

THE EDC/HRE WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH FOR THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES



Compiled by the European Wergeland Centre

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INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

This monograph was developed by the European Wergeland Centre's (EWC) as a contribution to the project "A systemic approach to peer violence in educational institutions – model and guidelines", supported by the Norwegian government through the EEA Grants and carried out collaboratively with the Institute of Criminology at the Faculty of Law, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

This publication was developed for education practitioners, policy makers and others interested to learn about strategies for preventing discrimination and violence in schools and communities through a whole school approach focused on the "positive values" of democracy, human rights and intercultural dialogue. This approach assumes that long-term solutions to violence and discrimination in schools involves sustainable strategies to foster the well-being of the school community in conjunction with specific strategies to raise awareness about and change behavior related to discrimination, bullying and other forms of violence.

The European Wergeland Centre was established by the Council of Europe and Norway in 2008 as a European resource centre on education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural understanding and dialogue. The centre serves all member states of the Council of Europe and is located in Oslo, Norway. As a privileged partner of the Council of Europe, EWC offers activities and services in line with the aim and priorities of the Council of Europe's education program. This includes in particular the Council of Europe *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*.¹

EWC's main target groups are education professionals, researchers, civil society actors, decision-makers, parents and students – the full range of people actively involved in education on all levels of society who are willing and able to act as agents of positive change in schools, local communities, organizations, higher education institutions, local and national government and society as a whole.

The EWC aims to empower people and institutes to develop democratic practices and democratic culture. It means empowering people to take action and supporting them when they do. In order to do so, EWC activities emphasize a whole school approach to training which encourages the active participation of all to build an inclusive environment in the classroom, in the school, and in the local community where principles of democracy and human rights can be learned and practiced.

¹ Council of Europe (2010). *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. See www.coe.int/edc. The Council of Europe has carried out numerous training programs to support the implementation of EDC/HRE in schools, including the Pestalozzi Training Program. The Council of Europe has also published *Violence reduction in schools – how to make a difference* (2006). This monograph is focused only on the Council of Europe's collaboration with EWC and national educational agencies in the Regional Summer Academies.

Furthermore, EWC provides active follow-up of participants over time to ensure sustainability and support.²

According to EWC's Executive Director, Ana Perona-Fjelstad, the organization sees its role as "supporting the journey from the policy level to the concrete practice in schools and communities."³ The work to promote practices reflective of the values of democracy, human rights and intercultural understanding incorporates efforts to prevent violence in schools and among members of the school community. The efforts supported by the EWC incorporate a school-wide approach for addressing violence. Any strategies developed by schools are also embedded within an EDC/HRE values framework, which promotes healthy school environments that protect and promote the human dignity of all. This publication therefore highlights the EDC/HRE approach as a wide, multi-faceted frame for school development, which can also address challenges such as discrimination and violence in the school and among its members.

Organization of the Monograph

This publication has four sections:

- some theoretical background on the whole school approach to preventing discrimination and violence;
- EDC/HRE-influenced whole school components and processes for the prevention of discrimination and violence;
- examples of activities developed and implemented by school teams participating in EWC programming;
- concluding thoughts.

Section 1 provides a brief, theoretical overview on two fields of relevance to the monograph: the manifestations of discrimination and violence in schools and the whole school approach to school development. The literature on violence in schools is oriented towards typologies of violence. As this information is widely available, it will be only summarized in this publication. The whole school approach to school development is also widely treated in the literature. However, understanding the components and the processes for undertaking a whole school change strategy is necessary background for the EDC/HRE model that will be presented in some detail. This theoretical section will conclude with links between whole school approaches and the prevention and treatment of violence.

Section 2 presents the EDC/HRE whole school approach emblematic of EWC's work across its projects in Norway, Russia, Ukraine and through its Regional Summer Academy programs. EWC's framework incorporates design components and processes that reflect and also extend the existing literature on whole school

² Background text on the EWC comes from *The European Wergeland Centre – Capacity building programs* (2015), published by The European Wergeland Centre.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

strategies. The nine elements presented in this section are supplemented with illustrations from Wergeland Centre programming.

Section 3 presents more holistic examples of school-generated strategies to address discrimination and violence, drawn from schools participating in EWC programming across Europe: Croatia, Georgia, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Section 4 includes conclusions and a summary of lessons learned that will be helpful for other schools interested to consider an EDC/HRE-driven whole school approach for combating discrimination and violence.

[European Wergeland Centre Programming](#)

EWC has developed a whole school approach to training for the cultivation of EDC/HRE values and practices in schools. The EWC literature explains that “in order for democracy and human rights to become a reality in young people’s lives these values need to be evident in the life of the school”. Thus the EWC training program addresses a range of levels, including teacher competencies, classroom methodologies, school ethos and governance and the contribution of community partners. It is an approach that encourages the active participation of all school stakeholders in school life – parents and community members as well as students, teachers and school administrators.⁴

The whole school approach is consistent with the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education and also the Norwegian democratic tradition and egalitarian culture. This approach cuts across the centre’s programming, including national projects in Norway, Russia and Ukraine and the Regional Summer Academies. These projects are briefly presented in this section. Their key components and processes will be presented in greater detail in section 2.

Regional Summer Academies (RSAs) use a whole school approach training program to promote education for democratic citizenship in Poland, Russia, South East Europe, the Baltic States and Eastern Partnership countries. The RSAs take place annually in Poland, Montenegro and newly established the one for the Baltic region.⁵ The RSAs are carried out for multi-stakeholder school teams of three persons, including teachers, school heads, NGOs, parents and municipal authorities. The academies are carried out in three phases: online preparatory tasks in the week(s) preceding the training; face-to-face residential training (typically eight days); and personalized, online follow-up support by trainers to school teams (typically up to 8 months). During this time each team develops and implements an action plan with

⁴ T. Huddleston (2015), *Democracy in the Making: Good practices from five years of Regional Summer Academies* “Democracy at School and Human Rights in Action. Strasbourg: Council of Europe with the European Wergeland Centre, p. 9.

⁵ The first Baltic Summer Academy in 2015 is taking place in Tallinn, Estonia.

concrete activities and projects aimed at fostering a more democratic culture in their school.⁶

In Norway, whole school approach trainings were organized for teachers from 11 Norwegian schools as part of the Dembra project⁷ in 2013-2015. Teams include school heads and teachers who develop local actions including the whole school – teachers, parents and students.⁸ In this project, activities were intended to explicitly counter group-based enmity and prevent discrimination.

In Ukraine, the EWC carries out trainings in education for democratic citizenship and human rights through seminars for school directors in “Democratic Governance of Schools” and annual trainings for young teachers and high school students at the “School for Democracy. These in-person trainings are followed up by both online and in-person support to school teams for implementation of local projects and initiatives conceptualized during the trainings.⁹

In Russia, the EWC has organized advanced trainings for a network of regional coordinators, combined with regional trainings and implementation of local projects. As with its other efforts, a whole school approach is used, as well as school teams. In the case of Russia, university faculty and other educational professionals can participate alongside teachers and school administrators.¹⁰

The specific examples chosen for inclusion in this publication are those documented school-level efforts that contain explicit aims and components to combat discrimination or violence in the school and among its members. School teams, along with other members of the school community, decide which issues to address in order to promote EDC/HRE and a subset of these projects have been included. These illustrate how the framework of democracy and human rights in a whole school approach promotes inclusive processes for analyzing the school environment as well as participatory and diverse strategies for addressing school needs, including those related to discrimination and sometimes violence.

This publication highlights practices that were explicitly developed in order to combat problems such as bullying, discrimination, conflict and other forms of violence in the schools. However, other practices reflective of democratic governance and human rights can be seen as antidotes to these other problems. Such practices, also fostered through EWC programming, include the integration of EDC/HRE values and learning methods in curriculum at school; democratic school governance;

⁶ The first RSA took place in 2010 in Warsaw in collaboration with the Polish Ministry of Education and the Polish Centre for Education Development and have continued to take place and expand to other regions since.

⁷ The Dembra project was jointly organized by the Center for Holocaust Studies and Religious Minorities, the European Wergeland Centre and the Institute for Teacher Education and School Research/University of Oslo.

⁸ A new phase of the Dembra project is ongoing through 2016.

⁹ The Ukraine project “Democracy and Human Rights at School” was piloted in 2013 and was still being implemented in 2015.

¹⁰ The Russian project “Promotion of Civic Education” was carried out in Russia with a local partner in 2013-2015.

linking schools without outside agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The manifestation of attitudes and behaviors that are discriminatory or violent can be seen as a symptom of deeper unhealthiness. Thus, although the examples presented will focus on school projects oriented towards addressing these kinds of problems in school, many other practices in the schools – such as how well people’s voices are heard, and how rules are made and sanctions imposed – inevitably contribute to the development of healthy schools.¹¹

¹¹ Huddleston, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Section 1:

Theoretical background on discrimination, violence and the whole school approach

The monograph focuses on EDC/HRE-influenced whole school strategies used by the European Wergeland Centre in its efforts. Different kinds of projects have been developed and carried out across the hundreds of school teams as a result of their participation in EWC programming. Each of these school-level projects has aimed to promote a positive school climate and practices consistent with the values of democracy and human rights. Some of these activities have been specifically oriented towards the prevention of bullying and violence as part of this overarching goal of positive school development.

This publication does not go into depth on the nature and causes of violence in schools nor specific strategies for combating violence, such as peer mediation groups. Other literature is available that presents these areas in detail. However, in order to present a context for the ways in which schools have responded to the EDC/HRE whole school approach in combating discrimination and violence, in this section, a brief presentation is made of the relevant literature. For more detailed information on any of these areas, please refer to the resources included in the Annex.

1.1. Nature of discrimination and violence in school and its impacts

The World Health Organization defines violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself (self-directed), another person (interpersonal), or against a group or community (collective).¹² Within Europe, a comprehensive definition comes from the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly report “Education against violence at school”. The report states that violence can be direct and physical, or take on more psychological forms. They define the term “violent” as referring not only to aggressive behaviour involving the use of force but also to “simple threats, verbal attacks or indirect pressure on a person by means of rumours, social exclusion, cyber mockery, etc.”¹³ A 2009/2010 survey carried out by the Regional European Office for the World Health Organization revealed that 13% of 11-year-olds reported being bullied at school at least twice in the previous two months; this figure was 12% for 13-year-olds.¹⁴

¹² World Health Organization (2002). World Report on Violence and Health. Geneva: WHO, pp. 4-5. <http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/>

¹³ Council of Europe (2009). *Education against violence at schools. Parliamentary Assembly Report*, Committee on Culture, Science and Education. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/violence/Flegoreport-violenceatschool.pdf>

¹⁴ World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe (2012). *Social determinants of health and well-being among young people. Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Study: International Report from the 2009/2010 Survey*. Copenhagen: World Health Organization, pp. 194-5.

Violence in schools takes place on school property but can also occur on the way to or from school or at school-sponsored events.¹⁵ Members of school communities may also be affected by violence outside of the school setting, for example, interpersonal violence that can take place within the family or outside the home in the community.

As with other settings, different typologies of inter-personal violence have been identified:

Physical violence: violent or oppressive behavior towards the body, animals or objects that cause pain, injury, physical confinement or damage property; obstruction of fulfillment of basic needs.

Sexual violence: Sexual violence incorporates non-consensual sexual contact, such as rape, and non-consensual non-contact acts of a sexual nature, such as voyeurism and sexual harassment.¹⁶ Sexual coercion is defined as “the act of forcing (or attempting to force) another individual through violence, threats, verbal insistence, deception, cultural expectations or economic circumstances to engage in sexual behaviour against his/her will”.¹⁷

Psychological violence: humiliation, harassment or mobbing; continuous criticism and degradation; making someone look ridiculous; any behavior that causes emotional pain; threats and intimidation; verbal violence; coercion; and isolation.

Structural violence: ways in which social structures or social institutions damage its members by preventing them from meeting their basic needs.

Mobbing: continuous humiliation practiced by many persons towards a community member, with regularity and usually over a long period of time.

Cyber-bullying: use of the Internet and related technologies to harm other people in a deliberate, repeated and hostile manner.

An experience of violence can lead to lasting physical, mental, and emotional harm, whether the child is a direct victim or a witness.

Children who are exposed to violence are more likely to suffer from attachment problems, regressive behavior, anxiety, and depression, and to have aggression and conduct problems. Other health-related problems, as well as academic and cognitive problems, delinquency, and involvement in the

¹⁵ Center for Disease Control (2015). *Understanding School Violence: Fact Sheet*. Atlanta: CDC. http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/school_violence_fact_sheet-a.pdf

¹⁶ K C Basile, L E Saltzman (2002). *Sexual violence surveillance: uniform definitions and recommended data elements*. Atlanta: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. As quoted by A. Rutherford, A. B. Zwi, N.J. Grove, A. Butchart (2007). Violence: A Glossary. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* Aug; 61(8): 676–680.

¹⁷ G Krantz, C Garcia-Moreno (2005). Violence against women. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. 200559818–821.821. As quoted by Rutherford et al, *ibid*.

child welfare and juvenile justice systems, are also associated with experiences of violence.¹⁸

Violence can affect individuals but also families, schools, workplaces, communities, societies and the environment.¹⁹ The treatment of violence, in school settings and elsewhere, includes strategies of both prevention and intervention. School-wide strategies may be initiated in reaction to problems that have become evident in the school environment but would be maintained with the goal of increased inclusion and safety of members.

1.2. The whole school approach

The general meaning of the term “whole school approach” is fairly self-evident as it alludes to the area of action (school) and the scope of the activity (the entire school). In understanding related processes and components, however, it is helpful to think of the school in its many facets. School life is not only what takes place in the classrooms but also non-formal learning, such as extracurricular activities and school events. The school involves all of its members, not only pupils and teachers, but also parents, school leadership, support staff and other “stakeholders” such as the local community. The culture of the school -- the atmosphere one senses when walking through the corridors, sitting in the teachers’ lounge or the school cafeteria, attending a parent meeting – are all ingredients in the daily, dynamic life of the school. Programmatically speaking, a whole school approach can refer to the potential inclusion of all members of a school community. However, interventions may incorporate many dimensions of school life, not only formal teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

A frequently quoted definition of the whole school approach presents it as “cohesive, collective and collaborative action in and by a school community that has been strategically constructed to improve student learning, behaviour and wellbeing, and the conditions that support these.”²⁰

The whole school approach is closely linked with whole school development and school improvement. These approaches share similar ***processes and inputs for schools***, including:

- An inclusive school management body, with meaningful participation of multiple stakeholders and opportunities for widespread participation in decision making (including students)

¹⁸ Child Trends (2013). *Children’s Exposure to Violence: Indicators on Children and Youth*. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends, p. 2. <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=childrens-exposure-to-violence>.

¹⁹ World Health Organization, *op.cit.*

²⁰ Department of Education, Western Australia (2009). Whole School Approach. Accessed 21 June 2015. <http://det.wa.edu.au/policies/detcms/policy-planning-and-accountability/policies-framework/definitions/whole-school-approach.en>

- The development of relevant school policy and/or visioning statements that outline the school’s commitment to a key focus or principles
- The development of an action plan, with clear roles, responsibilities and processes for achieving goals
- Pedagogy and professional development, including training and opportunities for peer sharing and learning
- Links and partnerships with the local community
- Opportunities to partner and network with other schools participating in a similar endeavor
- Reflection and reporting out on program achievements²¹

Section 2 of this monograph presents the European Wergeland Centre’s “way of working” in using the whole school approach. This section presents the nine components of the Centre’s whole school approach, which collectively incorporate each of the processes and inputs above. A distinctive feature of the EWC programming is that the required visioning statement is already proposed through the EDC/HRE framework, incorporating values and processes touching upon all areas of school life. This will be addressed in greater detail in the next section.

Literature on the whole school approach has also identified important ***supports and features of the school environment*** for effective school development. These features cannot be directly influenced by organizations such as the European Wergeland Centre as they pertain to local school conditions. However, these are identified as important for EDC/HRE-influenced school improvement and school teams are not eligible to participate in EWC programming unless they have the active involvement of their headmaster and other members of the school and local community (such as parents, community-based organizations and municipal authorities).

Below is a list of supportive conditions identified for a successful school development effort.

1 Supportive Input

- Parent community support
- Effective support from (higher levels of) education system
- Adequate material support

2 Enabling Conditions

- Effective leadership
- A capable teaching force
- Flexibility and autonomy
- Time in school

²¹ Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability, 2006.

3 School Climate

- High expectations from students
- Positive Teacher Attitudes
- Order and discipline
- Organised curriculum
- Rewards and incentives

4 Teaching/ learning process

- Learning time
- Variety in teaching strategies
- Frequent homework
- Frequent student assessment feedback²²

The school development and the whole school approaches incorporate the dimension of positive school climate, as mentioned in the list above. Positive school climate is related not only to the learning environment but also the social-emotional environment and the physical environment.

Research has identified specific key factors that contribute to creating a positive school climate for students, staff, and the community:

continuous growth: experiencing academic and social growth.

respect: having high self-esteem and being considerate of others.

trust: having confidence that people can be counted on.

high morale: feeling good about being there.

cohesiveness: experiencing a sense of belonging.

opportunities for input: being able to contribute ideas and participate.

renewal: being open to change and improvement.

caring: feeling that others are concerned about them.²³

It is common to administer surveys to students and teachers in order to document perceptions of school climate. These surveys can be conducted at the school or classroom level and can involve students, staff, parents, community members, and

²² R. Carr-Hill (2007). *What could be best practice in whole school development?* pp. 70-72 as quoted by Network for International Policies and Cooperation in Education and Training. <http://www.norrag.org/es/publications/boletin-norrag/online-version/best-practice-in-education-and-training-hype-or-hope/detail/what-could-be-best-practice-in-whole-school-development-wsd.html>

²³ Howard, Howell, and Brainard 6-8, as quoted in Manitoba, whole school, p. viii.

school administrators. They can be formal and/or informal.²⁴ EWC programming encourages the use of school-wide surveys to obtain input from community members on any range of topics of interest to the school team. Questions might relate to overall school climate as well as other experiences or views that will inform the priorities and strategies of a school action plan. Examples of the kinds of surveys administered by schools associated with the EDC/HRE-influenced whole school strategies are touched upon in the Section 2.

1.3. [The whole school approaches and the prevention of violence](#)

The final theme for the literature review combines the whole school approach with the specific agenda of the prevention of discrimination and violence. The many forms of discrimination and violence that can take place in schools suggest that a range of strategies and approaches may be necessary for intervention and prevention, among them policies that prohibit certain negative behaviors and also promote social inclusion, peaceful resolution of conflict, respect for others, equality and emotional well-being.

Bullying is a common problem in school, and many systems have developed programs to prevent bullying, including whole school approaches. Whole school approaches to combat bullying can incorporate multiple levels of intervention: individual, classroom, school and community. For example, at the individual level, school staff can intervene on the spot when students are involved in bullying; at the classroom level, class meetings with students can be held regularly in order to address bullying; and at the school level, school rules could be introduced against bullying.²⁵ Some quasi-experimental research have confirmed that whole school preventative approaches to bullying (including curriculum and ‘shared concern’ approaches) are more effective than either of these strategies applied individually.²⁶ However, a meta-evaluation of available educational research on this subject was inconclusive. Although modest reductions in bullying could be associated with whole school approaches to bullying, Smith et al argue that whole school approaches to bullying – as with any intervention – may work best with well-functioning schools. Their conclusion is that it would be wise to intervene in the broader aspects of school climate, such as the general atmosphere and interpersonal relations.²⁷ This relates to

²⁴ Manitoba, Whole School Approach, p. x. Examples of school climate tools include: The School Climate Survey (School Development Program, Yale University) [available online at <<http://goal.ncrel.org/winss/scs/sample.htm>>]

— The NASSP CASE School Climate Surveys (National Association of Secondary School Principals) [available online at <http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/index.asp>]

Informal assessments are usually conducted using checklists administered by school staff.

²⁵ Olweus & Olweus (2008). Bullying Prevention Program. MORE.

²⁶ G. Wurf (2008). Reducing Bullying in High Schools: An evaluation of school-based initiatives for the prevention and management of bullying. Paper presented at Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Annual Conference, Brisbane, Australia.

²⁷ J.D. Smith, B.H. Schneider, P.K. Smith and K. Ananiadou (2004). The Effectiveness of Whole-School Antibullying Programs: A Synthesis of Evaluation Research. *School Psychology Review*, 33(4), p. 557.

the notion of school development and is consistent with the EDC/HRE whole school approach that is presented in this monograph.

One of the recommendations of the High-level expert meeting co-organized by the Government of Norway, the Council of Europe and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children in June 2011 was the use of whole school strategies for combating school-based violence:

Whole school approaches to ending violence appear to hold particular promise because they involve all stakeholders and mainstream violence prevention in all aspects of school life including school management and governance, recruitment policies, budget allocation, curricula development and teaching methods... The boundaries between schools and communities are porous, and when communities adhere to values of respect, tolerance and inclusion, these same values are likely to take root in local schools.²⁸

The report went on to identify several specific strategies for combating violence in schools that directly endorse whole school approaches and their specific features. Some of these recommendations include and extend upon some of the points raised earlier in this literature section and are therefore presented in their entirety.

Whole school approaches and strategies based on open *dialogue, mutual trust and participation* [ital added] is an integral means for addressing violence in schools. Implementation of whole school approaches that take into account power relations, gender disparities and structural hindrances on all levels in tackling violence in schools is the most viable way forward.

Inclusive participation mechanisms (structures, processes etc.) are necessary for meaningful pupil and pupil-teacher participation and for enhancing resilience and tolerance in schools.

Capacity building of teachers as well as co-operation and partnerships among many stakeholders, including academia and media, on local, regional, national and international levels are likely to result in better policies and practice.

Early *human rights and citizenship education and awareness raising* of children's rights, including rights in the Internet and how to use Internet/social media, social, emotional, behavioural and life skills training and inclusive education safeguard children from all forms of violence in school and in the communities at large.²⁹

²⁸ Council of Europe (2011). *Tackling violence in schools. High-level expert meeting co-organized by the Government of Norway, the Council of Europe and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. Oslo 27-28 June, 2011. Final Report of the Meeting*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, in collaboration with the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Education and the Special Rapporteur of the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, p. 10.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The next section presents the ingredients of the EWC's EDC/HRE-influenced whole school approach, with examples of how some schools have used these to combat discrimination and violence.

Section 2:

The EDC/HRE-influenced whole school approach

The Vision:

2.1. EDC/HRE framework as the school vision

The EDC/HRE framework is one that imbues the aims, working methods and materials in all of the European Wergeland Centre's efforts. Principles of inclusion and democratic participation resonate across the partners and within the training teams. Training methods are active and learner centered, so that participants can become better able to use such methods themselves. They also invite reflection on personal practices and the school environment in relation to the EDC/HRE standards. Do decision making processes in the school reflect inclusive and democratic principles? Are there any groups excluded or experiencing violence in our school? Are teachers, students and parents working together in healthy relationships? Does the school look outside its own borders to invite and involve itself in issues in the community?

The EDC/HRE framework is used in the EWC efforts as a framework for critical reflection and the goal setting. Democratic and human rights principles and practices are carried forward in the work of the school teams both through their infusion within classroom teaching as well as other aspects of the school environment. The capacity-development trainings address EDC/HRE teaching and learning processes. Related Council of Europe materials are included in the Annex to this publication, and present a wide assortment of learning activities, many of which are modeled in the trainings.

The EDC/HRE framework is carried forward in the work of the school teams both through the infusion of this framework within classroom teaching. Nearly all of the school teams participating in capacity-development training as part of a EWC project will return to their schools, share the Council of Europe materials and carry out some kind of peer training. This peer training typically involves practical methodologies and approaches for classroom practice, using sample lessons from the Council of Europe resource or activities that they participated in.

This track is essentially a "bottom up" approach for curriculum enrichment that offers teachers in their school environment the choice of numerous lessons on EDC/HRE-related topics that can be integrated in a transversal manner across the teaching of all subjects and that can also be concentrated within key subjects such as civics or in teachers' open hours. The beauty of this approach is that teacher autonomy is retained in relation to the activities selected from the various Council of Europe materials and that such an initiative can involve many classrooms in the school.

In relation to violence prevention, EDC/HRE content and methodologies in the classroom not only transmit important values such as tolerance and inclusion but foster communication and cooperation among students and between students and teachers. In primary school Lijepa nasa in Tukulj, Croatia, the main focus of the follow-up to the 2012 summer academy in South Eastern Europe was to support teachers in understanding and making use of EDC/HRE approaches in their classrooms. One of the workshops organized in the school focused on communication and conflict resolution with methods used from *Compasito* (2007). This particular workshop was viewed as an essential building block for encouraging learners to express their opinions and to take actions, as part of the wider effort to encourage student engagement in the school.

The EDC/HRE framework is also carried forward through the profound work of analyzing the school situation and on the basis of these results, identifying priorities and developing an action plan. These plans usually include some aspect of infusing EDC/HRE within classroom teaching but also incorporate other areas of school life, such as nonformal learning, student participation, or a specific need such as combating violence against members of the school community. Through this process, participants recognize and interpret their own vision for EDC/HRE in their environment and identify concrete steps for improvement.

Ingredients from the School Side:

2.2. Self-selection of schools into the effort

It is perhaps self-evident that capacity-development projects are more likely to be successful when participants are engaging voluntarily. This self-selection process helps to ensure that learners are genuinely open to the aims of the training and will make an effort to apply their knowledge and skills. This sets aside one potential barrier to a successful training effort, that of disinterest or even resistance on the part of the learner.

All schools participating in the Dembra, Ukraine and Russia projects do so voluntarily. For Summer Academies, as they are publicly advertised, the requirements for acceptance are quite high and the competition is intensive. School teams have to present an application that demonstrates enthusiasm for EDC/HRE, the ability to pull together a multi-stakeholder team, and a commitment to implement. This is a highly competitive process, where only a small percentage of applications are accepted. Those teams that are accepted recognize that they are privileged and this may further encourage engagement with the Academy.

The international dimension of the EWC efforts may provide additional incentives for some schools to participate. They will become associated with the European Wergeland Centre, a leading teacher professional development organization in Europe. If they participate in a Regional Summer Academy, the school will also be linked with an international Council of Europe effort, one sponsored by a ministry of

education and involving teams from different countries. These features add additional prestige to schools' involvement in the project and may help to further foster engagement in line with the training aims.

[2.3. Inclusive school management body](#)

As mentioned earlier, research has shown that effective school development projects are linked with leadership support. To put it another way, without such support, a change effort is not likely to operate at the school level. With such support, the possibilities of success are not guaranteed but they are certainly improved.

The engagement of headmasters is assured through various processes in the EWC programming. When working in a national environment with numerous schools, as is the case in Russia and Ukraine, outreach sessions are organized either explicitly for headmasters or in combination with teachers. For the summer academies, the school teams include their headmaster, thus helping to ensure their commitment to and engagement with all phases of the program.

The engagement of headmasters is pragmatic on many levels. It helps to ensure the necessary political and operational support for school wide action plans. Headmasters can also stand behind a long-term vision of the school oriented around EDC/HRE.

[2.4. Links and partnerships with the local community](#)

The whole school approach recognizes the mutual value of schools linking with partners outside of their building. The European Wergeland Centre itself serves as a kind of partner. In the Dembra project in Norway, staff from the organizing institutions, including EWC, assisted in teacher training and the administration of surveys assessing school climate. In its international work, the centre has carried out initial capacity development trainings with school teams and then continued to provide encouragement and support online.

The principle of partnerships between schools and local entities is central to the EDC/HRE whole school approach. Schools are just one institution in a milieu of entities, processes and cultures that constitute one's community outside of one's own family. Studies on the political education of learners have recognized that many things influence learners, including personality structure, family systems and beliefs, local culture, the media and so on. How students recognize, assess and then engage with these influences is part of their development.

A core value of EDC/HRE is participation. As the environment that students live and study in extend beyond their school walls, it is natural that EDC/HRE efforts would facilitate their engagement with local organizations, including opportunities to contribute to the fostering of these values through their actions.

Institutions can enrich the learning of students in the schools, by working with teachers, parents and students in trainings and projects in their areas of specialization. Across the hundreds of action plans developed by school teams in EWC projects, the kinds of partners have included:

- NGOs, such as educational non-profits, child welfare groups, youth groups and human rights organizations
- other civil society organizations, such as churches
- municipal authorities
- health personal such as social workers, psychologists and others
- media
- higher education faculty and students
- parents

These partners have cooperated with schools in the delivery of trainings and lectures; the provision of sites for field trips; opportunities for community action and service; the organization of special events; venues for awareness raising carried out by teachers and students. As one example of many, two schools in Montenegro³⁰ that had participated in the 2012 South East Europe summer academy invited in an outside lecturer on peer violence in order to raise awareness on this topic within the school community.

Just as real needs can be met in the school through the added expertise and energy of local partners, local partners -- and by extension the local community -- can also benefit from engagement with schools. The mission of many of these partners involves public service and education, and engagement with schools helps them to fulfill these tasks.

School teams – including students – can identify their needs and develop a strategic plan that is inclusive of partners. In the summer academies, school teams can include a partner external to the school, such as a local NGO or municipal authority and such a group can then actively participate in the development of an action plan from the early stages.

A violence prevention program organized across six schools in Riazan, Russia was designed with a school mediation team for each, supervised and supported by a social worker from the municipality. This person worked with teachers and students on the teams in facilitating solutions to violence in the schools. According to the internal evaluation at the end of the first year of the effort, these supervisors not only “supported” the teams but also provided moral support in difficult times and were ready to join in with the practical work of schools.

³⁰ These Montenegrin schools were the “Milija Nikcevic” primary school in Nikšić and the “Veljko Drobnyaković” primary school in Risan.

Support from outside the school

2.5. Capacity development -- Pedagogy, professional development and resources

All of the EWC programming is oriented towards the realization of EDC/HRE values in school life. Capacity development around this framework include not only the sharing of information and skill development of participants around EDC/HRE teaching and learning practices but dimensions of the whole school approach and practical measures for developing an inclusive and effective action plan.

Each of the Regional Summer Academies has included sessions addressing over a seven- to nine-day period of time:

- the whole school approach
- teacher competencies related to implementing EDC/HRE in the classroom
- teaching and learning activities that develop EDC/HRE in the classroom and school
- involving students and parents in decision-making at schools
- democratic governance of schools
- stakeholder partnering for sustainable EDC/HRE
- the role of the school head
- analysis of school situation / environmental audit
- how to develop an EDC/HRE school project (including drafting, presentation, revision during the RSA)

Additional sessions are included that are reflective of the trainers' backgrounds and the needs of the participants coming from the region, which are assessed through an application form prior to the training. In recent years, EWC experiences a growing interest by participants to learn more about how to address violence in schools (often particular forms such as bullying) through EDC/ HRE. Thus, since 2013 specific sessions were included into the RSA program on:

- How to challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Developing a positive school climate to prevent unacceptable forms of behavior
- EDC/ HRE as a tool to address problems at school (among others bullying)
- Tools of effective communication³¹

Many of these sessions have drawn upon *Compasito* (2007), which includes background information on violence and active methods for use in classrooms and schools.³²

³¹ This information is taken from training agendas developed by the CoE, the European Wergeland Centre and the national authorities of the host countries such as Poland and Montenegro. Unpublished internal documents, 2103-2015.

Because of the broad agenda of the RSA, sessions do not typically go into depth on how to teach students non-violent behavior or use of nonviolent disciplinary approaches in the classroom or school. In those schools that chose to adopt such specific strategies, such as peer mediation, collaboration with outside agencies can be very helpful, as some of the examples in this monograph will demonstrate.

The capacity development and support that is provided by the EWC does not take place only during the in-person training. Support typically lasts over a full year, including a phases preceding and following the in-person trainings. The centre is committed to the success of the school teams in implementing their action projects and serves as a long-term coach for the lifetime of the project as well as through the ongoing, supports that are delivered through the alumni network Share&Connect online platform and the information and resources that are continuously updated and shared on the EWC website.

The RSAs, which are residential, are preceded by an online preparatory phase just beforehand, which facilitates participants getting to know each other and reviewing the Council of Europe resources that will be used in the trainings. The follow-up phase involves the delivery of supports to school teams to further revise and implement the action plans drafted during the summer academy. These supports include ongoing support by one or two of the trainers from the RSA and the opportunity to read and share reports on Share&Connect with their peers, the trainers and the EWC staff on the implementation of their school plans. Schools are encouraged to share their final report in the form of a “newsletter” (English or Russian) that can then be shared with an even wider audience than the respective RSA.

In the Dembra project carried out in Norway, staff from the Dembra partner institutions carries out capacity-development trainings directly to school teams and their school staff. The themes are similar to those carried out in the Regional Summer Academies. Three, whole-day workshops were delivered for the school team: (a) introduction to the whole school approach and its relevance for the prevention of group focused enmity, the role of the team, initial situation analysis, interactive activities to facilitate engagement with the key concepts of the Dembra project and which could also be used in classrooms (including those relating to identity and belonging, identification and de-construction of hate speech, and Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed); and teachers’ role in relation to the democratic mandate of schools; (b) development of an action plan; (c) evaluation of the school’s Dembra activities and future planning. In addition, three lectures were provided for the entire teacher staff, focusing on knowledge (racism and anti-Semitism, historically and in a

³² *Compasito* includes background information on violence, including definitions and relevant human rights instruments, as well as active methods that raise awareness about one’s role in preventing and overcoming negative conflict (see pages 108, 113, 133).

contemporary times; anti-democratic ideologies and movements), values reflection, critical thinking skills, distinguishing between fact and opinion, and methods of conflict resolution.

[2.6. Opportunities to partner and network with other participating schools](#)

The capacity development activities carried out for the EWC projects involved not only multi-stakeholder teams but also teams from different schools. This ‘community of practice’ develops naturally across the teams during trainings and is also maintained through the Share&Connect online platform managed by the EWC. Teachers and team members sustain these contacts at their own discretion but relationships are encouraged. It is not unusual for teams within a country to collaborate on activities after the Academy, though this would typically take place on an informal basis.

Teams participating in European Wergeland Centre projects have also taken the initiative to share EDC/HRE resources and ideas with teachers in neighboring schools with whom they have relationships. NGOs that are part of the teams can also disseminate EDC/HRE-related resources and ideas within their work across different beneficiaries. As projects are successfully carried out, word spreads. Teachers may present their results in national fora with other teachers and educational administrators. In many countries, this has led to strengthened relationships with the Ministry of Education and opportunities to demonstrate leadership in EDC/HRE more widely in the country.³³

In the city of Riazan, Russia a collaborative effort to prevent school violence through mediation emerged as part of one school team’s participation in the 2012 Regional Summer Academy program in Poland. The team included the private school “School of Project Planning, Research and Leadership (SPIL)” and an NGO partner “Inter-regional center for life-long learning.” In Riazan’s traditional all-city teacher meeting at the beginning of the school year, the teachers from SPIL invited others to join the project and develop school mediation teams. Six schools joined the “School against violence” project, participating in the local capacity-development efforts with the support of school psychologists from the municipality.

Processes for school-focused analysis, visioning, project design, implementation and reflection

As part of their own capacity development, school teams carry out a review exercise and learn about how to develop an action plan. School teams subsequently replicate all or portions of these activities within their schools in order to finalize an action plan that has wide ownership in the school community.

³³ In Georgia, a team member from Tblisi School No. 42 was elected to the board of the Georgian Civic Education Teachers Forum. A presentation on the school’s EDC/HRE effort to 600 civic education teachers in the country and in other events brought the positive attention of the Ministry of Education.

2.7. Environmental audit or review

Most schools will participate in some kind of survey that will help the team understand the needs in their environment. In the Dembra project, the organizers had developed a standardized, 15-item questionnaire that was distributed to students and teachers in all participating schools. The questions asked for respondents to comment on features of the overall school environment: democratic school climate (feeling that one's opinion is taken into account, that one can influence decisions), and the use of prejudicial language and attitudes towards specific groups, including ethnic and religious minorities, females, persons with disabilities and persons coming from lower income groups.

In the RSAs, school teams participate in an analytical activity during the training that helps them to establish their initial priorities for their action plan. They are encouraged to carry out surveys or another form of data collection upon their return to their school, in order to validate needs of the school and to get input on the action plan. These reviews were also seen as a way to engage different members of the school community and to interest them in the follow-up actions developed.

Following participation in the 2014 South Eastern European Summer Academy, a Slovenian school³⁴ decided to focus on combating bullying in their school. As part of their environmental audit, a questionnaire was developed and administered at the beginning and end of the school year measuring the incidences of perceived physical, verbal, social and cyber-bullying in schools.

Following participation in the 2011 Summer Academy that took place in Poland, a Ukrainian school team³⁵ decided to focus on violence prevention. One of the partners enlisted in the effort were parents working at Lviv University who worked with the school in developing a survey on incidences of bullying and violence for students in grades 5-7. The overall survey results identified a problem with online bullying. In addition, one case emerged of offensive communication between students in the 7th grade. This case was analyzed by pupils, parents and teachers and an intervention was carried out by the school psychologist.

A Polish school team³⁶ focused on a domestic violence prevention program following their participation in the 2012 summer academy that took place in their home country. An anonymous survey was administered to students in the fall, asking about incidences and kinds of violence (physical, psychological) in their homes. The results were used by the team of teachers, psychologists and a lawyer involved in carrying out workshops with students on recognizing and responding to domestic violence.

³⁴ Osnovna šola Simona Jenka Kranj, in Kranj, Slovenia.

³⁵ Lviv, Ukraine gymnasium "Prestige".

³⁶ IV Lyceum Ogólnokształcące in Chełme, Poland.

2.8. Development of an action plan

On the basis of the analysis carried out for their school environment, school teams develop action plans to promote EDC/HRE. During the trainings, each team develops a plan that minimally includes activities, target group(s), responsible team members and deadlines. They receive feedback on this initial plan during the training and have the opportunity to carry out further revision before sharing, validating and revising with other members of their school after the training has concluded.

Below is an action plan related to the dissemination of EDC/HRE teaching and learning practices among teachers in the Serbian primary school “Nebojsa Jerkovic” in Budjanovci. This action plans includes an explicit orientation towards combating prejudice and discrimination and involved a local educational NGO, Civic Initiatives.

Table 1. Year-long Action Plan for EDC/HRE Training of Teachers at the School Level

ACTIVITY	TARGET GROUP	TEAM MEMBER RESPONSIBLE	DATE/DEADLINE
Inform teachers on EDC/HRE	Teachers	school head, English language teacher, English language teacher	End of September 2014
Do a research on knowledge and values of EDC/HRE	Teachers	Team member and school pedagogue	Beginning of September 2014
Train teachers to incorporate EDC/HRE principles and practices into their teaching particularly with regard to discrimination	Teachers	school head, English language teacher, English language teacher, Civic Initiatives (Belgrade)	End of October 2014
Organize a teachers’ meeting to exchange good practices related to prejudice discrimination	Teachers	school head	Beginning of November 2014
Plan how to incorporate and incorporate EDC/HRE principles and practices into teaching particularly with regard to discrimination	Teachers	School pedagogue, school head	End of December 2014
Organize a teachers’ meeting to exchange good practices related to prejudice discrimination	Teachers	school head	End of January 2015
Plan and organize thematic days and cross subject teaching	Teachers	school head	February, March, April 2015
Do a research on knowledge and values of EDC/HRE	Teachers	Team member and pedagogue	End of May 2015

Consistent with whole school development, most school teams attending a RSA incorporate within their initial action plans activities for sharing of EDC/HRE teaching and learning materials and techniques from the training. This typically involves sharing the Council of Europe resources (see Annex) and modeling lessons with colleagues. In some cases, schools focused on increasing teaching staff capacity in the area of EDC/HRE also include components that can be viewed as related to violence prevention, such as communication and conflict transformation skills.

The incorporation of lessons with themes related to children's rights, respect for diversity, democratic values and participation -- and the encouraged use of more participatory and dialogic methods of instruction -- can be seen as a contribution to the wider agenda of school development. With EDC/HRE as the guiding normative framework, each school can continuously improve, including activities related to the prevention of violence and discrimination.

In some schools, there was added emphasis placed on combating discrimination and promoting social and cultural cohesion. Following their involvement in the 2013 summer academy in Poland, the Lev Tolstoy Secondary School in Yerevan, Armenia implemented an action plan with a "school projects" component. Each of the three project groups involved 15-20 students plus teachers and parents collectively representing ethnic and economic diversity. The topics explored for Yerevan were its rich and poor neighborhoods, youth subcultures and the "anti-Rabis" youth lifestyle. The project groups carried out research and presented their findings for the school using creative mediums such as essays, photos and performances.

Other tactics that emerged for violence prevention included the organization of peer mediation and school mediation teams, trainings specialized on the nature of violence and how to report incidences (sometimes carried out with municipal organizations of NGOs), and school-wide awareness raising events. Generated by the local needs and the creative impulses of school actors, many tactics have been elaborated for addressing violence among members of the school community. A few examples are presented more thoroughly in Section 3 of this monograph.

[2.9. Reflection and reporting out](#)

The processes of inclusion and of reflective analysis were reinforced throughout the Regional Summer Academies. School teams were provided with time to not only develop draft action plans but to practice sharing them with others. The teams returned to their schools and shared their experiences, picking up the discussions and initial planning that had taken place in the RSA with teaching staff and the wider school community and partners.

Ongoing contact with a EWC trainer, as well as with team members from other schools who had participated in the training, were maintained online through the EWC online platform Share&Connect. Mid-way through the school year, teams were

asked to share their progress online. At the end of the school year, teams were asked to prepare a “newsletter” on their efforts and results. The format of this newsletter evolved over the years of offering the regional summer academies, and was shared during the academy so as to help participants analyze their future efforts in the schools.

The text-based components of each school project newsletter were organized according to the categories below. This information was interspersed with photos, images and impressions from participants, creating a lively and colorful rendering of the school-level efforts in four-page “newsletters” that could also be distributed to wider audiences.

Project title:

Challenges/context of the school:

Period of the project:

Aims:

Focus areas: (e.g., EDC/HRE training of teachers/school staff; EDC/HRE in lessons; democratic school governance; student(s) participation; involvement of parents; partnership with local community)

Target group(s), including numbers:

Activities carried out:

Council of Europe materials used and their usefulness:

Challenges/problems faced during project realization:

Main results and changes achieved:

Future plans.

These newsletters are prepared in one of the languages used in the RSA trainings so as to foster sharing with other school teams.

Section 3:

View from the field:

The EDC/HRE whole school approach for the prevention of discrimination and violence

These are examples of a subset of Action Plans from Regional Summer Academies that had a strong focus on the prevention of discrimination and violence. In principle, any school that is oriented around the values of EDC/HRE will be in effect combating violence through positive school climate and school development. However, in the examples that are shared below, the school had identified violence as a problem to be tackled. The strategies presented in these examples do not demonstrate the full array of whole school strategies that may be carried out but only those that have emerged to date and are documented in the work of the European Wergeland Centre.

3.1. Regional Summer Academies

Slovenia. “Non-violence, yes please!” September 2014 – June 2015. This school organized an explicit anti-bullying campaign with 250 primary school students (grades 1 to 9/ages 6 to 15) and teaching staff.

The aim was to reduce incidences of bullying by:

- Educating students about their rights and the rights of others
- Showing students how to spot and respond to violence
- Creating an inclusive, violence-free school environment.

Following participation in the 2014 South Eastern European Summer Academy, a Slovenian school team presented to the entire teaching staff and shared Council of Europe materials with suggestions for how to integrate them in classroom teaching. The multi-faceted strategy included:

- The distribution of EDC/HRE Council of Europe teaching and learning materials from the Regional Summer Academy by team members to teachers, with recommended sample lessons to use on human rights, violence and bullying and how to respond
- Documentation of amount and kind of bullying, through administration of a questionnaire to students at the beginning and end of the year
- An “assertive behavior” camp for 6th graders
- An overnight “reading night” carried out in collaboration with an NGO involving primary school students and students from a local youth home, involving the reading and preparation of short stories and comics on bullying.
- Various activities in art and literature related to diversity, responses to bullying

At the end of the project year, the school team recognized that awareness about the presence of bullying in the schools had increased among not only the students and school staff, but also parents and members of the local community. Although the questionnaire administered at the end of the school year did not show reduced levels of bullying, students demonstrated increased awareness that such activities were taking place. New processes were initiated with the teaching staff. The Council of Europe Compass resource was adopted as an official teaching resource and teachers were integrating EDC/HRE-related lessons in order to prevent bullying. An NGO focused on non-violent communication were invited to work directly with students, both in classrooms and in special events organized outside of the school grounds. Due to the energetic efforts of the school to combat bullying, it was invited to participate as a pilot school in a national project to address violence and bullying in school.³⁷

Russia. August 2012 – May 2013. The school team from the private school “School of Project Planning, Research and Leadership (SPIL)” in Riazan, Russia invited other local schools to join them in an effort to reduce violence in schools. Six school teams joined the effort organized by the team from the summer academy, with school psychologists also participating.

Following an initial orientation and planning meeting, the project was launched with a workshop on teacher competencies and conflict resolution, organized by the summer academy team based on their experience in Warsaw. The workshop included a theoretical element, interactive activities and an opportunity to identify personal levels of tolerance. Following the workshop, each school team organized an awareness raising campaign on violence in schools and the supporting school psychologist analyzed the nature and degree of violence in the school environment on the basis of surveys distributed to students and teachers.

School mediation teams were then formed in each of the schools, involving interested students and teachers who were then trained. These teams then developed school-specific tactics for addressing violence, such as carrying out presentations and interactive activities in classrooms to promote tolerance and non-violent interactions. Eventually each of the teams became engaged in live mediation.

At the end of the first year, the school mediation teams were even more convinced of the need of their efforts, based on their experiences and the feedback from students. They also felt the need to further improve their skills and to develop new plans for the coming year. These plans included the identification and training of new members of the teams, the development of promotional materials that could be shared across schools, the publication of training materials and the establishment of an online media network for sharing resources and support.

³⁷ The project “A Systematic Approach to Peer Violence in Educational Institutions – A Role Model” is financed by the Slovene Ministry of Economic Development and Technology and the European Economic Area (EEA) and Norway Grants.

Poland. September 2012 – April 2013. The school team from IV Lyceum Ogólnokształcące in Chełme decided to improve EDC/HRE values by focusing on the prevention of domestic violence through programming geared towards first year students.

Following participation in the 2012 Poland Summer Academy, the Polish school team informed the headmaster and teachers from their school, as well as neighboring ones, about the aims of the Summer Academy, the EDC/HRE outlook and resources. The topic of domestic violence was first approached through the Convention on the Rights of the Child-- the special protections that the standards afford children physically, mentally and socially, including protection against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.³⁸

The initial action plan developed during the academy was endorsed and partnerships were established with organizations that could assist in the implementation of violence-prevention activities with the students. These organizations included the Chełme teacher training centre, the Family Help and Protection Center and the City Council.

A team of psychologists, a pedagogue and a lawyer from across these agencies served as “coaches” and delivered three workshops. One held with students addressed the different kinds of domestic violence, its causes and consequences and which institution students could turn to if they experienced violence. A workshop on how to assist victims was organized for students and teachers jointly. Students also participated in a workshop on inter-personal communication skills and assertive behavior.

At the end of the project year, the school team felt that an immediate gain was that students had learned that it was important to report domestic violence to the right person as soon as possible. Teachers also observed that students were ready and eager to share opinions. In addition, new relationships had been established with organizations in the community and teachers had been enriched through the EDC/HRE materials that were shared from the Summer Academy. As a next step in the effort, the school planned to repeat the workshops with students who had not had the opportunity to participate in the first year.

Ukraine. September 2011 – June 2012. The gymnasium “Prestige” organized a campaign to prevent violence with its 803 secondary school students (ages 11 to 16) and teaching staff. The project was carried out in cooperation with a local NGO “SALUS”. The school is located in Lviv, a multi-cultural city in Ukraine including ethnic and religious minorities from Russia, Poland, and Armenia.

The overall strategy was to embed violence prevention within a broader, whole school effort to promote a positive school culture and to encourage agency among

³⁸ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 44/25, “Convention on the Rights of the Child”, 20 November 1989.

students. The aims of the project were to reduce violence through awareness-raising with students, improving relations between teachers and students, and engaging parents and other members of the community with the school in maintaining a safe and friendly environment in the school.

Following participation in the 2011 Poland Summer Academy, the Ukraine school team engaged with the teaching staff in elaborating and implementing an action plan that was overseen by the School Council and included the following elements:

- In early December in conjunction with Human Rights Day, human rights education were carried out for students in grades 5-7 and a radio rally took place
- A survey was administered to students regarding bullying and violence and the results were integrated into violence prevention strategies
- Trainings on violence prevention were carried out by a school psychologist for teachers and parents of grades 5-9. An end-of-year conference on this topic was organized for all school counselors and social workers in the city of Lviv.
- A local charity organization “SALUS” that worked in the area of social needs delivered a staff training on preventing violent behavior among teenagers and every teacher shared these materials in their classrooms. Other community partners, including a drug prevention NGO “Youth at Crossroads” and Lviv University researchers shared through presentations and trainings.

At the end of the project year, the school team felt that students had become more aware of the consequences of violence and that the overall environment in the school had improved through improved student behavior. The effort brought together parents and teachers more often than usual in order to collaborate in addressing a problem and the team was optimistic that the School Council would continue to remain monitor and support a positive school culture. An interesting side result of the violence prevention effort was the initiation of a violence prevention project for animals, initiated by a teacher at the school. This effort resulted in media attention and some of the students raising money to assist homeless animals. These students developed new skills in relation to carrying out a community project.

Georgia. September 2013 – June 2014. The example from the Tblisi No. 42 Public School illustrates a main starting point as a focus on strengthening self-governance and the work of the School Council. In Georgia, the School Council is the main decision-making body in the school and consists of teachers, student and parents and is regulated by the State Law on Public Education. The school team considered that the council had been operating in a passive and formal manner, and decided to use the EDC/HRE aims and methods of the Summer Academy as an impetus to revitalize the School Council in relation to student engagement.

The Action Plan contained three phases. In Phase I, student workshops focused on the structure and operation of the School Council and the topic of school culture. As students began to develop ideas for improving school culture, these were shared with

parents and teachers as evidence of the value of student participation. In a parent meeting, they learned about some of the student results and encouraged to foster their child's development through responsibility and positive discipline. Teachers attended seminars that addressed cooperation with students, the school legal system and values-oriented education.

In Phase II, students carried out research on school culture and practices in order to identify topics that the School Council could address. Sixty percent of the students, 80% of the teachers and 20% of the parents answered a questionnaire, which revealed two main challenges in the school environment, one of them being bullying.

In Phase III, the School Council developed and piloted actions for addressing the problems identified in the research. Twenty students participated in the piloting of a module that used the arts to raise awareness about bullying and how to combat it. A relationship was established with Ilia State University, which sent some university students to the secondary school in order to collaborate on the development of an action plan for the following year. This plan included student workshops on bullying and the establishment of a peer mediation service.

At the end of the project year, the school team felt that the greatest accomplishment was having students and teachers collaborate as peers in developing and administering the survey, and developing solutions for the problems that were identified. Concrete projects were planned for the following year using these inclusive processes.³⁹

[3.2. Norway- Dembra.](#)

The Groruddalen lower secondary school in Oslo had a high proportion of pupils with an immigrant background, with 42 different native languages spoken by the pupils. Participation in the Dembra project over six months in the 2013-2014 school year enabled the school leader and teachers to extend their work with inclusive school culture to address the issue of demeaning, stereotypical language and swear words among students.

A survey administered to students and teachers at the beginning of the project had shown that such language was common, although there were apparently only minimal corresponding negative attitudes towards the minority groups themselves. Following the delivery of capacity development trainings by the Dembra organizers, teachers in turn carried out with their students a series of activities aiming to develop critical thinking and reflection during a "Week of Friendship": the Dembra team had developed participatory exercises on identity that also raised awareness about the use and consequences of using derogatory swear words; students were matched with "secret friends" who received special attention from a student during the week.

³⁹ As no reports were submitted to the European Wergeland Centre after June 2014, the results of these Year 2 action plans is not known.

A concluding “open house” involved parents and other members of the local community.

An internal evaluation carried out by the European Wergeland Centre on behalf of the organizing group at the end of the project showed that teachers considered an important result of the project to be an increased awareness related to the use of language and to prejudice and racism.⁴⁰ The school team that had led the project at the school anticipated that the “Week of Friendship” would be repeated in the future.

⁴⁰ C. Lenz and P. Nustad (under review), “Fostering democratic preparedness to prevent focused enmity in Norwegian schools.” The final evaluation report is published at the EWC website: www.theewc.org

Section 4:

Conclusion

4.1. School conditions

The whole school approach is an intrinsically complex one. This is an advantage because the associated processes and components are more promising for systematically and comprehensively addressing school culture and practices. The challenge is that their very complexity requires considerable effort and coordination. The nine components presented in Section 2 signal the degree of attention that may be required for a successful effort.

The literature identifies many conditions that would ideally be met in a whole school change effort. Below is a list that demonstrates the crucial role of the school teams in implementing whole school approach-oriented projects, including the delivery of leadership, time and resources.

- Preplanning – awareness, buy-in, staff involvement, incentive to change
- Implementation support system – provision of training, ongoing support
- Implementation environment – including leadership support, curriculum integration, time, resources, openness to change, multiple initiatives, climate and relationships
- Implementer (e.g., teacher, student) factors – experience, skills, confidence, attitude towards the intervention
- Program characteristics – quality of materials, level of materials, flexibility⁴¹

The internal evaluation carried out as part of the Dembra pilot project identified “time” as a critical ingredient for successful programming.⁴² Teacher and school leaders need the time and methodologies for analyzing their school environment in order to develop and implement appropriate responses at a school wide level. Teachers also need space and encouragement to reflect on their own teaching practices, to integrate new approaches and to figure out how to contribute to a broad building-wide effort.

EWC tries to account for many of these conditions through the overall design of its programming by:

- focusing on long term (e.g., one year) capacity development and support of school team members

⁴¹ Humphrey et al, 2010.

⁴² Lenz and Nustad, *op. cit.*

- provision of a wide assortment of quality materials for EDC/HRE teaching and learning as EDC/HRE in the overall school environment and school development processes
- helping to ensure the commitment and support of staff and school leadership through the initial criteria required for participation
- through integration of an environmental analysis, helping to ensure that the project will address genuine priorities in the school environment
- providing a wider frame of legitimacy and audience by being attached to an international program supported by the Council of Europe and EWC, in addition to authorities (mostly the ministry of education).

4.2. [Sustainability of whole school efforts](#)

A question raised in the internal evaluation of the Dembra pilot project in Norway was that of sustainability. How, then, to help ensure that any actions that are carried out during these projects (a) are repeated; (b) are integrated within the ‘ways of working’ within the school over the course of the school year; and/or (c) are updated and applied to evolving needs in the school environment?

Across the entire project there was evidence that some school teams had developed project that deliberately linked with pre-existing structures or efforts in their environment. Some schools in the Dembra project had specifically decided to participate in order to develop synergies with existing programming related to Dembra themes or breathe new life into areas that they had worked on before, such as inclusion, tolerance and building a respectful school climate.

In the Lviv, Ukraine gymnasium “Prestige”, which participated in a RSA, efforts to prevent violence were linked with the efforts of the existing School Council. The Council oversaw the administration of surveys to students and a training offered by a school social worker to teachers and parents on violence prevention. The School Council remains engaged on the topic of school life and a healthy environment.

The High School No. 5 in Vagharshapat, Armenia participated in the 2012 regional summer academy in Poland and integrated the Student’s Council within the implementation of the school’s action plan. The Council took the lead in organizing the school-wide monthly human rights education days. The Council also integrated the EDC/HRE-related approach into its ongoing work through having more regular meetings with the school head, organizing a regular self-evaluation on the degree of democratic governance at the school, and involving students in the evaluation of the quality of teaching at the school. These practices were expected to continue following the formal conclusion of the follow-up to the regional summer academy.

The long-term sustainability of results would be desirable for all school projects, especially as the integration of EDC/HRE values is seen not only as a tool for prevention of violence and discrimination (negative) but also a positive contribution to a healthy school, with a positive climate and effective learning. School teams

exploring ways to strengthen EDC/HRE in their local environment might first explore existing structures or pre-existing projects to see if these might be strengthened or revitalized in the whole school effort. This review might also facilitate lesson learning about challenges that these challenges can be anticipated and strategized for in the new programming.

4.3. Evaluation of outcomes

There are several challenges in regards to evaluating the impact of any specific whole school program on students, teachers and other members of the school community. The first challenge is methodological and it overlaps with logistics: What baseline data should be collected at the outset and which data should be collected at other key points in the school's development? The question that follows close behind is how feasible it is to collect such information, given time and resources (human, time, financial) at the school level.

There is no easy answer to this challenge. In the internal evaluation of the Dembra project, a mixed-methods approach was applied, involving the following kinds of data sources:

- a teacher survey, which inquired about the project impacts at the individual level (e.g., increased awareness and knowledge) and at the school level (e.g., improved capacity to prevent group-focused enmity)
- focus group interviews with teachers
- written documentation related to the work of the school teams, including action plans, reports and other documentation of activities.

Case studies for each of the participating Dembra schools were developed on the basis of the interviews and written documentation.

In order not to overly burden school teams in their EDC/HRE efforts – which are usually taking place in addition to other teaching responsibilities – the EWC has set out a template for self-review that is contained in a “newsletter”. This effort is not highly technical in terms of measurement. Schools are asked to describe the aims and activities carried out in their project any results that they can find. Schools also present on conditions in their schools that resulted in the development of the action plan.

“Action research” studies would be ones that are methodologically consistent with the EDC/HRE values framework. Teachers would then need time and interest for carrying these out. A rigorous external evaluation might also be carried out in order to document results. Such a study would also require careful documentation of the school conditions and the implementation of the action project.

In lieu of such a comparative study being carried out in relation to schools participating in EWC programming, schools will continue to reflect upon and self-

evaluate the implementation and results of their action plans. Some form of program learning – even without a formal evaluation – can assist in continuous improvement of EDC/HRE program efforts.

[4.3. Lessons learned for moving forward](#)

As reflection and critical analysis are central to the pedagogy of the EWC projects, this learning process is an ongoing and open one. Yet, over the past years, the efforts of school teams to implement their action plans have demonstrated some patterns that can be reported. Some of these lessons – by no means comprehensive – are presented below.

What seems to work.

Building on existing infrastructure and processes in the school. School teams have learned that it can be easier to implement an EDC/HRE project if it links with something already existing at the school, such as a student council or a school mission. This helps the project to begin with some pre-existing legitimacy and the project can help to breathe new life into an earlier effort.

Taking small steps. Although the concept of the whole school approach can imply a massive effort given the scale of the project, in fact, it is possible and sometimes desirable to take only small steps at first. A small, successful project can help build experience and support that will help to “sell” the EDC/HRE effort more widely down the road.

Making quality materials available. Most projects require some kind of technical support in the way of manuals and/or toolkits, including those projects oriented specifically towards the prevention of bullying and violence. Council of Europe materials, such as *Compass* and *Compasito*, have been praised for being relevant and readily accessible, both linguistically and electronically.

Involving parents. Parents have a key role to play in helping their children to recognize and overcome their prejudices. Many parents appreciate the opportunity to become engaged in such projects, but will require an invitation and support. One father engaged in a project oriented towards respect and acceptance in a school in Serbia commented “Finally I feel useful when it comes to the education of my child.”

Organizing support from outside partners. Some supports for combating violence and discrimination can be found outside the school. Municipal authorities can offer moral and sometimes financial support, and technical support can be provided by health workers and others specializing in violence prevention. If you don’t ask, you might not know what might be available.

What can be a challenge.

A lack of time for the project. Educators can already feel overburdened by the demands of their jobs and can find it difficult to make time for engaging in an EDC/HRE whole school effort. This is the challenge most commonly mentioned in EWC projects. One solution is to integrate the projects goals into the core operation of the school so that it is not seen as an “add on” but a central feature of the school’s success.

A lack of long-term commitment. EDC/HRE projects that are oriented towards the reduction of bullying can sometimes see short-term results in only one year. However, a healthy school culture requires sustained attention and effort. The linking of the outcomes of the action plan with school quality and mission can help to establish new processes introduced in a one-year action plan as a desirable, permanent “way of working.”

Resistance to new approaches. Both teachers and students may resist efforts that introduce new processes or ways of thinking that are inconsistent with personal values or preferences. A school-wide plan will need to respectfully take into account this diversity and strategically build towards a common goal. Such democratic processes, as difficult as they may be at times, are intrinsic to the EDC/HRE approach.

Thinking long-term.

Sustaining momentum through external, local partners. Partnerships with outside agencies can not only help in implementing non-discrimination and violence prevention projects, they can help to sustain educator interest at times when pressures might distract them from project activities.

Building a knowledge base through local networks. Successful school projects in a certain locality or region can generate organic networking among school teams and educators. Such networks can nurture their members through opportunities to share experiences, resources, techniques and materials. A Russian Regional Summer Academy team established a network of local schools engaged in combating violence.

Forging links across national borders. Due to the international nature of the RSAs, some school-school partnerships have emerged across national boundaries. Sometimes these partnerships have been formalized. Other times, thorough the experience of the RSA and the follow-up communication fostered through Share&Connect, an informal community of practice can evolve among participants. Either route helps to support schools in long-term efforts to integrate EDC/HRE throughout their school.

Concluding thoughts.

EDC/HRE in relation to violence prevention and non-discrimination might incorporate in the short run awareness-raising about the nature and consequences of violence and what to do when experiencing or witnessing violence. In the medium – to long-term, under the frame of EDC/HRE, the school can dedicate itself to promoting a positive school culture that not only has zero tolerance for bullying but cultivates teacher and student agency around democratic participation and human rights.

In principle the use of the EDC/HRE framework will be a sustained and generative one for school development that extends beyond any ‘official’ project. The EDC/HRE framework thus has value not only because of its content but because of its frame. Its aim is wider than the specific theme of violence prevention or non-discrimination. It is a school vision to be realized in multi-faceted ways, over the years, both as a tool for prevention and for addressing immediate problems in the environment. As this memo has strived to present, projects will be an effort that require strategic thinking as well as a commitment to modeling inclusive, democratic and rights-respecting processes for bringing about cultural change in schools.

The outcomes of such a well-executed EDC/HRE WSA effort seem likely to be invariably positive ones. There is some evidence and there is hope. As one student in a Slovenian school commented at the conclusion of the first year of a project focused on non-violence: “With what I have learned, I will be able to help others and myself.”

ANNEX – USEFUL RESOURCES

Whole School Approach

Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (2006). *Whole-school approaches to sustainability: An international review of whole-school sustainability programs*. Sydney: Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Heritage.

Council of Europe: Charter for All: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/edc/charter-for-all>
Guidelines for educators provide advice for teachers and trainers on how to work with the “Charter for All” with children and young people.
<https://edoc.coe.int/en/index.php?controller=get-file&freeid=5705>

Council of Europe (2007). *Democratic governance of schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/education-for-democratic-citizenship/3704-democratic-governance-of-schools.html>

Council of Europe (2009). *How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/human-rights-education-intercultural-education/4238-how-all-teachers-can-support-citizenship-and-human-rights-education-a-framework-for-the-development-of-competences.html>

Council of Europe (2010). *School-community-university partnerships for a sustainable democracy: education for democratic citizenship in Europe and the United States*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/human-rights-education-intercultural-education/4489-school-community-university-partnerships-for-a-sustainable-democracy-education-for-democratic-citizenship-in-europe-and-the-united-states-of-america.html>

Council of Europe (2005). *Tool for quality assurance of education for democratic citizenship in schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/human-rights-education-intercultural-education/4135-learning-and-living-democracy-introducing-quality-assurance-of-education-for-democratic-citizenship-in-schools-comparative-study-of-10-countries.html>

Humphrey, N., Lendrum, A. and Wigelsworth, M. (2010). *Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programming in secondary schools: national evaluation*. London: Department of Education.

Manitoba Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth (2005). *Whole School Approach to Safety and Belonging. Preventing Violence and Bullying*. Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada: Ministry of Education, Citizenship and Youth.

Violence Reduction in Schools

Center for Disease Control (2015). *Understanding School Violence: Fact Sheet*. Atlanta: CDC.

http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/school_violence_fact_sheet-a.pdf

Pestalozzi Programme (2011-2012); A trainer training course on “Education for the prevention of violence in schools”

Council of Europe (2009). *Education against violence at schools. Parliamentary Assembly Report*, Committee on Culture, Science and Education. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. <http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/violence/Flegoreport-violenceatschool.pdf>

Council of Europe (2011). *Tackling violence in schools. High-level expert meeting co-organized by the Government of Norway, the Council of Europe and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. Oslo 27-28 June, 2011. Final Report of the Meeting*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, in collaboration with the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Education and the Special Rapporteur of the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children.

Council of Europe (2009). *Violence Reduction in Schools Training Pack*. http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/violence/ViolenceSchoolTrainingPack_en.asp

Council of Europe (2006). *Violence reduction in schools - how to make a difference*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

World Health Organization (2002). *World Report on violence and health: summary*. Geneva: World Health Organization.

Council of Europe (2014). *Beat Bullying*. Video, 10:26.⁴³
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5sB7mndfrQ>

Council of Europe (2014). *Tackling Bullying at School through Citizenship and Human Rights Education*. Leaflet to accompany video “Beat Bullying”.⁴⁴

⁴³ The CoE film depicts two different scenes of bullying- one involving physical violence and one depicting bullying via social media (cyberbullying), alongside statistics of the numbers of children worldwide and in Europe that have experience bullying and online hate speech (6-27% and 78% respectively). The film also highlights the effect that family and home life can have on children, for example the increased likeliness of bullies coming from families where they lack attention. The second half of the film highlights the ways in which the CoE is working with schools to help combat bullying and violence through promoting a new type of school culture based on human rights and democracy.

⁴⁴ The leaflet provides information on the film (‘Beat Bullying’) highlighting what it is about and practical information on how to watch it. In addition, the leaflet gives a brief overview of the problem of bullying in schools and potential solutions offered by the CoE i.e. EDC/HRE and the whole-school approach.

EDC/HRE/Intercultural Education

Council of Europe (2007). *Compasito: a Manual for Human Rights Education for Children*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

<http://www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/>

Council of Europe (2012). *Compass: a Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People*. 2nd edition. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eycb/Source/Compass_2012_FINAL.pdf

Council of Europe (2012). *Intercultural competence for all - Preparation for living in a heterogeneous world (Pestalozzi series n°2)* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Council of Europe (2010). *Policies and practices for teaching sociocultural diversity - Diversity and inclusion: challenges for teacher education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Council of Europe (2007-2011). A series of manuals: "Living democracy" Volumes 1-VI. <http://www.coe.int/web/edc/living-democracy-manuals>

Council of Europe (2014). *Signposts - Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.