

# NEIGHBOURS

Learning to respect one another

Czech Helsinki Committee (c) 1999

## Introduction

### Content:

- **Project outline** : context, objectives, target group, basic documents, participants, duration, cooperating organizations/media, instruments, evaluation, methodology curriculum, schedule, project author and coordinator
- **Manual for teachers and project leaders, including Index of terms and abbreviated major human rights documents.**

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1. **Context:** the Project is based on the Declaration of European Education Ministers (Norway June 24 1997), that “the fundamental values of the Council of Europe - the respect for human rights, tolerance and understanding - should be taught to every schoolchild in order to counter racism, xenophobia and ultranationalism.“ . It follows up on projects previously run by the Czech Helsinki Committee: “What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child?“ and “Programme of Education for Citizenship“. It is designed for implementation in lessons of civics and other subjects (history, geography, languages, music and the arts, etc.) as well as in out-of-school activities.
2. **Objectives:** The Project aims to acquaint children with the historical development of the respective State as a multicultural and multinational community, to inculcate in children and young people the spirit of mutual understanding between nationalities, ethnic and other minorities (religious, handicapped , sexual orientation, etc.) and nations (refugees, expatriates, assylum-seekers). *The Projects proceeds from the basic premise that All are different and all are equal. The main concept being that the line to be drawn on individual human rights is the infringement of the human rights of another human being : My rights end where the rights of my neighbour begin.*We have been living side by side in this area for centuries. Xenophobia, bullying, violence, racialism and antisemitism are negative human relations which have to be stood up against. To be able to do this one has to have knowledge, awareness and communication skills.
3. **The target group:** children in the age range of 12 - 16 (upper primary, lower secondary), secondary school students, teachers, parents, non-educational personnel, educators in general, possibly the community at large. We assume that those directly and indirectly involved will spread the project and its results to other schools and out-of-school organizations.
4. **Basic documents:** Convention on the Rights of the Child, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Constituion of the Czech Republic, see Index

5. **Participants:** 4 - 7 schools selected so as to represent the variety of areas and communities : a village primary school in a socially structured community, a school in a housing estate, a religious school, a technical vocational school, a private school, an apprentice training centre, others.
6. **Duration of project:** 2 - 3 school years depending on available funding. The summer vacations serve for evaluation, summer schools for teachers, holiday workshops, individual study groups.
7. **Cooperating organizations:** the organizers will address all governmental and especially non-governmental organizations and institution such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, the Czech Committee for UNICEF, the UNHCR, all involved departments of the Czech Helsinki Committee, Partners for Democratic Change, Czech Republic - Czech Centre for Conflict Solution - Partners for Democratic Change, the parents' groups, ECHO - Czech Republic, Amnesty International, Human Rights Education Associates, Heinrich Boelle Foundation, Milan Šimečka Foundation, Education Centre of the Prague Jewish Museum, SOS - Man in Need, Open Society, the British Council, the US and Canadian embassies and other national and international institutions, children's and youth organizations, this both with regards to direct cooperation and sponsoring.
8. **Media:** The organizers will address all relevant media, hold regular press conferences and issue regular press releases informing the general public of the progress of said Project. We shall hold a press conference informing of the launch of the Project
9. **Instruments:**
  - Manual for Teachers (extra-curricular activities leaders) and a Students' book. These documents proceeds from the Programme of Education for Citizenship with greater focus on minority, tolerance and mutual respect issues, i.e., the neighbourhood.
  - Workshops and seminars for teachers and extra-curricular activities leaders to acquaint them with the Project and the issues involved, such as the history and present situation as concerns racialism, relations and coexistence among minorities , relations between minorities and the majority, bullying in school , human rights, methodology.
  - The Teenager's Guide to the Civic Society: is a manual for youngsters in the age range of 12 - 18 containing basic political, economic and cultural information, as well as practical day-to-day advice, including addresses and telephone numbers for helplines and relevant institutions and organizations.
  - Workshops for children relating to the Project within school or out-of-school. For smaller groups and clubs.
  - Competition for school teams and individuals relating to main theme: "The Neighbourhood" , essays, poems, songs, paintings, photographs, activities (helping the neighbours ) - the main issue : *how the majority respects the minority and vice versa*. The competition entries will be evaluated by experts in the field. Inside the participating units (schools and out-of-school groups) there should be a wide discussion on the issue and on the entries. This should in fact be the culmination or outcome of the entire Project.
  - Poster - could be winning poster from Competition
  - Video - amateur and/or professional on life in the Neighbourhood
  - Inquiry - the kick-start and final question to be asked of all participants is: "Who is a neighbour?"
10. **Project evaluation** - there will be continuous evaluation following every time period of the Project and a Final Evaluation at the very end of the whole Project. The evaluation will be made by all participants and by experts who will then meet and compare the results.

Insofar as this is a school project marks may only be given for actual knowledge of facts and skills, *not for views and opinions. Views and opinions are a matter for discussion.* This may prove difficult for teachers but must be observed. After all the outcome should be a democratically minded responsible young person.

**11. Methodology:** will differ from school to school and out-of-school group in detail. However, the basic methods used will all be directed at forming a young person of the 21<sup>st</sup> century : responsible aware of his/her own rights and those of other human beings, tolerant and law-abiding neighbours.

- **Knowledge:** basic human rights institutes, laws and international conventions and human rights documents, the history and basic data on ethnic and other minorities living in the area (the history of the majority is presented in history lessons), basic local issues and events.
- **Skills:** communication, independent judgement and decision-making, responsible behaviour, conflict solution.
- **Attitudes:** all are different - all are equal, everyone is responsible for his/her behaviour, everyone has the right to discuss and express their views unless such views harm or act against the rights of another human being, animals have rights, the environment should be cherished.

**Methods** will range from the classic : the teacher explains and the students learn to listen, to the discussion (the student learns to respect others and to independently express his/her own views), role-playing (empathy), brainstorming (independent thinking), the essay (formulation of views), the project (the student learns to cooperate with others). Part and parcel of the Project are school (class) elections, the school-board (teachers, parents and students), discussions with the local authority and the drafting, approval and issuance of School regulations based on individuality, responsibility, respect for others, and the Convention. Emphasis is placed on the development of the student's personality and his respect for others, society and the world at large. A very important method is The Inquiry which allows the student to answer questions and reflect his/her views. The inquiry is not marked, is anonymous and need not be handed in at all if the student does not want to reveal his views. Essays and inquiries serve as a good basis for discussions on problems of personal nature, such as "How my parents observe my rights and how I observe theirs", they may relate to local problems : "The quality of goods sold in the local supermarket" and global : "Should NATO be the global policeman?"

### **11. Curriculum:**

The Project is essentially divided into three units:

- The citizen as a human being, rights and responsibilities
- Close neighbours (the family, the school, the community)
- Distant neighbours (the State and the world at large).

### **12. Flowchart:**

#### Year one: PILOT PROJECT

- Schools and out-of-school groups are recruited
- Sponsors are found
- Participants become acquainted with Project
- detailed curriculum is developed
- Manual and Student Book written, published and distributed to participants
- Seminar and/or Workshop for teachers and leaders
- 2 Press conferences, several press releases
- model workshop for children at the end of school-year
- essay at the end of school-year

### Year two - Project develops

- Teenager's Guide is written, published and distributed
- two seminars and /or two workshops for teachers /leaders
- mutual visits and communication between participants, visits to refugee camps, "different" communities, music performances and cultural events to become mutually acquainted with minorities
- 2 press conferences, 2 press releases, appearances in the press, radio and TV
- workshop for children in mid-year
- contest for best essay, drama, painting, photograph at the end of the school-year

### Year three - Project is evaluated

- participating groups draw up projects
- participating groups elect school board, leadership, school parliament, develop school regulations
- participating groups establish contact and cooperation (or otherwise) with local authority and participate in local projects
- competition is launched
- poster is made and published
- video is made
- participating groups begin to publish their own newsletter, information sheet, etc.
- press conference and press release at the close of the Project
- Project evaluation: experts, followed by participants, then both groups together - evaluating report is written , published and distributed
- Competition is evaluated by elected team of experts and students, results are published
- Results are published in local and national press (interviews, etc.), radio and TV as widely as possible to promote interest among other schools and groups.
- Evaluation reports are handed over to sponsors and cooperating institutions and organizations.

Project may continue and develop

**Project author and coordinator:** Jana Ondráčková, graduate of Charles University in Prague, journalist, educator, teacher, children's rights activist. To the year 1968 she worked as a journalist for Radio Prague's Foreign Language Broadcast. After the year 1989 she returned to journalism as a freelancer, worked for the Czech National Committee for UNICEF, the Czech Helsinki Committee, and for Tereza, the NGO for environmental education. She attended and took active part in a number of international conferences, seminars and workshops:

- World Conference on Children's Rights, College of Education, University of Exeter , September 1992,

- The 11<sup>th</sup> Training Session of the International Training Centre on Human Rights and Peace Teaching (CIFEDHOP) 11<sup>th</sup> International Training Session, Geneva 1993 on a stipend from the Council of Europe
- Amnesty International Seminar on Human Rights Education, Ljubljana, Slovenia 1995
- was member of Working Group of Experts for the Council of Europe's Project: Democracy, Human Rights, Minorities - Educational and Cultural Aspects. (1996)
- Head of Education Unit, Czech Helsinki Committee (1995 - 1998)
- was awarded Third Prize in the 1996 national contest for the best educational material for the publication *What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child?*
- Headed a four year civics education project at the Kamenice primary school near Prague 1993 -96
- cooperated with Amnesty International in the development of the *First Steps* , 1997
- children's rights activist: writes, broadcasts and lectures on human rights and civics education.

Publications by author:

*The Rights of Children in a Post-Totalitarian Country*, IN: *Children in our Charge*, Jessica Kingley Publishers, 1996

*What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child ?* Czech Helsinki Committee 1996, 1997 - for children and their parents and teachers, was awarded in national contest of educational materials in the Czech Republic, 1996

*Project of Civics Education for Primary Schools*, Czech Helsinki Committee, 1995 - 6  
 In : *Guide of teaching tools for education in human rights, democracy and the management of diversity*, Recommended HRE materials, Council of Europe 1996, Amnesty International, In: *First Steps*, 1997 , Project was implemented over four school - years in Primary school, Kamenice near Prague Czech Republic

*Manual for Civics Teachers in Upper Primary and Lower Secondary* - FORTUNA publishers of educational literature, Prague Czech Republic

## Manual for Teachers and Project Directors

**Jana Ondráčková (c),**

This Manual is designed for all teachers and out-of-school activity leaders who have decided to take part in this Project. The initial project has been organized and coordinated by the Czech Helsinki Committee. The Manual is no dictate which is to be blindly implemented but a simple cookbook.

Schedule: This Manual may be covered within 30 teaching hours (or more) which include frontal teaching, seminars and workshops and individual learning units. The units are closed in order to allow the teacher to manipulate his timer schedule, to leave out those which he

deems unnecessary and to give more time to those which he believes are more useful for the given situation.

Orientation: The Project is oriented to three aspects of the educational process: knowledge, skills and awareness - respect for oneself, others, globally for the environment, other nations. The participants will learn about other nations, their civilization, neighbours close and distant, skills of communicating and last but not least the awareness of belonging to the human race and to the world at large. The notion of NEIGHBOURHOOD is conceived as a narrow one - (he/she who lives with me or next to me) and broadly - all of us live on the same planet. In the latter we shall have to exclude all forms of extremism and fundamentalism.

Knowledge: In the course of the Project the teachers and learners should obtain basic information on the main aspects of the Project: minorities in the respective country: characteristics, history and present situation, fundamental human rights and the rights of the child:

- the citizen as a human being : has rights and responsibilities. Who am I and where do I come from - nationality, religion, external characteristics, family and its history.
- close neighbours : the family, school and community - their life and problems, the minorities which live on the territory of the State
- distant neighbours - State bodies and institutions, Europe and the world, mutual responsibility and assistance in case of natural and man-made catastrophes - hunger, floods, earthquakes, local, tribal, civil and regional wars, ethnic disasters and migration, the problem of refugees. The global problems of the environment. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Attitudes:

- the citizen as a human being : self-reflexion, to come to terms with oneself being “different, with being a member of the majority/minority“ in general but also practical terms: how to treat handicapped people, elderly and sick people, children, communicating with individuals who are “different.“
- close neighbours - involvement in the life of the community, interpersonal relations and cooperation, conflict solution: how we live in our family, our next-door neighbours who are “different“.
- distant neighbours - attitudes to nextdoor and distant nations, xenophobia and stereotyping, respect for immigrants from other countries.

Skills: how to practice attitudes

- the citizen as a human being - self-reflexion, concentration and data collection and its truthful and correct processing and dissemination, evaluation and self-evaluation.
- close neighbours - respect for other people, conflict solution, ability to take stands, problem-solution, discerning priorities communicating with institutions and State bodies, with “different people“.
- distant neighbours - aid to developing countries and countries affected by natural or man-made disasters, communicating with different cultures, learning to live next to them, integration of immigrants. Global environmental events :Earth Day, etc., global problems: pollution, the ozone layer, etc.

Inquiry : who is a neighbour?

The question will be put to the entire Project group. The participants will answer it in any appropriate manner (depending on age, institution, environment, etc.: : drawing, writing, brainstorming, essays, discussions)The answers will give the teacher/ leader the idea of what the learners believe is a NEIGHBOUR. This provides the basis for further work.

The inquiry will be followed by a discussion in which the participants will learn what the project is all about and will of course ask questions and tell their teacher what they believe they should learn in relation to the subject.

## **UNIT I - THE CITIZEN AS A HUMAN BEING**

### **The fundamental human rights and freedoms which relate to the personality of the human being - domestic and international legal documents relating to these rights and freedoms.**

Every human being regardless of the colour of his skin, his social origin, race, religion and political denomination, sex and sexual orientation has equal rights, all are endowed with fundamental rights and freedoms. Nobody has the right to threaten the rights of the other. The rights of one person always ends where the rights of another person begin.

*The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was issued on December 10, 1948. It is not legally binding but those States which have signed it should respect it.*

*The Convention on the Rights of the child is a legally binding document. Has been signed by 190 countries and has higher legal force than domestic laws in signatory countries.*

*Documents on fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens which apply in the respective country.*

*The above documents should be discussed and explained.*

### **Fundamental rights and freedoms which relate to the individual:**

**1. the right to life:** every human being has the inherent right to life. The State is obligated to protect the lives of its citizens and no one has the right to deprive anyone of his life.

*Themes for discussion : the right of a human being to life and to take his own life, the rights of the unborn child, euthanasia.*

*What are the imminent threats which put life in peril?*

- direct : war, famine, natural disasters, disease, torture, malnutrition, polluted air and water,
- indirectly: smoking, drugs, unhealthy life style, man-made disasters environmental pollution

**2. the right to a name :** this right establishes the identity of every citizen. Names and surnames differ by nationality, religion, national tradition, fashion in any time and country, flowers, saints, months of the year, etc.

*Theme for discussion:* do you like your name and what does it express? Parents tend to give their children names which in childhood or even adulthood they may not like - sometimes they are made fun of, bullied because of their name. What solution would you suggest? The same may apply to surnames.

*Research:* names and surnames related to other nations, nationalities, ethnic minorities, religions.

**3. The right to nationality -** this theme will also be taken up in the unit “ close neighbours“ but the fundamentals should be explained here. We could start from the English saying “British you can become, English you have to be born“.Your nationality is something you are born with, citizenship you can acquire.

Research: How do you become a citizen of your country.? How can you and by whom be deprived of your passport? Who are “aliens“ (not the sci-fi type!) In your country who are the foreigners and what do they do. Do you need a work permit? What does the term “domicile“ mean? Who is a refugee and how do you acquire refugee status in your country? Who is an emigree and who an expatriate?

Refugees are assisted by various international organizations, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, the Red Cross, Medicins sans frontieres, and many national organizations. Which national organizations help refugees in your country?

School project1 -do you belong to a national minority or minority - self-reflexion. Draw your picture and write a short essay about yourself. Do you like what you see? What are your pleasant and unpleasant characteristics? Do you think they are common to your nation /ethnic group?

School project 2: You now know where you “belong“. Are you privileged or discriminated against. Why? By whom?

Discussion: members of different groups (ethnic, religious, national, etc) will now discuss their points about discrimination/privileges in the family, community, State.

Home project: draw your family tree :historical, social, religious, etc. If photographs or paintings are available all the better. The family tradition.

**4. The right to the highest available standard of health.** This will obviously differ from country to country as will the involvement of the State and international organizations in providing health care.

Themes for discussion:

- what is preventive health care: vaccination: should it be obligatory? Is obligatory vaccination an interference in the right of the individual and the family to take decisions about oneself? Caring for one’s own health protects the health of others. Refusing vaccination and other preventive measures may be very dangerous for society.
- how should the State provide health care. Should health care be a matter for the State or for the individual. This will obviously differ from country to country :advanced countries x developing countries.
- how does a citizen who smokes, drinks and takes drugs damage his neighbours, mainly children?
- some religions have dietary rules (the Muslims, the Jews, others). These rules should be respected. And children in school canteens should be given the choice. On the other hand it is right to force such rules on all children and should these rules be observed even by small children whose health could be at risk?
- smoking is extremely dangerous to all, even to non-smokers and should not be tolerated. Smokers often claim that not allowing them to indulge is a manifestation of intolerance.

Themes for discussion: Should smoking be tolerated in public places and in the home, especially where children are affected? Should advertisements be banned or does this constitute a violation of the freedom of expression?

- Drugs: how do drug dealers endanger their neighbours? Should this be tolerated. Should users be punished or treated?\_Who is a streetworker and how important is he/she in establishing relations between drug addicts and the healthy population?

Research work: what is being done in my country to prevent people, especially children from taking drugs? How are dealers and pushers punished . What help if any is given to young addicts . Are the latter discriminated or helped?

**5. The right to education.** School education is extremely important for socialization and to make people equal. The lack of education builds barriers between people and hampers communication. Children should be given equal access to education.

*Discussion:* What is the importance of the school for giving children of all races, nationalities, colours and religions an equal start in life, for overcoming barriers between people? Should children of different religions, etc. Be segregated in school, i.e. should they attend different schools or should they be integrated in their school education? Should handicapped children attend special schools or should they be integrated in mainstream schools? Should children of different religions attending mainstream schools be allowed to differ by their clothes? Should children of different religions attending mainstream schools be forced to wear traditional clothes by their parents? (turbans, veils, long skirts, yarmulkas, etc.) where do we draw the balance?

**6. The right to access to information, the freedom of thought and expression.**

Information is acquired

- directly, from one's own experience. This makes it very important for people to live within a community, in friendly relations with one's neighbours. Contrarily the child receives negative information which will be harboured and disseminated. Positive direct information is closely linked with decency and respect for one's neighbours, one's own self-respect. Freedom of thought is directly linked with freedom of access to information. People who have little or no information are bound to have limited social thinking, thereby they are easy prey to xenophobia, etc. The freedom of thought is likewise linked with the freedom to express one's thought and beliefs. However, the basic rule is that *my freedom ends where the freedom of my neighbour begins* in other words my freedom must never be allowed to infringe on the freedom of my neighbour.
- indirectly from various information sources. Here also education is extremely important to allow people equal access to information. Disadvantaged people are most easily misused, mistreated and suppressed. Everyone has the right to access to information and to disseminate information acquired.

*Discussion:* What if any information should be classified? Where do we draw the line between the freedom of the press and racialism, antisemitism, respect for the privacy of the individual, pornography. Should journalists be allowed to invade the privacy of famous people?

**7. The right to religion**

Everyone should respect the right their neighbours to religion. Again no one should force one's religion on one's neighbours. The specifics and characteristics of all religions should be respected.

Fundamentalism is the return to the roots of religion. It is often misused by the few to suppress the majority (the oppression of women by Islamic fundamentalists, the segregation of women in orthodox Jewish synagogues, the refusal of the Catholic church to ordain women, etc.) Fundamentalism often leads to fanaticism and ultimately to terrorism. Fundamentalism, fanaticism and terrorism are negative neighbourly relations. This often applies to religious sects which tend to force their members to give up their property and live in segregated communities, requiring total obedience.

*Invite members of different churches to talk about their religion. This must in no way be a platform for propaganda or promotion of any church or ideology.*

*Essay:* Is it important to be a believer? What my church means to me. How does it help me to live with my neighbours? Or does it?

*Alternatively:* discuss the issue of religious conflicts in real terms (in your class, school, community - how it affects people personally as individuals. This is very important especially

in countries or areas where there is religious antagonism. The aspects of all respective religions should be openly discussed . The students might come up with very good ideas, programs and projects which could help resolve the situation in their country.

*School project :*

- draw your own picture - as you see yourself showing what you like and dislike about yourself
- describe what irritates you, what attracts you, whom you like, and what kind of people you dislike.
- collect the pictures and descriptions and distribute in class . Make sure they are not given back to the authors. The students will then try to identify the authors, they will argue their points while respecting their views.

**At the end of this unit the students should have the ability of self-reflexion and self-evaluation, they should be able to freely express their views asnd engage in free discussions, fully respecting one another in a neighbourly fashion.**

**Evakuation of first part of Project**

## **THEME 2 - CLOSE NEIGHBOURS**

### **Close neighbours: a) the family**

The closest neighbours are one´s own family. Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the family is the fundamental unit in society and is protected under the law. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child every child has the right to know his/her parents and is entitled to their care, even after the parents have divorced.

#### **Brainstorming 1:**

Who are one´s biological parents, the orphans, abandoned children, single parents, children´s homes, SOS villages, foster care, adopted children, abused, physically and psychologically abused children, neglected childre, bullying. What do you know about them. Where to turn for help: give telephone lines.

#### **Brainstorming 2 to be followed by discussion 1:**

There are certain limits to what parents and author authorized adults (teachers, the police, etc.) can do to discipline the children in their charge. However, reasonable discipline (my *rights end.....*) *does not equal bullying*. When and from what age do you think children should take their own decisions? Such as : which parent do I want to live with after the divorce, what books do I want to read, what school to attend, etc. Good relationships between parents and their children should be founded on open discussion and mutual respect. Parents should respect their children´s privacy but should also protect them from drugs, alcohol, crime. This is very difficult to combine and requires absolute mutual confidence and good personal relations.

#### **Discussion 2:** Do I live with or next to the other members of my family?

**Discussion 3:** What is the difference between „live and let live“, indifference and mutual respect?

**Brainstorming:** what are the opposites to the following terms (never use the negatives, e.g. intolerance):

tolerance - humiliation - disdain - modesty - envy - decency - hatred - humaneness - betrayal - respect - kindness - pride - heroism - bravery - xenophobia - racialism - cowardliness - dignity - reliability - cruelty - ruthlessness - servility

How would you characterize a family?

Love - economic stability - respect - children - etc. This is an exercise in individual thinking and reflexion of own experience or wishful thinking.

Family problems should always be resolved in the interest of the child:

Case 1: Little John was first placed in a home by his mother. His mother never bothered to care for him or to show much interest in him and so he was placed in foster care. The foster family was great with lovely kind relations and John felt totally at home with them. When he was 12 his biological mother decided to take him into her own care. John refused. The case was taken before a court which decided that John was old enough and mentally mature enough to decide where he wanted to stay: with the mother who had abandoned him or with his loving foster parents. He decided he wanted to stay with the foster family and be adopted by them. The court agreed. His old-new parents and siblings were thrilled. They were now all legally equal members of the family.

Essay: how are your rights, the rights of your siblings observed and how do all of you observe the rights of your parents? This essay will only be read out loud voluntarily. It basically serves students to realize what kind of relations prevail inside their own family.

The family is a living organism, a human unit where good "neighbourly" relations should prevail. There can be handicapped children, even adopted children of various origins. The family is the first community which most people come across in their life. First experiences may be good or bad. That depends on the Neighbourhood.

Case 2: Little Jane's mother was Czech, her father Arabic. She was born in Prague and for 14 years she lived the life of a Czech girl: went to school, loved her Czech grandparents and her Czech friends. She knew very little about her paternal family. One day her father took her away to his country without consulting her mother. There he forced her to cover herself up in the Muslim fashion and did not allow her to go to school. At the age of 16 she was married off to one of her father's friends and by the age of 20 she bore three children. In the end she managed to run away and with the help of friends and human rights organizations and her mother she succeeded to take her children with her. She now lives in Europe, has remarried and is very happy.

Discussion: What happened? Why was Jane unhappy? Should young girls marry foreigners from countries with different traditions, religions and cultures? How would you describe a good "mixed marriage". Can it work and how?

Home project and research: Try to find a mixed marriage in your neighbourhood and tell the class about how it works. How many mixed marriages are there in your neighbourhood? What would you advise your friend if he/she wanted to marry someone from a different cultural environment?

Case 3 - Family relations: a group of teenage classmates decide to go to the disco. This is a weekday and all but one of the respective parents forbid them to go: they have to do their homework, do their math, and get up for school the following morning. The teenagers decide to go anyway and produce an excuse: they are going to their classmate's apartment to do their homework. Obviously the truth comes out the following morning in school: no homework, bad marks, poor concentration.

Discussion 1: aspects of inter-generation communication problems:

- was it right to tell lies?
- was it right to forbid the kids to go to the disco? Or should they have been persuaded?
- where did communications go wrong?
- should the kids have gone to the disco anyway?

- how could the conflict have been resolved in a good neighbourly fashion without lies, bad marks, offended parents and children?

Discussion 2: family values: does the family have any values any more? Should parents be obeyed?

Home project 1: Characterize the “tribe“ to which you belong: its basic characteristics , culture, level of socialization, health level, way of life, language, etc. Characterize the close and distant tribes. Describe why you do/do not have allegiance to this tribe or why you have integrated in another tribe. How does your tribe differ from other tribes. Is it in a conflict situation with them or does it have friendly communication with the neighbouring tribes (in the street, district, village, country, etc) How well does it integrate or does it? How much is it respected by other tribes?

School project: follows from home project.

The class is divided into “tribes“ on a voluntary basis. The tribes either integrate, communicate, differ in all aspects but communicate, refuse to communicate, have conflict relations

The tribes:

- communicate with others
- do not communicate
- are in conflict with other tribes

The other tribes:

- accept them
- refuse to accept them
- communicate with them
- are antagonistic

The objective of this project is that those who want to communicate and to accept one another persuade those that do not that this is the right thing to do. How they will achieve their objective is up to them. It does, however, have to be a peaceful and convincing manner.

Evaluation: the members of the different groups will evaluate the value and success of the project

**COMMUNICATION** is extremely important for any interpersonal relations in any neighbourhood. Communication is the first step towards establishing good neighbourly relations. ***Good neighbourly relations cannot be established without good communication!***

Basic prerequisites of communication are: decency, mutual respect, tolerance for different attitudes and opinions, This does not mean that we have to accept everything that is presented by the other participants in the communication process. One’s views should be put forward firmly but not offensively.

What is communication?

Active listening. If we want to communicate with someone we first of all have to listen to the other participants in the communication:

- empathy - trying to see it the way the person speaking sees it
- express one’s interest non-verbally : expression, gestures, contact
- do not interrupt, do not give advice, recommendations, do not try to “ be the wise guy“
- use persuasion and encouragement to make the communicator continue and explain: Phrases to be used: “ Could you say more about... If I understand the problem well.... What can we do to help you?.....
- sum up and evaluate what you have heard: “Does that mean, that..... That must have been very complicated..... How about that.?....

Communication is hampered by

- orders: You must go and tell him!...
- threats: Don't you dare! ....
- mentoring: Do you realize that you could have.....?
- personal assessment of speaker: Well you are absurd!....
- trying to present a better description of the situation thereby degrading or ridiculing the speaker: Well, you know, I believe the situation was completely different, don't you think?.....

Verbal and non-verbal communication:

1. verbal: anything that we say. It is important that we learn to articulate clearly, use good grammar, that we do not use rude words. Learn to speak with your parents, teachers, classmates, elderly people, handicapped people, people of other language origin.
2. non-verbal: body language. This is very important, especially in communities where people have different mother tongues and are not familiar with the language spoken by the majority population.

Home project: Try to communicate with other members of the family in a neighbourly fashion in the usual everyday situations : everybody is going to work/school and there is only one bathroom, one toilet and everybody is in a hurry: use verbal and non-verbal communication. The children share one computer: the eldest would like to surf the Internet, the others would like to use the computer to do their homework, the youngest wants to play computer games: how do they arrange computer time: communicate!

**Close neighbours: b) the school**

The next organized community which most children enter is the school. There is no such thing as a uniform school even in "all-white" or "all-coloured" areas. In every class there will always be someone wearing glasses, braces, someone who is short, someone who is exceptionally tall and thin. All these children are, in fact, "minorities" and will often be laughed at, ridiculed, singled out for bullying. Most schools are attended by children of the majority population and children of "other" "different" religions, ethnic origin, nationality, colour. Some schools integrate handicapped children.

The integration of all "different" children depends on the level of mutual respect and communication.

School project: There are in any class (group of citizens) many of those who are usually described as being "different". Look around your class and try to make out who are members of the "majority" and then look again to find out who may be classified as "different". This mapping of the class will greatly help us to establish who is the majority and who the minority. Usually at the end of the day the surprising result will be finding that the minorities make up the greater part of the class. Who then is the majority in your country? Try to describe the main characteristics. Again the surprising finding will be that a) you will probably differ in your views, b) that there are no generally accepted or acceptable characteristics to observe. You will easily come to the conclusion that all racist theories about some nations meeting the criterion of "whites" who are considered superior (e.g. Hitler's theory) and other races being "different", "alien", and therefore "inferior" are not only unacceptable but untrue.

Game: Stand your students in a line according to their height, then disband, stand them in a line by colour of hair (from dark to light or vice versa), disband, line them up by other characteristics (tall, short, good athletes to poor, good maths to poor, etc.etc.), anything except negative characteristics which infringe on the dignity of the pupils is fine. They will soon find out that every line is different, that each of them is "different" in one way or another.

The lesson to be learned: *All are different - all are equal.*

***So let us discuss interpersonal relations:***

- friendship -

Brainstorming: *what is genuine friendship?*

Discussion: does friendship mean that you stand up for your friend even if he is doing something wrong?

Case 1: Peter and Paul were friends. Peter knew that Paul smoked grass. When Paul got into trouble he called on Peter to testify to his parents that there was no truth in the accusations.

Alternative solutions: Peter refused and Paul got into trouble in school. He joined a drug programme and got rid of the habit./ Peter testified to Paul's innocence and Paul went on smoking marijuana until he got into real trouble with the police.

Case 2: George and Tom were friends. George borrowed CD's from his friend and without permission lend them to his girlfriend. She in turn lend them on to her friends who ultimately destroyed them.

Alternative solutions: never lend valuable items to your friends, ask for guarantees when you do lend valuable items to friends, call the police when your friends do what George did, ask your friend to pay for lost valuable items, forget it.

Case 3: Mary and Jane were great friends. Mary who was a frail girl smoked cigarettes which was obviously not good for her health. Her parents refused to give her money and so Mary stole money from her parents, her brother and finally from her schoolmates. When matters got really bad the other pupils complained and the headmaster called in the police to investigate.

Alternative solutions: Jane tried to persuade Mary to give herself up and not to complicate matters any further, Jane told on her friend, Jane denied knowing, Jane swore Mary did not smoke, Jane said it was nobody's business and anybody could smoke : it was their right to take decisions about their health and as for the robberies she knew nothing. People should be tolerant, she claimed.

Where are the limits to friendship? Is genuine friendship a neighbourly relationship? When does it cease being neighbourly?

- xenophobia - is hatred for anything or anyone who is "different" - nationality, colour of skin, religion, different culture and habits, handicapped, etc.
- racism - is the view that those who are "different" are inferior and should be treated accordingly, should be suppressed, driven out of the country or even physically exterminated.

Research: if and how is xenophobia or even racism manifested in your family, community, country - against whom and by whom.

Discussion: based on the above research what do you think could be done to overcome xenophobia and racism in your community (family, school, etc).

In the discussion please pay great attention to the importance of education:

- for the majority: for them to learn all about the minorities, about their own history (Skinheads often claim that their nation is the sole representative of the white race and others should be driven out and they remember the Nazis with respect for their racist policies. Yet it is often the case that they do not know that the Nazis intended to exterminate not only the Jews, the Roma, the handicapped and the homosexuals but also the Slavs and all other races with the exception of the "master race" . Only very few German Nazis and even fewer skinheads can boast of having the required characteristics of the "white race".

- *for the minorities* - to learn about the majority in the respective country, its culture, language, history. This will make it easier to communicate, become neighbours, integrate in their country of choice while keeping their language and cultural traditions.

Role-playing: try to find out from own experience how it feels to be “different“ (handicapped, coloured, Roma). Then change roles and play the racist. Try to make believe your class/group is racist and play the various roles that pertain to such a community. Then play the tolerant class, finally the integrated community. Only then will you *be neighbours*.

Discussion: discuss what you have experienced: how you felt being snubbed, how you felt bullying others, what was it like to be real neighbours. How would you treat someone for whom you justifiably have no respect? Is there such a thing as justifiable disrespect?

**The fundamental rule underlying relations in the school should be mutual respect between all, i. e., mutual respect between students, mutual respect between students and teachers, between teachers, between students, teachers and non-pedagogical staff. The following neighbourly school regulations were developed by the civics teachers in one primary school in the Czech Republic. They were then discussed by the pupils and staff. The points taken up by the pupils and their teachers were incorporated in the Regulations which are based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The regulations are readily adaptable to the needs of your school.**

## SCHOOL REGULATIONS

### *Article 1 : School attendance*

- The pupil/student attends school according to the school time-table. In case of illness, convalescence or other serious reasons agreed upon with the parents and school the pupil/student could be accorded an individual learning programme
- Absence in school may be excused for illness, family reasons, visit to the doctor, religious holidays (those religions whose holidays are not red-letter days). Such an excuse shall be handed to the classteacher in writing and shall be signed by the parent or guardian.

### *Article 2. Obligations, rights and responsibilities of the pupil/student*

- The pupil/student shall always responsibly observe the rules of hygiene and safety in and around the school.
- The pupil/student shall respect the principles of clean and aesthetic appearance, polite and decent behaviour towards his teachers, classmates, schoolmates and all members of the staff.( teachers and non-teachers.) He does not use swear words, does not fight, does not use his physical strength to bully other pupils/students.
- The pupil/student shall behave with respect and consideration towards his handicapped schoolmates
- The pupil/student shall not deliberately damage the equipment of the school or the property of any private person (student, teacher, others).
- The student/pupil shall take active part in lessons and will not disturb his classmates, has the right to express his views on the content and method of the teaching process, and on the school management. The student/pupil shall do this politely, in a dignified manner and will respect the dignity of those criticized and their right to respond. He/she shall never slander or spread gossip. The pupil/student shall not prevent the teachers from doing their work by untoward behaviour.
- During school hours the teacher bears full responsibility for his pupils. Hence the pupil/student shall only leave the classroom during lessons for serious reasons. He/she shall

only leave the school building during lessons on the basis of a written request from his parents or guardian.

- The pupils/students are free to move around the school premises during breaks.
- Out-of-school activities may be organized on the school premises only on condition that a member of the staff or another authorized adult is present and responsible for the safety of the pupils.
- The pupil/student shall not eat or drink during lessons unless this is required for health reasons (e.g. diabetes)
- Cans and other waste shall be sorted and disposed of in marked containers which shall be placed in classrooms and in corridors
- Smoking is forbidden on the school premises, there shall be no smoking areas
- It is forbidden to bring onto the school premises any items which might endanger the life or health of persons, such as knives, other sharp objects, firearms, drugs and alcohol, cigarettes, pornographic materials. Such items shall not be brought into the school or distributed on or around the school premises.

*Article 3 The obligations, rights and responsibilities of teachers.*

- The teacher teaches his pupils to the best of his capability, he educates them in the spirit of responsibility, humaneness and decency, he inculcates in them human rights and civic responsibilities. The teacher continues in his own education, attending available in-service training courses. He uses modern teaching methods, requires discipline but never abuses the dignity and human rights of his pupils. On the other hand he requires that his own human rights and dignity be respected. He comes to school on time and well prepared and requires the same from his pupils.
- The teacher maintains good contacts with the parents of his pupils and with the community at large. If possible the teacher will participate in community activities such as cultural and educational events, the local paper, etc.

*Article 4 The Obligations, rights and responsibilities of non-pedagogical staff*

- The members of the non-pedagogical staff will fulfill their duties, and will be respected by teachers and pupils. They shall respect the teachers and will treat the pupils with full respect for their human dignity.

*Article 5. Final clauses*

The school should provide facilities for handicapped pupils. Students/pupils, teachers, the management and the non-pedagogical staff shall do everything in their power to integrate in their midst handicapped pupils, children from minorities and from refugee families. The school should also make it possible for handicapped teachers to work here if they wish to do so.

The entire school community should do everything to create in the school a neighbourly atmosphere with good relations with the outside community.

Essay: The school of your dreams: school management, the teaching profession, the pupils, the school atmosphere. How should your school be involved in the community? How should parents work with the school to make such a neighbourhood possible? The presented school regulations - would you accept them?

**Close neighbours: c) the community**

Neighbours in the community may be divided into the following groups:

- neighbours who are generally respected and who permanently live in the community
- neighbours who are neglected by some communities or some people in the community or at worst by the entire community - old people, young children, people who are ill and weak
- neighbours who have mostly been forgotten - those who have moved, who have been deported, families which used to live here, expatriates, people who have deceased
- neighbours who have been moved temporarily by illness (hospitalized), by crime (imprisoned), university students (away in school or abroad in school), those who are temporarily working abroad,
- strangers, holiday people

Discussion: who is “different“ in the community and why? What is integration? How do we and how should we treat people who move into the community from elsewhere?

Role-playing: A stranger walks around the village: what does he see and how does he feel?

Anonymous inquiry: everyone to himself (self-confession): What kind of people really bother me? Whom do I respect and whom do I scorn? In the classroom, on the bus, in the village would I like living next-door to :

- a foreigner
- a coloured foreigner
- a Roma
- a citizen of any of the republics of the former Soviet Union
- a German, Frenchman or any citizen of the European Union
- an American

(complete the list according to local conditions, likes and dislikes)

## STEREOTYPES

You are looking at 12 people. How would you describe them (draw or write):

- the disciplined pupil
- the school's best athlete
- the poorest child in the community
- the richest person in the neighbourhood
- the intellectual
- the businessman
- the diligent student
- the disorderly lady next-door
- the nice guy
- the hippy
- soccer rowdie
- stickler for order

And who would you say gets along/ fights with whom?

School project - stereotypes: role-playing

we are travelling around the world by bus, by train and hitch-hiking

### A. Hitch-hiking

- you are the hitch-hiker: you are standing by the road watching cars drive by. You can now take your pick from the following four:
  1. a ŠKODA car, driven by a white caucasian in a scruffy T-shirt, unshaven and obviously someone who got up to a late start, or is in a hurry to get to his weekend house

- 2.a Ford Mondeo driven by a white caucasian, cleanshaven, probably on a business trip
3. a BMW well-dressed lady, white, blonde driving to work
4. a FIAT UNO driven by a young handsome man, loud popmusic can be heard played very loudly

Who do you think these people are, where are they going and whom would you prefer to hitch.

- you are the driver in the said four cars and the following hitch-hikers are standing by the road:
  1. a young tall well-dressed blonde
  2. a long-haired white young man with a backpack
  3. a boy and girl clean and well-dressed (Chinese / Hispanic)
  4. two coloured boys , clean , possibly students
  5. a girl with not too pleasant an appearance: not too clean, not terribly attractive (white)

If you have decided to take these people who do you think they are and whom would you choose?

Remember: we do not know these people, they do not know one another and they will have to spend several hours together in a car. They will all have to judge one another by external appearances and first impressions-.

B. You are travelling by train and you are an adolescent. You enter the first compartment in the train where there is still a vacant seat. In the compartment there are four people:

- a conscript
- a coloured person, possibly a foreigner
- a person dressed in an extremely worn suit
- a female student
- a man in dungarees

Alternatively:

- a foreign worker
- a male student
- a Roma musician
- a young hippy

Alternatively:

- a coloured student
- 2 soccer fans one of whom has been drinking
- an elderly lady going to the market (with basket of produce)

Project: From their appearance and your first impression try to develop “stories“ around the said passengers. This will be followed by a discussion with them where they will tell you who they “really“ are and probably demonstrate how wrong (or correct) your stereotyping has been. Then tell the class whom you would sit next to and why, next to whom you would feel safe and under what circumstances you would leave the compartment to find a seat elsewhere. This is a project for advanced students.

Discussion: Is stereotyping based on first impressions the right way to judge people? How can such an approach become the breeding ground for xenophobia and possibly racialism?

Independent research project: (alternative 1) In your neighbourhood there lives a handicapped person . How do his “healthy“ neighbours behave towards him/her? How does he/she feel in the midst of this neighbourhood? How do I feel when I meet him in the street? In the shop? How do we communicate? What about our mutual relations with this person? Are they good or poor?

(alternative 2): In your neighbourhood there lives a small ethnic community. The group comes from a wartorn country, its members are refugees and their children. Most of them intend to ask for assylum in your country. Some of them already have. Their colour, religion, culture is different. What do you feel when you meet them in the street, in the shops? Remember there is unemployment in your area. How are they integrating in the community Do they find it difficult? If so, why?

**Grand School Project:** this school project serves to establish neighbourly relations to help students realize where, how and next to whom they live in their neighbourhood.

Life in the community resembles life in the family and in the school, only on a larger scale. We shall divide the class into smaller group who will represent the minorities in the community (religious, ethnic, handicapped, homosexual, children, women, etc.) Each of these specific groups will get together and will draw a project of the community: residential area, possible industrial area, markets and other shops and services and the neighbourly or otherwise interpersonal and interethnic, etc. Relations between people living in the community, obviously including their own group. The groups will then discuss their projects gradually, first those who are closest, then those who are more distant, finally those who know from experience that there is bound to be some hostility in their relations. In the end all groups will get together, either directly or through their representatives and will endeavour to design a neighbourly village where everyone feels comfortable with his origins and with his neighbours. This may become a long-term project but experience has shown that it does work and is usually projected into the actual life of the class, school and local community.

The thus designed and projected community may further be developed to resolve a wide range of problems:

- we suggest a current event or topic which has given rise to great controversy inside the community, such as
  1. the decision of the local council to build an industrial area/ a residential area/ a shopping centre in place of what used to be sporting grounds/ a park,
  2. the expulsion from school of the member of an environmental group that has been making life disagreeable for the local council/management of a large factory

Each member of the group/class will write a brief speech/address/letter/ draw a poster showing the positive alternatives to the negative decisions. The authors will not only read their letters/speeches, show their posters, etc. But will be asked to defend and justify their stand. The debate will have to be polite respecting all sides in the conflict.

- we suggest a problem or situation that is causing controversy in society at large, like an amnesty, a court case, the war in Kosovo and refugees, an oppressed ethnic/religious/coloured minority: is it / is it not being discriminated in a concrete restaurant/cinema/school?

**One day in our community:** this is the final stage of the Grand School Project:

- the group will again divide into smaller units/groups. Each of these small groups will dress like one group of people in the village, will speak about the actual problems of that group, will organize the respective cultural and other events of that community. There will not only be the positive people but also those who suffer from xenophobia, hold racialist views, fail to communicate. The village should have a wide range of minorities, including children, handicapped people, etc. The most important aspect is that the village should reflect the community the students know from their own experience for them to be able to respond. A lot of research will have to be done so this again is a medium-term project. There will also be a lot of communication going on between the groups on who will play the role of whom, etc. All the missing groups, i.e., those who are currently in hospital, abroad, in prison, etc., shall

be returned to the village. This will be followed by a visit the local cemetery where members of the older generation will tell us all about the history of the community.

- the “performance“ will show one day in the life of the community
- after the “performance“ there will be a broad discussion which may be attended by members of the real community about the experience and “how neighbourly we felt“
- on the basis of the performance and discussion the participants shall draw up a set of rules governing the running of the community, including waste treatment, pets, noise, help to needy people, children, etc.

The project will show many aspects beneficial for the community. The group will therefore meet with the members of the local council, the local police for a post-mortem discussion. In this manner the experience will reach the people who are important for the running of the community. It is also a good idea to meet with representatives of local NGO’s and institutions active in the community. It might be a good idea to distribute to the participants in this broad meeting the abbreviated versions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (see Appendix).

Within this Grand Project it is also useful to try conflict resolution as conflict is something that might easily occur in the mentioned situations. Once it arises it should be resolved immediately or as soon as possible to be able to proceed to develop a neighbourly situation.

We have already discussed friendship, xenophobia and racialism.

Hostility, animosity, hatred are interpersonal relations which are characterized by the failure of two people/groups/nations, etc. to come to an agreement. It may proceed from a simple argument, which develops into xenophobia, or simple dislike, may turn into a conflict, a fight, violence, possibly physical battle or war. On the other hand conflicts may be resolved peacefully and there are peaceful conflicts with no violence, e.g. democratic elections.

What are the main causes of conflict between people and nations? Brainstorming:

land, property, religion, rights, a house, money, power, opinions, ideology, natural resources, children (in divorce), territory, etc.

What types of conflict do we know?

- Internal: man fights with himself : should I buy this book or not, should I go to the cinema or do my maths homework, do I buy another icecream or not, do I help my neighbour or do I watch TV?
- between two people: two boys fight for a girl
- between two groups : the workers fight their managers/factory owners/government for better pay/against closure

Approaches to conflict:

- escape: those who should resolve the problem escape and refuse to take responsibility
- one side agrees to respect the views of the other and even apologizes
- confrontation : neither of the two sides in the conflict gives way, neither has any intention to negotiate , both intend to argue
- conflict is resolved by appeasement, either by compromise or by mutual agreement

Principles of conflict solution:

- everyone has the right to his/her own opinion
- everyone shall be heard
- the views of the other party have to be respected even though we disagree

The problem is resolved:

- by agreement
- by compromise (each goes a step towards meeting the other side’s stand)
- they will not agree and agree to disagree yet to continue negotiations

The parties in the conflict talk:

- directly
- through spokespersons
- through a mediator
- they use the “ talking stick“

Rules of the game:

- the spokesperson: - is a trustworthy person which any one side in the discussion/conflict shall select as its representative. The members of this group will agree on their standpoints and the spokesperson will then present their views. He /she is the only person to speak to the other side in the conflict
- the mediator is that person who helps resolve the conflict by trying to bring the two sides closer together, trying to find a consensus so that both sides can be satisfied with the solution. This must be a reasonable person who is trusted by both sides in the conflict.
- talking stick - this is an old Indian custom. The conflict is resolved in a meeting which all persons involve attend and everyone can express his/ her views. However, only he/she who has the „talking stick“ can speak. The meeting is presided over by a chairperson who makes sure that the stick goes to the person who wants to take the floor in fair order.

Home project (research and report): research and report on a conflict resolved fairly or otherwise, methods used, etc. Which has taken place in your family/school/community.

School project: The class/group will divide into two groups, each will select a spokesperson, a mediator will be chosen on a voluntary basis or will be selected by the class. The mediator may decide to use a talking stick.

Conflict : In the centre of the village there is a large meadow(common) A place where children play and people go for walks. The local authority has decided to sell off part of the common to a large company to build a shopping centre. The centre will give jobs to many people and the area has a high level of unemployment. However, it will also deprive children of their playground and will destroy part of the lovely environment. The local authority needs the money to build a drinking water system, the old one is faulty and ancient, and for modernizing the school.

The students represent the local inhabitants, some of them will represent the local authority, some will represent the adults who favour employment.

Try to find a solution acceptable to most of the community.!

**Evaluation of second part of Project.**

### **III. DISTANT NEIGHBOURS**

**Distant neighbours :** a) **the civic society** is such a society in which all citizens are equal before the law, they all enjoy all human and civic laws. It is a multicultural society where citizens of different race, religion, sex, ethnic origin and political affiliation live together. All are different and all are equal. In order that such a society should function properly it needs an executive, legislative and judicial apparatus. In order that citizens can fully use their rights and freedoms, also their responsibilities, they associate in *non-governmental, non-profit organizations* and *political parties*. The programmes of these organizations and political parties must not contravene the laws and constitution of the respective country. Citizens associate on a voluntary basis and the activities of the said organizations are funded from grants, membership fees, donations from individuals, international organizations and sponsors. Sometimes funding is also obtained from the State. NGO's are extremely important for the functioning of the civic society (charities, environmental organizations, children's organizations, etc.)

*The civic society in the microcosmos - Role-playing:*

*School project 1: The firm.* We shall set up a company (manufacturing/ selling/ servicing) and we shall change the staff to overturn the usual stereotypes: male functions shall be held by women, intellectual work shall be done by foreign workers who regardless of their qualifications are usually employed to do manual work, etc. The new setup will clearly demonstrate the discrimination applied in employment. Within the Project we shall write an advertisement for the local and national papers : discriminatory/ non-discriminatory

*School project 2 - the NGO* - set up several NGO's in the class which will be joined by people according to their hobbies, inclinations and interests. Each group will then decide on the name and programme of the respective NGO: e.g. will look after the homeless, the old people's home, the environment, will publish a paper, will run a dog shelter, a childrens' rights group, etc. Also political parties whose names and programmes will correspond to local needs and conditions. They should not be copies of existing political parties.

*School project 3: Election campaign*

Organize an election campaign for the class and school committees. Taking part will be the NGO's and the political parties (Project 2). We have learned to resolve conflicts, to cooperate and respect one another. We shall now use all these skills in the campaign. Each group running for the election shall draw up a program, present a candidate. The election system should either be proportional ( the committee members represent the proportion of votes) or the majority system (winner takes it all)

Let us return to stereotypes:

*School project 4 : Candidates* What type of candidates are we going to select. Let us do some Role-playing: Select candidates from the following people:

- a typical white student (caucasian, blonde, wearing a school uniform/ jeans and T-shirt)
- a coloured student in white shirt, blue/black trousers,
- a refugee student in whatever he can wear that is clean
- a student wearing something that shows he is a member of a religious sect or extremist group

Some of the candidates will in their presentations confirm their initial appearance, agreeing with the stereotyped image, others will refute the first impression to demonstrate the errors of stereotyping. The election will be held accordingly.

*Discussion:* How did/did not the stereotypes influence the elections, how did they/did not lead to discrimination of certain candidates and how much of a surprise were the election results. How does such stereotyping affect real local and national elections?

*Discussion: There are no good or bad nations, there are only good or bad people.*

How about this. How would you characterize the different nationalities that you know „Germans, Italians, Afro-Americans, white Americans, British, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnam, etc. Do you know any “real“ representatives of these nations. Do they conform to the usual stereotypes? If you could select any one of these to employ whom would you prefer for the following occupations and professions: builders, mechanics, electronics, teachers, decorators, musicians, businessmen, financiers, managers? How much does the stereotype influence your decision. Has experience proved you right or wrong?

**What is a multicultural society?**

A multicultural society is one in which people of different origin live together fully understanding and respecting their cultures, ethnicity, religion without prejudice., capable of looking across political and territorial frontiers and mutually enrich one another. *It is a society which fully meets the concept “ all are different - all are equal“.*

*Discussion: is our society multicultural? Yes/no. Why?*

*Brainstorming: what is assimilation, integration, segregation, what is the difference between “we live next to each other“, “we live together“.*

**Role-playing, school project :“The Marketplace“**

The marketplace represents the multicultural society. We shall divide the class/group into smaller groups, each group represents a different nationality, religious , ethnic, colour, etc. Each group will itself decide who and what it is going to be, then it will set up a marketstall and sell its own characteristics (good and bad) in exchange for those of other groups. Each characteristic will have a certain price-tag (dilligence may cost 100 dollars per kilo, tolerance 300 dollars per kilo, etc.) Negative properties will be difficult to sell and it will take a good salesman to do this. You can profit or lose on each market operation and the final product can be a totally new person in line with the wishes and values of the respective group. Will the end product correspond to our stereotypes (the German is dilligent and a good organizer, the American is flamboyant, the Russian drinks too much, etc.) or are we objective enough to disregard the stereotypes and accept people as they really are? - For advanced students.

**Distant neighbours: b) the world**

*The world is round and whatever happens on one end affects everyone else.*

*Role-playing: this is similar to the Marketplace. Every group will select a nation that it will represent in the United Nations Organization*

The game may be played:

- choosing really existing states and the respective problems to discuss (Kosovo)
- inventing states and inventing/assigning existing problems, e.g., - Terrania and the agricultural policy /national policy of neighbouring Betonia

The discussion shall respect the usual rules: see previous chapter

All spaces in the building in which the meetings are held must be accessible to handicapped delegates. There will obviously be no religious, colour or other discrimination.

**Helping distant and close neighbours**

Case - civil war : In wartorn Antalia two antagonistic nationalities: the majority Antalians and the minority Zantorians (make up other names if you like). Both nations have lived here since time immemorial. Now they are fighting for their existence and other countries with Antalian and Zantorian minorities are involved. Open war erupts. Many Zantorians flee to the neighbouring countries which also become involved. The world community then becomes involved militarily and restores unstable peace in the country Air strikes and ground forces are followed by humanitarian help. Yet the fighting goes on. The Zantorian take revenge. It will take a long time, if ever for the two communities to be able to live side by side.

*Discussion / essay / poster /letter to UN / letter to involved governments, etc.:*

- can an “ Antalia“ state situation where national/religious/social groups fight and kill each other be prevented? Would education/ a better social policy help? Would interference/ non-interference help? Can the international community help and if so how (aid /militarily /political pressure /sanctions /other)?
- what about the children? What should be done to prevent the perpetuation of revenge, hatred, discrimination, civil war, genocide in upcoming generations?
- how should the problems of refugees be resolved: integration in the country to which they have fled /go back home?
- what could be done to make the two groups sit around one table to discuss the situation and live each other in peace?

*Essay: the war has ended. The two ethnic groups are separated by international military and police units. How would you resolve the situation in Antalia?*

Discussion 1: Is military service an honour/ a waste of time/a duty/an infringement of human rights for those who do not want to serve. What about service in international armed units (UNFOR/SFOR, etc)?

Discussion 2 (Where appropriate and actual): What is the role of small /post-totalitarian countries in international efforts of this kind? In efforts to protect human rights in other countries?

### **The environment concerns every citizen**

The environment is treated as a human rights issue. There is no need to be aggressive, to be negative towards every technical progress. It is useful to discuss environmental issues within the local government, with importers and manufacturers, consumers and builders. The environment is a global matter and affects everyone. One man's technical progress may become another man's polluted river. However, it is important for the neighbourhood, its wellbeing. Points to be taken up may include car sharing, the building of highways, felling timber forests, air pollution, water pollution, etc.

Research - public inquiry - report - letter to the local authority: The local authority decides to build a factory/ supermarket/ housing estate and for this it will have to fell a forest and dam the river. In short deteriorate the environment. The students will conduct a public inquiry among the members of the public. They will evaluate the results and send a report to the local authority.

Essay: *The environment of the future: will we only protect, or shall we also be using modern technology? Are household appliances, such as the washing machine, the dishwasher, etc good or bad for the environment - viewpoint Does a good and healthy environment contribute to a good neighbourhood?.*

### **Evaluation of third part of project.**

Is better done in writing. This helps students clarify their views.

#### **Questions:**

- did the project give you new information on “different“ people?
- did your views on “ different“ people change within the Project?
- would you now be ready to sit next to/live next to/ sit next to on a bus/discuss/ matters with “different“ people?
- what are my views of neighbourly relations now and how do they differ from what they were at the beginning of the Project?

#### **Final thoughts**

*A group of Martians landed on planet Earth. What did they find? How did they manage to establish contacts and communicate with their new neighbours? Answer the following 10 questions:*

1. What functional institutions and organizations did they find?
2. What rights were given by law, which were observed and which abused or violated?
3. What level of legal awareness was there among the general populace?
4. How did people behave towards the weakest: children, old people, the handicapped, animals?
5. In what state did they find the environment and the general health of the population? What was the level of environmental thinking of the general public?
6. Were the citizens happy? Or did they grumble constantly?
7. Did the citizens feel safe in their neighbourhood?
8. Did the civic society function? How did they behave towards one another? Did they respect the rules of decency, politeness and good neighbourly relations among people of

- different races, colours, religions, etc? How did they behave towards the Martians - as towards foreigners? Did they respect their uniqueness?
9. Did the citizens feel they were part of the world at large or were they living behind closed doors and high walls, a world onto themselves?
  10. Did the Martians feel they would like to live here or were they happy to go home as quickly as possible?

### **POSTER: NEIGHBOURS**

*The POSTER can have individual authors, may be the work of groups large and small. It might be a good idea to organize a contest for the best poster, bring in professional artists as judges with a general vote from the children/students and have the winning poster published. It could then be used for promoting the ideas of the Project and the money earned from selling it to the general public, institutions, private firms, etc. could be given to charities, educational projects, environmental projects, projects for children/ handicapped people, the elderly, the disadvantaged, etc..*

**Final question Who is a neighbour?**

### **Important terms used in this Manual (in order of use)**

**Believers** are people who believe in God.

**Atheists** are people who do not believe in the existence of God, they may be formal members of a church but do not practice any religion.

**Family** - in ancient times and in some parts of the world this is still true, people lived in tribal systems. From the tribe the family (father, mother, children) developed where the head of the family (the patriarch) hunted for food while the mother looked after the household and the children. In some societies it was the mother (the matriarch) who headed the family). The extended family includes not only the parents and children but also other members of the family (grandparents, cousins, nieces and nephews, etc.) In the modern family all members have equal rights, the parents should act in the best interest of the children while the children should respect the rights of their parents and of all other members of the family.

**The Convention on the Rights of the Child** was unanimously adopted by the Ugeneral Assembly in November 1989. It has higher legal force than the domestic laws of the countries which have signed it (now more than 190 have) and it provides the rights of children. In terms of the Convention a child is every human being under the age of 18, unless majority is attained at a younger age under the laws of the respective country.

**Handicapped** people have equal rights. They may be handicapped from birth or as a result of an accident or illness. The handicapped are the target of racialists who believe they are inferior (were sent to be put to death in concentration camps by the Nazis during the second world war). In civilized societies handicapped people are integrated in society. Disabilities (another term for handicaps) may be *physical* (cannot walk or even move), *sensory* (sight, hearing), *mental*. *People may also be socially handicapped* (they come from a disadvantaged environment).

**Child abuse:** children may be abused physically (beaten), sexually or psychologically, they may be neglected. It is the moral, in some countries even legal, obligation of the citizen who knows that a child is being abused to inform the police, the social services, the authorities.

**Bullying** - when a stronger person beats up someone who is weaker, smaller or more sensitive. The bullies usually come in groups and they physically assault or blackmail their weaker schoolmates, children who are "different".. Bullying may be the first step to racialism, gang crime, etc.

**Majority - minority.** The majority is the greater part of a group, a community, a nation. The minority (minorities) are the smaller groups, or smaller sections of a community, nation.

**Integration:** this is when “different“ people keep their characteristics (culture, language) and live *within* the majority society, share the school, observe the laws and are equal citizens with all rights and responsibilities.

**Assimilation:** this is when a minority *melts* into the majority with the loss of its specific characteristics

**Xenophobia** is fear of anything or anybody “different“ which often leads to **discrimination** which is illtreatment of anyone who is “different“ up to **Segregation** : this is when “different“ people are forcefully separated from the majority to **apartheid** where coloured people are totally segregated and discriminated against.

**Racism or racialism** is discrimination on racial grounds . It is now often used more widely for the discrimination and oppression of all “different“ people.

**Antisemitism** is racialism against the Jews which during the second world war led to their **genocide** which is the the planned extermination of whole nations, ethnic and religious groups as in Kosovo, Somalia and elsewhere The genocide of 6 million Jews during the second world war is known as the **holocaust** . Also exterminated were hundreds of thousands of handicapped people, Romas, homosexuals and members of other groups. that the Nazis believed to be inferior. Representative of various racist movements and parties deny the existence of the holocaust and claim that the Nazis did the right thing to make Europe a “white“ continent.

**Refugees** are people fleeing their own countries from war or natural disaster. They either ask for assylum or return to their home countries when the war is over (Kosovo).

**Elections** are either *proportional* which means that people are represented in their elected bodies (e.g. parliament) according to the proportion of votes obtained by each party or *majority* which means that the winner takes it all.

**The United Nations Organization** was founded in 1945 and now has 200 members. Its main bodies are the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights** was adopted and proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1948.

**Organizations affiliated to the UN** include **UNICEF the UN Children’s Fund, UNESCO** which looks after education, science and culture, **the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization.**

**The International Court of Law Hague** is in the Hague and its 15 judges are elected by the Security Council and by the UN General Assembly. The UN member countries are obligated to abide by its rulings.

**UN Peacekeeping Forces** (UNPROFOR, KFOR , etc.) are deployed to keep the peace in many parts of the world which have torn by civil war and its aftermath (Bosna, Kosovo, etc.).

**The Council of Europe** was established in 1949 and now has 33 members. Its main objective is to protect and strengthen democracy and human rights and to develop european cultural identity. It has already adopted over 150 international conventions relating to the European continent, mainly in the area of human rights. It also has a European Court of Law. It is also very active in the field of education, information, the protection of social rights, health care, in financing and organizing youth activities. A well-known campaign “All are different - all are equal“. It is in Strassbourg, France.

**The European Union** was founded in 1958, its headquarters are in Brussels, Belgium. It is very important in that it introduces common law, a common economic, financial, agricultural, foreign and security . policy. The European Parliament has 626 members elected in the

member countries. The European Union has one external frontier, there are no borders between the individual countries. The EU has several associated members, mostly from the post-communist countries waiting for full membership.

**NATO** - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a defence organization which links Europe with the USA in the defence of the democratic world. Its headquarters are in Brussels

## DOCUMENTS

### **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (excerpts)**

- all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and should towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood
- all are entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status
- everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person
- no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- all are equal before the law and are entitled to protection of the law
- no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks on his honour and reputation
- everyone has the right to a nationality
- the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by the State
- everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the right to manifest this freedom
- everyone has the right to peaceful assembly and association
- everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country
- everyone has the right to rest and leisure
- childhood is entitled to special care and protection, all children shall enjoy the same social protection

- everyone has the right to education which shall be directed to the full development of the human personality

### **The Convention on the Rights of the Child**

*(excerpts)*

- The rights set forth in this Convention shall be ensured without any discrimination of any kind.
- In all actions concerning children the best interest of the child shall be of primary consideration.
- Every child has the inherent right to life, to a name, to acquire a nationality
- The child has the right to know and be cared for by its parents
- The child has the right to express freely views on all matters affecting him/her and the child's views should be given due weight. The child has the right to freedom of expression.
- The child has the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kind.
- The right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion shall be respected.
- The child has the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.
- No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his/her privacy, family, home or correspondence, the child should be protected from unlawful attacks on his/her honour and reputation.
- The State shall ensure the right of the child to access to information and material from national and international sources
- Parents have the prime responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child.
- The State shall take all legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation.
- The child has the right to the highest attainable standard of health care, with emphasis on primary health care, the development of preventive health care.
- The child has the right to benefit from social security.
- The child has the right to a standard of living which will allow physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
- The child has the right to education. The State shall make primary education compulsory and available and free to all and encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, make them available to every child. School discipline shall be administered in a manner consistent with the child's dignity. Education should be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and abilities, the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, responsible life in a free society in the spirit of peace, friendship, understanding, tolerance and equality, the development of respect for the natural environment.
- The child has the right to enjoy his/her own culture.
- The child has the right to rest and leisure, to play and freely participate in cultural life and the arts.
- The child shall be protected from economic exploitation and from performing work that is hazardous to his/her life and development. The child shall be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices, in pornographic performances and materials.
- The State shall take all feasible measures to protect and care for children affected by armed conflict.

- Every child accused of having committed an offence or crime should be guaranteed to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, to have legal assistance in presenting his/her case, not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt, to have his/her privacy fully respected, to be dealt with in a manner appropriate to their age, circumstances and well-being. Neither capital punishment or life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by children below the age of 18.

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