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Project monthly bulletin, March 2012

Dear colleagues,

Finally, the vast blanket of snow has melted and we can see flowers blossoming in different shades and colours, boosting our energy as we welcome one of the busiest months of the year. In a nutshell, our project has also been blossoming throughout March 2012, producing the very first drafts of some of the main products of our action, such as the outline of the revised EDC/HRE curriculum for secondary education and the Democratic School Competence Framework following a group-specific training focusing on the needs of Curriculum Development and Democratic School Culture WGs. The first generation of national STEs successfully completed their work with WGs and the second generation has taken over. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their diligent work and their invaluable contribution to the Project and I would like to wish success to those who have now picked up the flag. WGs have started working on their monthly planning in parallel to their mid-term planning together with the project officers. Moreover, our Programme Office provided technical support in the translation of the Annexes for the Grant Scheme Programme, which will complement and support our Project results. Last but definitely not least, to enhance our own capacity-building, our Project staff attended a secretariat training organised at the HQ in Strasbourg. Greetings from the DC/HRE Ankara Team!

Sincerely Yours,

Emir Adzovic
DC/HRE Team Leader

News of the month

In March, apart from the preparations for the upcoming events and technical developments, the highlight activity of the month was the Group-Specific Training, which took place between 12 – 15 March 2012 in Volley Hotel, Ankara. Conducted under the guidance of key experts Mr Edward Huddleston and Ms Olena Stayslavska, the plenary session of the training addressed all working groups, while the second and third days focused specifically on the Curriculum Development and Democratic School Culture Working Groups. On the last day of the training, all working groups were invited to take the floor and to make a brief presentation of what they have accomplished so far as well as to share the learning experiences of the study-visits to London and to Zurich. It was an important and enriching opportunity both for the WG members and the international experts to observe the progress in each working group.

The training also witnessed the genesis of the first draft of two major documents; the outline of the concepts of the revised EDC/HRE curriculum for secondary education and the Democratic School Competence Framework. Moreover, the Material Development Working Group had the chance to display their very first draft work which includes posters, several options for a project logo and some animations.

In March, the first generation of national STEs accomplished their tasks with the WGs and the second generation of national STEs took over. Under their guidance, the WGs confidently continue meeting their objectives defined in their 6-monthly action plans. They are working on their monthly planning in parallel to their mid-term plans, in order to be able to monitor progress in the best way, as well as to maximise the support given by the CoE Project Team.

As announced in our February bulletin, the Project website has been on line since the beginning of March and has already received positive comments and has been appreciated by all interested parties. Between 01 – 21 March, the project website welcomed 156 visitors and 4,044 hits, which is expected to increase day by day as the website improves. WG members are also provided with a Restricted Platform on the website, where they can share their working papers and at the same time it offers a workflow tool, thanks to which they can easily work on the same document and revise until they generate the final version. The Programme Office is also providing support by uploading the basic documents and training materials to be used by WGs.

In terms of resources, the Programme Office also finalised the translation of three important CoE Publications which form part of the EDC/HRE Pack; namely, “Democratic Governance of Schools”, “Strategic Support for Decision Makers: Policy Tool for Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights”, and “How all Teachers Can Support Citizenship and Human Rights Education: A Framework for the Development of Competences”. The Turkish versions are now available on the project website: www.EDCHRETurkey-eu.coe.int. Translation of CoE publications will continue giving priority to materials that are most urgent for the purposes of WGs. In addition to the translation of CoE materials, the Programme Office also provided technical support to the BoE for the translation of the Annexes to the Grant Scheme Programme, which will be implemented by MoNE in parallel to the Project and is expected to contribute to the sustainability of Project results.

In March, the CoE project team was intensively involved in preparation not only for March activities but also for the upcoming events in April. In between, there was also some space for capacity building for the CoE project team as the project assistants, as well as the financial assistant, participated in an in-service training in Strasbourg between 19 – 21 March 2012.

As another relevant development, it is important to note that Mr Hüseyin Şirin was appointed as the new EDC/HRE Coordinator for Turkey. In this context, it is also noteworthy to mention that between 12-13 March 2012, the 19th EDC/HRE coordinators' meeting was held in Budapest, Hungary. The aim of the meeting was to share information on the latest EDC/HRE developments in the member states, in the Council of Europe and in other international organisations.

Following this meeting, on 14 March 2012, the 10th meeting of the South East Europe network of EDC/HRE Coordinators was also held in Budapest. The network specifically discussed strategies for regional cooperation for putting into practice the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

In the period to come, the project will be very busy implementing following activities:

- April 12, 2012, Launching Event, Rixos Hotel, Ankara
 - The Launching Event of the Project, with the participation of senior officials from the MoNE and the EUD, will feature an opening speech delivered by the Minister of National Education.
- April 12, 2012, Second Steering Committee Meeting, Rixos Hotel, Ankara
 - The Steering Committee will take place right after the Launching Event.
- April 20-22, 2012, International Symposium on Social Studies Education: “New Trends and Issues in Citizenship and Democracy Education in a Changing World”
 - Our project is co-organizing the ‘International Symposium on Social Studies Education: New Trends and Issues in Citizenship and Democracy Education in a Changing World’, in partnership with the MoNE and the University of Marmara. The Symposium will take place in the Sultanahmet Campus of Marmara University between 20 – 22 April 2012. Prof. David Kerr, Citizenship Foundation, UK; Prof. Rolf Gollob, Zurich University of Teacher Education, and Dr Reinhild Otte, the former chair of CoE EDC/HRE Committee are among the key-speakers of the Symposium. For further information and the draft programme please refer to the symposium website http://sempozyum.sosyalbilgiler.org/english/index_en.html
- April 22-28, 2012, Study Visit to Sweden
 - Study Visit to Stockholm for the members of DSCWG and one member from each WG.
- May 21-25, 2012, Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) Second Evaluation
 - Meetings will be held with project partners for the second evaluation round in the scope of Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM).
- Visibility
 - The project continues to update its website and it will further facilitate the work of WG members and STEs by giving them access to the Restricted Platform, which is already made available on the website.
 - As always, you can check our <http://www.facebook.com/groups/dchreankara/> Facebook profile and we tweet from dchreproject@twitter profile ☺