

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP  
2001-2004

**All-European Study on Policies for  
Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC)**

**CROATIA**

Follow-up  
to the

*Stocktaking Research on Policies for Education for Democratic Citizenship in  
Southeast Europe - Country Report: Croatia*  
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This report is a follow-up to the regional project *Stocktaking Research on Policies for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Management of Diversity in Southeast Europe* which was carried out in Croatia under the auspices of the Council of Europe and the Enhanced Graz-Process in the first half of 2001 (Council of Europe doc. DGIV/EDU/CIT (2001) 45 Croatia). With the exception of a few introductory paragraphs, the data presented in this report cover the period from July 2001 to July 2003. Wherever possible, the report follows the instructions from the *Terms of reference for EDC coordinators* and the *All-European Study on Policies for Education for Democratic Citizenship Revised Study Guide*. However, a full compliance with the guidelines was impossible to achieve due to non-existent resources and a limited administrative support in the phase of data collection. Since the follow-up to the practitioners' viewpoints had not been envisaged for the present report, a few such comments here included were originally collected in two projects which were carried out by the Research and Training Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship of the Faculty of Philosophy University of Zagreb as part of regional projects. The Project on Education for Democratic Citizenship: From Policy to Effective Practice through Quality Assurance (EDC-QA) is being coordinated by the CEPS Ljubljana, Slovenia and the Research on Youth by the PRONI Institute, Sweden.

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## EDUCATIONAL POLICY CHANGE AND EDC

### I. SUMMARY OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION

#### Croatian Education System

By 2000 Croatian education system has outlived several reform attempts to bring this sector closer to the needs of a transitional economy and society which were additionally burdened by the war aggression. Due to an overly-politicised approach to education which was further strengthened by an extremely centralised decision-making, the system remained underdeveloped, misbalanced internally and marginalized in regard to other important sectors. The result was that the system of education became even more vulnerable to new social and economic challenges after a decade of transition.

#### Pre-school education

The pre-school education sub-system encompasses children of six months to the school-entrance age. According to the *Law on Pre-school Upbringing and Education*, its main objective is a safe, supportive and healthy environment for the development of cognitive, social and physical skills of each child. It comprises three types of institutions: nursery schools, kindergartens and "small schools" (preparatory programmes for elementary school). Alternative programmes, such as Montessori, Waldorf, Agazzi, Reggio Emilia and Step by Step are well represented. Minority and religious communities run their own preschool institutions. Children with special needs go through special institutions or special programmes in regular institutions. However, institutional assistance has been provided for less than one third of all pre-school children. There are 329 public and 125 private preschool institutions, two thirds of which are founded by municipalities and towns; the rest by individuals, religious communities and minority organisations. The idea to set up the pre-school centres which appeared in the *National Programme for Children* in 1996 has not yet been realised.

#### Elementary (compulsory) education

Elementary education lasts eight years and its duration equals compulsory education. Lower elementary level (from 1st to 4th grade) is organised as class teaching while the upper elementary level (from 5th to 8th grade) is conducted as a subject-matter teaching. There are 825 central and 1,270 branch public schools, three fourths of which work in two shifts. A great majority of elementary schools implement the national framework curricula structured along the principle of subject-matter teaching. There is also a number of music and alternative, as well as 6 private elementary schools with specific programmes approved by the Ministry of Education and Sport (MoES). Children with

special needs attend either special elementary schools or are integrated in regular classrooms. Elementary education of children belonging to national minorities is an integral part of the national school system. There is no independent school run by a religious community. Religious classes are *de iure* optional and are, depending on the number of children who opt for such class, taught either in school or in a religious institution.

### Secondary education

The present sub-system of secondary education encompasses 363 public and 26 private schools of 3 types (without 53 students' boarding houses):

- gymnasiums, further divided into general, linguistic, classical, science and math;
- vocational schools of two types: 4- and 3-year programmes for secondary vocational qualifications and 1-2 year programmes for lower vocational qualifications;
- art secondary schools (art and design, music, dance)

Secondary school is not compulsory. Approximately 95–97% of the elementary school graduates continue their education at this level and approximately 85–90% of the enrolled graduate within the regularly allotted time period. Almost two thirds of all secondary school students attend vocational school programmes. Gymnasiums and 4-year vocational schools lead directly to higher levels of education. Students belonging to minorities may attend minority schools or programmes run by their communities. Students with special needs are educated either in classes with special programmes organised in regular schools or in special secondary schools. There are 14 private gymnasiums and vocational schools, 10 Catholic gymnasiums and 2 secondary schools of other confessions.

### Higher education

The system of post-secondary education encompasses 88 public institutions of two types: non-university colleges (polytechnics) and university education and training institutions, including art academies. The duration of the former is 2-4 years while the minimum years required for the latter is 4 years after which a student is eligible for post-graduate studies. There are 11 private colleges. Croatia has 5 universities located in Zagreb, Osijek, Rijeka, Split and Zadar, which differ considerably in number and type of programmes, staff quality and administrative support. Colleges and faculties enjoy a high level of autonomy in determining their organisation and programmes of study and are loosely linked through the university structures. Approximately 120,000 students were enrolled in institutions of higher education during 2000/2001 academic year. However, only 33 percent of all enrolled students complete university study, 8 percent of whom finish within the allotted time period. Students of Italian background may enrol in one college programme run by the University of Rijeka. Theological faculties are part of the university structure. In difference to lower levels of education system, which are regulated by special laws and are under the responsibility of the MoES, tertiary education is regulated by the Law on Higher Education and is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Sciences and Technology (MoST). The coordination between the two is not satisfactory.

### Minority Education

Minority cultural rights, including the preservation of their languages, history and cultures through education, are guaranteed by the *Constitution of the Republic of Croatia*, the *Constitutional Law on Minority Rights* and the *Law on Education in the Languages and Scripts of National Minorities*. Many minority groups run their own educational institutions, classes or programmes especially at the preschool level, provided they are approved by the MoES since they are an integral part of the national school system. In 2000 there were 62 minority elementary schools, half of which belonged to the Serbian minority. Minority secondary schools, classes and programmes exist for Italians, Serbs, Hungarians and Czechs. There is also one college programme for Italian minority at the University of Rijeka. All minority educational institutions and programmes are co-financed from the state budget. At the primary school level three models of minority education are implemented:

- *Model A - schooling in the national minority language* (Croatian programmes are translated to the national minority languages; Croatian language is taught 4 hours per week);
- *Model B - bilingual teaching* (social sciences and humanities are taught in the minority languages, natural sciences in Croatian; Croatian language is taught 4 hours per week);
- *Model C - nurturing mother tongue and culture* (5 hours per week throughout the school year; summer schools etc.).

### Adult education

The 1991 Census confirmed that about one quarter of the total Croatian population above 15 years of age had not completed elementary education which resulted in number of changes in regard to the organisation and content of adult education in the country. In 2000 some 45 primary schools organised adult courses in basic literacy; additional 372 organisations provided secondary education and training; while 22 folk universities and 150 other organisations were involved in providing basic education, secondary level education and vocational training, as well as retraining and upgrading courses for adult population.

### Teacher training

There are two types of teacher training institutions: a) non-university teacher colleges with 4-year programmes (for all elementary school teachers) and 2-year programmes (for pre-school teachers) and b) 4-year university pedagogical and other teacher training faculties (for some categories of elementary and secondary schools teachers). Teachers holding a non-teacher training college or a faculty diploma must complete pedagogical, psychological and methodological training prior to or upon their employment by the school. The upgrading of professional knowledge is a statutory obligation of all teachers. It is ensured through a system of accredited conferences, seminars and workshops organised at the national, county and town levels by the Institute for Development in

Education, teacher training faculties and colleges, teacher professional associations and actives, as well as by some NGOs. Apart from the lack of clear career paths for teachers, the key problem in this sector is the division of responsibility and the lack of coordination among the MoST, which controls teacher pre-service training, the MoES, which controls in-service teacher training, and the Ministry of Crafts & Small Enterprises, which deals with training of some teachers employed by vocational schools.

### **Post-2000 education policy changes**

After the general elections held on 3 January 2000 the new Croatian government launched the *Working Programme of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for the Period 2000-2004*. The document defines educational priorities in the context of the overall national goals, which are defined in terms of the country's economic and social stabilisation and its preparation for the European integration. After October 2001 when the *Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and Its Member States and the Republic of Croatia* was signed in Luxemburg, the changes in all major sectors have been planned in compliance with the Agreement.

The overall priorities of the *Working Programme of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for the Period 2000-2004* were the following:

- political system (abrogating the elements of autocratic governance and the para-state centres of power by strengthening the division of power, especially parliamentary democracy and by reducing the power of the president);
- democracy and civil society (promotion of human rights and freedoms, in particular freedom of worship and equality of religious communities, including the interfaith dialogue);
- freedom of the media (promoting media self-regulation, independence and pluralism in the production and distribution of information);
- displaced persons and refugees (assistance to the areas devastated by war by ensuring reconstruction of houses, economic recovery and development);
- non-governmental organisation and civil society (promoting the right to association and providing the support to civil organisations and initiatives).

Educational priorities were defined as part of the social welfare policy. The document refers to education as "a strategic priority for the overall development of Croatian society". It seeks to promote an efficient school system closer to European standards. Specific objectives of educational reform are summarised as follows:

- promotion of democratic principles (human rights and freedoms, openness, innovation, tolerance and diversity);
- decentralisation (financing, management and curricula);
- pluralisation of curricula;
- gradual increase in the state budget for education to reach the European standards;
- strengthening of co-operation with trade unions, NGOs, international organisations etc.;
- computerisation of schools;

- promotion of education of children belonging to Croatian Diaspora and minority groups.

The *Basis for Restructuring the Croatian School System (Osnova za ustroj školstva Republike Hrvatske)* was the first paper prepared by an expert group of the Education Advisory Council of the MoES. The document was issued in 2000 following the government's Programme. It was meant to initiate professional and public debate on the priorities of educational reform so as to make the system more efficient in 'fulfilling its social role'.

A rather politicised debate initiated by the document was a clear sign that neither in the post-2000 period the consensus on changes in this sector would have been easy to achieve. As the consequence, two expert groups were set up to prepare the new document. One group continued to work under the auspices of the MoES (Education Advisory Council), while the other group was set up by the central government and was linked to the Office for the Strategy of the Development of the Republic of Croatia. In September 2001 the latter group finalised the *White Paper on Croatian Education* as part of an overall *Strategy for the Development of the Republic of Croatia 'Croatia in the 21st Century'*. The paper conceptualises education in a life-long perspective as 'a factor of national development' and links it to the quest for improvement of the quality of life of an individual and a society based on knowledge. Three paths of reform were identified in relation to:

- *curricular subsystem* (knowledge and skills with transfer value; interdisciplinary and innovative approach to the development of an open, democratic, inclusive, balanced school curricula with the European dimension);
- *technological system* (diversified learning which leads to understanding; non-authoritarian and supportive school climate; improvement of professional information and guidance; advancing education and status of teachers; development of the system of competencies recognition);
- *the link between education and the environment* (partnership between schools and out-of-school organisations and interest groups; decentralisation and deregulation of school system; promotion of an equitable, accessible, passable, flexible and well co-ordinated system which is financially adequately supported).

The document explicitly states that 'the competences for active citizenship and for employment are amongst the most important objectives of lifelong learning', as well as that human rights, equality, pluralism and civil society are the foundations for the 'improvement of the quality of life'. However, these concepts are poorly defined and are loosely related to central objectives of Croatian education reform, such as the curriculum development, revision of legislative in education, further decentralisation, development of national quality indicators and external system of evaluation, teacher pre-service and in-service education and training, the development of R&D institutions and advisory services, etc.

The Educational Council of the MoES published the *Concept of Changes in the Education System of the Republic of Croatia (Project 'Sources')* in the beginning of 2002. The document outlines the starting-points, objectives and principles of education reform and goes on to define structural changes, as well as the changes in curricula for all levels and types of schools, including private and minority schools, as well as Croatian schools abroad. The framework for assessment, management, governance and financing of schools, as well as for teacher pre-service and in-service training is also drawn. The approach is said to be guided by the principles of democracy, decentralisation, autonomy, pluralism, globalisation and international standards and cooperation. The list of objectives includes, *inter alia*, the promotion of equal opportunities and social inclusion, development of Croatian and European culture, improvement of education quality and the appreciation of ethical values. Among the 'principles' upon which the reform should be based the document mentions human rights, 'democratic behaviour', pluralism, religious freedom, equality, national identity and European dimension, friendly school environment, decentralisation, deconcentration and deregulation of the system etc. The document was presented at the *International Conference on Education – Changing Croatian education system as part of the stabilisation and association process*, which was held in Zagreb, May 24-25, 2002 under the auspices of the MoES, OECD, Council of Europe and the Task Force Education & Youth.

In compliance with the decision reached at the joint meeting of the three coordinating bodies of the government held in October 2002, the MoES drafted a new document - *The Project on Croatian Education System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, which was a compilation of the *Concept of Changes in the Education System of the Republic of Croatia* and the *White Book on Croatian Education*. The paper was the basis for developing the *Priority Measures in Education System for 2002-2004*. As for 2002 the following measures were suggested:

- promote a disburdening model for elementary school and gymnasium by reducing and restructuring the framework plans and programmes;
- develop students' standard;
- transform the Institute for Development in Education into an independent institution and establish the National Council of Parents and the National Council for Life-long Learning.
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Among the 2003 priorities are: the promotion of multiple foreign language learning; development of a pedagogical standard; pilot implementation of the state matura; drafting of general and specific laws on education; the preparation for the PISA Project and the establishment of the Headmaster School. For 2004 the focus is on the development of national curricula; the development of life-long teacher training model; the improvement of self-evaluation and external evaluation of schools.

Both documents were adopted by the government in November but did not pass the Parliament in February 2003. The main obstacle seemed to be the extension of compulsory education from 8 to 9 years and the introduction of a 3+3+3 model which the Parliament deemed inadequate and costly for Croatia. The new MoES' proposal is expected in September 2003.



For our further analysis it is important to stress that EDC is not explicitly referred to in any of the strategic papers on education reform described above, despite the fact that all documents more or less explicitly mention human rights, democracy and citizenship as the target values of educational reform. Consequently, the Priority Measures for 2002-2004 do not include HRE and EDC, either.

Besides, although the *Constitutional* foundations for HRE and EDC do exist, there are no legal provisions for their implementation either in the *Law on Elementary Education* or the *Law on Secondary Education*. The laws were amended in 2001 with a view to promote financial and management decentralisation in education. The law on secondary schooling determines that the representatives of the students' council may participate in the work of the school committee, which is the main governing body of the school, but they have no right to vote. Such gap between the Constitutional provisions and, on the one hand, the laws on education and, on the other hand, the strategic papers, may be solved by drafting an executive by-law by the MoES which would determine the implementation of HRE and EDC as a statutory obligation of teachers and schools.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION

### The promotion of HRE and EDC

According to the *Mid-term Review of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education*, Croatia is one of few countries in the world with a comprehensive model of the *National Human Rights Education Programme* which encompasses 6 sub-programmes (pre-school, lower primary, upper primary and secondary, adult education and media). The programme was developed in the second half of the 1990s under the auspices of the National Human Rights Education Committee. It is based on a multifaceted, trans-disciplinary and experiential approach to learning *about, for* and *in* human rights throughout one's life and in cooperation of formal and non-formal education sectors. The programme explicitly states that the main aim of HRE is to assist children, young people and adults in learning the basic principles on which the promotion of human dignity, democracy and plural society is based, as well as to develop their skills for an active, productive and responsible participation in the society. Apart from human rights and freedoms, democracy and pluralism, some of the programme's constituent concepts are: equality, social justice, inclusion and respect for difference, non-violence and partnership. As such, the programme encompasses the very key aspects of EDC as well as of other approaches, including peace, intercultural and global education.

In 1999 the *Education for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship* was integrated into the *Framework Plan and Programme for Primary Schools* issued by the MoES. The document explicitly states that human rights and democratic citizenship education is an integral part of the elementary school curriculum which may be implemented cross-curricularly, as an optional school subject or as an extra-curricular project activity. Although no such provisions were explicitly made for preschools and secondary schools,

the MoES began in 1998-99 to organise regular in-service training for all categories of teachers and school counsellors (pedagogues and psychologists, i.e. the multipliers). First seminars were carried out in cooperation with the Human Rights Education Associates and with the Netherlands support. From 2000 the MoES has nominated one superior counsellor for the implementation of HRE and one for civic education at the central level and 21 county HRE coordinators to facilitate the implementation of HRE in schools. HRE teacher training seminars are regularly announced in the *Catalogue of Professional Meetings* which is issued by the MoES twice a year and disseminated to schools. They are often realised in cooperation with external experts and some NGOs (Small Step, Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights, Forum for the Freedom of Education, Croatian Red Cross, Kulturkontakt etc.). In the last several years the training has included a wide range of topics, such as: curricular approach to HRE; protection of the child's rights in school, cooperative learning; project and workshop teaching; partnership with parents and the local community; student-oriented HRE planning; quality communication in HRE; HRE and students with special needs, European Dimension in schools; prevention of risk behaviour; HIV and AIDS prevention in education; Holocaust; HRE in the context of students' disburdening approach etc.

The reactions of the teachers who have received training in HRE indicate that the National HRE Programme may be used as a broad framework or 'glue' for a variety of projects and activities carried out by schools and NGOs in this field, including primarily Croatian Citizenship Sites in Varazdin, Zagreb and Labin; Europe in School; Quality School Movement Project; Project 'Citizen'; YouthNET Project (European Youth, School and Community Network); Human Values Project; Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking; Debate Club; Peer Mediation Project and number of others. Some HRE and EDC projects have brought considerable changes into schools and their local communities, especially in regard to students' participation in decision-making (Students' Clubs in schools, Youth City Councils, youth volunteer initiatives etc), as well as in regard to new approaches to school organisation, planning and management (self-improving schools; all-school development planning etc.). In some cases the implementation of the *National Strategy for Prevention of Violence in Schools* of 2001 and the initiatives regarding HIV/AIDS drug abuse awareness rising are well attuned with the objectives of HRE and EDC.

Several steps forward in the implementation of HRE and EDC were made in 2002 and in the beginning of 2003:

- Firstly, the National HRE Committee decided in 2002 to establish the coordinating units for HRE and EDC from preschool to university level, including adult education and media. A special coordination for EDC for all levels was also set up. The units are expected to develop a more efficient strategy for implementation of HRE and EDC throughout the system which is still lacking in Croatia.
- Secondly, the Department for International Cooperation in Education of the MoES sent in February 2003 to all local government offices for education a letter with a translated version of the *Recommendation (2002)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for democratic citizenship*. The purpose of this

communication was to bring the local offices' attention to the Recommendation as an important contribution to implementation of National HRE Programme. Local offices are explicitly asked to disseminate the Recommendation to all schools under their jurisdiction and to support school and NGOs projects and initiatives in HRE and EDC with a view to better prepare Croatia for the European Year of Citizenship in 2005.

- Thirdly, a special tender for NGOs projects in education was launched by MoES in spring of 2003 on the basis of the government's decision to allocate lottery tax to NGOs activities which was also in line with the new *Law on Association* and the *Programme of Co-operation of the Government of Croatia with Non-governmental - Non-profit Sector in the Republic of Croatia*, of 2001. However, the decision has actually discriminated against schools which are only rarely and insignificantly financially supported for such projects by the MoES despite the fact that they are expected to implement HRE and EDC in their curricula and extra-curricular activities.

Another contribution to developing HRE and EDC in Croatia is the establishment of the Research and Training Center for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship as a self-supporting unit of the Faculty of Philosophy University of Zagreb in 2002. The Centre aims to promote interdisciplinary research, curricula development, training and data collection in HRE and EDC, especially for the university level and in regards to teacher training which is still underdeveloped in Croatia. The Centre's web-site (<http://www.ffzg.hr/hre-edc>) is meant to be developed both as an information and interaction site for researchers and practitioners in HRE and EDC field. In addition, the Centre has disseminated more than 1,500 publications in HRE and EDC developed by the former UNESCO project on Peace and Human Rights for Croatian Primary Schools and the Council of Europe project on EDC (Interdisciplinary Dictionary, the Collection of International and National documents in HR, Stocktaking Research on EDC in Croatia etc.) to schools, libraries, NGOs and faculties in Croatia and other countries in SEE.

However, the implementation of HRE and EDC in Croatia is still unsystematic and sporadic and it depends on the individual motivation of teachers and school principals, what makes this field even more vulnerable. This is mostly due to the fact, as stated above, that HRE and EDC are not explicitly referred to in any of the strategic papers on education reform launched by the MoES. This is inconsistent with the fact that human rights, democracy and citizenship are defined as the target values of educational reform.

### **Changes indirectly affecting the implementation of HRE and EDC**

Since 2001 there have been a certain number of changes in education and youth sector that may indirectly trigger further development of HRE and EDC in Croatia.

- In December 2002 the State Institute for the Protection of Family, Maternity and Youth launched a demanding *National Programme of Action for Youth in the Republic of Croatia* as a means of implementing the Article 62 of the Constitution which establishes the duty of the state 'to protect maternity, children and youth, as

well as to create social, cultural, educational and material and other preconditions for promoting the right to live in dignity'. The Programme defines the guiding principles of the youth policy, sets up concrete measures and identifies main actors responsible for implementation at the level of central and local government and self-government, as well as among public institutions and civil society organisations. Some of the key objectives of the working plan refer to the promotion of youth active participation in decision-making at local and national level, the mobility and engagement of young people in civil society, the introduction of an open system of formal and informal education, the promotion of continuous and life-long skill-oriented learning, counselling, and support to youth NGOs and NGOs for youth. The future National Youth Council is expected to contribute to the implementation of the working plan by, *inter alia*, coordinating the activities of the local youth councils, including educational and training dimension.

- In 2002 the Institute for Development in Education was established as an independent institution. Prior to that, the Institute had acted as a special MoES' agency responsible for pedagogical and methodological supervision of schools, as well as for teacher training in subject-matter, including HRE and EDC. Its main project for 2002-03 refers to designing and implementing a disburdening model for elementary school and gymnasium. Instead of an earlier subject-matter-centred approach, the model introduces the so-called teaching areas developed through the process of integration and coordination of different teaching contents, including HRE and EDC. The focus is on promoting 'life skills' in school and out-of-school activities of students which suggest the reduction of extra-school activities imposed on students by their parents, as well. The results have been published in a series of 8 publications (5 for elementary school and 3 for gymnasium) entitled *A Curricular Approach to Changes in Elementary Schooling/Gymnasium: Detailed Working Out of the Framework Plan and Programme in the Function of Disburdening of Students*. Another project in which the Institute takes part is the reform of vocational education and training which is being carried out through the CARDS Programme. The reform has been drafted by the Croatian government and the European Commission on the basis of the ETF's assessment. The focus is on curriculum change, decentralisation, and teacher training.
- In 2002 the Centre for Research and Development in Education (CERD) was put into operation on the basis of agreement between MoES, Ministry of Science and Technology (MST) and the Open Society Institute – Croatia. The mandate of the Centre is to support reform by conducting four projects, i.e. the feasibility study on the duration of compulsory education; the drafting of national curriculum and a catalogue of knowledge and skills (indicators of quality); the improvement of teacher training in the context of life-long education; and development of a system of internal and external evaluation in education. The project on evaluation received an important support in July 2003 when the government passed the Law on the Establishment of the Centre for Evaluation in Education as an independent national agency for promoting external evaluation in education with an initial mandate to set up the state matura exam.

- In 2002-3 academic year the MoES has allocated special resources for: the development of professional (teachers) councils at the county and municipality/town level and the improvement of teacher in-service training; the training of school principals and the establishment of the National Council of School Principals; the renewal of school advisory services encompassing pedagogues, psychologists and special educators and improvement of their in-service training; the implementation of school security (drugs and AIDS prevention) programmes; the promotion of multiple foreign languages learning and for further computerisation of schools and teacher training in ICT.
- In 2003 the government adopted the *Textbook Standard* which, apart from scientific, psychological, didactic-methodological, linguistic, esthetical and technical standards, defines ethical standards for the development of school textbooks. Ethical standards are said to be based on the principles of “truthfulness, authenticity, objectivity, universal human rights, democracy and patriotism”. Consequently, the textbook should, *inter alia*, strengthen the commitment to the principles of democracy and the rule of law; oppose the promotion of anti-democratic ideologies; affirm respect for differences and minority cultures; reflect plurality of the Croatian society and accurately present different religious and ethnic groups, as well as oppose discrimination and hate speech on the ground of sex, age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and religion, socio-economic background etc.
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### III. PRACTITIONERS' VIEWPOINTS

Since no resources were provided to survey the practitioners' and stockholders' viewpoints on the development of HRE and EDC in the country after 2001 when the first stocktaking research on EDC policies was carried out, we shall briefly summarised the results of two studies which were conducted by the Research and Training Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship of the Faculty of Philosophy University of Zagreb in the framework of two regional projects. The Project on Education for Democratic Citizenship: From Policy to Effective Practice through Quality Assurance (EDC-QA) has been coordinated by CEPS from Ljubljana, Slovenia. Croatian part of the research was conducted in May-June 2003 on the basis of structured interviews with 48 decision-makers, strategy writers, superior advisers, researchers, teachers, NGO trainers and trade-unionists. The Research on Croatian Youth was carried out in December 2002-January 2003 as part of a regional study coordinated by the PRONI Institute, Sweden. The questionnaire was applied on 950 young respondents.

When compared to the 2001 Stocktaking research, the results of the EDC-QA study confirm that very few obstacles to development of EDC in the country have been efficiently removed between 2001 and 2003. However, it seems that the awareness about EDC has been raised considerably among the practitioners and that more schools have been implementing such projects alone or in cooperation with local or international IGOs or NGOs. The most promising in this respect is the fact that the interest for HRE and

EDC has been growing among schools located in small towns. Several reports confirm that the implementation of HRE and EDC has an important impact on curricula, methods of teaching, teacher-student relations and school climate, as well as on the relations of schools to parents and local community. Many respondents from the EDC-QA study confirmed that HRE and EDC had a central role in developing the system of quality assurance in education since they provide teachers and students with skills and competences which are necessary for schools' planning and self-improvement. It has been said that the definition of quality necessarily includes the issues of EDC, in particular the awareness of human rights and freedoms, participation, equality of treatment, respect for diversity, environmental awareness, individual responsibility etc. One of the respondents put it briefly: *"Education quality without human rights is problematic."*

Many practitioners are concerned with the fact that HRE and EDC have no place in education strategy papers and that no clear directive has been launched yet by the Ministry. Besides, they see the barriers to development of HRE and EDC in *"an outmoded approach to knowledge that stresses quantity of information instead of intellectual, social and communicative skills and competencies by which learning is set free from school and linked to life."* The lack of school autonomy, formalism of the national inspectorate, inadequacy of advisory service and the lack of accountability, were often mentioned as factors which hinder the integration of HRE and EDC into teaching. In addition, an important suggestion was made to include HRE and EDC among the indicators of education quality.

The data from our Research on Youth demonstrate that the decision-makers should put more effort to promote learning for participative and responsible citizenship based on respect for human rights and freedoms at all levels of Croatian society. A strong argument for this is the necessity to bridge the gap between the ideal and the real which characterises the youth's perception of Croatian society. Namely, the values that are mostly preferred by Croatian youth are healthy environment, peace, gender equality, individual rights and freedoms, solidarity, social justice, economic security, respect for differences and the rule of law. However, when asked about the values which they see as the most important for the upward mobility in Croatian society many young people mention adaptive behaviour and 'important' connections and acquaintances. Moreover, over one third of the surveyed think that national background and party membership, as well as bribing and corruption are equally important for someone's success. These findings are even more troublesome when compared to earlier studies on youth in which almost the same factors of social promotion dominate. The fact that there is no significant difference in perception of Croatian society between the 'socialist' and 'transitional' youth is the strongest argument for the development of HRE and EDC.

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND RELATED MATERIALS

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Citizenship of the Faculty of Philosophy University of Zagreb, April 2003 (soon at <http://www.ffzg.hre-edc>).

*Thematic Review of National Policies for Education: Croatia*. Paris: OECD, 2001 Doc. CCNM/DEELSA/ED(2001)5.

*Vocational Education and Training in Croatia*. Turin: European Training Foundation, 2001.

### 3

## IMPORTANT ORGANISATIONS IN EDC/HRE

### NGOs and similar organisations/institutions

B.a.b.e. - Grupa za zenska ljudska prava (Be active, Be emancipated – Women's Human Rights Group)

<http://www.babe.hr>

Centar za direktnu zastitu ljudskih prava (Center for Direct Protection of Human Rights)

<http://www.zamir.net/~dphr/>

Centar za mir, nenasilje i ljudska prava – Osijek (Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights, Osijek)

<http://www.centar-za-mir.hr>

Centar za mirovne studije (Centre for Peace Studies)

<http://www.zamir.net/~cms>

Centar za zenske studije (Centre for Women's Studies – Zagreb)

<http://www.zenstud.hr/>

Društvo za psiholosku pomoc (DPP) (Society for Psychological Assistance)

<http://www.dpp.hr/>

Europski dom Zagreb (Europe House Zagreb)

Europski pokret Hrvatska (European Movement Croatia)

<http://www.europe-house-zagreb.hr>

Europski klub mladih (EuroYouth Club)

<http://www.eyc.hr>

Forum za slobodu odgoja (Forum for Freedom in Education)

<http://www.fso.hr>



Hrvatski Crveni kriz (Croatian Red Cross)

<http://www.hck.hr>

Hrvatski helsinski odbor za ljudska prava (Croatian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights)

<http://www.hho.hr>

Hrvatski obrazovni portal skola (Croatian Educational School portal)

<http://skole.hinet.hr>

Hrvatski pravni centar (Croatian Law Centre)

<http://www.hpc.hr>

Hrvatsko debatno društvo (Croatian Debating Society)

<http://www.hdd.hr>

Istrazivacko-obrazovni centar za ljudska prava i demokratsko gradjanstvo Filozofskog fakulteta Sveucilista u Zagrebu (Research and Training Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship, Faculty of philosophy University of Zagreb), email: [hre-edc@ffzg.hr](mailto:hre-edc@ffzg.hr); web: <http://www.ffzg.hr/hre-edc>

“Korak po Korak”, Udruga roditelja (Association Parents’ *Step by Step*)

<http://www.korakpokorak.hr>

Mali korak - Centar za kulturu mira i nenasilja Zagreb (Small Step – Centre for Culture of Peace and Nonviolence Zagreb)

<http://human-rights.net/MALI-KORAK>

web-stranice hrvatskih osnovnih i srednjih skola (Web-pages of Croatian Elementary and Secondary Schools)

<http://skola.sys.hr/skole/indeks.htm>

## **Practitioners/Researchers/Programme designers**

### NGOs

- Ms. Renata Bacic, Europe House Zagreb, Jurisiceva 1, 10000 Zagreb  
<http://www.europe-house-zagreb.hr> (youth training in EDC and HRE; Europe in School)
- Dr. Biljana Kasic, Centar za zenske studije Zagreb (Centre for Women’s Studies Zagreb), Berislaviceva 12, 10000 Zagreb <http://www.zenstud.hr/> (women’s rights, responsive patterns of communication)
- Ms. Katarina Kruhonja, Centar za mir, nenasilje i ljudska prava – Osijek (Centre for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights, Osijek), Zupanijska 7, 31 000 Osijek  
<http://www.centar-za-mir.hr> (EDC and HRE programme development ; teacher and student non-formal training)

- Ms. Mira Kunstek, Udruga roditelja 'Korak po korak' (Step-by-Step), Fausta Vrancica bb, 10000 Zagreb <http://www.korakpokorak.hr> (non-formal training in DC and HR)
- Ms. Vesna Puhovski, Forum za slobodu odgoja (Forum for the Freedom of Education), Kralja Drzislava 12, 10000 Zagreb <http://www.fso.hr> (training in critical thinking skills, non-formal training in DC and HR)
- Ms. Mirjana Radakovic, Centar za ljudska prava (Center for Human Rights), Kralja Drzislava 6, 10000 Zagreb (non-formal training in DC and HR)
- Ms. Sanja Sarnavka, B.a.b.e. (Be active, Be emancipated – Women's Human Rights Group), Vlaška 79/III, 10000 Zagreb <http://www.babe.hr> (violations of women's rights, gender equity, gender stereotypes in textbooks)
- Božica Sedlic, Europski dom Slavonski Brod, Antuna Barca 30, 35 000 Slavonski Brod (youth training in HR and DC)
- Ms. Maja Uzelac, Mali korak (Small Step), Kraljevec 77a, 10000 Zagreb <http://human-rights.net/MALI-KORAK> (EDC and HRE programme development ; teacher in-service training; students' peer-mediation)
- Mr. Tihomir Ziljak, Pucko otvoreno uciliste Zagreb, Ulica Grada Vukovara 68, 10000 Zagreb (adult education in DC and HR)

Teachers' Academy, 10000 Zagreb, Savska 77/III

- Prof. Dr. Milan Matijevic (programme development and teacher training in HRE and EDC)
- Ms. Renata Ridjicki (programme development and teacher training in HRE and development education)
- Prof. Dr. Majda Rijavec (programme development and teacher training in self-empowerment)
- Prof. Dr. Mile Silov (programme development and teacher training in HRE)
- Dr. Biserka Soco (programme development and teacher training in democratic skills)
- Ms. Velimira Velicki (programme development and teacher training in democratic skills)
- Dr. Vrgoc, HPKZ, Trg marsala Tita 4, 10000 Zagreb (teacher training in democracy and tolerance)

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 10000 Zagreb, Ivana Lucica 3

- Prof. Dr. Vjekoslav Afric, Department of Sociology (HRE/EDC and ICT)
- Ms. Jasmina Bozic, Research and Training Center for HRE and EDC (HRE, training of Roma youth for leadership)
- Prof. Dr. Gvozden Flego, Department of Philosophy (university students' training in HRE and EDC)
- Dr. Neven Hrvatic, Department of Education (research on Roma)

- Prof. Dr. Dubravka Males, Department of Education (programme development and preschool teacher training in HRE and EDC)
- Prof. Dr. Zarko Puhovski, Department of Philosophy and Croatian Helsinki Committee (promotion of human rights and freedoms, democracy and civil society)
- Prof. Dr. Vedrana Spajic-Vrkas, Department of Education and the Research and Training Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship (programme development, research and teacher training in HRE and EDC)
- Prof. Dr. Vlasta Vizek, Department of Psychology (university training in critical thinking skills)

Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, 10000 Zagreb, Trg marsala Tita 14

- Mr. Djordje Gardasevic (training in HR)
- Prof. Dr. Dubravka Hrabar (Child's rights)
- Dr. Sinisa Rodin (European law; training in HR)

Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Zagreb, 10000 Zagreb, Lepusiceva 3

- Mr. Berto Salaj (university students' training and research in civic education)
- Prof. Dr. Vladimir Vujcic (university programme development and training and research in civic education)

Experts from other higher education, research and similar institutions

- Prof. Dr. Biserka Belicza, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 10000 Zagreb, Zrinski trg 11 (genome, health and HR)
- Dr. Branka Baranovic, Center for Research and Development in Education, Institute for Social Research Zagreb, 10000 Zagreb, Tomislavov trg 21 (gender stereotypes in textbooks)
- Prof. Dr. Ladislav Bogner, Faculty of Education, University of Osijek, 31000 Osijek, L. Jagera 9 (programme development and teacher training in HRE and EDC)
- Prof. Dr. Jasminka Ledic, Faculty of Philosophy University of Rijeka, 51 000 Rijeka, Omladinska 14 (teacher training in promoting democracy and civil society)
- Ms. Nevenka Loncaric, Institute for Development in Education, 10000 Zagreb, Badaliceva 21 (teacher training in HRE and EDC)
- Dr. Elvi Pirsl, Faculty of Philosophy – Pula, University of Rijeka, 52 000 Pula, Ivana Matetica Ronjgova 1 (teacher training in intercultural education)
- Dr. Sanja Spoljar Vrzina, Institute of Anthropology - Zagreb, 10000 Zagreb, Ulica Grada Vukovara 72/IV (medical sciences and HR)

- Ms. Ivanka Stricevic, Knjiznica Medvescak, 10000 Zagreb, Trg zrtava fasizma 7 (programme development and preschool teacher training in HRE and EDC; HRE and library service)
- Prof. Dr. Petar Veic, Police Academy Zagreb, 10000 Zagreb, Avenija G. Suska 1 (police training programmes in HRE and democracy)

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### EDC COORDINATOR'S PERSONAL BACKGROUND

**Prof. Vedrana SPAJIC-VRKAS, Ph.D.**

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#### Curriculum vitae

Prof. Vedrana Spajic-Vrkas, Ph.D., teaches pre-graduate and/or post-graduate courses in *Educational Anthropology, Interculturalism and Education, Culture and Identity and Art and Education* at the Faculty of Philosophy University of Zagreb (Department of Education and the Chair of Anthropology). She is the founder and presently the director of the Research and Training Centre for Human and Democratic Citizenship of the Faculty of Philosophy. As a guest lecturer she has visited several universities in Europe and US and was from 2000-02 co-lecturing at the Central European University Summer Course on Intercultural Citizenship: Southeast European Context.

She has co-ordinated number of scientific and development projects related to education and culture, including education for human rights, democratic citizenship, peace and intercultural understanding. In particular, she was the co-ordinator of the UNESCO Project on Peace and Human Rights for Croatian Primary Schools (1997-99); one of the co-ordinators of the UNESCO MOST project for Croatia (1996-98); member of the Council of Europe project 'Education for Democratic Citizenship' (1997-00); coordinator of the Council of Europe and the Graz-Process Stocktaking Research in EDC for Croatia (2000-01); member of the Project EURED (Education for Europe as Peace Education – 1998-01), co-ordinator of the Project SEE HRC-NET for Croatia (South East Europe Human Rights Centres Network – 2001-02) and a coordinator of the PRONI regional project 'Research on Youth' for Croatia (2002-03), as well as the coordinator of the Project on EDC-Quality Assurance for Croatia (2003-)

Upon the invitation from the Council of Europe, UNESCO, Enhanced-Graz Process and some other international organisations she has been the reporter, moderator and/or trainer at a great number of European or SEE conferences, seminars and workshops.

She is the author/co-author and co-editor of number of professional publications and scientific articles in Croatian or English. The most recent books include a series in *Education for Human Rights and Democracy* (e.g. *Interdisciplinary Dictionary*, 2001; *International and National HR Documents*, 2001); *Strategies for Learning Democratic Citizenship* (2000); *Human Rights for Non-lawyers* (2002) and *Peace Education in Europe: Visions and experiences* (2003). Some of her recent articles are: *Learning for civic empowerment and responsibility in Europe: visions, provisions and barriers; Visions vs. provisions vs. reality: political changes and education for democratic citizenship in Croatia; From monoculture to interculture : A critical perspective on the development of pluralism in education ; Pluriculturalism and education: beyond the folklore of separation and the rhetoric of integration; Globalisation and education: the apocalypse of paradise or the paradise of apocalypse; International standards and strategies for learning human rights; An attempt in redefining modernisation of schooling in the context of European integration; Peace and education for peace: long-lasting search for a global solution; (De)construction of the (de)constructed: anthropological theory and social construction of identity; Cultural discontinuity and search for identity: the case of post-communist Croatia; Croatian public administration and NGO in the educational arena: Is there a forgotten ally waiting to join in?*

She was the co-author of the National HRE Programme for Primary School and is presently the coordinator of the University HRE and EDC programme of the National HRE Committee. In addition, she is the head of the Commission for Assessment of Projects in Education of the Croatian Ministry of Science and Technology; the Head of the Education Commission of the Open Institute – Croatia and the member of the Croatian Commission for UNESCO.

She received the Fulbright Grant for the University of California at Berkeley (1993-94); the National Award 'Ivan Filipovic' for promoting Croatian educational theory and practice (1996); the 'Coat of Arms of the City of Makarska' (1996) and the 'Award of the Municipality of Tucepi' (2002) for promoting local cultural heritage; 'European Circle Award' in human rights from the European Movement – Croatia and the European House – Zagreb (2002). In 2002 she was nominated for the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education by the HR Committee of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.