

## CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS THEME: DEMOCRACY

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# TEACHER'S MANUAL

In this document you will find all the information necessary to enable you to conduct the workshop. You will also find clear directives on when to use the training material, the sound bites and film clips included.

The workshop consists of four exercises, where the students will, among other things, make photo analyses, learn how to reflect as a group and take an active stand on a variety of issues. This will give the students an opportunity to improve their knowledge of democracy.

The exercises also touch on issues such as democratisation, different political systems and the possibility for ordinary citizens to influence political decisions. Also covered is the subject of human rights and in what way a person could demand individual and collective rights. Alongside this, the students will practice their ability to use a historic context to understand present times.

### Prior knowledge

The students should have knowledge and understanding of the following terms:

- democracy
- dictatorship
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- majority rule
- opinion making

### Teaching purpose

- To develop an understanding of democracy and issues such as democratisation, different political systems and the possibility for ordinary citizens to influence political decisions.
- To develop an understanding of the human rights and how to demand individual and collective rights.
- To practice the ability to use a historic context to understand present times.

### Preparations

- The students will need a pencil
- Prepare the viewing of the photos in the visual presentations (exercise 1 and 4)
- Print out the forms from the training material (exercise 2, 3 and 4)



## EXERCISE 1

### What does democracy look like?

The exercise proceeds from analyses of historic and contemporary photographs, showing various examples of democracy.

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**1.** Show the photographs one by one. No background material should be given to the students. Use the questions below to make a group analysis of each picture. After each question, let the students reflect and discuss freely.

Ask the following questions:

- What is happening in the picture?
- What do the people in the picture look like?
- Who are these people?
- What are they doing?
- When was the picture taken?

**2.** Ask the following question after each analysis:

- In what way does this photo illustrate the concept of democracy?

Let the students discuss this in class.

**3.** When the class has completed the analyses of the three photographs, and the students have had time to reflect on the connection between the pictures and the concept of democracy: show the pictures once more and recount the background information. (See fact box).

Ask the following question:

- Did the background information alter their interpretation of the photographs?

End the exercise with a group discussion.

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## DEMOCRACY 1

### DEMOCRACY – HOW DOES IT WORK?

#### **Facts about the photographs**

- Photo 1: A large group of Germans participate in a Nazi-rally in Cologne, 1937. All the people in the picture are anonymous and the fact that they are at the rally does not necessarily mean that they are Nazis or that they are sympathising with the politics of the Nazis. (Source: USHMM, photo: Julien Bryan)
- Photo 2: White students harass Dorothy Counts, one of the first black students admitted to a high school in the state of North Carolina in the U.S. The photo is taken on her first day at school, September 1957. Dorothy Counts is 15 years old.
- Dorothy Counts was faced with organised harassment by a majority of the students who spat on her and threw rocks and trash at her whilst the teachers ignored what was happening. Various organisations were supportive of the humiliating treatment. Her family received threats and had their car smashed. After four days Dorothy Counts withdrew from the school as her parents could protect neither her nor themselves from the attacks. The family moved to another state where Dorothy Counts attended an integrated school. (Source: Scanpix, photo: AP Photo)
- Photo 3: Using their mobile phones, Egyptians at the Tahrir Square are filming the celebration of President Hosni Mubarak's resignation on February 12, 2011. Mubarak resigned as a consequence of the massive demonstrations and pro-democracy protests in Egypt. (Source: Scanpix, Photo: AFP Photo/Mohammed Abed).

## EXERCISE 2

### Rights

In this exercise the students should reflect on what rights people have, or should have, in a democracy, and who is to determine these rights. The students should work in groups, pretending to be governments of a fictional country. They should choose six rights that should apply to the population of “Abalonia”.

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- 1.** Divide the class into groups of four or six. Explain that each group represents the government of “Abalonia”. Hand out the forms where a certain number of rights have been listed. Each group must then choose six rights that should apply to the population of “Abalonia”.
- 2.** Let each group present their results in class. Which rights have they chosen and why?
- 3.** Give the background information to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (See fact box)
- 4.** Discuss: What are the consequences of the students' choice? Are all rights obvious in all countries, even in a democracy like Sweden?

# TEACHER'S MANUAL

## DEMOCRACY 1

### DEMOCRACY – HOW DOES IT WORK?

#### **Facts about the Universal Declaration of Human rights**

- Human rights apply to everyone. The rights assert that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. The rights are universal and applicable all over the world, regardless of country, culture and context. The rights are indivisible and inviolable.
- The human rights regulate the relationship between the state and the individual citizen. The rights constitute limitations of state power over individuals. At the same time, the rights conclude that the state must assume certain obligations towards its citizens.
- There is a strong correlation between human rights and democracy – a sustainable and profound democracy is dependent on the protection of human rights. The protection of the human rights is decisive in the development of a democratic culture, while not protecting the human rights means a failed democracy. A decision-making process based on democratic principles tends to consolidate the protection of human rights.
- The rights that are the most directly linked to the decision-making process are: freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly and the right to take part in free and fair elections. Other rights are also significant to the democratic process; those rights are for example the rights of the upholding of the rule of law and the right to education.
- Basic rights, such as the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and the right to education play an important role in creating an environment where individuals can participate in politics. A minimum standard of security and living standard is required to give each and every individual the strength and the financial means to practice their political rights. The right to education is crucial to the upholding of the democratic principle.

## EXERCISE 3

### Freedom of the Press

This is a swift and efficient exercise where the students must take a stand on certain statements that are linked to different rights.

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1. Each student should be given two pieces of paper – one that has “Yes” written on it and another one that has “No” written on it. The students must have one of each to be able to take a stand on the different statements.

Read the statements one by one, wait for the students to show their viewpoint (yes or no) and ask them to justify their choice.

Freedom to demonstrate

- Should neo-Nazis be allowed to demonstrate outside a synagogue?
- Should certain statements be banned during a demonstration?

Freedom of the press

- Should it be allowed to sell “Mein Kampf” by Adolf Hitler?
- Should the government have the power to ban a magazine?

Freedom of expression

- Should a singer be allowed to perform an offensive song about homosexuals?
- Should it be allowed to burn the national flag of Sweden?

Freedom of worship

- Should a police officer be allowed to wear a turban?
- Should the church be allowed to speak about homosexuals in derogatory terms?

Right to respect for privacy and family life

- Should the state be able to monitor private activities on the internet?
- Should the government be able to investigate what books individuals are reading?

After each statement, tell the students what the law says about what you have just read.

# TEACHER'S MANUAL

## DEMOCRACY 1

### DEMOCRACY – HOW DOES IT WORK?

#### **Facts about freedom of expression**

Freedom of the press is guaranteed by the Swedish constitution. Freedom of the Press Act guarantees our rights to disseminate printed publications without any interference by the authorities or other state bodies. The Fundamental Law on Freedom of Expression is a complement to the Press Act and guarantees freedom of expression in media not covered by the Freedom of the Press Act, such as radio, television, films and, to a certain extent, Internet. Slander and insults go by the common word “defamation” and could be considered as a crime. In legal terms, to insult someone means to offend a person by: using offensive and foul language or by any other disgraceful behaviour.

#### **Facts about flag-burning**

There is no law against flag-burning in Sweden. It is however, considered as damage of property to burn a flag that belongs to someone else. Added to this, the flag cannot be completely mishandled. Act (1982:269) regarding the Swedish flag stipulates what the rules are, for instance: that no emblems, letters or symbols may be attached to the flag.

#### **Facts about Mein Kampf**

It is not against the law to sell Mein Kampf in Sweden. The independent authority of the Chancellor of Justice has on several occasions dismissed complaints that have been raised. In a statement written on 21 November, 2003 the Chancellor of Justice remarks: “According to the Freedom of the Press Act the person or institution monitoring the compliance with the Act must bear in mind that freedom of the press is fundamental to a free and just society.”

However, this principle could clash with the Freedom of the Press Act stating that agitation against a national or ethnic group is an offence against the freedom of expression. Mein Kampf is considered a historic document that could be used as a tool to understand Nazism.

#### **Facts about the denial of the Holocaust**

By Swedish law it is not a crime to deny the Holocaust. However, this is a crime in thirteen other countries (one of them being Germany) that have all experienced Holocaust denial. The argument is that this kind of historic revisionism is driven by an anti-Semitic and an un-democratic agenda.

#### **Facts about religious symbols and police uniforms**

Since 2006 police officers in Sweden are allowed to wear a turban, a kippah or a headscarf with their uniforms. Critics of this decision argue that the neutral appearance of a police uniform is lost when it is worn together with a religious garment. According to the Equality Ombudsman of Sweden a turban, kippah or headscarf does not pose any problem as long as the garment is worn as part of the regular uniform. No complaint has come to the attention of the Equality Ombudsman. Should such a complaint be made, a formal investigation would be conducted.

**Facts about “the right of the church” to speak about homosexuals in derogatory terms.**

The Equality Ombudsman has never had to take a position on this issue. The Discrimination Act does not include non-governmental organisations, such as the church. Since 2009 there is a paragraph stipulating that “public assemblies” including religious gatherings must be protected from discriminatory and insulting language. However, as few complaints have been raised and none of them have been tried in court, this is still very much a grey area.

**Facts about the authority of the state to monitor private activities on the Internet.**

The state has the authority to monitor what individual citizens do on the Internet. There are several laws protecting the privacy of the individual. Sweden has signed and ratified several international conventions and laws, first and foremost the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was drafted in 1966. When it comes to the protection of personal data, Sweden is bound by the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data.

It is the task of the public authority, the Data Inspection Board, to create the preconditions for the processing of personal data so that it does not lead to undue privacy infringement. According to the constitution, processing of personal data must be done in such a way so as not to violate the right of privacy.

The Swedish Privacy Act protects individuals from having their privacy infringed through processing of personal data. The Swedish Privacy Act is based on a European Parliament and Council Directive. Member states of the European Union must change national legislation to comply with the directive.

The National Defence Radio Establishment (FRA) is the Swedish national authority for Signals Intelligence. Its task is to supply intelligence on international state of affairs that could influence Sweden from the perspective of foreign policy, defence or security. Communications Intelligence (COMINT) intercepts both military and civilian signals such as telephones and telegraphs.

The Swedish Post and Telecom Authority (PTS) supervises Internet service providers to, for example, ensure that provisions concerning privacy protection are being complied with. Areas of the PTS's responsibility include cookies, subscriber data and traffic data.

**Facts about the government's right to investigate what books individuals are reading**

The government has no right to investigate what books an citizen is reading. This is stipulated in the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400). The Act also contains provisions on authorities' and other institutions' handling of official documents. An official document could be kept secret for a maximum of 20 years.

## EXERCISE 4

### Democratic Rights

In this final exercise, the photographs from the first exercise are re-examined. The aim is to see what rights could be linked to each photo respectively.

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1. Hand out the forms with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



2. Show the photographs one by one.

3. Let the students freely associate each photo with rights they think apply to the picture. Let them also explain why.

Wrap up the exercise with a group discussion on the following issue:

- Do different rights sometimes clash?

(For example: The photo of Dorothy Counts shows how she practices the right to education. At the same time the students surrounding her could be said to practice the right of expression and the right of assembly.)

**Evaluation**

It is always a good idea to leave some time for wrap-up and evaluation after each exercise and/or workshop completed. It is up to you as a teacher to decide, sometimes together with the students, the best way to evaluate and close each part of the workshop. Some prefer group discussions, some take notes in a logbook and some do short evaluation exercises in smaller groups.