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

**LAUNCHING CONFERENCE
OF THE 2005 EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENSHIP
THROUGH EDUCATION**

FINAL DRAFT COMMUNIQUE AND ACTION PLAN

**COMMUNIQUE
OF THE LAUNCHING CONFERENCE**

The Launching Conference of the 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education was held in Sofia on 13-14 December 2004 at the invitation of the Bulgarian authorities.

The Council of Europe has decided to proclaim 2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education. The Organisation wishes to draw attention to the crucial role education plays in developing active citizenship, democratic culture and social cohesion. The Council of Europe also wishes to underline that all parts of education in a lifelong learning perspective, whether formal, non-formal, initial or continuous, contribute to this endeavour.

At the Launching Conference, representatives of the member states of the Council of Europe, as well as of European and international governmental and non-governmental organisations met to discuss the implementation of the "Year". They shared their experiences and achievements and endorsed the concept of the "Year". They informed each other about activities aimed at linking policy and practice of citizenship and human rights education in formal and non-formal education, at raising awareness and developing networks at all levels during the "Year". They agreed on the following considerations and priorities:

Participants reaffirm the fundamental role of education for democratic citizenship (EDC) and human rights education (HRE) in developing a democratic culture, based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. **They recall** that this has been set out in several adopted texts, such as the Declaration of the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (October 1997) and the Declaration and Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship adopted by the Committee of Ministers in Budapest in May 1999, in Recommendation (2002) 12 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to member states and in the Declaration of the 21st session of the Standing Conference of the European Ministers of Education (Athens, 10-12 November 2003).

Participants underline that democracy can only function if citizens are well informed and possess analytical skills and the ability to put factual knowledge into proper context and share democratic values. Education is indispensable in promoting values and in developing the broad knowledge and the new competences that modern, complex societies require.

Participants recognise that one of the main challenges of education today in Europe concerns the management of diversity within a human rights framework. European societies are already multicultural. Population movements and mobility sometimes create tensions, conflicts and social exclusion, but it should be emphasised that they do not fundamentally create a new situation: they merely strengthen tendencies that have been evident throughout European history, and which also have many positive aspects. Educational activities must take into account the cultural and social diversity of learners, encourage intercultural learning and social inclusion. Citizenship in Europe has to be based on values such as mutual understanding, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, solidarity, gender equality and harmonious relations within and among peoples, involving all stakeholders at grass-root level.

Participants are convinced that EDC/HRE is instrumental in fostering and furthering these values among Europeans of different origins.

Participants welcome the results of the Opening Conference for the 50th Anniversary of the European Cultural Convention (Wroclaw, 9-10 December 2004), in particular the strategic line of action "European identity and democratic citizenship", mentioned in the Declaration adopted by the European Ministers of Culture, Education, Youth and Sport on that occasion.

Participants strongly support the Ministers' view that the Council of Europe should strengthen its role as a centre of excellence for policies to provide people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes for life in democratic societies. Indeed, another fundamental challenge of education in Europe and for Europe is to equip young people with new competencies for life so that they are ready for living democracy in contexts considerably different from those known in the past. People living in Europe today must be able to act throughout their lives as informed, active and responsible citizens, respectful of the rights of others. Consequently, **participants suggest** that learning and living democracy should be among one of the Council of Europe's core priorities in the years to come.

Participants note that the third Summit of the Heads of State and Governments of the Council of Europe will take place in Warsaw on 16-17 May 2005. **They are confident that** the Summit will recognise the fundamental role of EDC/HRE in developing citizenship in Europe, based on values of human rights and democracy, rights and responsibilities, by giving the Council of Europe a mandate for making it a priority area of its work.

Participants take into due consideration the recent decisions taken by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe regarding its action against terrorism, in particular the Committee of Ministers' wish that this action be strengthened in the framework of the European Year of Citizenship through Education. **Participants feel strongly** that every effort should be made to prevent violent behaviour and in particular that every education institution must be a safe place. Awareness should be raised about the threat to society posed by terrorist activities. Participants feel that a very effective way to prevent terrorist activities in the long run is a sustainable implementation of EDC/HRE at all levels.

Participants emphasise that one of the main messages of the European Year of Citizenship through Education should be that learning democracy is a lifelong process, concerning not only the transmission of knowledge, but also the practice of democracy, through active political and social involvement, participation in decision-making, informed discussion, negotiation and peaceful solution seeking.

Participants welcome the interest in the "Year" and the support expressed by a large number of European and international governmental organisations/bodies as well as non-governmental organisations present at the Conference. **They emphasise** that the European Year of Citizenship through Education will benefit from co-operation and development of synergies with these organisations, as well as from initiatives at the grassroots level. In particular, **participants welcome** the development of networks and communities of educators in EDC/HRE.

Participants welcome the various initiatives and actions, presented at the Launching Conference, which will be undertaken to implement the objectives of the "Year", at all levels in member states (national, regional, local) and by the Council of Europe.

Participants endorse the following Plan of Action for the "Year". They acknowledge that this Plan is an evolving one and that it may be completed in the course of the "Year". **They agree** that it should serve as a basis for measuring the results/success of the "Year", such evaluation being crucial for the continuation of the work undertaken.¹ **Participants emphasise**, in particular, the following actions as being instrumental for the success of the "Year" and for ensuring its sustainability beyond 2005:

· ***Developing instruments and sharing innovative practice***

The dissemination and implementation of the tools and documents put at the disposal of member states by the Council of Europe, such as the EDC Pack², the Compass and the T-Kits of the Youth Sector, the Revised Charter on the Participation of Young People in local and regional life of the CLRAE and the Charter on schools without violence, will greatly assist in the success of the "Year". Member states could use these tools as reference instruments. They could be adapted to the needs of member states and used in practice by policy makers, teacher trainers and educational institutions. Through the use of these tools and documents, the needs of EDC/HRE practitioners may be better defined and responded to in new and refined practical instruments after the end of the "Year". Participants emphasise that the EDC

Pack is an evolving instrument, and that it could be complemented with other tools if deemed necessary.

Governments and non-governmental organisations in member states are invited to make every effort to share innovative practices in EDC/HRE, both bilaterally at all levels and through the Council of Europe. Participants invite the persons responsible for the implementation of the "Year" in member states to make full use of the Council of Europe's special website set up for the "Year", as this will favour the flow of information and the sharing of good practice.

· Developing frameworks and mechanisms for future European co-operation in the field of democracy learning

The "Year" is seen as an important step in a sustainable process, expected to continue over the years to come. The "Year" should therefore be an occasion for looking ahead and setting such processes in motion. Among other proposals, the Ministers of Culture, Education, Youth and Sport suggested, in the Wroclaw Declaration, that "consideration should be given to the setting of European standards by means of appropriate conventional mechanisms as well as the expansion of European opportunities for the training of educators through the creation of a centre of excellence for the training of teacher trainers."

· Favouring inter-institutional co-operation, multidisciplinary and transversal partnerships and networking

The Council of Europe has already taken action to seek close co-operation with major international organisations, asking them to support the "Year" and to launch joint projects. This is already a valuable work in itself. It acquires even more weight in the light of the fact that 2005 will be the beginning of the United Nations' Decade for Education for Sustainable Development and that of the World Programme for Human Rights Education which has just been proclaimed by the United Nations' General Assembly. The participants are of the opinion that the "Year" could be viewed as a major European contribution to these programmes, and that it will enrich these global initiatives. Furthermore, co-operation between institutions could favour the sustainability of the actions taken in the framework of the "Year".

The "Year" will be an unprecedented opportunity for creating EDC/HRE partnerships and co-operative networks at all levels, inside and among member states, inside the Council of Europe and between the Council of Europe and other institutions/organisations³. It should also be a vector for developing ways of working with neighbouring countries, especially in the south of the Mediterranean, in the spirit of fostering dialogue and preventing conflicts through knowledge and understanding of difference, as set out in the Wroclaw Declaration.

Participants suggest that the Communiqué and the Action Plan be submitted to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, asking them to forward it to all relevant bodies of the Organisation, such as the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the Council of Europe Development Bank and the Steering Committees concerned, inviting them to co-operate to implement activities in the framework of the "Year" and beyond.

APPENDIX

ACTION PLAN

The general objective of the Council of Europe European Year of Citizenship through Education is to bridge policy and practice by empowering policy makers and practitioners at all levels to set up and develop sustainable programmes for EDC/HRE.

In this framework, the "Year" has four main objectives: 1) awareness-raising; 2) strengthen the commitment of member states to EDC/HRE policy making and implementation of sustainable reforms; 3) provide member states with a framework and tools to this effect; 4) encourage the development of initiatives and partnerships for sharing knowledge and best practice.⁴

The "Year" will be implemented at the level of the Council of Europe and at the level of member states. International and European institutions/bodies, governmental and non-governmental organisations and agencies are expected to offer co-operation and support.

I. COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Implementation structure

The coordination of the implementation and evaluation of the "Year" has been entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts for the European Year of Citizenship through Education (CAHCIT). The Committee, composed of 15 experts, representing the education, youth and human rights sectors of the Council of Europe and the network of EDC coordinators, reports directly to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. A multidisciplinary and transversal approach has been chosen to ensure that all sectors of the Council of Europe which have something to bring to the "Year" will do so.

The Secretariat of the Division for Citizenship and Human Rights Education provides the Secretariat to the CAHCIT as well as contacts with the coordinating committees in member states and the EDC coordinators, including through the special website set up for the "Year".

Major initiatives responding to the objectives of the "Year"

Awareness-raising

The Council of Europe has launched a special website on EDC/HRE (<http://www.coe.int/EYCE>) where all the major texts on the subject can be found, together with information about what is happening in member states with regard to the "Year". Links are provided to other sectors of the Council of Europe, to other organisations/institutions as well as to useful sites in member states.

The Council of Europe provides member states with material aimed at awareness-raising, such as a logo, a slogan, leaflets and posters and other material, as well as a glossary explaining EDC/HRE terms. All the material will be available in English and French. Member states are invited to use and adapt this material to their needs.

Strengthen the commitment of member states

As the All-European Study on EDC policies⁵ has shown, EDC/HRE has met considerable enthusiasm at the level of political declarations and at the legislative level in member states. However, EDC/HRE are rarely a priority objective of educational or youth policies. Through the organisation of the "Year", the Council of Europe wishes to demonstrate that EDC/HRE should be a major element of both formal and non-formal education. Member states are encouraged to implement sustainable reforms to this end at all levels of the education system, beginning with the inclusion and/or development of EDC/HRE in school curricula, with the involvement of NGOs, when appropriate.

Provide member states with a framework and tools

The Council of Europe has prepared a set of practical tools and documents aimed at assisting policy makers and practitioners to put EDC/HRE into practice. The most relevant are the following: The Compass and the T-Kits of the Youth Sector, the « Revised Charter on the Participation of Young People in local and regional life » of the CLRAE and the Charter on schools without violence and the EDC Pack. The EDC Pack consists of the following tools: Tool 1: *Key Issues for EDC Policies*; Tool 2: *Democratic Governance in Education*; Tool 3: *Tool on Teacher Training for EDC and HRE*; Tool 4: *Tool for Quality Assurance of EDC in Schools* (prepared in co-operation with UNESCO and CEPS⁶). Member states are encouraged to adapt the Tools in the EDC Pack to their needs. A tool concerning learner assessment in EDC, setting out evaluation criteria, is also under consideration. The EDC Pack is an evolutive instrument, which will be completed during the "Year".

Encourage the development of initiatives and partnerships within and among member states

A special effort will be made to favour inter-institutional co-operation during the "Year". The Council of Europe will also continue to support the network of EDC coordinators. Emphasis will be put on building contacts between teacher trainers in the member states, as well as between NGOs working in the field. Some support will be given to activities at the national level. Activities that favour partnerships and multidisciplinary approaches within the country and co-

operation with other member states, as well as activities aiming at testing the EDC Pack in pilot schools, will be given priority.

Council of Europe action and initiatives supported by the Council of Europe in 2005, giving a specific contribution to the "Year"

The EDC Pack prototype with the existing versions of the Tools that it includes is presented at the Launching Conference on 13-14 December 2004 in Sofia. The EDC Pack and the other Council of Europe instruments can be used as resources and distributed in member states: to develop codes of practice for EDC and HRE; to create websites, resource centres and databases for EDC and HRE. They could be disseminated at launch events, conferences and workshops, and through the national, regional and European networks of professionals in EDC and HRE.

A series of events will be organised by or with the support of the Council of Europe with contributions from the member states. The following list gives some indications as to the events to be organised in the framework of the "Year":

- Regional Seminar for SEE on the implementation of the Tool for Quality Assurance for EDC in Schools (January);
- Seminar "The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations in the Field of Education for Democratic Citizenship" (Warsaw, 21-24 April);
- Seminar for representatives of Teacher Training institutions in member states (Strasbourg, June);
- Conference on Democratic Governance in Higher Education Institutions (Strasbourg, October);
- 8th meeting of EDC coordinators to be held in Zagreb, Croatia, 14-17 April 2005. It will be organised together with the International Conference on the Sustainability of EDC;
- 9th meeting of EDC coordinators, October;
- Seminars for teachers in the framework of the Council of Europe in service training programme for educational staff (throughout the year);
- Seminar on History Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship (Romania);
- Seminar on the European Language Portfolio, preparing young people for responsible decision-making (June).

The Youth Programmes of the Council of Europe contribute as a whole to the "Year". Therefore, active participation of youth NGOs is essential in the preparation of all activities related to the "Year". In addition, other Council of Europe sectors will take an active part by organising specific events in the framework of the "Year". Member states could consider possible involvement of Council of Europe experts and Secretariat from all the relevant sectors in their activities.

A conference concluding the European Year of Citizenship through education will take place in the 1st half of 2006. The conference should be held jointly with the main international organisations working on EDC and HRE in Europe, evaluating the results of the Year and developing ideas for the follow-up.

II. MEMBER STATES

Implementation structures

Member states are expected to set up Coordinating committees for the "Year". The committees may vary in their composition, taking into account the specific situation in each member state. However, the composition should reflect the transversal and holistic character of the "Year" and the variety of partners involved.

The most common membership of a coordinating committee is the following:

Ministry of Education; National UNESCO Commission; Council of Europe Information Centre (where it exists); Ministries of Youth and Culture; Local Authorities Associations; Professionals in the educational field; Students' Organisations; Foundations; NGOs; Human Rights Organisations; National Youth Councils; Mass media; Experts in sociology and civic education,

The tasks of the Committees

The priorities and scope of member states programmes are decided upon by each individual committee, taking into account the objectives and concept of the "Year" as agreed upon in the Concept Paper.

However, in order to ensure an effective implementation of the "Year", the committees are invited to deal with the following issues:

- general orientation and political priorities of the member state programme;
- setting up a programme of activities;
- co-ordination of key events;
- ensure a maximum impact on relevant target groups;
- co-ordination of information and media campaigns, including setting up of links to the Council of Europe "Year" 's website. When useful, translation of material produced by the Council of Europe;
- evaluation, reporting and preparation for follow-up activities at member state level.

Programme of activities

The 7th meeting of the EDC Coordinators (Strasbourg, 18-19 November 2004) came to the conclusion that the "Year" would be divided in three major parts as the programme of activities was concerned:

Launching events (January-March 2005)

These events will take the form of Seminars/Conferences/Meetings to launch the "Year" and disseminate documents and material. These events may focus on one or the other of the key issues identified by the CAHCIT and set out in the Concept Paper (see infra). During this period, translations of documents will be made and the material presented in schools, universities and other educational institutions. Contacts will be made with NGOs, local authorities and other possible partners for the implementation of the "Year". Round-tables could be organised at the local level on the key issues. Specific projects falling within the framework of the "Year" could be identified and prepared. Policy work to include EDC/HRE into curricula will begin.

Awareness-raising and networking activities (April-August)

Smaller seminars to be organised at grass-roots level, incorporating community, school and NGO level. Special action days or weeks will be organised in co-operation with National Youth Councils and other organisations. Awareness-raising campaigns will be organised in schools and universities, in co-operation with youth organisations.

Teacher training activities will begin, and policy work continue, in consultation with all the partners involved.

Exhibitions will be organised.

Implementation of the EDC Pack (April-December)

Monitoring of the implementation of the EDC Pack in Pilot schools will begin.

The Council of Europe Secretariat will receive feedback on the possible improvement of the Pack.

Presentation and dissemination of EDC/HRE material in schools and other education institutions.

Media coverage (notably in specialised media) related to citizenship and human rights education.

Presentation of good practices to the relevant target groups.

Policy work will continue, and textbooks prepared/reviewed if need be.

III. CO-OPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

In the framework of the European Year of Citizenship through Education (2005), the Council of Europe seeks co-operation with major international organisations in order to co-ordinate actions and favour joint projects as well as support to activities already initiated. The implementation of the "Year" should, for example, contribute to the activities of the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development which begins in 2005.

International organisations would be welcome to support events both at national and European levels. Networks of institutions such as SICI⁷ and CIDREE⁸ should be encouraged to be involved. International organisations might wish to join the Council of Europe in the preparation of the assessment conference that will take place in the beginning of 2006. A joint event would give a strong message to the international community.

The Ad Hoc Committee of Experts for the European Year of Citizenship through Education (CAHCIT), who is responsible for the co-ordination of the implementation of the "Year", has strongly supported the idea of strengthening inter-institutional cooperation on EDC and HRE in 2005, including also the international NGOs. The NGOs participating in the Grouping of Education and Culture, who all have a participatory status with the Council of Europe and a long experience in the field, will actively participate in the "Year"; their work with multipliers should reach a very broad public.

On 23-24 September 2004, the Council of Europe held a meeting focused on inter-institutional co-operation in the framework of the "Year". At the meeting and after, the following proposals were put forward:

- The **European Union** will continue to give priority to EDC under the EU educational projects.
- **UNESCO** proposed that the Council of Europe coordinates at the European level the Action Plan of the 1st phase (2005-2007) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education that will focus on the school systems.
- **UNICEF** proposed to share: 1) a multi-media education kit addressing issues related to child violence; 2) the educational kit Kids Inclusive (available in print and in CD-ROMs) designed to encourage young people's understanding and participation in fighting the worst forms of exclusion and discrimination.
- **OECD** proposed that, subject to further consultations, the 2005 launch of a new network on the prevention of school bullying and violence (arising from the OECD Stavanger conference (Norway) on "School bullying and violence", 5-8 September 2004) might be linked to the "Year".
- The **European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)** proposed to focus its 2005's Award (in the framework of the EU's Grundtvig Programme) on best practices in citizenship through education or in active citizenship (to be defined by the Executive Board).
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) proposed to share its multimedia educational resource pack "Exploring Humanitarian Law" with interested Council of Europe member states;
- The **Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe (CIDREE)** proposed to produce a publication on pupil assessment (with a possible collaboration with The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates - SICI) that will focus on the evaluation of educational achievements in the field of EDC, on the assessment mechanisms, and on evaluation criteria.
- The **British Council** proposed to link the "Year" with a forthcoming conference for curriculum developers, coordinators of EDC, teachers and senior managers to take place in Manchester during the autumn of 2005.

Many institutions present suggested that links should be created between their websites and that of the EDC website and the website of the "Year".

On 13-14 December, the European Year of Citizenship through Education was officially launched in Sofia, Bulgaria. A round table discussion on inter-institutional cooperation during the Year was organised during the Launching Conference.



Note ¹ A detailed explanation of the objectives, key issues, working methods and expected results of the "Year" is set out in the "Concept Paper" drawn up by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts for the European Year of Citizenship through Education (CAHCIT); doc: DGIV/EDU/CAHCIT (2004) 13 rev4

Note² The EDC Pack is a set of practical tools for policy-makers, teacher trainers, teachers and headteachers and all those involved in education, developed to facilitate EDC/HRE implementation in member states. Some of the tools are produced together with other intergovernmental organisations (UNESCO).

Note³ See Appendix, part III

Note⁴ See the Concept Paper for the « Year » : doc : DGIV/EDU/CAHCIT (2004) 13 rev4

Note⁵ *All-European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies*, by C. Birzea, D. Kerr, B. Losito, R. Mikkelsen, M. Pol, I. Froumin, B. Losito and M. Sardoc, Council of Europe Publishing, 2004, ISBN 92-871-5607-7

Note⁶ Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS), Slovenia

Note⁷ Standing International Conference of Inspectorates

Note⁸ Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe