

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

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Working sessions 5, 6 and 10

“Tolerance and non-discrimination”

Contribution of the Council of Europe

Introduction

As early as 1954, the European Cultural Convention defined mutual understanding as the central goal of co-operation in the field of culture. Originally focused on understanding between nations, this concern has progressively widened to include migrants, national minorities, linguistic and cultural communities, and religious groups. It has also become linked to the goal of social cohesion and the inclusion of all groups at risk of disadvantage.

The increase in recent years of social and political conflicts exacerbated by the exploitation of cultural differences gives even greater importance to the need for a "culture of peace". High-level political statements, notably the declarations and action plans of the Council of Europe Heads of State and Government (Vienna Summit of 1993, Warsaw Summit of 2005), have repeatedly underlined the absolute necessity for tolerance and good-neighbourliness within the rich diversity out of which Europe's identity is made, under a shared commitment to the human rights of all.

As a result, a large number of the Council of Europe's activities in education, culture, heritage, sport and youth focus on fostering intercultural dialogue combating racism and xenophobia, mutual understanding and values such as tolerance, respect for others and participation in society. This document contains information on the most important programmes and activities in the Directorate General IV which contribute to these values.

I. Intercultural dialogue

1. The “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue”

In May 2007, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe launched the “White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue”, a policy document providing guidelines and

recommendations addressed to all stakeholders of intercultural dialogue and outlining orientations for relevant Council of Europe action in years to come.

The White Paper is based on the *acquis* of the Council of Europe over several decades and the results of its educational and field work, as well as the results of a wide-scale consultation of steering committees, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and other bodies of the Council of Europe, member states, the members of the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, religious communities, migrant communities, cultural and other non-governmental organisations. The Council of Europe also organised (or co-organised) a range of consultative events, including symposia with non-governmental organisations of migrants, women, young people, journalists and media organisations as well as international institutions. The OSCE was involved in the consultation at different points.

The 'White Paper' sets out the overall political context of cultural diversity and the principles of its democratic management. To advance intercultural dialogue, the White Paper argues, the democratic governance of cultural diversity should be adapted in many aspects; democratic citizenship and participation should be strengthened; intercultural competences should be taught and learned; spaces for intercultural dialogue should be created and widened; and intercultural dialogue should be taken to the international level.

In this last dimension, the Council of Europe expresses its commitment to continued co-operation with other international institutions active in the field, including the OSCE, UNESCO, the European Union (particularly in the framework of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008), the 'Alliance of Civilisations' initiative of the United Nations, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO) and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue Between Cultures.

During 2008 the White Paper will become available in a range of languages.¹

2. Implementing the White Paper

The Council of Europe is currently engaged in a number of activities that implement the orientations provided in the White Paper, among them the "Intercultural Cities" project, the build-up of the "European Wergeland Centre" (European Resource Centre on Education for Intercultural Understanding, Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship, Oslo), the "Artists for Dialogue" project, the publication on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights, the continuation of the "Image of the Other in history teaching" project and many more (see below).

A particularly important step is the new Anti-Discrimination Campaign ("Speak Out for Diversity – All different, all equal"), which the Council of Europe is running in 2008 and 2009 in co-operation with journalism training institutes and media partners. The campaign pursues three interrelated objectives: to better prepare media professionals for working in a multicultural Europe; to facilitate the access of professionals with a minority background to all sectors of the media industry; and to encourage the media to communicate information on discrimination and on anti-discrimination mechanisms to the general public.

As one of the flagship projects implementing the Council of Europe strategy for the promotion of intercultural dialogue, the Committee of Ministers held the "2008

¹ The text and all translations can be found on www.coe.int/dialogue

Exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue” in Strasbourg on 8 April 2008 under the presidency of Mr Fiorenzo Stolfi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of San Marino. The theme of the Exchange was "Teaching religious and convictional facts: a tool for acquiring knowledge about religions and beliefs in education; a contribution to education for democratic citizenship, human rights and intercultural dialogue". The meeting brought together some 150 representatives of member and observer states, of the three religious communities traditionally present in Europe, international and national non-governmental organisations active in the area of education, academic experts, media professionals and representatives of co-operating international institutions. The OSCE was represented by Professor Silvio Ferrari (OSCE Advisory Council on Freedom of Religion or Belief) and Ms Simona Santoro (advisor to ODIHR).

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3. *Cultural identities, shared values and citizenship*

Following the Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Prevention Project and as a contribution to the preparation of the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, the Council of Europe carried out a two-year Project on “Cultural identities, shared values and citizenship” which was implemented following the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government (Warsaw, May 2005). The Project ended with a Forum on “Cultural values for Europe” (Strasbourg, 3 December 2007). The results of the Project were presented to a wide number of participants from the Council of Europe’s member States as well as international non-governmental organisations. The participants supported the wide dissemination of:

- the Manifesto for Multiple Cultural Affiliation;
- and the Handbook on cultural values for Europe.

They encouraged the Council of Europe to continue its work on the interpretation of the cultural heritage in different cities and regions throughout Europe.

The final versions of the Manifesto and the Handbook are being prepared and the dissemination process has begun for these two interesting texts.

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4. *Intercultural Cities: governance and policies for diverse communities*

The Intercultural cities programme emerged from the Council of Europe’s significant experience of projects that focus on issues concerned with the management of diversity, and considerable reflection that has been undertaken in relation to the principles and practices of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. It is also conceived as a contribution to the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue but its operational phase will continue well beyond the end of the Year.

Intercultural cities is a capacity-building and policy development field programme complementary to many of the current projects and events (conferences, research, exchanges, and campaigns) implemented by the Council of Europe. The programme’s long-term, comprehensive approach will contribute to the sustainability of the political impetus of one of the Council of Europe’s declared priorities concerning the practice of diversity in today’s world.

The programme's starting point is the belief that as communities across Europe grow increasingly diverse, their governance models, their public and media discourse, the management of their institutions and their policies determine whether this diversity becomes an asset or a threat. Successful cities (and societies) of the future will be intercultural: they will be capable of managing and exploring the potential of their cultural diversity to stimulate creativity and innovation and thus generate economic prosperity, community cohesion and better quality of life.

The Intercultural cities programme will study successful experiences in a range of cities in Europe (and possibly beyond) and harness this experience to encourage the development of structures, policies and practice in other cities through good practice exchange and city-to-city mentoring. In addition to the direct exchange, good practice will be made publicly available by means of an annual "Intercultural cities share fair" as well as web and print-based publications.

Following a pilot phase (2008-2009, possibly to be extended to 2010) on the ground, a set of benchmarks, as well as a generic review, support and training tools will be developed in order to facilitate the development of intercultural governance and policies on a larger scale. The programme's longer-term objective is to help shape overall public policies for cultural diversity and dialogue by demonstrating what can be the benefits of such policies and what conditions need to be in place for these benefits to materialise.

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5. Information system on cultural diversity and good practices information on intercultural dialogue

Since 1998, the Council of Europe has developed a web-based cultural policy information and monitoring system (Compendium available at <http://www.culturalpolicies.net>), which also provides a *database of good practices* on intercultural dialogue. Information presented relates to projects undertaken within individual countries to facilitate dialogue among the different cultural groups living there. They are initiated on the national, regional or local level and range from artistic productions to training programmes, awards, festivals, public events, media productions etc. The following information is provided on each project: overall description, main partners and funders, lessons to be learned, target groups and contact details. Links to additional information such as reports or project websites are provided. The Compendium also provides a *dialogue forum* on mapping cultural actors engaged in intercultural dialogue.

Another focus of the online system is on diversity policies. Cultural diversity is understood as:

- the pluralistic ethno-cultural linguistic identity and origin of cultural creators, producers, distributors and audiences;
- a diversity of artistic and other cultural content which diverse audiences can have access to through the media or other distribution channels;
- the diversity of actors which are involved in decision-making, regulating and /or funding creators and their works.

Since the beginning of the *Compendium* project, cultural diversity as a component of cultural policy making has been treated as a transversal issue via several strands of related information and data found in various sub-sections of individual *Compendium* country profiles. Some of them are: cultural minority groups, language diversity, media pluralism and artistic creativity/content production. Comparative overviews

have also been compiled. Such information could assist national government and NGOs in their efforts to begin monitoring cultural policies and measures which support cultural diversity, as promoted in the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

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6. The Kyiv Initiative (KI) for democratic development through culture

This regional programme of co-operation in culture and heritage, devoted to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, was initiated in September 2005 during the 5th (enlarged) Ministerial Colloquy of the countries participating in the STAGE (Support for Transition in the Arts and Culture in Greater Europe) Project, as a means to assist these countries in addressing the challenges of post-Soviet transition.

The Kyiv Initiative reflects modern understanding of culture, heritage, environment protection and urban planning as interconnected components of a comprehensive policy for sustainable community development. Its main objective is to contribute to sustainable cultural, social and economic development through regional co-operation and a trans-sectoral approach in the management of culture and cultural heritage.

Actions within the framework of the programme are structured according to three components: 1. Capacity building; 2. Pilot projects on transversal themes; 3. Public awareness. In 2007, consultations are being carried out by the Council of Europe Secretariat with the Kyiv Initiative participating countries, in order to identify the concrete activities to be carried out within main areas of co-operation, which include: cultural policies information systems, cultural heritage legislation, cinema policy, cultural routes, building up of cultural networks, etc.

As for the methods of their implementation, the Council of Europe promotes a transversal and integrated approach, through the setting up, in each participating country, of an appropriate management body at the national, regional and local levels. The aim is to ensure effective coordination and synergies between all stakeholders and thus foster an integrated approach towards the objectives of sustainable development.

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7. Public awareness and participation in European culture and heritage

This programme aims to enable Europeans to appreciate their diverse cultural achievements as a common heritage, through wide public participation in highly visible and high quality events and projects.

The activities organised in this framework are the European Heritage Days (jointly with the European Union), Cultural Routes and Arts Exhibitions, educational activities for mutual understanding through heritage and cross-border activities to test the contribution of heritage education to intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention.

The idea is not only to mobilise European citizens to go and visit a variety of sites, monuments and works of art, but in so doing meet other Europeans, and to make, out of travel and tourism, an intercultural (and in some cases inter-religious) human experience. Cooperative activities involving young people focus more on the quality

of human participation and encounters around innovative and widely well known and less well known heritage projects.

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www.ehd.coe.int (European Heritage Days)

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www.coe.int/routes (Cultural Routes)

www.coe.int/ArtExhibitions/ (Art Exhibitions)

8. The challenge of intercultural education today

The Council of Europe has dealt with many aspects of intercultural education over the years. In order to consolidate this longstanding work and, in particular, to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, the project "The challenge of intercultural education today" was launched in 2002. It aims to raise the awareness of decision makers and teaching staff of the implications of the religious dimension of intercultural education, as well as of good practice, new methods and approaches of intercultural education in general, both in school and out-of-school education. Thus the project will attempt to be both theoretically innovative and practice oriented.

A Reference Book, published in 2006, is the main outcome of the project.

The main purpose of the Reference Book is to aid teachers and other education practitioners to address religious diversity based on respect for human rights. In concrete terms, the various methods and inspiring practices presented in it focus on the development of intercultural competence in the case of pupils with widely differing social, cultural and religious backgrounds. This generic competence presupposes, in turn, other specific competences such as sensitivity to cultural facts and sources of human diversity; ability to communicate and enter into dialogue; skills required for learning to live together such as teamwork, cooperative learning, empathic communication, peaceful conflict resolution, confidence building; capacity to explore symbols and deal with sensitive and controversial issues, and critical thinking and individual deliberation.

The Reference Book addresses intercultural education addressed at three levels: at the level of education policies, in the form of clear-cut education aims; at the level of institutions, especially through democratic governance, student participation, open learning settings and inclusive policies, and at teaching-staff level, through the methods that make up the very substance of the Reference Book.

Unlike traditional approaches to intercultural education, promoted especially in the '80s, the methods described in the Reference Book focus not on the link between the dominant culture (e.g. dominant religion) and minority cultures (e.g. minority religions), but instead on learning to live together. The reference entity is no longer the community and the differences between several cultural communities but the manner of resolving common issues and working on joint projects.

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[http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-](http://www.coe.int/t/e/cultural_co-operation/education/Intercultural_education/Intro.asp#TopOfPage)

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9. Youth building peace and intercultural dialogue

A. Intercultural Language Programme in the Youth field

The European Ministers responsible for Youth, meeting in Budapest for their 7th Conference in September 2005, decided that in order to prevent violence motivated by racism and intolerance, governments should promote education for intercultural dialogue as a key dimension of youth policy and youth work policy, and support the development of international youth exchange programmes.

Foreign language skills and intercultural competence are essential preconditions for youth mobility and development of international activities and participation. The Intercultural Language Programme is a training course integrating language learning (English, French, German, Russian, Italian, Spanish and Arabic), intercultural learning and the discovery of European youth work. The aim of the Intercultural Language Programme is to enable members of youth organisations to become more active in international youth work by promoting intercultural dialogue, international understanding and improving their language and communication skills in the context of European youth work. If genuine communication and co-operation are to exist, language teaching should also contribute to an active, critical understanding of each person's own culture and of others' culture.

Learning a language differently: more than just a language course:

The DYS intercultural language courses, while developing the language and intercultural competences adapted to youth work, encourage an interest in history, politics, culture, ideology, geography, religion and everyday life in another country. This is the intercultural side of the courses. These courses therefore allow participants to undertake multicultural and multiracial exchanges and to develop this international understanding and co-operation.

This is achieved through:

- classroom sessions using a variety of materials and activities relevant to youth work and the participants' needs and interests; these sessions provide for practice in the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as for developing knowledge of grammar and vocabulary;
- periods of individual study for practising specific skills and consolidating learning;
- workshops and activities on intercultural learning and international youth work;
- contact with local youth organisations to discover youth work at local level, and
- a programme of visits.

The various course elements aim to provide:

- communication skills in the target language adapted to youth work activities, as well as with the skills to continue learning the language afterwards;
- intercultural learning, which happens whenever a group of people from mixed cultures and linguistic backgrounds come together, but also through interaction with the local community thanks to activities organised with local youth or cultural associations;
- enable the development of joint projects and promote the setting up of networks between youth organisations;
- encourage youth mobility, intercultural behaviour and multilingualism in youth work.

Profile of candidates:

Applicants must:

- be actively involved in youth work, in an association or a youth network, preferably at international level, or committed to taking on responsibilities at international level;
- preferably but not necessarily have some knowledge of the target language;
- be between 18 and 30 years old;
- be well informed about their local organisation and the international/national sending organisation. Participants should be able to present their organisations and activities to the other participants;
- be highly motivated to benefit from the course by participating in all activities and to contribute to the development of the programme and to the group process;
- be willing to work in a group, to take initiatives and to share with others.

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B. All-Different – All Equal Campaign

A European Youth Campaign for human rights, diversity, and participation “All Different, All Equal” was launched in June 2006 and has been running for over one year. The Campaign aims at encouraging and enabling young people to participate in building peaceful societies based on diversity and inclusion, in a spirit of respect, tolerance, and mutual understanding. Forty two Council of Europe member states have joined the Campaign.

The “All Different – All Equal” name was adopted in 1995 for the first successful campaign launched by the Council of Europe to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. It was dedicated to fighting racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and intolerance. The new Campaign mobilised a new generation to spread and reaffirm the message that all humans are equal – regardless of their skin colour, culture, religion, physical or mental abilities or sexuality.

The partners involved in this Campaign are the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport, the European Youth Forum, the European Commission and several governments of the Council of Europe's member states.

The Campaign is decentralised in the sense that the Campaign's activities, targeted at the civil society, have been initiated and carried out at local level by young people themselves, often in partnership with their country's public authorities. In order to support the young activists, most countries have a National Campaign Committee constituted of active NGO members, public authorities and media professionals. For example, an initiative called Graffiti Competition had young people from more than 20 Council of Europe member states painting graffiti with the Campaign themes on the walls of their cities in public spaces provided by local authorities and private partners.

The Campaign was present at many large street events and festivals, such as the EXIT Festival in Serbia and the World Scout Jamboree in the United Kingdom.

At the same time the Campaign embraced a number of pan-European events with hundreds of participants from around Europe. These were guided by the European Steering Group (ESG) and managed by the Council of Europe's Secretariat.

The pan-European events included the "All Different - All Equal" Symposium in St Petersburg, Russia, in September 2006, the Diversity Symposium in October 2006 in Budapest, Hungary, the Symposium on Inter-religious and Intercultural Dialogue in March 2007 in Istanbul, Turkey, the Symposium on Participation in April 2007 in Schengen, Luxembourg, and the conference "Cultures and Human Rights of the Mediterranean Area" on social inclusion of young migrants in Monopoli, Italy.

A number of sports-related initiatives took place under the Campaign slogan, such as a short film about racism in football, a camp for young Campaign supporters at Europa Park, Germany, and a conference on violence in Sport in Europe which took place in Rennes, France.

The Closing event will take place in Malmö, Sweden, on 5-7 October 2007. It will be marked by large-scale youth manifestations and a ceremony of awarding a Council of Europe "Young Active Citizen Prize" for the best projects carried out in the framework of the Campaign.

Following the Closing event, a comprehensive evaluation of the Campaign will take place, so that the best practices could be fed into the work of the youth NGOs around Europe, as well as into the Council of Europe's work on the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue and the European Union's Year of Intercultural Dialogue in 2008.

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II. Education for democratic culture

This programme contributes to strengthening democracy, human rights and the rule of law, which are the main objectives of the Council of Europe. It addresses areas in which the education process should promote the learning of key skills for a democratic culture on a lifelong basis: citizenship and human rights education, history, languages and intercultural education.

1. Language Policies for Democratic Citizenship and Social Inclusion

In the follow-up to the [3rd Council of Europe Summit](#), this medium term project (2006 – 2009) addresses social cohesion and democratic citizenship through three broad domains: analysis and development of policies for plurilingualism; European standards for quality and transparency; language policies for the education of minorities.

Language education policies should promote plurilingualism and lifelong learning in order to foster intercultural competences and thus facilitate communication with others in all domains. The main innovation concerns a new project on policies and standards for languages of education / mother tongue.

The activities include, among others: assistance to member states in reviewing their language education policies (Language Education Policy Profiles); development of common European standards for foreign and second languages; development of guidelines related to language requirements for adult migrants in relation to residence or citizenship; development of tools for improving intercultural understanding and dialogue and development of curriculum standards for the Romani language in education.

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2. *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages was opened for signature in November 1992 and entered into force on 1 March 1998. It has been ratified so far by Armenia, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. A further ten States signed the Charter. Seven States have committed themselves to ratification when joining the Council of Europe but have not yet done so (Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Russian Federation).

The purpose of the Charter is to protect and promote the various regional and minority languages spoken in the different countries of Europe. The Charter provides for a definition of the languages covered by this treaty (Article 1): these are the languages which have been traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population and are different from the official language(s) of that State. The definition explicitly excludes the languages of migrants and the dialects of the official language(s) of the State. The protection of regional or minority languages must respect the territorial integrity of each State without interfering with the development of the official language(s) of that State.

Part II of the Charter lays down the aims and principles for all the languages spoken on a given territory which are to be the States' long term policy targets. These aims and principles include, inter alia, the recognition of the regional or minority language as an expression of cultural wealth, the respect for the geographical area in which each language is spoken, the facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of regional or minority languages, in speech and writing, in public and private life, and the teaching and study of these languages at all the appropriate stages. In addition, States are required to eliminate discrimination in respect of the use of regional or minority languages. Although the Charter is principally concerned with languages which are historically identified with a particular territory of the State, it was considered necessary to grant "non-territorial languages" protection as far as possible, and they are therefore subject to the protection under Part II of the Charter.

Part III contains more specific provisions for the languages identified thereunder by the States at the time of ratification. The undertakings entered into by the States under Part III require the latter to adopt concrete positive measures for the protection and promotion of regional or minority languages in several fields: education, justice, dealings with the administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life and transfrontier co-operation. However, the extent of the protection can vary according to the situation of each language (e.g. the number of speakers) provided that the State applies at least 35 paragraphs or sub-paragraphs of the Charter to each language that it has selected under Part III. This contributes to a minimum standard of protection.

Although the Charter is not concerned with minorities as such, it may be expected to help, in a measured and realistic fashion, to assuage the problem of minorities whose language is their distinguishing feature by enabling them to feel at ease in the State in which history has placed them.

The Charter foresees a system of monitoring its implementation by an independent Committee of Experts. Each Party is required to present a first report within the year

following the entry into force of the Charter with respect to it, in which the Party states its policy and measures taken in order to fulfil its obligations under the Charter. Other periodical reports are to be presented thereafter at three yearly intervals. These reports are made public by the State Party. The Committee of Experts, established in accordance with the Charter's provisions, will soon start considering the fourth periodical reports presented by the longest-standing States Parties.

After a first examination of the State report, the Committee of Experts may decide to visit the relevant State in order to meet with representatives of the users of the various regional or minority languages and to consult with the authorities on the contents of the information that the Committee of Experts has received.

In the context of the fact-finding process, the Committee of Experts can be approached by bodies or associations legally established in the respective State Party wishing to supply additional information or to give their views on specific situations relating to the implementation of the Charter. The Charter itself does not pose any limitations as to the nature of these bodies or associations, other than the requirement that they have to be established in the State concerned in accordance with national legislation. Accordingly, they can be cultural, political bodies, or any other association which has an interest in the promotion of regional or minority languages in their country.

After this process of information gathering, the Committee of Experts adopts a report which is then sent to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe together with proposals for the recommendations to be addressed by the Committee of Ministers to the State concerned. The Committee of Experts has so far adopted 39 reports, 371 of which have already been processed by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Additionally, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe is required to report every two years to the Parliamentary Assembly concerning the implementation of the Charter.

The Charter being a rather complex instrument for States to ratify and implement, information seminars are regularly organised by the Secretariat in those States which are approaching ratification or are facing difficulties in the implementation of the Charter and the recommendations by the Committee of Ministers and the Committee of Experts.

Non-governmental organisations and local, regional and national authorities are usually also involved in such seminars. In particular, non-governmental organisations have the important role of assisting the authorities in identifying the needs of the languages as to which kind and level of protection is adequate. They also have the role of providing the Committee of Experts with information, after ratification and during the monitoring process, on how the Charter is applied in practice. Local and regional authorities are often the authorities which are in practice confronted with implementing the obligations arising from the Charter, for example in pre-school education, in local and regional assemblies and administration.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is open for accession of non-member States upon invitation by the Committee of Ministers. It is part of the legal standards which are also referred to by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. For example, the Council of Europe and the High Commissioner have published a compilation of European standards on minority protection, which contains the Charter.

Furthermore, a representative of the Committee of Experts on the Charter and of the Secretariat took part in the international conference “Linguistic Rights of National Minorities: ten years after the Oslo recommendations and beyond” organised by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights/University of Oslo on 18-19 June 2008. This conference focused mainly on the impact of the Oslo recommendations and was an occasion to present the role of the two major European treaties in the field of minority protection: the Framework Convention and the Charter. The conference has demonstrated that although the three instruments employ different methods, they address various states, focus on many aspects of the role of national minorities and their cultures in public life and contribute through their specific provisions to the establishment of an international system for the protection of national minorities in Europe and beyond.

3. Education policies and practice for democratic citizenship and human rights

The Project on Education for Democratic Citizenship launched in 1997 aims to supporting and promoting educational policy and practice that help young people and adults to play an active part in democratic life and exercise their rights and responsibilities in society. Respect for the rights of the others and intercultural competencies are an integral part of the programme.

The Recommendation (2002) 12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on Education for Democratic Citizenship outlines the main EDC principles and provides guidelines for the member states. The publication “All European Study on EDC policies” looks at the existing policies and practices in this field and makes a number of recommendations. Standards and materials for democratic citizenship and human rights (EDC/HRE) are developed for decision makers and education practitioners (EDC Pack). A network of EDC coordinators nominated by the member States provides a link between national and European activities. In 2005, the Council of Europe organised the European Year of Citizenship through Education to draw the attention to the role of education in promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Forty one member states participated in the “Year”, which shows strong interest and commitment on their part.

The Third Phase of the Council of Europe Programme of Activities 2006-2009 on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE) is based on the experience of the first two phases and of the “Year”. It focuses on the following priorities: Education policy development and implementation for democratic citizenship and social inclusion; New roles and competences of teachers and other educational staff in EDC/HRE, and Democratic governance of educational institutions.

Following the Recommendation 1682(2004) of the Parliamentary Assembly “Education for Europe” to draft a European framework convention on EDC/HRE by the Committee of Ministers, a feasibility study on “framework policy documents” on EDC/HRE has been prepared and is being examined by the relevant bodies of the Council of Europe.

Taking into account the orientations of the Third Phase of the EDC/HRE 2006-2009 Programme, a new tool for core competencies on EDC/HRE for initial teacher education is being prepared. The Tool on Democratic Governance of Schools has been published in 2007 and translated in Croatian, English, French, German, Hungarian, Portuguese and Russian. The Tool provides practical guidelines for school leaders, teachers and all those interested in promoting democratic practice in educational institutions. The Council of Europe will continue to work on Quality

Assurance in EDC/HRE. The Tool on this subject has been translated in Albanian, Azerbaijani, Bulgarian, French, Romanian and Ukrainian. A school manual "Exploring children's rights" was published in English in 2007 and will be soon translated into Azerbaijani and French.

The setting up of a Council of Europe Resource Centre for Education for Democratic Citizenship and intercultural education has recently been considered by the Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C) of the Committee of Ministers. Delegations, in particular Norway who proposed to host the Centre, gave a wide support for this initiative, which is fully in line with the priorities of the Third Summit on promoting training for teachers and instructors and drawing up guidelines and tools for school education and out-of-school education, and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Following a recommendation of the 1st NGOs Forum on EDC/HRE (Warsaw, 2005), it is foreseen to organise a 2nd NGOs Forum in 2008 to present the work of the Council of Europe on EDC/HRE, to strengthen co-operation between the Council of Europe and NGOs and to share examples of good practice.

The Council of Europe co-operates with the European Commission in the framework of a research project on "Active Citizenship for Democracy". The aim of the project is to propose indicators that could be agreed by the EU member states. On 20-21 September 2006 the initial findings of the project was presented in Ispra (Italy) at a conference "Towards indicators on active citizenship". Researchers met for the fourth time in Strasbourg between 2 and 4 July 2007. This project is an example of the strengthened cooperation which has developed between the two organisations. The Council of Europe and the European Union have recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which states the need to intensify co-operation and ensure co-ordination of action on issues of mutual interest.

The Council of Europe assists the UN in monitoring the implementation of the first phase of the Action Plan of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-2007). The Council of Europe will organise a regional European meeting on school education in Strasbourg (5-6 November 2007) in co-operation with OSCE/ODIHR, UNESCO and OHCHR to assist Council of Europe's member states with the national implementation of the Action Plan in the framework of EDC/HRE. The meeting will contribute to the preparation of examples of good practice. Representatives of ministries of education, regional and international institutions, the European Commission, national and international NGOs and foundations active in HRE will attend the meeting. To strengthen links between formal and non formal education and dissemination of the best practice in the sector of school education, a compendium of good practice in human rights citizenship, tolerance and anti-discrimination will be prepared by these organisations and coordinated by ODIHR after the European regional meeting

A network of EDC/HRE in South East Europe has been set up, and will deal with curricula, teacher training and teaching material. The representatives of the different countries meet regularly. The third meeting will be hosted by Slovenia in Ljubljana on 22-24 November 2007 on the development of curricula in EDC/HRE, with a special focus on standard development and evaluation of competences in EDC/HRE.

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4. History education and its contribution to democratic society and citizenship

As a follow up of Recommendation (2001)15 of the Committee of Ministers on "History Teaching in the 21st Century in Europe" and in the framework of the work on strengthening and developing intercultural dialogue, a project on "The Image of the Other in History Teaching" has been set up.

This project aims at drafting general guidelines for policies on history teaching within the framework of intercultural dialogue; proposing strategies, methods and instruments which can be used to turn these general guidelines into specific projects, and making proposals on the training of history teachers as well as all those involved in the history learning process.

For that purpose three themes have been selected: multiple images, shared destinies? - Learning history in a multicultural society; images of others and images of ourselves in the context of globalisation, and Images of the other in conflict and post-conflict situations: learning different histories as a mean of rebuilding confidence.

Seminars will be organised on each of the themes followed by a European conference, presenting the findings.

Regional and bilateral initiatives are being developed on the development of new methodologies and the implementation of multiperspectivity in history lessons (Tbilissi Initiative, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Russian Federation...)

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5. Teaching remembrance – Education for the prevention of crimes against humanity

This project also has its origin in Recommendation (2001)15 "History teaching in 21st Century Europe". According to this Recommendation, history teaching must not be an instrument of ideological manipulation, of propaganda or used for the promotion of intolerant and ultra-nationalistic, xenophobic, racist or anti-semitic ideas. On the contrary, everything possible should be done in the educational sphere to prevent recurrence or denial of the devastating events that have marked this century.

The first objective of this project is to assist teachers in the states parties to the European Cultural Convention to prepare pedagogical projects in order to organise a "Day of Remembrance" in memory of the Holocaust, all the genocides and crimes against humanity that left their mark on the 20th Century. The dates are chosen by each member state, and are often linked to the history of the countries concerned. The second objective of the project is to pass knowledge of these tragedies on to pupils and educate them in the prevention of crimes against humanity.

In order to achieve these aims, teaching material is being produced, teachers are trained in these subjects and given the possibility to exchange information and experiences in the framework of the "Pestalozzi" programme for education professionals of the Council of Europe.

The Ministers of Education of the states parties to the European Cultural Convention meet in authentic places of remembrance (Auschwitz-Birkenau, Prag-Terezin, etc.) in order to pay tribute to the victims of the Holocaust and ensure that the memory is kept up by the young generations so that this never happens again.

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III. Education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe

Due to the specific situation of Roma, who face educational, social, cultural and economic problems all at the same time, the education is not considered in isolation, but in relation to cultural identity and heritage, integration into society, preparation for employment and involvement in the community.

As part of the Project, the Council of Europe has designed an education pack for Roma pre-school children. This pack prepares Roma and Traveller children who have not attended nursery school and are neither ready nor sufficiently mature for the first primary school class to start school so that they do not fall too far behind.

In the framework of the "Pestalozzi" programme for education professionals of the Council of Europe, some training seminars are devoted to Roma issues (use of teaching material, Roma culture and history in schools, Roma school mediators, etc.). Conferences and meetings are organised on different themes such as the Experts' meeting on "Towards Quality Education for Roma Children: Transition from Early Childhood to Primary Education", 10-11 September 2007 organised jointly by the Council of Europe and UNESCO and with the support of the Roma Education Fund.

The Council of Europe is producing a Guide for Roma school mediators. Positions such as that of Roma mediator or school assistant can be made more effective by promoting high-quality initial training geared to the needs on the ground. This Guide will contain an occupational profile, training modules for mediators and other essential practical information.

The Council of Europe is producing teaching material suitable for use by Roma and non-Roma teachers working with classes made up of both Roma and other children. This material, in the form of publications or sets of educational fact sheets covering a number of topics, such as history, culture, cinema, literature and theatre, will foster mutual understanding of differences, which is the basic principle underlying the intercultural approach. It will be used in both formal education and non-formal educational settings such as cultural centres or museums of Roma culture and history. Some of this material can be used in the community by children and their parents.

As part of the Council of Europe's project on the education of Roma children, representatives of the Roma community are involved at each stage, and play an active role in the implementation of policies concerning them. The idea of involving community representatives in developing the project is in keeping with the more general principle of encouraging direct participation by, and empowerment of, members of these communities.

The Language Policy Division has started a medium term project that aims to elaborate a common framework of reference for the development of Romani language curricula, drawing as far as possible on those used in member states and adapting to this effect the structure of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to the specific situation of Romani language use in society and its place in education systems. Among the expected results there is also a proposal for a European Language Portfolio model as well as a Guide for teachers. The work has benefited from a voluntary contribution from Finland. The European Roma and Travellers Forum has followed the work with interest and is kept informed of developments. The project, along with other policy actions on minority education,

was also presented at a Hearing of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages with the Language Policy Division.

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IV. Towards a European Higher Education area

1. Contribution to the Bologna Process of democratic higher education reform.

The Council of Europe is one of the key contributors to the Bologna Process, in particular through work on the recognition of qualifications, public responsibility for higher education and its newly-attributed role of coordinating the sharing of experience in the development of national qualifications frameworks.

On the basis of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention, the Council of Europe – in close cooperation with UNESCO and also with the European Commission – promotes good practice in the recognition of qualifications with a view to facilitating the mobility of learners and holders of qualifications.

In May 2007 the Council of Europe adopted Recommendation on Public Responsibility for Higher Education, which emphasised, among other things, that public authorities should have a leading responsibility for ensuring effective equal opportunities to higher education for all citizens, as well as ensuring that basic research remains a public good.

Within the Bologna Process aiming to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010, the Council of Europe has a particular mission in providing advice and assistance to countries that joined the Bologna Process relatively recently in the democratic higher education reform (creation of new higher education legislation, the development of higher education policy and the sharing of examples of good practice).

In November-December 2006 the Council of Europe hosted two informal Ministerial conferences, one - for the countries of the Western Balkans and another – for the countries that acceded to the Bologna Process in 2005 (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine).

In what concerns bilateral activities, in 2006/2007 the Council of Europe has in particular been engaged in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and 'the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia'. It is notable to mention that the Council of Europe developed Master plan for higher education in Albania.

2. Global network on higher education for democratic culture

In June 2006, the Council of Europe organised a Forum on Higher Education and Democratic Culture: Citizenship, Human Rights and Civic Responsibility, in cooperation with partners in US higher education.

This Forum focused on four main topics: the role of higher education for sustainable democratic culture; fostering the culture of democracy; promoting human rights and democratic citizenship; building sustainable democratic communities.

The Forum adopted a Declaration on the Responsibility of Higher Education for Democratic Culture² and established an interactive web page to support the global Network on Higher Education for Democratic Culture through which participating institutions can publish and link their activities in support of democratic culture³.

As a follow-up activity in March 2007, the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy and the Council of Europe coorganised a symposium on “Universities, Democratic Culture and Human Rights”. The symposium was held at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

3. Project on “*The University between humanism and market: redefining its values and functions for the 21st century*”

In November 2007, the Council of Europe will launch a new three year project aiming to develop a comprehensive view of the roles, functions and values of higher education in modern, complex societies.

The three phases of the project will seek to provide answers to three key questions: what are the main challenges facing higher education and, in a broader sense, modern societies; what kind of higher education is needed to respond to these challenges, and how should this higher education be organised?

The project will explore a widened notion of employability, the contribution of research beyond the confines of economic interest and the importance of higher education institutions as sites of citizenship and as models of and preparation for life in pluralist democratic societies. It will also examine the role of higher education in helping modern society cope with and benefit from the cultural diversity that is already and is likely to continue to be a characteristic of European societies – to help build societies that remain communities while accepting and drawing strength from diversity.

4. New project on ‘*Promoting Intercultural Dialogue in the European Higher Education Area*’

Traditionally, higher education has a twofold mission in furthering the exchange between different cultures, peoples and knowledge communities:

First of all, universities play an integrative role at societal level by attracting foreign students and researchers. Universities provide students and staff from their home country with the opportunity to experience cultural diversity by getting in touch with educated citizens from all over the world.

The second task of universities in promoting Intercultural Dialogue is to transmit intercultural communication skills (in form of linguistic skills or historical knowledge as well as communication skills) and to infuse young and mobile people with a set of democratic values cultured by the academic profession: freedom of mind and expression, tolerance and (self) reflection.

The purpose of this project is to introduce Intercultural Dialogue into the Bologna Process and to propose - as a first step - the organisation of a series of three international seminars on *Promoting Intercultural Dialogue in the European Higher Education Area*.

² http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/HigherEducation/DemocraticCulture/Declaration_EN.pdf

³ <http://dc.ecml.at/>

By identifying the challenges of cultural diversity for higher education in Europe, defining the role and stake of European universities in Intercultural Dialogue, the seminar series seeks to identify means of promoting it.

The project will be launched in February-March 2008 with the seminar 'Intercultural Dialogue on University Campus'.

The Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) at its plenary session in September 2006 adopted a statement on 'Contribution of higher education to intercultural dialogue. It is also actively involved in the drafting of the Council of Europe's 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue'.

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V. European identities through culture and heritage

This programme aims to enable Europeans to appreciate their diverse cultural achievements as a common heritage, through wide public participation in highly visible and high quality events and projects.

The activities organised in this framework are the European Heritage Days (jointly with the European Union), Cultural Routes and Arts Exhibitions, educational activities for mutual understanding through heritage and cross-border activities to test the contribution of heritage education to intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention. The idea is not only to mobilise European citizens to go and visit a variety of sites, monuments and works of art, but in so doing meet other Europeans, and to make, out of travel and tourism, an intercultural (and in some cases inter-religious) human experience. Cooperative activities involving youth focus more on the quality of human participation and civilized encounters around innovative and widely distributed heritage projects.

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VI. Sport for the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination

Sport has a distinctive role to play for social integration and understanding. The Council of Europe programme on sport policies has long emphasized the necessity of keeping the sport movement mobilised against racism, xenophobia and discrimination, and to use sport gatherings as opportunities to promote positive inter-cultural experience.

The activities developed within the framework of the European Convention on Spectator Violence (CETS 120) put a special emphasis on measure to fight racism, xenophobia and hooliganism. This includes monitoring sport legislations and initiatives to fight racism and xenophobia in sport and gathering of good practice.

This question has been identified as a key issue to prevent violence in stadiums and their surroundings. The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted in 2001 a Recommendation on the prevention of racism, xenophobia and racial intolerance in sport.

A network of “Ambassadors for Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play” is being co-ordinated by the Council of Europe. It consists of top athletes who are appointed by their governments for promoting fair play and tolerance in sport. This network should be developed in the coming years.

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