

# DARE

Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning

## Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe through Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning

Glasgow, March 4-5, 2010

DARE BLUE LINE EDITION

Textbook for EDC/HRE practitioners

Conference organised  
in partnership with:



Lifelong Learning Programme

Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning  
EU Project No. 134263-LLP-1-2007-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GNW

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## FOREWORD

*"I am convinced that there is an absolute connection between lack of education, democracy and human rights and an increase in poverty and social exclusion. Conversely, if you increase education, democratic participation and respect for human rights, you will decrease poverty."*

*David Martin (MEP) at his opening speech*

Educational NGOs have a crucial role to play in eradicating poverty: They must identify root causes of poverty and social exclusion, and employ a bottom-up approach with individuals and groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion: "Nothing about us without us". Following this strategy, the impacts and outcomes of adult education programmes should be defined rather by the learners, instead of for them.

The European conference "Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe through Education for Democratic Citizenship / Human Rights Education" took place in Glasgow, March 4-5, 2010. It aimed to contribute to coherent European framework policies combating poverty and social exclusion through Human Rights Education (HRE) and Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) in lifelong learning. The conference provided a forum for more than 170 stakeholders from the Grundtvig community and related adult education fields, among them practitioners in formal and non-formal education, NGO activists, educational experts, political scientists and policy makers from various levels ranging from city councils to the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

As a result of the conference, recommendations to both policy makers and NGOs were drafted and subsequently disseminated to various European EDC/HRE stakeholder networks. A core recommendation focuses on the need to counteract the current "vocationalisation" of EDC/HRE: The conference participants pointed out that citizenship skills are no soft and fluffy stuff, merely decorating a basic layer of "hard" job-related skills. Citizenship skills are basic for democratic, cohesive and prosperous societies.

Mainstreaming citizenship education leads to more social cohesion: National and EU programmes in adult education should set a specific focus on civic education, human rights education, and democratic participation. Both member states and the EU are asked to endorse

the European Charter for Human Rights Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship, drafted by the Council of Europe.

The conference "Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe through Education for Democratic Citizenship / Human Rights Education" was jointly organised by BEMIS (Black and Ethnic Minorities Infrastructure in Scotland) and DARE (Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning). This conference textbook offers a selection of case studies from nine European countries. It does not intend to cover the whole range of European initiatives in the field. Still, many lessons can be drawn from the reports and best practices from nine European countries, highlighting the many effects of poverty and social exclusion on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education. A special emphasis was put on case studies from Scottish local communities, in order to explore the link between local initiatives and European issues and vice versa.

This publication is a result and part of the work plan of the EU Grundtvig Network Project "DARE – Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning", funded with support from the European Commission (EU Project No. 134263-LLP-1-2007-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GNW) to the beneficiary organisation AdB – Arbeitskreis deutscher Bildungsstätten.

This textbook is available in print as well as for download (pdf-file) at [www.dare-network.eu](http://www.dare-network.eu). Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any additional information.

We would like to express our gratitude to the workshop leaders, training facilitators, moderators, speakers, researchers and all the others who helped to make this conference a success!

Georg Pirker, Anne Stalfort  
DARE Project Office Berlin, June 2010

For further information on DARE and DARE's current EU project "Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning" please visit [www.dare-network.eu](http://www.dare-network.eu) or contact Georg Pirker at [pirker@adb.de](mailto:pirker@adb.de).

## **PART 1: OPENING SPEECHES AND INTRODUCTION: EUROPEAN APPROACHES**

### **Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe through Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning**

*Opening Speech by David Martin, Member of the EU Parliament, Committees on International Trade and Human Rights*

The European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion came about as a direct result of a joint decision by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers that explicitly recognises the right to live in dignity. The European Union Year has been given a budget of at least 26 million euros, of which 17 million euros come from the EU.

The main objectives of the year are:

- to raise awareness of the causes, prevalence and consequences of poverty and social exclusion;
- to encourage and promote the involvement of a wide range of partners
- and – most importantly – to ensure a lasting legacy in the reduction of poverty and an increase social inclusion.

Within the Socialist and Democrat Group in the European Parliament a clear consensus has formed which focuses on eradicating child poverty, getting people into the job market, ensuring everyone has access to good housing, and fighting discrimination and over-indebtedness. We believe that we need a New Deal for Europe's Poor. The European Parliament as a whole treats poverty and social exclusion as a priority area with its new Social Agenda, which was adopted in July 2008. It is part of the strategy to create growth and jobs. And the European Parliament has the support of its citizens. In a recent Euro Barometer Report 64 % of EU citizens said more decisions should be taken at European level to protect social rights.

EU funding such as PROGRESS, which has a global budget of 743 million Euros for seven years (2007 – 2013), was set up to act as a catalyst for change in five areas: employment; social inclusion and protection; working conditions; non-discrimination; and gender equality. And there is a big job to do in terms of tackling poverty and reducing social exclusion. Within the EU there are 79 million people, or 16 % of our population, at risk of poverty. About 23.5

million people in the EU have to get by on less than ten euros a day. 30 million people in the EU are undernourished. The income of the richest 20 % in the EU is nearly five times that of the poorest 20 %. There are 19 million working poor which means even although they have work they are so poorly paid they are in danger of falling into poverty. Because of the current world wide recession, the EU may have to cope with an extra six million jobless people in the next few years, which could leave more people with increased debts, on the breadline, or homeless.

One key element the EU must deal with is how to stop poverty being 'passed down' from generation to generation. This could be best done by focussing on the needs of large families, single parents and those caring for dependents. The Year also aims to help immigrants, ethnic groups and other vulnerable people who face social exclusion. The objective is to improve access to vital public resources which can provide essentials such as decent health services and accommodation. Other issues to be covered include: in-work poverty and how to make work pay; improving access to cultural and leisure facilities; and age and gender dimensions to poverty. This conference is focused on adult education. And this theme will feature strongly as the European Year highlights the value of education and training in combating poverty and joblessness. I personally am very interested and encouraged by the approach you are taking to tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion through education for democratic citizenship and human rights education in adult learning.

As a European MP who serves on the International Trade Committee as well as the Human Rights Committee I have been struck by the connection between the lack of democracy, human rights and education and the prevalence of poverty in some of the developing countries of the world that I have been involved in. So I will be very interested to hear of the outcomes from your conference. It is one of my main aims in negotiating with the European Commission and representatives from developing countries that the inclusion of human rights and the respect for democracy, along with International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards are written into all new Trade Deals the EU signs with developing countries.

I am convinced that there is an absolute connection between lack of education, democracy and human rights and an increase in poverty and social exclusion. Conversely if you increase education, democratic participation and respect for human rights you will decrease poverty. I know that is your aim and I share it with you. I wish you well for the rest of your Conference and any leisure time you have to spend in Glasgow and look forward to hearing of the outcomes of your deliberations.

## **Building Partnerships for Citizenship and Human Rights Education**

*Opening Speech by Yulia Pererva, Council of Europe, Division on Citizenship and Human Rights Education, Directorate General IV – Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport*

First of all, allow me to thank the DARE and BEMIS for the invitation to this conference, and the Scottish authorities for hosting it in the historical building of the Glasgow City Chambers. DARE is an important partner for the Council of Europe in the field of citizenship and human rights education. We have a long history of co-operation, and many of you might recall the DARE conference in Vienna last year, to which the Council of Europe contributed in many different ways. We hope to further reinforce such co-operation in the years to come.

It is a great pleasure for me to see those of you whom we know very well by now, as well as the new faces. As not everyone might know well the Council of Europe, I would like to use this opportunity to recall that it is an inter-governmental organisation, bringing together 47 member States with 800 million Europeans. The Council of Europe priorities are protection and promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Council of Europe is not one of the bodies of the European Union, but the two organisations work very closely together on questions of common concern.

One of such questions is the issue of Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe. This is a high priority area for the Council of Europe, as it is difficult to talk about human rights, democracy and the rule of law in situations when basic social and economic needs of individuals are not met. Europe has always been proud of its social model based on social rights, social justice and solidarity, but today we face an increasing fragmentation of our societies, with more and more people finding themselves at the margins and with inequalities rising between the rich and the poor. This has been a growing concern for the Council of Europe member states, and the organisation addresses this issue in several ways.

First of all, most of the Council of Europe work is built upon international treaties, that is conventions and charters, and on the work of the corresponding monitoring mechanisms. Quite a few of them are either devoted to the topic of social exclusion, or dealing with it to a certain extent. Just to give you an example, I would like to mention the European Social Charter, which guarantees rights related to housing, health, education, employment, legal and social protection, free movement of persons and non-discrimination. The Charter establishes the European Committee of Social Rights, which is a supervisory mechanism guaranteeing their

respect by the States Parties. There is also a possibility for civil society organisations to lodge complaints under the Charter

The Council of Europe also works on other types of guidelines, and following the Conference of Ministers responsible for social cohesion held in Moscow in February 2009, the Council of Europe is currently working on a new Strategy for Social Cohesion and on an Action Plan for Social Cohesion which will provide further orientations and guidance both to the Council of Europe and to its member states.

While treaties and guidelines play an important role in terms of setting standards and streamlining policies and practices, one should not underestimate the role of education in tackling poverty and social exclusion. The Council of Europe Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights aims to support all forms of education that allow young people and adults to play an active part in democratic societies. Such education can help in many different ways including: raising awareness about poverty and social exclusion, stimulating debate about possible solutions to these problems, providing essential life skills such as critical thinking, negotiating and peaceful conflict resolution, and encouraging projects and initiatives to tackle exclusion in a community. The plethora of tools and guidelines that have been developed in the framework of the Council of Europe programme on EDC/HRE, aim to assist all those interested in promoting a culture of democracy and human rights in educational institutions. To mention just a few, manuals on democratic governance, on teacher competences and on quality assurance have been met with a lot of interest, and have been used in many member states.

One of the major outcomes of this programme is the draft Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, which has been negotiated for several years now. The text was approved by the Steering Committee for Education (which is the Council of Europe body bringing together representatives of the ministries of education), and is to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for adoption this spring<sup>1</sup>. As the draft text stands now, it reads, under section “Objectives and principles” as follows: “an essential element of all EDC and HRE is the promotion of social cohesion and intercultural dialogue and the valuing of diversity and equality, including gender equality”. If adopted, this document will provide an important frame of reference for the Council of Europe member states on this topic, and co-operation with civil society organisations will be vital for putting this text into practice.

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<sup>1</sup> On 11 May 2010, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and representatives of the 47 Council of Europe member states adopted the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, in the framework of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 at the 120th Session the Committee of Ministers.

I would also like to mention our long-standing co-operation with other international institutions in this field. In particular, the Council of Europe is contributing to the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education, of which the second phase has been recently proclaimed. Another example of such co-operation is the publication on "Human Rights Education in the School Systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: A Compendium of Good Practice", which was produced and launched last year in co-operation with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE/ODIHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Significantly, the compendium was compiled by an international NGO Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), and is an example of a fruitful partnership in this field.

These are just a few examples of existing partnerships, but of course there is a strong need for governments, civil society organisations, international institutions and many other actors to join forces in tackling systematically poverty and social exclusion, while giving it the highest priority on our overloaded agendas. And only then can we hope that one day Europe will be able to be proud of its social model again.

## **Social Exclusion – a Fundamental Rights Agency Perspective**

*Opening Speech by Frederic Banson, Fundamental Rights Agency*

### **Introduction**

The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) interacts with a diverse range of partners in the policy making processes. Key examples of such partnerships are with civil society organisations through the mechanism of the Fundamental Rights Platform (FRP). Others include EU institutions, EU Member States as well as international organisations such as the UN and the Council of Europe. The importance of the engagement with civil society is explicit in our mandate through the FRP where there is interaction with over 300 civil society actors on issues such as the work programmes and projects.

Although there are no explicit references to tackling poverty and social exclusion in the FRA's mandate, the nature of the FRA's work on anti-discrimination is by implication about social-exclusion.

### **EU MIDIS and Human Rights Education**

In this regard, the Agency's work on Roma related issues is quite informative. The 2008 FRA EU MIDIS survey gives some insights into rights awareness from the victims' perspective. According to MIDIS in the seven member states where Roma were surveyed (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Slovakia), only one in nine (11.5 %) of all Roma who reported having felt discriminated in access to housing, chose to report such incidents to the relevant organisations.

Furthermore, when asked about their awareness of legislation prohibiting discrimination in relation to ethnicity when renting or buying a flat, almost half of them (47 %) did not know of any such law. In Greece only 13 % were aware of any such law whilst 85 % were categorical that no such law exists. The lack of rights awareness suggests that the message about the right not to be discriminated against is not reaching some of the most vulnerable minorities in Europe. A more intensive human rights educational approach needs to be embedded into the work being done in this area.

### **Roma housing conditions**

Following a specific request from the European Commission in December 2007, the FRA carried out further Roma related work when it examined the housing conditions of Roma and Travellers in the EU in a report entitled "Housing Conditions of Roma and Travellers in the European Union".

The research found that even although there are useful initiatives being carried out at different levels within member states, these initiatives have largely not been successful. The report identifies two reasons for the failure:

- These initiatives are often not based on adequate, ethnically disaggregated data, without timetables or benchmarks for assessment.
- The reluctance of some regional and local authorities which often are responsible for local housing policies to implement effectively national housing policies.

Looking forward, the report states that it is imperative to recognize that the status quo constitutes a serious problem and requires urgent action by EU institutions, member states and local authorities in order to ensure equal treatment and to foster social inclusion.

### **Recommendations**

As solutions the FRA proposes the promotion of the active participation of Roma and Travellers at all stages of the development of housing policies through a concerted approach, from planning, implementation to evaluation and review across the EU and at national, regional / local government level.

Finally, rights awareness and human rights education should be intensified as an integral part of the solution to this pressing problem.

## Poverty and Social Exclusion across the European Union: An Introduction

*Gabriella Patriziano, Human Rights Office, Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo, Italy*

On 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010, the European Commission and the Spanish Presidency launched the “2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion”. The main aim of the campaign is fighting against poverty across the European Union during 2010.

Four cross-disciplinary objectives are at the heart of this European Year:

**Recognition:** recognise the fundamental right of persons experiencing poverty and social exclusion to live in dignity and to take an active part in society;

**Shared responsibility and participation:** promote public support for social inclusion policies, emphasising collective and individual responsibility in combating poverty and social exclusion, and fostering commitment by all public and private actors;

**Cohesion:** promote a more cohesive society, where no one doubts that society as a whole benefits from the eradication of poverty;

**Commitment and practical action:** renew the pledge of the EU and its member states to combat poverty and social exclusion, and involve all levels of authority in the pursuit of that aim.<sup>2</sup>

In order to spread these objectives, the EU Commission launched a **campaign website** ([www.2010againstpoverity.eu](http://www.2010againstpoverity.eu)) to stimulate networking and joint initiatives among key actors, such as civil society organisations, local and regional authorities. The website will also show-case events held in each of the participating countries.<sup>3</sup>

Poverty is most often measured in monetary terms, but it is more than a lack of what is necessary for material well-being. As underlined by UNDP Human Development Report 1997 “Human Development to Eradicate Poverty”, Poverty refers to the “denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living”.<sup>4</sup> In this sense the concept of poverty is multifaceted and multidimensional and, during the recent years, it has been defined in different ways. The UNDP Report 1997 identifies three perspectives:

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission, 2010 International Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion [http://www.2010againstpoverity.eu/extranet/About\\_the\\_Year/factsheet\\_EY2010\\_en.pdf](http://www.2010againstpoverity.eu/extranet/About_the_Year/factsheet_EY2010_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.2010againstpoverity.eu>

<sup>4</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 1997 “*Human Development to Eradicate Poverty*”, UNDP, New York 1997, p. 15

1. **Income approach.** A person is poor if, and only if, her income level is below the defined poverty line (e.g. in terms of having enough income for food).
2. **Basic needs approach.** Poverty means the deprivation of material requirements for minimally acceptable fulfillment of human needs, including food. This concept, beyond the lack of private income, includes the need for basic health and education and essential services that have to be provided by the community to prevent people from falling into poverty.
3. **Capability approach.** Poverty represents the absence of some basic capabilities to function. The elements relevant to this analysis can vary from such physical ones as being well nourished, being adequately clothed and sheltered and avoiding preventable morbidity, to more complex social achievements such as partaking in the life of the community. The capability approach reconciles the notion of absolute and relative poverty, since relative deprivation in incomes and commodities can lead to an absolute deprivation in minimum capabilities.

Poverty in the human development draws particularly on the capability approach: through this approach, in fact, poverty lies not merely in the impoverished state in which the person actually lives, but also in the lack of real opportunity.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, it is necessary demanding the eradication of poverty not just as a development goal, but as a central challenge for human rights.

Generally, poverty is often associated with developing countries but Europe is also affected by poverty and social exclusion. According to the recent study published by the European Commission "Combating poverty and social exclusion. A statistical portrait of the European Union 2010"<sup>6</sup>, in 2008, despite the social protection systems in the EU are among the most highly-developed in the world, today, too many Europeans still live in poverty:

- 79 million people live below the poverty line (set at 60 % of their country's median income). That represents 16 % of Europe's population.
- One European in ten lives in a household where nobody has a paid job. Even so, occupation does not always guard effectively against the risk of poverty.
- For 8 % of Europeans, having a job is not enough to work one's way out of poverty.
- In most member states, children are more exposed to this scourge than the rest of the population: 19 % of children live under the threat of poverty.

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<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, p. 16

<sup>6</sup> "Combating poverty and social exclusion. A statistical portrait of the European Union 2010" European Commission, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

In addition to well-known problems such as poor housing, or homelessness, people who are poor are also likely to endure:

- Poor health and reduced access to healthcare
- Reduced access to education, training and leisure activities
- Financial exclusion and over-indebtedness
- Limited access to modern technology, such as the Internet<sup>7</sup>

In this sense, the actions proposed by the EU to fight against social exclusion are the following:

- **Encourage** involvement and political commitment from each and every segment of society to participate in the fight against poverty and social exclusion, from the European to the local level, whether public or private;
- **Inspire** each and every European citizen to participate in the fight against poverty and social exclusion;
- **Give voice** to the concerns and needs of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion;
- **Engage with** civil society and non-governmental organisations that fight poverty and social exclusion;
- **Help** deconstruct stereotypes and stigmas attached to poverty and social exclusion;
- **Promote** a society that sustains and develops quality of life, social well-being and equal opportunities for all;
- **Boost** solidarity between generations and ensure sustainable development.<sup>8</sup>

### **Social exclusion and young people with fewer opportunities**

The concept of social exclusion is complex, dynamic and multidimensional. It could be defined as: "... a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.2010againstpoverity.eu/about/tackling.html?langid=en>

<sup>8</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langid=en&catId=637>

They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feeling powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives.”<sup>9</sup>

Most of evidence from EU countries shows that poverty and social exclusion have a negative effect in particular on young people from the most vulnerable groups that are often at risk of racial discrimination. They do not have access to adequate health care and are exploited at work; have learning problems, in general have lower skills and aspirations. Young people from poor families are most probably at risk of social exclusion and have limited opportunity in education and development.

Poverty and social exclusion contribute to a denial of poor young people’s rights: they deprive young people of the right to education, to association, to rest and leisure, to participate in the community, and to other civil and political rights.

Marginalized young people face many problems in their realities:

- **Multiple insecurities** – the most vulnerable young people are often facing a number of different insecurities in their lives at the same time (unemployment, discrimination and isolation; or inadequate housing, health problems and inconsistent education and training).
- **Persistence** – multiple insecurities can build up and compound one another, for example: inadequate housing can lead to poor health; discrimination can lead to unemployment or problems at school; family break up to isolation.
- **Erosion of rights and responsibilities** – eventually people’s basic social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights and responsibilities are undermined or under threat wholesale: it is difficult to succeed at school if you face discrimination on a daily basis.<sup>10</sup>

To provide young people food and work is important but not enough in term of long term response to the problem: it is important also to promote young people’s participation in all the decisions affecting them as recommended by Art. 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>11</sup>, ensuring, at the same time, human development, removing discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and social status and building up their skills.<sup>12</sup> All these are roles that both individuals and institutions, both governmental and civil society must unite to play.

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<sup>9</sup> Council of the European Union, *Joint Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2003*

<sup>10</sup> T-KIT Social Inclusion, Council of Europe and European Commission, 2003, p.15

<sup>11</sup> UN Convention on the Right of the Child, UN General Assembly, 1989

<sup>12</sup> Compasito, Manual on Human Rights Education for Children, Council of Europe, 2009, p. 267 - 269

Encouraging young people's participation means also to improve their protection and the fulfilment of other children's rights. When young people themselves are familiar with expressing their ideas and using the mechanisms available, abuse and violation of rights can be more easily exposed and rectified.

As recommended by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment No.12 "The Right of Child to be heard"<sup>13</sup>, the voices of children have increasingly become a powerful force in the prevention of child rights violations. In this sense all processes that involve actively children and young people must be:

- **Transparent and informative** – in order to give young people all the appropriate information about their right to participate and to express their view freely
- **Voluntary** – to guarantee freedom of young people to take part in a project or initiative
- **Respectful** – young people's views have to be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities
- **Relevant** – the issues on which young people have the right to express their views must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities
- **Child-friendly** – environments and working methods should be adapted to young people's capacities
- **Inclusive** – participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for young people with fewer opportunities
- **Supported by training** – adults need preparation, skills and support to facilitate young people's participation effectively, to provide them, for example, with skills in listening, working jointly with them and engaging them effectively in accordance with their evolving capacities
- **Safe and sensitive to risk** – adults have a responsibility towards the young people with whom they work and must take every precaution to minimize the risk to children of violence, exploitation or any other negative consequence of their participation
- **Accountable** – a commitment to follow-up and evaluation is essential. Monitoring and evaluation of young people's participation needs to be undertaken, where possible, with young people themselves.

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<sup>13</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its General Comment No12 (2009) "*The Right of Child to be heard*"<sup>13</sup>, Committee on the Rights of the Child, Fifty-first session, 20 July 2009

According to Amartya Sen “**participation itself is human development**, in that development is a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy.”<sup>14</sup> Through inclusive participation processes embedded in settings so meaningful to them as education and commitment for global causes, most young people with fewer opportunities can develop life skills, build citizenship competencies, form aspirations, gain confidence in partaking in and influencing activities, processes and decisions that they will use in other settings, in their own development process and as active subjects of the human development of their community. They must have the opportunity to build a Europe of equality, justice and peace taking part actively in youth work that can play an important role in social inclusion reaching and bringing together young people who face exclusion on a daily basis.

In the last years, governments acted to combat poverty and social exclusion implementing, for the most, only measures to support poor people (welfare service, healthcare for all, e.g.), basing their policies on the basic needs theory. A change of perspective is needed in order to support the empowerment of young people with fewer opportunities, such as access to quality education for all people, parents education and the promotion of youth participation in various decision making activities concerning the design of local policies.<sup>15</sup> Promoting a culture of human rights has to be also an important part of these poverty-reduction policies. Tackling poverty and social exclusion contributes to a culture of human rights and improves social cohesion for the whole society.

### **Educate to and for human rights for tackling poverty and social exclusion**

The World Conference on Human Rights, that took place in Vienna in 1993, affirmed that “extreme poverty and social exclusion constitute a violation of human dignity and that urgent steps are necessary to achieve better knowledge of extreme poverty and its causes, including those related to the problem of development, in order to promote the human rights of the poorest, and to put an end to extreme poverty and social exclusion and to promote the enjoyment of the fruits of social progress. It is essential for States to foster participation by the poorest people in the decision-making process by the community in which they live, the promotion of human rights and efforts to combat extreme poverty.”<sup>16</sup>

In this sense, educate *to* and *for* human rights, to a culture of human rights, could be a tool for the inclusion of all. As noted by the UN General Assembly (in Resolution 49/184, 1994)

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<sup>14</sup> Sen A., *Development as freedom*, 1999

<sup>15</sup> *Idem*, p. 269

<sup>16</sup> VIENNA DECLARATION AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION, UN General Assembly, June 1993

declaring the decade: “Human rights education should involve more than the provision of information and should constitute a comprehensive lifelong process by which people at all levels of development and in all strata of society learn respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring that respect in all societies. Human rights education contributes to a concept of development consistent with the dignity of women and men of all ages, which takes into account the diverse segments of society.”

Human rights education is a lifelong process. It can prevent human rights violations by promoting a culture of peace, non-discrimination and tolerance anchored in respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. Empowerment of people – both by educating them on their rights and by ensuring for them access to justice – has to be a priority of every policy in the EU member States. But it is not enough: human rights education at political level, does not cover, nor can it ever cover, the multiplicity of possible ways for mainstreaming a human rights culture. NGOs, associations, oratories, social centres, youth centres can play a key role in education to and for human rights.<sup>17</sup>

In particular, human rights education can reach young people with fewer opportunities that too often are out of the formal education system, promoting the construction of knowledge and skills in a horizontal relationship, using different methodologies such as peer to peer education, project work, etc. human rights education provides young people new experiences and challenges allowing the strengthen of personal skills and values.

In this light, human rights education is instrumental in bringing about human development both personal and collective and therefore to achieving a world that is more equitable, more just and more healthy. The goal of this kind of learning is to foster mutual knowledge and collective self-awareness.

#### **Human rights education allows to:**

**Respect and caring for oneself** – respecting and caring for oneself brings both the capacity to act autonomously and to be self-motivated. It is an essential pre-requisite for an understanding of how to care for others and creates the potential for inner peace in a world of change and uncertainty.

**Respect and caring for others** – the positive relationships forged among individuals and groups are essential to the development of qualities such as co-operation, interdependence, and respect for a diversity of people and cultures which allows us to live and work in the realities of the world of today and the future.

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<sup>17</sup> Carazzone C., “*Educating to and for Human Rights*”, International Congress “Preventive System & Human Rights”, Rome 2-6 January 2009.

**Develop a sense of social responsibility** – based on the critical scrutiny of information and evidence within an awareness of existing power.<sup>18</sup>

### **Human rights education**

- means to educate to commitment to causes and to the issues that arise day after day in our lives at local or international levels
- aims at educating young people to social justice and active citizenship
- helps young people to understand the complexity of the world around them
- allows to develop skills, attitudes, knowledge and values in order to face the challenges of the society
- provides young people the tools to reflect on the consequences of their choices to promote human rights defenders
- promotes an approach to socio-civic learning, one that encourages practical experience, the acceptance of responsibility and active and responsible participation
- allows the construction of a sustainable world in which every person can express his/her potential
- is a multidimensional, holistic and ongoing process to active and responsible citizenship
- aims at preventing human rights violation, promoting a new approach beyond simply prohibiting

To speak then of ongoing education for a culture of human rights means to educate to commitment to causes and to the issues that arise day after day in our lives at local or international levels.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> T-KIT Social Inclusion, *Op. cit.*, p. 21

<sup>19</sup> Carazzone C., *Op. cit.*

## **PART 2:**

# **EFFECTS OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION ON EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP / HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: SCOTTISH CASE STUDIES AND THE RELEVANCE OF COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES**

## **Challenging Poverty and Social Exclusion in Housing: Case Studies**

*Najimee Parveen, PATH Scotland*

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation commissioned their report on Poverty, Inequality and Human Rights as part of its programme on public interest in poverty. One of the programme's aims is to broaden the range of groups and individuals involved in the debate on UK Poverty. The foundation brought together organisations working primarily on human rights and those with an anti-poverty focus for a seminar on these issues. A recommendation of the seminar was for more analysis of how human rights have been used in other countries to combat domestic poverty and to what effect. The Foundation described poverty in the UK proving to be an intractable problem, despite more than a decade of rising public expenditure. Assessment of poverty and social exclusion in the decade up to 2008 shows that, after an initial burst of success, improvement in many key areas stalled or reversed. The report stated that in both wealthy and low income countries people working to combat poverty have used human rights to

- reframe conceptions of poverty and challenge stereotypes of people affected by it;
- mobilise alliances between disparate groups around anti poverty goals;
- hold governments accountable for poverty inside and outside the courtroom.

Judgemental attitudes towards people experiencing poverty have also been hard to shift. One Survey carried out by the National Centre for Social Research found that some two thirds of the UK public thought that poverty was either an inevitable part of life or due to a person's own laziness. Teachers and activists in the US for example have used human rights to challenging degrading and discriminatory treatment of mainly low income black school students.

Another report found that only a quarter of participants agreed that people on benefits would contribute to society in the future. The economic downturn has injected greater urgency into this discussion. A key question for those concerned with UK Poverty is how well a govern-

ment anti-poverty strategy that has focused on getting people into work will work in the context of a recession in which public spending cuts, rising unemployment and repossessions threaten to have a severe impact on people affected by poverty.

The UK has a human rights infrastructure that offers channels for debate and action to confront aspects of poverty, amongst those are the Human Rights Act, The Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Human Rights Commission in Scotland and Northern Ireland. To date there has been little integration of human rights and anti-poverty work in the UK, either in public policy or among communities experiencing poverty.

### **So what does it mean to use human rights?**

We understood human rights to be a set of values contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." These values are enshrined and given deeper content and weight in international law and often domestic law, their content is also elaborated in a range of principles and standards and by internal mechanisms that monitor compliance with law and standards. Human rights have also been used as a means of promoting human dignity outside the courtroom through political campaigns and social mobilisation.

### **Implementing human rights**

The record of governments using human rights as an anti-poverty tool is infrequent. Human rights do not appear to be at the core of a government's anti poverty work. A possible example would be Scotland's homelessness law which sets targets to measure progress.

You don't have to be sleeping rough to be homeless – the legal definition of homelessness, as laid out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 (see below), is much broader, stating that anyone who does not have a safe or permanent home may be homeless. For example, a person may be homeless if they are forced to leave their home due to domestic abuse or harassment from their neighbors, if they have no rights to stay in their current accommodation, or if their home is seriously overcrowded.

The homelessness legislation has been praised for its progressive nature. The legislation makes major changes to the tests which determine the services which homeless people receive on application. The Homelessness Task Force recognised that in many instances homelessness was as a result of wider needs which had not been recognised or had not been met effectively. The intention of the legislation is to end the test of priority need. It will do

this by gradually expanding the groups defined as in priority need until the term becomes redundant. There should be a phasing out of priority need by 2012.

The first set of groups added to the priority need category were those with mental illness, those discharged from prison or the armed forces, and those who due to their religion, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnic or nations origins run the risk of violence. If implemented effectively the legislation should help the most vulnerable people in Scotland.

The UK recession had appeared to be coming to an end, but recent figures belie this. UK unemployment is still rising and expected to peak at around 3 million. UK public spending has been hugely distorted by the efforts needed to avoid economic catastrophe; significant future cuts are in prospect to return the public finances to a sounder footing. The Equalities Bill will consolidate and extend existing equalities legislation. A new public sector duty to consider reducing socioeconomic inequalities will affect how public bodies make strategic decisions about spending and service delivery.

Under the Bill, this new duty is only applicable in England and Wales, but Scotland is consulting on its extension to public bodies north of the border also. The Equalities Bill includes powers for Ministers to require public authorities to report on equality issues. It is anticipated that public bodies with over 150 employees will be required to publish annual details of their gender pay gap, ethnic minority employment rate and their disability employment rate. The Equalities Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent in spring 2010 with the majority of its elements coming into force in autumn 2010. There is a clear opportunity here for PATH (Scotland) to assist public authorities achieve the requirements of the Equalities legislation.

The draft Scottish budget for 2010-11 reports a proposed fall in housing and regeneration spending in cash terms from £ 701.4 millions in 2009/10 to £ 448 m in 2010/11. This includes an adjustment arising from the previous acceleration of £ 120 m of affordable housing expenditure from 2010-11 into 2008-09 (£ 40 m) and 2009-10 (£ 80 m) as part of an economic recovery programme.

This has clear implications for the work of PATH (Scotland) not only in terms of core funding but in accessing placement opportunities for trainees. The PATH (Scotland) core budget has been cut by £ 17.500 in 2010/11. The organisation has acknowledged cuts in funding by looking at different ways of accessing funding e.g. the 'Friends of PATH Scheme' has bought in additional income to the organisation. Furthermore the organisation has carried out two redundancy consultation exercises which have resulted in significant savings. The organisation has also reduced office running costs where possible.

The Scottish Government has published a draft Housing Bill. The two main components of the Bill involve a reform of the right to buy (RTB) and a reform of social housing regulation. In addition, the Scottish Government is consulting separately on the possibility of including some private housing measures in the Bill. PATH (Scotland) has produced a response to the Housing Bill focusing mainly on the implications for Equalities in the Bill.

In November 2007 national and local government signed a historic concordat, which committed both to moving towards Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) for all 32 of Scotland's councils and extending these to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs).

The Scottish Government and local government share an ambition to see Scotland's public services working together with private and voluntary sector partners, to improve the quality of life and opportunities in life for people across Scotland. They are agreements between the Scottish Government and CPPs which set out how each will work in the future towards improving outcomes for the local people in a way that reflects local circumstances and priorities, within the context of the Government's National Outcomes and Purpose. In June 2008 PATH (Scotland) carried out research on Community Planning Partnerships and their engagement with ethnicity and disadvantage which highlighted a number of issues for consideration for the Scottish Government, CoSLA and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The research could be utilised for future funding applications.

PATH (Scotland) has collated statistical information on the employment of black and ethnic minority (BME) staff in local authorities and Scottish housing associations. From the information collected we observed that only 1 of 32 local authorities had achieved a representative workforce. We have also collated a breakdown of the ethnicity of registered social landlord staff as per the Annual Statistical Performance Returns for 2006/07. This data gives details for 169 registered social landlords. From the figures only 31 % (52) have at least 1 employee from a BME background leaving 69 % (117) employing no BME staff. In recognition of the very low figures of BME staff in senior management positions PATH has been running a Leadership Programme funded by the Scottish Government.

Of the 31 % (52) of registered social landlords employing BME staff, 55 % (29) have more than 2 % of BME employees. However it should be noted that where an organisation has less than 50 staff, one BME employee is likely to give them a percentage of more than 2 %. Clearly it is extremely important that PATH (Scotland) continue to access significant funding from the Scottish Government and other agencies given the failure of the Housing Sector to

address its obligations under the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and the valuable work carried out by PATH (Scotland).

The Scottish Housing Regulator has also recently published an assessment of the social rented sector as a whole, "Social Landlords in Scotland: Shaping up for Improvement", which is a review of the sector and the challenges it faces. The report cited the need for social landlords to improve their understanding of need across all equalities strands and set targets with local partners to reduce inequalities in staffing and access to services. It also recommended better analysis and use of monitoring information to review progress and plan improvements. All local authorities and registered social landlords were contacted regarding the findings in the report with an offer to assist them in their efforts to reduce inequalities in staffing.

### **Using human rights to think about poverty and mobilise communities**

Human rights see poverty as being multidimensional encompassing not only a low income but also other forms of deprivation and a loss of dignity and respect. Using human rights entails a shift from needs to socially and legally guaranteed entitlements and from charity to duty. Work in the US has shown that human rights have attracted new constituencies to anti-poverty work and helped to build anti-poverty alliances between groups with different class, race, faith, geographical identity, or single issue affiliation. Human rights invite analysis of the structural causes of poverty rather than its symptoms and of the impact of governmental action or inaction on communities experiencing poverty. In France, homeless people mobilized for a right to housing, in Canada people affected by poverty used human rights to draft a citizen's bill for the elimination of poverty.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Report stated that there was little evidence in the UK of communities and their allies using human rights to mobilise against injustice or to articulate their claims in human rights terms with a few striking exceptions.

There are some UK initiatives to use human rights to pursue accountability for instance by strengthening the advocacy capacity of communities experiencing poverty in relation to the budget process. In some contexts human rights have provided a powerful banner under which communities have united around shared injustice, challenging stereotypes of people experiencing poverty as feckless or fraudulent.

Finally some of the recommendations around human rights and poverty work include the following:

- Using human rights to transform the debate about poverty which focuses on socially and legally guaranteed entitlements

- Using the experience of poverty to transform public debate about human rights – challenging perceptions that human rights are limited to civil and political rights or only benefit certain groups
- Developing understanding of and capacity to use human rights in anti-poverty strategies, amongst communities affected by poverty, the public, advice groups and other third sector organisations and those who design and implement public policy
- Communicating the achievements and potential of the Human Rights Act as an anti-poverty tool and taking action aimed at ensuring that the legal process is accessible including through legal aid.
- Developing the use of human rights based budget analysis
- Developing tools to advocate against and monitor public spending cuts to ensure that they do not fall disproportionately on people on low incomes.

## Refugees and Poverty

*John Wilkes, Scottish Refugee Council*

**Asylum seekers and refugees are often excluded from debates about poverty and social exclusion.** In fact we and many others argue that in terms of asylum the UK Government has *adopted rather than tackled* policies of social exclusion, such as removing financial support and access to services to ensure people comply with immigration controls.

Next year is the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the Refugee Convention. It is ever more vital in run up to the UK elections to promote and defend the fundamental human right of asylum. And it is more broadly important for civic society to promote this right across Europe as people seeking asylum become the focus of restrictive policies and practice in EU member states. Welcome inclusion on the agenda.

Our presentation will discuss the poverty issues that people seeking asylum in the UK face as well as those who have gone through the asylum process and been granted refugee status under the Refugee Convention.

The majority of people who flee their country and seek sanctuary in Scotland arrive with few or no possessions and are destitute. Most have had to abandon property and assets, leaving everything behind including family and friends, and often every penny of their or their families' life savings are spent on paying people smugglers to secure their journey out of danger.

**Example** – this week we met a 15 year old boy from Afghanistan who arrived at our offices alone. He had been travelling for 15 months since he left Afghanistan and had no possessions, no money. He didn't even have a warm jacket.

### Asylum

People seeking asylum have no choice but to apply for financial support from the UK Government as they are forbidden to work and support themselves and their families while the UK Border Agency makes an assessment on the claim for asylum. Since the 2000 Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 entered into force asylum seekers have not been eligible to access

any mainstream benefits. In Scotland there are currently 2470 who are receiving financial support and accommodation from the UK Border Agency.

People seeking asylum face specific forms of poverty such as learning to manage on a low and fixed income in a foreign country; loss of status; coping with additional costs such as travelling to reporting centres accessing culturally appropriate food; having limited social support networks; social isolation due to language difficulties and trauma; and having no access to credit.

A key issue in the UK is destitution. The Scottish Refugee Council witnesses every day the suffering and human misery that is brought on asylum seekers when things go wrong in accessing support from the UK Border Agency. We continue to advocate with UKBA on one-to-one basis for clients on systemic changes to ensure that people entitled to support receive the support.

However support itself is at a very low level. In October last year UKBA announced without any consultation that they were reducing support rates. For a single adult, rates were reduced to just 55 % of income support that is £ 35.13 per week. With colleagues in the “Still Human Still Here” campaign we believe that support levels for asylum seekers should, at a minimum, be set at 70 % of income support and should not be less than £ 45 a week for single adults. Westminster MP Dianne Abbot has tabled an early day motion supporting this proposal. Until now very few Scottish MP’s had signed up to it. The UK Home Secretary is currently setting rates for 2010/11 and we hope that he will listen to our lobbying efforts.

Destitution at the end of the process - Section 4 is a form of accommodation and subsistence support given to refused asylum seekers who can show that they are destitute and is, or was initially, meant as a short term mechanism for people about to leave the country. However recent research by Scottish Refugee Council shows that on average people have spent 19 months on Section 4 support with some individuals having spent up to four years. A key issue is that people do not have any access to cash and support is now provided in the form of a debit card (previously vouchers up to Dec 09).

*“I don’t actually belittle what I get... Giving vouchers, Tesco vouchers or Asda vouchers or anything, as I said at the beginning I don’t want to belittle what you get, but as a human being in this country after nine years, you might give me food by vouchers but your life can’t change... you want to cut your hair, either they have to open a barber shop in Asda to cut your hair by voucher.”*

*“I have to go and report to the Home Office once a month and before when I was on crutches I used to start off at 5 in the morning, get there at 12 to report and then get home at 6 in the evening because I have to walk everywhere”*

However there are many people who have been refused asylum and have no access to any support. According to Asylum Support Partnership’s 2<sup>nd</sup> destitution Tally May 2009 – 60 % of all visits across partnership and other agencies were by people refused asylum.

The UK Government’s belief is that by reducing support and access to services they will motivate refused asylum seekers to return to their country of origin. We do not accept this view. Recent research published by the Refugee Council in England looking at understanding why people seeking asylum come to the UK showed that:

*Over two-thirds did not specifically choose to come to the UK to claim asylum. Most of them only discovered they were going to the UK after leaving their home country or even upon arrival. Some people wanted to go to countries other than the UK but were unable to do so.*

*Most people fleeing for their lives were helped to leave by an external party or agent, who made the key decisions about their destination and helped to facilitate the journey to safety.*

*There is no evidence that asylum seekers came to the UK because of access to welfare or work. Three-quarters had no knowledge of welfare benefits and support before coming to the UK and most had no expectation that they would receive support. There is no evidence to suggest that the UK welfare system was considered more generous than elsewhere.*

Many traditional anti-poverty responses are simply ineffective with asylum seekers since the overall policy seeks to reinforce the temporary nature of their status in the UK. Since the treatment of this group is so radically different from that which is experienced by other poorer sections of UK society increasing awareness, promoting civic awareness and direct campaigning is the only viable option to highlight the unfairness, and demand more civilised treatment of asylum seekers within the UK asylum system.

In Scotland approaches have been different. Scotland does not control the immigration or asylum process but does have responsibility over aspects of people’s lives while they are in the system in Scotland – health, education, housing, children. We welcome the approach taken by Government in Scotland of integration from day one, unlike in England, and ensuring that asylum seekers can access essential services such as health, education, legal aid – areas for which they have responsibility. We welcome standing up to human rights issues of asylum seekers to the UK Government, such as children’s rights and right to work.

The Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) of the UK parliament in 2007 described the treatment of asylum seekers by the UK Government as bordering on 'inhumane and degrading treatment'. We also welcome last year's Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) which called on the UK Government to review Section 4 and to stop restricting asylum seekers access to the labour market. The Committee also urged the UK Government to intensify its efforts to combat poverty, fuel poverty, and social exclusion, in particular with regard to the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups and in the most affected regions and city areas.

**To reach these aims the UK government must ensure:**

- Refused asylum seekers should receive support until such time as they are either given status in the UK or they return to their country of origin;
- The UK Government should provide appropriate protection to all of those who need it. This includes all of those who cannot return to their country of origin due to it not being safe for them to do so; and
- The UK Government should grant asylum seekers the right to work after six months if a final decision has not been made on their asylum claim.

**Refugees**

Poverty faced by those refugees who attain some form of leave to remain in the UK is different from that experienced by asylum seekers. Refugees can access mainstream services. But they also face serious and debilitating poverty with families and individuals dealing with fuel poverty, high rents in furnished accommodation, radical changes in circumstances without a corresponding improvement in the ability to gain employment.

Refugees' employability is in turn affected since their skills stagnate for the duration of their asylum claim, also issues surrounding skills recognition and qualifications. We welcome Scottish Government initiative.

Housing – people live in temporary accommodation for long periods and many people use integration loans for private housing deposits.

Family reunion costs – applications are free but there are additional costs such as travel expenditures.

Citizenship for refugees –refugees should not have to pay for citizenship applications.

We need to know more about the poverty experiences of refugees. Our contribution to the 2010 Year of Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion will be to work with the Scottish Poverty Information Unit (SPIU) on a project to improve understanding and knowledge of refugees' views and experiences of poverty and exclusion in Glasgow and to compare findings to what is known about poverty among more mainstream groups. We will seek to launch the findings during the Refugee Week. We will also work with our sister organisations across Europe in pushing for a Common European Asylum System which ensures better treatment of people in the asylum process. Disappointingly the UK Government has decided it will opt-out of the second stage of its development. We will co-operate with civic society to promote and defend the right to asylum.

# **The Role of Informal Training and Education in Anti-Poverty Advocacy Work: Linking Fundamental Rights and Poverty Eradication**

*Robin Tennant and Twimukye Mushaka, Poverty Alliance Scotland*

The Poverty Alliance is a Scottish wide Network of groups, organisations and individuals working together to tackle poverty. Our Vision is of a sustainable Scotland based on social and economic justice, with dignity for all, where poverty and inequalities are not tolerated and are challenged. Our aim is to combat poverty by working with others to empower individuals and communities and to effect change in the distribution of power and resources.

## **Poverty Alliance areas of focus are:**

- Low incomes: Policy influence, campaigns
- Attitudes: Raising awareness of poverty issues and challenging stereotypes
- Services: Ensure that services that people in poverty rely on are defended and protected
- Participation: Community engagement, helping people get their voice heard

## **The role of training and education in anti-poverty advocacy work:**

Learning in its widest sense, including learning through experience, must be democratic, driven by the needs of people experiencing poverty, must empower the learners, and aim to bring about change.

## **Case Study: Evidence Participation Change (EPiC)**

The aim is to ensure that the voices of people who have experience of issues of poverty and smaller community and voluntary organisations, get fed into Scottish anti-poverty policy and responding to the need for greater engagement of communities experiencing poverty.

## **Training Sessions:**

- Development of training sessions to support the active participation of community/voluntary groups and individual activists in engaging with Scottish local and national Government.
- Empowerment of people and communities. Enabling a stronger voice.
- Experience being fed into government policy.

### **Research: Core Programme of participatory research**

- Two pieces, one urban and one rural each with a time frame of one year
- Driven by people experiencing the issues. Will broadly be tied into the anti-poverty framework
- Full training and ongoing support
- Building on existing skills and giving new skills
- Feeding into the dialogue forums so that the evidence goes to the right people

### **Spaces of Dialogue: Stakeholder forum**

- Community and voluntary organisations, individuals with experience of poverty, relevant organisations working on the issues, Scottish local and national Government
- Focus on the 'Achieving our Potential' strategy – devolved issues
- Input of a wider range of 'stakeholders' than normal
- Once yearly event with around 150 people
- Will bring together a wide range of people working on the issue of poverty along with Scottish Government, MSPs from across the parties etc
- Wider discussion on poverty issues in Scotland

### **Participatory Governance:**

- Aiming to build upon previous work carried out by the Poverty Alliance and many other organisations to create more participatory forms of governance in Scotland
- Grassroots experience to feed the continuing development of policies to ensure that they correspond to realities on the ground
- A work in progress – building more democratic societies where those who are not traditionally heard can be supported to engage at government level
- Creating more transparent forms of policy making – informing people on the ground what is happening at government level and informing those who make policies, what is working well and what still needs to be addressed
- Everyone from national and local government to communities and individuals themselves play a role in shaping and driving forward anti-poverty policy

### **Conclusion**

Our work and the Evidence Participation Change (EPiC) aim to join up with all levels, give support for those less heard groups and an opportunity for local and national government to go beyond the 'usual suspects'. It also offers more places for organisations already working on the issues to come together and discuss with local and national government.

### **PART 3:**

## **EFFECTS OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION ON EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP / HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION: REPORTS AND BEST PRACTICES FROM NINE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

### **Social Inclusion Efforts of Local Authorities: Vocational Training Courses of the Local Government of Istanbul**

*Ihsan Ikizer, Leuven University / VORMEN, Belgium*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Social exclusion, a wider concept than poverty, is one of the most pressing social problems. This paper explores a best practice from Istanbul and its potential to be adapted by other European communities.

With the effect of a change in administrative policies especially in Europe, subsidiarity became a basic principle, which requires tackling problems at local level. As a consequence of this understanding, social inclusion, which is the process of including excluded groups into mainstream society, now lies under the responsibility of local authorities in many European cities. In social inclusion, it is commonly accepted that a multidimensional approach is essential for a real lasting solution. In that context, vocational courses appear as an indispensable tool in tackling social exclusion, which especially stems from unemployment. It is also an efficient way of ensuring a social network for excluded people, who usually keep on having social contacts with other trainees. In this paper, the concept of social exclusion and as a tool of tackling this problem, the vocational courses of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, which has been provided for more than 800.000 people since 1994, will be presented.

#### **1. THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

The concept of social exclusion has found a central place in sociology and social policy since it was conceptualized in 1970s. There have been similar concepts for explaining the situation of people who were unable to participate in the customary normal social life, such as poverty, deprivation, inaccessibility, segmentation, fragmentation, marginalization, isolation etc. However, none of these concepts are as 'encompassing' as social exclusion, which is a combina-

tion of different negative factors. In other words, it was realized that the situation of disadvantaged people who remain 'outside the society' cannot be explained only with material deprivation. Today, the concept of social exclusion became the lynchpin of the EU social policy and most of the European countries are combating for eradicating this social problem.

It is agreed that *Les exclus* by René Lenoir in 1974 was a milestone in the emergence of the concept of social exclusion. He employed this concept merely to bring to attention that an expanding economy was unable to include certain groups namely the mentally and physically handicapped, suicidal people, aged invalids, abused children, drug addicts, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons, and other "social misfits". His main concern was based on his prediction that one in ten inhabitants of France was being left aside by the country's economic and social development (Estivill 2003:5; Silver 1994:532). Though it is a short-hand concept, it might be useful to list the areas from which people are excluded: a livelihood; secure, permanent employment; earnings; property, credit, or land; housing; minimal or prevailing consumption levels; education, skills, and cultural capital; the welfare state; citizenship and legal equality; democratic participation; public goods; the nation or the dominant race; family and sociability; humanity, respect, fulfillment and understanding (Silver 1995:63).

The concept of "social exclusion has been developed to explain the situation of a variety of groups that have loose bonds with the rest of the society. Like all other concepts, social exclusion has been defined by numerous scholars through the perspectives they stand on. Even it has been found difficult to define, as it is a vague term related to numerous economic, social, political, and cultural connotations and dimensions" (Silver 1994:535). One of the catch-all definitions adopted by the EU, which has placed the concept at among the priorities of social policy in most of its member states, is as follows:

"Social exclusion is a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education and training opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feel powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives" (European Council 2004).

On the other hand social exclusion was defined as deprivation from the societal participation in the following key activities:

- Consumption activity: being able to consume at least up to some minimum level the goods and services, which are considered normal for the society
- Savings activity: accumulating savings, pension entitlements, or owning property
- Production activity: engaging in an economically or socially valued activity, such as paid work, education or training, retirement if over state pension age, or looking after a family
- Political activity: engaging in some collective effort to improve or protect the immediate or wider social or physical environment
- Social activity: engaging in significant social interaction with family or friends, and identifying with a cultural group or community.” (Burchard et al. 1999)

When we analyse the concept of social exclusion, we come across with five aspects. First, it is multidimensional and implies deprivation in a wide range of indicators of living standards. Usually, this deprivation has a neighbourhood dimension, since it can be caused not only by lack of personal resources but also by insufficient or unsatisfactory community resources. Second, it is dynamic and implies that people are excluded not just because of their current situation, but also because they have little prospect for the future. Within this framework, analysing social exclusion means understanding a process and identifying the factors that can trigger entry into or exit from it. Third, it is a purely relative concept. It implies exclusion from a particular society at a particular point in time (i.e. unlike poverty, we cannot talk about ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ social exclusion). Fourth, it has an agency dimension, in the sense that social exclusion lies beyond the narrow responsibility of the individual concerned. Fifth, its nature is relational, in the sense that it implies a major discontinuity in the relationship of the individual with the rest of society, inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power. (Tsakoglou and Papadopoulos, 2002:211)

The concept, beyond mere descriptions of deprivation, focuses attention on social relations and the processes and institutions that underlie deprivation and exclusion. It has two main defining characteristics. First, it is a multi-dimensional concept. People may be excluded from many areas in economic, social and political spheres as they were listed above and people are often deprived of different things at the same time. In addition, exclusion on a particular dimension (consumption, production, political engagement or social interaction) increases the exclusion on the same dimension in the following year (Burchardt 2000). Secondly, social exclusion implies a focus on the relations and processes that cause deprivation. In other words, it is not an outcome; rather it is a dynamic process. People can be excluded by many different sorts of groups, often at the same time, such as from the labour market, from ex-

pressing their identities, from participation in policy-making etc.<sup>20</sup> Society, in general, might be threatened by social exclusion, with the loss of collective values and the destruction of the social fabric.

Social exclusion is a result of multiple factors, in other words there is no single factor that leads to social exclusion. In most cases, it is seen that exclusion occurs as a result of the combination of more than one factor. To give an example, a well-educated professional might suffer from poverty for a period of time, which may not cause him to fall in the vicious trap of social exclusion, as he might still have a chance to return to the labour market and social networks thanks to his educational background. On the other hand, an unemployed single mother with poor vocational skills might highly probably face social exclusion.

It is generally observed that those who remain outside the circle of labour also remain outside social, economic and cultural networks. In other words, they are excluded from the society mainly for the reason that they lack the necessary income to be included in social and economic circles and they are unable to reach general services such as education, health and public transportation. Although those who are socially excluded are mainly people who have limited or irregular income for a decent life, the disabled, people who have a different ethnic and cultural background from the mainstream society, and marginal groups such as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) might also suffer from social exclusion.

Social exclusion clearly differs from the traditional concept of poverty which is viewed as a static concept, an outcome rather than a dynamic process, mainly concerned with income distribution and defining what constitutes an adequate level of income (Townsend, 1979). In other words, the concept of poverty is restricted to denote a lack of disposable income while the concept of social exclusion refers to a breakdown or malfunctioning of the major societal systems that should guarantee full citizenship. To put forward more simply, poverty is a part of a specific form of social exclusion, which is a broader concept and does not necessarily always encompass an element of poverty (Berghman 1995).

On the other hand, social exclusion is primarily concerned with relational issues and the dynamic processes which lead to the breaking of social ties, as it is suggested to be defined by the Poverty 3 researchers, especially the Irish researchers, in term of the failure of one or more of the following four systems:

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<sup>20</sup> De Haan, A., Social Exclusion: Enriching the Understanding of Deprivation [www.sussex.ac.uk/cspt/documents/issue2-2.pdf](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/cspt/documents/issue2-2.pdf)

- The democratic and legal system, which promotes civic integration
- The labour market, which promotes economic integration
- The welfare state system, promoting what may be called social integration
- The family and community system, which promotes interpersonal integration (Ibid)

## 2. SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social inclusion, which can be defined as the mirror concept of social exclusion, not only refers to equality but also the closing of structural gaps (Vranken et. al 2000). In fact, it is possible to comment social inclusion as exactly opposite to all processes and activities that we used in defining social exclusion. For example, social exclusion occurs when people are unable to use their rights to labour, health, education etc. and social inclusion occurs when people are again able to access to these rights. Similarly, not being able to participate in consumption, saving, production, political, social activities result in exclusion, and enabling people to take part in those activities is social inclusion. And finally, as exclusion is a process, meaning that people are not socially excluded all of a sudden, inclusion also can not be possible overnight. However, deriving from the analogy of “building is more difficult than destroying”, the path to social inclusion is not as smooth as the path to social exclusion.

## 3. SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN ISTANBUL

Before moving to the city of Istanbul, it would be better to see the general context of Turkey with regards to social exclusion. Turkey is the country that has the highest inequality of income distribution (S80/S20 income quintile share ratio) with a rate of 10, which is twice more than the EU average.<sup>21</sup> The number of the unemployed people in Turkey is 3.6 million with a rate of 15 % as of January 2009 (in 2008, 11.6 %) and 22 % of that is long term unemployment.<sup>22</sup> The unemployment rate of the EU-27 was 7 % in 2008.<sup>23</sup> In Turkey, the risk-of-poverty is around 25 %, which is the highest figure in the EU-27. It should be kept in mind that the EU-27 average, as of 2007, is 16 %.<sup>24</sup> In brief, all these statistics give a round picture of the social exclusion in Turkey, as poverty, unemployment and inequality of income distribu-

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<sup>21</sup> Eurostat, Statistics Year Book 2008, statistics in 2005, [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-CD-07-001-04/EN/KS-CD-07-001-04-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CD-07-001-04/EN/KS-CD-07-001-04-EN.PDF)

<sup>22</sup> Office for National Statistics, Turkey, [http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?tb\\_id=25&ust\\_id=8](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?tb_id=25&ust_id=8)

<sup>23</sup> Eurostat, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

<sup>24</sup> Eurostat, <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>

tion are the main features of social exclusion. This picture does also give an idea about the situation in Istanbul, where nearly one fifth of the total population in Turkey lives.

Istanbul is among the European cities that suffer from social exclusion most. It is the city that has the highest gap in income distribution. For example, the gap of household income between the richest and the poorest is estimated to be 322 times (in 2000). The same gap in the entire Turkey is 232 times.<sup>25</sup> Another striking statistics is that in 2007, average household income in the richest quarter in Istanbul was 15 times higher than that in the poorest quarter in Istanbul. The unemployment rate in Istanbul is higher than the average unemployment rate in Turkey. The number of unemployed people in Istanbul is over 450.000 and 37 % of them is long term unemployed people.<sup>26</sup> The administrative system in Istanbul is complicated as the city is governed by both the representative of the central government, who is responsible for health, education, security, justice etc., and an elected mayor who is responsible for infrastructure, transportation, electricity, gas, water etc.

To give some information on Istanbul and to contextualize the social exclusion in this city, it is the most populated city with a population of around 12.5 million.<sup>27</sup> Although it is not the capital of Turkey, it can be named as the commercial, industrial, historical, cultural and educational capital of Turkey. Nearly 43 % of taxes in Turkey are collected in Istanbul and nearly 55 % of the total import and export of Turkey is conducted in this gigantic city. One fourth of universities in Turkey (in Istanbul 29, in Turkey 132) are situated in this city and with its historical and natural assets, it welcomes more than seven million foreign visitors every year, which constitutes one fourth of the total foreign visitors to Turkey.

Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IMM), the umbrella local government in Istanbul, serves together with 39 district municipalities. The mayors of district municipalities are also the members of the Municipal Assembly, which is chaired by the Mayor of Istanbul. In other words, district municipalities serve under the authority of IMM, which spends around 200 million US Dollars annually for efforts which can be said to be targeting social inclusion. The efforts of IMM on social inclusion are on the areas as follows: vocational training courses, centres for the disabled, health centres especially for the women, centres for the elderly, aid in cash and kind, and mass housing for the low-income group.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Sönmez, M., 2001. 10 Boyutuyla 2000 İstanbul'u (Istanbul of 2000 with its ten dimensions), İstanbul Dergisi, 36, 32.

<sup>26</sup> Governorship of İstanbul, Report on Employment, <http://www.istanbul.gov.tr/images/duyurular/2007istihdam.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Office for National Statistics, Turkey, <http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/adnksdagitapp/adnks.zul>

<sup>28</sup> IMM Strategical Report 2007, <http://www.sp.gov.tr/documents/planlar/IstanbulBuyuksehirSP20072011.pdf>

#### 4. VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSES IN ISTANBUL

Vocational training courses in Istanbul were opened under the name of ISMEK (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Art and Vocational Training Courses) in 1996. There was no antecedent of these courses in Istanbul and similar courses were opened on the same year in Ankara, which was also ruled by the same-party member mayor, under the name of BELMEK. In Istanbul, there are 39 district municipalities under the umbrella of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and there are vocational courses in some of these districts, available only for their residents.

At the time when ISMEK was first opened in 1996, there were only three vocational courses in Istanbul. In the training period of 2008-2009, nearly 230.000 trainees were attending 123 different courses in 218 centres, which are scattered all around Istanbul, especially slum areas. The number of trainees increased each year and between 1996 and 2009, the total number of trainees has reached around 810.000. All the courses in ISMEK are free of charge and all people who are over the age of 16 can apply to the courses without any additional requirements. ISMEK training branches are determined according to the requests from trainees. The main categories and the number of branches under them are as follows:

- a. Vocational and Technical Training: 41
- b. Handicrafts: 35
- c. Turkish and Islamic Arts: 7
- d. Information Technologies: 4
- e. Languages: 3
- f. Music: 22
- g. Sports: 3
- h. Social and Cultural: 9

As it is seen, ISMEK does not only provide vocational and technical training but courses in many areas ranging from music to language learning. For example, music is one of the branches attracting a great deal of attention in ISMEK. In 22 different branches ranging from Turkish Artistic Music to piano, courses are provided. On the other hand, in more than 40 centres, in 3 branches (aerobics, step and fitness), sport training courses are given. So, residents in Istanbul have a chance to do sport in these centres under the guidance of coaches.

Not all the courses taught at these centres aim at equipping the trainees with vocations. In fact, nearly one third of these courses aim at equipping the trainees with vocations that might allow them to participate in the labour market, although the categories except music, sport,

social and cultural can contribute to the participation of the trainees in labour market. The targeted groups by ISMEK are listed as follows:

- Those who have not acquired vocational courses
- Those who wish to advance in their acquired vocations
- Adults who wish to acquire a new hobby and skill
- Those who need rehabilitation due to some reasons
- Groups that have difficulty in adaptation to the city
- Those who wish to make new friendships and enlarge their social network
- Groups that need support such as prisoners and residents of houses for the elderly <sup>29</sup>

Although there is no direct reference to the concept of social inclusion in these targeted groups, it is sure that, implicitly, these courses also aim at reaching socially excluded groups. It is a fact that those who are outside the labour market are more probably exposed to social exclusion, and professional skills are required to enter into the labour market. These courses provide people with vocations, which allow them to be a candidate for the labour market. As a consequence, they can break the chains of social exclusion. Secondly, people might suffer from social exclusion due to their ethnic background or identity. In ISMEK courses, people coming from different backgrounds have a chance to form social contacts with each other, which in turns serves for social inclusion and cohesion.

There are no strict conditions for enrolling in these courses. All the residents in Istanbul who completed obligatory primary education are eligible to be an ISMEK trainee. So the bottom age limit to be able to attend ISMEK courses is 16 and there is no top age limit. Each year, the courses begin in October and the training period ends in June. Within the frame of the curriculum prepared by Ministry of National Education, the course period ranges from 3.5 months to 10 months. Additionally in some branches there are perfection courses that continue for the next period. All courses are completely free and everyone can benefit from the trainings according to the application priority.

The successful trainees completing the credits of the branch receive Course Graduation Certificates approved by the Ministry of National Education and these certificates are valid in every part of Turkey. Moreover, for some branches, ISMEK starts to issue certificates that are valid abroad in collaboration with the foreign institutions having international accreditation.

ISMEK serves trainings in various branches so as to rehabilitate the elderly people living in two nursing Houses in Istanbul. ISMEK also provides trainings for the prisoners in seven dif-

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<sup>29</sup> Official web site of ISMEK, <http://ismek.ibb.gov.tr/portal/kurumsal.asp>  
Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Art and Vocational Training Courses, Report on ISMEK, 2009

ferent jails and detention houses, in collaboration with Ministry of Justice so that they can contribute to the production, acquire a profession and adapt to normal life after being released. ISMEK provides various training services for the disabled citizens of society so that they acquire a profession, enhance their self-confidence, adapt social life more easily and have social networks. ISMEK has always provided training opportunities to the disabled trainees together with other trainees. Three course centres only serve the disabled people right now and these training programs include specific programs. It is possible to call these centres as a kind of rehabilitation centres.

ISMEK has centres for the direct sale of handicrafts of the trainees and the webpage of the institution is also used for online sale, which is a financial contribution to trainees. Another project implemented by ISMEK is 'application centres' where the trainees of ISMEK course centres are employed with an applied exam. The selected trainees who undergo an advanced level of training for a year find the opportunity to participate in the business life by improving their knowledge and ability according to the expectations of real economy. The trainees at these centres prepare the orders received from various individuals and institutions. Finally, ISMEK organises symposiums, panels, conferences and competitions to further develop the efficiency of these courses.<sup>30</sup>

When we look at the statistics about 18.800 trainees in ISMEK, for the term 2003-2004, we see that 93.7 % of trainees were women. 27 % of trainees are aged between 25-34; 25 % aged between 20-24 and 17 % aged under 19. However, it is interesting that the percentage of trainees aged over 55 is only 2.5. The lack of interest towards these courses by people aged over 55 is an issue that requires to be carefully analysed. On the other hand, in terms of the educational situation, it is observed that most of the trainees are graduates of high school (a total education of 11 or 12 years). For the age group of 45 and over, most trainees are graduates of primary school. In all age groups, house-wives constitute the majority with a percentage of between 70 and 80. Interestingly enough in all age groups only less than 3 % of the trainees are unemployed, which signals that either these courses are not well known among unemployed people or they do not believe in its contribution to finding a job.

Finally, we see in table 1, the distribution of trainees according to their sex and reasons for enrolment.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Statistics was taken from the unpublished PhD thesis by Arif Tepe, Istanbul, 2007

Table 1: Distribution of trainees according to their sex and reasons for enrolment, 2003-2004

Reasons for enrolment in ISMEK courses	MEN		WOMEN	
	Frequency	%	frequency	%
To make use of free time	319	25.2	7,685	37.4
Acquiring an occupation	430	33.9	6,786	33
To advance his/her expertise	430	36.3	4,416	21.5
To contribute to family budget	58	4.6	1,672	8.1
Total	1.267	100	20,559	100

## CONCLUSION

Although we do not have exact statistics to measure the effect of ISMEK in the social inclusion, it may not be difficult to state that it is an influential tool in tackling social exclusion in Istanbul. Without looking at other aspects, the fact that more than 800.000 people have taken ISMEK courses since 1994, might be accepted as a success of local government of Istanbul. These courses are effective tools in terms of giving trainees an opportunity to have more social contacts and acquire professional skills to become a candidate for the labour market. It is also beneficial in terms of social cohesion and adaptation of people to the city life when we consider that more than 70 % of trainees are house-wives. In brief, it is safe to say that these courses make a considerable contribution to the social inclusion and cohesion in Istanbul.

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## **Tackling Social Exclusion Promoting Active Participation of Young People from Southern Italy: VIS - Non-Formal 'School' of Global Education**

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### **Social and regional context**

With approximately 62 million inhabitants, Italy is the sixth most populous country in Europe. The highest density is in Northern Italy, as that one-third of the country contains almost half of the total population. The regions of Southern Italy (Campania, Calabria, Basilicata, Puglia and Sicilia) are the most underdeveloped areas of the country. Emigration, including brain drain, from these regions has been a continuous trend throughout the entire post-war period. The level of education is very low and education represents, for many young people, the road to greater independence.

In this area a significant proportion of young people from the most underprivileged social categories leave school and start to work at a very early age with the risk of social exclusion and the danger of drifting into organised crime. As a result, young people are discouraged and excluded from the society. This situation, in fact, gives rise to the vicious circle of exclusion liable to lead also to chronic social exclusion.<sup>32</sup> Social exclusion of young people who live in this area affects their ability to participate actively in their community in both the present and the future.

The participation of young people in this area is mostly restricted to the old socio-cultural values such as contribution to the economy and the protection of the family. This limited perspective does not promote young people's contribution for a real human development. In this sense, young people's participation has to be recognized and valued, supporting them in the building of new opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes of the society.

The project ***Tackling Social Exclusion promoting active participation of young people from Southern Italy: VIS Non-Formal "School" of Global Education***, implemented by VIS (Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo), was born from the conviction that the root causes of exclusion and the main factors that contribute to exclude young people must be tackled. It aims at establishing pathways to give young people more opportunities to learn and participate in their communities.

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<sup>32</sup> Jobert A., Marry C., Tanguy L., Rainbirig H., *Education and work in Great Britain, Germany and Italy*, Routledge International Studies in the Philosophy of Education

### **VIS (Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo)**

In 1986 VIS – Volontariato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo, a non-profit and Non-Government Organisation (NGO) of solidarity – began to operate as an educational agency, promoted by the National Institution of Salesians CNOS. VIS, as a lay organisation, collaborates independently with the Salesian Congregation in Italy and in developing countries, thanks to the inspiration of Don Bosco's preventive system and Salesian educational praxis.<sup>33</sup> VIS is in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). At international level, VIS develops its advocacy activities in partnership with networks of national and international NGOs. One of the most important NGO networks of which VIS is an active member is Don Bosco Network (DBN) a worldwide federation of Salesian development NGOs whose vision, mission and actions are based on the values and principles expressed by the Salesian tradition of solidarity with the poor.

VIS works in the field of international co-operation to promote human and sustainable development and human rights of vulnerable groups, targeting especially children, adolescents, young people and women at risk of social exclusion, through comprehensive actions of education, vocational training, social reintegration and training of trainers. Strictly committed to its mission, VIS operates through a double-pronged approach both in developing countries (international co-operation programmes) and in Italy and Europe (awareness raising, training, advocacy and lobbying programmes). The human and sustainable development actions led by VIS aim at enlarging the capabilities of vulnerable groups, through the promotion of quality education and training, the dissemination of a preventive culture of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the promotion of equal gender opportunities and the improvement of living conditions in the most needy sub-urban and rural areas in developing countries, tackling the root-causes of extreme human poverty.

VIS operates mainly in the sector of education and training, for the promotion and protection of children's and adolescents' rights, for the creation of a strong base for children's meaningful participation at local and regional levels with the aim of contributing to empower children to play leading roles in their own development and in the development of their communities.

As an educational NGO, VIS is committed to mainstreaming human rights education and the training of trainers, through the exchange of good practices and the promotion of international

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<sup>33</sup> The **Salesians of Don Bosco** (or the **Salesian Society**, originally known as the **Society of St. Francis de Sales**) is a Roman Catholic religious order founded in the late nineteenth century by Saint John Bosco in an attempt, through works of charity, to care for the young and poor children of the industrial revolution. The Salesians' charter describes the society's mission as "the Christian perfection of its associates obtained by the exercise of spiritual and corporal works of charity towards the young, especially the poor, and the education of boys to the priesthood". (Wikipedia)

and regional meetings aiming to enhance the capabilities of European and international civil society organisations acting in that fields and to promote human rights young defenders. The projects lead by VIS address the themes of global citizenship since they aim at developing a full active and responsible citizenship more open to the world, promoting the strengthening of the civil society through the development of local processes where young volunteers and organisations of the civil society meet and put into operation the approaches and methodologies to youth work and voluntary sector developed human rights participatory education. VIS promotes intercultural dialogue as an important element to mainstream a culture of human rights and organises the annual “Global Education Week”, a training path aimed at deepening a topical issue every year. VIS promotes the International Voluntary Service, sending expatriated volunteers abroad for co-operation in the implementation of projects. As a member of the Italian Working Group for the CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child – VIS participated in the elaboration of the second Supplementary Report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Italy.<sup>34</sup>

### **VIS Committee of Southern Italy**

VIS is rooted in the Italian territory thanks to its six committees, to supporters and volunteers who aim at implementing activities for and with young people. In particular, the objective of the VIS Committee for Southern Italy is to implement non-formal education activities on the themes of human rights, intercultural dialogue and European citizenship for young people (target group 18-25 years) from four Italian Regions: Campania, Basilicata, Puglia and Calabria. The activities are addressed to young people with fewer opportunities from across the regions of Southern Italy. The training gives participants the opportunity to develop their understanding of globalization and global citizenship and the skills to address global issues with young people. Participants also undertake a critical analysis of their own personal links to the wider world. Resource packs are provided to each participant, enabling them to promote global youth work practice within their own settings.

The Committee promotes national and international Youth Voluntary Service Exchanges with other countries (Albania, Kosovo, Madagascar) and in the most marginalized areas of Southern Italy (in particular in the cities of Naples, Foggia and Locri) with the aim of promoting a culture of solidarity and mutual aid through the possibility to enable young people to work for the promotion of human development, offering the same opportunities to everyone and respecting the value of each culture.

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<sup>34</sup> [www.volint.it](http://www.volint.it)

### **Brief Description of the Project**

The project *“Tackling Social Exclusion promoting active participation of young people from Southern Italy: VIS Non-Formal “School” of Global Education”* endorses the wider objective of strengthening local young people and backing their contribution to the democratic process by promoting active participation and individual and social commitment of young people from the regions of Southern Italy in the construction of the economic, social, political and cultural development of the society. The “School of Global Education”, a non-formal “School”, addresses young people (target group 18-25 years) from different background and settings by offering them not only the opportunity to strengthen their skills, values and attitudes to combat against the chronic human poverty and social exclusion that characterize the target area, but also giving them the possibility to become active agents of their development through the use of peer to peer methodology.

In some cases the project represents probably one of the last opportunities young people with fewer opportunities have to develop participation experience, skills, competencies and attitudes. As agents of change, young people are encouraged to work together by participating in advocacy and awareness creation on the global issues and are invited to create various networking, consultative and management structures that ensure youth participation is achieved.

The project aims at raising young peoples’ awareness of the main principles of human rights to recognize the equality between all human beings, in the respect of mutual differences and in close relationship to their daily life and to the international context. Young people are invited to discuss and confront on the themes of human rights and active participation, development of the area in which they live and work.

The “School” generally starts on September with an online preparation phase, alternating at 8-10 face-to-face meetings of 2 days each, on themes related to human rights to stimulate the analysis of the reality and the assumption of a personal and social commitment.

This project is part of a broad long-term overarching strategy of promoting active participation and voluntary service as tools of engaging people in tackling development challenges, in the conviction that voluntary service helps young people to strengthen their skills, knowledge and attitudes for the construction of a better world. For this reason, at the end of the “School” young people are invited to do a Voluntary Service Exchange both in the most marginalized areas of Southern Italy (in particular Naples, Foggia and Locri) and abroad (Albania, Kosovo and Madagascar) in collaboration with local Salesian partners that work in these areas.

**Youth Voluntary Service Exchanges** provides a valuable non-formal learning experience, which enables young people to acquire skills and values to fostering active citizenship. These activities promote inclusion and facilitate intercultural dialogue by forging links between individuals and helping to transcend national identity. Voluntary Service, in fact, as universal and inclusive, mainly strengthens capacities for empowerment, accountability and networking of youth leaders and those responsible of youth organisations, duty bearers and rights holders acting in Southern Italy in the formal and informal educational settings.

The participatory approach which characterizes the project determines a multiplier effect in order to facilitate democratisation and the development of individuals and communities.

The innovative approach of the project consists of inviting young people to motivate and teach other young people, in order to create a multiplier effect that involves not only young people who take part actively in the “School” but also, for example, children from the schools or the youth clubs with whom young participants work in their daily life. Using the peer-to-peer methodology young participants, in fact, are invited to transfer the knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired during the “School” to their peers.

Under the motto “think global, act local!”, the project also provides young participants opportunities to take part actively in the presentation of proposals for local development, in order to invite them to act as agents of change at local level, keeping in mind the main international issues. This concern is in particular aimed at stimulating young people's reflection on the prevention, ways out, and consequences of poverty, projects tackling the issue of marginalisation and various forms of discrimination, such as those based on gender, disability, or ethnic, religious, linguistic, or migrant grounds.

One of the biggest successes, in these years, was that young participants felt motivated to act in their local context: for example, some local youth groups organised Italian courses for immigrants at local level in collaboration with other institutions and organisations to promote their fundamental rights. Moreover, young participants took part actively in the elaboration of a programme to implement human rights education in the schools at regional level, involving more than 500 their peers.

### **Overall aim**

The overall aim of the project is to contribute to empower young people to play leading roles in their own development and in the development of their communities, fighting social exclusion and creating a strong base for their meaningful participation at local and regional levels.

Through being able to know and encounter others, they have the possibility to overcome their prejudices and stereotypes to discover common hopes for their present and their future.

### **Specific aims**

- **To involve** young people in finding solutions to emerging human rights problems in their communities
- **To stimulate** the empowerment of young people in order to invite them to play a constructive role in the development of human rights in their communities
- **To encourage** projects aimed at raising young people's awareness of everyone's responsibility in tackling poverty and marginalization as well as promoting the inclusion of groups with fewer opportunities
- **To develop** double-pronged integrated actions to enlarge the capacities of young people at risk of social exclusion in participating actively, freely and meaningfully
- **To strengthen** capacities for empowerment, accountability and networking of rights holders and duty-bearers in formal and informal education settings
- **To develop** skills and competences of young people in working with human rights education at local level
- **To promote** peer to peer education in order to enable young people to act as trainers or facilitators of human rights education activities based on non-formal learning approaches
- **To empower** young people in order to strengthen their competences to fight against social exclusion
- **To motivate** participants to advocate for human rights education
- **To enable** young people using information and communication technology as a part of their own learning
- **To provide** a non-formal space in which young people can learn to work in co-operation with others
- **To promote** peer to peer education as a tool of empowering young people

### **Beneficiaries**

- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Young people (target group 18-25 years) from different backgrounds and settings of the regions of Southern Italy
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** Young peoples' educational providers and informal learning associations (oratories, sport centres and theatres); regional partners and associated child-led and participatory associations and organisations; formal and informal groups and of youth leaders and organisations of the civil society in the target area; at least 500 young people

from the Schools and other settings involved indirect in peer to peer activities implemented by young participants

### **Outcomes**

- Since September 2005, when the first non formal “School” of Global Education started to work, at least 150 young people from the target area at risk of social exclusion were trained
- At least 50 youth leaders, teachers, formal and informal educators took part in the non-formal “School” during the years
- At least 500 young people from the Schools and other settings were trained by the participants, acting as facilitators and educators for their peers.
- An online course for multipliers (approximately 50 hours of learning) was implemented to deepen the main topics developed during the face-to-face meetings
- Several local youth initiatives and actions took place as a result of the training path
- The leaders and members of the child-led organisations and associations working in the area in the field of protection and promotion of the rights of the child were involved in the project. Civil society plays an important role as a partner in tackling social exclusion, and ought to be systematically considered throughout all stages, including policy makers
- Use of child-friendly language to broaden awareness on the different themes
- Educational kits composed by thematic factsheets

### **Methodology**

The project promotes **peer to peer education**, as a tool of dialogue between equals. During the face-to-face meetings, young people are invited to share information with each other, acting as facilitators of discussions. In the project, participatory activities used in peer education are games, art competitions and role-plays. Through this methodology, young participants acquired the potential to influence their peers in positive ways, to become aware of the basic communication skills required to be a peer educator and support and help their peers in managing conflicts and difficult situations.

The use of the sustainable potential of the networking tools and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based dissemination strategy aims at enhancing young people’s participation both in the project implementation and in the international network itself, con-

necting young people and allowing them to widen their perspectives and develop an active world citizenship.

In some cases, participants used the online course and the forum to share information about their projects and work as well as to discuss about relevant topics in their work and daily life, in relation to human rights and human rights education.

The project is based on **experiential learning** approaches developing critical thinking through different steps and levels of learning:

1. The first is an understanding of one's own rights, duties and underpinned values;
2. the second is personal reflection, interiorizing those values and rights;
3. the third is learning to put them into practice and learning to defend one's rights and those of others.

Another important step is the **translation of the theory in the reality and daily lives** of the participants through, for example, field visits and youth voluntary service exchanges.

The “School” provides also the contributions of experts in the field of human rights to give the participants the opportunity of gaining skills and knowledge of human rights issues.

The single meetings are developed in different cities of the regions of the South of Italy to give young people with fewer economic opportunities the possibility to take part. Moreover, this year the “School” integrated also an online course aiming to prepare the participants for the themes developed during the face-to-face meetings.

Young people are asked to take part actively in the design of the project, in particular in the planning and development of the education tools (online course, educational guide for multipliers, etc). Several participants of the previous year of the “School” contribute to the development of the content of every following version.

Young people participate also in the implementation of the project: youth leaders of past years facilitate single courses of the “School” using non-formal education methodologies they have acquired during their initial training in the “School”. In this way, the participants can have a concrete example of the positive result of the “School”.

Generally, the face-to-face meetings are facilitated by a team of experienced trainers and youth leaders of past years. They also have the task to support participants in their follow-up (projects, learning) and to foster networking between participants.

The participation is free of charge.

**Other activities implemented:**

- Multimedia activities: participants developed webpages, blogs, videos, photographs in order to spread the knowledge and the information acquired during the “School”.
- Music activities: Participants are asked to write songs on the themes developed during the “School”.

**Strong Points**

The project offers several added value elements:

- It endorses an innovative human rights based programming (HRBP). Operationalizing HR guiding principles<sup>35</sup> offer additional and unique elements in assessment and analysis, programme planning and design (setting of goals, objectives and strategies); implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- It endorses a capacity development strategy: all the activities aim at building rights holders and duty bearers capacities.
- It promotes participatory human rights education and non violent conflicts management and can contribute to boost democratic values and attitudes and citizenship competencies to prevent human rights violations and reduce the risk of violence. This is an added value in an area with a high level of social exclusion.

**Weak Points**

- Logistical difficulties due to the geographical dislocation and the difficulty in finding the youth and maintaining a constant level of interaction over time
- In the online course, some participants face difficulties with the use of ICT

**Programme of Non-Formal “School” of Global Education 2009- 2010**

**Title:** Promoting active participation through human rights education

**Methodology:** ten face-to-face meetings of two days each; four thematic online paths; field visits during each meeting (Centre for young people with fewer opportunities; organisations

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<sup>35</sup> PANEL: Participation, Accountability, Non discrimination and inclusion, promotion and protection of the most marginalized, Empowerment, Linkages to human rights standards, including gender mainstreaming, indivisibility and interdependence, progressive realisation and non-retrogression

that work for the protection of human rights and, in particular, children rights; e.g.); working groups; Round Tables with experts

**Educational tools used:** Manual “Fundamental, Universal, Inviolable, Indivisible: tools for a participatory education to and for human rights”, by Carola Carazzone (VIS – Human Rights Officer Coordinator) and Francesca Lange, edited by LAS –Roma, 2009

### Format of face-to-face Course Programme

The “School” is divided into eight face-to-face meetings dealing with different topics related to human rights:

DATE	TOPIC	PLACE
10 - 11 OCTOBER 2009	The long march of Human Rights: to promote the indivisibility and the interdependence of all Human Rights	BARI
14 - 15 NOVEMBER	Promote Children’s and Adolescent’s Rights	TORRE ANNUNZIATA (Napoli)
12 - 13 DECEMBER	Promote the tolerance: Say “NO!” to discrimination, racism and intolerance	BRINDISI
16 – 17 JANUARY (NAPOLI VOMERO)	To promote and protect Human Rights: Being a Human Rights Defender	NAPOLI
10 -11 APRIL	Educating to and for Human Rights	LECCE
5 - 6 JUNE	Design a project on Human Rights Education	POTENZA

### Format of online Course Programme

Topic “Human Rights and...”	Date
1. ... Education	February 2010 – March 2010
2. ... Environment	March 2010 – April 2010
3. ... Communication	April 2010 – May 2010
4. ... Cooperation to development	May 2010 – June 2010

## **Case Study Slovenia: The CoE Compass on Human Rights Education and the Roma Minority**

*Alenka Elena Begant, EIP Slovenia*

### **Abstract**

The Roma minority is present in Slovenia and artificially divided into “autochthon” and “non-autochthon”. So called “non-autochthon” Roma in southern Slovenia are facing greater social difficulties and human rights violations also because of their illegal status, traditional way of life and romaphobia of the majority population.

EIP Slovenia developed in 2006 a special HRE programme to identify and train Roma HRE trainers. In cooperation with local NGOs and Roma helpers in compulsory education a partial translation of Council of Europe’s HRE manual COMPASS was made and used for HRE workshops and empowerment on grassroots level. The main target groups were young Roma and their mothers. The manual is available for free on EIP Slovenia’s website. While the international Roma community showed appreciation for the project’s achievements the local Roma organisations delivered no response.

### **The official status of the Roma minority in Slovenia**

There are some 3.200 members of the Roma minority in Slovenia officially, but all research shows the real number is somewhere over 10.000. The majority lives in north-eastern and southern parts of Slovenia. As mentioned above there is a unique division of the Roma minority practiced in Slovenia. Namely, they are divided into “autochthon” and “non-autochthon” Roma and according to their status, related to the municipality they live in, they have or have not certain political and social rights (for example a Roma delegate in city council, access to employment programs etc.).

Most Roma in Slovenia still live in communities, isolated from the majority of inhabitants or at outskirts of bigger towns, and their housing standard is usually much lower than average. The data from 2002 general survey shows that 39 % of the Roma live in their own houses, but more than half of them are built illegally; only 12 % live in flats and 49 % in barracks, trailers and other not permanent units. Only 2 % of Roma people in Slovenia are employed, 98 % live

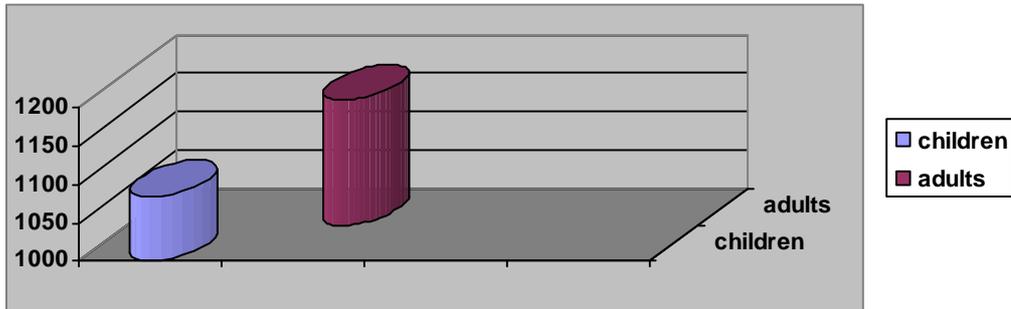
from social transfers or are busy within the black market. 1.668 Roma children are visiting primary and secondary schools. In 2004 The Educational Strategy for Roma Children was adopted by the Ministry of education and since then no separate Roma classes are present. The trend of the state in the last ten years was to increasingly organise the Roma minority and therefore 23 Roma organisations have been established on territorial basis. They are networked by Slovenian Roma Union Association which is considered an official partner to the state in decision making processes. In 2007 a Roma Community Act was passed in parliament and since then some improvements have been made. The minority has been given the opportunity to make their own programme on national radio in Roma language (two hours weekly) and official policy tends towards the empowerment of Roma members and informing the majority population on Roma situation, life and culture. The National Roma Strategy 2010-2015 is now being drafted.

### **The real picture – NGO experience**

The Roma minority in Northeastern Slovenia bordering Hungary gained the status of the “autochthon” minority and mostly managed to integrate well with the majority population with some smaller problems, while Roma in bigger cities and especially in south Slovenia face many difficulties, deriving both from their status and unwillingness of the majority population to accept them as well as from their own traditions and lifestyle.

Roma in south Slovenia, Dolenjska region, mostly migrated to Slovenia in the last 60 years from former Yugoslav republics – a lot of them during the Balkan conflicts. A majority of them does not have the Slovenian citizenship and is therefore deprived of most of the citizens’ rights. They mostly live on social transfers as they are unemployed and without formal education. The basic problem is that Roma families are still practicing their traditional way of life, so women are by the rule not sent to schools. As young mothers they do not know enough Slovenian to teach their children, that is why children are in an unequal position regarding the majority of children when entering primary school. They are also often taken out of school by their parents for longer periods. The result is a low educational status and an inability to get a well paid job or continue education on post-secondary level.

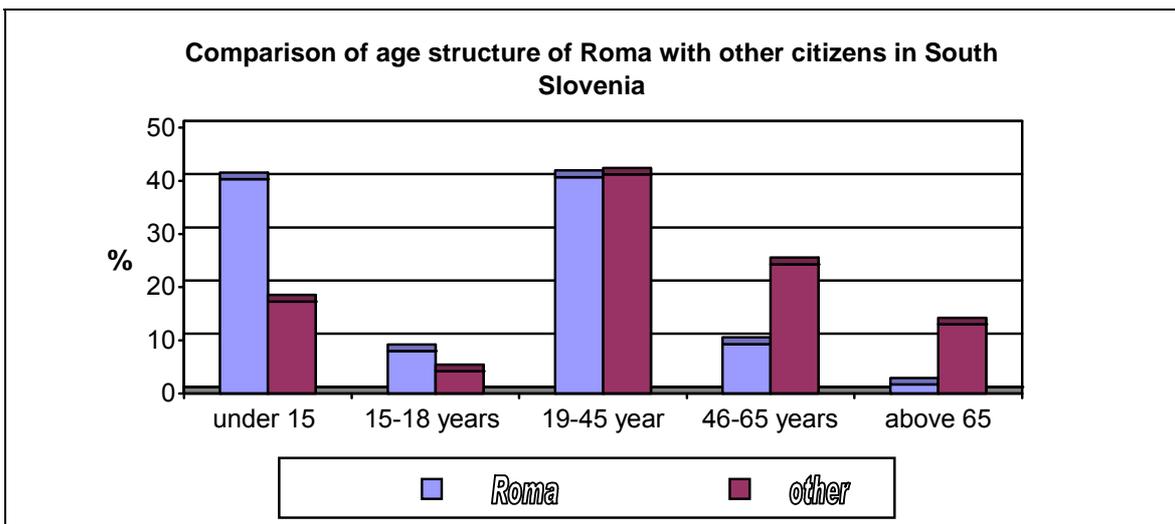
**Roma population in South Slovenia - age groups**



The majority population in that region is extremely hostile towards Roma and romaphobia escalates every year in open protests. There were even public fights between the police, protecting Roma, and local inhabitants wanting to lynch them. The latest example was when local people in one of the villages protested in front of the graveyard because they did not want to allow the burial of a Roma women in “their” place.

Five years ago the situation in schools started changing after a scandal when one of the primary schools segregated and humiliated Roma children. Roma helpers were introduced in classrooms. First it was difficult to employ them as the law sets a condition that Roma helpers should have a University degree and speak Romani language fluently, but by now two talented and courageous Roma students managed to get the degree and were employed.

**Comparison of age structure of Roma with other citizens in South Slovenia**



### **Challenge – how to bring HRE to the most needing ones: Roma children and women?**

EIP Slovenia – School for Peace has been developing a national HRE training of trainers and teachers since 2003 and every year we managed to train NGO activists, political youth leaders, youth workers and teachers on HRE using COMPASS manual as our main tool. In 2006 we wanted to train members of different national and ethnic minorities and we were quite satisfied with the results, but not entirely. As our long-term training courses are done mostly on-line and are quite demanding, we failed to attract representatives of the Roma minority.

Therefore we decided to develop a HRE project for them. As it would be impossible to just enter their settlements in south Slovenia and “select” future trainers and disseminators we used a different strategy. We started a cooperation with a regional NGO for volunteers in Novo mesto and located Roma students of post-secondary schools that were interested in volunteer work and activism. Additionally we got some useful hints from Amnesty International Slovenia that also was already active in the area.

Our idea was to enter primary schools with adapted HRE workshops for children in Romani language, conducted by young Roma students (peer-education) with the assistance of our skilled HRE trainers. The second aim was to invite parents of these children to schools to be “guests” of our workshops. In that way trainers from our partner NGO got in touch with Roma women/mothers and soon they were able to visit them and their children in Roma settlements and to organise short empowerment workshops and discussions on the importance of knowing and respecting human rights.

### **Building bridges – HRE material in Romani language**

The idea of translating COMPASS manual into Romani language was from the beginning seen as too demanding for EIP Slovenia. There were two major obstacles: firstly the manual has over 300 pages and secondly, Romani language is very limited in vocabulary.

After some consultation with activists on the grassroots level we decided to go for a partial translation. The choice of which parts to translate was purely functional: what could serve best in HRE with young people and women?

We decided for a theoretical part on understanding human rights (what are human rights, where do they derive from, key concepts and values), the simplified version of the Universal declaration of human rights (UDHR) and three workshops. The workshops are focusing on:

- children's rights,
- women's rights,
- social rights,
- discrimination,
- poverty,
- citizenship,
- media and
- general human rights.

We selected the following workshops:

- Take a step forward
- Act it out
- Picture games

because they are all suitable for beginners and could be performed in all environments – classrooms, backyards etc. (modest requirements).

For the format we decided that it would be best to have it available in e-version. So we put it on our website for free download in pdf form: <http://www.eip-ass.si/Publikacije.htm>. We are distributing it also on CDs to interested activists.

Translation was a challenge on its own. As we wanted to use up-to-date Romani language, comprehensive to our target groups, it was difficult to find a skilled translator. Finally we managed to contract a young Roma activist who later became so interested in Roma rights that she is now the first woman appointed as a Roma councilor in the municipality council of Novo mesto.

### **Evaluation of project results**

When evaluating our project on HRE with the Roma minority in south Slovenia I have to say that we achieved our goals. Young people and especially their mothers were informed on some basic HR concepts and empowered to use them in daily life. Some individuals are already taking advantage of this empowerment (the case of the female Roma councilor).

The response from Roma organisations was interesting: In Slovenia no-one responded on our messages and Roma COMPASS manual while internationally three bigger European Roma organisations sent congratulations and encouraging mails. We speculate that Slovenian local Roma organisations, established by the state department for minorities, are working only on paper as they are actually not showing any real interest in their members' empowerment. It might also be the case that they do not consider HRE important enough.

On grassroots level activists from our partner NGO in Novo mesto are continuing HRE work using the manual and developing new HRE materials for children at local primary and secondary schools, also with the support of the new Roma helpers. They did over 15 workshops and reached more than 100 individuals.

### **Conclusion**

The project was an interesting challenge. We have learnt a lot and are hoping the interested young Roma activists will continue to work among their own people. The Roma question has many sides and turns; many steps have to be made by the state, while prejudices and stereotypes will have to be overcome in people's heads. Roma themselves are playing the key role in this process, and giving them human rights knowledge and skills will most certainly help towards the improvement of their current status.

### **Sources:**

- EIP Slovenia <http://www.eip-ass.si/>
- COMPASS manual for HRE with young people <http://www.eycb.coe.int/compass/>
- Roma Council of Slovenia <http://www.inv.si/romsvet/default.html>
- Slovenian Roma Association <http://www.zveza-romov.si/index,2,0.html>
- Report on Roma Minority in Republic of Slovenia  
[http://www.uvn.gov.si/fileadmin/uvn.gov.si/pageup-loads/pdf\\_datoteke/Raziskava\\_Polozaj\\_in\\_status\\_pripadnikov\\_narodov\\_nekdanje\\_Jugoslavije\\_v\\_RS.pdf](http://www.uvn.gov.si/fileadmin/uvn.gov.si/pageup-loads/pdf_datoteke/Raziskava_Polozaj_in_status_pripadnikov_narodov_nekdanje_Jugoslavije_v_RS.pdf)
- Slovenian Department for Minorities <http://www.uvn.gov.si/>

### **Note on the author:**

Alenka Elena Begant is a full time teacher, HRE trainer and activist, translator and author of numerous expert papers and manuals on HRE, project director and since 2000 president of the NGO EIP Slovenia – School for Peace.

## **The UNESCO Study on Shared Values Among Young People in Estonia: Effects on Civic Education**

**(UNESCO 2008-2009 participation program project - 4641900004 ENA: "Enhancement of awareness about diversity of cultures and provision of equal opportunities for obtaining social and learning skills in international cooperation")**

*Sulev Valdmaa, Jan Tõnisson Institute, Estonia*

The level of shared values within a society has a strong impact on social inclusion or exclusion of certain groups. Concepts of civic education working towards social inclusion have to take this into account. The UNESCO study on shared values among young people in Estonia offers basic data for civic education initiatives targeting both the Estonian citizens and the significant Russian minority in the country.

Some Background Information on Estonia:

- Population: 1,3 million
- Parliamentary democracy
- Member of European Union since 2004
- GDP per capita: \$23,200 (2008)
- Ethnic groups: Estonians 68.6%, Russians 24.9%

Leading questions of the study:

- understanding of the multicultural nature of the society
- willingness/readiness to communicate with different people
- definition of elements of „quality of life“
- comprehension about each human being's equality/equal position regarding to laws
- understanding about democracy – democratic values from the personal perspective of respondents
- understanding about the elements of active participation

Who participated in the study?

- students - 16, 17 and 18 years old
- total number of those questioned was 260
- 142 students were from schools with instruction in Estonian

- 118 students were from schools with instruction in Russian
- 164 students were from towns
- 96 students were from countryside

The international research project financed by the UNESCO for specification of value estimates of young people was started in Tallinn on January 8-9, 2009, where representatives of five countries met - Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and the USA. The project partners agreed on the specified content, format, target groups, and timelines of the study and the roles of all participating bodies.

The study was focussed on the young people's value orientations and comprehension of democracy and multicultural society of young people in five countries. A questionnaire of 15 questions was compiled. The fields of the questionnaire reflect the respondents' awareness and comprehension of basic values in a democratic society.

The questionnaire was analysed and elaborated by specialists at Purdue University in the USA and at Aarhus University in Denmark before its implementation.

### **The results of the study by the fields researched**

1. Young people's awareness of a multicultural society, their attitude to multicultural structure of the society

The respondents were asked to mark on the five point scale (many - some - few - none – do not know), how they perceive the structure of Estonian society by specification of diverse social groups (people who speak different languages at home, people with special needs, people belonging to a different race or ethnicity, people with a different sexual orientation, people belonging to some religion) and their existence in Estonia.

Considering statistical data and student's answers estimating the structure of society, the students from Estonian medium schools have a more adequate comprehension of the social situation than students from Russian medium schools. A more detailed analysis could clarify what Estonian students actually meant by "different home languages" and by "belonging to a different race or ethnicity" as their answers showed that there are more people speaking different home languages than those belonging to a different race or ethnic group.

When taking the question how multicultural Estonian society is, the students from both Estonian and Russian medium schools gave similar answers, most often “quite” and “not very”. Still considering all answers, Estonian students consider Estonian society at large more multicultural, as 8% of them said “very” whereas the corresponding number of students from Russian medium schools was 3%; the corresponding numbers of respondents saying “not at all” were 3% and 10%, respectively.

## 2. Young people’s readiness and openness for communication with representatives of different social groups.

The respondents were asked about their wish and readiness to communicate with people of the above-mentioned groups (people who speak different languages at home, people with special needs, people belonging to a different race or ethnicity, people with a different sexual orientation, people belonging to some religion).

Making an attempt to summarise the results collected we may tentatively conclude that students from Estonia medium schools are somewhat more willing to communicate with people of diverse social groups than students from Russian medium schools. However, among students of both school types there are many of those who cannot decide or take any position.

The following question was dedicated to having friends among people belonging to diverse social groups. The structure of answers provided by students from both school types were quite similar to the answers given to the previous question with quite different percentages. In comparison to the previous question, the researchers had broadened the circle of friends and two new groups had been added - “people much older or younger than you” and “people who can spend considerably more or less money than you can”.

When trying to compare students’ answers to both questions – whom they would like to cooperate and who to make friends with, then the analysis of all the answers gives suggests that neither students of Estonian medium nor Russian medium schools have no clear preferences. It is hardly possible that 70% of students from Estonian medium schools and 69% of students from Russian medium schools could have religious friends. When estimating the proportions of different social groups in society, the numbers characterising the amount of religious people were quite small. When only a couple of per cent of students from Russian medium schools thought that there were some people with different sexual orientation in our society, then only some, but still 6% of students from Russian medium schools claimed to

have friends from that social group. We also encountered some similar discrepancies when analysing the proportions of the existing social groups, possible joint actions to be taken and having friends from among people representing different social groups.

When the answers analysed above mostly reflect personal values and attitudes, then the open question - why is it good to accept diversity - allows us to get some insights into what they have acquired at school in different subject lessons. The answers of students from both school types were practically identical considering their content and meaning with the following positive arguments favouring diversity presented:

- diversity and individual differences make life more interesting,
- people cannot avoid being different from others to a certain extent,
- ability to accept diversity helps to avoid conflicts in society,
- the right to be different belongs to basic human rights.

All arguments of that kind speak about awareness how important and necessary cohesion in society is. It is essential to accept the fact that 6% of students of Estonian medium schools did not answer the question why it is good to accept differences; the corresponding number in Russian medium schools was 21%. Some respondents from Russian medium schools also had answered “no” or “don’t know”.

### 3. Comprehension of a democratic society and a good quality of life in it.

The respondents were asked in the questionnaire to evaluate, how much they are concerned about future employment, access to education, use of natural resources, treated justly and equally under the law, access to the Internet, allowing and accepting immigrants/newcomers in the country, being accepted and respected by other people. The scale offered the following possibilities for evaluation: a lot, somewhat, a bit, not at all.

Among questions characterising a good quality of life there was also quite a complicated one: What makes a good living in the multicultural society? There was a list (health, coffee, education, friends, jobs, social skills, family, luck, money, pets) of which they had to leave or delete and add what was missing. The respondents had to decide what was the meaning of values in a multicultural society and any society and that made the question complicated. At the same time they had to decide what definitely must belong to a good life and what they could do without.

Decisions taken by students of Estonian and Russian medium schools about deleting some

of the words were similar: they excluded unanimously coffee and pets from the list, but quite many considered also health and money unnecessary. The words added to the list were can be clearly classified by target groups. Students from Estonian medium schools often added words like tolerance, food, safety, social guarantees, honesty, love, freedom, access to arts and culture to characterise good life. The list of added items by students from Russian medium schools was different. They were of the opinion that patriotism, equality, multitude of opportunities, life without discrimination also belong to characteristics of a good life. They also added safety and love similar to students from Estonian medium schools.

#### 4. Young people's comprehension of equality and equal rights of people in society.

The students were asked, if the rights of the following people should be better protected than now. The same social groups were listed that were represented in the questions about the structure of a multicultural society: people who speak different languages at home, people with special needs, people belonging to a different race or ethnicity, people with a different sexual orientation, people belonging to some religion.

It was possible to answer with "yes", "no" and "don't know". All respondents generally agreed that the rights of all the mentioned groups should probably be more protected. The opinions of students from students of Russian medium schools were considerably more radical.

#### 5. Young people's comprehension of a democratic society perceived as individually accepted values.

The young people had to decide about a tricky question: What values are most important for you personally when living in a democratic society? They had to select the top five from among enlisted twelve and rank them according to their personal priority esteems. The listed values were the following: being included/respected/accepted; money and material values, safety, legal equality, honesty and friendship, fairness, privacy, freedom of expression, respect consensus, personal responsibility, loyalty to your state and loyalty to your friends. The students from Estonian medium schools selected least the four last mentioned. They considered safety and security most important (17% of all respondents), fairness (16%) and legal equality (15%). More than 10% also valued freedom of expression, honesty and friendship. All the other values listed were not considered less important for living in a democratic society.

To characterise students' awareness in the same field of social competence, the respondents were also asked to name three most essential characteristics of democracy. The students of Estonian medium schools named most often freedom of expression, thought and self expression as well as equality, human rights, participation in policy making and elections and privacy.

The answers of students from Russian medium schools were similar. They also highlighted freedom of expression, but also freedom of action and freedom of choice. Similar to students from Estonian medium schools they also mentioned free elections and equality under law.

#### 6. Young people's evaluation of different factors influencing development of their values and social skills.

For answering the question: Where do you get your values from? there was the following list: family, friends, the Internet, mass media (TV, newspapers, magazines, radio), learning at school, experience from the "street community", religion. Both target groups highlighted family and friends as greatest factors. The least mentioned was religion. Other factors gained different support.

In order to allow students to specify the role of school more precisely, there was the question: If you have some of those skills, mark, how much has the school contributed to. Students from Estonian medium schools chose of the enlisted twelve skills the following top three: cooperation skills, communication skills and specifying your own capabilities. The school's role was considered insignificant at promoting computer skills, skills for asking for help and conflict resolution skills.

The students of Russian medium schools considered the role of school greatest at developing cooperation skills, negotiation skills and skills for specification of one's own capabilities. They considered school experience skills for celebrating success and somebody's achievement, conflict solving skills and skills for asking for help.

#### 7. Young people's comprehension of active participation in social life.

Young people's awareness of possibilities and importance of participation in social life were studied by an open question: Would you like something to be changed in society? They had to name three most essential things that need to be changed. The opportunities for offering

change were practically unlimited. At the same time it turned out to be the question that got least answers. 20% of students from Estonian medium schools and 28% of students from Russian medium schools chose not to respond at all. The ideas offered were usually more different than similar considering the two target groups.

The students from Estonian medium schools offered usually ideas for changing something at schools and in education in general, starting from the changes in the system of education and ending up with ideas about particular school subjects (not to decrease the number of lessons for the mother tongue). They also expressed the wish that our society should be more open, that more attention should be paid to nature protection, that there were more social guarantees and that people could enjoy being equally treated. They also highlighted the need for better integration of society and combat crime in society. They also wanted to see fair policy making and tolerance.

The students of Russian medium schools also think we should have a more open society, increase tolerance and mutual respect. The use of drugs and alcohol should be decreased. Contrary to opinions expressed by the students from Estonian medium schools, there was a great amount of students of Russian medium schools who considered everything perfect in our society and there was no need for changes.

## **Conclusion**

All data have to be summarised for the international project to characterise values of young people in Estonia. It is rather difficult as data offered by students from Estonian medium and Russian medium schools differ greatly.

The views differ greatest in regard to multiculturalism in Estonian society, to life in Estonia in general and to young people's own individual position in society. We can observe the discomfort of students from Russian medium schools as well as them feeling insecure when living in Estonia. At the same time they show that they are well aware of their situation and also have a vision for living in Estonia in future. When students from Estonian medium schools consider the present situation natural and feel protected by guarantees – their concerns are smaller, their views and expectations have a more collective approach, then the students from Russian medium schools perceive dangers and limitations and their expectations are of a more individualistic character.

In the field of active participation we can learn about future wishes of young people, their visions and social ideals. If these visions of students from Estonian and Russian medium schools are vastly different, it also shows how difficult it is to reach any consensus even in our small society.

We may also tentatively conclude that the unused potential of schooling and education in general could be one of the reasons for insufficient knowledge and underdeveloped social skills of the young people.

# Education, Health Issues and Social Exclusion: Legal Consulting for Persons with Drug Abuse Problems. A Case Study

*Erika Matuzaitė, Center for Civic Initiatives, Lithuania*

## 1. Overview of drug users situation in Lithuania

### Drug users in Lithuania

The injecting drug users (IDU) are a very latent group of the society: According to official data<sup>36</sup> there are 3200 in Lithuania (the total population in Lithuania is ~3 millions). According to unofficial estimations the number is up to ten times bigger and reaches up to 32 000.

The IDU are one of the most problematic groups of the society, because of a potential spread of infectious diseases, e.g. HIV, Hepatitis B and C (round 70 % of all HIV infected got the virus through injecting drug use<sup>37</sup>) and drug related crime (IDU need up to 100 euros per day for their dose. Most often they get this money by stealing, providing sex services, etc.)

The IDU are also one of the most socially excluded groups of the society: Most of them are jobless, do not have social insurance and therefore their access to public health care and other services is very limited. They constantly face stigma and discrimination: According to the tolerance research<sup>38</sup> (2005) Lithuanian are most intolerant towards injecting drug users (more than 47 % don't want to live in neighborhood with IDU).

Social inclusion/integration of IDU would contribute significantly to the society's safety (reduction of criminal related crime), health (prevention of the spread of infectious diseases) and economy (integration in the labour market).

### IDU human rights violations

#### In the field of social and health care:

- Low access to social and health care services: Low coverage of threshold services (e.g. methadone and buprenorphine treatment in 2009 was available for 17,5 % of IDU). Not enough public funded rehabilitation services (one month in a private rehabilitation centre costs about 350 euros). Lack of other social and health care services.

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<sup>36</sup> Estimation of the Prevalence of Problem Drug Use in Lithuania", Dr. Gordon Hay, Centre for Drug Misuse Research University of Glasgow, United Kingdom, 2008

<sup>37</sup> Lithuanian AIDS centre

<sup>38</sup> The tolerance research conducted by the Coalition I Can Live in cooperation with National Health board in 2005.

- The quality of social and health care services: Discrimination and harassment from social and health care specialists. Violations of patients' rights (mainly right to privacy) Existing legal acts limit the access to social and health care services – mandatory registry of drug users

**In the field of law enforcement:**

- Human rights violations during the detention (illegal detention, discriminative, insulting and violent behavior of police officers) and during trial (right to fair trial, right to defense, right to consultations)

**Other human rights violations and problems that face IDU:**

- Discrimination from the employers (impossible to get a job)
- Bailiffs - many IDU have public liabilities but due to poor/bad financial situation can not return the debt. According to the legal acts there are alternative ways to eliminate the debt but bailiffs are not interested in those alternative options.

**Very often IDU are not able to solve their problems and to protect their rights properly because** they lack knowledge about human rights and skills to protect them and money to appeal for legal assistance. Due to stigma and discrimination it is hard to find allies and to “prove the true”. It is difficult to represent and protect their interests because of their health state (drug dependency is a heavy disease that affects the brains).

**Main questions:**

- How to help them to stop human rights violations and to improve their situation?
- Which HRE means and tools to choose – looking for the most suitable HRE means and tools.

**2. Presentation of the project “Legal services to drug users”**

**General information**

- Implementer: a Coalition of non-governmental organisations and experts “I can Live”
- Financial support: Open Society Institute (USA)
- Duration: 2006 October – 2010 March
- Implementation area: Vilnius city, Ignalina district (Lithuania)

**Goal of the project**

To provide legal assistance to drug users in exercising their rights by rendering regular legal consultations, legal education and engaging in advocacy activities.

### **Objectives of the project**

- Select, train and provide ongoing technical support for a student-lawyer who will provide legal consultations to drug users
- Prepare lectures on legal, job, health care e.g. for IDU relevant issues
- Provide drug users with ongoing legal consultations at the Vilnius Center for Addictive Disorders and at the *Meikstu Dvaras* rehabilitation center in Ignalina district
- Prepare a set of legal document templates for the easy-use of drug users and to make them available during consultations and online
- Prepare educational material for IDU on relevant legal issues
- Involve a professional lawyer in informational and advocacy activities around legal issues drug users face

### **Activities and main results**

#### **Legal consultations :**

- Place – Vilnius Center for Addictive Disorders, the *Meikstu Dvaras* rehabilitation community in Ignalina district
- Time – once a week at fixed time in Vilnius (5-7 p.m.), and quarterly in rehabilitation community
- Consultations are conducted individually in a private room
- The clients are also able to get the legal advice over the telephone or e-mail
- Informational announcements are spread regularly in the community of drug users and their relatives to attract clients (from mouth to mouth)
- About 100 drug users made use of the consultations in the period of 2009 – 2010

#### **Prevalent topics:**

- bailiff problems and their rights and responsibilities in exaction procedures
- problems in getting medical aid (unwillingness to admit a patient for treatment)
- administrative fines
- police officers behavior during the pre-trial process

### **Preparation of certain templates of typical documents**

A set of documents templates (applications, request, complaints, appeals, etc.) that reflect the most common legal need of drug users were developed. The templates were used during consultations and posted online for easy access.

Certain templates of typical documents help the clients to address legal authorities in a more legally-literate fashion. Previous practice has shown that such documents are regarded more seriously and helped reach more favorable decisions by authorities.

**Preparation and publishing of the brochure “Legal information for drug users”:**

The brochure was distributed to drug users during the consultations and through other channels. An E-version of the brochure was placed on the website of the “I Can Live”-Coalition.

**Preparation of extensive list of frequently asked legal questions and answers:**

The list was published on the website of the “I Can Live”-Coalition and spread through other channels accessible to drug users and other vulnerable groups of the population.

**Involvement of a professional lawyer in informational and advocacy activities around legal issues drug users face:**

The lawyer has spoken on Coalition’s behalf during various public statements, seminars, to media on the legal/human rights issues that drug users face.

**Advantages of the project**

- Purposeful education of IDU through consultations and other means (informational material)
- Real help to IDU through lawyer services
- Good access to target audience (beneficial location of project activities) and good opportunity for IDU to get integrated assistance
- Good opportunity to reveal existing legal act gaps and to take steps/advocate for policy changes

## **Without Protection on the Street – Mask Theatre with Homeless People: Method Training on Theatre Work with Vulnerable People**

*Angelika Heinich, Director EuropaHaus Aurich, Germany*

This method training is a result of a 2004 EU Socrates Project “EUMeth” (114087-CP-1-2004-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-G1) which explored different strategies for socially excluded groups in Europe to access adult education.

### **Workshop report**

At the beginning the workshop leader Angelika Heinich introduced herself and her experiences in the cultural work with disadvantaged groups. As an educated actress she worked six years in professional theatres in Germany, before she was instructed to be a drama teacher. Afterwards she worked as a drama teacher at the professional theatre “Landesbühne Niedersachsen Nord” in Wilhelmshaven for ten years. In this time she guided several theatre groups: three with old people (oldest player was 98 years old), several with children (youngest child was 3 years old), with handicapped people, blind people, with teachers and educators .... Since nearly six years now she works in the Europahaus Aurich, an institution for political youth- and adult education in Ostfriesland, Northern Germany.

During this time she already performed two cultural projects with homeless people, one international, one national. The first project was part of the big EU-project “EuMeth” (Europe with method) and was aimed to develop methods to bring social excluded and underprivileged people in contact with topics of the European Union. Over two years Angelika Heinich developed a street theatre with homeless people from the Netherlands, Germany and the Czech Republic. The project culminated when they went on tour for eight days from Groningen over Berlin to Prague.

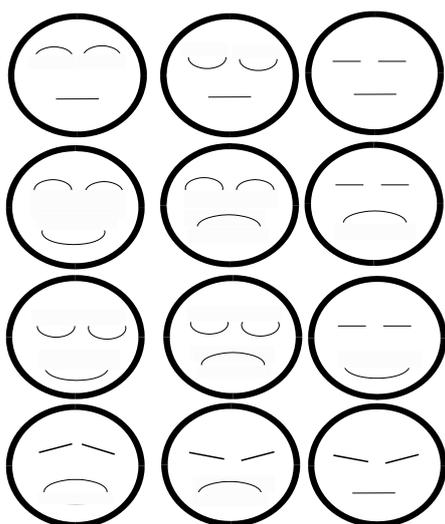
The second project with the aim to bring homeless people into a dialogue with the society was called “Without protection on the street? – mask theatre with homeless people”. It started and ended in 2009. About twenty homeless people discussed about physiognomie, created several facial expressions first on paper, than at their faces, before they started to build up masks from paper, plaster bandage and papier mâché. After a period of rehearsals the group played several theatrical performances at the street and in buildings. These experiences were the topic and starting point of the workshop.

After her own introduction Angelika Heinich asked her international participants to tell about their own experiences with the target group of social excluded people and their expectations to the workshop.

At the very beginning of a project is the **point of financing**. So Angelika Heinich told of the funding of the project “Without protection on the street – mask theatre with homeless people”. The funding included a mixture of financial sources, because with this target group you cannot expect any admission of the participants. The project was financed by the “Fonds Sozio-kultur” (a socio-cultural funds), the “Kulturförderung der ostfriesischen Landschaft” (a cultural promotion of the region) and the “VGH Versicherungen”, an assurance company.

The second point is to get in contact with the **target group**. Angelika Heinich used the network of the “Diakonisches Werk”, a division of the Protestant Church in Germany. They offer houses where the homeless people can meet, drink coffee, have a shower, wash their clothes and get their money. So the social pedagogues know the people well and can make a first contact.

During the practical part of the workshop a lot of questions of the participants were discussed. They talked about the specific methods of working with this special target group. The participants of the workshop first discussed about the **physiognomie of the human face** and the possibilities of changing like in those smiley-faces in the picture below.





### **Mugshot**

Each participant was asked to change the facial expression of a mugshot. This method allows also people with nearly no cultural experiences to create something, which is very important in the work with homeless people. They have to have quick results and the feeling of success.

The next step was to build up their own masks only from a slice of paper, a pair of scissors, some markers and elastic band. The workshop leader showed the technique in short steps and the participants created their own masks with very different facial expressions. They were happy and proud of the quick success.



After a short discussion about the facial expressions of the masks the participants were asked to try out some exercises of the theatre-pedagogic work. At first they should walk through the room without their masks, but all together at the same time. (This is very important for beginners, so that they don't feel watched, like on stage). Then the workshop leader named a certain emotion and the players should empathise this feeling. After about ten different emotions (it is important to end this exercise always with a positive feeling like "being lucky"), the participants met again in a big circle and talked about their experiences. The

workshop leader should consider that there is no “wrong” experience. Every emotion is true and personally. But he or she should ask about the different ways of expression. The participants were asked to describe what changed in their body when they expressed a new feeling.

To complete this exercise the participants took their masks again and tried to give them an expression in their own body language depending on the facial expressions of the masks. They presented their masks with the position they found and discussed the results all together. This is the starting point to create a mask theatre scene.

At the end of this two hours workshop the participants reported that they especially enjoyed the very practical approach and methods of the workshop and the exchange in the group. And they believe that they can really use the results in their daily work with people from the street and other socially excluded groups at home.

# Education for Diversity: Religious Diversity and an Anti-Discrimination Handbook

*Tsvetoslav Nikolov, Partners Bulgaria Foundation*

1. Education for diversity and anti-discrimination
2. CEJI (a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe) and partner organisations
3. Religious diversity and anti-discrimination training and handbook
4. Partners Bulgaria Foundation's participation in the project

## 1. Education for diversity and anti-discrimination

Issues related to religious diversity are becoming increasingly important in European societies. Not only is Europe getting more religiously diverse, thus providing a rich opportunity for inter-cultural understanding, but it is also an undeniable aspect in many modern-day conflicts in intercultural relations. It is important to respect the development of individual religious identities and to confront prejudice and discrimination based on religious differences. Living in a multi-ethnic and diverse society provides a great opportunity for mutual understanding, but as Europe becomes more religiously diverse conflicts in intercultural relations also appear.

The Partners Bulgaria team actively participates in educational initiatives which promote tolerance and embrace diversity. As a part of a consortium led by CEJI (A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe) and supported by the European Commission Lifelong Learning Programme, Partners Bulgaria has been engaged in the development of a new training programme for adult educators to address issues of religious diversity and anti-discrimination. **This project gives adult educators a possibility to work with participants who have different religious affiliations and to focus on transformation of religious differences from an obstacle to an opportunity.** The programme does not provide an interfaith dialogue but rather promotes anti-prejudice diversity education and the development of intercultural skills.

The Religious Diversity and Anti-Discrimination project developed and managed a new training programme to address diversity and discrimination issues around religion. The programme includes subject-specific modules on anti-Semitism and discrimination, and is de-

signed to help enhancing adult education in areas where information about religious diversity and discrimination is needed.

The Religious Diversity and Anti-Discrimination training programme has been supported by the Grundtvig Programme of the European Commission and the Ford Foundation. The European Commission awarded its Gold Prize for Adult Education to CEJI and the project partnership for the Religious Diversity and Anti-Discrimination Training programme. Recognising this groundbreaking work on religious diversity and intercultural education in Europe, the prize is a part of the European Awards for Lifelong Learning.

## **2. CEJI (a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe) and partner organisations**

CEJI and six partner organisations developed the training programme for adult educators to address issues of religious diversity and anti-discrimination, bringing a topic that has generally belonged only to religious leaders to the realm of adult educators – transforming religious differences from an obstacle to an opportunity. The partners in this project are from six European countries: Belgium, United Kingdom, Germany, Denmark, France and Bulgaria.

The leading organisation in this project is *CEJI* – an international non-profit organisation established in 1991. CEJI aims with individuals and organisations of all religions, cultures and backgrounds to promote a diverse and inclusive Europe. CEJI works to combat prejudice and discrimination and to support social cohesion through training, education, dialogue and advocacy. [www.ceji.org](http://www.ceji.org)

Project partners are:

- *The Multi-Faith Centre* based at the University of Derby; [www.multifaithcentre.org](http://www.multifaithcentre.org);
- *The Scarman Trust*; [www.thescarmantrust.org](http://www.thescarmantrust.org)
- *The Institute for International Co-operation of the German Adult Education Association*, based in Bonn; [www.iiz-dvv.de](http://www.iiz-dvv.de);
- *Partners Bulgaria Foundation* based in Sofia; [www.partnersbg.org](http://www.partnersbg.org);
- *The Islamic-Christian Study Center* in Copenhagen; [www.ikstudiecenter.dk](http://www.ikstudiecenter.dk);
- *La Ligue de L'Enseignement of Calvados* based in Caen; [www.fol14.asso.fr](http://www.fol14.asso.fr);

## **3. Religious diversity and anti-discrimination training and handbook**

Open to people of all shapes of religious and non-religious belonging, the training module on Religious Diversity and Anti-Discrimination aims to address the religious diversity and discrimination issues that are becoming increasingly pertinent in European society. Using highly

interactive and participatory methods that have proven effective in dealing with general prejudice and discrimination, it seeks to provide adult educators with tools for situations where religious diversity and discrimination are a concern.

By looking first at religious identity, participants can reflect on their own beliefs, and can come to recognize the wide range of spiritual diversity between and within the numerous religious traditions. Followed by an exchange of views and experiences, participants can increase their cultural awareness and sensitivity of others. Awareness is an important step towards action, so the training module strives to develop strategies and motivation for participants' to be actively involved in the creation of inclusive, diverse societies.

The specific objectives of the training are to:

- Raise participants consciousness of the uniqueness of each individual's religious identity.
- Facilitate dialogue and sharing of experiences in the area of religion and culture.
- Increase participants understanding of the concepts and issues related to religious diversity.
- Enable participants to recognize contemporary manifestations of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination related to religion, with specific training activities on anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.
- Develop an appreciation for the complexity and richness of religious diversity.
- Develop individual skills and institutional strategies for creating inclusive intercultural environments.

This module is designed for mature youth or adults. It works best with a group of 12–18 participants, to allow for quality discussions. The intended target groups for this training are:

- Adult educators who could benefit by having: 1) increased awareness and capacities for working with religiously diverse groups; and 2) pedagogical tools for increasing the awareness and capacities of the adults with whom they work.
- Community associations engaged in adult education who could benefit by having: 1) concrete programmes that they can offer to improve intercultural relations; and 2) a religiously diverse partnership of organisations committed to the shared value of religious diversity.
- People who experience religious discrimination and/or intercultural tensions with a religious dimension who could benefit by having: 1) increased awareness of the issues involved in religious discrimination, 2) new language and skills for confronting religious discrimination and engaging in positive intercultural relations; and 3) deeper appreciation of a multi-religious society.

This module is not designed as a form of interfaith dialogue. It is designed in the spirit of anti-prejudice diversity education: to recognize and respect multicultural diversity, to confront prejudice and discrimination, and to develop intercultural skills.

The pedagogical process of this module is consistent with the anti-prejudice diversity education programmes created by the Anti-Defamation League A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE Institute, a model that has been successfully implemented in schools, youth organisations and public authorities in several countries throughout Europe. This model is also based upon significant research in the field of prejudice reduction that cites the following as key skills to develop in the prevention and unlearning of prejudice and discriminatory behaviors: empathy, self-esteem, critical thinking, co-operative learning, high expectations, diverse environments, and social action. This project proposes to adapt the diversity approach to religious issues, following a sequence of pedagogical concepts:

*The Religious Diversity and Anti-discrimination handbook* developed by the consortium partners contains a variety of useful cultural information. Adult educators who participate in the training modules enjoy the variety of pedagogical tools for use in their own local educational and community contexts. In this handbook:

- Highly inter-active and participatory methods are used that have proven effective in dealing with general prejudice and discrimination.
- Adult educators are provided with tools for situations where religious diversity and discrimination are a concern.

#### **4. Partners Bulgaria Foundation's participation in the project**

Being an expert in social action, conflict resolution and change management models Partners Bulgaria contributed to the design of the training module with interactive and solution focused activities, building on "recepies for happy ending" drawn from successfully resolved multicultural conflicts all over Europe.

Partners Bulgaria trainers have conducted the training programme for people of different faiths, beliefs and senses of religious or non-religious belonging. Participants are adult educators working in a variety of formal and non-formal learning environments where issues related to diversity of religions and beliefs are a concern. A complete pedagogical handbook will be provided to support the learning process of individuals and groups.

## The Young Muslim Leadership Network Project

*Naqeeb Ahmed and Tony Breslin, Citizenship Foundation, Young Muslim Leadership Network Project, UK*

### About the Citizenship Foundation

The Citizenship Foundation is a leading source of expertise, training and advice on citizenship education and a key player in the debate on citizenship education, providing cutting-edge thinking to Government, policy makers and schools. It is experienced in delivering programmes in schools and communities based around curriculum development, resources, participation and social action.

The independent education and participation charity is strategically partnered with the statutory bodies, government departments, charitable trusts and private companies, especially in the law and finance sectors and delivered an extensive international programme with partners such as the British Council and the Council of Europe.

We are currently celebrating our 21st anniversary year.

**Our strategic objectives** are better citizenship education, effective participation and stronger communities. These objectives are delivered through programmes and projects, publications, consultancy and training as well as lobbying and seeking to inform policy.

### Our areas of concern are:

- Low levels of political participation and community engagement and a clear “participation gap”.
- A growing divergence between ‘civil’ society and ‘civic’ politics.
- An increasingly closed and ‘professional’ political class.
- A lack of knowledge about politics, law and economics.
- Prevailing social exclusion, persistent poverty and the absence of cohesion.
- The apparently relentless march of individualism and an associated preference for consumption over citizenship.
- Building identity, belonging and governance in a globalising world.

### **Inclusion-first and Citizenship-rich**

- Policies that rebalance 'achievement' and 'inclusion'.
- Approaches that broaden the conceptions of 'success' and 'participation'.
- Initiatives that reconnect the 'civil' and 'civic' spheres.
- Interventions that seek to create engaged and critical citizens rather than disengaged consumers.
- Strategies that champion these principles.

**Current Projects are:** Education for Citizenship in all its guises; Youth Community Action initiatives in various forms; Youth Act; Interact; The Youth of Today; Young Muslim Leadership Network (YMLN).

**The Young Muslim Leadership Network (YMLN)** supports and empowers a group of young Muslim men and women (16-21) to investigate a range of issues relating to Muslim alienation through research and interrogation of expert witnesses. These witnesses are people in positions of authority or influence in mainstream society, including politicians, lawyers, police officers, journalists and educators. The group members will identify issues they particularly want to address. They will communicate their findings and views to their peers and to others via a range of media like the internet or a video documentary.

### **Context: British Muslims**

1.5 million Muslims reside in the UK. A large proportion of Muslims in the UK are from the Asian sub-continent (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh). According to the 2001 census the Muslim population is amongst the poorest ethnic minorities in the UK and has the highest numbers of people who never had an occupation or are long-term unemployed, who have no qualifications and the lowest levels of female economic participation rates compared to any other ethnic minority in the UK. British Muslims have the lowest percentage of all ethnic minorities in higher managerial professions and the highest percentage of persons looking after the home.

### **Background**

After the terrorists attacks in New York in 2001 (9/11) and London in 2005 Britain discovers that many suspected terrorists are 'home grown', often from poverty stricken neighbourhoods.

British government responds to the terrorists attacks by launching the 'Prevent' strategy. 'Prevent' is an initiative aimed at strengthening communities through educational strategies. YMLN is funded through the 'Prevent' strategy.

**Progress to date and next steps**

Three groups (two in London and one in Birmingham) made up of 40 young people (16-21) have been established. The groups meet on a monthly basis since October 2009. With coordination and support from the Citizenship Foundation, the groups are facilitated by experts from Muslim Youth Helpline, British Muslims for Secular Democracy and Young Muslim Advisory Group. Further group meetings in which young people will develop their ideas are scheduled and peer-led resources and dissemination will be produced.

# **Developing a Voice for the Non-Formal Adult Education Sector – A Case Study of the AONTAS Community Education Network**

*Niamh O`Reilly, AONTAS Ireland*

## **Summary**

This presentation gave an overview of the AONTAS community education network. It shared the experience of setting up a network that is dedicated to raising the profile and recognition of, and ensuring resources for, community education. Community education was described in terms of its many definitions and how united agreement is needed in order to create a strong and effective network that works towards a common vision. The evolution of the network was outlined, in terms of its inception, development and growth over 2.5 years.

The initial phase focused on creating a work plan, agreeing a definition of community education and creating a harmonious and inclusive network that benefits from academic inputs to facilitate critical reflection. The role of advocacy and lobbying in the second year was highlighted in terms of the projects undertaken, including lobbying training, research to provide evidence for lobbying work and the creation of manifestoes. The start of the third year focused on the consolidation of the work achieved and looked to developing a network that maintains an ethos congruent with community education and focuses on its long-term objective which is also capable of short-term actions as required.

One outcome of the network was the creation of a set of television programmes entitled 'Beyond the Classroom' that describes the theory, practice and outcomes of community education. A short clip of the practice focused programmes was shown to end the presentation in order to view community education in action.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Community Education**

Defining community education is not a straightforward task. In Ireland, two definitions exist within the Governmental White Paper; on the one hand community education is viewed as an extension of the service provided by second and third-level education institutions into the wider community. Equally, it is also viewed as a process of communal education towards empowerment, both at an individual and a collective level...it is as an interactive, challenging process, not only in terms of its content but also in terms of its methodologies and decision

making processes.<sup>39</sup> In terms of creating a Network agreement on a definition of community education was essential to ensure a cohesive, focused and united group. Following extensive discussion and consultation the Community Education Network definition of community education is:

*“Community education is a process of personal and community transformation, empowerment, challenge, social change and collective responsiveness. It is community-led reflecting and valuing the lived experiences of individuals and their community. Through its ethos and holistic approach community education builds the capacity of groups to engage in developing a social teaching and learning process that is creative, participative and needs-based. Community education is grounded on principles of justice, equality and inclusiveness. It differs from general adult education provision due to its political and radical methodologies.”*

Community education can be considered non-formal adult education in that it exhibits the following features: it provides short, part-time courses, it is self-governing and democratic, learners determine entry requirements and it is output led. (Adapted by Fordham 1993 from Simkins 1977: 12-15)

## **1.2 What is the community education network?**

The Community Education Network is a political platform of independent community education groups within the AONTAS membership and serves under the organisational development section of the AONTAS Strategic Plan. The Network directs its work and actively participates in developing immediate and long term strategies in order to achieve the aim of securing a distinct funding stream for community education through actions based on the three themes of: resource, recognition and raise profile. This is the only national network dedicated to independent community education groups at national level and it constantly works to ensure that it operates effectively through engaging in ongoing evaluation and critical reflection. It has been in existence for over two years and has met on seven occasions, a report and details of all meetings are available from the AONTAS website:

<http://www.aontas.com/commed/networkcen.html>

Any local, self-managed, independent community education organisation that is committed to raising the profile of, and lobbying for, a community education sector that is committed to social change can join the Network. A total of 134 organisations from 19 Irish counties have registered to be part of the Community Education Network.

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<sup>39</sup> 2000, 'Learning for Life', White Paper on Adult Education, Dublin.

The mission statement of the Network is: “to achieve a greater public understanding of the value of community education and have it recognised as a distinctly funded sector of the Irish Education system.”

A steering group guides the work of the Community Education Network by providing guidance on specific areas: long-term objectives, planning and reviewing Network meetings and other opportunities that are available for the Network. The success of the steering group is that it is working well together and the dynamic is motivational, productive and challenging. The group is also committed, supportive and eager to assist in the running of the Network meetings.

## **2. Evolution of the Community Education Network**

### **2.1 Year 1: Establishment and defining its role**

In the first year of the Network focused on three key points:

- Creating a work plan for the Network
- Agreeing a definition of community education
- Creating a harmonious and inclusive Network

A strategic work plan for the Network was created using the outcomes of the first meeting and the inputs and guidance from the steering group. It drew on the basic plan for the Network and used the wealth of experience from the group to identify the aims and objectives of the Network together with the opportunities for development.

The aims and objectives of the Community Education Network emerged in three themes: Resource community education, Recognition for the value and distinctive nature of community education and Raise Profile of community education and lobby for its needs.

The Aims of the Community Education Network are:

- To lobby for the independent resourcing of the community education sector (finance and human resources).
- To ensure recognition for community education in terms of its distinctive nature, value and role in lifelong learning, community development and active citizenship.
- To have a strong, collective and distinctive voice for community education that raises awareness on its achievements and contribution to society.

The Objectives of the Community Education Network are:

- To ensure community education is resourced appropriately by gaining commitment from the Department of Education for core funding of activities which will be carried out by lobbying; including that of specific departments.
- To gain increase recognition through data collection and an agreed definition of community education.
- To increase awareness of community education through: increased communication; linking with the media; revisiting the White Paper; sharing of best practice and; promotion and development of the Network.

The focus of the strategic work plan

- In order to achieve the aims and objectives of the Community Education Network the work plan will focus on the following areas:
- Resource – through active lobbying work
- Recognition – through discussion, debate and clarification on the definition, and locations, of community education
- Raise Profile – through local and national media work.

One major piece of work which the Network undertook was agreeing a definition of community education. The development of this work was as valuable as the outcome because it involved the following processes:

- Personal reflection on the role of each participant in their provision of community education
- Reflection on the two definitions of community education as per the White Paper – Learning for Life: Community education as the provision of a service in the community and as a process of empowerment both at individual and community level
- Identification of the participants' position on the continuum of the two definitions: this enabled the Network to understand the position of each member in relation to the two definitions, where their work fit and the limitations of their work in relation to their beliefs and aspirations
- Keynote addresses from academics on the theory of community education facilitated reflection on the reality of practice at grassroots level in relation to theoretical perspectives
- The recognition and valuing of all members of the Network with the aim to ensure an accepting, inclusive and vibrant Network that has strength in its diversity. The majority of the participants were aiming for the empowerment definition.

- Reflection on a proposed definition that captures the words and identification on the implication of this definition on the work of the participants
- Final agreement, definition, explanation and describing the practice of community education.

## **2.2 Year 2: Supporting Advocacy**

- In the second year of the Network it focused on three key points:
- Building the capacity of the Network to lobby at local level
- Create lobbying tools that reflect a united lobbying position for the Network
- Initiate the creation of television programmes on community education

In keeping with the work plan themes a number of initiatives were undertaken to *raise the profile*, *achieve recognition* and to *resource* community education namely: initiate the production of television programmes regarding community education, run lobbying training and create a manifesto for the Network respectively. These initiatives were run through, and along side, the national network meetings.

Given the local and European elections which took place in 2009 it was essential for the Network to use the opportunity to lobbying for community education. Funding was secured in order to run specific lobbying training for members of the Community Education Network. The aim of which was to build the Network's collective capacity to effectively articulate the needs of, and to provide a rationale for investing in, the sector. A total of 39 individuals from 11 organisations participated in the training with a manual being produced. A manifesto for community education was also created which was used during the training as a basis for the lobbying campaign. The process of creating the manifesto involved extensive discussion and consultation which resulted in much debate regarding the common vision for the Network in terms its needs. A part of the consultation process was undertaken via the online Network's discussion forum.

Meetings of the Network included inputs and discussion sessions with politicians, which provided the opportunity to build alliances, promote the value of community education and to use their experience in shaping an effective lobbying strategy for the Network.

In a joint application with Dublin Community Television funding from the Sound and Vision Scheme of Broadcasting Authority of Ireland was secured in order to develop television programmes that highlight, promote the value, methodology and ethos of community education. The preliminary research was put into action and initial filming undertaken.

### **2.3 Year 3: Developing an effective Network**

In the third year of the Network it is focusing on three key points:

- Developing and expanding the Network to balance long term work with responsive action
- Creating partnerships with civil servants and government departments
- Launch of television programmes on community education and developing as a tool for the sector

The work of the third year came at a vital time for the sector as it faces challenges due to the current economic situation, through funding cuts and restructuring. It is experiencing a higher demand for courses with less resources. Therefore the focus of the work was to ensure that the network was strong and effective by striking a balance of lobbying work and network development. If lobbying is always undertaken in a fire-fighting capacity it is to the detriment of the long term goal of the Network, likewise if scant attention is paid to creating a strong Network it will reduce the efficacy to collectively affect change. In response to these plans a national meeting was devoted to creating a new shape for the Network which identified the specific areas for development and proposed what the attributes of the Network should be. Also a new manifesto was created in response to the changing conditions of the sector, and a subgroup was proposed to create a position paper on the funding mechanisms for community education.

National meetings of the Network were evaluated and the following recommendations were implemented: increased inter-agency dialogue; creating a more welcoming space; introducing half-day sessions; ensuring speakers are present in the morning; and an increase in the number discussion groups and questions and answers sessions.

'Beyond the Classroom', a set of three television programmes that provides an insight community education, was launched during the AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival in February. The programmes cover community education from three themes: The Practitioners, which focus on the theory of community education; The Communities which cover 4 case studies of community education in action; and The Learners which provides the learners' experience and view of community education. Initially transmitted on Dublin Community Television, they will be sequentially released online each week and will form a set of DVDs that will act as a learning tool, as a means to promote community education to potential learners, for lobbying and for raising the profile to the general public.

## **Conclusion**

The AONTAS Community Education Network has created a strong united voice for independent community education organisations. By incorporating participative methodologies into the action-focused Network meetings ownership of the work and direction of the Network has been facilitated. Implementation of the strategic work plan has ensured tangible outcomes such as: a Network definition of community education, lobbying skills and tools, television programmes which will ensure the three themes of resource, recognition and raise the profile of community education. It seeks to increase its membership nationwide, strengthen its voice and successfully secure a distinct funding stream for community education.

## **Further information:**

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About the AONTAS Community Education Network:

<http://www.aontas.com/commed/networkcen.html>

'Beyond the Classroom' television programmes: <http://www.dctv.ie/main/?p=1545>

## **PART 4: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **“Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe through Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning” (Glasgow, March 4-5, 2010)**

This European conference provided a forum for more than 170 stakeholders in the field of human rights education and education for democratic citizenship (HRE/EDC), among them practitioners in formal and non-formal education, NGO activists, educational experts, political scientists and policy makers from various levels ranging from city councils to the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

The conference aimed to contribute to the development of coherent European framework policies to combat poverty and social exclusion through HRE/EDC in lifelong learning and emphasize the role of NGOs in the field. The following recommendations were drafted by 170 European stakeholders and their constituencies.

#### **A: Recommendations for policy makers**

1. A lack of democracy leads to poverty and social exclusion. Likewise, solely economic measures will not lead to more social cohesion.
2. The trend towards “vocationalisation” of Education for Active Citizenship has to be counteracted towards building citizenship skills. Citizenship skills acquired through sound civic and human rights education are no “fluffy stuff” merely decorating a basic layer of “hard” job-related skills. Citizenship skills are basic for democratic, cohesive and economically strong societies. Policy measures to fight social exclusion and poverty should therefore set the focus on the people and their opportunities to participate in lifelong and life-wide learning. Non-formal adult education in this regard is of crucial importance and NGO’s play a key role here.
3. Mainstreaming citizenship education leads to more social cohesion: National and EU programmes in adult education should set a specific focus on civic and human rights education and democratic participation. Both member states and the EU are asked to endorse the European Charter for Human Rights Education and Education for Democratic Citizenship as drafted by the Council of Europe.
4. “Nothing about us without us”: The impacts of general adult education programmes should be defined with the learners, not for the learners. Measures taken on the political level – be it the European or the member states level – must be in line with the demands of the people, especially the vulnerable groups. The EU can not reduce the strategies for tackling social exclusion and poverty to a genuine economic approach counteracting the current economical crisis. It were the existing policy instruments and

the focus on merely economic needs that led to this crisis. A more cohesive society will not automatically be the result of a revitalized market.

5. The attention to education for democratic citizenship and human rights in the new EU member states has to be re-established, as civic education can not be limited to the accession period. Experience from all Central European countries that joined the European Union show that with the accession done, civic education programmes were shut down. The result was not only a lack of civic education within the educational systems but a shrinking participation in all elections.
6. Premature and short-term political activism does not lead to long-term successes: A shared understanding of the reasons for poverty in Europe is a precondition for any shared European strategy to combat poverty and social exclusion.
7. If social cohesion is really important for the EU the political level should reflect more intensive on the interrelation of increased xenophobic, homophobic and right-wing-extremist tendencies that threaten and exclude vulnerable groups all over Europe and the lack of support for non-formal civic and human rights education in all member states.
8. Sustainable funding and political commitment for education for democratic citizenship and human rights is crucial for building long-term capacities and maintaining high-quality results.

## **B: Recommendations for NGO practitioners**

Educational NGO's have a crucial role to play in eradicating poverty: They must identify root causes of poverty and social exclusion, and employ a bottom-up approach with individuals and groups experiencing poverty and social exclusion: "Nothing about us without us".

1. Put people at the centre of the agenda: Inclusive approaches in education for democratic citizenship and human rights in lifelong learning are key to success, rather than stigmatizing "excluded" people. Poverty reduction and social inclusion is not limited to a certain age group but a raising challenge for lifelong and life-wide learning.
2. Approaches of non-formal education for human rights and citizenship education lifelong learning have to come up from the grassroots, rather than employing top-down approaches and preach to the converted. Several existing best practices in community education demonstrate how civic education based on people's needs lead to more social cohesion.
3. EDC/HRE has to embrace diverse learning environments in lifelong learning, closely linked to the real lives of learners (empowerment at the workplace, community education, family and peer learning etc.) Community learning is well suited to empower local communities to tackle social exclusion.

4. The full range of EDC/HRE tools and methods has to be based on learners' needs. In adult education, tools and methods should be developed with the learners, not for the learners. Non-formal education has to critically reflect if a validation-oriented approach which is primarily measuring competences relevant for the labour market is the only practicable way.
5. Nothing about us without us! Leadership and participation skills of groups at risk of social exclusion have to be strengthened, in order to make their voice be heard. Likewise NGO leaders need to be skilled up to speak the language of policy makers – and vice versa. The structured dialogue with policy makers should be significantly increased.

## **PART 5: APPENDIX**

### **ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT**

BME:	black and ethnic minorities
CR:	children's rights
CRC:	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
CRE:	children's rights education
EDC:	education for democratic citizenship
HR:	human rights
HRE:	human rights education
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
T-T-T:	Train-the-Trainer

**DARE**

Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning

in partnership with

**BEMIS**  
Black and Ethnic Minorities  
Infrastructure in Scotland

Conference:

**Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe  
through Education for Democratic Citizenship  
and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning**

Glasgow, March 4-5, 2010



Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning  
EU Project No. 134263-LLP-1-2007-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GNW

**Conference organisers:**

- DARE – Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning
- BEMIS – Black and Ethnic Minorities Infrastructure in Scotland

**More information and full conference documentation:**

<http://www.dare-network.eu/>

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**DARE Conference Documentation:**  
Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion through EDC and HRE in Adult Learning  
Glasgow, March 4-5, 2010

## **DARE BLUE LINE EDITION June 2010**

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- contribute to DARE's blog on EDC/HRE in Europe: [www.dare-network.blogspot.com](http://www.dare-network.blogspot.com)
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Education and Culture DG

**Lifelong Learning Programme**

EU-Project No. 134263-LLP-1-2007-1-DE-  
GRUNDTVIG-GNW

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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## Democracy and Human Rights Education in Adult Learning

EU Grundtvig Network Project No. 134263-LLP-1-2007-1-DE-GRUNDTVIG-GNW

### Beneficiary organisation:



Arbeitskreis deutscher  
Bildungsstätten e.V.

Association of German Educational Organisations  
Germany

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Scotland/UK

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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