An example of this is the ‘tandem’ teaching initiative linking the Baranovichi Gymnasium #1 with the Melitopol Specialized Comprehensive School #23.

Simply coming together to share common problems can be a rewarding experience in itself. It leads to higher motivation and improved performance all round. This was one of the guiding ideas behind the creation of the Armenian Summer Academy Alumni Club.

Co-operation between teachers and schools is important in democracy and human rights education in particular, because it goes to the heart of the subject. It is through the experience of co-operation that people learn to co-operate, and observing it in action is a great stimulus for learning – for students, parents and educational staff alike.

*“We are able and willing to share our knowledge and experience with other schools in our country, and we are also looking forward to making connections in the whole region” Čakovec, Croatia*

## Teachers interested in school democracy – Croatia

The revised national curriculum for citizenship education specifies new competences for Croatian teachers – for subject-teaching, school-community project work and student participation in school decision-making.

After trialling this new curriculum earlier in the year, teachers from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Elementary School in Čakovec felt they needed to learn more. So they applied to take part in the 2013 Summer Academy in Montenegro.

## Strengthening student participation in school governance

During the Academy they decided the issue they most wanted to address in their school was the lack of power experienced by students. Why would students want to get involved with the Students’ Council when they felt it wouldn’t change anything? The cause of the problem, they felt, was the attitude of the school management and teaching staff. Surely, if the adults realised some of the benefits wider student participation could bring to their school, they would be more likely to want students to be involved in school decision-making.



Illustration photo from Niksic

Having got the go-ahead from the school head and psychologist, the project team presented their ideas to the Teachers' Council. They showed colleagues what they had done at the Academy, using some of the same activities and active learning methods they had experienced in Montenegro. They also used several of the Council of Europe training resources – for example, on teacher competences, democratic school governance and lesson planning in education for democratic citizenship and human rights.

### School co-operation

Although teachers were generally positive about the ideas, they lacked a sense of what they could do practically. Help with this came in the form of a school visit to the Simona Jenka Primary School in Kranj, Slovenia – teachers from which the Academy alumni had previously met in Montenegro.

Slovenia has one of the most advanced approaches to democratic school governance in Europe. A visit there would be an excellent learning opportunity – but how could it be financed? At a presentation on democracy and human rights education, the project team plucked up the courage to ask the local mayor. Impressed by the presentation, the mayor agreed to find the money!

In November that year forty-four students and six teachers visited the school in Kranj. Games and activities were provided for the students. The school rules

were presented and the process by which students were actively involved in creating them was explained. The whole process of democratic school governance was brought to life before their eyes. For the first time they were able to see how it could also become a practical reality in their own school.

*"We are planning to continue our partnership with the school in Slovenia, the first future step of which will be their visit to our school"*

### Lessons learned form the Summer Academy – Croatia

Since 2011, Croatian teachers who participate in Summer Academies in Montenegro are invited to contribute to the in-service teacher training programme in citizenship education in their country once the Academy is over. This is organised by the Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency.

Those alumni teachers share what they have learned at the Academy – experiences, resources and information – with the county co-ordinators for teacher training. The county co-ordinators are advanced practitioners whose job it is to train Croatian teachers at school and county level in the competences required by the new curriculum for citizenship education. They are responsible for the dissemination of new approaches and materials for democratic and human rights education at the grass roots level.

Academy alumni also share their experiences and materials from the Summer Academy on their school website for other schools to see.<sup>2</sup>

### **Tandem Partnership: Belarus-Ukraine**

Success in education is strongly dependent on the quality of teachers. That is why the development of teachers' professional competence in education for democratic citizenship and human rights has been a priority for the Baranovichi Gymnasium #1 in Belarus.

A team of trainers, made up of alumni from the Summer Academy in Poland and others, was formed to provide a systematic programme of professional development based on the Council of Europe training manuals.

A key element in this programme was a bi-lateral partnership with the Melitopol Specialized Comprehensive School #23 in Ukraine – a school also concerned about standards in civic education teaching. After a Skype conference, teachers from one school were paired with those from the other – 19 pairs in all. Communicating on-line, the pairs worked together to find common topics to teach and common methods of teaching them. The 'tandem' lessons that resulted were recorded on video for experts from the participating countries to evaluate.

### **Summer Academy Alumni Club – Armenia**

Excited by their experiences at the Summer Academy in Poland, the participants from Armenia wanted to share what they had learned with Armenian alumni from previous years.

In 2013, they decided to organise a Summer Academy alumni club. A number of round-table meetings were arranged to which former alumni were invited. They discussed the idea of setting up an alumni network and how it might contribute to the dissemination of best practice in education for democracy and human rights in their country.

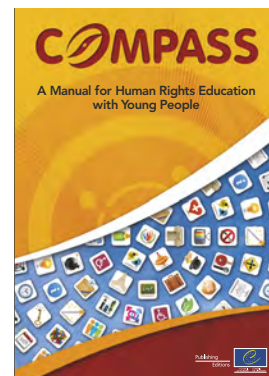
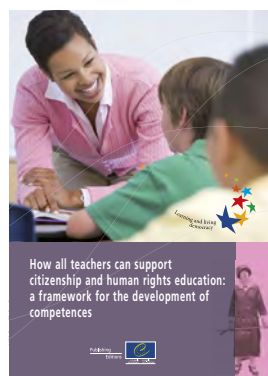
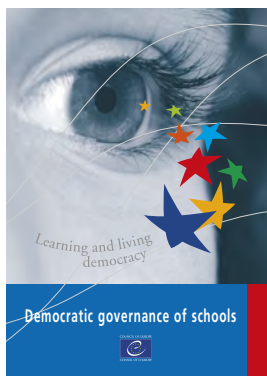
The meetings were supported by the Armenian National Institute of Education, the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the National Assembly Education Committee.

The Club is now firmly established and has three main aims: provision of advanced training in democracy and human rights education for the thirteen Club members; preparation and translation of training materials; and organisation of short-term training for school administrators, educational staff and relevant local NGOs.

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2. By Nevenka Lončarić Jelačić, senior advisor for EDC/HRE, Education and Teacher Training Agency, Zagreb and CoE EDC/ HRE coordinator for Croatia

# Interested in learning more?



## Council of Europe tools and manuals

The Academies offer trainings based on several of the CoE tools and manuals that draw on the expertise and good practice currently available in the 47 member states. They provide ideas, advice and guidelines to put education for democratic citizenship and human rights education into practice in a participatory, fun and innovative way. The key tools and manuals are:

■ *Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*, official text, 2010, available in many languages (non-official translations).

■ *Human Rights and Democracy Start with Us – Charter for All* and guidelines for educators are available in English and French. [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/resources/charter4all\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/resources/charter4all_EN.asp)

■ *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2007, available in: English, French, Albanian, Armenian, Bosnian, Croatian, German, Hungarian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Swedish, Turkish, Ukrainian.

■ *How all Teachers can Support Citizenship and Human Rights Education: A Framework for the Development of Competences*, 2009, available in: English, French, Albanian, Georgian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian.

■ *School-Community-University Partnerships for a Sustainable Democracy*, 2010, available in English, French, Russian.

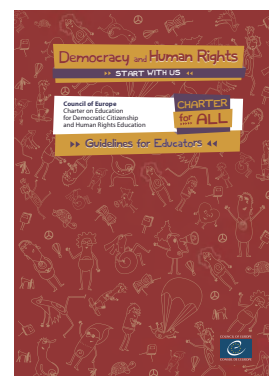
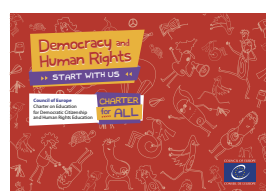
■ Publication website: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Resources/Publications\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/Resources/Publications_EN.asp)

■ *Compass – A Manual for Human Rights Education With Young People*, 2011, available in English. The previous edition is available in over 30 languages including Albanian, Armenian, Bosnian, Croatian, Polish, Russian and Slovenian.

■ *Compasito – A Manual for Human Rights Education With Children*, 2009, available via the CoE in English, French and Russian.

■ Publication web side: <http://eycb.coe.int/compass/>

■ All manuals are also available in the EWC library: <http://www.theewc.org/library/>





## Visit the home pages of the Summer Academy organizers

### The Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It includes 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The website « Learning and Living Democracy » aims to provide an overview of the Council of Europe activities in the field of Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which the Organisation aims to support by facilitating exchange and cooperation among its member states, based on the principles and objectives of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE [www.coe.int/edc](http://www.coe.int/edc)

### The European Wergeland Centre

The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) is a resource centre for education professionals, researchers, civil society, policymakers, parents and students. EWC was established by the Council of Europe and Norway to support member states to bridge policy and practice in the field of education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural understanding.

Join the EWC community of practice Share&Connect. Explore our online library with free teaching and learning materials, research and policy documents. Explore inspiring stories from EWC projects around Europe. All at [www.theewc.org](http://www.theewc.org)

If you are interested in the Summer Academy programme and/ or in the good practices highlighted, please contact: Caroline Gebara, [c.gebara@theewc.org](mailto:c.gebara@theewc.org)



THE EUROPEAN  
WERGELAND  
CENTRE

### Centre for Education Development Poland

The Centre for Education Development is a national public in-service teacher training institution run by the Ministry of National Education of Poland. The aim of the Centre is to take and implement actions to improve the quality of education according to the state education policy and follow the current changes in the education system.



[www.ore.edu.pl](http://www.ore.edu.pl)



[www.men.gov.pl](http://www.men.gov.pl)

### Bureau of Education Services Montenegro

The Bureau for Education is a government institution for monitoring, improvement and evaluation of educational reform processes in general pre-university level of education. The Bureau is continuously working towards the improvement of education system, implements in-service training programs for teachers, conducts research and other activities in accordance with the current needs and state education policy.



Government of Montenegro  
The Bureau for Education

[www.zavodzaskolstvo.gov.me](http://www.zavodzaskolstvo.gov.me) &  
<http://www.mpin.gov.me>



# Appendix

## List of all good practices highlighted in this booklet and alumni teams

We would like to thank the following alumni teams for their valuable contribution to this booklet.

**Teaching for democracy and human rights – Croatia, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2012**  
Lijepa naša Primary school

**Natalija Knezić Medvedec (graduate teacher) and Snježana Romić (homeroom teacher)**  
NGO “Our Children” association  
Ljiljana Žegrec

**A ‘guiding point’ for all teachers – Montenegro, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2013**  
Osnovna škola “Veljko Drobnyaković” Risan  
Dragutin Scekić (school head) and Tanja Rotković (Italian and English language teacher)  
MNE Forum NGO  
Nataša Dendić

**Getting it on the agenda – Greece, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2013**  
3<sup>rd</sup> High School of Egalea  
Isidoros Kakouris (school head) and Maria Vekri (career education teacher)  
NGO, OCEAN  
Dimitra Katsidonioti Skoufi

**Democracy and Human Rights Curriculum at School – Armenia, Online Academy 2011**  
Physics-Mathematical Special school and 128 Middle school

**Building bridges between academia and schools – Russia, Summer Academy in Poland, 2013**  
No 186 in Novosibirsk  
Natalya Tyutyunnikova (school head #186), Varvara Antipenko (teacher)  
Novosibirsk State Pedagogical University  
Lidia Kotovich (associate professor)

**“I changed the Civic Education syllabus completely” – Georgia, Summer Academy in Poland, 2011**  
Khakaberi Public School No 1  
Nanuli Didmanidze (school head) and Natalia Sirabidze (teacher)  
Georgian Association of History Teachers in Adjara  
Madona Mikeladze (University teacher)

**Governing the school together - Ukraine, Summer Academy Poland in 2012**

Mykhailo Kravchuk Lutsk Gymnasium No 21  
Oksana Koval (school head) and Andriy Melnyk (teacher)

Volyn regional In-Service Teacher Training Centre  
Oksana Martyniuk (methodology advisor)

**Social network helps build a democratic school – Georgia, Summer Academy in Poland, 2011**

GLC School Lyceum in Zugdidi  
Gia Khasia (school head) and Tea Lashkhia (teacher)  
NGO Association ATINATI  
Ivetta Rodonaia

**Living in Democracy – Slovenia, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2012**

Osnovna šola Gornja Radgona  
Nika Forjanic Huber (school psychologist)  
Dejan Kokol (teacher of citizenship, homeland and ethics)  
NGO « Humanitas »  
Damijan Sovec

**A Human Rights Ombudsman for each class – Russia, Online Academy 2011**

Republic Khakassiya School #26  
Olga Lybimtsheva (leader)

**School rules survey – Slovenia, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2013**

Simon Jenko Primary School in Kranj, Slovenia  
Ingrid Klemencic (deputy school head)  
Tina Kaltenekar (school pedagogue)  
NGO Scouts Association of Kranj  
Klemen Markelj

**Applying new knowledge across the school – Ukraine, Summer Academy in Poland, 2012**

Melitopol Specialized School  
Natalia Bohanets (deputy director) and Iryna Yurchenko (teacher)  
Regional In-Service Teacher Training Centre in Melitopol  
Natalia Kidalova (teacher trainer)

**Human rights training – Bosnia Herzegovina, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2013**

Treća osnovna škola “Ilidža”» in Sarajevo  
Irma Pašić (school head assistant)  
Azra Sakovic Colovic (English teachers)  
NGO Life with Down's Syndrome  
Maida Agić

**School leaders need training, too – Russia, Summer Academy in Poland, 2011**

School of Managers Lyceum in Novomoskovsk  
Farit Galeev (school head) and Olga Ershova (teacher)  
Municipal Centre of Education  
Valentina Sadkova (methodology advisor)

**School as a community hub – Montenegro, SEE Summer Academy in Montenegro, 2013**

Milja Nikčević School in Nikšić  
Slavica Perošević (school head) and Branko Perović (civic education teacher)  
Nansen Dialogue Center Montenegro  
Dragana Radoman

**Democracy in Action – Georgia, Summer Academy in Poland, 2013**

Ilia Vekua #42 Public School Tbilisi  
Nugzar Kedelashvili (school head) and Maka Bibileishvili (civic education teacher)  
Georgian School Students Unions' Alliance  
Sulkhan Chagishvili

**Impossible to stay indifferent – Poland, Summer Academy in Poland, 2011**

Władysław IV 8 High & 58 Middle School in Warsaw  
Wawrzyniec Kofta (teacher, represented school head) and Agnieszka Chechłowska (teacher)  
NGO Polish Humanitarian Action

**‘School of public activity’ – Azerbaijan, Summer Academy in Poland, 2011**

General School No. 181 Baku  
Anna Guliyeva (teacher)  
NGO - NUR Civic Education Centre  
Malahat Agayeva (teacher trainer)

**Schools against violence – they said it couldn't be done! Russia, Summer Academy in Poland, 2012**

Non-Governmental School in Riazan  
Irina Voznesenskaya (school head) and Valentina Rokunova (teacher and school psychologist)  
Interregional Centre of Extra-Curricular Education  
Viacheslav Zaichikov

**Civic Education Club – Moldova, Summer Academy in Poland, 2011**

Grigore Grigoriu Theoretical Lyceum in Kyrnycen  
Natalia Panis (school head) and Tamara Ambroci-Ivanov (teacher)  
Union of Business Press from Moldova  
Angela Chiucu (NGO)

**Teachers interested in school democracy – Croatia, SEE Summer Academy, 2013**

Osnovna škola Čakovec in Čakovec  
Zdenka Novak (school head) and Tomica Hlapčić (history and Croatian language teacher)  
Coordinating Committee of the town of Čakovec – a friend of children  
Filip Car

**Tandem Partnership: Belarus-Ukraine, Summer Academy in Poland, 2013**

Baranovich Gymnasium #1  
Mikalai Shyrko (school head) and Larysa Tarasiuk (teacher)  
Alena Zhuryna (parent representative)

**Summer Academy Alumni Club – Armenia, Summer Academy Poland 2011, 2012, 2013**

2011:  
Armenian Education Foundation  
Melania Geghamyan and Naira Ayvazyan  
Jinashian Memorial Foundation  
Ruben Krrikyan

2012:  
Yerevan#128school  
Viktoria Sukiasyan (school head) and Laura Poghosyan  
Civitas  
Ashot Yeghiazaryan  
High school Vagharshapat  
Gayane Safaryan, Sahakanush Yeghiazaryan (school heads) and Arusyak Safaryan

2013:  
Yerevan#8school  
Artashes Torosyan (school head) and Lilit Grigoryan (teacher)

National Institute of Education  
Armine Ivanyan  
Karin School Yerevan  
Alvard Galstyan (school head) and Lilia Kchachatryan (teacher)  
Civitas  
Tigran Tovmasyan

The booklet DEMOCRACY IN THE MAKING: Good practices from five years of Regional Summer Academies "Democracy at School and Human Rights in Action" highlights some of the innovative practice which has emerged since the academies were established. It shows just what can be achieved when education for democratic citizenship and human rights is taken seriously in schools, and encourages educational practitioners and decision-makers to further action in this field.

Linking policy with practice, it also shows how the *Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education* can be used as a key reference point for all those dealing with citizenship and human rights education, and confirms the central role of this important political framework in raising awareness of core European values and encouraging the active engagement of Europe's citizens.

**[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)**

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.