

Strasbourg, 17 July 2000

DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 62 def.2

**COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION (CDCC)**

**PROJECT "EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC  
CITIZENSHIP"**

Sites of Citizenship:  
Empowerment, participation  
and partnerships

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In 1997, the Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project was set up with the aim to find out which values and skills individuals require in order to become participating citizens, how they can acquire these skills and how they can learn to pass them on to others.

A Project Group composed of education ministries representatives, specialists, international institutions and NGOs active in the field of education for democratic citizenship was set up at the beginning of the project. The project activities grounded in theory as well as in practical everyday life, have been divided between three sub-groups. They worked on

A – concepts / definitions :

Aims: to work out a framework of concepts for education for democratic citizenship together with the appropriate terminology and to identify the basic skills required for democratic practices in European societies.

*B – pilot projects / sites od citizenship:*

Aims: to identify, learn from, compare, appraise and encourage the development of citizenship sites (innovative and empowering initiatives in which citizens participate actively in society, especially at the local level). Partnerships between the different actors involved in education for citizenship (e.g. schools, parents, the media, businesses, local authorities, adult education establishments) are identified and supported.

*C – training and support systems :*

Aims: to identify different methods and ways of learning, teaching and training, to build up a network of multipliers, adult educators, teacher trainers in education for democratic citizenship, to exchange information and experience in the field of EDC and to create fora for reflection and discussion.

The many activities carried out between 1997 and 2000 resulted, *inter alia*, in the project's synthesis report and three complementary studies presented at the project's final conference (Strasbourg, 14-16 September 2000).

In addition to the present report, these are :

- Education for democratic citizenship : a Lifelong Learning Perspective, by César Birzúa, the synthesis report of the overall EDC project
- Basic concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship, by François Audigier
- Strategies for learning democratic citizenship, by K.H. Duerr, V. Spajic-Vrkas and I. Ferreira Martins.

Further information on the EDC project's activities, studies, reports and publications can be found on the project's internet website: <http://culture.coe.int/citizenship>



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## Citizenship and Learning: A Synthesis Report on Sites of Citizenship

### Policy Recommendations: A Summary

As a result of discussions within Sub-Group B and from this Synthesis Report, we suggest the following policy recommendations for consideration in any 'follow-up' activities to the current Education for Democratic Citizenship project:

1. We recommend that a 'follow-up' phase to the Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) project be agreed by Ministers at their meeting in 2000;
2. We recommend that the notion of 'Sites of Citizenship', as developed within the current EDC project be retained and further developed in the future;
3. We recommend that the early collaboration and partnership arrangements between the Council of Europe and other international agencies on education for democratic citizenship be continued and deepened;
4. We recommend that the Council of Europe maintain links with existing Sites and, should financial resources be available, extend Site activities to other countries;
5. We recommend that priority in the future should focus on:

#### SUPPORT:

- (a) **site support** through, for example, training seminars within particular Sites and meetings and exchanges between Site participants;
- (b) the development of a Sites of Citizenship **Internet resource** for use by participants;

#### POLICY DEVELOPMENT:

- (c) encouraging local **action-research activities** that contribute towards policy formation in the areas of, for example, 'support systems', 'lifelong learning', 'citizenship partnerships', 'social inclusion strategies' and 'democratic citizenship practices';

#### DISSEMINATION:

- (d) compiling **examples of 'good practice'** illustrations;
  - (e) identifying, collecting, producing and distributing **examples of learning and capabilities**;
  - (f) producing and distributing a video encapsulating Site activity and encouraging new developments;
  - (g) organising dissemination seminars with available 'tools' and 'resources' (such as c, d, e and d above);
  - (h) produce a leaflet/booklet on EDC for distribution through member countries.
6. We recommend that the Council of Europe strengthens and deepens its working relationship with interested **member countries** around EDC activities.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background Notes on the Education for Democratic Citizenship Project

This Report is primarily concerned with the local activities undertaken in 'Sites of Citizenship' in various countries as part of the **Education for Democratic Citizenship** project (for an explanation of 'Sites of Citizenship', see Appendix 2). In order to situate these activities within the context of the project, these Introductory Notes will provide a brief outline of the political circumstances and processes of the Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) Project.

In February 1997, the first meeting of the Project Group for the Council of Europe's **Education for Democratic Citizenship** project took place in Strasbourg, France. Building on important work that had been done in earlier years (on, for example, democracy, human rights and minorities), the new project 'must actively engage in the process of finding out the new shape of democratic culture and the means by which individuals can creatively participate in its reproduction.' (DECS/CIT(97) 5). The new project would have two special features. The project would:

- (a) be pro-European and therefore of interest to all the (then) 44 countries who had signed the European Cultural Convention. It should not focus on any specific part of Europe to the detriment of the rest;
- (b) approach citizenship education as a continuum of a lifelong process that incorporates school and adult education. Great effort and thought must be given to avoid the separation between school and adult learning. 'The need for coherence should be built into the reflections of the Project Group.'

In order to carry out the work of this new project **Education for Democratic Citizenship** in the next '3-4 years', it was decided to create three 'sub-groups' each with their own areas of responsibilities:

- Sub-Group A** would focus on the definitions of concepts and the meanings of democratic citizenship;
- Sub-Group B** would focus on strategies for implementing education for democratic citizenship;
- Sub-Group C** would focus on training and support systems necessary in education for democratic citizenship.

As can be seen from the discussions and decisions made at this 1997 first meeting of the **Education for Democratic Citizenship** (EDC) project, there was this very usual and ambitious objective of involving and combining (as the Minutes of the first meeting records) 'the theory and practice of educational structures and processes which enable or disable citizenship participation at the local, regional and national level that are to be carried out in partnership with institutions or non-governmental organisations and associations and finally, to incorporate formal and non-formal educational approaches to all age groups - to 'promote structures and processes' and 'to develop a strategy for the implementation' through 'Sites of Citizenship' was a new and radical departure for the Council of Europe. Instead of primarily being concerned with policy issues, the Council was now going to get involved with identifying, creating, developing and encouraging real activities around real issues and involving real people in a number of countries. The Council of Europe was itself going to be a partner with local citizens in various forms of democratic citizenship. This combination of

'theory and practice' or of 'knowing and doing' was both a brave and novel change of working for the Council of Europe.

1997 Heads of State & Government Meeting:

Since the 1997 first meeting of the Education for Democratic Citizenship project, a lot has happened. In October 1997, for example, the **Heads of State and Government Meeting** from the member States 'expressed their desire to develop education for democratic citizenship based on the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the participation of young people in civil society'. They agreed 'to launch an initiative for education for democratic citizenship with a view to promoting citizens awareness of their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society'.

'Budapest Declaration':

On the 7 May 1999, at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Council of Europe meeting in Budapest, a declaration entitled "Declaration and programme on EDC based on the rights and responsibilities of citizens" was agreed. It has become known as the 'Budapest Declaration'. Education for democratic citizenship, it stated,

- i) constitutes a lifelong learning experience and a participating process developed in various contexts: in the family, in educational institutions, in the workplace, through professional, political and non-governmental organisations, in local communities and through leisure and cultural activities and the media, as well as through activities for the protection and improvement of the natural and man-made environment;
- ii) equips men and women to play an active part in public life and to shape in a responsible way their own destiny and that of their society;
- iii) aims to instil a culture of human rights which will ensure full respect for those rights and understanding of responsibilities that flow from them;
- iv) prepares people to live in a multi-cultural society and to deal with difference knowledgeably, sensibly, tolerantly and morally;
- v) strengthens social cohesion, mutual understanding and solidarity;
- vi) must be inclusive of all age groups and sectors of society.'

All the member countries agreed to promote democratic citizenship initiatives and to integrate these concerns and activities into their own educational, training, cultural and youth policies practices. Finally, the Budapest Declaration endorsed the Council of Europe's active partnership role with local activities when agreeing to the development of 'novel and effective strategies, means and methods', 'exploring major issues', 'exchanging and disseminating knowledge, experience and good practice across Europe', 'providing assistance' and 'developing a platform for networking and partnerships'.

October 2000 Ministers of Education Meeting in Krakow, Poland:

At this meeting, the Ministers will consider the results from the Education for Democratic Citizenship and agree proposals for a follow-up stage to the project. The title of the ministerial conference will be '**Education Policies for Democratic Citizenship & Social Cohesion: Challenges and Strategies for the Europe of Tomorrow**'.

### The 'Graz Process':

As a result of the war in Kosova, southeastern Europe has become a geopolitical priority for the Council of Europe. As part of an effort to redirect the activities of the Council, a number of the Education for Democratic Citizenship project activities in south-eastern Europe (such as its citizenship sites and its training for opinion shapers in Croatia and Romania) have taken on increased importance. An example of this redirection, the Education Department and the EDC Secretariat in particular, were involved in the preparations and organisation of the conference on Educational Co-operation for Peace, Democracy and Tolerance, in south-eastern Europe, held in the Austrian town of Graz in November 1998. As a result of the Graz Conference, a partnership between various organisations and institutions was agreed and was designed to promote educational activities in the democratic development of the region based on co-operation between these organisations and the active involvement of local forces. This educational co-operation and development within the framework of the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe, is referred to as the 'Graz process'. A second conference was held in Sofia in November 1999. The Council of Europe has been invited to lead and co-ordinate the educational work on education for democratic citizenship and diversity management. (Additional information is available on the Web Site of the Graz process: <http://www.see-educoop.net>).

In various ways, then, the **political context and urgency** behind the Education for Democratic Citizenship project has significantly increased since the first meeting of the project group back in 1997. Co-operation between the Council of Europe and other agencies (such as the EU, UNESCO, World Bank, OSCE, UNICEF, Soros Foundation and European Training Foundation) has greatly increased. Throughout **all** the member States there is an acknowledgement of the importance of designing and implementing educational initiatives focussed on democratic citizenship. As indicated in the recommendations attached to this Synthesis Report, we suggest that this process of collaboration between organisations working in partnership with local groups of people should be continued in the future.

### **1.2 The importance of 'Sites of Citizenship': 'Leaving the Ivory Towers'**

As mentioned above, at the heart of the **Education for Democratic Citizenship** project is this link between policy development, learning and training and finally, grass-root project development. What will be understood and 'known' about democratic citizenship will emerge, to a large extent, from what is developed and happens in local democratic citizenship activities or 'grass-root projects' (which are called 'Sites of Citizenship'). Research studies and peoples experiences and knowledge of previous grass-root projects would be valuable but the most important resource in shaping an understanding of what constitutes democratic citizenship today would be obtained from the (still to be identified and developed) grass-root projects - from the Sites of Citizenship: the understanding derived from the Sites could then be generalised together with the tools and practices that are necessary in developing successful examples of 'democratic citizenship'.

It is this interrelationship between policy, practice and training at the centre of the Education for Democratic Citizenship, which is so unusual a feature of the project. The Council of Europe has not worked in this way before. Developing a partnership with local activists in various countries in order to learn from these actors and their activities in the Sites was not only an unusual way of proceeding but also a risky strategy. In 1997 when the EDC project began, there were no recognised Sites, although there were two or three proposals. Extreme difficulties and political embarrassment would have occurred had it not been possible to

identify or develop any Sites. Where Sites might be started, what would happen if the Sites imploded as a result of conflicts and disagreements amongst the participants? Would, possibly, the Council of Europe be drawn into a widely publicised dispute about the nature or future direction of Site activities? Did the Council of Europe have the resources and expertise amongst its staff to manage such a project and to contribute towards a partnership arrangement with the Sites? The answers to these and other questions could not be answered in 1997.

The Sites of Citizenship - the grass-root activities - were, then, an imaginative way of improving our understandings and practices of education for democratic citizenship. As Raymond Weber, Director of Education, Culture and Sport in the Council of Europe, stated in his comments to the first meeting of the 'Reflective Group' which analysed the Sites, the Sites of Citizenship are:

- **Innovative** in that they allow a contemporary understanding of democratic citizenship to emerge from different practices in different contexts;
- **integrative** in that they go beyond a pure political definition of citizenship and take into account larger issues of social economic and cultural participation;
- **dynamic** in that they involve the real participation of citizens and
- **risky** in that activity is decided by participants themselves and evolves as part of the development (or otherwise) of the Site.

As Mr Weber noted, 'the Sites offer the Council of Europe the possibility of actually working in the field and to leave the confines of the 'Ivory Tower' it has sometimes been accused of occupying.'

This Synthesis Report **begins** the complicated process of understanding and analysing the experiences and activities that have developed within the Sites of Citizenship since 1997.

### **1.3 Methodological Considerations**

The Education for Democratic Citizenship project is not a research project. It is, instead, a 'learning' project for both the Council of Europe and for the participants involved in the Sites themselves. This Synthesis Report represents an important aspect of this complex learning process and will compliment other avenues of learning.

#### Limitations of the Synthesis Report:

At the seminar 'Democratic Participation in Education and Training' held in Lillehammer, Norway, in October 1998, the rapporteur, Professor Gus John recorded 'a worry' about a keenness to squeeze the disparate range of encounters and complex array of forms of active citizenship into a tidy mould, thus appearing to be controlling if not constraining the rich messages that are emerging from self-directed attempts at being self-critical and working collaboratively to bring about change' (DECS/EDU/CIT (98) 44). Speaking on behalf of the the 'Reflective Group' and as authors of this Synthesis Report, we share Professor John's sentiments and worries. There, however, has never been any attempt in the past, or currently, to 'control' the local activities suggested or developed in the various Sites. Indeed, the opposite has been the case. The activities pursued within the Sites belong and are determined by the participants themselves. The contribution of the Council of Europe has been to encourage and, where appropriate and within the inevitable financial constraints, support the activities within each of the Sites. On the other 'worries' raised by Professor John, this

Synthesis Report will, as a result of our own inadequacies, be guilty. There is no way in which the Report can do justice to 'the disparate range of encounters and complex array of forms of active citizenship', or adequately reflect 'the rich messages that are emerging' from the Sites. Anyone who has visited the sites or participated in the Santandar, Paris, Warsaw or Rome Conferences where Site participants have come together to share and contribute to the EDC project, will be able to testify to the 'richness' of developments within the Sites and also to the enthusiasm, energy, commitment, insights and excitement of the Site participants. For the 'outsider', it is sometimes a little overwhelming and certainly exhausting! It is also an exhilarating experience and provides confirmation of the EDC 'risky' strategy embarked upon way back in 1997.

A Synthesis Report is indeed a poor vehicle in which to try and capture the experiences within the Sites and the enthusiasm of the participants.

#### Sources of Data for the Synthesis Report:

The Education for Democratic Citizenship project, as mentioned earlier, is not a research project. There is subsequently no single authoritative source of data upon which this Synthesis Report is based. Instead, there are various sources, such as:

- **the available printed documents of, or from, the Sites.** This extensive documentation, on the whole, was not written from an evaluative perspective nor prepared for any Synthesis Report. They are of a general communicative nature - informing the Council of Europe and other interested parties of factual developments;
- **a small number of interviews** by the authors with co-ordinators from 'new' Sites;
- **meetings or seminars** at which some Site participants were present and who participated in particular workshops on Site developments;
- **visits** to a small number of Sites by the authors;
- **discussions and reports** in Sub-Group B and of the 'Reflective Group' on proposals for new Sites and on developments within existing Sites.

In addition, there is beginning to emerge research reports on particular Sites that have been agreed between Site participants and a sympathetic research agency. Eventually, it would be excellent to have such reports for each Site. Where such texts are available, they have used a reference in the text of the Synthesis Report.

Perhaps the most serious limitation to the Synthesis Report is the systematic absence of the views and insights of the Site participants themselves. These eventually will be available but, at this moment in time, are absent. Their absence in this Synthesis Report constitutes a significant weakness and limitation.

It is important to record very strongly that we are not at that stage of the EDC project, nor do we yet have the necessary resources, to accurately reflect and understand the complex and rich processes of democratic citizenship underway within the Sites. The emphasis within the EDC project over the last 2-3 years has been identifying or developing Sites of Citizenship. Only recently has attention begun to focus on understanding, interpreting and discussing Site activities. As in most similar projects, our theoretical and policy insights and 'tools' are lagging some way behind the concrete experiences and activities being undertaken in and, sometimes, between the Sites.

For this and other reasons mentioned earlier, this Synthesis Report is literally a very early beginning in attempting to 'learn' from the Sites of Citizenship.

#### **1.4 The Comparative Grid**

The criteria for assessing the nature and practice in the sites have been discussed at all three meetings of the Reflective Group. Twelve criteria were identified in regards to the ‘Mechanisms for Information Management of the Sites’ at the first meeting and further discussed at subsequent meetings. At the second meeting, these twelve criteria were seen as falling within three broad themes; namely

- Theme One: The actors, partners, local initiatives (the what and the who);
- Theme Two: The synergies, strategies and conditions of access for participation;
- Theme Three: The type of training or specific form of education for democratic citizenship.

A number of issues were listed under each of these themes. At the third meeting of the Reflective Group the issue of criteria to be used in the Synthesis Report was further discussed. A Comparative Grid diagram was proposed that reflected the discussions in the Reflective Group meetings. This Grid, attached as an Appendix item to this Report, will be the organising framework for the synthesis.

Finally, brief mention should be made of the assumptions and values underpinning this report. Attempting to understand what is happening within the sites is not a politically free or value-free process. We will attempt to make our considerations (i.e. values and assumptions) as transparent as possible in discussing various issues. We will attempt to limit and constrain the choices and decisions to be made by ourselves as authors to those agreed with the Reflective Group discussions. Despite these aims, there will be inevitably a ‘flavour’ to this report which is our responsibility alone (as authors) and which will need to be taken into account in the reading and the discussions of our efforts.

#### **1.5 The ‘Synthesis’ process**

Given the fraught and complexity involved in any synthesis activity, it is important to make public what we understand in such a task. ‘Synthesis’ has something to do with making connections, with developing a ‘whole’ from separate elements. Using the numerous reports produced about and from the Sites, this is what we attempt to do. The report is a reflection of what we understand is developing within the Sites. As such, it will be highly selective and secondly, will inevitably reflect the values and views of the author(s). While it is obvious that we are attempting to accurately reflect the views and activities of the sites, there will be an inevitable ‘filtering’ process employed (consciously or unconsciously) by the authors. Judgements and evaluations are inimitable to any synthesis activity. In some sections of the report, these qualities of judgement and evaluation become so dominant in trying to understand what is happening in the Sites that we make space in the text to discuss these matters. Where appropriate, then, we attempt to make public – and therefore, accountable – the choices and decisions which confront us many times on each page of the report.

Secondly, this is not an academic report. References are presented to other Council of Europe publications on or from the sites as an aide for further reading or information on a particular point. The many influences on the authors of others involved or not involved in the Education for Democratic Citizenship are not referenced or acknowledged. However, their influence will be apparent to themselves and to others and we, as authors, would like to freely

acknowledge the support and insights, provided by a wide variety of writers and researchers in the general area of citizenship and democracy, that we have made use of in the report.

## 2. THE COMPARATIVE GRID

### 2.1 Location

Ten countries currently participate, as Site ‘hosts’, in the EDC project; namely, Belgium), Bulgaria, Croatia, France (Alsace), Ireland (Tallaght), Italy (Tirreno) Moldova, Portugal (Lisbon), Quebec, Romania and Spain. A number of other Sites are at an advanced preparatory stage, such as the ‘Universities as Sites of Citizenship’ (involving a number of countries). Other Council of Europe projects on teacher training on human rights and civic education in Bosnia Herzegovina and in Russia, or on democratic change through schools in Albania, not only have very similar characteristics to the sites of citizenship, but have also provided very useful information. They have therefore been integrated in this analysis. ‘The Place’, a site in Scotland was an early participant within the EDC project but contacts are no longer continuing.

A number of the Sites were in existence before the advent of the EDC project: others are new Sites, established as a result of, and with encouragement from, the Council of Europe’s EDC project. In general, the more established Sites exist within Western Europe and Quebec while the newer Sites and those in preparation come from Eastern Europe. Overall, the formation of new Sites and possibilities outside of western Europe and Quebec reflect the political ‘turn’ within the Council of Europe towards eastern Europe as a result of the break-up and tragedy in the former Yugoslavia.

### 2.2 Context

As recognised in the understanding of ‘citizenship’ by the Council of Europe, “one cannot speak of citizenship in isolation. It must be situated within a particular context. Citizenship only makes sense, has a meaning, in relation to the needs and requirements of a society or political system.” The dominant contextual characteristic in most of the Sites of Citizenship flows from a communitarian conception of democracy as opposed to one linked to representative democracy. While there obviously exists a considerable overlap in concerns and practices within the two understandings and traditions of democracy, the overwhelming characteristic in most of the Sites is an encouraging and developing forms of **participation** in decision-making processes and institutions. Less prominent are activities centred on government, parliament and free elections although the ‘public domain’, especially at the local government level, remains an important focus of concern and in some cases, partnership.

Put very generally then, ‘participation’ is often linked to political processes or procedures and relates to decisions that are ‘public’ in nature, imply power-sharing and impact on more than a small, local group. On the other hand, ‘participation’ is often seen as a ‘social decision-making’ process located in everyday life. Here the emphasis is more to do with agreement and consensus. The connection between these two uses of ‘participation’ is complex and contested. For our purposes, however, it is suffice to see these two uses of ‘participation’ as important themes in Site activity and it would be a mistake to draw too rigid a distinction between them.

Significant differences in the specific contexts within which Sites attempt to act and negotiate through obviously **do** exist. As outlined below, this is especially the case between the western European and Quebec Sites on the one hand and the ‘newer’ eastern European Sites on the other hand.

'We do not throw out our differences, but our disputes. Weapons are left at the door. A dojo is created, a place of common learning - hence the importance of the works 'crossroads'.

A participant from the Quebec Site

However, irrespective of these contextual differences, there is this emphasis on participation throughout the Sites. The Irish Site, for example, writes of ‘enhancing the self-esteem of individuals and groups by ensuring that they are given an opportunity to participate’ (DECS/EDU/CIT 99.7.p.19). The Portuguese Site talks of ‘the empowerment of parents proceeding from cultural milieus traditionally excluded from the cultural framework of public and formal education’ (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 25.p.5), while in Albania, the emphasis is on school partnerships involving school actors (teachers, students) and the wider community (parents, local associations etc). Associated with, and underpinning models of partnership, are often claims and aspirations towards strengthened feelings and commitments of **belonging**. This complex notion could refer to a powerful drive towards confronting forms of **social exclusion**. As volunteers in the Fettercairn Community Development Project (Ireland) mention, this includes developing specific strategies to involve ‘early school dropouts, drug addictions, vandalism and the marginalisation of specific groups such as lone parents’.

'We have now put in place a successful strategy to act against drug addiction. And we have set up Crèches, which enable parents, especially lone parents, to join in educational and training opportunities.'

Participant from Fettercairn Project, Tallaght Site, Ireland

In other cases, ‘belonging’ implies not only overcoming forms of social exclusion but also creating and developing intercultural relationships. As the Portuguese Site argues, ‘the concept of intercultural education also implies a better equality of opportunity ... to fight against inequalities and discrimination, to give an active voice to all those that have to do with a local educational community ... We should define intercultural education as a road to empowerment and to inclusion, as a way to understand’ (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 25 p.3). The strong involvement of ethnic minorities (especially African families and Roma people) in the Portuguese Site is shared by the intercultural Bulgarian Site with their involvement of Romany, Muslim and orthodox Bulgarian communities.

The emphasis on ‘participation’ and the related concerns and practices of ‘belonging’, ‘social exclusion’ and ‘intercultural activity’ suggests a number of important dimensions to the context within which the activities of Sites are situated. Common features of the context include the strengthening or extending, of important aspects of civil society (especially in collaboration with marginalised or excluded groups) and in making connections between the particular experiences, concerns and knowledge of these groups with more general civil society and constitutional issues. Involvement and linkages from the particular to the general are common contextual themes and indicate anxieties (irrespective of the location and socio-

economic context of the Sites) that relate to the health or otherwise of civil society infrastructures and possibly, with the partnerships with state or public agencies. Underpinning such ‘relationships of anxiety’ is often a strong sense of social injustice. Le Carrefour de Pastorale en Milieu Ourrer (CAPMO) in Quebec, for example, with its critical and innovative actions, illustrates the emphasis on social injustice and with engaging with the public domain. If dissatisfaction with the health of the civil society, and with the relationships between civil associations and the institutions, and practices of democratic procedures and institutions are a strong common theme between the various Sites, there are in each (or most) context(s) specific issues which add to the significance and ‘meaning’ of the Sites. In Spain, for example, the three sets of activities within the site could be seen (or interpreted) as deepening, broadening and enriching the democratisation processes being developed in the post-Franco context. This is especially the case at a micro-level and with ‘new’ audiences such as children. In Portugal, the post-colonial context witnessed, throughout the 1980s, an increasing migration from ex-colonies such as Cape Verde and Angola. In Lisbon and its neighbourhoods, intercultural activity focused on issues of social inequality with accompanying divisions of cultural and ethnic diversity. In other instances, Site activities are situated within rapidly developing urban growth that fail to mask areas of comparative poverty, high levels of unemployment and political marginalisation (especially amongst young people). Squaring the circles of wealth creation and with forms of social exclusion has provided a fertile interface for the emergence of citizenship activity! The four examples within the Quebec Site, the Alsace Site and the multiple forms of activity (some 38) within the Irish (Tallaght) Sites are good examples here. As the Italy (Tirreno) Site notes, ‘the high challenge of the new millennium is to successfully create an osmosis between economic exploitation, democratic development and regard for the individual ‘ (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 10 p.2). Exploring and negotiating understandings and practices of citizenship within such a context has encouraged a variety of innovative activities that focus on the **possibility** of modernised forms of solidarity, as will be detailed below.

When trying to interpret the similarities and differences of the contextual background which informs, shapes and gives meaning to the various Sites, it is possible to identify various interpretative criteria and frameworks. Some of these common and distinctive features have been noted in the paragraphs above. Before elaborating further on some of the distinctive or differences within the Sites, a summary of the common contextual features is provided.

Firstly, all the Sites are firmly situated within civil society and can be seen as efforts directed towards repairing or strengthening the complex network of freely formed or created voluntary associations. While this might, and often does, entail partnerships with State agencies (especially local and regional government), the relationship remains problematic in a number of cases such as in the Alsace Site or Quebec Site (as illustrated by the Quebec Site participants’ refusal to participate in the Santander, Spain, meeting), complex in other cases (such as the Tallaght Site) and tenuous in other examples (Bulgaria, Spain and Tirreno, Italy). In other cases, the partnership between the civil and public sector appears to be developing harmoniously (Portugal, Tallaght, Croatia, Albania). Sites in their various ways, then, are attempting to negotiate, connect or engage with the state sector and almost by definition, this relationship will remain a complex and difficult characteristic of Site definition and activity. Secondly, the Sites are designed to explore and, in some cases, contest accepted understandings and practices of democracy. The stress on participation, inclusion, solidarity and/or integration, for example, can be seen as strengthening process of democratisation at, usually, a local level or in exploring solutions to problems associated with democracy. This

focus on community (the relationship between the individual and society) and participation can be seen as part of a ‘modernising’ agenda while in the cases of Alsace, Quebec and to some extent Belgium there is, it could be suggested, more of an emphasis on a ‘post-modern’ or ‘post-industrial’ agenda: namely, a negotiation with the emerging character of contemporary political culture that is pluralistic, and at times, disorganised, rhetorical, stylised and ironic. New social movements, lifestyles and the identity politics they are, or have, generated are commonly associated with such developments. Democracy and democratisation, in other words, forms an important defining contextual characteristic of all Sites but is experienced differently. These experiences range from newly established ‘fragile’ democracies in the post-communist countries (Bulgaria, Moldova, Croatia, Bosnia) through to ‘youngish’ post-war democracies (Portugal, Spain, Italy) and ‘old’ democracies (Quebec, France, Belgium, Ireland). Common to these different experiences of democracy, however, is the (often, not stated) aim of strengthening or re-inventing democratic understandings and practices that are relevant to the situation, context and problems confronting each Site, country or region.

If it is possible to identify a number of common features within the diverse experiences and activities that constitute the Sites of Citizenship, it is also possible to highlight differences in the contextual backgrounds.

‘We get on well here... hearing what other young people are doing and then making our own plans. I might never see them again, but I can learn a lot’.

Young participant at Bulgarian Multiculturalism Workshop

One important explanatory category that illustrates some of these differences is that between the ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ Sites. As we have suggested elsewhere (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 51), the ‘eastern’ newly emerging ‘market economies’ Sites are part of a region experiencing a transformation rather than a transition. This transformation, unlike democratisation processes in other places at other times (such as Western Europe) involves two intermediate processes; namely, the creation of market economic institutions and at the same time, democratic institutions. As has been observed by other commentators, ‘the simultaneous transformation of polity and economy, and the potentially explosive interaction between the two, makes outcomes uncertain’. Insights, assumptions and experiences gained through the development of democracy in, for example, Britain or North America, cannot be applied uncritically to countries experiencing this ‘double transformation’. The practice of governance and the creation of citizenship activities in newly created democracies, is a process of trial and error, ‘a search across a terrain for which there is no map’. While Soviet-style Communism is rapidly dissolving or, in some countries, has been left behind altogether, there is no certainty of what lies ahead; developments can lead in more than one direction. An under-estimation of the fragility, tensions and contradictions inherent within the democratic project of the emerging ‘market economy’ countries would be a mistake of the gravest nature. While the rallying cry for ‘democracy’ might have united desperate groups anxious to end undemocratic regimes, its popularity as a slogan arose from its capacity to mean different things to different groups within a society. To assume that changes now underway in many new transitional countries will inevitably result in the creation of established democracies runs contrary to our historical evidence and analysis.

The difficulties, complexities and challenges inherent within such a transitional context are recognised by the Council of Europe. As the document, ‘Developing a Regional Approach to Education in the Countries of South Eastern Europe’ (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 33) states, ‘it is also undeniable that what is being witnessed (in former Yugoslavia) is the negation of the values and ideas which the Council of Europe exists to promote. The post-conflict challenge in the region will be on a scale which far exceeds anything that Europe has faced in the past fifty years’. It is this qualitatively different context, it can be argued, that separates the ‘western’ Sites from those in the ‘east’. And it is from these different contexts that a number of other important distinguishing characteristics can be identified. In summary, these are:

- \* all the Sites in the ‘west’ existed prior to the Council of Europe’s Education for Democratic Citizenship’ while the ‘eastern’ Sites, to a large extent, have been formed as a result, and in response to, the EDC Project;
- \* the ‘eastern’ Sites have a very different relationship to the Council of Europe when compared to those in the ‘west’. This is due not only to their ‘newness’ but also stems from a different and more complex political milieu;
- \* for a number of historical and political reasons, there is a great fragility and unevenness in the nature and extent of the civil society in most of the eastern countries. This fragility is compounded by the lack of experience, tradition and expertise in developing and managing constitutional democratic institutions and in nurturing and developing partnerships with elements within civic society;
- \* all eastern Sites are situated within countries characterised by extremely limited material resources and rapidly growing forms of material inequality and mass unemployment;
- \* the immediate political past (post World War, in most cases) of many of the eastern countries has resulted in different understandings of key aspects of the EDC project. ‘Democracy’, ‘participation’ and ‘solidarity’, for example, can embody different meanings, traditions, values and connotations to those participants in the western Sites.

These differences should not obscure the many positive ‘contextual’ aspects to be found in eastern contexts. These include the recent mass displays of opposition, political organisation, social ingenuity and imagination required in forcing through the huge political changes of the last decade or so. Similarly, evidence can be found of the great energy and enthusiasm that has begun to be channelled into the process of economic, cultural and social reconstruction and renewal in some of the past communist countries.

‘One cannot speak of citizenship in isolation. It must be situated within a particular context’, argues the working definition of citizenship used by the Council of Europe. The notes above have provided a flavour of the varied and complex contextual situation within which the Sites live, negotiate and attempt to shape. The sections below provide further details and analyse how this is attempted and with who.

### **2.3 Actors**

Given the communitarian conception of democracy that underpins most Sites’ understanding of citizenship, it is not surprising that ‘who participate’ is a key concern. The emphasis on participation, partnership and community implies some shortfall or criticism of existing civic and political arrangements. It also raises difficult issues of membership – who belongs and who does not, what are the criteria of membership and who decides? In their different ways

and in their different contexts, the Sites can be seen as building new coalitions of civic interests to rectify gaps or address imbalances.

School children, for example, are one of the dominant group of actors within the various Sites (Portugal, Croatia, Spain, Albania, Italy, Bulgaria). The receptiveness of young people to new ideas and practices, their institutional context (the school) and comparative ease of organisation and management together with symbolic representation of 'the future' are factors which contribute towards Site activity revolving around schools and students.

'It was strange for me to see how well the young people got on with their teachers. That's what I remember best'

A pupil from Moldova, participating in a Bulgarian Site workshop.

Croatia and Albania, for example, are each planning Sites involving a network of schools. As the Croatian plan explains, 'we believe that school is the best location where active citizenship and democracy can be learned about. Schools, as the Sites of Citizenship, will be the institutions where young people will not only get prepared for lifelong education, mobility and everyday living in multi-cultural and multi-lingual Europe, but will also learn how to share power and build society based on solidarity, spiritual and moral values and cultural heritage enriched by diversities'. Important as such objectives are, the actors include more than the school participants alone: teachers, parents 'partners from outside' and local, regional and national government are usually identified as Site actors. In the Lisbon, Portugal Site, the schools are situated within neighbourhoods characterised by social and ethnic diversity and inequality. Involving actors from the immigrant African population and from the Roma people, the 'programme for intercultural education' is based on three schools and on two civic voluntary agencies, Bairro do 6 de Maio' and 'Moinho da Juventude', and a public health centre. Developing new and innovative partnerships between volunteers in the civic associations with the school actors has resulted in discussions, awareness-raising and practices that reflect a broader understanding of culture and heritage. Central to those developments was the contribution of parents and relatives as conduits of their own culture and heritage.

Young adults, as university students, are the actors in the Moldova Site. Democratic citizenship knowledge, values and practices can be encouraged and developed 'not only through their actual curricula, but also through the way universities act as institutions and through extra-curricula activities', argues the report from the Moldova Site. Based on the 'Ion Creanga' Pedagogical University in Chisinau, Moldova, the Site will focus on actively involving young students and young lecturers in the activities of both the university and the wider community through a combination of formal and informal participating methods (formation of a Students' Council, participation in Faculty and Senate meetings, designing a Students' Charter, summer training schools).

A further Site of Citizenship, involving a number of universities from different countries, is currently under way. Similar to the Moldova Site, the proposed 'Universities as Site of Citizenship' focus on democratic procedures and activities within the institutions as well as 'the university' relationship with the wider multi-cultural society. In the early exploratory phase of the 'Universities Site', six universities are participating (from Albania, France, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Former Republic of Macedonia" and Northern Ireland).

The complex and multi-layered activities pursued in the Lisbon Site derive in part from the involvement of diverse local groupings and agencies active in the neighbourhood. ‘Education for citizenship’ in the Lisbon ‘bairro’ is seen as the development of connections and partnership relationships within a ‘normal’ context of diversity and mistrust through a variety of concrete practical activities that ‘improve democratic values and participation’.

A similar trajectory but around different immediate concerns can be seen in the Italian Tirreno Site. At the centre of the ‘Tirreno Network Partnership’ are the thirteen schools from the Litoral Reserve area and the eight schools from the urban school areas of Rome. A complex pattern of partnerships centre around the 21 schools involving Local Authorities, Ministries, Scientific Organisations, Environmental Associations, lifelong educational organisations and other agencies such as the local public health office and the Archaeological Bureau of Ancient Ostia. It is the young people in the schools and their negotiation with teachers and other ‘adult’ groups and agencies that are the key actors within the Site, rather than ‘an adult project for young people’.

If school children are a key category of actors within many of the Sites, young adults are another important grouping. In Sites such as Quebec, Tallaght (Ireland), Bulgaria, Belgium and Alsace, there is, in general, an attempt to involve culturally, politically and/or socio-economically ‘disadvantaged’ groups of young adults (about to finish school or who have recently finished school).

‘Yes, the Parliament was a genuine forum for young people -a forum which enabled us to get a better idea of what is really happening in the workd of young people’.

A participant from the Belgian Site

Whether these actors within each particular Site can be seen as politically disaffected (nearly all the Sites), ethnically or culturally isolated and discriminated against (such as the Multicultural Young Café or Genesis project in Quebec or in the Bulgarian or the Travellers Development Group in Tallaght Sites) or socially and economically excluded (nearly all the Sites) or a combination of all those characteristics, the Sites have defined their activities, and understanding of ‘citizenship’, as means of making connections, valuing difference, exploring possibilities and, from these, designing action programmes that address these issues. Common to all sites are practical activities and understandings that are driven and designed by the participants themselves, as illustrated in section 4 below.

Adults, as principal Site actors, form a third important category. In the complex of Sites that constitute the Tallaght Site, for example, the Fettercairn Residents’ Trust, the Urban Initiative in Jobstown and the St Basil’s training centre for travelling women are three examples which primarily are focused on involving marginalised/ excluded communities of adults. It is significant, however, that although adults are involved indirectly in all the Sites within the EDC project and, in other cases, are involved directly (such as the Tallaght Site), the Sites as a whole are primarily oriented around young people and in particular, school participants.

Finally, mention should be made of certain significant groupings which span across the Sites. These include Roma or travelling people (in the Spanish (Torrejon), Bulgarian and Tallaght Sites) and secondly, women (Tallaght, Quebec).

## 2.4 Site Activities

Making sense, and presenting selective but illustrative accounts, of activities pursued within the various Sites involved in the EDC project, requires some understanding and engagement with the notion(s) of citizenship inherent within one, some or all of the Sites. The risks and dangers in such an exercise are obvious but a necessary feature in any ‘synthesis’ activity. Mention has already been made of the ‘communitarian’ tradition (as opposed to a more formal constitutional representative democratic tradition) within which most, if not all, of the Sites can be situated. Such a tradition privileges concerns and values relating to, for example, participation, ‘giving a voice’, developing shared understandings and practices and overcoming various forms of social exclusion. Implicit in such conceptions and practices of ‘citizenship’ is the rationale that with new knowledge, skills and understandings, Site participants can ‘make a difference’ – can influence or change circumstance that result in a greater/further participation in a democratic society or that result in challenging inequalities or perceived injustices. The focus of the Sites tends to be local and not societal or regional in scope but it is possible to see their activities as local actions around societal (or even, regional) issues. Underpinning those local activities and understandings (although, again, rarely articulated or made public by Site participants) are visions of a better and more just world, of some strengthened or alternative situation or context. Those ‘visions’ are not of a rhetorical nature or over-ambitious in scope or breadth: rather, they stem from very local practical concerns and activities (perhaps, even parochial) but gain their ‘citizenship’ significance from the context, the participants and the issues and questions posed.

‘Empowerment’ is perhaps the term and process that could most commonly be attached (and is often voiced by Site participants in their reports) to Site activity. This is understandable given the centrality of ‘agency’ within the definition and activities of Sites. Unfortunately, ‘empowerment’ is a notoriously complex and contested term and, it could be argued, is increasingly used in a ‘depolitised’ manner to refer any activity or process that assists people to ‘help themselves’ or to ‘have a greater influence’ or even, ‘for people to feel better’ than they were before. Important as these qualities or features may be for the participants concerned, it is the **political** context that ultimately provides the context for understanding ‘empowerment’.

‘This week has helped us to understand our rights and responsibilities as individuals and members of a community’.

A participant from the Bulgarian Site

Political power, structural inequalities, struggle and resistance, democratisation, exploitation and oppression are, for example, the concerns and values that inform and provide the significance for understanding empowerment. If ‘citizenship’ is somehow associated with ‘empowerment’ as a set of activities and processes, it is also more than a form of ‘social work’ or ‘self-help’ activity although these might be an important part of the activities. ‘Empowerment’, it is suggested in ‘Guidelines for a Site Report’ (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 6) ‘is a very useful and helpful idea when thinking about Sites of Citizenship. We agree, though, that we must be very careful about how we use the term’. Given the comments made in the first ‘Context’ section of this report, it is not too difficult to identify ‘empowerment’ assumptions and capacity building aspirations within most of the Sites activities and understandings of themselves. There is usually no single course of action that qualifies a

particular Site as such: rather it is the collection of activities undertaken within the Site, together with its definition of its objectives and tasks and the particular context within which the activities are undertaken that reveals the ‘empowerment’ perspective at work within the Sites.

A further characteristic of Site activity which helps illuminate understandings of ‘citizenship’ is their location within civil society. Their autonomy as ‘civil Sites’ importantly offers the possibility of alternative forms of, for example, political involvement, resolutions and representation at some distance from the direct or dominating influence of the State or the economy. From another perspective, the ‘civil society’ context reduces the likelihood of Site participants as the passive recipient of specific rights (which might be the case) and instead, emphasise an active, engaging conception and practice of citizenship – the construction of a ‘we’ and ‘a belonging’.

For a more detailed understanding of the conception and practices of citizenship involved in the various Sites, the sections below will provide a selective account of some of the activities undertaken in the sites. Two general categories will be used in the discussion of Site activities: namely, Site activities as forms of 'inclusive citizenship' and secondly, as forms of 'pluralist citizenship'. Neither of these two categories are mutually exclusive nor will they represent all the diverse experiences and activities pursued within the Sites or even, one particular Site. It is, of course, possible to identify other conceptually organising categories and schemes such as, for example, citizenship activity as represented by its political, social, cultural and economic dimensions. The focus on inclusiveness and pluralism, however, (arguably) permits a greater fluidity in analysis and opportunity for commentary, is wide-ranging in scope and incorporates a greater emphasis on societal change and contexts than some other formulations. There is also a strong linkage between these two categories and the communitarian discourse of citizenship mentioned earlier in this report.

**2.4.1 Site Activity as forms of Inclusive Citizenship:** The inclusive/exclusive perspective has emerged in recent years as a central policy concern and focus of activity by state agencies. The reasons for these are complex (and contradictory) but are generally seen as reflecting the rapid societal changes, increasing unpredictability and growing inequalities of political and economic power in the late modern or ‘disorganised capitalist’ world.

The use of ‘inclusiveness’ as an interpretative category, in other words, highlights themes associated with, for example, an increasingly unequal contemporary world, with a perceived decline in social cohesiveness, with the increasingly blurring of the private-public sectors (particularly regarding public services and the concerns associated with welfare dependency within a restructuring emphasis of the funding and role of ‘the welfare state’) and with cultural, ethnic and gender divisions. There is also a focus on people’s rights as individual and their life as social beings. ‘Inclusiveness’ has this important focus on the role of ‘the stakeholders’ as well as stressing their responsibility for that society.

<p>‘It is multiculturalism that is important here. By multicultural I mean getting involved, know how things go on in other families and in other countries. Seeing what it is like for young people.’</p> <p>Quebec Site participant</p>
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The multi-layered and complex activities undertaken in the Tallaght Site of sites, for example, can be seen as addressing a number of ‘inclusiveness’ themes. The prominence of the term ‘partnership’ within the title of the Site, together with the importance given to the process and objectives of partnership within the numerous Site reports is indicative of this focus on ‘inclusiveness’. The context of the Site – rapid urban growth with an assorted variety of social, economic and cultural problems such as unemployment, planning ‘blight’, discrimination, poverty, isolation, crime and passivity —has obviously driven the various ‘inclusiveness’ activities that, crucially, are centred on the involvement of local people.

‘Importance of citizenship in so far as access to justice includes citizenship which is why we put our human and civic rights into practice’.  
A participant from the Alsace Site, France

As reported in the 1992 Annual Report, the Site ‘does not see itself as another operating agency providing a range of services in Tallaght. (Its) task is to act as catalyst and facilitator to existing agencies ... in the provision of more relevant, effective and integrated services ... in particular to those experiencing social exclusion, whatever its cause’. Tackling the exceptionally high rate of early school leavers among girls/young women in the Shanty Educational Project or the Tallaght Travellers Development Group ‘aimed at equipping travellers with the skills and confidence to represent themselves at all levels in relation to (education, accommodation, health and traveller economy)’ illustrate the practical activities that are developed through the Site. Similarly, the Fettercairn Residents’ Trust with its emphasis on local residents monitoring, identifying and developing actions within the Fettercairn area, the Youthstart Project with its focus on jobs and employment for young people or the priority given to designing and supporting youngster care and learning provision (for those between 3-18 years) all contribute towards ‘strengthening people’s sense of belonging’. At the heart of the Tallaght experience, both organisationally and conceptually, is the notion of ‘community’. Substantial detail and evidence is provided in the reports from the Site of the organisational features of the Tallaght Partnership (with accompanying flowcharts and ‘networking’ diagrams).

The summary evaluation document of the Tallaght Partnership between 1994-99 (Steven Rourke, January 2000), for example, reports that some 7,305 local people have participated in the various Tallaght initiatives during this period, with 94 people from 40 organisations/groups and six networks actively involved in the structures which have been developed within the Partnership. This is a substantial achievement. As the author notes, the Partnership ‘has made a significant contribution to empowering disadvantaged communities to combat problems of poverty and deprivation through the development and resourcing of personal and community programmes... and has helped to identify and implement more effective uses of training/educational resources and services to the benefit of people who are long-term unemployed and in danger of becoming long-term unemployed.’ (Rourke, January 2000). The Summary Report also acknowledges that ‘there is still a high degree of concern about the issues of participation and sustainability’. Further analysis, of a more sociological nature would permit a more informed discussion around key notions of ‘community’, ‘participation’ and ‘inclusiveness’ as evidenced in the Tallaght Site.

'I have become a free person, capable of making choices. I am now active in building my own community through participation in those organisations which are important to me . . . school, child-care.'

A participant from Shanty Project, Tallaght Site, Ireland

A number of associated points relating to this issue was raised by the 1998 Secretariats report (DECS/EDU/CIT (98) 24). The success of the Tallaght Site in so many of its projects, the experience and long involvement of many of its professional and voluntary participants in the Site and the recognised centrality of concerns such as 'involvement', 'participation', 'solidarity', 'community', and 'partnership' raises the exciting possibility of progressing our conceptions and understandings of 'community' within contemporary or 'late capitalist' settings.

The focus on 'inclusiveness' can be found too in other sites. The Bulgarian Site, for example, with its local Commissions for Intercultural Understanding (C.I.U.s) involving representatives from different cultural, religious and ethnic groups in the development of skills, knowledge, understanding and activities necessary in an active participatory civic society, represent an early fragile but exciting institutional development. Such initiatives, multiplied many times over, are going to be required in post-communist environments characterised by, often, a plunging economic performance and an unstable constitutional political context. In Croatia, the proposed Site is suggesting activities amongst the network of school participants that 'promote tolerance, equality and a sense of belonging'. Some of these activities will involve 'joint excursions and sports activities to show the positive sides of life in this diversified society through good examples'. (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 56).

In the Lisbon Site, there is again this strong articulated sense of 'partnership' that flows from focus on intercultural education within an urban city environment. 'Integration' was identified by Site participants as a defining quality informing the Sites activities. In particular, developing children's nights, intercultural co-operation, linkages between teachers and parents and between the school and the wider community were identified as the key actions within the Site. Small local activities that begin to address some of the complex micro-level post-colonial leftovers help to not only concretely explore strategies of 'inclusion' but do so within an explicitly context of integrating 'democracy into daily life'.

The unusual Belgian Site of Citizenship had, as its main objective, 'to involve young people in decision-making processes concerning the fight against social exclusion'. Funded by the P and V insurance company and managed by the King Baudouin Foundation, the Site attempted to financially support local projects, chosen by young people, involving young people 'to raise public awareness of the problem of exclusion' (DECS/EDU/CIT (98) 45). The mechanism for identifying, choosing and supporting these local 'inclusion' projects was through a 'One-day Parliament' involving 88 young people between the ages of 17-23 years of age. After discussion and debate within the 'Parliament', it was decided to support three categories of projects. These were 'socio-economic exclusion', 'exclusion of immigrants' and 'political exclusion'.

Twelve projects were selected: 6 that were Flemish based, 5 that were French based and 1 that was German based. The topics chosen for the projects included:

- creation of a materials toolkit on citizenship education for impaired hearers;

- project using music as a way of mobilising young people around local forms of participatory citizenship;
- the use of graphic arts to think about, and to express views about, politics;
- helping young people to organise local Youth Councils and gain an advisory role in Local Authorities;
- develop materials and methods for citizenship education for existing youth movements;
- a multi-cultural project aimed at developing organising skills among disadvantaged groups;
- a community development project in a disadvantaged Brussels neighbourhood.

No systematic evidence is yet available on the outcomes from the finally agreed fifteen projects, but early reports are very encouraging;

- \* a 'multi-media bus' project by the Youth Advice Centre in Aalst working with young people from underprivileged neighbourhoods to broaden understandings of politics and identify forms of participation. The activities were a great success and attracted significant media attention. The participants have decided that they wish to continue in 'working with the bus' and have designed a follow-up project;
- \* Don Quixote Project from Bruges developed a number of innovations and different approaches towards involving young people in exploring democratic processes and forms of political activity. A 'speakers corner' was arranged, video clips produced, participation in a TV debate and developing an internal TV station, learning materials designed and elections arranged were some of the ways of interesting and involving young people. Some 250 students from years 4-6 participated in the project demonstrating the use of audio-visual media in involving young people in politics.
- \* JeP! - A joint venture for young people in Brussels Involving various youth organisations, the JeP! Project involved a number of initiatives designed to involve young people in political activities. These initiatives included a WWW Site, discussions with politicians, postcards, a touring bus, posters and publicity. More than 4000 visitors to the WWW Site and 5000 young people participating in one or more of the JeP! initiatives indicate the success of these activities. 50 Members of Parliament have taken part in a JeP! activity. The Minister of Youth wants to involve children and young people in drafting a youth policy plan for 2001.

The early evidence from the Flemish Site does seem to suggest that young people are interested in politics when listened to, when involved and when they have some control participation in decision-making. If this is correct, it is a very powerful result and outcome from the Site activity.

Social cohesion, intercultural communication and anti-racist activities are some of the central concerns of the Spanish Site. The Cueto quarter site in Santander, for example, has as its central objective 'the development of educational activities around civic life to reinforce the connections between the different social groups of the quarter' (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 31). Establishing 'social mediators' to resolve confrontations between different groups in the

neighbourhood (between adults and between children) and the organisation of sporting and cultural events involving different ethnic and cultural groupings are seen as ways of developing 'social integration of excluded groups'.

The Torrejón de Ardoz Site, outside Madrid, is designed "to facilitate an effective co-operation of the immigrants of the town with local organisations which work for their social and cultural integration". A variety of intercultural activities are planned which prioritise the rights of immigrant workers, develop solidarity in the town through initiatives for cultural exchange and which involve local immigrant groups in labour market initiatives. The Cornellá de Llobregat mini-site within the Spanish Site is situated with Barcelona and involves activities designed to strengthen the rights and quality of life of children and young peoples.

Site activity as forms of 'inclusive citizenship', as the examples above illustrate, involve often the rebuilding of some form of civic life where none has existed or where it has withered away to such an extent that local concern and perhaps, anger, results in an effort 'to do something'. In other cases, the activities within the Sites are a fresh local attempt to resolve 'modern' problems resulting from 'global', regional or historical episodes or trends. From different perspectives and involving different strategies, the activities involve an active engagement with notions of 'inclusiveness' and 'difference' (whether of a socio-economic, cultural, gender, ethnic or religious character).

**2.4.2 Site Activity as forms of Pluralist Citizenship:** The notion of 'difference' is equally a strong characteristic of the second interpretative category, pluralistic citizenship: indeed, 'difference' as a result of social change could be seen as the central concern within conceptions and practices of 'pluralistic citizenship'. While there is this recognition of basic universal rights, there is also space for variability, negotiation and redefinition. Depending on the context, citizenship is about 'sameness' – about overcoming exclusion, developing social cohesion and solidarity awareness between different social, cultural and ethnic groupings. But it is also about a 'citizenship' that embraces difference, diversity and plurality.

'For us, as training teachers, it is very important to be involved with democratic citizenship issues. Our pupils and schools will benefit.'  
University pupil in Moldova Site

At a different level, a 'pluralist citizenship' can be held to transcend traditional understandings and divisions. A longstanding criticism around understandings of citizenship, for example, has been the 'gendered' nature of citizenship. Women, it has been strongly argued, have traditionally constituted a marginal or absent concern within an essentially patriarchal conception of citizenship. There is the gap between the guarantee of a full or active citizenship on the one hand with women's actual lived experience of that guarantee, on the other hand.

'I am no longer enslaved in the kitchen and I have acquired knowledge and skills which help me work with other women in identifying our needs and creatively designing actions to meet those needs.'  
A participant from the Shanty Project, Tallaght Site, Ireland

This exclusion of women from the ideal of the civic public realm of citizenship relies on a traditional opposition between the public and private dimensions of human life. Women and women's activities within conceptions of democratic citizenship is contradictory since many 'common-sense' understandings of citizenship are themselves defined in opposition to women and the sphere of work which is relegated to them. We thus need an understanding of citizenship which encourages an exploration of tensions such as the growing interconnections of the public and the private.

If an understanding of 'pluralist citizenship' represents a move away from the once prevailing modernist patriarchal assumptions and attitudes, it also creates space for 'life politics': that is, those issues that relate to questions of social identity as they are worked out in relation to health, food, work, sexuality, spirituality, the body and caring.

'Pluralism' when coupled with 'citizenship', then, not only encourages a rethinking between the private and the public, but also enables a more engaged perspective of globalisation, the nation-state and ecological concerns through which to view the local Sites of Citizenship. It also encourages a more regional dimension where appropriate.

The Quebec Site and especially the Multicultural Young Café is a good example of practices engaging with a pluralist citizenship. Involving quite large numbers of young people (between the ages of 13 and 21), a number of activities (including 'Operation Hope' and a street demonstration in support of intercultural solidarity) were designed to explore a democracy which 'is first and foremost a dialogue between people who are different while, at the same time, having certain things in common. The young people gain experience (of democratic citizenship) in respecting differences and establishing genuine two-way exchanges' (DECS/EDU/CIT (98) 48). The Genesis Project, located in Montreal's multi-ethnic Côte-des-Neiges district, is similarly concerned with issues of justice, equality and people's control of their own lives. As reported at the Santander meeting, the activities include 'discrimination-free access to community and public-welfare services, development of neighbourhood community, and citizen participation in collective action to improve quality of life and give people more control over their lives and what happens in the community' (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 48). The Maurice Community Education Services Co-ordinating Group (COMSEP) seeks 'to raise consciousness among the severely deprived and attract them into an individual and collective empowerment process'.

An action-research project undertaken by Jocelyne Lamoureux from the Université du Québec à Montreal entitled 'Citoyenneté et Pensée Métisse' records a number of invaluable insights by the participants themselves from the four sites into contemporary understandings and tensions surrounding democratic citizenship.

<p>'We learned how to discuss. At the beginning everyone was embarrassed. It was very embarrassing to speak in front of the whole gang. Now people have opened up and talk more. We have learnt not to laugh at one another.'</p>
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A participant from the Quebec Site

These insights, she suggests, illustrate a number of interesting points. First, the various Site activities illustrate 'a process of becoming actors': that is, a process of emerging individual and collective subjects through making a/some sense of what is being lived. Central to this process is the concern for central/autonomy as the basis for being aware and deciding whether to act. Secondly, in order to become an actor, there is the need to develop some

distance from existing arrangements. Without this ability to create ‘open spaces’ and to provide the capacity to initiate, control and appropriate activities, citizenship activity is seen to have little value. Thirdly, Jocelyne Lamoureux’s study highlights the importance that participants attach to ‘action’, to do something in negotiating the messy and often confusing civic pathways. Fourthly, there is this recognisable theme of identity running through the Site activities, an ease and acceptance of diversity and plurality of identities and a corresponding capacity for tolerance. Finally, there is this view of politics emerging from the Sites which is centred on exploring the available and possible social public spaces. Politics is to do with enlarging these spaces and with broadening the conception and practices of ‘existing’ politics. Complexity, unpredictability and uncertainty is accepted. Overcoming exclusion while recognising diversity and difference is a process characterised by a tension between on the one hand, negotiation and deliberation and, on the other hand, existing structures and determinancies.

<p>'Since I retired I have come here very often. Political parties don't listen to me. This is the only place I can express myself, where I can protest.'</p>
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Genesis Project participant, Quebec

Similar pre-occupations can be identified in the activities of the Alsace Site. As Richard Sancho Andreo notes, ‘By voicing their protests, young people are contesting the whole civic structure: youth workers, parents and teachers, institutions, elected representatives, the police, judges, associations and business enterprises’ (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) 14). This provides the backdrop for the Alsace activities. Democratic mediation, workshops and the Media Group, for example, are used to provide an opportunity for the young Site participants ‘to produce its own operating rules via a democratic process, and to establish its own tools for social advancement’.

In a different context, the Tirreno Site in Italy too has this global significance to its local activities. ‘The big challenge of the new millennium’ argues a Site report, ‘is to successfully create an osmosis between economic exploitation, democratic development and regard for the individual... the Tirreno project is a way of understanding, imagining, assessing and realising to make young people more at one with themselves and the world and to help others to feel the same. It is a method for living in Europe, developing our own culture in order to learn to dialogue with the other’. Involving a network of local schools, the various discovering activities are designed to investigate the local human, archaeological, architectural and environmental heritage in Fiumicino County, together with activities aimed at developing the Roman Coast National Park. ‘Identity’, ‘historic memory’, ‘ecology of human relationships’, ‘network culture’ are some of the identified concerns and values underpinning the numerous innovative activities of the schoolchildren and the partnership relationships with the children and adult groups/agencies.

A ‘new pluralistic citizenship’, then, can build upon and extend beyond ‘inclusiveness’: although for analytical purposes of clarity and comprehension, we have distinguished between ‘inclusiveness’ and ‘pluralism’. In practice, of course, many of the activities within the sites illustrate both interrelated concerns. The Education for Democratic Citizenship project is, in part, a search for new, contemporary meanings and understandings of ‘citizenship’ **as evidenced by Site participants themselves**. A focus on ‘pluralism’ provides an avenue for exploring suggestions and hints of such ‘new contemporary meanings and understandings’. It can only be a case of ‘hints and suggestions’ because we do not have

sufficient data from the Sites and more importantly from the site participants themselves. The single exception is the earlier mentioned study by Jocelyne Lamoureux from the Quebec Site. The insights and richness of data collected in this study strongly suggests the need for similar studies being an **integral** part of future Site activity. However, even given the (very) limited data sources on each Site, it is possible to see, for example, a serious and meaningful engagement with ‘identity’ politics and the encouragement of ‘voices’ previously marginalised, silenced or excluded. Most encouragingly, there is evidence as suggested in some of the Site activities and experiences listed above, of an early positive dialogue **beginning** around difference and identity which moves substantially beyond ‘pre-modern’ sources of identity such as nationalism, localism, racism, xenophobia and fundamentalism. This is very exciting.

There is also, very importantly, ‘hints and suggestions’ of a more ‘updated’ and sophisticated exploration of ‘community’ that goes beyond a ‘rosy’, uncritical ‘gemeinschaft’. In contemporary settings, there is the recognition that ‘within multi-cultural societies, different cultures are not completely ‘bounded’ but can overlap, explore together different understandings and meanings, identify common interests and interact for mutual and collective benefit’. There is the possibility then, of Site activities pointing, in significant ways, towards new insights and meanings of ‘community’ that reflect the current context rather than one of some time ago. This too is very exciting.

## 2.5 Learning in the Sites

Learning in the Site is a crucial aspect of all Sites. It is occurring at many levels, demonstrates itself in a huge variety of different ways and often, provides the ‘glue’ or ‘cement’ which keeps Sites in existence and in development. For even a casual outside observer, it is clear that learning is an **integral** part of ‘what a Site is’ and ‘what a Site does’. Any analysis of this ‘learning’, however, suffers from (at least) two significant problems. First, we do not have the data from the Sites to arrive at detailed descriptions and conclusions and secondly, from a pedagogic perspective, our conceptual understandings of ‘what counts as learning’ are insufficiently developed to ‘capture’ the learning that is undoubtedly taking place within Sites. These two issues will be developed further in the paragraphs below.

At the most immediate and obvious level, it is clear that learning takes place at the various training and education workshops held periodically within the Sites. In the Alsace Site, for example, training workshops are integral part of the Site activities. An initial mediator workshop on democratic citizenship was organised which explained the background to the EDC project and fed in examples from other sites. As the report states, ‘At the conclusion of the training course, the young people proposed setting up and running an information unit in association with Themis and other partners (judicial authorities, police and associations) to give young people in their neighbourhoods a grounding in law so that they would be able to couch their grievances in legal terms and air them through the appropriate channels’.

<p>'We have negative opinions of the police - the crime squad are dangerous. The riot police are the worst.'</p>
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A Participant from the Alsace Site, France

The subsequent training workshop aimed to give ‘young people a grounding in the law and institutions, thereby empowering them to deal with a wide range of requests and to

reformulate them in such a way as to guide young enquirers towards the competent bodies, without providing actual assistance ... In the longer term, after assessment of their grassroots work, young trainees should be familiar with conflict-solving procedures and be able to train other young people for democratic citizenship, becoming mediators themselves.' In this example, the development of particular (complex) skills and knowledge are situated within 'grassroots work': there is the interplay between citizenship activity and learning, each reinforcing each other and so creating a developmental cycle.

In the Bulgarian Site, residential workshops involving young people from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, are used to discuss, prioritise and plan local forms of citizenship activity. Follow-up workshops are envisaged to report back, evaluate and deepen activities, possibly with new participants and possibly with young people from different south-eastern European countries so to enable a regional dimension to be added to the local activities.

Formal training workshops are, then, an important part of most, if not all, Sites. They tend to be driven by the participants themselves and their 'curricula' strongly reflects the practical tasks and activities that are being undertaken, or are being planned in the near future. Such 'action learning' forms an important feature of Sites.

At another level, there is a 'formal learning' preoccupation in regards to some of the institutions or partners involved in the Sites. Secondary Schools, for example, are important backdrops for citizenship activity in a number of Sites and there is the expectation that life relationships and curricula within the schools will be beneficially affected through participation in Site activities. As the Croatia report states, 'We believe that school is the best location where active citizenship and democracy can be learned about. Schools, as Sites of Citizenship', will be the institutions where young people will not only get prepared for lifelong education, work, mobility and everyday living in multicultural and multi-lingual Europe, but will also learn how to share power and build society based on solidarity, spiritual and moral values and cultural heritage enriched by diversities.' Similar sentiments and aspirations underpin the Albanian project and the proposed universities as sites of citizenship. In the Tirreno Site in Italy, there is a similar perspective. 'It is very important', they write, 'that the school should be a "site of democratic citizenship" that includes in its education programme models of practical training in democratic citizenship based on the values of pluralism and the respect of diversity'.

Other partners and agencies involved in Sites are equally likely to be 'learning'. Local authorities or Ministries of Education will be attempting to 'learn' from their involvement in a particular Site, reaching conclusions about this involvement and deciding on future courses of action. Unfortunately, we have little collected evidence of this type of learning. One example of the 'learning' undertaken by national policy agencies is that reported at the 'Social Minorities in Democratic Citizenship' meeting in Santander, Spain in November 1999 and involving representatives and Roma participants from the Bulgarian Site (DECS/EDU/CIT(99) 67 rev.). Representatives from the Spanish Ministry of Education, in a strong statement in support of the Spanish Sites, stressed 'that the role of the Ministry of Education & Culture was not only to co-ordinate projects but to disseminate the ideas throughout the country. She stressed', stated in the report from the meeting, 'that there are some plans for the development of similar projects in South America.' To 'co-ordinate', 'disseminate' and generalise Site activities imply an enormous degree of 'learning' by such

national policy actors. Similar commitments from government agencies can be found in most Sites. The recently produced evaluation summary report on the Tallaght Site (by Stephen Rourke, January 2000) provides the evidence with which to inform such government 'learning'. It is a rare example of a policy orientated evaluation study.

Perhaps, however, the most important aspect of learning underway within the Sites relates not to the 'formal' domain but to the 'informal' domain. It is in this area that we are perhaps at the greatest disadvantage in trying to understand the learning activities within the Sites. There is some evidence. The reports from the Sites, for example, are important sources of evidence for some aspects of this informal learning. Outlining the development of activities within the Sites or reporting on significant decisions or reporting on an important partnership meeting and conclusions reached are all examples that suggest the extent and nature of 'learning' that is integral to the Site. Newsletters, such as 'Identify' from the Tallaght Travellers Development Group or 'Community Links' from the Tallaght Partnership and exhibitions or poster-displays are valuable learning experiences for those involved and again, evidence of that learning. Minutes of meetings, annual review reports and other assorted 'episodic' activities again provide important illustrations of the informal learning that, almost by definition, needs to happen if Sites are to have an existence beyond a small number of activities.

The most important and exciting source of learning – that of the Site participants themselves – is, however, largely absent. Anecdotal evidence on this matter is readily available and participation in visits to Sites by 'outsiders' often provides glimpses of the 'outcomes' of this learning: that is, self-confident people with a civic commitment, understanding and enthusiasm undertaking complicated and demanding activities and responsibilities. 'Learning-by-doing-by-discussing' seems to work. For someone intimately involved in a particular Site, it would not be too difficult to list the necessary skills and understandings developed by participants in that Site and secondly, the various means and activities in the Site which has resulted in the development and acquisition of those skills and understandings.

'When I say that being a citizen means being able to participate; one of the ways of participating is through work, through employment.

Participant from Quebec Site

Those would probably include, for example, skills and understandings that relate to personal development, developing and maintaining partnership arrangements, communication and campaigning issues, conflict resolution, organisational capacity building, fund raising, mediation, political lobbying and electronic networking.

The main problem, however, in addressing the 'learning' occurring in the Sites is in the informal nature of much of this learning. Almost by definition, for a Site of Citizenship is to have an 'impact' and to remain in existence for any period of time, it must be a 'learning Site'. The overwhelming majority of this learning in each site will be of an informal nature: that is, outside the formal educational and training workshops or activities organised in any Site. While we do not have the formal data relating to this informal learning, it is obvious, given the variety and complexity and activities underway in most Sites, that a tremendous amount of learning is being undertaken by the participants (although they themselves might not realise it unless encouraged to reflect on their experiences).

There is a further complication when trying to grasp this important issue of ‘learning’ and the Sites. We do not adequately conceptually understand how this learning takes place. The emphasis in the past by pedagogics on **what** should be taught has resulted in the ‘how’ issues being largely unaddressed. Learning has, in the main, been taken for granted. The growing influence of ‘lifelong learning’ at a policy level, however, has encouraged a recent and healthy research-informed discussion into ‘how people learn’ (both within formal and informal situations). It is increasingly clear, for example, that people’s dispositions to learning are influenced by a wide range of interacting variables in their current and past histories. From this perspective, the effective learning of citizenship competencies and capabilities probably depends on the ways in which the participants’ employment, unpaid work, family life and social life influence the ways in which citizenship is perceived. Notions such as ‘learning careers’ and ‘cognitive apprenticeships’ are used to encompass this type of learning. Of equal interest for understanding Site learning is the notion of ‘everyday learning’. Such learning is an organic and changing interaction between activity, context and concepts. What is being done and where it is being done are integral parts of learning rather than issues separate and distinct from it. A key idea from this perspective is ‘community of practices’. Learners, or participants in a Site, often belong to such communities – at home, in work or in a social or community context. These groupings can be of a formal or informal grouping. Within a ‘community of practice’, newcomers learn how to fit in or fail to fit in with the existing patterns. These patterns or norms, in effect, determine what it means to be ‘citizenship literate’. Again, much of the learning is tacit as opposed to formal ‘propositional’ knowledge.

The above points suggest the centrality of ‘lifelong learning’ as a key idea when seeking to understand and interpret developments at a Site level (as is recognised within the main texts on EDC adopted at the Council of Europe’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by the Committee of Ministers in 1999). A perspective and approach which prioritises ‘lifelong learning’ is better equipped to interrelate the huge diversity of forms of learning which characterises all Site development and which does not comfortably or easily dovetail with more formal practices of education and training. A plenary paper by G Dohmen on Lifelong Learning at the December 1999 Warsaw meeting recognised these points when arguing for a view of lifelong learning that ‘comprises all forms and possibilities of human learning’ and that for many adults ‘is the natural and often unconscious apprehension and comprehension of new information, experiences and challenges in actual life situations;...’ This ‘everyday learning’ is not coherent or systematic but is occasional ‘situational’ learning, bound to actual problems, new experiences, critical events, embarrassing challenges at the workplace, on travel, by television etc.’ Uncovering, legitimating and making ‘public’ such forms of explorative or investigative learning is not difficult. It is time consuming and qualitative in approach (and therefore, expensive). Once obtained, a more informed discussion of competencies, capabilities, skills and knowledge of ‘learning for education for democratic citizenship’ can be presented.

'Breaking out of the closed world of the market and exposing oneself to the thoughts, perceptions, experiences and the dreams of the people who lounge aimlessly at the edge, leads necessarily to self-enrichment . . . to the discovery that at least one person in ten was not being made use of.'

A participant from the Quebec Site

As Dohmen remarks, ‘If we want to lay broader mental foundations for democratic citizenship, its core approach is to disclose the citizen’s daily world and make it more transparent and accessible to democratic participation.’

If the evidence that we do have from the Sites strongly suggests that a lot of learning is happening (although we cannot at this stage document in detail the ‘what’ and the ‘how’), it is equally evident that this is an ongoing or continuing process of learning. Once learning ceases, the Site is likely to stagnate and eventually wither away. Again, no detailed evidence is yet available on this process of continuing learning but Site activities such as evaluations, monitoring, annual reports, policy reviews and developments, Site meetings are all ‘everyday’ activities that contribute towards the process of reflection necessary for the continuous learning of the Site and within the Site. Perhaps, as suggested in the ‘Site Reports’ guidelines, we will be soon receiving the necessary data on this and other aspects of learning which allows us to fill in the gaps in this area.

## 2.6 Sustainability

As indicated earlier, most of the sites – especially in the west – were established prior to the commencement of the EDC project. They have created, during this period, established routines of working based on relationships characterised by their trust and respect (even though this might have not been the case to begin with!). Financial support for their Site is not a major concern. In some cases (such as Tallaght), the Sites have developed various and sophisticated mechanisms for attracting outside funding that range from local, national through to European sources. In other instances, Site workers have been ‘seconded’ or ‘lent’ to the Site from a partnership agency. In Bulgaria, it is the Open Education Centre, a national non-governmental organisation that provides the material support (obtained from a variety of sources) for much of the Site activities. The involvement of local government or national Ministries of Education (as in the cases of Lisbon (Portugal), Moldova, Croatia, Tirreno (Italy) and Spain) can sometimes provide an important structural ‘sustainability’ feature which provides a legitimacy and focus for Site activities.

'This unique experience has kindled an interest in politics. One of the participants remarked that the 'skilleduggery' for which real politicians were so often criticised, was also present in this Youth Parliament - it appeared inescapable.'

A participant from the Belgian Site

In other instances, it is the Council of Europe itself which is providing the basis for the initiation and sustainability of the Sites. This is especially the case for the ‘newer’ Sites and those in the east of Europe. A withdrawal of support from the Council of Europe would, in most of these cases, severely jeopardise the future of such Sites. In the ‘older’, more western sites, this is less likely to be the case.

Within the Sites themselves, although the evidence is patchy from the Site reports, it is likely that sustainability is maintained through an effective Site co-ordinator or through some key organisational structure or committee. Many of the (mini-site) projects that contribute to a ‘Site of Sites’ (in, for example, Quebec, Tallaght, Lisbon and Tirreno) have well established co-ordinating committees or structures with, perhaps, an energetic Co-ordinator (working with or without financial support).

Interestingly, the Tallaght Partnership Summary Evaluation Report raises the issue of 'mainstreaming' when discussing the issue of sustainability. 'Mainstreaming' is generally understood as moving from the margins to the centre (of funding sources, activities, lessons learnt, best practice etc.). 'It is the clear intention and hope of the Partnership that these actions would ultimately be mainstreamed by relevant statutory agencies', states the report. A number of examples are then provided which illustrates the success, in certain areas, of this objective. As well as mainstreaming particular projects, there is also recognition of influencing mainstream policies of relevant government departments and statutory agencies. 'Mainstreaming' success is a significant help in making the transition from pilot and demonstration project status to becoming an accepted and recognised element within mainstream provision. As the report notes, 'there is now a need for the Tallaght Partnership and mainstream agencies/organisations to identify the most effective mechanisms for sustaining the innovative developmental approaches'.

It is in the nature of much citizenship activity that it is episodic and short-lived. Usually focusing on a particular problem or issue, the activity fades away after a short period of time due to, possibly, the problem being resolved, lack of funding or support, obstacles being too great or simply, exhaustion. 'Sustainability', by contrast, implies a certain degree of bureaucratic infrastructure with the development of inherent tensions resulting from issues of accountability, democracy and a demanding 'lay' participation. 'Sustainability', in other words, is a complex phenomenon requiring considerable skills, co-ordinating acumen and organisational experience. The absence of such attributes often leads to the brevity of many citizenship activities. In the Sites within the EDC project, however, it is clear that most of the existing Sites have managed to create sustainable structures or contexts. How they have managed to do this and by the development of what initiatives is not yet clear from the data.

## 2.7 'Schools' as Sites of Citizenship

Mention has already been made to the number of Sites (especially in Eastern Europe) which involve schools in their democratic citizenship activity. The Portuguese, Irish, Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Bulgarian, Albanian and Croatian Sites, for example, either marginally or centrally involve schools and their participants as 'actors' within the Site. Sometimes, the schools are in partnership with wider neighbourhood or community groups or agencies. Given the importance of schools within the Sites of Citizenship; it is worth summarising a number of points relating to citizenship activity within the schools.

In all the sites involving schools, there is the recognition of the importance and contribution that schools can **potentially** make towards understandings and practices of democratic citizenship. This can either be through the curriculum (the 'formal agenda') or through the School as 'a democratic institution' (the informal or 'hidden' agenda) - or, as a combination of both approaches. We have already mentioned how the Portuguese, Croatian, Albanian and Italian Sites see 'their schools' as citizenship sites (or wish to change their schools to become citizenship sites). Introducing values based on 'pluralism and respect for diversity' as the Croatian Site put it, the schools from the various Sites are all anxious to develop awareness and activities of a democratic nature. It is rare for the literature from the Sites to specify in detail the exact nature of these democratic attitudes and activities, but in general they are seen to include tolerance, feelings of solidarity, multi-culturalism, respect of self and others and participation and shared decision-making. And there are many different ways of promoting these aspects of 'democratic citizenship' in the different Sites. The quotations from the

Croatian school children (in the box below) from a 'democratic' lesson on learning English, illustrates the value of such an approach. Respect between students and teacher, learning how to reach decisions, involvement of students in decision-making, expressing and having opinions valued and the development of negotiating skills are some of the 'citizenship learning' going on in an English language class! Irrespective of the subject matter (the curriculum) in a particular class, democratic values and practices can be emphasised and encouraged. As the Croatian students suggest, there are a many other valuable experiences and relationships present within any classroom or any school that influence and shape pupils current and future attitudes and behaviour towards democratic citizenship. The pedagogic approach used in the Bulgarian Site encourages similar values among the participating young people. In the Italian Site, these understandings and practices of citizenship by the school children are explored and developed in relationship to the environment. Involving parents and neighbourhood participants in the activities of the school, as in the Portuguese Site, is another mechanism seen as important in different Sites.

Student responses to collaborative/negotiated English classes from Croatia Site

The best thing about this class is that we can choose our own subject, express our opinions and talk about problems.

The best is that we learn activities democratically and it is a great example for other subjects where we are not allowed to express ourselves.

I think that most of the things are fine and in my opinion this is the only class where we can be what we really are and are treated equal with the teacher: she doesn't look down at us and is always prepared to help.

The best thing about this class is that we can say what we mean and the teacher respects our opinion.

The work we do in groups is helpful for learning of communication, patience, competitive spirit, negotiation, respect.

Schools are not the only or perhaps the most important experience for the development of citizenship values and practices amongst young people. Separating the impact of the school from the wider socialisation process is a complicated and controversial issue within research studies. A study by Mark Elchardus, Dimokritos Kavadias and Jessy Siongers looks at this issue (DECS/EDU/CIT(99) 65) and makes a number of important points that relates to the role and contribution of schools to citizenship in the various Sites. They report that 'based on our results, we must conclude that the formal curriculum does at present not contribute much to values education' ('Values' are seen as providing the basis for judgements of good, bad, right, wrong, suitability, truth, justification etc). By contrast,

the hidden curriculum turns out to be much more important for values and citizenship education.

The pupils' values are significantly affected by the Participation opportunities they get, by different aspects of the school climate or school culture, and by the teachers' attitude.

The pupils participation (the democratic school) and participation in socio-cultural activities favourably affect values

Participation in decision-making in the classroom and in the school and in extra-curriculum activities (during lunch-breaks, after school or at the week-ends) is identified in the study as being important. Other examples that are seen as important in promoting positive attitudes towards democratic citizenship include

- \* a pupils council in the school;
- \* pupils reacting against and curbing racist attitudes
- \* pupil involvement in school policy discussions;
- \* pupil participation in a broad range of social and cultural activities;
- \* non-directive leadership by the school principal;
- \* school rules that are understood and agreed;
- \* teachers attitudes and values that are 'progressive' and inclusive in nature.

The importance of teachers' attitudes, values and commitment towards democratic citizenship within the classroom and within the school, cannot be stressed sufficiently. As role models for the pupils, teachers are identified as key actors in the promotion of democratic values and ideals among young students. As the study concludes, 'a democratic school stimulates democratic attitudes'.

Schools, then, are important actors within many of the Sites within the EDC project. The proposed Moldovan Site of Citizenship with its emphasis on the university as an important source of learning (both through the formal and hidden agendas) for young adults shares many similarities with those Sites which centre on schools. The schools and universities are an important source of the 'learning' that needs to be undertaken and practiced around democratic citizenship issues. Other sources of learning within other Sites focus on adults and involve community groups, health centres, women's groups, ethnic minority groups and unpaid groups. Much of the 'learning' in these other Sites is similar to that promoted within 'a democratic school'. The **lifelong learning** emphasis within the Education for Democratic Citizenship project, is therefore the appropriate perspective within which to situate the learning from the various Sites of Citizenship. Not only does it stress the duration of the learning (from young people through to adults), it also recognises the contribution of 'everyday learning' (or non-formal learning) to the development of understandings and practices of democratic citizenship. Important learning occurs outside formal structures and is often not officially recognised. The perspective of Lifelong Learning underpinning the EDC project recognises this important point. To separate school and adult learning, or formal and non-formal learning, would significantly weaken the rich and valuable experiences and lessons emerging from the various Sites of Citizenship. As the first meetings of the EDC project suggest, citizenship education is a lifelong process.

### **3. LEARNING FROM THE SITES**

Underpinning the main texts on education for democratic citizenship adopted at the Council of Europe's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly in May 1999, was the central concern of 'learning from the Sites'. As a result of the activities developed in and through the Sites of Citizenship, in what ways and around what issues are we now clearer about when compared to a few years ago? This Report is a beginning in attempting to reach some conclusions. However, as mentioned in the Introductory section to this report, we do not yet have the necessary data and evidence from the Sites themselves

with which to outline and discuss such conclusions with any certainty. What we have instead are a valuable and rich collation of ‘cameo’ indications, suggestions and illustrations from the Sites and from particular actors on an eclectic variety of issues relating to ‘democratic citizenship’.

'And so you could, and do, get that sense of empowerment and participation in society whether it's at one level – getting information, having to defend your rights or getting some repair in your building. There are so many different ways of getting involved and having an impact on changing our society.'

A participant from Quebec Site

Whilst such ‘cameos’ prevent a systematic, rigorous and authoritative description and analysis of Site activity, they do allow and encourage an identification of discussion points informed by reports, activities and visits to the Sites. In other words, what we do ‘know’ about the Sites allows us to raise a number of points that we feel merit further consideration and discussion. Irrespective of the ‘silent voices’, the missing data and the early stages of development in many of the Sites, a number of issues can be listed that contribute towards answering the questions of ‘What has been learnt from the Sites (so far)?’ We list some of these issues in this section of the Synthesis Report. The following section will outline a number of policy recommendations based on issues listed below.

What then, can be learnt (and discussed) from the Sites of Citizenship, so far?

- 3.1 There is a strong willingness amongst groups in society to experiment, develop practices and create partnerships around citizenship concerns;
- 3.2 this willingness and enthusiasm is greatly strengthened by a ‘supportive’ framework and structure such as the Council of Europe’s Education for Democratic Citizenship project;
- 3.3 the interest in, and enthusiasm for, citizenship activities, does not have to be the responsibility of the Council of Europe. Other agencies such as national and local governments or well-established non-government organisations can provide such a supportive framework;
- 3.4 the benefits, from a learning and practice perspective, to be derived from a limited number of Sites to participants and to local and national policy agencies are potentially huge. The emphasis should be on the quality of site activity rather than the quantity (i.e. the number of Sites);
- 3.5 reflection, evaluation, monitoring and research (within ‘engaged’ and sympathetic methodological frameworks) should be integral characteristics within Sites of Citizenship;
- 3.6 ‘networking’ within Sites and across Sites and countries substantially strengthens understandings, commitments, learning and practices relating to citizenship by those participating;

- 3.7 each of the Sites has distinctiveness in terms of activities, contexts, participants, partnerships or objectives. Comparisons and analyses across Sites are difficult;
- 3.8 the notion of ‘participation’ is critical to an understanding of activities developed within the Sites and has important implications for conceptions and practices of democratic citizenship that centre on ‘rules’ as opposed to ‘status’;
- 3.9 evidence from a number of Sites suggests a more fluid, emerging and redefined authority relationship between ‘citizens’ and ‘institutions’ in, for example, schools and in local communities;
- 3.10 in the relationship between the State and civil society, it is important to have the ‘political space’ within which risk, exploration and experimentation around forms of democratic citizenship can be developed and encouraged;
- 3.11 the notion and practice of ‘partnerships’ is a key structural characteristic of most Sites and often involves novel arrangements with ‘unfamiliar’ participants within newly created relationships of trust, confidence and social solidarity;
- 3.12 most Sites have chosen to work within an inter-cultural context where recognition and value of ‘difference’ co-exists within a complex relation to ‘integration’;
- 3.13 Sites from the newly emerging democratic and market economies (as in south-east Europe) exist within a different relationship to EDC when compared to those in Western Europe. Their political histories suggest a more complex context and demanding arrangement of circumstances that need to be overcome when exploring ‘citizenship’ activities;
- 3.14 despite such differences, there are in some instances, clear linkages between Sites in east and west Europe than within eastern or western Sites (such as those involving Roma participants);
- 3.15 ‘learning’ is a more appropriate generic term than ‘education’ within the EDC project. It covers the wide variety of learning – within an educational and training context and from a formal and non-formal perspective – implicit in Site activity. It is, moreover, closer to a conception of ‘lifelong learning’ which most accurately ‘captures’ the nature of ‘self-directed’ learning characterising much of practices developed in and through the Sites;
- 3.16 the complex activities underway within the Sites require not only a recognition of the vital contribution of formal compulsory schooling in the development of democratic citizenship, knowledge and skills, but also of the need to extend this learning to encompass new and innovative ways of acquiring information, knowledge and competencies.

Throughout this report, comments and observations have been limited to those which are suggested by the Site participants and activities themselves. This is also true of the issues listed above and which provide the basis of the recommendations itemised below.

#### 4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS (please, see page 6).

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

On 7 May 1999, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe agreed a **Declaration and Programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship, Based on the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens** (DECS/EDU/CIT (99) Decl E). On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council of Europe, it was appropriate that the EDC project was recognised and seen as a central activity in the Council and in the Council's partnerships with other international organisations. In the Declaration, paragraph eleven covers the Committee of Ministers' understandings of education for democratic citizenship. Mention is made of 'lifelong learning', of the importance of a 'participation' in shaping personal and societal issues, of respect and understanding for others, of strengthening social cohesion, mutual understanding and solidarity, of preparing people to live in a multicultural society and to deal with differences and, finally, emphasis is given to citizenship activities that 'must be inclusive of all age groups and sectors of society'.

This Synthesis Report, we feel, is a contribution towards beginning to outline and analyse the activities within those Sites that currently exist or have recently begun their activities. There is evidence, we suggest, of all the concerns and themes identified by the Committee of Ministers being addressed in some form or another by one or more of the Sites. On a number of issues, the Sites have progressed beyond what might have been expected in so short a time period and in so complex a terrain as citizenship. As such, they provide clear signals of not only what is possible but also invaluable present concrete experiences that further our understandings of a 'modernised' conception and practice of citizenship often within a societal or regional context that is characterised by the absence or declining influence of 'citizenship'. There are, of course, gaps and absences in these practices and understandings (partly resulting from our inability to 'capture' what is happening and why, within the Sites) but the gains overwhelming dwarf these shortcomings.

Finally, mention in the Ministers' Declaration is made of assistance 'in the establishment of national plans for human rights education as part of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education' (para. 4.1.2). It is appropriate that future activities around citizenship education are identified as part of the Council of Europe's continuing support and 'learning' from the Sites in the years ahead. Consolidating, deepening and extending the activities within the Sites, however, remain as important as discussing and proposing future activities after the forthcoming 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education in Krakow, Poland October (2000). The evidence presented in this report, irrespective of how selective and limited it is, provides a sound and optimistic basis, we suggest, for taking the Education for Democratic Citizenship project forward.

## APPENDIX 1

### **What is to be understood as ‘democratic citizenship’?**

There is an extensive literature available on different understandings and definitions of ‘democratic citizenship’. The Council of Europe has discussed and reviewed much of this writing and agreed that ‘democratic citizenship’

- has a variety of meanings which depend on the political, social and cultural context. The context of citizenship will differ according to these factors and is likely to slightly or greatly differ from situation to situation or from country to country. One cannot speak of citizenship in isolation. It must be situated within a particular context. Citizenship only makes sense, has a meaning, in relation to the needs and requirements of a society or political system.
- in a narrow sense, is about the integration of the individual into the political framework of a country and, for the individuals, means freedom, independence and political control over the authorities.
- involves the participation of citizens in the institutions of law and means, for the state, loyalty, participation and service for the benefit of society as a whole.
- in a more modern and broader sense, is about greater participation, social cohesion, access, equity, accountability and solidarity. Democratic citizenship is about inclusion rather than exclusion, participation rather than marginalisation, culture and values rather than simple procedural issues (such as voting within expanding frameworks of accountability) and is about being active in shaping understandings and practices of citizenship rather than being passive ‘consumers’ of democratic ‘products’.
- is at the centre of a number of complex societal issues and problems such as sustainable development, security, social justice, the environment, the nature and future of work, etc. etc.

## APPENDIX 2

### What are 'Sites of Citizenship'?

A 'Site of Citizenship' is a local grass-root project. It may cover a number of similar activities across a number of geographical areas or indeed throughout a country or a region. A Site is not a location. Sometimes, there may be different activities, each with more or less their own identities, within a Site. (Sometimes we refer to this as a 'Site of Sites'). A Site may occur within a centre, an institution (such as a school), a local neighbourhood or community, a town, city or region.

A Site is an exploration or a discovery of the conditions and circumstances, the structures and the processes which encourage or discourage democratic citizenship activities. It will illustrate the WHY and the HOW of developing democratic citizenship.

A Site of Citizenship could be a loosely organised grouping of people coming together around one particular issue. It could also be a partnership between local people, local institutions (such as the Health Centre or Women's Clinic), the local municipality and the Ministry of Education. The Site might have a sophisticated complex organisation and receive financial support from a number of different sources.

Irrespective of the geography or the organisation of a Site of Citizenship, each Site is likely to share a number of common characteristics in relation to democratic citizenship activity. Their activities are likely to:

- \* be free from outside control and rooted in civil society;
- \* involve a variety of different groups and partnerships in the development of democratic practices;
- \* be controlled and driven by the participants themselves through democratic processes;
- \* be directed towards social change;
- \* involve a focus on one or several aspects of political power (in the content of education, employment, justice, environment, health, politics, culture, xenophobia etc) which shapes the relationship between the citizens and the State;
- \* involve identifying and confronting exclusion and the barriers to participation;
- \* potentially be self-sufficient and self-sustaining;
- \* be exploring and developing local, group or community resources;
- \* be an activity from which other groups and countries can learn from.

In summary, a Site is any initiative where there is the attempt to implement the principles of education for democratic citizenship.

## APPENDIX 3

<b>A Comparative Analysis Grid For Sites</b>					
<b>(1) Location</b>	<b>(2) Context</b>	<b>(3) Actors</b>	<b>(4) Objectives</b>	<b>(5) Learning Activities</b>	<b>(6) Multipliers</b>
Country Region Europe	Social Economic Cultural Educational Religious Political Environmental	Specific Target Groups Institutions Agencies Community	General Specific (Planning and Evaluation)	Processes/ Content Formal Non-Formal Informal Partnership/ Participation Collaborative Self Directed Community Education Critical Reflection Communication & Information Technologies (CIT) Evaluation	Role and Training of Multipliers. Outcomes of Training Methods. Evaluation Impact of Site Activities on Multipliers
<b>(7) Impact Outcomes</b>	<b>(8) Support System</b>	<b>(9) Barriers</b>	<b>(10) Strategies Policies</b>	<b>(11) Dissemination &amp; Networks</b>	<b>(12) Sustainability</b>
For Different Actors and All Involved Effectiveness Efficiency Quality Empowerment Transformation Unplanned Outcomes	Various Access Use Relevancy	Various Social Institutional Cultural Financial Educational Attitudinal Previous Negative Experiences Etc	Various  Origin Content, Effectiveness	Formal and Non-Formal Evaluation of dissemination  Use of CIT	Elements and Foundations  Maintain Streaming
<b>(13) Transferability</b>	<b>(14) Significance for EDC Project</b>	<b>(15) Source of Data, etc.</b>	<b>(16) Guidelines of Good Practice Emerging</b>	<b>(17) Contribution to a Future Action Plan</b>	<b>(18) Implications for Council of Europe</b>
Member States Communities  What? How? When? Where? For Whom?	Concepts, etc. (A) Activities (B) Multipliers (A) Etc. Materials Dissemination Innovations	Reports Visits CIT Action Research Etc.	Policies Processes Strategies Education & Training Resources	Campaign Initiatives  Dissemination	General and Specific