

Quer durch Europa

Demokratieerziehung in den Mitgliedsstaaten des Europarates

Zur Umsetzung seines Programmes "Education for Democratic Citizenship" (EDC) und des "Europäischen Jahres der Demokratieerziehung" arbeitet der Europarat eng mit dem von ihm aufgebauten Netzwerk, den sogenannten "EDC-Koordinatoren", zusammen, die von jedem seiner 46 Mitgliedstaaten für diese Aufgaben benannt wurden. Die deutsche EDC-Koordinatorin hat ihre Kolleginnen und Kollegen aus fünf Ländern des Europarates nach Ihren Zielen und Vorhaben für das Jahr 2005 befragt. Nachfolgend sind Ihre Antworten in Englisch (gekürzt) wiedergegeben.

Azerbaidja

Azerbaijan declared its independence in 1991 after the collapse of the USSR. The Soviet Constitution proclaimed all major human rights, including active citizenship and democracy. However, in real life people didn't have opportunity to express their political standpoint, their right to freedom of speech, as well as other basic human rights were vastly restricted. Therefore, after gaining independence and proclaiming secular and democratic state, Azerbaijan came across with major challenges related to construction of real democratic society which will guarantee them basic human rights and, at the same time, will give them opportunity to actively participate in state management. In achieving these goals education plays an exclusive role, through shaping democratic thinking and providing knowledge on mechanisms and tools of active citizenship and responsibility. In this view the Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project, launched by Council of Europe and implemented in Azerbaijan, was very important and useful. Knowledge and experience collected during the implementation of this project were widely used in the process of designing a new curriculum for secondary schools on subject 'Man and society' (Citizenship), which was adopted in Azerbaijan in 2004.

A special programme is designed in Azerbaijan within the framework of the European Year of Citizenship through Education, which stipulates activities in secondary and higher educational institutions, as well as activities to be implemented by mass media. The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with secondary and higher educational institutions, NGOs, students organizations and other agencies started activities in compliance with the recommendations set forth during the 7th Meeting of EDC Coordinators. The programme of activities will focus on three main directions: launching events, awareness raising and network activities, implementation of EDC Pack. During the first phase of the programme, conferences, seminars, round table discussions, workshops, exhibitions and other events will be convened in secondary and higher educational institutions on human rights, active citizenship and other issues identified by CAHCIT. Implementation of EDC Pack in pilot schools is planned for April-December 2005. Special attention will be paid to in-service teacher training, with regard to applica-

tion of new interactive methods of teaching.

Azad Akhundov

Finland

The aims of the theme year are: developing the policies in schools to more active direction by giving pupils an opportunity to be heard, to participate and to collaborate; strengthening and diversifying the activities of the student unions; supporting the implementation of the cross-curricular themes of Participatory citizenship (in basic education) and Active citizenship (in upper secondary education) introduced in the National core curriculum in instruction and other school activities; supporting the collaboration of the school/educational institutions and other social bodies.

Opening ceremony of the year February and closing ceremony in December. The Youth and Social Awareness training events for teachers and pupils in February and March. The internet pages of the theme year opened in January (in Finnish, Swedish and English). The participatory and Active School Citizenship in Schools competitions was announced in February.

The Year is coordinated by The Ministry of Education and the Finnish National Board of Education.

Jorma Kauppinen

Iceland

The minister of Education, Science and Culture in Iceland formally opened the European Year of Education for Democratic Citizenship 2005 with a press conference in a compulsory school in Reykjavík at the beginning of March. The school, Vogaskóli, is a special "motherschool" in democracy, lifeskills and human rights education. During the press conference the minister took the opportunity to discuss with the students, from the age of 11-16, about their views and understanding of citizenship and democracy

In Iceland the "Year" is not considered as a project that ends at the end of the

year 2005 but hopefully more the beginning of a sustainable development for a democratic culture in schools and NGO youth activities.

The main goal is to raise awareness among teachers, teacher trainers, students and parents as well as NGO's about the importance of a democratic culture in schools and to gather together information about good practice.

In order to do so a national committee has been established with representatives from different stakeholders. Among projects that are being discussed and planned for the implementation of the year are:

- A conference with participation of young people at the beginning of next school year
- An essay contest in compulsory and upper secondary schools
- Teacher training seminars
- A net forum for young people on special subjects concerning the project

At the end of the year the idea is to publish a brochure with guidelines for schools on democratic school culture and how to create such a school.

Sesslja Snaevarr

Malta

A national committee was set up in the last part of 2004. The EYCE was introduced on January 25th in a pre-launch meeting for some 70 Education Division officials. The meeting was opened by the Director General and closed by the Minister of Education, Youth and Employment while the EDC co-ordinator and the Education Officer for democracy and values education addressed the audience.

The EYCE was then officially launched on 2nd February by the Minister of Education, Youth and Employment at a Primary school, where the Student Council had a joint meeting with the School Council for the occasion. This activity together with interviews with the children, were broadcast on national TV that evening in the news bulletin.

In Malta we are concentrating on three areas of citizenship namely, political literacy, attitudes and values and community involvement. We are in the process of reviewing citizenship areas in the formal curriculum with the aim of introducing better coverage and progression.

Since Malta now has an Education Officer with a remit focusing on democracy and values education, great importance is being given to schools becoming 'citizenship schools'. We have organised seminars for Heads of school, we will be having an international seminar on 'Citizenship - An Educational Challenge' next week and there will be in-service courses for teachers next July/September.

Schools have been invited to design an action plan on becoming citizenship schools. Great emphasis is being laid on the setting up of Student Councils. A number of community projects are also in progress. These are collaborative ventures with NGOs, commercial and state entities. These initiatives centre mainly on community involvement, tolerance and appreciation of diversity.

Owing to our holding of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting later this year, our schools are also engaging in inter-cultural learning with and about Commonwealth countries. The December Tsunami tragedy is still being used as a strategy to learn global responsibility as schools go on organising fund-raising activities for Tsunami-hit countries.

Malta will soon have its 2005 EYCE web site showing some of the above projects.

Mary Rose Mifsud

Portugal

In my country, Portugal, education for democratic citizenship (EDC) is an orientation of educational and cultural development that has to be perceived in relation to two historical factors that characterise the present situation in 2005.

Portugal, a small country (pop. 10 million) with a long and rich historical tradition dating back to the twelfth century, built its identity on the relationship with peoples and cultures from all over the world, both European and non-European. Europe, Africa, India, Brazil and Timor come together and become part of our way of being and living.

Ever since the fifteenth century we have been a country with a strong tradition of emigration to every corner of the world. In the twentieth century, especially in the 1960s and 70s, there was a large outflow of emigrants to European countries. But we have also always been a land that welcomes and is open to other peoples. We are a country between cultures. We are nowadays no longer, and have not been since the nineties, a country of emigration, but one that receives immigrants.

During our young modern democracy (dating from the 1974 'carnation revolution'), we have been confronted with these two factors in the orientation of our educational and cultural development: firstly our position in Europe, the political, economic and social commitments we assumed when we joined the EU, and secondly our moral responsibility in relation to the non-European peoples and cultures that form part of our identity.

Education for democratic citizenship is a framing principle for the whole curriculum in all subjects and in non-disciplinary curricular areas such as Project Work, Civic Education and Supervised Study, as well as in school management and development.

There are nowadays several formal and non-formal educational initiatives that respond to the Portuguese multicultural context and are aimed at developing intercultural learning, and an involvement in, and respect for, citizenship and inclusive democratic culture. There are nowadays schools that may be called educational communities, which show awareness and commitment in promoting democratic culture in students, their families and the local community. There are cases of schools that recognise problem situations and respond in various ways, such as providing support to the parents of students from Eastern Europe with the Portuguese language and with democratic integration into the community. There are cases of schools that create educational spaces for the involvement, participation and integration of various cultural groups with socially precarious backgrounds and materially difficult living conditions. There are cases of schools with interdisciplinary projects that combine specific skills, like mathematics and physics, and the development of the knowledge and understanding of what democratic citizenship is. There are cases of teachers who develop research-action processes in their classes where the focus is self-reflection and self-assessment of their practice in the light of the values that underlie EDC.

The priorities for 2005 are considered to be the following: to publicise, spread and build bridges and synergies between good practices; to provide information and circulate ideas about the conceptual framework of EDC and the international documentation that supports it; to identify, from the sites of citizenship, quality criteria for EDC and for teacher training. For these purposes, regional meetings and seminars will be held during the second half of 2005, with the participation of the Ministry of Education, teachers, boards of school governors, local authorities

and NGOs. At the end of 2005 there will also be a national congress on EDC.

Maria Helena Salema