COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: EXPERIENCES FROM SERBIA

SVETLANA LAZIĆ,[1] SNEŽANA VUKOVIĆ[2]
[1] Preschool Teacher Training College Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Serbia
pedagogns@gmail.com
[2] Ministry of Education of Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, Serbia
snezanavukovic2@gmail.com

The purpose of this paper is to overview new research in Serbia on the topic of education for implementing children's rights in schools and interdisciplinary competences in teaching for determining the presence of knowledge, implementation and beliefs in the child's possibilities and potentials to the end of improving educational work. The analysis is based on understanding the dimensions of values, attitudes, skills and critical thinking, as competences for democratic culture and their implementation in environments which support participation. The educational system should be this kind of environment. The Council of Europe Referent Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) is a set of materials about principles and implementation of all 4 dimensions in educational institutions, through the real-life situations which enable some or all dimensions' implementation. The imperative is grounded theory knowledge of rights in general and child's rights too. Authors conclude that relation of non-equal power is dominant in educational work, which implicitly means that there is a lack of knowledge of aim and significance of some child's rights, possibly the Convention itself.

KOMPETENCE ZA DEMOKRATIČNO KULTURO V IZOBRAŽEVALNEM SISTEMU:IZKUŠNJE IZ SRBIJE

SVETLANA LAZIĆ,[1] SNEŽANA VUKOVIĆ,[2]
[1] Visoka šola za vzgojitelje predšolskih otrok Novi Sad, Novi Sad, Srbija
pedagogns@gmail.com
[2] Ministrstvo za šolstvo Republike Srbije, Beograd, Srbija
snezanavukovic2@gmail.com

Cilj prispevka je pregled novih raziskav v Srbiji na področju izobraževanja o uresničevanju otrokovih pravic v šolah in medpredmetnih kompetenc pri pouku zaradi ugotavljanja prisotnosti znanja, izvajanja in verjetja v otrokove možnosti in potenciale z namenom izboljšanja vzgojno-izobraževalnega dela. Analiza temelji na razumevanju dimenzij vrednot, stališč, spretnosti in kritičnega mišljenja, ki tvorijo kompetence za demokratično kulturo in se izvajajo v okoljih, ki podpirajo participacijo. Vzgojno-izobraževalni sistem bi moral biti takšno okolje. Referenčni okvir kompetenc za demokratično kulturo Sveta Evrope (RFCDC) je zbirka gradiv o načelih in izvajanju vseh štirih dimenzij v izobraževalnih ustanovah, in sicer s pomočjo prikazovanja realnih situacij, ki omogočajo izvajanje nekaterih oziroma vseh dimenzij. Nujen pogoj za njihovo uporabo je dobro poznavanje koncepta prava na splošno, vključno z otrokovimi pravicami. Avtorji ugotavljajo, da v vzgojno-izobraževalnem delu prevladuje razmerje neenake moči, kar posredno pomeni, da je pomanjkljivo razumevanje smisla in pomena nekaterih otrokovih pravic, morda tudi nepoznavanje same konvencije.

1   Introduction

Education for the rights of the child can be viewed in the wider framework of human rights education, because rights of the child are a part of the overall corpus of human rights. However, education for the rights of the child is not the same as education for human rights. If children and students learn about human rights without content interaction and experiential knowledge, they are denied the opportunity to understand the rights of the child, i.e. a valid understanding of the position in which they are and the opportunities they have in applying everything that concerns them (Vranješević, Cicvarić, Žunić-Cicvarić & Jovanović, 2022). This further means that children and students in educational institutions need to be given a context based on everyday experiences, in order to be able to exercise their rights adequately and in line with their needs.

One should also wonder if the teachers in schools are ready to do this, and whether there are any obstacles that can be recognized as difficult to surpass. It seems that the competences of teachers which refer to the attitudes and values that the teacher knows how to use in the performance of his professional activities can be one such obstacle (Gonzáles &Wagenaar, 2008). They go beyond the scope of teaching curricula and form the backbone of community life in which the teacher acts as supporter to the child or student. The dominant questions in this paper are: (1) the extent to which teachers are prepared to work on education for children's rights; (2) whether they are committed to the teaching vocation and are aware of their authority to achieve the objectives of education, tasks and content prescribed by law; (3) how much they 'see' children and whether they fully understand the complementarity of their relationship with children; (4) whether schools perceive their culture/ethos as the starting, as well as progressive development point for the application of children's rights in practice and (5) whether they believe school is a place in which it is possible to achieve democratic culture.

Although there is not a large body of research in Serbia focusing on the aforementioned questions, there is sufficient material to be able to determine the tendencies of teachers' actions in school and discover gaps in knowledge as suitable points for practical intervention to the end of strengthening their faith in children, seizing opportunities and realising their potential.

2   Methodology

This study was made as theoretical research and as a system of logical and value exploration of human and children's rights, teacher's competences, complementary issues in relationship, as well as context of democratic culture in schools. It is made within the corpus of hermeneutic and explorative paradigm, which allow deeper understanding of important questions mentioned above, relevant for increasing the positive values in education.

This research is realised as overview of (1) new researches in Serbia and foreign contemporary researches, (2) activities in schools provided by Ministry of Education in co-ordinance with Institute for Improvement of Education and Council of Europe related to democratic culture and professional development and (3) by consulting legislative framework and strategic documents relevant for new educational paradigm and national educational policy.

3   Results

Results are divided in four major units related to the topic of the study. Each of them demonstrates a degree of autonomy, but at the same time depends on others and forms one part of a whole. By simultaneously assessing them individually and as part of a whole, it becomes quite clear they are constituent to the comprehensive knowledge of teachers and students. They also confirm the necessity for continuous improvement of the quality of work in a highly ethically demanding profession that teaching is.

3.1   Education for children's rights and competencies

According to research that examined the issue of student participation in Serbia (Avramović, Stamenković, 2013; Vranješević, 2014; Vuković, Čaprić & Lazić, 2023) there is an impression that the current school climate does not yet encourage student activism nor does it seriously contribute to the strengthening of their participation skills. Despite reforms which emphasise the importance of democratising education and establishing partnerships (IDEC, 2005), some schools in Serbia still lack the practical knowledge for providing opportunities for students to actively participate in the life and work of the school. On the other hand, some countries show

significant improvement of decision-making opportunities for young people in school, even in the early childhood classrooms (Marsh, et al., 2020; Suorsa, 2023). However, there are exceptions. Opportunities for student activity exist only in contexts which presuppose free choice and initiative of students (extracurricular activities), while other segments of educational work "close the door" to student participation (Klemenović, Lazić, 2007), which is confined to the formal existence of student parliaments. In the survey conducted by the Provincial Ombudsman, in over 50% of the 344 primary schools in AP Vojvodina, the student parliament never came to life (*Report of the Provincial Ombudsman for 2005*, 2006). In the schools where it existed, the work of the student parliament was based mainly on meetings, discussions, encounters usually initiated by the president of the student parliament. The meetings mainly took place in the presence of an adult from school (most often the pedagogue), which in the opinion of the students leads to reduced independence of this body. In the 117 secondary schools of APV at the time, high school student participation in the life and work of the school was realised in several ways, with the most common responses: student parliament, organisation of school events, peer education, participation in technical activities of the school, participation in school development planning, organising excursions and various other initiatives and activities. The student parliament existed in almost all schools and their representatives equally participated in school board meetings (Klemenović, Lazić, 2007).

According to some studies (Pešikan, 2020; Rowe, 2003; Vranješević et al., 2022), key determinants of success in schools are the values foundational to the education for the rights of the child, such as the involvement of students in various aspects of school life and in the learning and teaching process, respect and cooperation with different actors of the educational process and the inclusiveness of the learning environment (Schaffer & Gagnon, 2023). Some authors emphasised the importance of empowering children and adults to acquire competencies for progressive realisation of children's rights through learning about them (Lundy & McEvoy, 2012), i.e. to launch initiatives in defence of human rights and prevent their violation, thus introducing the concept of initiatives which train children and adults to bring about changes in their environment (Gerber, 2008; Vranješević et al., 2022).

The study of the Provincial Ombudsman of Vojvodina conducted in 2009 was repeated eight years later in the same residential areas. It was concluded that there was no qualitative step forward in students' understanding of rights, constitutional democracy and the protection of national minorities' rights to free thinking and expression, with almost half of the respondents in the repeated study justifying discrimination as a measure (Lazić & Perić, 2017, 2018). The focus on information and cognitive content has dehumanised schools and distanced them from students. Therefore, they cannot perceive school as a place where something significant and necessary for life happens, but rather see it as an occupation intended for everyone in equal form and measure (Obenchain et al., 2016; Tošić Radev and Pešikan, 2017). There is an evident need to connect schools to the community and to introduce programmes that would bring the school closer to life and equate academic achievements to social, emotional and other competencies (Murry and Isaacowitz, 2016; Shepherd, Luebbers and Ogloff, 2016). In this way, schools could improve the care for others, self-awareness, differentiation of terms related to human and children's rights, which was observed mostly in students belonging to the Ruthenian national community and partially in students attending Civic Education as a compulsory elective course in the repeated study (Lazic & Perić, 2017, 2018).

Consequently, Bajaj (2012) and Vidović et al. (2005) believe that the education system needs competent and enthusiastic teachers who will be able to respect and use the principle of equality and participation in creating an environment conducive to the implementation of children's rights through experiential learning. Competencies are a combination of knowledge, cognitive and practical skills, attitudes and values that a teacher can use in the performance of their professional activities (Gonzales & Wagenaar, 2008). Since they depend on the political and economic system and society in the context of cultural diversity, they are applied through intercultural and interpersonal dialogue. According to a definition similar in content, competencies are divided into 4 constituent groups / areas, namely values, attitudes, skills, as well as knowledge and critical thinking (Council of Europe, 2016; Gollob & Lazić, 2021a, 2021b). In the teaching context, they are perceived as the ability of teachers to mobilise and apply relevant values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and/or understanding and to respond appropriately and effectively to demands, challenges and opportunities in a given context (Council of Europe, 2016).

Foreign research that explore the competencies of teachers in child rights education shows that teachers have positive attitudes and that they base their teaching practice on the rights of the child, while at the same time expressing a desire to acquire knowledge about the rights of the child (Aroa & Thakur, 2015; Ozmen, Kaymak, Ozmen & Yalcin, 2010; Shahid, 2009). The latest study in Serbia (Vranješević et al., 2022) revealed that almost half of teachers lack sufficient knowledge on the rights of the child directly related to the education system, that two thirds fail to adequately apply knowledge about children's rights in a specific situation, and that they do not possess knowledge of the procedures for acting in cases of children's rights violation. In contrast, the same teachers express dominantly positive attitudes towards child rights education.

3.2   The authorities of teachers in achieving the goals of education and upbringing for the purpose of cultivating democratic culture

It is clear that learning for the application of CDC starts from the cognitive dimension, i.e. from knowledge, so students can later be equipped to conclude for themselves that learning and development are not only based on knowledge and skills, but also on values and attitudes. If the educational process is not just perceived as the accumulation of previously acquired knowledge, but as the support to the development of competencies for life, students grow and learn in a world where they feel welcome and are enabled to find their own perspective of the world, founded on appreciation and acceptance of authenticity. In order to do so, the educational process needs to be connected to the life experiences of students, and teachers need to upgrade those experiences into the context of the educational institution and apply them in the life and work of the school. If the school is governed as a mini-community with principles of democratic governance, it can provide students with opportunities for participation and application of its basic postulates. As such, the school, thanks to the engagement of teachers, can facilitate student development, helping students grow into aware, active drivers of their own life, who have respect for themselves and others, and who will become citizens equipped to recognize and define the problem situation, capable of taking care of themselves, and aware of the support systems around them (Vukovic et al., 2023). This further means that the school, as an institution of clearly defined formal education, provides valuable opportunities for informal learning, gaining life experience and creating a personal framework of reference. This process is also reversible, equally affecting both

students and teachers. It is important to note that the Guidelines for the Integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) in selected teaching and learning programmes (Council of Europe, 2022) provide examples of the implementation of CDC in primary and secondary schools in following subjects: Serbian language/ Serbian language and literature, mathematics, the world around us / nature and society, foreign language, history, geography, physics, chemistry, psychology and civic education that are associated with 477 descriptors.

3.3 Complementarity of relationships and challenges

Numerous studies emphasise that the quality of the educational process, educational outcomes and student motivation are greatly dependent on the teacher. They determine the extent to which educational policies and policies in the field of protection and implementation of children's rights will be implemented in practice. This also entails that teachers can be both obstacles and advocates for children's rights education and participation in the life of students during their stay at school (Ball, Maguire & Brown, 2012; Leenders, Veugelers & De Kat, 2008; OECD, 2005). The teaching profession requires specific professional knowledge that is not demanded to such an extent in other professions. Coupled with the complexity of modern life, the specificity of the teaching profession complicates their professional development, reducing it to multiple sources and forms (Pešikan, 2002). Therefore, it is not by chance that the quality of the teacher's work and the student achievement is highly correlated. Knowing that education is one of the most important antidotes for the diseases of the 21st century - violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance – it has one of the most important roles in promoting democracy, human rights, the rule of law, as well as the prevention of human rights violations (Council of Europe, 2010).

The teacher is viewed as a person of support to the students, since they empower them to make progress and realise qualitatively good achievements. Every teacher who is guided by the general pedagogical principle of positive direction for all activities understands that they are the stronghold of children's rights and that they help children discover their strengths, emphasising and relying on them, encouraging them to further develop them and thus reduces tendencies of children to deviate from positive values and ideas to which the educational practice aspires.

The teacher-student relationship is complementary, which means that it is characterised by an imbalance of power. Such situations unevenly distribute the burden of responsibility to the more powerful side – the teacher. As such, the teacher supports the student in their development, provides them with opportunities for learning and development, to the end of observing the significance of change and its fine nuances. In this process, the competencies that students need to change society and shape the future for a better life emerge. They are recognized as "transformative competencies" (OECD, 2018a, 2018b) joining the core foundation of knowledge, values and attitudes (Table 1).

Table 1: Transformative competences and core foundations

Transformative competencies	Core foundation	Areas
Creating new values Calming tensions and dilemmas Taking responsibility	Knowledge Attitudes Values	Cognitive basis: a widely viewed literacy within which digital literacy and data operations develop
		Health basis: physical and mental health and well-being
		Emotional basis: morality and ethics
Cross-subject competencies		

Creation of new values, calming tensions and dilemmas and taking responsibility are recognized as transformative competences (OECD, 2018a). The core foundation areas are broadly regarded literacy (cognitive basis), physical and mental health (health basis), morality and ethics (emotional basis) (OECD, 2018b). Transformative competencies and the core foundation precisely include the elements of life skills that are actually sets of competences independent of the teaching subjects in school (OECD, 2018b) We know them under the name of cross-curricular competencies. Their development encourages students to see reality from different perspectives, to find connections and relationships between different subjects and to connect them with previous learning and their own experiences (*Defining Cross-Curricular Competences*, 2013). They depend on the level of formal education, educational profile and competencies that future professionals should have. What they have in common is that they are based on key competencies for a fulfilling and successful life and proper functioning of society, as well as for lifelong learning.

3.4   Democratic culture in schools

The *Law on the Basics of the System of Education* (2017), more precisely Article 51, prescribes the professional development and further specialisation training of teachers, educators and professional associates. In addition, the field of professional development is regulated by the latest *Rulebook on Continuous Professional Development and Advancement in the titles of teachers, educators and professional associates* (2021). Among the prescribed competencies are the K4 related to competencies for communication and cooperation. Among the priority areas is area P4, which refers to strengthening the educational role of educational institutions through the development of programs for the prevention of violence, discrimination, abuse and neglect. As part of their professional development, teachers have the obligation to attend training for the prevention and protection against discrimination, violence, abuse and neglect, constructive conflict resolution, nonviolent communication, tolerance, stereotypes and prejudice, which also relate to the prevention of hate speech. In the *Catalogue of professional development programs for employees in education for the school years 2018-21* there are a total of 32 programmes related to human rights (ZUOV, 2018). In contrast, in the *Catalogue of professional education programs for the school years 2022-25*, there are 95 programmes that are directly or indirectly associated with human rights (ZUOV, 2022) are accredited. The evident increase in the number of programmes shows the sensitivity of general, but also children's and human rights, as well as all other specific rights, makes them a topic of special interest for education professionals.

The new educational paradigm, which was adopted in 2018, is defined by Article 7 of the *Law on the Basics of the System of Education* (2017). It represents the beginning of education reform and promotes a new, outcome-oriented concept of teaching and learning. Key cross-curricular competencies have been introduced. The teaching and learning concept is directed at achieving the standards of achievement (Table 2).

Table 2: Cross-curricular competences

Cross-curricular competences	Responsible participation in a democratic society
	Communication
	Responsibility towards the environment
	Problem solving
	Cooperation
	Relationship to health

They represent the prevention and fight against discrimination, violent behaviour, hate speech. Teachers have obligations towards development of cross-curricular competencies in all teaching and extracurricular activities. These competencies represent a step further in understanding the subject matter and applying what is learned. The responsibility for the development of competencies falls on all teachers and teaching subjects. In addition, teachers within the mandatory elective program Civic Education and classes of the headmaster, connect and deal with topics related to stereotypes and prejudices, discrimination, prevention of all forms of violence, abuse and neglect, children's rights, tolerance. With the aim of improving the competence of teachers who teach Civic Education, three manuals have been developed – for the first and second cycle of primary education and for grammar schools. The teacher receives basic information for all topics, on the correct use of terms that are important in this area (tolerance, diversity, discrimination, gender, gender roles, sexism…), information on gender and stereotypes and prejudices on national and racial grounds, on gender discrimination and discrimination based on national and ethnic affiliation, as well as the proper reactions to each violation. They also cover topics in the field of gender-based violence against women and accompanying phenomena, peer violence, as well as information on institutionalised mechanisms for ensuring gender and any other equality, regulations prohibiting discrimination in Serbia, *The Convention on the Rights of the Child*, as well as information on regulatory mechanisms for the response of schools in cases of discrimination and gender-based and any other form of violence. Beyond this, there are interesting texts on how the media shape gender and every other stereotype, on the most common myths and facts about gender-based violence, on the phenomenon of bullying, on the results of research on attitudes of young people towards violence in general, especially gender roles and gender-based violence, as well as a list of the most common signs of violence.

Within the Joint Initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union, through the project "Quality Education for All", a framework of twenty competences from the Competence Model from the value group, group of attitudes, skills group and knowledge and critical understanding group was adopted. Schools organised a large number of diverse activities, with pedagogical approaches appropriate for the development of competences for democratic culture and creation of a more pleasant, a more interesting and safer school environment, while strengthening their capacities for eliminating violent, discriminatory and anti-

democratic structures in schools and the school environment, improving the school ethos and providing support to students. Examples of content that reach democratic competencies can be found in publications for parents and teachers on the website of the Ministry of Education. During 2022, 20 new advisors-external associates were hired for the implementation of CDC in schools. During 2022 and 2023 2400 teachers and professional associates improved their knowledge and skills for the implementation of CDC in schools. In the meantime, the RFCDC has become a part of the *Strategy for the Development of Education and Upbringing until 2030* (2021).

4   Discussion

The biggest difference between research abroad and in Serbia is that the results of foreign studies are based on self-assessment of respondents, while only researchers in Serbia standardised responses and reached a realistic state in practice. For that reason, knowledge of children's rights among teachers in Serbia is weaker and less applied in practice, which does not necessarily have to be true. Schools provide students with activities in the field of activism and inclusive practice, engaging them in socially beneficial and humanitarian work, but only as a form of corrective action, which they themselves expressed in the professional development program *Improving the work of SOS counsellors for reporting violence in schools* (ZUOV, 2023). This demonstrates knowledge of relevant procedures for the handling of such situations, but opens the need to expand the image and apply them in an affirmative direction. *Rulebook on performing socially useful, i.e. humanitarian work* (2018) is defined as a restorative measure, and this ordinance should be amended to become binding for the entire school. The school should organise socially beneficial and humanitarian work as part of activities for acquiring values, dedicated to all students.

Guidelines for the Integration of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (Council of Europe, 2022) and *A guide to achieving a democratic culture in schools* (Council of Europe, 2023) allow implementation and improvement of universal democratic values in schools. It is especially important for science subjects like mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, as such topics can be used to talk to students about important questions related to critical thinking that can enable creativity. Questions and discussion of topics like tolerance, equality, relativity, sensitivity and other, increase the interest of students in teaching units and improve their knowledge, and

at the same time lead them to positive values of the national educational system and its foundational moral values.

In the cross-curricular competencies framework, education is considered to influence and be influenced by the context in which it occurs (*Defining Cross-Curricular Competences*, 2013). It takes place within the unique context of each student's life, occurring in interpersonal interaction experiences of students outside the classroom. In this way, what students learn within the school system has the potential to enrich their comprehensive development, as it occurs in their school years, and in the preparation for their future lives and further learning. Education perceived in the context of cross curricular competencies represents the prevention and fight against discrimination, violent behaviour, hate speech. Besides that, it is a step towards understanding and applying lessons learned, which is why all teachers are obliged to develop cross-curricular competences and why all teaching subjects are suitable for this purpose.

The STEM programme is dedicated to all students, but in practice shows a high range of gender inequality. The context of all topics presented in this study as a whole and each of them separately, has the potential for significant quantitative and qualitative improvement. Within this programme students can foster inquiring minds, logical reasoning and collaboration skills and can achieve gender equality as a principle of children's rights. According to Schaffer and Gagnon (2023), it improves democratic culture in schools and offers an assistive approach to nuancing democracy in terms of participation, inclusion, equality, freedom, development. Each of them contains important issues related to sustainable development, specified by the UN *Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action* (2016) and UNESCO's *Education for Sustainable Development* (2020).

5   Conclusion

It can be concluded that the paper answers all the questions expressed in the introductory part. This study determined the tendency of teachers' readiness to work on education for children's rights, regardless of perceived deficiencies in knowledge. Teachers are aware that they are committed to the teaching vocation and their duty to achieve the goals of education, tasks and content prescribed by law, and see the school as a community of formal education, but also its role in informal learning,

suitable for practising life experiences. If they are able to provide a qualitatively good assessment of their profession, they are aware of their responsibility in a complementary relationship and really see children, and, through personal engagement in understanding themselves and reality, encourage them to connect teaching content with life experiences. They see school culture or ethos as the origin and place of progressive development of child rights in practice, which can be achieved by applying laws and other strategic documents. Teachers can see school as a place for realising democratic culture only if the whole school constitutes such a context. This provides them with opportunities to apply knowledge in this field, which implies the need to modernise schools and reduce them to the level of various forms of advancement in the context of lifelong learning. Teachers' faith in the well-being of their profession was confirmed, and the layering of the teaching profession and its importance in the strategy of development of society were further emphasised.

References

Aroa, S., Thakur, R. (2015). A study on knowledge of child rights among teachers of primary school in Jammu. *American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, 12*(1), 24–28.

Avramović, M., Stamenković, A. (2013). School and museum in human rights education. In: Ž. Krnjaja, D. Pavlović-Breneselović and K. Popović (Ured.), *Pedagogue between theory and practice. Proceedings* (str. 116-120). Belgrade: IPA, Pedagogical Society of Serbia.

Bajaj, M. (2012). *Schooling for social change: The rise and impact of human rights education in India.* London & New York: Continuum.

Ball, S. J., Maguire, M. & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactments in secondary schools.* Oxfordshire: Routledge.

Council of Europe (2010). *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.* Retrieved August 23, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://www.coe.int/en/web/edc/charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education

Council of Europe (2016). *Competences for Democratic Culture.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved November 17, 2020 from the World Wide Web https://www.living-democracy.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/CDC_EN.pdf

Council of Europe (2023). *A guide to achieving a democratic culture in schools.* Retrieved September 23, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://prosveta.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Vodic_za_podsticanje_demokratske_kulture_web.pdf

Council of Europe, ZUOV (2022), *Guidelines for the integration of the reference framework of competences for democratic culture.* Retrieved June 17, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://prosveta.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/COE_Kvalitetno-obrazovanje-za-sve_publikacija.pdf

Defining Cross-Curricular Competences (2013). British Columbia: Ministry of Education. Retrieved October, 15, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/docs/def_xcurr_comps.pdf

Gerber, P. (2008). *From convention to classroom: The long road to human rights education. Measuring states' compliance with international law obligations mandating human rights education.* (1 ed.) Saarbrucken Germany: VDM Verlag.

Gollob, R., & Lazić, S. (2021a). *Growing up in a Democratic Family. A manual for parents with sections on ages 6-10 and 11-14.* Council of Europe, Ministry of Education in Republic of Serbia. Link: https://childhub.org/sites/default/files/library/attachments/HF27-growing-up-democratic-family-ENG%20%281%29.pdf

Gollob, R., & Lazić, S. (2021b). *Living in a Democratic Family. A manual for parents of adolescents age 15 to 19.* Council of Europe, Ministry of Education in Republic of Serbia. Link: https://rm.coe.int/hf27-living-democratic-family-eng/1680a41644

Gonzáles, J. & Wagenaar, R. (2008). *Universities' contribution to the Bologna Process.* An introduction. (2nd edition). The University of Deusto.

IDEC (2005). *Democratic Education.* Link: https://www.idenetwork.org/index.php/about/what-is-democratic-education

Klemenović, J., Lazić, S. (2007). Human rights education in our school. In: O. Gajic (Office), *European dimensions of changes in the education system in Serbia. On the way to the "Europe of Knowledge"* (p. 39-53). Novi Sad: Faculty of Philosophy.

Law on the basics of the education system (Official Gazette of RS No. 88/2017). Available at: https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_osnovama_sistema_obrazovanja_i_vaspitanja.html

Lazić, S. & Perić, D. (2017). How many high school students know the rights of national minorities? *Pedagogy, 72*(2), 155-165.

Lazić, S. & Perić, D. (2018). The impact of elective teaching and national affiliation of pupils of secondary schools of AP Vojvodina on knowledge of human rights. *Pedagogy, 67*(4), 577-589.

Leenders, H., Veugelers, W. & De Kat, E. (2008). Teachers' views on citizenship education in secondary education in the Netherlands. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 38*(2), 155–170. doi: 10.1080/03057640802063106

Lundy, L. & Mcevoy, l. (2012). Children's rights and research processes: Assisting children to (in)formed views. *Childhood, 19*(1), 116–129. doi: 10.1177/0907568211409078

Marsh, M. M. , Kenyon, E. A. , Cardy, T. & West, E. M. (2020). That's My Voice! Participation and Democratic Citizenship in the Early Childhood Classroom. *Democracy and Education*, 28 (2), Article 1.

Obenchain, K.M., Balkute, A., Vaughn, E. & White, S. (2016). High School Teacher's Identities: Constructing Civic Selves. *The High School Journal, 99*(3), 252-278.

OECD (2005). *Teachers matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers.* Paris: OECD.

OECD (2018a). *Transformative competencies for 2030.* Retrieved July 7, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/transformative-competencies/Transformative_Competencies_for_2030_concept_note.pdf

OECD (2018b). *Core foundations for 2030.* Retrieved July 7, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/core-foundations/Core_Foundations_for_2030_concept_note.pdf

Ozmen, A., Kaymak Ozmen, S. & Yalcin, T. (2010). Prospective teachers' knowledge level and knowledge needs about child rights issue. Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 9, 81–86. doi:10.1016/j. sbspro.2010.12.119.

Pešikan, A. (2002). Professional development of teachers – what's new here? *News from school, 43*(5), 115-120.

Pešikan, A. (2020). *Learning in an educational context.* Belgrade: Official Gazette.

Report of the Provincial Ombudsman for 2005 (2006). Novi Sad: Provincial Ombudsman.

Rowe, K. (2003). The importance of teacher quality as a key determinant of students' experiences and outcomes of schooling. *Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) Research Conference*

(pp.15–20). Retrieved September 12, 2023 from the World Wide Web
    https://research.acer.edu.au/research_conference_2003/3/

Rulebook on Continuous Professional Development and Advancement in the titles of teachers, educators and professional associates (Official Gazette of RS, no. 109/2021).

Rulebook on performing socially useful, i.e. humanitarian work (Official Gazette of the RS, no. 68/2018).

Schaffer, F.C. & Gagnon, J-P. (2023). Democracies Across Cultures. *Democratic Theory, 10*(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.3167/dt.2023.100107

Shahid, M. S. (2009). Knowledge, attitudes and practices of primary school teachers regarding the rights of children. *Journal of Elementary Education, 19*(1–2), 25–50. doi: 10.18510/hssr.2021.93124

Strategy for the Development of Education and Upbringing by 2030 (Official Gazette of RS No. 63/21). Retrieved May 13, 2023 from the World Wide Web http://demo.paragraf.rs/demo/combined/Old/t/t2021_06/SG_063_2021_001.htm

Suorsa, A. (2023). Places for Young People to Influence Decision-Making: Developing Means for Democracy Education in Finland. *Democracy and Education, 31* (2), Article 2.

Tošić Radev, M. & Pešikan, A. (2017). "Missing Piece" in the Process of Education: Socioemotional Learning. *Teaching and Upbringing, 66*(1), 37-54. doi: 10.5937/nasvas17010371

UN (2016). *Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action*. Retrieved on July 17, 2019 from the World Wide Web https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en_2.pdf

UNESCO (2020). *Education for Sustainable Development. A roadmap.* Printed in France.

Vidović, S., Golić, M., Ćuk Milankov, D., Trikić, Z., Vranješević, J., Koruga, D. (2005). *Learn to score*. Belgrade: GTZ.

Vranješević, J. (2014). The Child Between Protection and Autonomy: Protectionism or Liberationism? *Teaching and Upbringing, 64*(1), 33-44.

Vranješević, J., Cicvarić, R., Žunić-Cicvarić, J., & Jovanović O. (2022). Education for the rights of the child: Know, apply and believe. *Proceedings of the Institute for Pedagogical Research, 54*(2), 321-341. doi: 10.2298/ZIPI2202321V

Vuković, S., Čaprić, G., & Lazić, S. (2023). Application of cross-curricular competences in the teaching of physical and health education subjects in the context of external evaluation of schools. *Themes, 47*.

ZUOV (2018). *Catalogue of professional development programs for employees in education for the school years 2018-22*. Retrieved January, 14, 2021 from the World Wide Web https://zuov.gov.rs/katalozi-programa-stalnog-strucnog-usavrsavanja/

ZUOV (2022). *Catalogue of professional education programs for the school year 2022-25*. Retrieved January, 14, 2023 from the World Wide Web https://zuov-katalog.rs/

ZUOV (2023). *Improving the work of SOS counsellors for the prevention of violence in schools*. Program of public interest approved by the Minister under the number 610-00-00757/3/2022-07. Catalog number 5341. Available at: https://prosveta.gov.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/COE_Kvalitetno-obrazovanje-za-sve_publikacija.pdf