

OUTCOMES OF WORKSHOPS WITH TEACHERS FROM PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, ACADEMICIANS, REPRESENTATIVES OF REGIONAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION AND NON-PROFIT-MAKING SECTOR

What are the weaknesses of the implementation of the Council of Europe EDC/HRE methodology in practice in the Czech Republic?

- The real school practice does not correspond with the importance and scope of education for democratic citizenship and human rights in framework education programmes. Education for citizenship often serves as a “waste bin” for various non-categorised topics, which appear to be relevant.
- There is no publicly declared target of education and educational policy of the state towards development, support and maintaining the democracy in the country.
- Insufficient concept of education for democracy on the part of the state, which would ensure systematic and long-term support in EDC/HRE development in practice. Insufficient implementation of modern teaching methods in schools that would introduce relations and differences between democratic principles and bribery or extremism to students.
- Education for democracy is often perceived by other teachers, in addition to parents, as a marginal, non-important subject, the content of which is unknown.
- Insufficient support by school management in integrating the innovative teaching of EDC/HRE and a fear of new things. Missing examples of good practice.
- A school, as an institution and a system, does not serve as an example/model of democracy and participation for students.
- Insufficient preparation at pedagogical faculties. Insufficient methodological skills of pedagogues for teaching de-



mocratic, civic and ethical topics. Cooperation between the general and subject-specific didactics at pedagogical faculties is not working.

- Often, Teachers do not identify themselves with the democratic principles. There is no similar preparation focused on personal development of teachers towards democratic citizenship.
- Most information related to the society and politics, which young people obtain from the media, is negative and conflicting. Schools do not serve as a counterweight to the torrent of media information.
- Parents do not think they are responsible for educating their children and for participation, they often think only the schools are responsible.
- The persisting cultural differences between the majority and minorities obstruct the participation and co-existence within institutions. Artificial selection of children, pupils and students based on the Education Act.
- There is no clear and comprehensible concept of inclusion, although it has been mentioned all the time.
- Politicisation of schools; a loyal attitude to an education authority is expected. Schools are overburdened with paperwork.
- There is no permanent national association of teachers of social sciences that would support lifelong education of teachers in the field of development of civic competences, and also organise meetings for teachers. There is no common platform of citizenship education.

What could be improved?

- On a national level, introduction of a clear vision and mission of what the citizenship education in the Czech Republic should head towards.
- Targeted cooperation of schools, universities, founders and the non-profit-making sector.
- Structural support of EDC in schools: establish the EDC/HRE coordinator function and a student's parliament in each school.
- Strengthen the EDC/HRE teaching by teachers of all subjects implementing the summary topics and developing key competences.
- Establish a platform of EDC/HRE educators supporting mutual cooperation and defence of the field.
- Establishment of an association of teachers of social sciences.



- Strengthening EDC/HRE in pre-graduate preparation of teachers, if we expect support of citizenship topics in a summary form in each subject, the teachers at the beginning of their career must firstly acquaint themselves with the EDC/HRE topics in person and understand their meaning.
- Strengthen the responsibility and cooperation of pedagogical faculties towards schools employing their graduates.
- Linking the formal and informal education with the preparation at pedagogical faculties.
- Define the subject-specific didactics of civics at pedagogical faculties and its mission. Establish the civics didactics as a science with own methodology and terminology.
- EDC/HRE didactics should support personal development of pedagogues. For instance, in the form of reflective seminars that strengthen and legitimise the practical aspect of the preparation of teachers.
- Increase the participation of parents from preschool education.
- Open preliminary classes to more children.
- Ensure continuity for rewarding assistants of pedagogues.
- Strengthen the methodical management of schools found by communities and regions in the area of prevention of negative social phenomena on the basis of experience from the region.
- Obtain the latest data about attitudes of young people to democratic citizenship – quick survey tools of the Czech School Inspectorate and international research ICCS 2016.

How can other national partners help us?

Primary and secondary school teachers would appreciate closer cooperation with universities in the field of didactic and methodical assistance, both pedagogical students and practising teachers. In the non-state sector, teachers would appreciate closer cooperation in creating interesting EDC/HRE methods and improvement of the awareness of the new methods and programmes. Non-profit-making organisations could also link schools with interesting people, who could cooperate with the schools. Education authorities would improve the integration of EDC/HRE in practice if they supported students' projects more, both on the issue of open cooperation with schools and students, and on funding these projects.



Academicians would appreciate if representatives of non-profit-making organisations informed individual civics educators about new methodical materials. They would like to cooperate more with the non-profit-making segment within the teaching process. Subject-specific educators would welcome the formation of a subject-specific group, which would sponsor non-profit-making organisations and other activists in the field of civics.

Representatives of non-profit making organisations, who have been engaged in the development of civic competences for a long time, would appreciate if school managers showed more support to active teachers, develop the climate of participation and cooperation between various entities in the school, and increased the support for extracurricular activities of students. As for universities, they would appreciate the improvement of the quality of preparation of future teachers for inter-subject cooperation, inclusion of the didactics of experiential education and project teaching, and improvement in the preparation for teaching civic competences: conflict solving, discussions on controversial topics, etc. As for state administration, they would appreciate the appointment of a coordinator in an authority who would deal with the participation of students. They would welcome a declared, conceptual and funded approach to participation of young people, that would provide them with a real voice in the society. State administration could initiate cooperation with schools and engage non-state organisations in the preparation of educational policy plans and strategies. Representatives of non-profit-making organisations agree that political parties could include citizenship education in their activities through party think tanks and in their political programmes. If the Council of Europe EDC/HRE strategy is to be implemented successfully, all partners have to share information, support and confidence.

Representatives of state administration agreed that students' parliaments in schools could cooperate with education authorities more. Community schools could act as citizen participation centres in communities and regions. Employment agencies could offer preventive and integration programmes. Retirement homes could ensure participation of seniors in education, upbringing or babysitting. Private sector in regions could also open up to schools and parents more, and introduce available professions, which could lead to better choices of professions and higher social cohesion at a community and regional level.

