Reference Framework of

Competences for Democratic Culture

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EU CONVINCE (EU Common Values Inclusive Education) project, The Whole School Approach as a tool to prevent radicalisation and extremism, Paris, 5 March 2019

Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC)

- 2013 - Andorra la Vella, High Level Conference organized by the Andorra Presidency of the Committee of Ministers on "Competences for Democratic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue: political challenges and values"

- 24th Session Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, Helsinki 2013

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  "... competences for a culture of democracy and intercultural dialogue were fundamental to our societies today and that they should be described and put into practice in our formal education systems."

- First meeting of the Expert group - December 2013
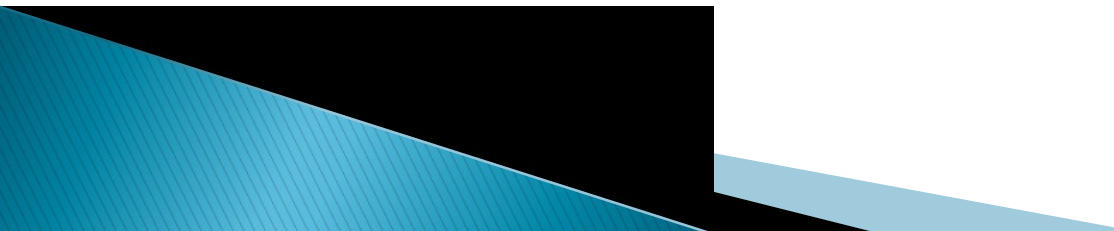
Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC)

- Main sources of inspiration:

- **Common European Reference Framework for Languages** (2001)

- **White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue** : « Living Together as Equals in Dignity» (2008)

- **The Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education** (2010)

- **Recommendation CM/Rec (2012)13 of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers to member States on Ensuring Quality Education**

Competences for Democratic Culture (CDC)

▸ A flagship education project for the Council of Europe

▸ The **key aim** of the project was to assist **national education systems** to enhance the **democratic and intercultural competences** of young people

▸ a **Reference framework**

▸ Detailed **guidance** for relevant stakeholders on how this framework can be used to develop appropriate **curricula**, **pedagogical methods and assessment tools** for use in formal education

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION?

▸ Seven most cited purposes of education in public debates:
  ◦ Employability
  ◦ Employability
  ◦ Employability
  ◦ Employability
  ◦ Employability
  ◦ Employability
  ◦ Employability

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION?

- **Council of Europe**:
  - Preparation for sustainable employment
  - Preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies
  - Personal development
  - The development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base

An unexpected spotlight on the project

‣ **A new level of political attention** - terrorist attacks in 2015

‣ Immediately after these attacks, the Council of Europe drew up an **Action Plan for Combatting Extremism and Radicalisation leading to Terrorism**

‣ The competences that young people need to recognize and deal with **online propaganda** (e.g., analytical and critical thinking skills), to recognize **hate speech** in the news media and online (e.g., knowledge and critical understanding of media), and to **value human dignity, human rights and democratic processes**, and many other.

Thorbjørn Jagland speech to the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (New York - 19 June 2015)

- *'While most states have some form of civic education, we don't – as standard practice – teach our children what it means – explicitly – to be a democratic citizen'*

And so it continued...

- March 2016 – Competences for Democratic Culture - Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies

- Describes the model and the methods that were used to develop it; aimed at readers who wish to understand the underlying assumptions and technical details of the model

And so it continued…

- April 2016 – the Framework presented to the Council of Europe's **Standing Conference of Ministers of Education** in Brussels

- Piloting and testing of the Framework (and descriptors) – 15 countries, 1236 educators

- April 2018 - The **Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture** (RFCDC) was officially launched in Copenhagen during the conference "Democratic Culture – from words to action" organized in the context of the Danish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers
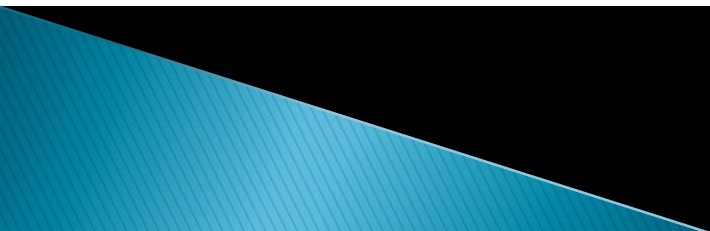
The context

➢ **Two background assumptions**

➢ There is no democracy without the competences for democratic culture, but it is not enough – we need **appropriate institutional structures and action on inequalities and structural disadvantages**

➢ All cultures are internally heterogeneous, contested, dynamic and constantly evolving

➢ Intercultural situations arise due to **the perception that there are cultural differences between people -** intercultural dialogue is construed as an open exchange of views between individuals or groups who perceive themselves as having different cultural affiliations from each other

The contents of the CDC framework

- Competence - The ability to mobilise and deploy relevant values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, difficulties and opportunities which are presented by democratic and intercultural situations

- Physical and digital world!
- Teachable, learnable and assessable

Competence

Values
- ❖ Valuing human dignity and human rights
- ❖ Valuing cultural diversity
- ❖ Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

Attitudes
- ❖ Openness to cultural otherness and other beliefs, world views and practices
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Civic-mindedness
- ❖ Responsibility
- ❖ Self-efficacy
- ❖ Tolerance of ambiguity

Skills
- ❖ Autonomous learning skills
- ❖ Analytical and critical thinking skills
- ❖ Skills of listening and observing
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Flexibility and adaptability
- ❖ Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- ❖ Cooperation skills
- ❖ Conflict-resolution skills

Knowledge and critical understanding
- ❖ Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
- ❖ Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
- ❖ Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability

Descriptors

- Sets of **descriptors** for each competence specified by the model – a descriptor is a statement or description of what a person is able to do if they have mastered a particular competence

- These descriptors have been formulated using the **language of learning outcomes**, and they have been **validated** through a survey that involved over 1,200 teachers who were drawn from across Europe

- In the process of assigning the descriptors to **levels of education** (e.g., preschool, primary, secondary, higher) and to **proficiency levels** (e.g., basic, intermediate, advanced)

Openness
- Expresses an appreciation of the opportunity to have experiences of other cultures
- Questions the supposed 'naturalness' of his/her own beliefs, worldview and values
- Expresses interest in working with people from different cultural backgrounds
- Expresses interest in discovering and learning about other beliefs, cultural orientations and affiliations
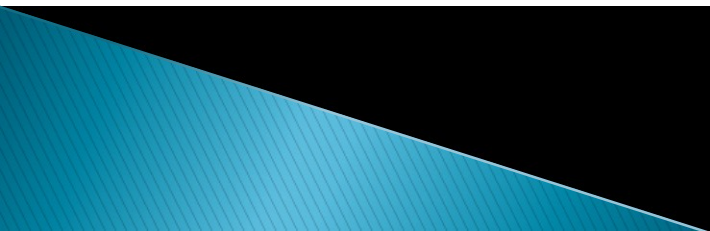
Civic-mindedness
- Takes a stand against injustice towards other people
- Proactively works to change the views of those who are intolerant of different people
- Expresses an interest in public affairs and issues
- Expresses the intention to vote in future elections when there are candidates or political parties that are proposing policies with which he/she agrees

Support documents

- Assessment
- Pedagogy
- Teacher education
- Curriculum development
- Prevention of radicalisation and extremism
- Whole school approach

- Higher Education

Final publications – April 2018

- **Volume one** : The model of competences for democratic culture

- **Volume two:** The descriptors of the competences for democratic culture that are intended to help educators identify learning outcomes, achieved proficiency after a period of learning, and areas for further development.

- **Volume three:** Guidance on how the model of competences and the corresponding descriptors may be used.

And forward...

- The Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN) – set in April 2018

- Assessment, Teaching and Curriculum Development in the focus

- 30 countries actively participating

What kind of education?

- "What kind of education do we need?"

- "What kind of society do we want to live in?"

(Eugenio Tironi: El sueño chileno, 2005)

For more information:

www.coe.int/competences

Thank you!