

“CITIZENS FOR DEMOCRACY”

Programme for Non – Governmental
Organisations

Financed by the EEA Grants

The European Resource Centre
on Education for Intercultural
Understanding, Human Rights
and Democratic Citizenship

Democracy Index 2012 (The Economist)

by regime type

	No. of countries	% of countries	% of world population
Full democracies	25	15.0	11.3
Flawed democracies	54	32.3	37.2
Hybrid regimes	37	22.2	14.4
Authoritarian regimes	51	30.5	37.1

«... A political malaise in east-central Europe has led to disappointment and questioning of the strength of the region's democratic transition...»

Poland

- Very high score on electoral process (9.58 out of 10) and civic liberties (9.12)
- **Political participation: 6.11 out of 10**
- **Political culture: 4.38**
- Overall 7.12, ranking 44 out of 167

- Significant «erosion of democracy in Western Europe»
Eurosat figures*:
 - 1/5 of EU citizens leaving school by 20: voting in national elections is «ineffective»
 - 18% Britons trust in politicians, while 21% trust in bankers, 24 % in estate agents
- Eastern Europe “...although democratic forms are in place in the region, much of the substance of democracy, including a political culture based on trust, is absent...”
- Subsantive democracy vs. shell of democracy

Crisis of trust → crisis of values

Education: central role in building a deeply rooted **culture of democracy**

*»Europeans engagement in participatory democracy» report, March 2013

Norway:

Democracy Index 2012 → rank 1

DEMBRA Project (Democratic Readiness to fight against Racism, Discrimination and Anti-Semitism in schools, supported by MoE)

Sept. 2013 survey in participating schools:

Very high scores: democratic participation, democratic environment.

BUT: 9% very difficult to be different
 31% difficult to be different

There is a rise of the xenophobic attitudes and movements all over Europe in both incarnations - the extreme right and the mainstream version

“Intolerance, Prejudice and Discrimination: A European Report” (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung)

Report: major determinants and possible causes of group-focused enmity in eight European countries (*France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and Portugal*).

- “**Group-focused enmity**” describes the syndrome of interlinked negative attitudes and prejudices towards groups identified as “other”, “different” or “abnormal” and assigned inferior social status. These take the form of anti-immigrant attitudes, racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim attitudes, sexism and homophobia as well as prejudices against other identified groups.

Central findings:

- Group-focused enmity is widespread in Europe**, weakest in The Netherlands, strongest in Poland and Hungary.
- About 50% believe there are too many immigrants in their country.
- Between 17% in the Netherlands and 70% in Poland believe that Jews seek to benefit from their forebears’ suffering during the Nazi era.
- About 30% believe there is a natural hierarchy of ethnicity.
- A majority in Europe also subscribe to sexist attitudes rooted in traditional gender.
- The proportion opposing equal rights for homosexuals ranges between 17 percent in the Netherlands and 88 percent in Poland (marriages and parenthood).
- Prejudices are interconnected. Those who denigrate one group are very likely to target other groups too. Although prejudices sometimes appear to be isolated they are in fact closely interconnected.
- Group-focused enmity increases with age and decreases with education.

The role of NGOs in EDC:

Flash Eurobarometer 2013 (EC):

- there is a high-level of trust towards civil society among Europeans
- civil society organisations are regarded as more likely to influence at local and national level
- There is a general sense that NGOs represent «our values and points of view»

NGOs have **legitimacy**

The challenge of Education for Democratic Citizenship in modern life:

- Is the growing deficit of participation an inevitable element of XXI century democracy?
 - How can today real power be given to the people?
 - Do small and local communities still have the potential for true citizenship?
 - And last but not least - can schools become labs for citizenship?
- **ACT:** « Priority → initiatives offering children and young people practical opportunities to act»

CoE Charter on EDC/HRE → an emphasis on the outcome of such education being not simply knowledge but **empowerment**, leading to appropriate **action**

Active citizenship
is experienced through
learning by doing!

Schools as labs for citizenship:

Regional Academy Democracy at School 2012 (Sulejowek):

MoEducation-Poland, ORE, Council of Europe-EWC

Local projects:

- Parents' involvement/ Democratic School Governance (Lutsk-Ukraine)
- Active Learning and Students Engagement (Tbilisi, Georgia)
- Citizenship and Participation (Yerevan, Armenia)
- Participation, Peace and Violence (Ryazan, Russia)

“...I came here with an idea, and I leave with a plan...”

2012 South East Europe Regional Academy, Montenegro.