

Teaching materials to combat anti-Semitism

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has repeatedly identified education as an important means of combating all forms of intolerance, including anti-Semitism. OSCE participating States have committed themselves to promoting educational programmes for combating anti-Semitism and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) works to offer them advice in their efforts.¹ Since anti-Semitic hate crimes still appear across the OSCE region, there is a clear need to develop educational tools and strategies to combat this phenomenon.

ODIHR and the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam have responded by developing, in co-operation with national experts from 14 OSCE participating States, teaching materials to combat anti-Semitism that deal with a variety of aspects of this phenomenon.



Divided into three parts, the materials cover different aspects of anti-Semitism:

Part 1 examines the specific national, as well as the broader European history of anti-Semitism;

Part 2 addresses the contemporary manifestations of anti-Semitism in the particular country and across Europe;

Part 3 deals with anti-Semitism in the context of general issues such as prejudice, racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance. The materials are complemented by a comprehensive guide for teachers.

Where ODIHR and its project partners have developed customized country versions of these teaching materials, they are distributed to schools, educators and libraries, and training seminars are conducted for teachers and teacher-trainers. ODIHR co-operates with educational authorities or in-service teacher-training institutions in a number of countries.

¹ Ministerial Council Decision No. 12/04, *Tolerance and Non-discrimination*, Sofia, 7 December 2004; Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/05, *Tolerance and Non-discrimination: Promoting Mutual Respect and Understanding*, Ljubljana, 6 December 2005.

Combating intolerance and promoting mutual respect and understanding

The materials also examine the workings of prejudice in general, showing students the impact that bias can have both on individuals and on whole societies. The materials are designed to provide schools and teachers with flexibility in placing the specific country version in their curriculum; they fit easily into such subject areas as history, religious studies, literature and social studies, and can also be used as part of an interdisciplinary approach.

One innovative aspect of this project is that the materials were not produced as one-size-fits-all resources. Instead, the project partners produced materials specific to the context of each of the participating countries. As a result, the materials are not only written in the language of the teachers and students but also rely on local experiences and examples. ODIHR and its partners have produced or are presently developing materials for 14 OSCE participating States: Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Ukraine.



The materials are tested in classrooms in each country before they are printed and introduced into the curriculum. Several countries have gone to second or third printings in order to meet the demand from teachers and educational institutions.

Other interested OSCE participating States are invited to work with the project partners to adapt the materials to their own national contexts and to introduce them into the curricula in their school systems.

For more information, please contact:

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- Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Information System (TANDIS)
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