

# Sites of Citizenship as a Strategy for exporting Democratic Values

**Hanus Beran**, Institute of Social Studies, Prague

At first glance, the Council of Europe exudes the impression of a big space with an inner life that is impossible to approach from the outside. This symbol of democracy is materialised in the form of a closed and well-guarded building, where an outsider has only limited access and is allowed to visit only a very limited number of places. Information about this institution, which is supposed to represent all of us, is available almost only through the media and through the publications edited by the Council itself.

It might appear that such an institution exists only for itself, that its inner life is clearly separated from the life of average human beings. How is it possible that it can present so many European achievements of the last fifty years as its own? In its public documents we find only limited general information, and from the media we hear mostly about the production of conventions and declarations that are usually addressed to the highest political institutions of certain states, or about experts visiting a country and preparing an overall report after a three-day stay.

Is there a possibility for the Council of Europe to exercise a direct influence on events in a specific region? Is it able to export its ideas other than through the media and the political institutions of its member countries? It does indeed attempt to do so by different means. Let us take an example of an idea that is being exported: the concept of social cohesion and linked to it a project entitled Education for Democratic Citizenship.

Social cohesion is a very broad concept with a very weak definition. From the point of view of the individual, it denotes firm links with other individuals or parts of a society and their adhesion to a social system. It is related to peace within society, a state without any open and violent conflict. For the individual, social cohesion is the basis for a safe life. From the point of view of society, social cohesion is the basis of the maintenance and reproduction of the social system. Large-scale social clashes arise from low social cohesion, while stability is the product of a high level of cohesion.

Social cohesion can be based on the belief of the members of a society that it is a value in itself, on the belief that there is no need for any violent changes. People either think that the system is so good that there is no reason to make major changes, or they do not believe that the result would be worth the efforts and costs.

Social cohesion can also be based upon fear. This is very often the case in totalitarian

regimes. The members of society are afraid that their resistance to the regime would significantly harm them. Thus they prefer to respect the regime.

Social cohesion based upon fear is not compatible with the ideas of the Council of Europe. The Council has chosen a way based on the belief of the members of society in the need to maintain social order and peace. The best way to achieve this is to convince the members of society that the system in which they live is the one that fits them best.

The members of society need to know how to live in such a system. It is one of the basic conditions for their satisfaction with the system. They need to know what they can do and what they are not allowed to do. If they are supposed not to behave in a certain way, they must be given an acceptable explanation why. They need to know their rights and responsibilities and be content with the definitions thereof. If some of these factors are either incomprehensible or unacceptable, there is a real danger of a revolt. It is often the beginning of the erosion of social cohesion, order, and peace.

If a system wants to survive, it needs to care about the education of its members. It is difficult to imagine a system capable of lasting without this. The main criterion for judging a system is its ability to convince its members that their system is the best.

The Council of Europe is aware of this aspect of the matter, and this is one of the reasons why it initiated the project entitled Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC).

The EDC project deals with both theoretical and practical aspects of education. Within the project, decisions are made on what to teach, how to teach, and who will teach who; methodological tools are created and developed, and political, educational and other authorities at various levels are persuaded of the importance of such activities. The practical method of running this project is to a large extent based on so-called sites of citizenship.

### ***1. Sites of citizenship***

The sites of citizenship play an essential role in the whole project. They serve as a means of connection between the project group and civil society. The Council of Europe defines sites of citizenship as follows<sup>1</sup>:

*Sites of citizenship are new, or innovative, forms of management of democratic life.*

*The sites consist of any initiative (centre, institution, community, neighbourhood, town, city, region etc.) where there is an attempt to give definition to, and implement the principles of, modern democratic citizenship. The site is a practice, or set of practices, which will illustrate the modern-day meaning of citizenship and the structure of the relationship which supports it.*

*The notion of site is not the notion of location. It is not the place of the site which is of interest to the Project, but the redefinition of the meaning of place, which is occurring on the basis of new forms of democratic practice. The notion of site of citizenship begins from the idea that it is the affirmative act, or practice, which creates the context for identification with a location.*

*For this reason it is the act of participation which defines the site and not the place of participation.*

*Part of the interest of the site will be an examination of why and how a particular practice can affect the sense of individual and group identification with society or a cultural location. It will be to discover the conditions and influences, the structures and processes, which encourage, or discourage, the practice of democratic citizenship.*

As we can see, there is no fixed definition of a site of citizenship. The concept of the site is still very open. According to one of the members of the project group, a site of citizenship is *an initiative at the local level created by a centre or community, group, school, or an organisation which creates new or innovative possibilities for the practices of citizenship, which encourages negotiation between citizens and local structures and which also modifies the relationship between citizens.*

We can imagine a site of citizenship as an institution that has the following features:

- it consists of people interested in social affairs who solve concrete problems in a (geographic) area;
- the problems involved are connected with the institutional arrangement of society;
- it comprises part of the Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project;
- it establishes contact between the EDC project group and the civil society.

How does an activity at the local level become a site of citizenship? A connection must exist between people active in the field and the project group. This connection is usually made by persons representing a local, regional or national authority in a member or observer state, or by an international organisation or institution. The members of one of the sub-groups of the project look for activities at grassroots level that could become a part of the network of the sites of citizenship. The main criteria are *relevance with respect to the activity as a whole, budgetary considerations and a respect for geographical balance*<sup>2</sup>.

Sites of citizenship exist in France (Alsace), Scotland, Ireland and Belgium, and there are various activities and proposals in Bulgaria, Norway, Croatia (Eastern Slavonia), Spain, Canada (Quebec), and Italy.<sup>3</sup> Each site has different aims, uses different methods of work and has different target groups. The activity that links the sites together is their co-operation with the Council of Europe. There is no unified vision of a site.

I will give an example of the activities of a concrete site of citizenship, a site in Strasbourg. According to one of the people active in this site, the core group consists of approximately ten young individuals who attend courses given by an association called THEMIS. Their topic is "access of youth to law". They want to teach young people, especially those from poor immigrant districts of Strasbourg, about legal issues, so that they know their rights and responsibilities. The people from such environments should know more about the legal system, and should know their rights when they come into contact with the police. The goal of the members of the site is to make the people feel like citizens. The aim of most of the sites

is to teach people about living in contemporary society, which means to teach them about the way various institutions work, to provide them with information, to support some of their initiatives, etc.

Each site consists of a network of various institutions and individuals. All of the sites are linked to the project group, which co-ordinates their work. At the same time, the project group processes the information coming from each site and gives instructions to the other sites. It is in fact a network with the Council of Europe as its centre.

There is mutual influence between the project group and the sites. On the one hand, the sites can be viewed as independent of the Council of Europe. They are in fact spontaneous activities, observed, assisted, supported and analysed by the Council of Europe. They can directly influence the work of the project group. The project group elaborates the concepts and definitions of participative citizenship according to the information coming from the sites. The currently developed new practices of citizenship draw inspiration from the work of the sites. From this point of view, the sites are the influencing and the Council of Europe is the influenced party.

On the other hand, the sites form part of a network organised by the Council of Europe. They have been identified, discovered by it. The Council is not only a passive observer of what is going on in the sites. It has a direct influence on them, and can also influence them through other institutions, such as local governments. They are not only a source of information, but are also intended to serve as disseminators of the ideas elaborated at the Council.<sup>4</sup>

## ***2. Education, communication and ideologies***

The EDC project involves a considerable number of people. There are teams of experts, political authorities, educational authorities, the management of various non-governmental organisations (NGOs), other people active in NGOs, etc. These people live in different social environments, have different background and experience and interests. However, they are linked together through their activities in the project.

As these people are very different, it is not surprising that they have different ideas about their work. Do they all speak about the same thing when they talk about democratic citizenship? Do they have the same goals? How do they speak about their goals and activities and what vocabulary do they use?

In the official documents published by the Council, we find mainly words such as democracy, participative democracy, participative citizenship, new practices of citizenship, modern democratic citizenship, human rights, rule of law, status of a citizen, collective democratic security, combating extremism, democratic stability, social cohesion, etc. These terms are associated with ideas about how society should be organised, how it should work and fit together. In most cases, the issue is how to secure and protect the system or institutional arrangement of society and how to define the status and role of citizens. This is the point of view of society and represents its aims. The most important term here is society and its

protection and development. This approach can be viewed as holistic.

The vocabulary used by the people from the sites of citizenship is very different. They speak about helping people, social aid, humanitarian aid, poverty, difficult neighbourhoods, etc. The people do not speak in terms of the organisation of society. Those who are often in contact with Council of Europe representatives and other officials sometimes speak about democratic citizenship, but with a different connotation. They see people more as subjective individuals. For instance, the members of the Strasbourg site say that they *want to help people feel like citizens, like members of society*. In most cases they want to help individuals. The approach of these people was well illustrated by a member of the Portuguese site: *I am a social educator, so I work with the people who need me*. He does not speak about the needs of society, he speaks about the needs of single individuals. This approach can be viewed as individualistic.

As we can see, the goals expressed in the materials of the Council of Europe and the goals expressed by the people from the sites are usually very different. It is important to note that different here does not necessarily mean contradictory. Under certain circumstances it can be even complementary. However, the people from the sites did not know much about the project, and about the political background of it they knew almost nothing.

An interesting example of this is the awareness concerning the term site of citizenship. Some of the people from the sites were present at the Youth Centre at the time of our stay in Strasbourg. They were attending a mediation training course.<sup>5</sup> When I started to talk about the sites of citizenship, most of them did not know what the term meant. They knew that they themselves co-operated with the Council of Europe, but I am not sure if they were really aware that they were part of a larger network created for a specific purpose. They regarded themselves as people who were helping other people, rather than as part of a larger network whose functions included the support and promotion of an ideology.<sup>6</sup>

Ideologies can be well hidden in teaching materials. Let us examine the example of the teaching of history at primary and secondary schools in Europe.<sup>7</sup> History is a very broad concept, but the history that is taught is mostly national and military history, history of conflicts of the various ethnic groups living in Europe. It is often taught in terms of injustice, repression, victory, national pride etc. This way of teaching history is linked to the growing nationalist movements (prominent in many European countries mainly in the 19th century). The ideology behind this is that people should support their nation and develop a nationalist feeling that makes a distinction between us and them. It often attempts to show that this distinction is something natural, and many people, including the teachers themselves, take it for granted.

A history teacher might object: Ideology? What are you talking about? I tell my pupils about historical facts. Ask people who remember it, read books, you will see that it is true! The pupils have the right to know about it!. Yes, the teacher is right. But why do teachers teach about these things whilst omitting other facts? Because they teach in accordance with a nationalist ideology, of which they are not necessarily aware/conscious. Young people who

have never had the chance to encounter other views on history can then easily adopt this interpretation and transmit it further. The nationalist ideology is concealed but its effects are obvious.

This brings us to a very important educational effect. If teachers do not tell their pupils about the ideological background of what they teach, whether because they do not want to, do not find it important or simply do not know about it, it then becomes very difficult for the pupils to realise it themselves. Their choice is then very limited, because they do not know about other possibilities. Let us go back to the previous example: if the dominant historical topic is the fight of a nation against its oppressors (other nations), the people will probably become nationalists and often even xenophobes. Applied to civic education: the civic education supported by a state is usually based upon the following principle: students acquire information primarily about the positive aspects of Western democracies, and its negative aspects remain hidden as well as the positive aspects of other regimes. Underlining the positive aspects of the system it attempts to show its citizens how to behave within it. Due to its focus and limitations it is very effective.

I have touched upon an aspect of education that is very common in civic education. However, the EDC project uses another approach. According to the document entitled *Guidelines for a Site Report* (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 6), the project group wishes to ensure that the people in the sites are well informed about the ideas of the project. To a certain extent, this document outlines the ideas behind the project. They do not attempt to hide the ideological background. The strength of the project is based upon the connection between values and practice. They do not simply say "Democracy is excellent and we have the best form of it". Rather, they say "Real democracy is linked to such and such values and practices". The idea that democracy is excellent is taken for granted and nobody discusses it. The problem is then shifted: no longer is the Western form of democracy questioned, but the question is asked, which values and practices are really democratic. The discourse is changed and there are still many aspects worth a discussion.

### ***3. Social order, social cohesion and the possibility of revolt***

#### **3.1. The ideal citizen and the ideal system**

Individuals want a system that suits them best. On the other hand, the system wants the citizens that suit it best. But who is the ideal citizen? The one who does not revolt. Or, even better, the one who adopts the idea that the political arrangement in which he or she lives is the best.

However, a passive citizen who simply does not revolt is not enough. The system is not something that exists independently of people. There are people who participated in its creation, and it cannot exist without their successors. That is the reason why it calls for participation. It needs to involve as many people as possible. Without people, it loses legitimacy and thus also power. There is a need for active citizens, people to support and enforce the system by their behaviour. This is one of the reasons for the fall of the so-called

socialist countries in Eastern Europe. They did not manage to convince their citizens that their system was the best, and they failed to motivate them sufficiently to participate in it. In the end, the people showed their discontent with the regime.

The legitimation of a system or arrangement usually rests upon very flexible concepts, such as accordance with the will of God, maximum freedom, liberty, the natural order of things, democracy, rule of law, scientifically proven historical phases, etc. Different political arrangements use different types of legitimation, which are always linked to positively valued things. For instance, mediaeval kings used the Will of God as the legitimation of their power and acts, Western democracies usually use the freedom of their citizens, Marxists called real socialism a scientifically proven historical phase preceding communism, etc.

In Western democracies, promoters of the existing social order and cohesion would probably admit that their society is not perfect. There are many things that should be changed or modified, they would say, but within the rules of the System. The citizens are expected to give up the idea of illegal combat against such an arrangement and rather to participate in it. They can disagree with their political representation, they can vote for somebody else, but they have to respect the system. The rules of the game have already been set, and if anybody wants to change them, they must behave according to these rules at first. The citizens are taught that they are not supposed to instigate and develop conflict with the machinery. If they want to modify it, they must do it by means that are not prohibited or negatively sanctioned.

The purpose of civic education is at least twofold. It teaches people about the functions of existing institutions. It provides them with information necessary for understanding the system of society. At the same time, it serves as an instrument for eliminating possible revolt by creating responsible citizens. In other words, it teaches people how to live in contemporary society and attempts to prevent the system from being destroyed. It helps citizens to find their place in society, and simultaneously helps the society to integrate the citizens.

### **3.2. Social cohesion and cultural diversity: unity or contradiction?**

Diversity is one of the most commonly used words in the vocabulary of the Council of Europe. It is one of its most publicly promoted values. I intend to show that the link between democracy and cultural diversity can be sometimes very problematic.

There are many nations and other kinds of groups living in Europe, most of whom feel that they are somehow unique. At the end of the 20th century, when Europe is becoming more and more unified, some of these groups feel endangered. They are afraid of the death of their culture. At the same time, there are various other groups whose origins lie outside Europe, such as immigrants from Africa or other parts of the world. It is not acceptable for these groups to simply abandon their culture in favour of European standards. These groups need to be assured that they are not going to lose their culture, that there is no danger of its demise. This is one of the reasons why the political need for the use of the term diversity is so urgent.

Each culture or society has its own system of institutions: law, ethics, methods of food provision, ways of getting prestige, power etc. There is no society where such a system works without problems, but such a system is usually the basis for something that we could call social cohesion and social order within the society. In contemporary society, which can be defined as multicultural, there are many different cultures with different institutions. Some of the institutions and practices of one culture can come into conflict with those of another culture. Behaviour that is considered legitimate within one culture can be seen as criminal in another. Such a conflict is usually solved by one set of institutions and values becoming dominant.

How does the Council of Europe solve the contradiction between supporting diversity and protecting minorities on the one hand, and securing social order on the other hand? Its way of solving this problem is at once sophisticated and simple. The Council of Europe tries to define common standards, basic principles that everybody will agree with. Once these standards have been set and agreed, the relevant institutions can begin to enforce their interpretations of these standards. Later on, it is possible for them to seek and define practices, activities or institutions that may be in contradiction with the interpretation of the standards of the common base.

There is general agreement in favour of diversity, but this agreement concerns only the elements of other cultures that are not in contradiction with the official interpretation of the common base. The intention is to provide citizens with such an education so that they agree with the dominant interpretation. Their rights and responsibilities, as defined and understood in the dominant culture, must be explained to them. According to this principle, diversity is possible only when it has certain features. However, the rhetoric figure emanating from the Council of Europe is not "a certain diversity", "a limited diversity" or "a controlled diversity", but simply "diversity".

How about the concept of minorities? Yes, they are welcome, they are even supported, but according to these principles only when that they are integrated into the Society. Minority rights are defined, but the minorities must obey most of the rules of the majority. The majority begins to control even those parts of life that were previously defined in terms of privacy, such as the way people raise their children, hygienic conditions in the family, ethical environment in the family, etc.

Within the issue of diversity, it seems that either the policy of the Council of Europe is inconsistent or the information coming out of the Council tends to omit certain facts. It publicly supports diversity at the same time as aiming to engage minorities in the dominant culture through its activities, such as education for democratic citizenship. The people at the Council of Europe are well aware of the fact that social cohesion is not possible without respect for certain common standards or values, and they try to implant these standards in the European public. In my opinion, this contradicts the principle of maintaining the diversity that has developed from historical experience and evolution of the various groups and nations living in contemporary Europe. I do agree with the Council of Europe that there is a need to define common standards and that that we should build upon them. The inconsistent element

in their statements lies in the contradiction between promoting the universal ideas and maintaining certain features of diversity. Although diversity is one of the keywords for the image that the Council of Europe is trying to create, its actual support of the idea is very limited. However, unlike many other organisations, it is at least trying to give some support to the value of diversity .

#### ***4. The enlargement of the Council of Europe and its links to the EDC project***

##### **4.1. The position of the East**

At the time of the enlargement of the Council of Europe, it was common to speak of the underdevelopment of democratic institutions in the Eastern Europe and about Eastern Europe's need to adopt Western standards. A number of projects have been instigated aiming to assist the Eastern European countries in following the Western model. The West took part in this process as example as well as leader. There was a clear distinction between East and West. The West was considered as developed and as playing the role of helping its younger and often rebellious brother.

This clear distinction between the East and the West has been blurred during the last months and years. Even though there are still power inequalities in the Council between the new and old members, i.e. the Eastern and Western countries,<sup>8</sup> the dividing line between the two is not as strong as it was before. The period of great uncertainty has passed. As there always have been tensions between the various political representatives both within the East and the West, these representatives are now seeking potential allies even in the other group.

##### **4.2. EDC Project and the Enlargement**

The EDC project has been designed as a pan-European project, and a conscious effort was made to forsake the policy of the Big Brother. It is not only Eastern society that needs reforms and assistance: these are needed in Western society as well. The project has no such a priori dividing line between East and West.

There is, however, one important point that mirrors the current situation in the Council of Europe. Even though this project is expected to run in all the geographical regions of Europe, the situation of the project in 1998 is as follows:

- In certain parts of the project, the majority of active members come from the old member countries
- The project is being implemented mostly in these old member countries.

The most significant reason behind this situation is probably the firm establishment of the networks of the Council of Europe in the old member states and their lack of development in the new member states. There are many people in the West with previous contacts to the Council, people willing to co-operate and well known in the Council. This is usually not the

case of the Eastern experts, among whom the Council's network is not so rich. The issues currently under scrutiny in the project have been defined by Western people according to the Western experience. The project tries to confront the problems in the Balkans as well as attempting to be active in other parts of Eastern Europe, but the situation there usually differs from that in the West. To implement this project in the new member states often different means have to be adopted, and this leads to complications. There are financial as well as technical reasons why it still does not work efficiently. The relationship with the Eastern institutions is also complicated by the language barrier, owing to the lack of people able to communicate effectively in the Council's official languages.

Another reason for the problems that the project group has to face in Eastern Europe is the choice of partners. According to many people in the Council, civil society is represented by NGOs. If the Council wants to contact civil society, it contacts an NGO. Although this approach might work quite well in Western Europe, in the East it becomes much more complicated. There is no strong tradition of forming civic initiatives here, and the structure of NGOs in Eastern countries cannot be compared to the structure of NGOs in the West. It is then very difficult for the Council to find a partner, because it is not easy to find an NGO that would correspond to its demands.

### ***Conclusion***

The project group for the education in democratic citizenship shows a high degree of self-reflexivity and is aware that it is not easy to define what participative citizenship means. They have not resorted to a strict and simplifying definition of it, but are trying to conceptualise it through theoretical and practical studies. This could, however, be one of the reasons why the project is sometimes criticised within the Council of Europe. Some people say about the project group that they don't know what they are doing, while others would like to see more concrete results now. This might complicate the future of the project, owing to the mass of competing activities at the Council of Europe and the lack of financial resources. However its strength and creative potential resides precisely in the fact that it is not being operated as a simple implementation of certain ideas. Ideas about democracy, participation and diversity are born out of practice. They are being developed, tested and changed within the loose network of the sites of citizenship itself.

## ***Appendix I: A brief description of the EDC Project***

The project Education for Democratic Citizenship was started in 1997, and was still in the initial stage during our stay at the Council of Europe . I will describe the main concepts used in the project, its aims, priorities and methods of implementation.

The aim of the project is

*to develop education for citizenship which makes it easier for children, young people and adults to participate in society and which develops their knowledge and understanding so that they are able to engage in the fullest possible range of citizenship relations.*<sup>9</sup>

The project is not just a matter of how to teach people. The idea is that the changes caused by globalisation, European consolidation and far-reaching technological change have created a need to reassess the meaning of participative democracy and the status of the citizen. The project aims

*to explore and develop definitions of citizenship, which must take into account the different situations in Europe, to identify the skills necessary for practising such citizenship, to understand and analyse the kinds of educational experience which children, young people and adults require in order to learn these skills, to provide assistance to teachers and other members of the teaching community (educators, parents, employers, citizens) so that these skills may be developed and the objectives in this area attained, to co-operate with non-governmental organisations and networks, and finally, to analyse citizenship sites and develop the methods to be applied to such sites.*

The programme priorities were set up so as to:

- identify and discover evolving rights and responsibilities in a democratic society;
- enhance public understanding and awareness of the multifaceted concept of democratic citizenship, particularly in a context of social change;
- discover and/or bring into relief those partnerships between individuals/groups/associations/communities etc. which enable citizens to exercise their rights and assume their responsibilities;
- encourage many different ways of taking part in society, especially in the case of young people and at local level;
- examine and improve institutional structures and processes specific to the development of education for democratic citizenship (e.g. schools, communities), by supporting networks, partnerships and model initiatives and by drawing up policy guidelines;
- acquire and transmit a body of knowledge, skills and attitudes which individuals will require in order to participate fully in the 21st century, as independent democratic and responsible citizens.

The project group was set up with members proposed by the heads of the national delegations to the Education Committee of the CDCC.<sup>10</sup> They were subsequently joined by representatives of the other specialised committees of the CDCC as well as members of NGOs active in the field of education for democratic citizenship. The main project objectives

have been divided into three sub-groups:

*A - concepts, definitions*

- To ensure that all European citizens are equipped with the knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable them to play a full part in a pluralist society, as pupils, educators, parents, voters, neighbours, and members of religious, professional and other groups;
- to develop the conceptual framework and define the appropriate terminology for the concept of education for democratic citizenship, and to identify the basic skills required for democratic practices in European societies.

*B- pilot projects, citizenship sites*

- To encourage politicians, decision-makers and those responsible at grassroots level to treat education for democratic citizenship as a key feature of educational policy, not only at regional and national levels, but also at European and international levels;
- to identify, compare and encourage the transfer of new or original ways of managing democratic life, particularly at local level, according to the principles of autonomy and legitimacy;
- to identify and support partnerships between the various fields and actors involved in education for citizenship (e.g. schools, parents, the media, businesses, local authorities, adult education establishments) in setting up networks and databanks.

*C- training and support systems*

- To help all those who teach, or are in other ways engaged in helping other people to develop citizenship skills (pupils, teachers, trainers, parents, employers, ordinary citizens), to learn how to develop their ability to do this successfully;
- to promote, to this end, the use of an extensive range of teaching methods in both formal and non-formal education based on an approach centred on the principles of lifelong learning (e.g. human rights and civic education, intercultural learning, and education for development);
- to increase training opportunities available to professionals and multipliers<sup>11</sup> in these fields;
- to explore ways of practising democracy within the school community as a whole and to encourage learning by doing so that it is the dominant concept in relations within the community.

The project will focus mainly on

- politicians and decision-makers (e.g. members of parliament, political leaders, government experts, education ministry representatives). At this level, it will be necessary to develop a reference framework (legislation, political support, educational policy documents) and facilitate decision-making in favour of education for democratic citizenship;
- practitioners in the field (e.g. teachers, parents of pupils, teachers involved in adult education, media experts, company representatives, trade unions, NGOs, communities and cultural and political institutions). At this level, it is essential to support examples of good practice and to develop partnerships. Similarly, the development of networks and exchanges

on a larger scale must be encouraged.

## *List of documents*

- CDCC (98) PV1 def. Summary of the general policy debate. In: Meeting report of the CDCC. 21-23 January 1998.
- CDCC (98) 20. Education for democratic citizenship. In: Activities of the Council for Cultural Co-operation. 1997 Report. March 1998.
- DECS/CIT (96) 1. Education for democratic citizenship. Consultation meeting. General report. 24-25 June 1996.
- DECS/CIT (97) 6. Current secretariat overview of project implementation. 6 March 1997.
- DECS/CIT (97) 10. Meeting of the project group. Sub-Group B. Report. Paris 5 May 1997.
- DECS/CIT (97) 23. Seminar on Basic Concepts and Core Competences. "Education for Democratic Citizenship: dimensions of citizenship, core competences, variables and international activities". Document prepared by Ruud Veldhuis, Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek, Amsterdam. 1997.
- DECS/CIT (97) 30 prov. Educational structures and processes at the local level - Strasbourg. Towards the development of a citizenship site in Alsace. Project on "Education for democratic citizenship". Report prepared by Mohammed Chehhar. December 1997. CDCC.
- DECS/CIT (98) Inf. Education for democratic citizenship. The project of the CDCC. April 1998.
- DECS/CIT (98) 7 def. The Basic Concepts and Core Competences. Council of Europe Seminar in Conjunction with the European Union. 11-12 December 1997. General report by Marino Ostini.
- DECS/CIT (98) 15. Development of a democratic citizenship site in Portugal. Report on the activities carried out by the Portuguese site of citizenship, May - November 1997 by Augusto Santos Silva and Balance of the meeting in Portugal November 26, 1997 by Luis Cardoso Pereira.
- DECS/CIT (98) 25. Report on the study visit to the Irish site in Tallaght (Dublin)/Ireland. 19 to 21 March 1998. Richard Sancho (THEMIS association).
- DECS/CIT (98) 26. Report on the meeting of sub-group B. Tallaght, Dublin (Ireland). 22 March 1998.
- DECS/CIT (98) 29. First meeting of the reflective group on the sites of citizenship. Background document. Strasbourg, 24-25 June 1998.
- DECS/CIT (99) 6. Guidelines for a site report. K. Forrester. February 1999.
- Agenda for the first meeting of the reflective group. June 24, 1998.
- Arborecence du site Web du projet "Education a la citoyennete democratique". 11 May 1998.
- Contre l'exclusion politique des jeunes. Appel a projets.
- Council of Europe: facts and figures. Edited by the Public Relations Service. November 1996.
- Democratic mediation: Some remarks from the Portuguese site of citizenship. Augusto Santos Silva. Preliminary draft.
- First meeting of the reflective group on the sites of citizenship. Strasbourg, 24-25 June 1998. List of Participants.
- Promoting Active Citizenship and Social Inclusion in Civil Society and Work. Professor Gus John, University of Strathclyde. A document prepared for the European Union.
- Rapport de la visite detude du site portugais de citoyennete du 18 au 21 mai 1998. Richard Sancho Andreo. (THEMIS).
- The Council of Europe: achievements and activities. Edited by the Public Relations

Service. November 1996

- Towards an Active, responsible citizenship. Adult education and social change. Final Project report 1988-1993 by Gerald Bogard. Council of Europe Press 1994.
- Urgently needed: active citizens. In: Newsletter education 5/1998
- Web pages. [culture.coe.fr](http://culture.coe.fr).

---

***INotes:***

See DECS/CIT (98) 29

2 See DECS/CIT (98) 29

3 In 1999, there are already new sites in other countries.

4 *The sites may also provide the interface between the EDC Project and the work of the Organisation as a whole. The diffusion and application of the rich body of materials, developed as a product of intergovernmental cooperation, which have a critical relevance to formal and informal education for democratic citizenship, could occur through the sites of citizenship. Sites of citizenship have a practical educational value in that they may directly influence, and put into practice, that work carried out in the Organisation which has direct relevance to the issue of democratic citizenship. This exchange may happen as a function of the actual engagement of persons from across the House taking a role in the work of the project or as a result of making a transfer of materials accessible. [DECS/CIT (98) 29].*

5 Conflict solving

6 I do not use the term ideology in its pejorative sense. In this particular case, I use it as a set of ideas about how society should be organised, which values should be promoted, how individuals should behave to each other, which social institutions are legitimate and which are not, etc. The Council of Europe is an institution where such ideas are created, supported and disseminated. It is (or should be) the aim of the Council that these ideas form a coherent whole. I call this set of ideas an ideology.

7 One of the Councils projects deals with this issue in the area of the Black Sea.

8 The monitoring used mainly in the new member states can serve as a good example.

9 In 1999, there are already some other sites in the Eastern European countries.

10 See DECS/CIT (98) Inf

---

11 Conseil de la coopération culturelle, Council for Cultural Co-operation: an organisation that links together the Council of Europe's member countries and some other countries that are willing to co-operate in the field of education, culture and sports. The CDCC is responsible for the Council of Europe's work in these fields.