

January 14, 2013

Primary school Gornja Radgona

Living in democracy



In year 2012 Primary school Gornja Radgona joined the international project "Human rights in action", whose initiators were Ministry of Education and Sport and Bureau for Educational Services Montenegro, Council of Europe and European Wergeland Centre. In the school year 2012/13 we want to contribute to better implementation of democratic citizenship principles and education for human rights through concrete activities and projects. We wish to establish and foster the climate of trust, openness and interpersonal respect among all participants in the educational process. For this reason we named our project »Living in democracy«.



Expected outcomes

Most of the wanted outcomes are connected with deepening and improving above mentioned principles together with different activities that predict the increase in responsibilities and activities of school parliament representatives and school council, internalization of school constitution values and their active usage as well as deepening of human rights knowledge, values and ethical principles. More active parents` participation and involvement in the school process and establishing cooperation with other organizations (in the municipality and NGO Humanitas) are also aims of the project.



Who was involved?

A team of three representatives from Primary school Gornja Radgona was responsible for project preparation and implementation. School psychologist Nika Forjanič Huber was responsible for connection with the school governance and parents, teacher Damijan Sovec was responsible for connection with NGO Humanitas and for the visual image of the project and teacher Dejan Kokol was the project leader.

All participants in the educational process were directly or indirectly involved together with parents, local community, different organizations and NGOs.

»Every person can contribute to the achievement of EDC/HRE goals and principles!«

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Activities

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Human Rights in Action

All activities set out in the Action plan were carried out from the beginning of the school year 2012/13 till the end of December 2012.

On the first school day the pupils elected their class representatives (24 females and 24 males) into the school parliament. Elected representatives from 7th to 9th grade formed the school council. Each representative was assigned with a field, where they should be active co-workers. Their role and responsibilities increased this school year, so each member of the council had to work actively in his field and report to the school community. In December members of the school council established a connection with the local municipality and took part in a meeting of the Board for social activities. It was a chance to feel and recognize how democracy works at the local level.

School constitution, written a year ago, was presented to the school parliament representatives by its authors in October. The authors also made posters on constitution contents and advice and hung them around the school, so that it could come into life and that the pupils begin to internalize its values.

Ombudsman Zdenka Čebašek-Travnik Ph.D. paid a visit and spoke about her work and mission in October.

In the beginning of December we carried out an activity day named "Growing up" which was also the topic of this year's school parliament. We involved pupils, teachers, parents, external co-workers, representatives from different institutions and organizations and NGO Humanitas. We carried out many workshops connected to the subject matter which amounted to the diversity of activities.

In December we strengthened our cooperation with NGO Humanitas and established an interactive exhibition »World in a shopping basket«. The meaning was to present the key environment and social problems connected with the production and daily usage of products and human rights violation.

In November the members of our film group participated in a contest under UN Association of Slovenia with a three-minute film »Santa Claus and Global Warming« and won an award. The film represented Slovenia at the Vienna International Human Rights Film Festival »This human world«. United Nations Association of Slovenia also organized a literary competition »Taking Care of Healthy Future«, where our pupil was among the awarded ones.

In the context of marking the International Day of Human Rights, the 7th grade pupils and members of photo group actively participated in the marathon of writing appeals under Amnesty International Slovenia.



List of activities:

- Nominating representatives of school parliament and school council.
- More active role of school council representatives and increasing their responsibilities.
- Establishing a connection with school council representatives and local municipality.
- Presenting the school constitution, working on wall posters with contents and advice.
- Visit of the Slovenian ombudsman.
- NGO Humanitas carrying out workshops on the topic of human rights violation.
- Participating in a film contest, under United Nations Association of Slovenia.
- Active participation (carrying out workshops) of parents and members of other institutions and organizations on the school activity day.
- Participating in a literature competition "Taking care of healthy future".
- Establishing an interactive exhibition »World in a shopping basket«.

Educating for EDC/HRE

To reflect on school education and education in our country, we think, that the lesson process and lesson content is methodically intertwined with EDC/HRE principles.

It is only necessary to deepen/strengthen the importance of these two principles, their more active integration and realization into school life and practice of human values and principles.

Climate of trust, openness and respect

It is also important to establish and foster a climate of trust, openness and interpersonal respect among all participants of school process for EDC/HRE goals to be reached.

By being aware of human rights and obligations, practicing positive human values, interpersonal respect and trust, we can contribute to better well-being, higher education quality and positive climate in the school.

Further resources

- [Article](#) about the academy in our local newspaper
- Our school [constitution](#)
- Santa Claus and Global Warming - [video](#)
- Activity day - [photos](#)
- World in a shopping basket - [photos](#)
- Write for rights 2012 - [video](#)



Interviews

N. F. H.: We are preparing an activity day on the topic of this year's school parliament subject "Growing up". We would also like for parents to be active and participate. Are you prepared to do so?

T. V.: Great idea! Yes, I am prepared to join you that day. Which activities did you have in mind?

N. F. H.: Thank you for your support and willingness to participate. I know that your working field is connected with child and human rights protection and prevention of violence. Would it be possible that you carry out workshops for pupils?

T. V.: Yes, it would! I think that this will be very interesting for pupils. I will try to include pupils and make them more active so that later on they will have no problems coming to independent conclusions and results.

"ACTIVE COOPERATION OF THE SCHOOL WITH PARENTS CONTRIBUTES TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT."

What was the progress? What were the challenges?

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Human Rights in Action

General goals of primary school curriculum fits directives of EDC and HRE key principles, build and educate in climate of trust, openness and respect, contribute to progress of critical thinking, specific points of view and human values and influence an individual life's key image. Goals and principles of educating for EDC and HRE are so indirectly (ways and methods of teaching) and directly (contents and lifelong learning) integrated into school process on a vertical scale.

Moreover, our progress was directed at deepening/strengthening of existing situation. Integrating representatives of school council into work of local municipality and giving them more active role with more responsibilities has brought a clearer image of functioning and the meaning of democracy on micro level (school) to the understanding of democracy on macro level (state). The constitution, a document founded on democracy and respect, arranges social order and provides each individual with human rights and freedom. And exactly these human values are also written into our school constitution. We presented our school constitution, its contents and the way it is meant to be put into practice to all participants of the school process. We also established active cooperation with NGO Humanitas and enriched our cooperation with one more organization. Parents also belong to democratically arranged school environment. We promoted the parents role as co-builders of school performance with their more active involvement in different school activities. Such form of co-working is useful and effective for all participants in the school life.

We did not encounter larger problems in planning or running of the project. One of the challenges was a short deadline to finish activities from the Action plan. The largest challenge will surely remain the continuation of parents' involvement, at least at this level.

Nika Forjanič Huber, Damijan Sovec, Dejan Kokol



ŽIVIMO V DEMOKRACIJI
LIVING IN DEMOCRACY

