Preface

This policy tool has been produced in response to the conclusions of the Council of Europe's All European Study on Education for Democratic Citizenship Policies (2004). Three main conclusions are worth noting. First, that strong policies for EDC/HRE are crucial to building effective EDC/HRE practices. As the study reported:

> "ownership of EDC policies is a key factor for effective implementation." (p. 23)

Second, that there is often a "compliance/implementation gap" between policy formulation and policy implementation and EDC/HRE practices. As the study noted:

> "formal provisions for EDC indicate compliance gaps among policy intentions, policy delivery and effective practice." (p. 35)

Third, that there is a lack of consistency and continuity in the EDC/HRE policy cycle between policy formation and policy implementation, with little or no consideration, at that time, to policy review and sustainability. As was reported in the study:

> "Quite often, policy makers are content with formulating goals and the expected courses of action, and do not follow up to see if there has been effective implementation." (p. 45)

The tool is firmly rooted in the cumulative experiences and expertise built up by the Council of Europe's flagship Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights project (EDC/HRE), which has been running since 1997. As was noted in the introduction to the Eurydice report on citizenship education in schools in Europe (2005) the project is recognised for its innovative approaches and practices:

> "the project [EDC/HRE] constitutes a forum for discussion between EDC experts and practitioners from throughout Europe, in order to define concepts, develop strategies and gather good practice on EDC. On the basis of the findings and recommendations, the Council of Europe has set policy standards in the field of EDC and advocated their implementation by its member states." (p. 7)

This policy tool is designed as a practical reference document, ensuring that the EDC/HRE project continues to set policy standards in the field. Its aim is to provide strategic support to decision makers in member states and international organisations to help them to better develop, implement, review and sustain effective EDC/HRE policies.

The policy tool will be an important companion to the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which was adopted in the framework of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7. It will provide practical support for decision makers concerning EDC/HRE policies. It will enable them to see how policy making in their context matches up to the draft charter and help them to take steps to ensure the decisions they are taking through the full EDC/HRE policy cycle are effective.

The tool also provides an overarching view of the main issues and challenges concerning EDC/HRE policies and practices. Such an overview is pivotal to the coherence and consistency of the EDC/HRE pack. This policy tool forms the first tool in the EDC/HRE Pack (tool 1). It raises issues that are picked up and followed through in greater detail for particular audiences in the other tools in the pack. The policy tool should be read in conjunction with the other tools in the pack:

– Democratic governance of schools (tool 2);[1]

– How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences (tool 3);[2]

– Tool for quality assurance of education for democratic citizenship in schools (tool 4);[3]

– School-community-university partnerships for a sustainable democracy: education for democratic citizenship in Europe and the United States (tool 5).[4]

It is hoped that this policy tool fulfils its aims and purposes and proves to be people and policy-friendly. If so it will make a significant contribution to improving the quality of policy provision and practice in EDC/HRE across member states and in international organisations. It will also justify the time and effort of all those who contributed to its production.

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1. Backman, E. and Trafford, B. (2006), *Democratic governance of schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
2. Brett, P., Mompoint-Gaillard, P. and Salema, M. H. (2009), *How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
3. Bîrzea, C. et al. (2005), "Tool for quality assurance of education for democratic citizenship in schools". UNESCO, Council of Europe and Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS).
4. Hartley, M. and Huddleston, T. (2010), "School-community-university partnerships for a sustainable democracy: education for democratic citizenship in Europe and the United States". Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Section 1 – Introduction: using the policy tool

The Policy Tool for EDC/HRE draws on experiences from the Council of Europe's flagship Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) project, which has been running since 1997.[5] The tool offers strategic support to those involved in making key policy decisions and encourages more effective policy making in EDC/HRE, within and across member states and in international organisations.

How is the policy tool organised?

The tool has two sections.

Section 1 introduces the tool, its aims and purposes, structure and how it can be used. It finishes with a diagram of the policy cycle for EDC/HRE that highlights the key strategic steps for decision makers in relation to that cycle.

Section 2 contains the main part of the tool. It focuses on how to develop, implement, review and sustain policies for EDC/HRE. It follows the policy cycle and explores the key strategic steps in relation to EDC/HRE that are the most pressing for those making policy decisions concerning policy formation, policy implementation and policy review and sustainability. It shows how these steps can be supported by key strategic actions.

Further information – including: a short self-evaluation checklist for decision makers and action planning monitoring grid, based on the key strategic steps outlined in section 2; a working definition of EDC and HRE; a list of key policy texts for EDC/HRE and links to other Council of Europe tools – is contained in separate supporting appendices.

What is EDC/HRE?

Education for democratic citizenship and human rights (EDC/HRE) is recognised by member states as an essential element in the education of all people, particularly young people. It is integral to the core mission of the Council of Europe in promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

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5. For further details and information about the Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) project visit www.coe.int/edc.

There is a shared understanding, across member states and international organisations, about the core aim, objective and approaches to EDC/HRE.

The aim of EDC/HRE is the establishment of sustainable forms of democracy in society based on respect for human rights and the rule of law. In a period of rapid and unprecedented change, EDC/HRE is one of society's strongest defences against the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance and is a preventative mechanism. It also makes a major contribution to social cohesion and social justice.

The objective of EDC/HRE is to help all people play an active part in democratic life and exercise their rights and responsibilities in society through exposure to educational practices and activities.

Approaches to EDC/HRE are a mixture of teaching and learning, through experience or "doing", that emphasise democratic learning, active participation and partnership learning. EDC/HRE is a lifelong learning process that takes place in connected "sites of citizenship", in the curriculum, school community and local and wider community. These "sites of citizenship" promote EDC/HRE through their ethos and democratic governance.

Why is the policy tool needed?

The EDC/HRE project has demonstrated the importance for EDC/HRE of clear and consistent policy making with appropriate strategic supports, in laying the foundations for the development of effective and sustainable practices.

For many involved in policy making – decision makers, practitioners and stakeholders – EDC/HRE remains a new area about which they feel uncertain and inadequately prepared. The aim, objective and approaches to EDC/HRE are not always understood and their implications for policy and practice only partially recognised. As a result, there are often sizeable "implementation gaps" between the formation of EDC/HRE policies and their translation into effective and sustainable practices.

Given this, there is a need to strengthen decision making to help develop a clearer and more consistent approach to EDC/HRE – one that will promote high-quality policy formation and implementation and secure effective and sustainable policy and practice in EDC/HRE.

What does the policy tool do?

The tool explains what EDC/HRE is and what it means in terms of policy making in different education and training phases from general education to vocational training and higher education to adult education. It supports EDC/HRE in formal, informal and non-formal education and training in a lifelong learning perspective.

Drawing on the experience of the EDC/HRE project it:

– provides a coherent overview of the policy cycle for EDC/HRE across education and training phases;

– synthesises the key steps for those making policy decisions in relation to EDC/HRE and offers key, strategic support on how to approach them;

– encourages reflection on and review of current EDC/HRE policy approaches;

– promotes the long-term sustainability of EDC/HRE**.**

Who is the policy tool for?

It is for high-level decision makers at member state level and in international organisations, namely those involved in making key policy decisions about EDC/HRE. However, it can be used by anyone involved in forming, implementing and reviewing EDC/HRE policies, whether in government and international organisations, education and training institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or youth organisations.
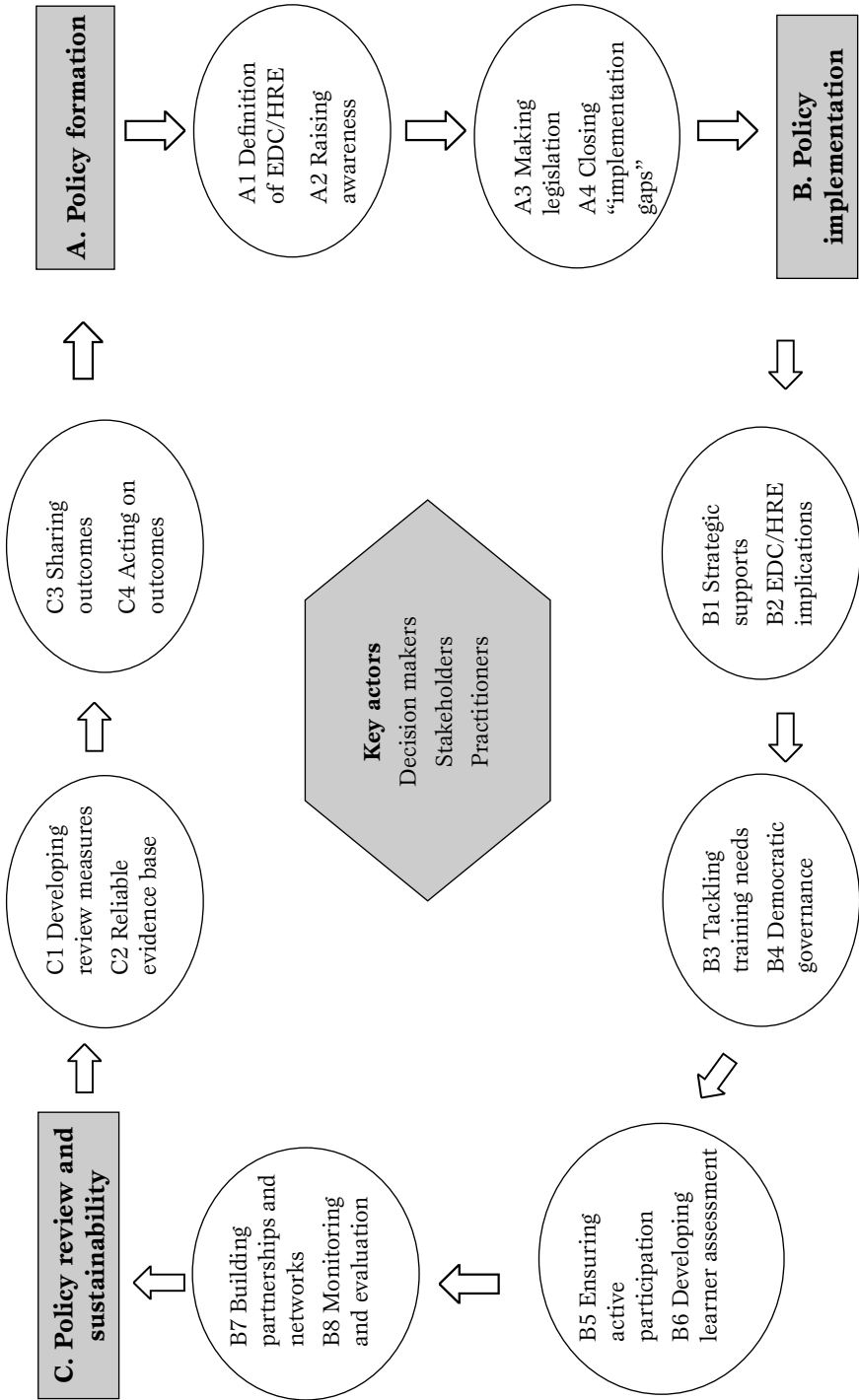
How can the policy tool be used?

Though the policy tool is compact, it is not intended to be read as a continuous document. Rather, when you are familiar with it, particular sections and issues can be selected and used as appropriate.

The policy tool represents current developments across member states of the Council of Europe. EDC/HRE, by its very definition, is an evolving area. Its strength and contribution comes from being responsive to change and relevant to the needs of democratic societies. Given this, in time, there will be new contexts in society, new debates and objectives and the need for new and revised EDC/HRE policies, regulations and practices to consider. In due course, the tool will require updating to take these developments into account.

It is hoped that this policy tool:

– provides a stimulus to those involved in making decisions about EDC/ HRE policies;

– deepens a culture of reflection, review and action among decision makers in relation to EDC/HRE policy formation, implementation and review;

– helps to improve the quality of policy provision and practice in EDC/ HRE across all sectors in society and, in so doing, ensures the long-term sustainability of EDC/HRE within and across member states and international organisations.

A. Policy formation

A1 Definition of EDC/HRE
A2 Raising awareness

A3 Making legislation
A4 Closing "implementation gaps"

B. Policy implementation

C3 Sharing outcomes
C4 Acting on outcomes

B1 Strategic supports
B2 EDC/HRE implications

Key actors
Decision makers
Stakeholders
Practitioners

C1 Developing review measures
C2 Reliable evidence base

B3 Tackling training needs
B4 Democratic governance

C. Policy review and sustainability

B7 Building partnerships and networks
B8 Monitoring and evaluation

B5 Ensuring active participation
B6 Developing learner assessment

Section 2 – How to develop, implement, review and sustain EDC/HRE policies

This section outlines the key strategic steps for decision makers in relation to EDC/HRE policies and demonstrates, with the aid of policy examples, how they can be strategically addressed.[6] The key steps are those cumulatively identified by member states through their involvement, since 1997, in the Council of Europe's flagship EDC/HRE project. It is divided into three interrelated parts: policy formation, policy implementation and policy review and sustainability.

Part A. Policy formation

The first part of the policy cycle for EDC/HRE is policy formation. Policy formation is the starting point for all decision makers. There are four key strategic steps (A1 to A4) concerning effective policy formation for EDC/HRE.

A1. Having a shared working definition of EDC/HRE

The starting point in forming policy is having a shared working definition of EDC/HRE. Having a shared knowledge and understanding of the definition of EDC/HRE will increase the capacity of key actors to explain, simply and clearly, to a range of audiences, what is the purpose and essence of EDC/HRE in society.

Shared working definitions of EDC and HRE from international institutions provide a useful tool for forming policy. In the course of the EDC/HRE project, the definitions of EDC and HRE have been constantly updated.

The current definitions contained in the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education could be used by decision makers.[7] These definitions are comprehensive and member states have found it helpful to translate them into clearer, more accessible working definitions that set out the aim, objective and approaches to EDC/HRE for their particular context.

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6. It should be noted that the policy examples used in the tool have been chosen as illustrative of how member states have provided strategic support for EDC/HRE policies rather than as examples of "best practice". Many countries have adopted similar approaches to these steps. The examples represent a range of member states of the Council of Europe.
7. See Appendix 2 – Definition of key terms.

A2. Raising awareness of EDC/HRE and making it a policy priority

Armed with a shared working definition for the country's particular context, the second challenge to be overcome is raising awareness of EDC/HRE and making it a policy priority. The two processes go hand-in-hand. The higher awareness about EDC/HRE is among key actors (policy makers, practitioners and stakeholders), the greater the consensus is that EDC/HRE should be a policy priority. Likewise, the more that is understood about the contribution of EDC/HRE to society's well-being, the more likely its inclusion in policy making.

The first move in building this broad consensus is awareness raising about the relevance of EDC/HRE in strengthening democracy, human rights and increasing social cohesion in society. The experience of the EDC/HRE project shows that member states have adopted a range of strategies to raise awareness about EDC/HRE and make it a policy priority. These include:

– discussing and raising awareness of member state programmes concerning EDC/HRE;

– implementing agreements among institutions at differing levels in society (for example, ministries, local authorities and international agencies);

– disseminating information on projects, actions and outcomes of international organisations involved in EDC/HRE.

EDC/HRE as a policy priority

In Austria, a national campaign was organised in 2007/08 called "Democracy Initiative". As a result of the "Democracy Initiative" citizenship education was included as a new subject in the eighth grade of the curriculum. It aims to promote the stronger integration of EDC in the Austrian school system in order to encourage the active citizenship of youth. In addition, the initial and in-service training of teachers for citizenship education was added as a new priority area.

In Croatia, a government initiative has led to a three-year National Programme for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (2008-11) and to the adoption of a supporting action plan for the programme by the Croatian Government.

Member states of the Council of Europe have found consensus building during policy formation to be crucial in strengthening links between policy formation and policy implementation. This involves engaging with those at various levels in society – in government and international organisations, in education and training institutions, in non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and in youth organisations – and in different education and training phases, from general education to vocational training, higher education and adult education. Effective policy formation lays the foundations for strengthened policy implementation and, in turn, stronger policy review and sustainability.

European countries have adopted a range of activities aimed at awareness raising of EDC/HRE and engaging with key actors – decision makers, stakeholders and practitioners – about policy and practice. The main ones include:

– promoting and encouraging debates and discussions about EDC/HRE issues in member states and the media;

– using the Internet and media to promote EDC/HRE campaigns;

– setting up Internet discussion forums on EDC/HRE issues;

– organising seminars, conferences, panels and public hearings on EDC/HRE issues.

Awareness raising

In Portugal, a forum has been running for the last two years on EDC/HRE organised by the Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Education. A large number of NGOs have participated and recommendations have been developed that build on the priorities of those involved in the forum. These recommendations are publicly available on the Internet and are feeding into EDC/HRE policy and practice.

In Norway, "School National Elections" *(Skolevalg)* is a national project that raises awareness in society and in particular among young people about democratic citizenship. Every four years, a few weeks before the national elections, upper secondary schools are invited to participate in mock elections that mirror the candidates and parties that are running in the national elections. Debates are held in the schools and politicians invited. Over 90 % of students in upper secondary schools are involved in these mock elections. The results are reported widely across Norway through television and other media outlets.

A3. Making regulations on EDC/HRE

The third step in policy formation is making regulations on EDC/HRE. The experience of the EDC/HRE project shows that having clear regulations on EDC/HRE helps to underline the importance of EDC/HRE within education policies.[8] It also contributes to more consistent policy making in EDC/HRE.

EDC/HRE and education policies in member states have two common characteristics:

– the constitutions in all countries provide the foundations for the development of democratic societies;

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8. It should be noted that any regulations and policies will have to be applied with due respect for the constitutional structures of each member state, using means appropriate to those structures and having regard to the priorities and needs of each member state in its given situation.

–   the majority of member states have established EDC as a specific education aim or principle.

Regulations

In Spain, the Organic Law of Education (LOE-2/2006) passed in 2006 saw the inclusion of "Education for Citizenship" as a subject and as a key competence in the school curriculum, and the development of democratic citizenship as one of the main aims of adult education.

In the Federal Republic of Germany there has been a fully fledged system of EDC/HRE in formal education incorporated in the regulations of the *Länder* for almost 60 years;[9] in the *Land* of Baden-Württemberg, for instance, EDC/HRE in schools has had constitutional status since 1953. This system comprises subjects in which EDC/HRE is taught, curricula, teacher training, teaching and learning materials and the participation of pupils and parents.

A4. Recognising and closing the "implementation gaps" between EDC/HRE policy formation and policy implementation

The fourth step in policy formation is recognising the existence of (and then closing) "implementation gaps" between EDC/HRE policy formation and policy implementation.

In EDC/HRE, as in other areas, the experience of European countries is that successful transition from policy formation to policy implementation requires careful planning and a clear strategic approach. However, the lack or inadequacy of strategic planning can create "gaps" that, in time, grow into obstacles that prevent the full and successful implementation of those policies.

The EDC/HRE project has identified the main "implementation gaps" in EDC/HRE policy making in countries, notably:

–   the gap between statements of principle (on the value of EDC/HRE in the education of all people) and existing policies;
–   the gap between policies and their implementation;
–   the gap between EDC/HRE policies and other policy sectors.

To encourage the transition from the formation of EDC/HRE policies to their actual implementation, it is crucial that decision makers recognise the existence of these "implementation gaps" and set up specific strategic approaches to counter them.

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9. In the western part of Germany, EDC/HRE has played an important role since the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, in the eastern part after the German reunification in 1990.

These strategic approaches are:

– to clearly define and specify EDC/HRE policies;

– to identify the key actors – decision makers, practitioners and stakeholders – who can promote and support policy implementation. They need to be actively involved in the policy formation and implementation process;

– to establish measures for the progressive implementation of EDC/HRE policies – with decision makers identifying priorities, making resources available and actively supporting the process of implementation at different stages.

Countries have adopted a number of strategic approaches to counter "implementation gaps" including:

– defining clear objectives for EDC/HRE at member state, regional and local level;

– drafting guidelines and frameworks for the implementation of EDC/HRE and defining concepts, aspects, learning outcomes, processes and contexts associated with EDC/HRE;

– drawing up and promoting action plans for EDC/HRE at member state, regional and local level;

– setting out a specific curriculum for EDC/HRE at school level.

Closing the "implementation gaps" between EDC/HRE policy formation and policy implementation

In Sweden, national objectives and guidelines have been developed. One example is in the field of gender equality where objectives and guidelines have been introduced on how to deal with issues such as girls' progress in maths and physics and with emerging concerns such as honour killings within migrant communities. These national objectives are implemented through assignments which focus on teacher training, competence development, courses, seminars and conferences, pilot projects and support from researchers.

In the case of international organisations on 10 December 2004, the United Nations General Assembly launched the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) to advance the implementation of human rights education programmes in all sectors. It is structured in phases, the first of which covered the period 2005-09 and focused on primary and secondary school systems. A plan of action for this first phase was developed by a broad group of education and human rights practitioners from all continents and proposed a concrete strategy and practical ideas for implementing human rights education nationally.

Part B. Policy implementation

The second stage of the policy cycle for EDC/HRE is policy implementation. Once policies are formed they need to be translated into effective practices. The experiences of member states of the Council of Europe confirm that policy implementation for EDC/HRE is a challenging, long-term and ongoing process. There are eight key strategic steps (B1 to B8) that need to be addressed if policy implementation for EDC/HRE is to be effective and sustainable.

B1. Agreeing the necessary strategic supports to turn EDC/HRE policies into effective practices

Addressing the first step is dependent on appropriate actions having been taken during EDC/HRE policy formation that lay the foundations for policy implementation, namely:

– setting out clearly the aim, objective and approaches to EDC/HRE;

– making laws that allow for EDC/HRE development;

– getting key actors involved – decision makers, practitioners and stakeholders;

– raising awareness of the steps to be taken in tackling "implementation gaps".

With these actions carried out, it is easier to put in place the strategic supports needed to turn EDC/HRE policies into effective practices.

Strategic supports that member states have employed to underpin EDC/HRE policy implementation include:

– promoting innovative EDC/HRE experiences and disseminating examples of good practice;

– providing financial support for EDC/HRE pilot projects and programmes (at member state, regional and/or local level);

– developing quality assurance procedures that improve EDC/HRE actions and initiatives;

– supporting institutional agreements and partnerships for developing EDC/HRE in adult education;

– developing co-operation on EDC/HRE among key actors at member state, regional and local level (and sometimes international level);

– increasing the number of organisations which provide educational services and training for EDC/HRE in education and training phases (from general education to vocational training and higher education to adult education).

Strategic supports

In Kosovo,[10] the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, the European Commission Liaison Office to Kosovo and NGOs, undertakes a range of activities concerning teacher training for EDC/HRE and also prepares resources for human rights education. Every year the ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, organises the "Month of Youth". The month involves a variety of campaigns hosted by different organisations that discuss and debate EDC/HRE topics and issues.

In Poland, a number of policy initiatives have been undertaken to stimulate EDC/HRE practices. The Citizens' Initiatives Fund *(Fundusz Inicjatyw Obywatelskich)*, for example, has been created to enhance and support citizens' initiatives and increase the involvement of the NGO sector.

B2. Addressing the implications for education and training frameworks (including school curricula)

Nearly all European countries have tackled this challenge by including EDC/HRE as an explicit part of the school curriculum, at primary and secondary level. Schools are viewed as crucial "sites of citizenship" for promoting, implementing and sustaining EDC/HRE.

Member states of the Council of Europe also recognise the need to include EDC/HRE beyond schools, including in vocational training, higher education and adult education, and particularly in teacher training courses.

Member states have adopted four main approaches to including EDC/HRE in education and training frameworks (including school curricula):

– the inclusion of EDC/HRE as a separate component/activity (for example, as a curriculum subject or training module);

– the integration of EDC/HRE into several components/activities (for example, curriculum subjects or training modules), through a cross-curricular approach;

– the adoption of a transversal, whole institution approach (for example, school, college, training institution, university);

– the use of a combination of these approaches simultaneously.

However, there are a number of implementation issues associated with these approaches including:

– strengthening the status of EDC/HRE in relation to traditional components activities (for example, existing curriculum subjects, training courses);

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

–   creating sufficient time and space for EDC/HRE components/activities;

–   facilitating the development of cross-curricular components/activities;

–   identifying skills and competences, values and dispositions associated with EDC/HRE;

–   introducing teaching and learning methods that are more active, participatory and student-centred;

–   developing new textbooks and teaching and training materials and making them widely available;

–   recognising that effective EDC/HRE practice requires an open and democratic institutional ethos and climate (for example, at school, college, training institution, university).

Member states and international organisations also recognise that social, civic and personal competences, related to EDC/HRE, are part of the key competences for lifelong learning. In defining the knowledge and skills to be developed for such competences, they have begun to build EDC/HRE approaches and activities into education and training frameworks.

Education and training frameworks

EDC/HRE competences

In Andorra, the competences needed for the promotion of social cohesion and democracy have been identified up to the end of compulsory schooling and are also described within vocational education and training. There are also descriptions of how the competences should be measured.

In Bulgaria, the skills and competences needed for the promotion of social cohesion and democracy in society have been defined. There is a National Strategy for Lifelong Learning (2008-13) that sets out key competences and how they should be acquired. One of the key competencies concerns EDC/HRE.

In Hungary, the national core curriculum defines the skills and competences needed for the promotion of democracy in society. These include key areas of development such as: respect for individual and human rights; strengthening national identity; historical awareness and citizenship; social sensitivity; responsibility for the environment; learning about and accepting other cultures and acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to use democratic institutions.

Relevant Council of Europe tool:

How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences

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