



May 2013



Dear Colleagues,

To help our working groups to cope with their escalating workload in capacity building and democratic school culture activities, we strengthened them with new researchers and academicians in April.

Between May and the end of June, our pilot primary schools will feel our presence in their schools much more. Democratic School Culture Working Group has completed to activities, "Discovering the problems around me" and "Class reconciliation commission" and they will be sent to pilot schools in May. Further activities on "Peer matching" and "Stop bullying" will follow. The experts who have developed these activities will also visit pilot schools to observe their implementation on the spot and they will also bring together the school principals and teachers from pilot schools in June to inform them about ways of strengthening democratic school culture.

We are getting ready for a busy and fruitful summer period. Our team will work hard to make sure that our schools are ready both for the elective course on democracy and human rights and for the democratic school culture activities which underline the whole school approach.

Dr Hüseyin Şirin  
Board Member / Board of Education  
EDC/HRE Coordinator Turkey



Dear colleagues,

We held the fourth Project Steering Committee meeting in April. It was a chance to get a bigger picture of the progress but also to celebrate our achievements, as mentioned by the senior international expert of the project Prof. David Kerr.

In the last year and a half we have achieved a lot. So far we have sent delegations to the five countries with the most developed EDC/HRE practices in Europe. More than 100 civil servants from Turkey have observed the best European practices and more importantly created networks all over Europe. During our visit to Dublin, we all made good friends with Prof Aidan Clifford of the Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education and Skills. He said "Education policy is a statement from the good times of the past that we leave as a forecast to our children".

In our project, now is the time when we need to turn the pilot into a proper course that will run nation wide. Our examples of democratic school culture need to become good policies in all schools. We are moving out of the piloting phase and we need to make sure all the little details are correct and all the loose ends are tied up and ready for the new school year. We have full confidence and faith in our team. Our project's SPO, Mr Salih Celik, praised the project during the Steering Committee meeting. The Head of the Board of Education, Mr Emin Karip, personally gave instructions on the next steps and invited the best national experts from Turkey to work with us. Generation Democracy can do it!

Emir Adzovic  
DC/HRE Project Team Leader





## Highlights of April 2013

- ✎ The Fourth Project Steering Committee Meeting was held on 9<sup>th</sup> April. The meeting was chaired by Mr Salih Çelik, Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of National Education of Turkey and the Senior Programme Officer of the Project. The meeting brought together representatives of all General Directorates of the MoNE, Central Finance and Contracts Unit, the EU Delegation to Turkey, the Ministry of EU Affairs, the Beneficiary, NGOs, and all the other relevant stakeholders. Ms Ólöf Ólafsdóttir, Director for Democratic Citizenship and Participation Department of the Council of Europe represented the secretariat and gave an opening speech along with Mr Erwan Marteil, First Counsellor of the European Union to Turkey. There was a strong emphasis on prospects of further cooperation from all partners. NGO involvement was at the centre of discussions in most of the agenda items and a number of proposals were made to foster the presence of NGOs in project activities and working procedures. Revising the existing 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum on EDC/HRE and adapting it for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade was another hot topic, as it was officially announced that this activity will also be a part of the DCHRE Project.
- ✎ We visited our pilot schools in Mardin, Sakarya, Konya, and Samsun. The EU Delegation also took part in the visit to Konya to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot visits. Their presence added to the positive atmosphere and the motivation of all the people involved. The main purpose of this round of visits was to get detailed feedback from teachers and students about the textbook that is being drafted at the moment.
- ✎ In the last week of April, a delegation including 7 school principals from Edirne, İstanbul, Konya, Mardin, Mersin, and Samsun, and representatives of the Board of Education and the Ministry of National Education visited the Republic of Ireland. The study visit aimed at familiarising the participants with Ireland's educational policy and school system, as well as demonstrating examples of good practice in the field of education for democratic citizenship and participation. The ambitious programme of the study visit, which produced tangible results going beyond our expectations, prompted us to prepare a more elaborate narrative about it, so please refer to our "Diary" on the last four pages of this.
- ✎ Generation Democracy was represented at the Education Reform Initiative (ERI) 10th Annual Conference of Best Practices in Education, organized by Sabancı University (13th April 2013). Our project had a stand at the venue, where we distributed our information brochures and visibility materials.

## What will we be doing in May 2013?

More specifically the major upcoming activities in May may be summarised as follows:

- ✎ In this period there will be much more emphasis on democratic school culture during our visits to pilot schools which will continue with the following schedule:
  - 13 May – Manisa
  - 17 May – Elazığ
  - 27 May – Yozgat





- ✎ The Curriculum Review and Legislation Review Working Groups will share their reports with the relevant departments of the Ministry of National Education to ensure the sustainability of their results.
- ✎ The deadline for the submission of activities for our competitions is approaching and we are looking forward to finding out who the successful teachers and their activities are.

## News from our pilot schools

- ✓ With the start of the second semester, our pilot schools have become more active in the field of EDC/HRE and democratic school culture. We do not want you to miss out the news, so here is a non-exhaustive list of their main activities:
  - ◆ In Manisa, İsmet İnönü Girls Technical High School took part in activities for 8 March, Women's Day.
  - ◆ Üsküdar Cumhuriyet Technical and Vocational High School students volunteered in the "Young People's Tree of Deeds" organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The aim of the project is to encourage students to take part in actions to provide services to the society and to raise awareness by documenting the activities through visuals.
  - ◆ Last month we announced the Facebook profiles of four pilot schools and this month we would like to add two more. They are also owned and developed by the students. The interaction between these groups will also increase in time, reaching hundreds and thousands of students all over Turkey. Who knows, we might even go beyond our expectations and reach out to students from all over Europe.
    - ✓ Dedekorkut Anadolu Lisesi: <http://www.facebook.com/dkaldemokrasi.kusagi>
    - ✓ Sakarya Cemil Meriç Sosyal Bilimler Lisesi: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/E-Demokrasi/172329052918599>

## Visibility

- ✓ We are making progress with the scenarios for the TV spot for the promotion of the elective course on Democracy and Human Rights for the next academic year. The offers received went through a meticulous evaluation process and now we are at the stage of refining the scenarios that meet our expectations more or less. The release of the spot film will be slightly delayed, but we feel confident to report that it is in good hands and in full ownership of the Ministry.
- ✓ The Facebook profile <http://www.facebook.com/DemokrasiKusagi> and Twitter profile <https://twitter.com/demokrasikusagi> will continue to stimulate interaction between interested parties and to spread our messages. Do visit these and post your ideas.

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## Ireland Diary

**Our delegation consisting of 7 school principals from Edirne, İstanbul, Konya, Mardin, Mersin, and Samsun, and representatives of the Board of Education and the Ministry of National Education set off on 21 April 2013 for the study visit to Dublin. The visit aimed at familiarising the participants with Ireland's educational policy and school system, as well as demonstrating examples of good practice in the field of education for democratic citizenship and participation.**

**22 April, Monday**

Dublin welcomed us with a bright, sunny face which was disturbed by sudden showers from time to time, but still pleasant enough for us to enjoy our visit.

Our official programme started early on Monday morning with a session in the Department of Education and Skills (DES), the regulating body in the field of education. There we were welcomed by Mr Aidan Clifford, who was our host throughout the week and showed us great hospitality. Mr Kevin McCarthy, Divisional Inspector made a presentation on the Irish Education system in general and we were introduced to the basics in order to have a full grasp of what we were going to see in the following days.

We were informed that EDC/HRE contents are dealt with in Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) at primary level. In the lower-secondary level this is followed by another course called Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), which is a part of their completion test. It was quite remarkable to see that in their completion test the written exam only accounts for 40% of the students' overall score and the remaining 60% is based on the project activity that each student has to be involved in. This weighting of scores itself is a tool to encourage active citizenship as the main attainment of the course.

In addition to this one-hour individual course, who also have the whole school approach in which they try to build up relevant skills, attitudes and values in all other subjects and in the ethos of the school. Unfortunately, they do not have any follow-up course in the upper-secondary, which corresponds to our high schools.





Having learned about the practises in general, we paid a visit to Larkin Community College to see how it works in real life. There we were welcomed very warmly and we had a series of presentations by students and by representatives of several NGOs, including Ms Fiona King from the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) and Ms Helen Beaumont from the National Museum of Ireland. The number of projects and the amount of work the students carry out in cooperation with local NGOs was quite remarkable. We were impressed by the active participation of students in their own community through such collaboration with social partners. Last but not least we shall not forget the personal touch they offered through the songs performed by one of the teachers and one of the students. Also we would like to thank once more Dean, Christin, Marcus, Rodka, Eoinlee, and all the other students who shared their feelings and experience with us.

In the final session of the day, we had a much more detailed presentation on CSPE and current reforms on the Student Councils in Irish schools by Mr Conor Harrison, former National Coordinator of CSPE support service, and Ms Deirdre Phelan, Deputy Principal & former National Coordinator of the Student Council Support Service on the Citizenship. In the last session, Ms Mairin Wilson, a staff member in the Church of Ireland College of Education and author of a textbook on CSPE, made a presentation about how CSPE is assessed formally. It was interesting to learn that CPSE will no longer be part of the national assessment within the new framework.

*23 April, Tuesday*

On Tuesday, we had two school visits on our agenda for the morning session, so we split into two groups. While one group visited Colaiste Pobal Setanda Post Primary School, a school considered as a human rights friendly school chosen by Amnesty International; the other group visited Mercy Secondary School. Mercy is an all-girls school and there again we were informed that there is a strong bond between the students and civil society. After lunch we went to Trinity College, where we met our colleagues from School of Education. There we met Ms Carmel O'Sullivan, Co-ordinator of the Division of Continuous Professional Development in the School of Education, who gave a lively and enthusiastic presentation on the use of drama in teaching, especially when teaching social justice and equality. We were also informed about existing cooperation between Trinity College and a number of universities in Turkey on "Educational Drama". Then we listened to Ms Anne Molloy speaking about the work of Amnesty International in the field of EDC/HRE.

After these sessions, a cultural element was added to our visit as we had the privilege to see the Book of Kells in the old Library of the College. A professor guided us through the library and gave an elaborate presentation on the Book of Kells.





*24 April, Wednesday*

Wednesday also started with school visits. This time one group visited Loreto Bray Secondary School, while the other visited Newpark Secondary School. In both schools our focus was the students' councils. We met the representatives and asked numerous questions to understand how they function and how they feel about it. They care about their own environment at school and their activities mostly aim at improving their conditions and providing support to those in need. Moreover, they try to reach out to even the remotest parts of the world to offer their help to people when there is a disaster or war. They care about diversity, multi-culturalism and mental health.

Right after the school visit we went to visit the Amnesty International exhibition called "Voice our Concern 2013", where we had the chance to see the concrete outputs of the projects carried out by the schools.

In the afternoon, we attended two important sessions at the CDVEC Head Office Ballsbridge. In the first session, Ms Jude Cosgrove, from the Education Research Centre (ERC), an independent research organization responsible for ICCS in Ireland, made a presentation on the key results of the [International Civic and Citizenship Education Study \(ICCS 2009\)](#) and told us what Ireland has learned from the results.

As Turkey also wants to be a part of the next study round of ICCS in 2016, the seminar was quite relevant and interesting for our delegation. The second session was with the NGO Global and Development Education Panel. Ms Aoife McTernan from Trócaire, Mr Michael Doorly from Concern Worldwide, and Mr Joe Clowry from Self-help Africa shared their engagement in supporting and promoting Global & Development Education in Ireland and answered our questions.

*25 April, Thursday*

In the morning we were guided by Dr. Gerry Jeffers from the National University of Ireland and Mr Aidan Clifford, our host from Teacher Education and visited St Aidan's Tallaght Secondary School and Beneavin De La Salle College. Just like in all the other schools we visited, the students are rather involved in social activities. They are dealing with a number of issues including justice and equality. They have set up a help desk and they have the chance to call for aid from relevant organisations. They took part in a programme called Young Social Initiatives. In St. Aidan's Tallaght Secondary School, which has a diverse student population, students with different ethnic and cultural background gave us a very delightful concert and showed us how they promote unity within the diversity of their school environment.

At lunch time we had the opportunity to visit Dublin Castle and the Chester Beatty Library, where we saw precious manuscripts from a number of religions. The collection includes a volume of the valuable manuscripts of the biography of the Prophet Mohammed.





In the afternoon, we visited the Ombudsman for Children, which functions as a neutral body to provide recommendations and guidance concerning the complaints they receive from children. They also aim at increasing awareness on children's rights. There we listened to the presentations of Ms Karen McAuley and Mr Manus deBarra in a children-friendly setting and atmosphere.

Our last session on Thursday was with Fidelma Joyce from the Irish Human Rights Commission (HRC), Cathal Kelly from the Equality Authority and Rachel Collier from Young Social Innovators (YSI). All these bodies have an important role supporting different education bodies and providing initiatives and raising awareness in human rights and citizenship education in Ireland. They are also influential in policy making in education and lobbying against current amendments to make EDC/HRE an elective course in the curriculum.

*26 April, Friday*

On our last day, we were together with Ms Barbara Wilson from the Irish Aid Section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Ms Annetta Honnan from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). Ms. Honnan briefed us about the on-going reform process in the Irish national curriculum, particularly about the new Junior Cycle Framework. It was equally interesting to hear from Ms. Wilson about the links between EDC/HRE and the seminars provided by Irish Aid in Development Education.

The official visit ended on the morning of 27<sup>th</sup> April leaving us pleasant memories of Ireland. Making comparisons between Ireland and Turkey is not easy as there are immense differences between the population and the surface area of the two countries, yet it was a good exercise to compare the effect of their approach to citizenship education on the overall education system. It is also interesting to observe that although the size of our countries, our schools, or the composition of our population might differ, we have a lot of common strengths and challenges; hence, we have a lot to learn from each other.

***We would like to thank all the members of the delegation and especially our pilot school principals who contributed greatly to the making of this narrative by sending their observations as soon as they returned to their schools.***

