



**Fearless advocacy
for democracy and tolerance**





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Project Consortium



Leibniz
Universität
Hannover

Institut für Didaktik der Demokratie
Leibniz Universität Hannover,
Deutschland

www.idd.uni-hannover.de/en



Institut für
Didaktik der
Demokratie



Technical school Nikola Tesla,
Vukovar, Croatia

www.ss-tehnicka-ntesla-vu.skole.hr



Zespół Szkół Poligraficznych,
Warsaw, Poland

www.zspoligraf.pl



Warsaw Centre for Socio-Educational
Innovation and Training,
Warsaw, Poland

www.wcies.edu.pl



Nansen Dialogue Centre, Osijek,
Croatia

www.ndcosijek.hr



Demokratiezentrum Wien,
Österreich

www.demokratiezentrum.org





Disclaimer: This brochure in English is a summary of the core content of the brochures produced for each member country as part of the Clio project. It does not deal specifically with one of the national contexts, as the other brochures and podcasts do, but refers mainly to the general, cross-national aspects of the problem. Nevertheless, there will be a brief outline of the legal situations in each of the individual partner countries in the chapter on "Human rights". Are you interested in the situations in Germany, Poland, Austria or Croatia? Then take a look at the country-specific brochures and podcasts on the Clio homepage: www.clio-project.eu





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WHAT IS CLIO?

Clio is a project for the prevention and management of xenophobic attitudes at vocational schools. Teachers, as well as school administrators are to be enabled to recognize and understand such positions among their students and to stand up for democratic values without fear. For this purpose, interdisciplinary experts from Austria, Poland, Croatia and Germany are developing various materials in close cooperation with the target group, such as an app, a blended learning training and a podcast. The main focus of this project is to build synergetic networks with other actors in each country in order to strengthen schools and provide them with knowledge and professionally produced materials.

Clio Homepage





Clio App

<https://clio.keelelearning.de>



IN THIS BROCHURE YOU WILL LEARN...

- what right-wing extremism is and why it is attractive for people in Europe
- why it is important to deal with right-wing extremism and group-based misanthropy
- when it is possible and, above all, necessary for teachers to take a stand against certain statements or behavior on the part of students, parents or colleagues
- which pedagogical approaches to prevention are available
- The legal base of the universal human rights





What you can find in the country specific brochures as well:

-the legal base of the countries Poland, Germany, Austria and Croatia

-what counseling and training opportunities are available for your school and colleagues in Germany, Poland, Croatia and Austria

WHAT IS RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM?

Right-wing extremism can be understood as the totality of attitudes & actions (organized or not) or as the ideology underlying these actions & attitudes. Right-wing extremism is not a homogeneous ideological concept, but it has certain characteristics:

- Right-wing extremism rejects the free democratic basic order. Democratic institutions and their representatives are devalued. Instead, authoritarian or totalitarian state systems are supposed to form the basis of the social order.
- Right-wing extremism relativizes or denies the crimes of National Socialism.





- Right-wing extremism is characterized by extreme nationalism. The idea of an external threat from which the people and the nation must be protected prevails.
- In right-wing extremism, völkisch ideologies are combined with ideologies of inequality such as anti-Semitism, racism, sexism and homophobia.
- Inequality ideologies are formed through us-them constructions. "Us" and "them" are portrayed as incompatible groups.
- Ideologies of inequality or group-based misanthropy exist independently of right-wing extremism. They appear in all areas of society and thus also in our schools. They can be intersectional. This means that they do not only occur in isolation, but can overlap, relate to each other, and reinforce each other (e.g. when Muslim girls are affected by racism & sexism at the same time).

WHY ARE FAR-RIGHT GROUPS SUCCESSFUL?

There are several reasons for the success of far-right groups. These include:





- Despite continuities of a "traditional" right-wing extremism, there are increasingly new actors* (e.g. "the Identitarians") who convey old content with new terms and interpret it in a modern, youthful and appealing way. In this way, right-wing extremism is transported in youth culture (music, clothing, street art, computer games, etc.) in order to appeal specifically to young people.
- Right-wing extremist groups can provide a social network for young people who feel excluded and isolated, for example.
- Right-wing extremism can be identity-forming by offering a clear order of belonging and rules of coexistence (we-they constructs).
- Aggression can be reduced by the glorification of violence and the willingness to use violence in right-wing extremist groups.
- Ethnic and inequality ideologies provide simple answers to complex issues. The formula of "us against them" is used to solve all problems. Complex sociopolitical challenges can be "solved" by pointing to scapegoats.





WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO STAND UP AGAINST RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM AND DISCRIMINATION?

Not every person who listens to right-wing music or makes a certain statement is a neo-Nazi. Nevertheless, in the case of right-wing extremist and discriminatory statements, actions, use of symbols, etc., intervention should always be taken, because

- otherwise right-wing extremism is normalized, legitimized and strengthened.
- further dissemination can be prevented in this way.
- tendencies can be strengthened if no democratic and inclusive counter-models are offered.
- teachers have a role model function which, due to their position of power (age, education, possibly gender, etc.), has a stronger effect than an intervention by people who are affected by exclusion.
- those affected by discrimination and right-wing extremism must be protected and strengthened.





WHAT CAN I DO IN CASE OF DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENTS/BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS?

- First of all, it is important to understand the causes and contexts of discriminatory statements and behavior. If young people with an affinity for the right appear dominant and intimidate others, it is often a matter of control and determining the authority of opinion. Here, it is important for school administrators and teachers to protect, support, and empower other students. These conflicts should not be reduced to supposedly "apolitical" disputes among rival youth groups.

- Discrimination can be intersectional. This means that they can be interdependent and, in the worst cases, mutually reinforcing. For example, girls with a migration history can be affected by both racism and sexism.

- Discrimination can additionally reinforce divisions in the (class) community and promote radicalization. Aggression and rejection on the one hand can lead to isolation or resistance on the other, e.g. when persons affected by anti-Muslim racism increasingly separate themselves and begin to identify with Islamist positions.

It is important to counteract a possible division of the students





- In addition, group-based misanthropy and right-wing extremism are negotiated and expressed non-verbally: By openly wearing codes and symbols or consuming certain music, affiliation with certain scenes is marked. This can also express itself in the posting of relevant memes in the class group on WhatsApp. Intervene if you notice this. The symbols do not necessarily have to be forbidden, but they still contribute to the normalization of right-wing extremist attitudes among students.

PEDAGOGICAL ACTION

- When it comes to an emergency, teachers often find themselves in a pedagogical dilemma. In the case of incidents that may be criminally relevant, they have to weigh up whether it is appropriate to report the incident, because such a report can not only hinder the professional development of the student, but also destroy the relationship of trust and make further pedagogical interventions more difficult. If, for example, a student shows a national socialist salute (Hitler salute), this may already be a criminal offense under the Prohibition Act.

How should a teacher react then?





- The context is important. If misanthropic tendencies are the consensus in the classroom, a report and accompanying pedagogical measures can be useful to protect students from discrimination.

Consider the following aspects:

- Do you know the student well?
- What is his/her basic attitude?
- Which clique does he/she belong to?
- Does he/she want to provoke?
- What are the motives behind this action?
- Do other students need to be protected?

Basically:

- If violence occurs, you must involve the police and protect those affected!
- Be transparent: address the problem openly, everyone involved can learn from it!
- By openly addressing the issue, problematic attitudes are always countered by humanistic attitudes. This strengthens the democratic consciousness of other students and shows





the undecided that right-wing opinions are not uncontroversial.

- (Potentially) affected students are shown that they are not alone, but that they too have people in their environment who show solidarity, support them in case of doubt and do not look away.

- Especially for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, who are more likely to be affected by discrimination, the school environment should be perceived as a safe place where they can find contact persons in case of problems.

PREVENTION

Preventive work makes sense. This work includes a substantive discussion of ideologies of inequality, i.e. an informed discussion of right-wing extremism instead of its tabooing. Bans without discussion of content are more likely to provoke a lack of understanding or resistance. The following tips can be initial preventive measures:





- Create an awareness of the topic among your students and staff.
- Gain insight into the language of symbols, memes and music that your students consume (e.g. via the Clío app!).
- Organize project days on the topic of discrimination. External actors like the Democracy Center Vienna or ZARA offer workshops and trainings.
- If not yet available: Integrate appropriate clauses regarding symbols and statements into the school rules.
- Involve parent and student representatives in this process. Changes should be supported by the entire staff.
- Ask how everyone at this school and in society wants to live and interact with each other.
- Create democratic counter-models by democratizing the class and school community and by involving teachers, students, school staff and parents in the decision-making process.

HUMAN RIGHTS

What are human rights?





Human rights are principles and regulations which ensure that we all have equal rights independent of personal differences!

We are all born free and equal.¹

We all have the right to life, liberty and security, and to the satisfied basic needs such as water, food and shelter regardless to what country we live in, who our parents are, no matter race, colour, sex, religion, political or other opinion or affiliation, national or social origin, education or other status.

Human rights are UNIVERSAL – they recognise the dignity inherent in every person as a human being, regardless of his or her particular nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, class or any other group affiliation or characteristic. Human rights are also INALIENABLE - they cannot be taken away from anyone or no one can give them up. Human rights are EQUAL – everyone has human rights to the same extent. As a result, they assert the moral and legal primacy of the individual over other entities that have “rights,” such as the family and the state.

¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Article one: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.





Human rights are based on values:

dignity, equality, freedom, respect, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, responsibility, cooperation and acceptance.

By advocating these values, we respect others and ourselves. When these values are understandable, generally accepted and respected, there is no unequal treatment and there is no discrimination!²

A human right by definition is a universal moral right, something which all men, everywhere, at all times ought to have, something of which no one may be deprived without a grave affront to justice, something which is owing to every human being simply because he is human.³ (Cranston 1973: 36)

Today's modern democratic societies in which we live are inconceivable without respect for the human rights of all its citizens. Democracy literally means the will of the people. If applied without corrective, the decision made by the majority could jeopardize the individuals and/or minority; if no human rights, or minority rights are applied.

² Javorina Tanja, Sedlar Emili Ema, Horvat Martina, Hoffmann Dražen Hoffmann (2017): Human rights for an equal and solidary society (<http://edu.goo.hr/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/LJUDSKA-PRAVA.pdf>). Accessed: 11 January 2021.

³ Cranston, Maurice (1973):





That is why today's societies are organised as liberal democracies, which means that the rights and the liberties (libertas (lat.)) of the individual are protected and must not be jeopardized by majority decision-making. The democratic principle refers to majority decision-making, and the liberal principle to respect for rights and individual freedoms.

Minority rights are based on the recognition that minorities (ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic), are in a vulnerable situation in comparison to other groups in society, namely the majority population, and are aimed to protect members of a minority group from discrimination, assimilation, prosecution, hostility or violence as a consequence of their status.

Minority rights do not constitute privileges, but act to ensure equal respect for members of different communities. Minority rights serve to accommodate vulnerable groups and to bring all members of society to a minimum level of equality in the exercise of their human and fundamental rights.

Pluralist and genuinely democratic society should not only respect the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of each person belonging to a national minority, but also create appropriate conditions enabling them to express, preserve and develop this identity. Creation of a climate of tolerance and dialogue is necessary to enable cultural diversity to be a source





and a factor, not of division, but of enrichment for each society.⁴

Protection of Human Rights

Respect, protection and promotion of human rights is the obligation and responsibility of every state.

Independent commissions and courts ensure the protection of human rights. Protection is provided on international, regional and national levels.

International institutions for the protection of human rights work under umbrella of *The United Nations*. Various organs of the United Nations are responsible for the protection and realisation of human rights, like the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, the UN Human Rights Council, a High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Court.

Also, a number of different civil society organisations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, FIAN International (For the right for food and nutrition) and Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) are involved in monitoring

⁴ Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation (2010), United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner, New York and Geneva (https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/MinorityRights_en.pdf) Accessed: 22 January 2021.





and reporting to UN on state and violations of HR, but also undertake different actions and campaigns to promote and protect HR worldwide.⁵

In Austria, basic and human rights are part of the constitution. A body of constitutional laws, developed and expanded over time and history, ensures basic and human rights for all its citizens. The main sources for basic rights are the so-called “Staatsgrundgesetz über die Allgemeinen Rechte der Staatsbürger” and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). In addition, Austria has ratified a number of international human rights conventions. Since 2012, the institutional body to ensure and verify human rights in Austria is the “Volksanwaltschaft” is an independent control unit. The report of Amnesty International of 2018 described the situation of human rights in Austria in 2018 as “turbulent” because of attacks against the freedom of press and one incident of youths being stripped of their right to freedom without a legal basis. At the same time, the report names positive instances such as the decision of the Constitutional Court to grant every Austrian citizen the right to an individual gender identity.

⁵https://www.bmz.de/en/issues/allgemeine_menschenrechte/menschenrechtsinstitutionen/index.html Accessed 11 January 2021.





In Croatia, fundamental rights and freedoms in the Republic of Croatia are protected by The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, Ombudsman, Ombudsman for Gender Equality, the Ombudsman for Children and the Ombudsman for people with disabilities.

There are also a number of Government Commissions and National committees (Croatian Government Commission for Human Rights, Commission of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Program for Roma, Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Council for National Minorities) and National programmes for the promotion of human rights (National Anti-Trafficking Program, National Program for the Suppression of Child Trafficking, National Program for Roma, National action plan for the welfare, rights and interests of children, Anti-discrimination strategy).⁶

In Germany, human rights are listed in the first articles of the constitution (GG) and continue to be protected by the so-called eternity clause (Art. 79 lit. 3 GG). This means that they may not be changed even by democratic majorities. The Federal Constitutional Court serves to protect the constitution by acting as an independent authority that reviews the

⁶ [http://www.mvep.hr/hr/vanjska-politika/multilateralni-odnosi-staro-ijvhi/ujedinjeni-narodi-\(un\)/ljudska-prava-u-rh/](http://www.mvep.hr/hr/vanjska-politika/multilateralni-odnosi-staro-ijvhi/ujedinjeni-narodi-(un)/ljudska-prava-u-rh/) Accessed: 11 January 2021.





compatibility of applicable law with the constitution. On the parliamentary side, there is a permanent Human Rights Committee in the Bundestag, which works to protect and expand human rights inside and outside Germany. Furthermore, the German Institute for Human Rights (DIMR) also plays an important role in the national and international protection of human rights. It was established in March 2001 by a resolution of the German Bundestag and is Germany's independently accredited human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles of the United Nations. It is designed to prevent human rights violations and promote and protect human rights.⁷

In Poland, the equality of citizens before the law, the right to equal treatment by public authorities and the prohibition of discrimination on any grounds is provided in Art. 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. In addition to the Act on the implementation of certain provisions of the European Union in the field of equal treatment, the issue is also regulated to a limited extent by the Labour, Civil and Petty

⁷ Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (o.J.): Institutions for the protection of human rights. https://www.bmz.de/en/issues/allgemeine_menschenrechte/menschenrechtseinstitutionen/index.html (exessed 18.03.2021)





Offences Codes.⁸ In addition, the provisions on the prohibition of discrimination are scattered in the laws on the Ombudsman, employment promotion and labour market institutions, higher education, the education system, health care benefits financed from public funds, vocational and social rehabilitation and employment of disabled people and the National Labour Inspectorate. In addition to the Ombudsman, the persons appointed to support the citizen are also the Ombudsman for Children, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, the Government Plenipotentiary for the Disabled and the Patient Ombudsman.⁹

DISCRIMINATION IN THE CLASSROOM. HOW TO REACT- IN A NUTSHELL

In the fight against discrimination, it is believed that attitudes need to change from an early age and this first line of struggle is implemented through the education system. Therefore,

⁸ Polskie Towarzystwo Prawa Atydyskryminacyjnego
<http://www.ptpa.org.pl/> - access 30 January 2021

⁹ Polskie Towarzystwo Prawa Atydyskryminacyjnego
<http://www.ptpa.org.pl/> - access 30 January 2021





today's anti-discrimination programs are aimed at children and are accomplished through school.

The school has an important educational role, as corrective of students' attitudes and behaviours that are primarily acquired in the family, in communication and socializing with peers or through media.

When a situation of discrimination occurs in the classroom, school environment and even in other life situations, we often do not react. The reasons may be: feelings of discomfort and shame; feelings of incompetence ("I don't know how to solve this."); feeling powerless ("Even if I react, it's just a drop in the ocean."); fear of escalating conflict; disclaimer ("It is not my duty.") or social pressure ("Will I get support from colleagues and parents?").

How to react to discriminatory statements/behaviour in the classroom?

- show/say that such a statement/behaviour bothers you
- react/protect a person who is exposed to discrimination,





- examine the background of the statement or behaviour - it is possible that the statement was made out of ignorance/recklessness/discomfort,
- refer to the laws and / or rules of the school,
- do not react with anger and rage towards the person who uttered it,
- if you are not able to provide time for dialogue at that time, agree on a time and place, postpone - but do not forget(!),
- Try to resolve the situation within the class, and if this is not possible or the situation recurs, involve the expert associates in the school, and if necessary, the principal and parents

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