

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 11: Assessment of EDC/HRE in schools

Democracy is not an automatic mechanism. Democracy is on the one hand a historical achievement in old democracies and on the other hand a result of a long-lasting process which depends on the specific situation in a country. Democratic attitudes are not given by nature but have to be acquired by every single person through experiences in social contexts, in family and in school. Democracy cannot only be learned in EDC/HRE lessons. Democracy has to unfold itself in the various informal and formal structures of a school. Therefore, school has a key role for a stable democratic society. Furthermore, “a democratically structured and functioning school will not only promote EDC/HRE and prepare its students to take their place in society as engaged democratic citizens: it will also become a happier, more creative and more effective institution”.⁴²

Schools can be assessed using certain criteria to identify the quality of EDC/HRE teaching as well as the degree of lived and practised human rights values and democracy in the school. This can be done using self-evaluation practices.

For evaluating EDC/HRE in schools one needs indicators which reflect different areas of expression. These three main areas are:⁴³

- curriculum, teaching and learning;
- school climate and ethos;
- management and development.

Furthermore, these indicators present EDC/HRE as a principle of school policy and school organisation, and as a pedagogical process.

In this volume we suggest instruments and tools for the self-evaluation of a school, involving all participants of school, not only external evaluators. Self-evaluation in this context also means viewing evaluation as the starting point in a process of improvement, not as an end to something that has happened.

For a more detailed description of measuring a school in terms of democratic school governance please see work files 12 to 18.

42. Council of Europe (2007), *Democratic Governance of Schools*, Strasbourg, p. 6.

43. Council of Europe (2005), *Democratic Governance of Schools*, Strasbourg.