# DARE
Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe

## DARE Spring Academy 2013

**Innovative Approaches in HRE/EDC to Overcome Discrimination of Vulnerable Groups in Europe**

**Maribor, Slovenia, April 3 – 5, 2013**

**Academy Documentation**

**Organizers:**

Center za Državljansko Vzgojo
Center for Citizenship Education

Center for Citizenship Education Slovenia

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Lifelong Learning Programme

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The DARE Spring Academy 2013 was hosted by the Slovenian Center for Citizenship Education within the framework of an **EU Grundtvig pr**oject on *„Adult Education Strategies to Overcome Group-Focused Hostility in Europe"* *and financially supported by the European Comission´s Lifelong Learning Programme.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Prejudice and discrimination towards certain vulnerable groups are indicators of a society's inability to integrate diverse individuals and minorities. Negative attitudes towards disadvantaged societal groups in particular, and towards diversity in general, are a barrier to integration and social cohesion. With the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997 the European Union agreed on joint action against prejudice and discrimination towards several target groups.

What is today the position of HRE/EDC regarding the political, economical and social contexts of discrimination towards vulnerable groups in Europe? What are the elements of successful education practices in the field? Is there already a common European perspective on the topic?

These were some of the questions explored at the DARE Spring Academy 2013 entitled: **"Innovative Approaches in HRE/EDC to Overcome Discrimination of Vulnerable Groups in Europe"** that took place in Maribor, Slovenia, from 3rd to 5th April 2013.

The meeting also included an introduction as well as some facts and figures to the situation of vulnerable groups (LGBT, the "erased" citizens, Roma and the Jewish minority) in Slovenia.

The DARE Spring Academy 2013 was hosted by the Slovenian Center for Citizenship Education within the framework of an **EU Grundtvig** project on *"Adult Education Strategies to Overcome Group-Focused Hostility in Europe".* In the framework of this 2-year collaboration, six European adult education providers exchange best practices, discuss national particularities of educational strategies to tackle group-focused hostility and identify common all-European approaches. The Spring Academy was open to all interested Europeans engaged in Adult Learning.

The reports and inputs in this Academy are structured in three sections:

1. Research and Study cases

2. Theory of Human Rights Education

3. Country Reports / Good Practices

The results presented in section 1 illustrate two examples of vigorous human rights violations in from of discrimination in Slovenia during the last 20 years: towards LGBT people and so called "erased" people. Section 2 brings a theoretical input on human rights education exploring the various controversies over the genuine problems of toleration in a plurally diverse polity as both historically and conceptually, toleration is one of the foundational characteristics that defines the very essence of a plurally diverse policy and the basic virtue associated with a liberal conception of citizenship. Section 3 is focused on concrete regional examples of good practice in adult education aiming to overcome discrimination of vulnerable groups in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia, Romania and Spain.

The DARE Spring Academy 2013 documentation is available also on www.dare-network.eu and www.eip-cdv.si . Please do not hesitate to contact us for any additional information.

Also not to forget - a big thank you to the experts, participants, guests, facilitators, moderators and all other who helped to make this training a success!

Elena Begant

Project Director at Center for Citizenship Education Slovenia

For further information on DARE - Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe Network please visit www.dare-network.eu or contact Georg Pirker at pirker@adb.de .

CONTENT

**RESEARCH AND STUDY CASES**

**THE ERASED: SLOVENIA'S MOST SEVERE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION**

*by Katarina Vučko, The Peace Institute, Slovenia*

**Unlawful Measure**

On 26 February 1992 25.671 people (mainly) born in other republics of former Yugoslavia who were Yugoslav citizens but had permanent residence in the former Socialist Republic of Slovenia were deprived of their legal status in the new country, the Republic of Slovenia - they were erased from the register of permanent residents.

The measure of erasure was arbitrarily performed by the administrative bodies of the Republic of Slovenia, since it did not have any basis in the law (the latter was established by the Slovenian Constitutional Court in 1999). When Slovenia became independent on 25 June 1991 the new country established its rules concerning citizenship. Citizens of the former Socialist Republic of Slovenia automatically became citizens. Citizens of other republics of the former Yugoslavia with permanent residence in the Socialist Republic of Slovenia had, based on Article 40 of the Citizenship Act, the possibility to apply for Slovenian citizenship within six months from the date of independence.

The people, who did not obtain Slovenian citizenship, because they did not apply in time or their application was refused or discarded or the procedure was terminated, lost their permanent residence. However, this consequence of not obtaining the citizenship was not established by the law. The 1991 Aliens Act stipulated that for those, who did not obtain Slovenian citizenship, the provisions of the Aliens Act shall enter into force two months after the period in which they could have applied for the citizenship of the Republic Slovenia, or from being issued a final decision. But the provisions of this act do not stipulate expiration or obligatory deprivation of legal status. This was also established with the 1999 Constitutional Court decision, which held that the act of erasure infringed the constitutional principle of the protection of legitimate expectations (as a part of the principle of the rule of law, protected by Article 2 of the Constitution of RS) and prohibition of discrimination, established in Article 14 of the Constitution. Furthermore, the principle of equality before the law was violated when foreigners from third countries, who in the times of the SFRY obtained a residence

permit, kept their status without having to file any applications, while persons from other republics of the former Yugoslavia were arbitrarily deprived of such legal status, which put them at a disadvantage in comparison with foreigners from third countries.

Therefore, the erasure was carried out arbitrarily – by taking advantage of the loophole in the legislation – the local authorities did not erase the people in accordance with the law, but with the instructions of the Ministry of Interior, at that time headed by the then Minister Igor Bavčar and the then State Secretary of the Interior, Slavko Debelak.

The Ministry issued a series of dispatches - internal instructions (circulars) to local administrative offices, which were instrumental for carrying out the erasure. In these internal instructions the Ministry of Interior instructed the administrative offices about the way in which the erased should be treated. From the letter of the then Minister of Interior Igor Bavčar to the Slovenian Government it is also evident that the Government was informed about the activities of the Ministry of Interior.

The erased people did not receive any kind of administrative decisions concerning the matter and were not informed of the termination of their status. They found out about the change of the status in different situations, some of them even years after the measure had taken place. Many of them realized something was wrong, when the administrative offices punched holes through their documents or when they were not able to enter the country after visiting their families in other republics of former Yugoslavia or when they were picked up by the police and driven to the state border without any written decision or, since with the loss of status, the erased also lost all economic and social rights tied to permanent resident status, when they lost their job or when they were evicted from their apartments or when they were refused medical care. But for a long time they could not know their situation is a result of a well planned act that affected so many people.

In 2009 the Ministry of Interior, then headed by Katarina Kresal, established that until 2009 1.302 erased persons died, 10.943 have a regulated status (out of them 7.313 are citizens of Slovenia), while 13.426 people are still without a regulated status. It is not clear how many

of them are in Slovenia and how many are abroad, however, the assumption is that the majority of them are abroad.

**Constitutional Court Decisions**

As mentioned above, the first Constitutional Court decision, declaring the erasure illegal, was issued in 1999. Following this decision, the 1999 Legal Status Act was adopted. *(the Act Regulating the Legal Status of Citizens of Former Yugoslavia Living in the Republic of Slovenia).* The Act set the three-month deadline to apply for the permanent residence. The basic condition that had to be met by an erased person was that he or she had lived in Slovenia from the deprivation of legal status onwards. According to this requirement, legal status was inaccessible for all those erased people who were deported from Slovenia, had temporary left Slovenia and were later unable to return to the country because of the war, closed borders or other reasons. In addition, the three-month deadline was short and many missed their opportunity to apply for permanent residence or even did not know about this option.

The second very important decision of the Constitutional Court was issued in 2003 and addressed the question of constitutionality of the 1999 Legal Status Act. With this decision, the Constitutional Court confirmed its conclusions of the 1999 decision and found the 1999 Legal Status Act unconstitutional.

**The Amended Legal Status Act**

In order to implement the 2003 Constitutional Court Decision, in 2010 the amendments to the Legal Status Act were adopted. The aim was merely to implement the Constitutional Court decision in the most minimal and restrictive way possible. The law continues to regulate legal statuses and does not provide any measures, necessary for remedying the injuries caused by the erasure such as measures in the field of employment, social support, housing or education. But even the provisions on regulating the statuses are very problematic and in many cases prevent the erased from regaining the status that was unlawfully taken away from them. The erased people have to file a new application for

permanent residence permit and engage in lengthy administrative proceedings, for which they have to pay the administrative fee of 95 EUR. In addition to the fact that the burden of proof (for very complicated set of conditions, the existence of which is often impossible to prove) is entirely on the erased people, there are also several other administrative barriers, making the procedure very complicated and the outcome uncertain: the competence for the decision is transferred to local administrative units, where the same officials solve cases who took part in erasure; the erased need to provide costly official translation of documents, attend a hearing in Slovenia or at a Slovenian embassy, which is sometimes difficult, time-consuming and costly; in case of absence from Slovenia they have to prove that they left Slovenia due to one of the reasons prescribed by the law and that they tried to return to Slovenia in the time period from 5-10 years of their absence (not before and not later).

The statistics concerning the implementation of the act prove the above statements. By 1 January 2013 (since July 2010), 368 applications were filed, out of these 101 applications were approved, 125 applications not approved, 142 cases were pending.

**European Court of Human Rights – the Kurić Case**

The Constitutional Court ordered the unconstitutionality to be remedied within six months - but the 2003 Constitutional Court decision was not implemented until 2010. Although the Constitutional Court decisions were clear, the authorities and the politicians continued to publicly deny illegality of erasure, criticizing the Constitutional Court decisions and claiming erased are speculators and only some individuals were truly injured by the erasure. Since there were no signs that the State will approach the issue in an appropriate manner, on 4 July 2006 the Italian attorneys' office Lana Lagostena-Bassi, representing eleven erased applicants, lodged an application against the Republic of Slovenia.

With a judgment of 13 July 2010 the European Court found a violation of the right to protection of private and family life, guaranteed with Article 8 of the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the right to effective legal remedy, guaranteed with Article 13 of the Convention. With an aim to remedy the violations the European Court instructed the Republic of Slovenia to adopt individual and

general measures, in particular adoption of appropriate legislation and issuing of permanent residence permit.

In October 2010 both the applicants and the Slovenian Government submitted addressed a request for referral of the case to the Grand Chamber.

In its judgement of 26 June 2012 in the case Kurić and others vs. Slovenia the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights confirmed that the Republic of Slovenia has violated the rights of the erased people. It found a violation of Article 8 (right to privacy and family life) and Article 13 (right to an effective remedy) of the European Convention on Human Rights. In addition it also found the violation of Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (prohibition of discrimination), because the erased people, being citizens of former Yugoslavia, were treated less favourably than those who had foreigners' status.

The Court found that the government measures taken since 1999 were not sufficient for full and timely remedying of violations caused with the erasure. The Court found that the situation of the applicants is a result of a broader structural problem and that the erased people cannot claim compensation for the damage due to the expiration of statutory limitations. Therefore, a pilot judgement has been delivered and the Court ordered Slovenia to set up an ad hoc mechanism for recognition of compensations to the erased people.

This means that the violations of rights were established only for the remaining six applicants, who have also been awarded 20.000 EUR per person as compensation for non-pecuniary damages. The court has also recognized the right to reimbursement of expenses amounting to 30.000 EUR for the applicants. The judgement is final and it cannot be appealed.

**Implementation of the Judgement**

The deadline for setting up the ad hoc mechanism for recognition of compensations is one year after the issuing of the judgement.

So far the Government prepared an Action plan for implementation of the judgement which includes the possibility of friendly settlement. However, the Government has not included the erased in the process and heard their needs or expectations.

Instead, in the fall 2012, the Government out-sourced the preparation of the implementation plan to a group of four Law Professors from the Faculty of European and State Studies from Kranj (*Fakulteta za evropske in državne študije*) - the professors who up to that moment never professionally worked on the issue of erasure. In the course of preparation of the implementation plan the group did not wish to interact with the civil society or the erased people. The materials prepared by the group were submitted to the Government in mid-December 2012 and were then classified as internal at and confidential.

In January 2013 the Action Plan was finally made public, while other, more detailed documents, such as the original implementation plan prepared by the group or any draft legislation, were not.

But the time is running out for the Government as June 2013 is fast approaching. It seems that in order to implement the judgement, the Government plans to adopt a special legislation, which could take several months. The manner in which the Government approached the implementation of the judgement so far is just another in the series of disappointments for the erased, which raises the question whether the Government fully understands the consequences of the European Court judgement.

**LINK:**

Peace Institute Slovenia
http://www.mirovni-institut.si/Main/Index/en/

**Homophobic Violence in Slovenia - Facts and Figures**


*by Mitja Blažič, project manager in Human Rights Education, LEGEBITRA, Slovenia*


In the Republic of Slovenia a long-term, accurate, effective or institutionalised **system of monitoring and documentation of homophobic hate crime and violence** (e. g. insulting, harassment, intimidation, bullying, hate speech and other forms of verbal, psychological, physical or sexual homophobic violence) **is not existent**. Nevertheless there are some community based studies and researches which show, that homophobia is quite an extensive problem in the Slovenian society.

The study on **Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Greif and Velikonja 2001)**, which surveyed 172 gays and lesbians, shows that almost 50 % of surveyed experienced violence or harassment due to their sexual orientation. Among the persons who experienced violence:

- 60 % reported experienced being physical attacked or harassed more than once;
- 31 % reported being attacked or harassed once;
- the most spread forms of violence were: insulting, physical violence and sexual abuse;
- there were more victims of physical violence among gays; lesbians on the other hand, were more often victims of sexual abuse and insulting;
- other forms of reported violence were: defamation, hate speech, ridiculing, spitting, intrusion in gay and lesbians clubs, loss of friends, loss of housing ...
- most frequent perpetrators of violent acts were strangers (but also acquaintances, colleagues, family members, neighbours, police and gangs).

According to the survey on **Everyday life of gays and lesbians in Slovenia (Švab and Kuhar, 2005)** which included 443 gays and lesbians, 53% of gays and lesbians surveyed have been victims of violence due to their sexual orientation (91% experienced verbal violence, 24% physical and 6% sexual violence). Other data from this survey, performed in the years 2003/2004, shows that:

- *»Most frequently, in 61% of cases, perpetrators of violent acts are strangers (on the streets, in the bar or other public spaces).*
- *Lesbians are more often exposed to a hidden violence at home (parents, kinship).*
- *49% of the respondents did not come out to their work colleagues or only to a few of them. 94% of the respondents believe that they were not discriminated against at work place due to their sexual orientation.*
- *4% of people surveyed suspect that they lost their job due to their coming out at work place.«*

In 2008 the Association LEGEBITRA performed a survey **on Everyday life of LGBT youth** (among students of high schools and colleges). The survey showed that:

- 63 % of students in high school, 35 % of students in colleges and 34% of employed LGBT youth (on their workplace) have experienced homophobic violence at least once;
- On average almost 5% of surveyed experience homophobic violence at home, in school environment or on the workplace often;
- Among the analysed contests – school, family, friends and workplace – the family outstands as the environment, where gays and lesbians most often experience homophobic violence;
- Almost 35% of the surveyed have stated that they have experienced psychological violence at home at least once (but possibly even more times or often); Almost 43% of the surveyed

experienced non-verbal violence at home connected with their sexual orientation (12% among them report experiencing it often); Almost 5% of surveyed experienced physical homophobic violence at home;

- In 3% of respondents coming out in the family resulted in breaking relationship with parents.

**Activate! - Research, monitoring and recording of cases of discrimination and rights violations against LGBT people in Slovenia** in the period from November 2007 to November 2008 (Kuhar, Magić, Kogovšek; 2009) shows that among 149 LGBT persons surveyed:

- almost 68% reported they have already been discriminated against;
- *"Respondents who have already been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation most often mentioned insults, ignoring or intentional exclusion from a group and threats of physical violence as the forms of discrimination they have been exposed to."*

The table shows the exact data of various forms of violence according to type of violence and gender:

| Form of violence/discrimination | Male | | Female | | Trans/fluid identity | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % according to type | % according to gender | % according to type | % according to gender | % according to type | % according to gender | |
| Name-calling | 43.6 | 83.7 | 34 | 74.4 | 2.1 | 100 | 79.8 |
| Intentionally excluded form a group or ignored | 20.2 | 38.8 | 14.9 | 32.6 | | | 35.1 |
| Threat of physical violence | 20.2 | 38.8 | 10.6 | 23.3 | 1.1 | 50 | 31.9 |
| Pursued or followed | 7.4 | 14.3 | 8.5 | 18.6 | | | 16 |
| Sexual harassment | 6.4 | 12.2 | 6.4 | 14 | | | 12.8 |
| Personal belongings stolen or othervise vandalised | 7.4 | 14.3 | 4.3 | 9.3 | | | 11.7 |
| Pushed, hit, kicked or beaten | 9.6 | 18.4 | 2.1 | 4.7 | | | 11.7 |
| Other types | 4.3 | 8.2 | 7.4 | 16.3 | | | 11.7 |
| Thrown objects at | 6.4 | 12.2 | 2.1 | 4.7 | 1.1 | 50 | 9.6 |
| Spat at | 5.3 | 10.2 | 3.2 | 7.0 | | | 8.5 |
| Sexually abused | 4.3 | 8.2 | 3.2 | 7 | | | 7.4 |
| Refusal of health care services | 5.3 | 10.2 | | | 1.1 | 50 | 6.4 |
| Turned away or dismissed from work | 5.3 | 10.2 | 1.1 | 2.3 | | | 6.4 |
| Harassed by the police (without use of physical force) | 4.3 | 8.2 | 1.1 | 2.3 | | | 5.3 |
| Refusal of housing | 4.3 | 8.2 | 1.1 | 2.3 | | | 5.3 |
| Refusal of another public service | 4.3 | 8.2 | | | | | 4.3 |
| Attacked or injured by weapon | 2.1 | 4.1 | | | | | 2.1 |
| Detained by the police without reason | 2.1 | 4.1 | | | | | 2.1 |
| Beaten or attacked by the police | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 52.1 | 100 | 45.7 | 100 | 2.1 | 100 | 100 |

The research shows that *»individuals who face discrimination and homophobic violence do not talk about it and even less often report it to the appropriate institutions, organisations or societies.«* **92 % of those who experienced discrimination or homophobic violence did not report it to the police**. According to the same research there are different reasons of not reporting:

- avto-minimalisation (reduction of the significance) – 36%;
- reporting homophobic reactions will not bear results – 27 %;
- fear of more violence – 9%;
- didn't know/think about the option – 6%;
- don't trust the police – 6%;
- reporting requires the victim to disclose his or her sexual orientation – 3%;
- the police would not believe – 3%;

The study also shows that there are several consequences of non reporting:

- violence and discrimination against LGBT population remain invisible; in the eyes of law enforcement, other public institutions, policy and law makers and general public;
- inadequate and inaccurate information about characteristics of homophobic acts also prevent more effective initiatives for raising awareness of the society about the appearance, frequency and consequences of such violence, which consequently creates an environment that does not only accept this kind of violence but even allows it;

**The "Homophobia in our school?" research** (Magić, 2012) included 309 teachers from secondary schools in Slovenia surveyed in 2011. The study shows that *"Most of the respondents (70 %) know that their school policies also address violence and discrimination between and against students. In comparison with other personal background the participants are considerably less familiar with the representation of sexual orientation in these policies."* Other interesting data:

- *"Upon detecting verbal homophobic violence, 71 % of respondents would talk to the student(s) about it.*
- *At the time of this research being conducted, 35 % of respondents reported witnessing verbal homophobic violence (jokes, name calling, comments, insults and prejudice), and less often physical and other forms of homophobic violence.*
- *The majority of respondents address and react to the violence they perceive at school. However, the perception of violence itself is problematic. Teachers only partially notice homophobic violence, which means that in reality the incidence of homophobic violence is presumably higher. The invisibility of LGBT youth also contributes to the lack of perception of homophobic violence in schools.*
- *The participants notice considerably more homophobia coming from male students than female, while the targets of homophobic violence are mostly male students. In the 80 % of perceived homophobic violence the victim was / is a male student."*

The survey also researched the competence of teachers for addressing and challenging homophobia. The collected data shows that:

- *"33 % of respondents attended a seminar about how to tackle violence and discrimination in schools. In total only 12 % of respondents received information about how to tackle homophobia in schools within these seminars.*

- *42 % of respondents assess that they do not possess the appropriate knowledge and skills for challenging verbal homophobic violence, while 60 % do not feel competent to tackle physical homophobic violence.*
- *The school staff lack awareness and understanding of specific actions and attitudes, connected to the needs of LGBT students (e.g. understanding the need for coming out). Almost half (49.2 %) of respondents believe that coming out is not necessary."*

Fortunately the study shows the teachers perceive the need to tackle the problem of homophobia in the school environment:

- *"More than half of respondents believe that for successfully tackling homophobia in the school environment they would need an actual strategy on the national level, which would explicitly include policies against homophobia. Respondents also mentioned seminars and training on the topic of homosexuality and homophobia and inclusion of the topics in the curriculum as support elements.*
- *The largest obstacles in tackling homophobia in schools, according to the respondents are negative attitudes/prejudice of parents (68.3 % of participants) and negative attitudes/prejudice of students (62.8 % of participants)."*

The need to thematise homosexuality in the school curriculum as a method of challenging prejudices and stereotypes and consequently prevention of homophobic violence was perceived in the surveyed sample of teachers.

**The "Excuse me, Miss, are you a Lesbian?" research** (Magić, 2012) project surveyed the sample of 123 LGB-teachers (27 % primary school, 28 %secondary school, 28% university, 10% other educational institutions, 7% kindergartens). In the section of questioning the process of coming out of the respondents, the results show that about half of the respondents were not out at their workplace:

- *"The highest level of disclosure was reported by those, who work at universities. Among them more than 65 % were out to all or some of the colleagues. In kindergartens the number was 50 %, with 46 % in primary schools. The lowest percentage is in secondary schools. 43 % of respondents, who work in secondary schools, reported they were out to all or at least to some of their co-workers.*
- *The majority of respondents (a little less than 84 %), who came out at their workplace, reported a positive or at least a neutral experience. 8 % of respondents reported they had a negative experience.*
- *The positive experiences cannot be automatically associated with the fears of those who are not out; the ones, who have not come out, have a good reason for not doing so – and the other way around: those who came out have assessed their workplace is safe enough to come out."*

The surveyed teachers were asked about the consequences of coming out:

- *"The majority of respondents, who were out (more than 90 %), have never experienced physical violence at their workplace because of their sexual orientation.*
- *The level of psychological or verbal violence is considerably higher in comparison to the physical violence. While almost 82 % of bisexuals reported that they have not experienced it, 43 % of gays and 35 % of lesbians had at least one experience of psychological violence. /.../ Almost 11 % of gays and 4 % of lesbians among them did not react to this violence.*

- *The level of occurrence of violence based on an employee's sexual orientation was highest in secondary schools – for psychological as well as for physical violence. 64 % of respondents, who work in secondary school, had experienced psychological or verbal violence because of their sexual orientation."*

When asked about the support system for LGB-teachers:

- *"/.../ more than 60 % of the respondents replied that their school does not offer relevant and accurate information or other support regarding same-sex orientation.*
- *The majority (more than 60 %) of respondents assessed their workplace environment as tolerant (e.g. have nothing against homosexuality, but do not want to talk about it), almost 20 % as unfriendly, abusive and disapproving. The answers of more than 60 % of respondents also show that schools have no support systems, which would explicitly protect teachers on the basis of this personal background, The answers to the reasons for not coming out reveal that teachers are afraid of being mobbed and losing their job, while they are also worried about the reactions of their colleagues and parents.*
- *3.3 % of respondents assessed their workplace as inclusive (e.g. organised workshops, round tables, etc. t the subject of LGBTs).*
- *The respondents expressed a strong need for additional training and education for employees in educational institutions and proposed to include experts from the field in school activities (NGOs, visiting professors, foreign students, etc.). The respondents also require positive workplace environment and complete support from their superiors for successful work and general wellbeing."*

**Although we do not have a system of monitoring and documenting homophobic hate crime and violence in Slovenia, the collected data clearly show that homophobia in our country and society is a well detected problem.** Therefore the state and the civil society should strengthen their efforts to tackle the problem of homophobia at least trough:

1. education for prevention – strengthening the efforts of normalising and mainstreaming the topic of homosexuality and the value of unacceptability of homophobic violence throughout the whole educational system;
2. awareness raising – strengthening the efforts of detabooisation of homosexuality and promotion of the value of unacceptability of homophobic violence in the general public trough media and campaigning;
3. building an effective, sustainable system of monitoring and documentation of homophobic hate crime and violence;
4. building an effective, sustainable system of prosecution of homophobic hate crimes and homophobic violence within the responsible institutions of the state;
5. building an effective, sustainable awareness raising system for LGBT-people and especially a support system for victims of homophobic hate crimes and homophobic violence.

Much of the said has been done, but much more effort to build an inclusive society of respect and zero-tolerance for violence is needed.

**LINK:**

Legebitra
http://www.drustvo-legebitra.si/

**HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION THEORY:**

# THE ANATOMY OF TOLERATION

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## Abstract

The basic aim of this presentation is to examine in detail the various controversies over the problems of toleration in a plurally diverse polity as both historically and conceptually, toleration is one of the foundational characteristics that defines the very essence of a plurally diverse polity and the basic virtue associated with a liberal conception of citizenship. This presentation consists of five sections. In section I, I present the main philosophical and conceptual issues related to the toleration-based approach to diversity. I then identify in section II the conditions and the circumstances any act that claims to be an act of toleration needs to be consistent with. In fact, the circumstances of the toleration-based approach to diversity refer to those elements of common public life that give rise to the conditions of toleration. At the same time, a number of background conditions need first to be fulfilled in order for a particular attitude to qualify as an act of toleration including recognition of the disagreement over a particular belief, practice or value both the tolerating and the tolerated agent find important; rejection of the belief, practice or value of the tolerated agent and its moral disapproval; possibility of the malleability of the object of toleration; and the conditional acceptance of the source of disagreement between the two agents. Next, I articulate in Section III the most pressing objections against toleration advanced by its many critics as the inadequacy of the toleration-based approach to diversity has been advanced on a number of grounds. Each of the moral and conceptual objections presented in this section criticises a particular element of the background conditions of toleration identified in section II of this abstract. Two prevailing sets of objections can be associated with these criticisms, i.e. the moral objections to toleration; and the conceptual objections against toleration. Central to the moral objections against toleration have been three interrelated objections that point to the morally troubling character of the toleration-based approach to diversity. The conceptual objections question the consistency of the toleration-based approach to diversity with the liberal version of the rights-based conception of citizenship. They differ from the moral objections against toleration primarily in terms of the criticisms of the various aspects of the *nature* of toleration. The moral and the conceptual objections to toleration identified above open two separate dimensions of the limits of toleration that need to be emphasized here, i.e. [*i*] the logical dimension of the limits of toleration; and [*ii*] the moral dimension of the limits of toleration. I explicate them in section IV of this presentation. In the concluding section of this presentation, I reclaim the centrality of the toleration-based approach to diversity for any conception of engagement with diversity that claims to be consistent with a right – based conception of citizenship. What I argue in this presentation is that the toleration-based approach to diversity cannot and should not be eliminated – as multiculturalists and other critics of the liberal version of the rights-based conception of citizenship would like to convince us – in favour of other models of accommodation of diversity. In particular, what has not been acknowledged or recognised is that

toleration allows a particular value, belief or practice to exist due to the value it has for a particular subject and the value this has for the political community.

*Keywords*:  toleration, diversity, pluralism, moral objections to toleration, conceptual objections to toleration, the limits of toleration

**LINK:**

Educational Research Institute Slovenia
http://www.pei.si//pei_english.aspx

**Practices**

**THE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVIE CLUB**

*by Elena A. Begant, Center for Citizenship Education, Slovenia*


***The idea behind the method***

Center for Citizenship was invited to create a series of Life Long Learning workshops for non-formal adult education that would target group-focused hostility in Slovenia. The authentic strategies and methods of combating group-focused hostility in Slovenia are rare although the problem of such hostility is gaining importance due to raising frequency of towards vulnerable groups-focused hostility events over the last years.

According to the research "*Slovenian National Opinion"* conducted in 2001 (source: http://www.cjm.si/SJM , 31.01.2013) a significantly high level of intolerance towards "the other" is shown by data that Slovenians would not tolerate a neighbor that is a drug addict, drunkard or having mental problems (over 50%), homosexual (47%), Jew, Muslim, Roma, migrant or colored (over 28%) and member of minority, right or left extremist group (over 20%). The recent data shows that these figures haven't changed.

However, appearance of group-focused hostility is not limited to majority population only; sometimes it can take place also among different vulnerable groups rooting from low awareness and respect of fundamental human rights of other minority group members.

***Methodology***

"The Human Rights Movie Club" is a series of five workshops for adult learners, preferably members of various vulnerable groups but not exclusive.

Every workshop is introduced by a selected film that in artistic way presents a specific vulnerable group and against that group focused hostility, stereotypes, prejudices and other "common" human rights violations that happen in western society.


Participants are invited to watch the film and no special instructions are given to them. After the screening small groups of 4-6 are formed and participants are invited to discuss the film through guided discussion. Basic rules of democratic discussion are facilitated by workshop leaders and agreed by participants.

Through the process of debate and reflection the participants are invited to go beyond the movie plot and focus on fundamental human rights violations towards specific vulnerable groups of society, express their opinion and compare seen situations to personal/everyday situations.

As selected films cover a larger geographical place (mainly Europe, some parts of USA) and involve various vulnerable groups (ethnical and national minorities, migrants, homosexuals, Roma, socially excluded) participants are led to greater awareness of importance of respect and implementation of fundamental human rights as well as active citizenship in their actual life.

Every workshop concludes with plenary debate on fundamental human rights and active citizenship highlighting the active role of every individual in ensuring them in everyday life.

The workshop implements methods of problem-based learning, experiential learning, democratic debate and plenary. If needed also some role play with debriefing of participants could be included.

*Selection of movies*

We have selected movies that cover geographically larger field to emphasise that fundamental human rights violations can occur everywhere but they usually take the similar form.

As we wanted the topic to be a bit colored with humor, motivational, interesting (also for socially deprivileged or poorly educated adult learners) we used art production combined with mainstream and avoided documentaries.

*Target group*

Our "Human Rights Movie Club" was organized for adult learners who are completing compulsory education at a local adult education institution. The very heterogeneous group of about 23 adult learners (the number varied from workshop to workshop) included female and male learners of different ethnical and national origin (including male and female Roma participants), and was also very mixed regarding to age: from 18 to 56 years.

To keep the interest of such a mixed interest group we selected the following movies:

1. Night on Earth (J. Jarmusch, 1991)

2. Chocolat (L. Hallström, 2000)

3. Ko to tamo pjeva? (S. Šijan, Yugoslavia, 1980)

4. Brokeback mountain (A. Lee, 2005)

5. Bienvenue chez les Ch'tis / Welcome to the Land of Shtis (D. Boon, 2008)

and through them we have focused on topics of human rights violations against economic migrants, socially deprivileged, disabled, Roma, ethnical and national minorities, LGBT and on national stereotyping of the "other".

The movie club was well visited; participants mainly watched the selected movies for the first time and enjoyed them very much. They were motivated to actively participate in group work and discussions in the second part of workshops and were mostly able to relate the plot to their experience and perception of today's society in Slovenia.

**LINK:**

Center for Citizenship Education [www.eip-cdv.si](www.eip-cdv.si)

Andragoški zavod Maribor [http://www.azm-lu.si/](http://www.azm-lu.si/)

**How to Overcome the Discrimination of Alternative Youth in Maribor?**

*by Urška Breznik, Alternative Youth Network Pekarna - magdalenske mreže, Slovenia*

*"Maribor's narrow city centre, covered with nothing but bars and clothes shops, makes it look like a laid-back and cute little town, but the general and rarely outspoken feeling around Maribor, the city where everybody knows your name, is that the time stopped and has been standing still ever since the fall of the industrial era. Somewhat like Beckett's Godot, Maribor is also in timeless waiting while its inhabitants kill time in content-stripped bars and simulate the illusion of change, based on nothing but the changing interpersonal dynamics in their social networks. Everybody knows everybody in the city, which no one really knows. In this respect, the city's identity is easier to define as that-which-is-not, rather to assert what exactly Maribor is: it's not a village, but it's not really a city either; it's not completely provincial, but it's not urban either; it's not outspokenly xenophobic, but it's not tolerant either: it's not multicultural, but thanks to a large number of Erasmus students, it's not completely mono-cultural either. Maribor is simply unwilling and unable to decide what and who it is.*

*What are the consequences, realities and symptoms that arise from Maribor being a small urban settlement, which heavily shapes the dynamics of its tight social networks, tight clans and tight family structures? In a way, Maribor seems impenetrable in its narrow illusion of auto-sufficiency and unwilling/unable to seek distance from its own reality, convinced that its timeless universe is functioning flawlessly. The municipality is facing a serious threat of bankruptcy. There is practically no existing civil dialogue between the NGO sector and the municipality, which means that the autonomous field of non-governmental arena is slowly dying. The municipality is run by a sheriff mayor – a d hunter and a policeman among many other things – currently facing 11 criminal complaints in court. There are no jobs and there is very little money circling around, yet bars and night clubs are packed. The greater its misery, the more glamour Maribor puts on to hide it. "*

(by Alja Šoštarič )

**20 years earlier: The beginnings of Cultural Centre Pekarna**

In the 1980's Slovenia was marked by civil society movements reacting to the system and institutional culture. Out of these movements in early 1990's alternative ideas and ideologies arose and the demands for socialising public spaces. After a while, when municipality promised a lot, but did nothing,  some people took matters into their own hands and squatted the buildings that use to belong to Austro-Hungariam empire's army and Yugoslavia's army. They have populated the buildings with artist's studio's, small concert rooms, concert halls, civil initiatives have started to form and and alternative way of life and everyday functioning became possible.

In the following years this form of democracy broke down ("Where is democracy when she's at home?"- to quote Arundhati Roy), new people came that understood the meaning of squatting quite differently (not as independent, autonomous creative, critical space). Privatization of Pekarna started to happen and is intensely still happening today. Slogans like "In anarchy we trust!" are used by people selling ideas (and clothes items) to young people that want to buy the image of creative and critical. New age prophets, hippies and apolitical youngsters are changing hands on the handles of the buildings that are slowly falling apart.

All of the above is implicitly or explicitly present if we want to take youth programs into focus. Thus the problem of the apathetic and disengaged young people without any future is one of the crucial problems of the city, because it points to a highly concerning lack of collective political will, of the crucial force constituting the public domain, of the common space articulating the future, of the ethical engine pushing to remember its

industrial as well as urban heritage. Thus the young people of Maribor merely reflect the disengaged timelessness of the city.

As Slovenian cultural anthropologist Rajko Muršič says: »We live in an era extremely unfriendly towards the young. Europian Union is pacifying the young with projects which do not encourage autonomy and creativity, but are continuing and deepening the protestant ethics of free, not paid work with volunteering activites, non-formal education and unpaid faculty praxis.«

However, it should be noted that the above mentioned issues are nevertheless being addressed gradually and persistently by some of those working in the NGO sector in the local community, adopting the grassroots approach on micro-level when trying to push youth and the city to interact with one another and to start building something sincere and engaged between the two.

One of them is Youth information and counselling centre INFOPEKA, Pekarna-magdalenske mreže. Our programme ideas come from long experience of working with young people, with organized volunteer work, non-formal education, cultural production and coproduction, activities in the field of civil society and with the attention turned towards the needs of the young from the local community, We try to connect all of our youth programmes into one concept, and regard it as extremely important to offer the young quality educational programmes that will encourage  socially transformational thinking and acting. We find this even more important in today's overwelming trends of working with the young and taking in consideration the state of the society as it is now. Socially transformative forms of eductaion are those that dare to reconsider our position in the world and that enable a form of critique that shows us how in some cases  knowledge serves  specific economic, political and social interests.

**LINK:**

Alternative Youth Network Pekarna - magdalenske mreže
http://www.pekarna.org/web/?siteLang=en

**Learning about Group-Focused Hostility in an International Group**


*by Florian Druckenthaner, Humanity in Action Deutschland e.V., Germany*


In summer 2012, I coordinated a Humanity in Action program in Berlin. This 5-week-program invited 20 engaged young adults from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Poland, Ukraine and the United States to Berlin in order to reflect upon current human rights challenges related to group-focused hostility.

The program "International Migration and its Consequences: A Human Rights Perspective" consisted of two parts: The first two weeks were dedicated to getting to know both historical and contemporary human rights issues in Germany. This learning phase consisted of meetings with experts and eyewitnesses, visits to memorial sites and important organisations in the field. It was followed by a two-week research period in which the participants collaborated in small international groups to translate their new learnings into practice.

Starting with the darkest period of German history, the Holocaust and the rule of the National Socialist regime, the focus of the program soon turned to current human rights issues in Germany. In a combination of lectures, site visits and interviews the participants learned about the discrimination of migrants and other minorities in the German education system, problems with access to health care, challenges on the labour market and other forms of social and political exclusion. The participants met experts and eyewitnesses to discuss cases of racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim and anti-Roma attitudes, xenophobia, homphobia, and forms of modern slavery (labour exploitation) in Germany. The group also met with activists and organizations offering solutions to these problems. Meetings at the Anne Frank Center, the Ban Ying Center against Human Trafficking and the group Monks against Exclusion highlighted initiatives to counteract symptoms of group-focused hostility, while a visit to the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency introduced a governmental approach to reduce discrimination. In a meeting with the Federal Commissioner for Human Rights the participants discussed questions of Germany's role in the international human rights dialogue.

In the second part of the program, the participants were divided into two groups. One group developed simulation games on concrete human rights dilemmas, to be used as an innovative tool in adult education. The second group learned about the complaint mechanisms within the UN Human Rights System and wrote reports about human rights violations in various countries.

Why is this program a successful tool to raise awareness and develop solutions against group-focused hostility?

Let me offer three reasons:

Firstly, the program shows the benefits of dealing with human rights challenges in an international way. Participants bring in the perspective of their respective home countries and share valuable experiences and potential responses to group-focused hostility. In 2012, the Berlin participants started an own initiative and protested against the widespread practice of "black-facing" in German theatres, after they had been confronted with it at the Berlin opera.  Additionally they participated in the annual LGBT rights campaign, the so called Christopher Street Day.

Secondly, it combines theoretical knowledge with a practical approach. The participants commit themselves to carry out an individual human rights project after the program ends. Past activities range from holding a workshop to producing a documentary film to even starting an NGO.

Thirdly, the participants join a larger and vibrant alumni network. After the program, the group took part in the 2012 HIA International Conference in Sarajevo, meeting more than 200 HIA alumni from Europe and the United States. At the conference they were able to exchange ideas, get inspired by best practices and establish contacts for future cooperation.

**LINK:**

Humanity in Action Germany

http://www.humanityinaction.org/Germany

**PROJECT MÉREGFOGHÚZÓ**

*by Peter Neumann, Jachad Jewish Youth Organization, Hungary*

The title of the project is a Hungarian word-play, consists of two words: "méregfog" is a fang of a venomous animal, and "foghúzó" is an instrument - or person - who pulls out bad teeth. Also the title refers to a Hungarian figure of speech: to pull out something's fang, what is to say to find and remove the root of a problem. With this word-play we hope to illustrate our work, which is to find innovative solutions to overcome group-focused hostility. The motivation of our project, alongside the need to struggle against prejudices and human rights violations, comes from the sad realization that the idea of volunteering has no great moral value in our society, thus people do not volunteer regularly.

To change this, we invited 15 young adults to be a parts of a volunteer group. First members of this group take part in a training which is to prepare them for the upcoming volunteer work, and to make an active and strong group out of them. During the training Jachad and the members of the group search for places where voluntary work is needed, such as Roma and other minority communities, rural communities and disadvantaged groups. When the members start to volunteer, the group meets once a month to discuss their experiences and process their conflicts.

The 12 week preparation training is based on experiential education, during which the participants practice engaging activities and games in a secure environment, within controlled conditions. In these sessions they learn the concept and methods of experiential education, plan their own activities and also learn how to facilitate activities.

During the first six times the participants take an active role in learning the methods and practices of experiential education. They gain their own experiences by trying out warm-ups, icebreakers, energizer games and de-inhibitors and by giving verbal reflection on each activity and on their effect on the group.

Second six meetings are for the participants learn the processes and methods of experiential education, learn and practice to plan and conduct their own activities.

This training helps to develop the following abilities and social competences:

- Trust-building activities,
- Team building, communication and problem solving activities (cooperation games)
- Game modify and creation
- Taking risks, trying out new ideas and learning new skills
- Strengthening self-confidence and trust

- Taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Increasing social and environmental understanding

During their preparation training participants search for 'places' where they are welcomed to try themselves as facilitators and they visit these communities before their start in order get to know the problems of the chosen group.

When they feel ready, they compose a unique set of activities based on the communities' needs and goals. Focus of these activities can be the tolerance, the cooperation, the acceptance of others, the otherness or the effective communication.

During the voluntary work term the participants meet regularly again for supervision. In these group sessions the volunteers can share their experiences and problems, can ask for help. Finally they need to document their activities, which will be published on our website.

Finishing the training volunteers are able to help others to manage their conflicts during their everyday life.

**LINK:**

Jachad Jewish Youth Organization

https://www.facebook.com/jachad.egyesulet

**Women and Participation**

*by Raquel Santos  and Sergio Guijarro, UNIÓN ROMANÍ, Spain*

The main objective of the project "Women and Participation" is the integral empowerment and training of Roma Women living in the most deprived urban areas in Andalusia (in Granada, Córdoba, Huelva and Seville) by contributing to the promotion and development of the female Roma community, reinforcing their participation of Roma women in different areas of public and social life and work places and fighting against illiteracy and low qualification through education and training. With this project, we aim at providing Roma women in social exclusion with the necessary tools to leader their own personal process of transformation as well as of their family environment, community and social context. Among the main areas of intervention of the project (health, housing, employment and education), adult education becomes key for the empowerment of Roma women and achievement of the following objectives.

- To contribute to the promotion and development of female Roma community in Andalusia.
- To promote the participation of Roma women in public spaces and all social and professional areas.
- To eradicate illiteracy through education and training.

The work methodology is focused mainly in providing and developing training and education to adult Roma women in order to improve their social, personal and job-related skills according to their needs and interests expressed in participative processes. Thanks to adult education, Roma women in social exclusion learn to mobilize, organize and participate in different activities of interest for their families, community and neighbourhood and become aware of their citizenship rights.

More specifically, the following education and training activities have been put into place:

- Support to obtain high school degree.
- Literacy workshops.
- Social and personal skills abilities workshops:
  - self-steem,
  - music therapy,
  - laughter therapy,
  - healthy nutrition,
  - radio,
  - crafts,

- cook,
- tailoring,
- dancing,
- theatre,
- recycling, etc.
  - Vocational training courses and workshops, such as,:
    - "Food Handler",
    - "Industrial Disinfection",
    - "TICs",
    - "Chambermaid",
    - "Waitress",
    - "Palet Truck Driver",
    - "Risk prevention in the work place",
    - "In-home care", etc.

In addition, there are different accompanying measures to the education work such as: information, facilitation and promotion of pupils parents associations, promotion of associationism, competitions, didactic playrooms, visits to other organisations and centres such as Universities, secondary education centres, adult education centres, pre-school and primary schools, guided tours to different places of the city, cultural and sport visits and trips, awareness campaigns, expositions, women gatherings for debate and reflection, participation and celebration of key dates, etc.

The main methodological principles of this good practice are: the participation of Roma women from the design to implementation of activities and the coordination with all actors and organisations involved in the community. In that sense, the school becomes a central space for the development of the project, as facilitates both the improvement of education of their children and the participation of women in all activities developed from the school, including the active participation in the parents and family associations of students.

**The experience of "Women and Participation"in San Diego (Sevilla): Literacy Workshops**

One of the main activities developed within the framework of the project "Women and Participation" in the suburban neighbourhood of San Diego in Seville has been the implementation of Literacy Workshops within the premises of the Primary School *Hermanos Machado*. This workshop was addressed to 17 Roma and non-Roma women in social exclusion residing in San Diego from 16 to 45 years old and was implemented during 2 hours every week.

This workshop was evaluated as successful due to the active and on-going participation of learners, despite the handicaps and limitations for participation of women in the neighbourhood, and the significant progress through the learning process of the majority of the participants.

In addition to the promotion of writing and reading skills among learners, each session included an additional half hour for learners to debate and share ideas about common needs and problems of their daily lives and other social and interesting community issues. This space for reflection and debate facilitated the climate for trust and expression of opinions and the introduction of key gender equality issues for debate, among others.

One of the main factors of motivation and participation of learners and success of this experience in San Diego has been, together with the space for debate and literacy education, the adaptation to the individual learning needs of each participant. In addition, the involvement and work of the social workers and mediators responsible for the coordination and facilitation of the workshop, their bond with learners together with their street work for information, awareness and promotion of the activities of the project within the neighbourhood have been key factors for success.

**LINK:**

UNIÓN ROMANÍ

http://www.unionromani.org/

**VOICE & PoliPedia: Promoting Active Citizenship and Creative Education for Democratic Citizenship**

*by Suzanne Reitmaier, Demokratiezentrum Wien, Austria*


**VOICE – problem-based learning in Education for Democratic Citizenship**


VOICE is a research project of 9 partner institutions in five countries: Austria, Estonia, Germany, Slovenia and Turkey. The main research areas were the following:

- Students' readiness to and interest in participating in EDC/HRE learning
- teachers' preparedness with regard to active teaching methods including problem-based learning
- the existence and quality of study materials, in-service training and other support for teaching
- teachers' needs around improving their skills and knowledge for implementing active teaching methods in daily work.

In interviews with teachers, educational experts and multiplicators in the five countries the project team identified four major demands or problems in the field of EDC:

- lack of teaching/learning material
- lack trainings and workshops for teachers and mutlipliactors
- a better teaching environment
- support from outside partners

In response to these needs the team developed trainings and workshops for teachers and new learning/teaching materials. Now I would like to focus on the materials which teachers and multiplicators can use flexibly in school, in non-formal education, with teenagers and with young adults. The key concept is "problem-based learning".


Problem-based learning uses problems of the "real world" as an input to a learning process. The adolescents or young adults are confronted with a "problem", some situation or dilemma, that they have to resolve in small groups – the "teacher" stands back and serve as *a facilitator* of this process. Therefore, problem-based learning is *pupil-centred.* The teenagers or young adults aren't supplied by the teacher with all the information needed to discuss the problem or solve their tasks. In small groups the students have to *organize their learning process themselves*: What is the problem? What is the relevant information I need? Where do I get this information?

This form of learning motivates and activates the students more, it stimulates their self-confidence, they develop a more sustainable interest in the topic and - maybe most important – they develop some key competences (like learning-to-learn, social and civic competences, media-competences) which help them being critical, mature citizens making their decisions based on arguments and their own opinion.

One of the scenarios you can find in the VOICE-handbook is about the possible tensions between (direct) democracy and human rights. Using the example of the swiss "minaret-referendum" 2009 the students have to investigate the case, prepare their arguments and defend them in a simulated "international conference" that is organized on the topic. The "learners" discover that democratic processes can lead to the discrimination of minorities, or to the disrespect of basic human rights and form their own opinion of where could lie the limit of (direct) democracy.

**PoliPedia – a web-based tool for collaborative learning**

PoliPedia is a peer-to-peer online tool for EDC and HRE. Originally it was developed by Demokratiezentrum Wien and ICT&S Centre Salzburg. The result was the www.polipedia.at – platform where pupils as well as other interested students and young adults can obtain as well as create information. Now there already exists an EU- and a Slovenian PoliPedia-platform: www.polipedia.eu and www.polipedia.si.

The platform is a "Wikipedia"-format, where *user can create, change, actualize and comment texts* and articles to a great variety of topics regarding society, democracy, human rights, etc. The idea is that students and young adults should be encouraged to not only passively perceive information, but actively shape the information-market on the internet. The students can choose and work on topics that they believe important and relevant to them. In groups or alone they investigate the topic, write an article, actualize existing texts and comment in the "forum". Civic education, human rights, politics and the like topics lose their appearance as theoretical, abstract or institutionalized, and turn into concepts with a variety of aspects and opinions. Students themselves discover topics that are relevant to them and can *discuss their opinions in an open (www) but protected (wiki-platform) space*, moderated by the project team and /or accompanying teachers and multiplicators.

This tool combines various competences and objectives of EDC and HRE:  students "discover" that supposedly boring or abstract topics are of great relevance to them and develop their interest in societal and political questions. Their willingness to actively investigate, discuss and write about these topics grows and with this the *competence* in using the internet as a research tool, investigating in the often confusing world wide web and taking on the *responsibility* of publishing an article that can serve others (their *peers*) as

their source of information. These competences are important in the "media-"and "information-" society the young adults live in.

Young adults turn themselves into *"prosumers":* they are producers as well as consumers of content. This is an important interactive aspect of this tool for EDC. The students have the option to obtain information on the platform – using it as a starting point for further investigation. But they also can and should produce new articles or improve existing ones. They give and they take from the platform, respecting a certain *"netiquette",* certain rules of "good online behaviour" and quality standards. They are taking on responsibility for the platform, being able to shape it in every moment. That is the key to this concept: *How* PoliPedia is used depends on *who* is using it.

**LINK:**

Demokratiezentrum Wien

**Overcoming anti-Roma stereotypes and prejudices by training of key focus groups**

*by Sofiya Zahova, Minority Studies Society Studii Romani, Romania*

Our initiative was set up as a response to widespread and commonly shared negative prejudices against the Roma/Gypsies in (but not only) Bulgaria that are based on lack of knowledge about the real situation of the community, and stereotyping it with wrong generalizations that have little or nothing in common with the real situation and characteristics of the Roma/Gypsies. We decided to fight against and overcome such prejudices and stereotypes by trainings that provide sufficient scientific knowledge and research data about the Roma targeted at two key focus groups:

- **Journalists, directors and practitioners from the field of media and film production**, who hold an important tool for dissemination of information in the society. It is a well known fact that the media very often strengthens wrong stereotypes about the Roma/Gypsy and instead of investigating and revealing the real situation, or providing space for debate, it once again reaffirms the wrong perception about the Roma. Both our observations and many media monitoring have been confirming this situation. What was common for the media representation was the fact that in the media pieces authors have not relied on any kind of scientific information or data, but were reproducing well known prejudices in the society (that Roma are living on social benefits, that they are lazy and not willing to work, genetically inclined to steal, having many children, etc.).

- **Roma leaders and activists,** who are well educated and were facing in their every day work and communication a need to fight the negative stereotypes. We observed in our long term work with Roma that these activists also needed to be trained and provided with established scientific facts about the Roma, which can serve them as tools when they argue in society and need proves to fight the majority's prejudices.

For the two focus groups we designed specially tailored trainings, each of them having few components under the general framework "Overcoming prejudices against Roma".

For the first key target group Journalists, directors and practitioners from the field of media and film production we implemented trainings in three modules:

1) <u>Overview of the history and ethno-culture of the Roma/Gypsies in Europe with focus on the Roma in Eastern Europe and the Balkans</u>. The aim of this module was to show that Roma have their place in the historical development of the region and to have general information on their ethnic culture in past time as well in the contemporary period. In this way participants were able to see that there is a rich and diverse Romani culture;

2) <u>Arguments against the most common stereotypes</u>. We asked the participants for the most common stereotypes expressed by them that they believe are true and afterwards we provided facts and research data showing that they are not true. For example, we took the general wrong image of the Roma as living on social benefits and then showing the statistical data about how many people are living on social benefits and what is the size of these benefits, arguing that this claim is wrong.

3) <u>Presenting audio and video materials revealing the real community and ethno-cultural characteristics of the Roma.</u> Since our target group were professionals from the media and film production field it was important to show-case them how through their work they can also contribute to a better knowledge about the Roma by showing them spots and parts from movie pieces.

For the second key target group – Roma leaders and activists we designed trainings organized around the following modules:

1) <u>Overview of the history and ethno-culture of the Roma/Gypsies in Europe with focus on the Roma in Eastern Europe and the Balkans</u>. The aim of this module was to provide the leaders with better scientific knowledge about the history and culture of the Roma, to present them the diversity of the Roma groups and to inform them how they can obtain further knowledge and follow sources of information;

2) <u>Arguments against the most common stereotypes</u>. Together with the participants we made a list of the most common stereotypes expressed by the people in society and

afterwards we provided facts and research data showing that they are not true. In this way the participants were given tools to argue and prove that these claims are wrong.

3) <u>Simulating debates with opponents, who express hostility towards Roma.</u> We divided the participants into pairs in which one has to express the position of person who expresses hostility towards Roma and the other has to argue with the hostile position. In this way Roma were trained how to publicly express and defend their position trough the skills and knowledge tools obtained during the training.

*Studii Romani* considers our initiative and approach successful and applicable for work with other target groups and in other countries as well.

**LINK:**

Minority Studies Society Studii Romani

http://mail.geobiz.net/sr-www/studiiromanien.html

**DARE Spring Academy 2013 Agenda**

Center za
Državljansko
Vzgojo
Center for Citizenship Education

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DARE
Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe

# DARE Spring Academy 2013,

## »Innovative Approaches in HRE/EDC to Overcome Discrimination of

## Vulnerable Groups in Europe«

**Maribor, Slovenia, April 3 – 5, 2013**

**Wednesday, April 3rd**

19.30        Arrival of participants, reception followed by welcoming dinner in old town.

**Thursday, April 4th**

09.00        Welcome by DARE and Center for Citizenship Education

09.15        *Elena Begant* (Center for Citizenship Education):  "Innovative Approaches in Adult
             HRE/EDC to Overcome Group-Focused Hostility in Slovenia"

09.30    *Urška Breznik* (Alternative Youth Network Pekarna - magdalenske mreže): "How to Overcome the Discrimination of Alternative Youth in Maribor?" - example of best practice

10.15    *Mitja Blažič* (Legebitra): "HRE Projects as a Method of Overcoming against LGBT Focused Hostility" - example of best practice

11.00    Coffee break

11.30    *Katarina Vučko* (Peace Institute Slovenia): "The Erased: Slovenia's most Severe Human Rights violation" - example of best practice

12.15    Plenary meeting.

13.30    Lunch

15.00    Parallel workshops:

   a) Anne Stalfort (Grundtvig Project „Adult Education Strategies to Overcome Group-Focused Hostility in Europe"): project monitoring session: overall progress, update of the project work plan and the dissemination activities, planning of the final report.

   b) Examples of best practice within DARE Network.

16.30    Coffee break

17.00    Group reports, plenary discussion.

19.00    Group Dinner in old town / restaurant Štajerc


**Friday, April 5th**


09.30    Welcome again.

10.00    *Mitja Sardoč* (Educational Research Institute): "The anatomy of Toleration" - expert input with discussion.

11.15    Plenary meeting.

12.00    Workshop in the community - visit to Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor hosted by *Marjetka Bedrač* (Programme Coordinator)

13.30    Lunch break.

15.00    Guided sightseeing tour of Maribor / Visit to National Museum of Contemporary History or The World Oldest Vine Museum (all optional)

16.00    DARE Network - Board meeting

20.00        Dinner in old town /restaurant Florjan

**Saturday, April 6th**

08.00        Departure of participants

*Contacts:*

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**Mr. Georg Pirker**

Secretary General, DARE Network pirker@adb.de

*Venues:*

**INFOPEKA**

Ob železnici 8, 2000 Maribor, Slovenia, *(Tuesday and Friday morning)*

**Center of Jewish Cultural Heritage Synagogue Maribor**

Židovska ulica 4, SI-2000 Maribor, Slovenija, *(Study visit on Friday)*

**Muzej narodne osvoboditve Maribor**
Ulica heroja Tomšiča 5 , 2000 Maribor, Slovenija *(Optional visit on Friday)*