



**EUROPEAN UNION / THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE JOINT PROJECT on
"DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION"**

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Dear colleagues,

In April, we were lucky enough to enjoy the beauty of some of the 12 million tulips planted throughout Istanbul for the tulip festival, which has become a tradition since 2004. Our month was as colourful and glamorous as the tulips blooming all around the city, reflecting its cosmopolitan character. Our project blossomed in its own way as we took part in the organization of the International Symposium on Social Studies Education, with the University of Marmara, and the Ministry of National Education. However, the month of April had much more to tell! The Launching Event, hosted by Mr Ömer Dinçer, Minister of National Education, was held on 12 April 2012 at the Rixos Hotel in Ankara. It was followed by the second meeting of the Steering Committee, which produced solid guidance to help the Working Groups to achieve their objectives. Last but not least, the Study Visit to Stockholm reinforced the capacity building of the project working groups and provided its members with insight into the Swedish education system and their approach to EDC/HRE. All in all, over the whole month, the smooth implementation of the activities set out in the description of action has brought the project back on track. With no backlogs remaining, the project team is now even more confident that the project objectives will be fulfilled in time. Let us share some of the details with you below.

Sincerely yours,
Emir Adzovic
DC/HRE Team Leader

The schedule for the first half of April was overwhelming due to the amount of preparation required for the organisation of four major events: the Launching Event, the second meeting of the Project Steering Committee, the International Symposium on Social Studies Education: 'New Trends and Issues in Citizenship and Democracy Education in a Changing World', and the Study Visit to Stockholm.

News of the month

The long-awaited Launching Event of the Project was successfully held on 12 April 2012 at the Rixos Hotel in Ankara, with the participation of senior officials from the MoNE, the CoE, the CFCU and the EUD. The opening speech delivered by Mr Ömer Dinçer, Minister of National Education, provided ample proof that the MoNE has full ownership of the Project. The presence of the Minister also gave rise to wide media coverage, greatly contributing to project visibility at the national level. Mr Sjur Bergan, Head of the Council of Europe's Education Department, highlighted the role and approach of the CoE in Democracy and Human Rights Education and the added value of this project being a role model for other countries in the region. The EU Ambassador and Head of the EU Delegation Turkey, Mr. Jean Maurice Ripert, also underlined the importance of teaching democracy and human rights in schools and drew attention to the political importance of the project stating that "...such a large project is a key to sustainably anchoring, in the medium to long term Copenhagen, political criteria in Turkey". The event also served as a platform for the project team and the working groups to make first contacts with provincial directors and school principals of the pilot provinces and schools.

The Launching Event was followed by the second meeting of the Project Steering Committee, at which Mr Emin Karip, Head of the Board of Education, made important remarks and provided guidance for the future planning of the WGs, mainly the Curriculum Development and Democratic School Culture WGs, which are responsible for the preparation of a revised curriculum for the elective DCHR course for secondary schools and a Democratic School Competence Framework for both primary and secondary schools respectively. The major date in their activity schedule seems to be mid-July, when they are expected to submit the draft curriculum and the framework to the Board of Education (BoE) in order to ensure that pilot implementation starts in September 2012.

One week after the two major events, the team was involved in another major organisation, the International Symposium on Social Studies Education: 'New Trends and Issues in Citizenship and Democracy Education in a Changing World', organised by the University of Marmara, the Ministry of National Education and the Council of Europe. The event was held at the Göztepe Campus of the University between 20–22 April 2012. The Project was promoted from a variety of perspectives by the keynote speakers: Prof. David Kerr, Citizenship Foundation, UK; Prof. Dr Emin Karip, Head of the Board

of Education, Turkey; Prof. Rolf Gollob, Zurich University of Teacher Education, Switzerland, and Dr Reinhild Otte, former chair of the CoE EDC/HRE Committee. Throughout the event, the project team extended its network to cover a number of national and international academicians, as well as teachers from pilot schools. Project visibility was also enhanced via a project stand at which visibility materials were distributed and information provided..

Directly after the Symposium, a Turkish delegation, consisting of members of the Democratic School Culture WG and officials from the Board of Education of the Turkish Ministry of National Education and one representative from each of the other WGs together with members of the CoE project team headed to Stockholm for a study visit. The extensive programme included visits to a number of schools, an active NGO, the National Student's Council (SVEA), the Swedish Education Agency, the Children's and Students' Ombudsman, the Swedish School Inspectorate and the Parliament. The visit provided participants with an insight into the Swedish education system and especially into the ways in which the Swedish education authorities promote and facilitate a democratic school culture in schools.

While the study visit participants were busy making observations and drawing conclusions from this international experience, the remaining WGs were also deeply engaged in the promotion of the project and strengthening the network of pilot schools. On 26th April, Project Officer Mr Ahmet Murat Kılıç made a brief presentation of the project to School Assembly Presidents from 81 provinces. Also through the collective efforts of the CoE project team and the BoE team, project promotional materials were delivered to the School Assembly Presidents.

In April, in terms of capacity building of the CoE project team, two colleagues received an on-line training on web design and development in order to enhance the visibility of the project via its website (www.edchreturkey-eu.coe.int)

Reinforced by all this input and the resulting new level of awareness about the project and its content, the focus in May will be on the production of more major project outputs and the organisation of further seminars to support the WGs:

- In the first half of May, all WGs will prepare their six-monthly plans for the period June-December in close cooperation with the CoE team.
- In the same period, a comprehensive Communication Strategy, including a PR campaign, will be drafted to facilitate efficient communication of messages to different target groups.
- May 21-25, Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Second Evaluation
 - Meetings will be held with project partners for the second evaluation round of ROM monitoring.
- The first three-monthly co-ordination meeting will be held in the second half of the month. The aim of these meetings is to share the results of the previous period with all the working group members under the supervision of the national (Dr. Ahmet Doğanay, Dr. Metin Elkatmış, Prof. Yasemin Kepenekçi) and international (Prof. David Kerr, Prof. Rolf Gollob, and Prof. Edward Huddleston) experts who have so far contributed to the project. These meeting aim to improve the co-ordination mechanism between the WGs and ensure consistency between the work of all the WGs,
- In May, the second generation of national experts will accomplish their tasks and the third generation of STEs will be contracted for the coming period.
- The preparations for the study visit of the Legislation Review WG are on track and will have been completed by the end of May.
- Last but not least, the project team will be working on the first Annual Report which is due at the end of June 2012.
- Visibility
 - The project website (www.edchreturkey-eu.coe.int) continues to be regularly updated thus further facilitating the work of WG members and STEs by providing them access to the Restricted Platform which is already available on the website.
 - The number of visitors to the website and the number of recipients of our Monthly Bulletin increase day by day as we expand our network.
 - As always, you can check our <http://www.facebook.com/groups/dchreankara/> Facebook profile and we tweet from [@dchreproject](https://twitter.com/dchreproject) profile ☺