

# REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE



**Volume 2**

**Descriptors of competences  
for democratic culture**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



# REFERENCE FRAMEWORK OF COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRATIC CULTURE

## **Volume 2**

**Descriptors of competences  
for democratic culture**

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une culture de la démocratie – Volume 2*  
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For quick reference, the Model of Competences for Democratic Culture can be found on the fold-out page at the back of this publication.



# Foreword

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**D**emocratic laws and institutions can only function effectively when they are based on a culture of democracy. For this, education is key. These were the conclusions of the Council of Europe's Third Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Warsaw in 2005. On this basis, our Organisation was tasked with "promoting a democratic culture among our citizens". Essential to this is ensuring that young people acquire the knowledge, values and capacity to be responsible citizens in modern, diverse, democratic societies.

Since that time, member states have undertaken a range of initiatives in this area. What has been lacking is a clear focus and understanding of common goals in citizenship education. Our Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture has been designed to bridge that gap.

The urgent need for it was brought into sharp focus by the many terrorist attacks across Europe in recent times. Education is a medium- to long-term investment in preventing violent extremism and radicalisation, but the work must start now. In light of this, the Model of Competences (contained in Volume 1 of the Framework) was unanimously welcomed by the 2016 Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education at its 25th session in Brussels.

This Reference Framework is the result of widespread consultation and testing within Council of Europe member states and beyond. It is built on principles that are common to our democratic societies. It specifies the tools and critical understanding that learners at all levels of education should acquire in order to feel a sense of belonging and make their own positive contributions to the democratic societies in which we live. In doing so it offers education systems a common focus for their action while respecting a diversity of pedagogical approaches.

The purpose of this Framework is to support member states in developing open, tolerant and diverse societies through their education. I hope that they will embrace this tool and benefit from it.

**Thorbjørn Jagland**

*Secretary General  
of the Council of Europe*





# Preface

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**W**hat kind of society will our children live in tomorrow? An important part of the answer to that question lies in the education we give them today. Education plays an essential role in building the future and reflects the type of world we want to prepare for the generations to come.

Democracy is one of the three pillars of the Council of Europe and there should be no hesitation among its member states that it should remain a key foundation for our future societies. Although our institutions may be solid they will only function in a truly democratic manner if our citizens are fully aware not only of their voting rights, but also of the values our institutions embody. Our education systems and schools need to prepare young people to become active, participative and responsible individuals: the complex, multicultural and rapidly evolving societies we live in cannot do with less. And at the dawn of quantum computing and artificial intelligence it is all the more important that our children should be equipped with the values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding that will enable them to make responsible decisions about their future.

The starting point for the development of the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture was the belief that education systems, schools and universities should make preparation for democratic citizenship one of its key missions. This involves ensuring that students should know and understand the challenges they are faced with and the consequences of their decisions, what they are able to do and what they should refrain from doing. In order to do all this they need not only to have knowledge, but also the relevant competences – and the aim of the Framework is to define what those competences are.

The Framework itself comprises three volumes.

The first contains the Model of Competences, as determined by a multidisciplinary team of international experts following extensive research and consultation. The 20 competences are divided into four areas – Values, Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge and critical understanding – and accompanied by information about the background to the model, how it was developed and how it is intended to be used.

Volume 2 contains a series of statements setting out learning targets and outcomes for each competence. These descriptors are intended to help educators design learning situations that enable them to observe learners' behaviour in relation to a given competence. The descriptors were tested by volunteer schools and teachers in 16 member states.

Volume 3 offers guidance on how the Model of Competences might be used in six education contexts. Further chapters will be added in due course.

The Framework is offered as an instrument to help inspire individual approaches to teaching competences for democratic culture while adhering to a common goal. Although there is no obligation to use the volumes in a set way, they are intended as a coherent whole and we recommend that educators get acquainted with the whole framework before deciding on their own –

I am very proud to present this Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture to our member states. It has been a work of dedication and an example of consultation and open-mindedness. I hope that many of you will use it in the spirit in which it is offered: a contribution to the efforts to make our future society one which we are happy for our children to live in.

**Snežana Samardžić-Marković**

*Council of Europe  
Director General for Democracy*

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## **Authoring team**

The Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture was developed by the Education Department in co-operation with the following international experts:

Martyn Barrett

Luisa de Bivar Black

Michael Byram

Jaroslav Faltýn

Lars Gudmundson

Hilligje van't Land

Claudia Lenz

Pascale Mompoin-Gaillard

Milica Popović

Călin Rus

Salvador Sala

Natalia Voskresenskaya

Pavel Zgaga

## **Council of Europe Education Department**

Head of Department: Sjur Bergan

Head of Education Policy Division: Villano Qiriaz

Main project manager: Christopher Reynolds

Assistants: Mireille Wendling, Claudine Martin-Ostwald

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## Introduction

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**F**or each of the 20 competences of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (henceforward, the Framework), competence descriptors have been devised and tested. As indicated in Volume 1, their purpose is twofold:

1. to support the assessment of the current level of proficiency with regard to each of the competences, for an individual or for a group, with a view to identifying areas of further development and learning needs or identifying achieved proficiency after a period of learning;
2. to serve as a reference and a toolbox for educators in designing, implementing and evaluating educational interventions, in formal and non-formal settings.

Descriptors are statements referring to concrete observable behaviour of a person with a certain level of competence.

There are many ways in which a person can express through observable behaviour the level of mastering any competence, and this is also the case for CDC. However, in order to operationalise competences, there is a need to identify behaviours which can indicate in a reliable way that a person has a certain level of proficiency in a specific competence.

The descriptors listed below satisfy this requirement because they have been derived through a systematic process of development and testing with large numbers of education practitioners, and have been piloted in concrete educational settings in different European countries. This process is described in the Chapter 3 of this volume.

There are two sets of descriptors which resulted from the piloting of the descriptors:

- ▶ Chapter 1 presents a set of 135 key descriptors, consisting of a limited number of descriptors for each competence which indicate clearly one of the three levels of proficiency: basic, intermediate and advanced;
- ▶ Chapter 2 contains a more developed list of 447 descriptors, including, besides the key descriptors, additional validated descriptors, some of them connected with a specific level of proficiency and others located in between basic and intermediate, or intermediate and advanced (identified in the descriptor tables as BI and IA respectively). For reference purposes, each descriptor has an ID number and, where relevant, the key descriptor number given in Chapter 1 is also indicated.

While some descriptors appear very similar to each other and are closely related in meaning, they are included to offer users a choice (and in case one of them is easier to translate).

In the case of 14 out of the 20 competences, there are two key descriptors per level of proficiency. The exceptions to this general rule are as follows.

Only one descriptor was validated for the intermediate level in the case of “valuing cultural diversity”, for the advanced level in the case of “responsibility” and for the basic level in the case of “knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication”.

Three descriptors per level of proficiency were included in the list of the key descriptors for “valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law”. There are also three key descriptors for the intermediate and advanced level in the case of “tolerance of ambiguity”.

Also, considering the complexity of the “knowledge and critical understanding of the world”, six key descriptors were included in this case for the basic and advanced levels of proficiency and seven key descriptors for the intermediate level.

The statistical processing of the data that were collected during the piloting of the descriptors ensures their cumulative character. This means that it is highly probable that when a person displays consistently and without support the behaviour in a descriptor assigned to the advanced level, they will also be able to display the behaviours in the descriptors for the intermediate and basic levels. Similarly, it is highly probable that a person who displays the behaviour in the descriptors associated with the intermediate level of proficiency will also be able to display the behaviours corresponding to the basic level of proficiency.

This does not imply, however, that once a person has achieved a certain level of proficiency, he or she can only increase the level of mastering the respective competence. Various factors, including increasing age, changes in the social environment, traumatic experiences, and so on, can generate a temporary regression in certain competences and demand additional support for returning to a higher level of proficiency.

In order to ensure their direct relevance for the practice of various education professionals, competence descriptors have been formulated using the language of

learning outcomes. This means that each one starts with an action verb followed by the object of that verb, and the behaviour that is described is observable and assessable. Considering also the fact that, as explained in Volume 1, competences are usually deployed in clusters, this means that a set of descriptors of different competences can be used primarily to define learning outcomes for educational activities. However, this should not be applied in a simplistic manner, as it is important to note that descriptors are related to proficiency rather than to achievement as a result of just one specific learning activity. For a discussion of the distinction between proficiency and achievement, see Chapter 3 on assessment in Volume 3 of the Framework.

The three levels of proficiency (basic, intermediate and advanced) in which the descriptors of competence have been scaled should not be strictly associated with the levels of education. There are certainly elements, regarding in particular knowledge and critical understanding, for which an advanced level is more likely at higher levels of education. However, in the case of the values, attitudes and skills, many elements can be acquired from an early age, even if they are further developed at a deeper level later on.

The use of competence descriptors is closely related to observation. Carried out regularly, observation becomes part of the teaching and learning process. In their everyday professional life teachers are experienced observers of learners, even if they are not always aware how and what they are observing and how they process the results of the observation. However, when observing the behaviour of learners in the context of CDC and taking descriptors as a reference, the process needs to be done purposefully and planned carefully.

In this context, several aspects need to be taken into account:

- ▶ Observation needs to be done in a way which does not disrupt the learning process or puts the learner in an uncomfortable situation.
- ▶ Observation needs to encompass a variety of situations, including the response of the learner to specific tasks, the work done individually in the classroom, the interactions with the teacher and with peers during the classroom activities, as well as the behaviour during breaks, before and after the start of lessons, or during extracurricular activities.
- ▶ As the competences for democratic culture are mobilised in clusters, the behaviours in a specific situation may need to be related to a set of descriptors and not just to a single descriptor.
- ▶ The use of descriptors facilitates not just the observation, but also the recording of the observed behaviour: it is much easier to make a note to the code attributed to the relevant descriptors than to write the full description of the behaviour observed. Quality observation uses written recording and does not rely on memory.
- ▶ Observation should focus on verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal behaviour and consider, besides what is being said and done, aspects such as eye contact, attitudes, expression of emotions, etc.

- ▶ The observation of the behaviour reflected in a certain descriptor should be done in a consistent way, over a period of time and not rely simply on the first impression, on the personal beliefs, expectations and biases of the observer, or on a specific moment or activity. A certain display of behaviour can also be accidental or generated by factors of which the observer is not aware, while the lack of display of behaviour may be the result of the fact that the learner was not given the proper opportunity to display the respective behaviour.

As the skills of listening and observing are an important component of the CDC model, both teachers and learners can and should develop them. In this context, peer observation can be an effective tool for developing observation skills.

The observation of behaviour based on descriptors is an effective tool for diagnosis of learning gaps, enabling the elaboration of well-targeted personalised plans, and adequate use of scaffolding and/or differentiation strategies.

Other issues regarding the use of descriptors, as well as a review of some of the risks of misuse, are presented in the chapter on descriptors in Volume 1 of the Framework. Discussions about how the descriptors can be used in curriculum design, in assessment, in the design and implementation of educational activities, as well as in planning the use of the Framework in a whole-school approach are presented in the respective chapters in Volume 3.





## Chapter 1

# The key descriptors

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### Values

#### 1. Valuing human dignity and human rights

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1	Argues that human rights should always be protected and respected	Basic
2	Argues that specific rights of children should be respected and protected by society	
3	Defends the view that no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	Intermediate
4	Argues that all public institutions should respect, protect and implement human rights	
5	Defends the view that when people are imprisoned, although they are subject to restrictions, this does not mean that they are less deserving of respect and dignity than anyone else	Advanced
6	Expresses the view that all laws should be consistent with international human rights norms and standards	

## 2. Valuing cultural diversity

7	Promotes the view that we should be tolerant of the different beliefs that are held by others in society	Basic
8	Promotes the view that one should always strive for mutual understanding and meaningful dialogue between people and groups who are perceived to be “different” from one another	
9	Expresses the view that the cultural diversity within a society should be positively valued and appreciated	Intermediate
10	Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to help us recognise our different identities and cultural affiliations	Advanced
11	Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to develop respect and a culture of “living together”	

## 3. Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

12	Argues that schools should teach students about democracy and how to act as a democratic citizen	Basic
13	Expresses the view that all citizens should be treated equally and impartially under the law	
14	Argues that laws should always be fairly applied and enforced	
15	Argues that democratic elections should always be conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation, and without any fraud	Intermediate
16	Expresses the view that, whenever a public official exercises power, he or she should not misuse that power and cross the boundaries of their legal authority	
17	Expresses support for the view that courts of law should be accessible to everyone so that people are not denied the opportunity to take a case to court because it is too expensive, troublesome or complicated to do so	
18	Expresses support for the view that those to whom legislative power is entrusted should be subject to the law and to appropriate constitutional oversight	Advanced
19	Expresses the view that information on public policies and their implementation should be made available to the public	
20	Argues that there should be effective remedies against the actions of public authorities which infringe civil rights	

## Attitudes

### 4. Openness to cultural otherness

21	Shows interest in learning about people's beliefs, values, traditions and world views	Basic
22	Expresses interest in travelling to other countries	
23	Expresses curiosity about other beliefs and interpretations and other cultural orientations and affiliations	Intermediate
24	Expresses an appreciation of the opportunity to have experiences of other cultures	
25	Seeks and welcomes opportunities for encountering people with different values, customs and behaviours	Advanced
26	Seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture	

### 5. Respect

27	Gives space to others to express themselves	Basic
28	Expresses respect for other people as equal human beings	
29	Treats all people with respect regardless of their cultural background	Intermediate
30	Expresses respect towards people who are of a different socio-economic status from himself/herself	
31	Expresses respect for religious differences	Advanced
32	Expresses respect for people who hold different political opinions from himself/herself	

### 6. Civic-mindedness

33	Expresses a willingness to co-operate and work with others	Basic
34	Collaborates with other people for common interest causes	
35	Expresses commitment to not being a bystander when the dignity and rights of others are violated	Intermediate
36	Discusses what can be done to help make the community a better place	
37	Exercises the obligations and responsibilities of active citizenship at either the local, national or global level	Advanced
38	Takes action to stay informed about civic issues	

## 7. Responsibility

39	Shows that he/she accepts responsibility for his/her actions	Basic
40	If he/she hurts someone's feelings, he/she apologises	
41	Submits required work on time	Intermediate
42	Shows that he/she takes responsibility for own mistakes	
43	Consistently meets commitments to others	Advanced

## 8. Self-efficacy

44	Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to understand issues	Basic
45	Expresses the belief that he/she can carry out activities that he/she has planned	
46	Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to navigate obstacles when pursuing a goal	Intermediate
47	If he/she wants to change, he/she expresses confidence that he/she can do it	
48	Shows that he/she feels secure in his/her abilities to meet life's challenges	Advanced
49	Shows confidence that he/she knows how to handle unforeseen situations due to his/her resourcefulness	

## 9. Tolerance of ambiguity

50	Engages well with other people who have a variety of different points of view	Basic
51	Shows that he/she can suspend judgments about other people temporarily	
52	Is comfortable in unfamiliar situations	Intermediate
53	Deals with uncertainty in a positive and constructive manner	
54	Works well in unpredictable circumstances	
55	Expresses a desire to have his/her own ideas and values challenged	Advanced
56	Enjoys the challenge of tackling ambiguous problems	
57	Expresses enjoyment of tackling situations that are complicated	

## Skills

### 10. Autonomous learning skills

58	Shows ability to identify resources for learning (e.g. people, books, internet)	Basic
59	Seeks clarification of new information from other people when needed	
60	Can learn about new topics with minimal supervision	Intermediate
61	Can assess the quality of his/her own work	
62	Can select the most reliable sources of information or advice from the range available	Advanced
63	Shows ability to monitor, define, prioritise and complete tasks without direct oversight	

### 11. Analytical and critical thinking skills

64	Can identify similarities and differences between new information and what is already known	Basic
65	Uses evidence to support his/her opinions	
66	Can assess the risks associated with different options	Intermediate
67	Shows that he/she thinks about whether the information he/she uses is correct	
68	Can identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies or divergences in materials being analysed	Advanced
69	Can use explicit and specifiable criteria, principles or values to make judgments	

### 12. Skills of listening and observing

70	Listens carefully to differing opinions	Basic
71	Listens attentively to other people	
72	Watches speakers' gestures and general body language to help himself/herself to figure out the meaning of what they are saying	Intermediate
73	Can listen effectively in order to decipher another person's meanings and intentions	
74	Pays attention to what other people imply but do not say	Advanced
75	Notices how people with other cultural affiliations react in different ways to the same situation	

### 13. Empathy

76	Can recognise when a companion needs his/her help	Basic
77	Expresses sympathy for the bad things that he/she has seen happen to other people	

78	Tries to understand his/her friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective	Intermediate
79	Takes other people's feelings into account when making decisions	
80	Expresses the view that, when he/she thinks about people in other countries, he/she shares their joys and sorrows	Advanced
81	Accurately identifies the feelings of others, even when they do not want to show them	

## 14. Flexibility and adaptability

82	Modifies his/her opinions if he/she is shown through rational argument that this is required	Basic
83	Can change the decisions that he/she has made if the consequences of those decisions show that this is required	
84	Adapts to new situations by using a new skill	Intermediate
85	Adapts to new situations by applying knowledge in a different way	
86	Adopts the sociocultural conventions of other cultural target groups when interacting with members of those groups	Advanced
87	Can modify his/her own behaviour to make it appropriate to other cultures	

## 15. Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills

88	Can express his/her thoughts on a problem	Basic
89	Asks speakers to repeat what they have said if it wasn't clear to him/her	
90	Asks questions that show his/her understanding of other people's positions	Intermediate
91	Can adopt different ways of expressing politeness in another language	
92	Can mediate linguistically in intercultural exchanges by translating, interpreting or explaining	Advanced
93	Can avoid successfully intercultural misunderstandings	

## 16. Co-operation skills

94	Builds positive relationships with other people in a group	Basic
95	When working as a member of a group, does his/her share of the group's work	
96	Works to build consensus to achieve group goals	Intermediate
97	When working as a member of a group, keeps others informed about any relevant or useful information	
98	Generates enthusiasm among group members for accomplishing shared goals	Advanced
99	When working with others, supports other people despite differences in points of view	

## 17. Conflict-resolution skills

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100	Can communicate with conflicting parties in a respectful manner	Basic
101	Can identify options for resolving conflicts	
102	Can assist others to resolve conflicts by enhancing their understanding of the available options	Intermediate
103	Can encourage the parties involved in conflicts to actively listen to each other and share their issues and concerns	
104	Regularly initiates communication to help solve interpersonal conflicts	Advanced
105	Can deal effectively with other people's emotional stress, anxiety and insecurity in situations involving conflict	

## Knowledge and critical understanding

### 18. Knowledge and critical understanding of the self

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106	Can describe his/her own motivations	Basic
107	Can describe the ways in which his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour	
108	Can reflect critically on his/her own values and beliefs	Intermediate
109	Can reflect critically on himself/herself from a number of different perspectives	
110	Can reflect critically on his/her own prejudices and stereotypes and what lies behind them	Advanced
111	Can reflect critically on his/her own emotions and feelings in a wide range of situations	

### 19. Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

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112	Can explain how tone of voice, eye contact and body language can aid communication	Basic
113	Can describe the social impact and effects on others of different communication styles	Intermediate
114	Can explain how social relationships are sometimes encoded in the linguistic forms that are used in conversations (e.g. in greetings, forms of address, use of expletives)	
115	Can explain why people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective	Advanced
116	Can reflect critically on the different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	



## 20. Knowledge and critical understanding of the world (including politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, the environment and sustainability)

117	Can explain the meaning of basic political concepts, including democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and responsibilities	Basic
118	Can explain why everybody has a responsibility to respect the human rights of others	
119	Can describe basic cultural practices (e.g. eating habits, greeting practices, ways of addressing people, politeness) in one other culture	
120	Can reflect critically on how his/her own world view is just one of many world views	
121	Can assess society's impact on the natural world, for example, in terms of population growth, population development, resource consumption	
122	Can reflect critically on the risks associated with environmental damage	
123	Can explain the universal, inalienable and indivisible nature of human rights	Intermediate
124	Can reflect critically on the relationship between human rights, democracy, peace and security in a globalised world	
125	Can reflect critically on the root causes of human rights violations, including the role of stereotypes and prejudice in processes that lead to human rights abuses	
126	Can explain the dangers of generalising from individual behaviours to an entire culture	
127	Can reflect critically on religious symbols, religious rituals and the religious uses of language	
128	Can describe the effects that propaganda has in the contemporary world	
129	Can explain how people can guard and protect themselves against propaganda	Advanced
130	Can describe the diverse ways in which citizens can influence policy	
131	Can reflect critically on the evolving nature of the human rights framework and the ongoing development of human rights in different regions of the world	
132	Can explain why there are no cultural groups that have fixed inherent characteristics	
133	Can explain why all religious groups are constantly evolving and changing	
134	Can reflect critically on how histories are often presented and taught from an ethnocentric point of view	
135	Can explain national economies and how economic and financial processes affect the functioning of society	





## Chapter 2

# The full bank of validated descriptors

This is the full bank of descriptors that were validated through piloting in concrete education settings. Descriptors that are located in between basic and intermediate levels, or between intermediate and advanced levels, are identified in the tables as BI and IA respectively. For full information on how the descriptors were developed and tested, see Chapter 3.

### VALUES

#### 1. Valuing human dignity and human rights

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
101	Key 1	Argues that human rights should always be protected and respected	Basic
102	Key 2	Argues that specific rights of children should be respected and protected by society	Basic
103		Argues that everyone should recognise the fundamental freedoms of each human being	Basic
104	Key 3	Defends the view that no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	Intermediate

105	Key 4	Argues that all public institutions should respect, protect and implement human rights	Intermediate
106		Defends the view that human rights are required for every human being to be able to live with dignity	Intermediate
107	Key 5	Defends the view that when people are imprisoned, although they are subject to restrictions, this does not mean that they are less deserving of respect and dignity than anyone else	Advanced
108	Key 6	Expresses the view that all laws should be consistent with international human rights norms and standards	Advanced
109		Defends the view that everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law	Advanced

## 2. Valuing cultural diversity

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
201	Key 7	Promotes the view that we should be tolerant of the different beliefs that are held by others in society	Basic
202	Key 8	Promotes the view that one should always strive for mutual understanding and meaningful dialogue between people and groups who are perceived to be "different" from one another	Basic
203		Argues that one should promote communication and dialogue between people from different cultural backgrounds	BI
204	Key 9	Expresses the view that the cultural diversity within a society should be positively valued and appreciated	Intermediate
205		Argues that one should try to learn from one another in order to deepen understanding of both one's own and other people's backgrounds	IA
206	Key 10	Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to help us recognise our different identities and cultural affiliations	Advanced
207	Key 11	Argues that intercultural dialogue should be used to develop respect and a culture of "living together"	Advanced

### 3. Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
301	Key 12	Argues that schools should teach students about democracy and how to act as a democratic citizen	Basic
302	Key 13	Expresses the view that all citizens should be treated equally and impartially under the law	Basic
303	Key 14	Argues that laws should always be fairly applied and enforced	Basic
304		Argues that fair and just laws should always be respected and obeyed	Basic
305	Key 15	Argues that democratic elections should always be conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation, and without any fraud	Intermediate
306	Key 16	Expresses the view that, whenever a public official exercises power, he or she should not misuse that power and cross the boundaries of their legal authority	Intermediate
307	Key 17	Expresses support for the view that courts of law should be accessible to everyone so that people are not denied the opportunity to take a case to court because it is too expensive, troublesome or complicated to do so	Intermediate
308		Argues that democracy should always be protected and respected as an essential foundation for acting together with others in society	Intermediate
309		Expresses the view that, when exercising power, public officials should obey the law and judicial decisions	Intermediate
310		Argues that officials and judges should not treat someone or some group differently because of either prejudice or corruption	Intermediate
311		Argues that officials and judges should treat everyone equally under the law and that like cases should always be treated alike	Intermediate
312		Expresses the view that all people and institutions should be subject to and accountable to the law	IA

313		Expresses the view that there should be a transparent legal system, including a clear set of laws that are freely and easily accessible to all	IA
314		Expresses the view that there should be an independent and impartial judiciary to protect citizens against the arbitrary use of power by the state, organisations and individuals	IA
315		Expresses the view that public decisions should always be taken and enforced in accordance with laws and regulations	IA
316		Expresses the view that law-making should be controlled by persons who have been elected by and are accountable to the people	IA
317		Expresses the view that there should be effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption	IA
318	Key 18	Expresses support for the view that those to whom legislative power is entrusted should be subject to the law and to appropriate constitutional oversight	Advanced
319	Key 19	Expresses the view that information on public policies and their implementation should be made available to the public	Advanced
320	Key 20	Argues that there should be effective remedies against the actions of public authorities which infringe civil rights	Advanced
321		Expresses the view that the legal system should have fair and transparent enforcement structures and procedures	Advanced

## ATTITUDES

### 4. Openness to cultural otherness

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
401	Key 21	Shows interest in learning about people's beliefs, values, traditions and world views	Basic
402	Key 22	Expresses interest in travelling to other countries	Basic
403		Uses opportunities to meet new people	BI
404	Key 23	Expresses curiosity about other beliefs and interpretations and other cultural orientations and affiliations	Intermediate
405	Key 24	Expresses an appreciation of the opportunity to have experiences of other cultures	Intermediate
406		Expresses interest in working with people from different cultural backgrounds	IA
407		Enjoys having discussions with people whose ideas and values are different from his/her own	IA
408		Expresses a willingness to relate to others who are perceived to be different from himself/herself	IA
409	Key 25	Seeks and welcomes opportunities for encountering people with different values, customs and behaviours	Advanced
410	Key 26	Seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture	Advanced

### 5. Respect

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
501	Key 27	Gives space to others to express themselves	Basic
502	Key 28	Expresses respect for other people as equal human beings	Basic
503		Expresses respect for different opinions, world views and ways of life unless they violate human rights	Basic
504	Key 29	Treats all people with respect regardless of their cultural background	Intermediate
505	Key 30	Expresses respect towards people who are of a different socio-economic status from himself/herself	Intermediate
506		Expresses respectful attitudes towards the beliefs, practices and ways of life adopted by other people unless they violate human rights	Intermediate
507		Expresses respect for different opinions or ideas unless they violate human rights	Intermediate

508		Expresses respectful attitudes towards other people who differ from himself/herself	Intermediate
509		Expresses respect for others based on the recognition of the dignity of all persons and of their human rights	Intermediate
510		Expresses respect for gender differences	Intermediate
511	Key 31	Expresses respect for religious differences	Advanced
512	Key 32	Expresses respect for people who hold different political opinions from himself/herself	Advanced

## 6. Civic-mindedness

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
601	Key 33	Expresses a willingness to co-operate and work with others	Basic
602	Key 34	Collaborates with other people for common interest causes	Basic
603		Expresses readiness to contribute to improving the situation of other people in the community	BI
604		Expresses a willingness to participate in collective decision making	BI
605	Key 35	Expresses commitment to not being a bystander when the dignity and rights of others are violated	Intermediate
606	Key 36	Discusses what can be done to help make the community a better place	Intermediate
607		Expresses an interest in public affairs and issues	Intermediate
608		Expresses willingness to volunteer to help people in the community	Intermediate
609		Expresses acceptance of the obligations of belonging to a community	Intermediate
610		Expresses commitment to sustaining and safeguarding the human rights of other people	Intermediate
611		Is actively involved in community issues	IA
612		Is involved in pro-environmental activities	IA
613		Participates in decision-making processes regarding the affairs, concerns and common good of the community	IA
614	Key 37	Exercises the obligations and responsibilities of active citizenship at either the local, national or global level	Advanced
615	Key 38	Takes action to stay informed about civic issues	Advanced
616		Supports organisations addressing social issues	Advanced



## 7. Responsibility

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
701	Key 39	Shows that he/she accepts responsibility for his/her actions	Basic
702	Key 40	If he/she hurts someone's feelings, he/she apologises	Basic
703		Holds himself/herself accountable for his/her own behaviour	BI
704	Key 41	Submits required work on time	Intermediate
705		Meets personal commitments to others on time	Intermediate
706	Key 42	Shows that he/she takes responsibility for own mistakes	Intermediate
707		Meets deadlines	Intermediate
708		Demonstrates punctuality	Intermediate
709		Does his/her chores the very best he/she knows how	Intermediate
710	Key 43	Consistently meets commitments to others	Advanced

## 8. Self-efficacy

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
801	Key 44	Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to understand issues	Basic
802	Key 45	Expresses the belief that he/she can carry out activities that he/she has planned	Basic
803		Shows confidence that he/she can solve most problems if he/she invests the necessary effort	BI
804		Shows confidence that he/she can get good results when undertaking a task	BI
805		Expresses the belief that difficult situations can be overcome	BI
806		Expresses a belief that he/she can undertake the actions required to achieve a goal	BI
807		Shows confidence that he/she can work effectively	BI
808	Key 46	Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to navigate obstacles when pursuing a goal	Intermediate
809	Key 47	If he/she wants to change, he/she expresses confidence that he/she can do it	Intermediate
810		Shows that he/she is confident about making decisions	Intermediate

811		Shows confidence about tackling new challenges	Intermediate
812		Expresses the belief that he/she copes well with changing situations	Intermediate
813		Expresses a belief in his/her own ability to select appropriate methods for accomplishing tasks	Intermediate
814		Shows confidence in his/her ability to be successful	Intermediate
815		Shows confidence that he/she has the ability to succeed in most tasks that he/she undertakes	Intermediate
816		Shows confidence that he/she can perform high quality work	Intermediate
817		Remains confident in his/her own capabilities when challenged by others	Intermediate
818		Shows confidence that he/she can rely on his/her coping abilities to remain calm when facing difficulties	IA
819		Shows confidence that he/she is able to make decisions about the best way of handling a problem	IA
820		Shows confidence that he/she can accomplish his/her goals in life	IA
821		Expresses the belief that overall, in his/her life, he/she is a very effective person	IA
822	Key 48	Shows that he/she feels secure in his/her abilities to meet life's challenges	Advanced
823	Key 49	Shows confidence that he/she knows how to handle unforeseen situations due to his/her resourcefulness	Advanced
824		Shows confidence that he/she can deal efficiently with unexpected events	Advanced

## 9. Tolerance of ambiguity

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
901	Key 50	Engages well with other people who have a variety of different points of view	Basic
902	Key 51	Shows that he/she can suspend judgments about other people temporarily	Basic
903		Interacts positively without certainty of what the other thinks and feels	Basic
904		Is comfortable with many different kinds of people	Basic

905		Expresses a willingness to consider contradictory or incomplete information without automatically rejecting it or jumping to a premature conclusion	BI
906		Recognises ambiguous situations	BI
907		Accepts a task which requires dealing with unknown or unusual circumstances	BI
908		Seeks out discussions with people whose ideas and values are different from his/her own	BI
909	Key 52	Is comfortable in novel situations	Intermediate
910	Key 53	Deals with uncertainty in a positive and constructive manner	Intermediate
911	Key 54	Works well in unpredictable circumstances	Intermediate
912		Copes with ambiguous situations	IA
913		When faced with a choice about how to respond to a given situation, he/she is able to shift between two or more cultural perspectives	IA
914		Rises to the challenge of situations or issues that involve ambiguity	IA
915		Expresses acceptance of lack of clarity	IA
916		Expresses willingness to tolerate uncertainty	IA
917		Is comfortable encountering things that are unfamiliar to him/her	IA
918	Key 55	Expresses a desire to have his/her own ideas and values challenged	Advanced
919	Key 56	Enjoys the challenge of tackling ambiguous problems	Advanced
920	Key 57	Expresses enjoyment of tackling situations that are complicated	Advanced
921		Is comfortable when dealing with ambiguous situations	Advanced

## SKILLS

### 10. Autonomous learning skills

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1001	Key 58	Shows ability to identify resources for learning (e.g. people, books, internet)	Basic
1002	Key 59	Seeks clarification of new information from other people when needed	Basic
1003		Accomplishes learning tasks independently	Basic
1004		Identifies what he/she knows already and what he/she doesn't know	Basic
1005		Can identify gaps in his/her own knowledge independently	BI
1006		Can identify relevant sources of information to accomplish a learning task	BI
1007		Can gather information effectively using a variety of techniques and sources	BI
1008		Uses appropriate tools and information technologies effectively to discover new information	BI
1009		Demonstrates the ability to seek out information independently	BI
1010		Looks for information in a variety of sources	BI
1011		Expresses willingness to learn new things independently	BI
1012		Develops own ideas by gathering information	BI
1013	Key 60	Can learn about new topics with minimal supervision	Intermediate
1014	Key 61	Can assess the quality of his/her own work	Intermediate
1015		Can locate information relevant to his/her own personal and academic needs and interests	Intermediate
1016		Can use information technology effectively to access, research, organise and integrate information	Intermediate
1017		Can integrate learning from various subjects/areas of learning	Intermediate
1018		Can select learning materials, resources and activities independently	IA
1019		Can monitor own progress towards reaching his/her own learning goals	IA
1020		Seeks out new opportunities for learning	IA
1021		Rereads new material after an initial reading to make sure that he/she has understood it properly	IA

1022	Key 62	Can select the most reliable sources of information or advice from the range available	Advanced
1023	Key 63	Shows ability to monitor, define, prioritise and complete tasks without direct oversight	Advanced
1024		Manages own time effectively to achieve his/her own learning goals	Advanced
1025		Can evaluate the credibility of sources of information or advice independently	Advanced
1026		Monitors own progress in learning new information	Advanced

## 11. Analytical and critical thinking skills

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1101	Key 64	Can identify similarities and differences between new information and what is already known	Basic
1102	Key 65	Uses evidence to support his/her opinions	Basic
1103		Can draw conclusions from the analysis of an argument	Basic
1104		Can analyse a situation before making a choice	Basic
1105		Can draw conclusions from an analysis of information	Basic
1106		Can solve problems through the use of logic	Basic
1107		Can compare different ideas when thinking about a topic	Basic
1108		Can distinguish between statements of fact and statements of opinion	BI
1109		Can make connections between arguments and information	BI
1110		Can make evaluations on the basis of evidence and experience	BI
1111		Can analyse alternative points of view	BI
1112		Uses more than one source of information before making a decision	BI
1113		Can use more than one source of information before making a decision	BI
1114		When faced with a problem, tries to determine what caused it	BI
1115		Can reflect critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress	BI
1116		Can construct a logical and defensible argument for or against a particular interpretation	BI
1117		Can evaluate arguments, claims and beliefs	BI

1118		Can identify logical relationships in materials being analysed	BI
1119	Key 66	Can assess the risks associated with different options	Intermediate
1120	Key 67	Shows that he/she thinks about whether the information he/she uses is correct	Intermediate
1121		Can analyse evidence when evaluating an argument	Intermediate
1122		Can analyse different points of view, products or practices found in other cultures	Intermediate
1123		Can make judgments about whether or not materials under analysis are appropriate or useful	Intermediate
1124		Can evaluate information critically	Intermediate
1125		Can make judgments about whether or not materials under analysis are persuasive	Intermediate
1126		Can distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information and evidence	Intermediate
1127		Shows that he/she considers the risks and/or the benefits of a choice before making a decision	Intermediate
1128		Can analyse materials in a logical or systematic manner	IA
1129		Prioritises choices before making a decision	IA
1130		Uses compelling evidence to make judgments	IA
1131		Can conduct cost-benefit analyses of different options	IA
1132		Can analyse all the information which he/she has about the different choices before making a decision	IA
1133		Shows regard for accuracy in analysing and evaluating information	IA
1134		Can identify causal relationships in materials being analysed	IA
1135		Can make judgments about whether or not materials under analysis are true, accurate or reliable	IA
1136		Can evaluate critically the actions of those who have responsibilities to respect, promote and realise human rights	IA
1137		Can examine the likely results for each possible solution to a problem	IA
1138		Can employ various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate	IA
1139	Key 68	Can identify any discrepancies or inconsistencies or divergences in materials being analysed	Advanced
1140	Key 69	Can use explicit and specifiable criteria, principles or values to make judgments	Advanced

1141		Can analyse the motives, intentions and agendas of the people who produce propaganda, stereotypes, intolerance and hate speech in the mass media (e.g. newspapers, TV)	Advanced
1142		Can draw the results of an analysis together in an organised and coherent manner to construct logical and defensible conclusions	Advanced
1143		When it comes to solving a problem, he/she thinks about all of the things that are part of the problem before deciding what to do	Advanced
1144		Can generate new syntheses of elements that have been examined	Advanced
1145		Can analyse how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes	Advanced
1146		Can examine both short-term and long-term perspectives	Advanced
1147		Can evaluate the preconceptions and assumptions upon which materials are based	Advanced

## 12. Skills of listening and observing

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1201	Key 70	Listens carefully to differing opinions	Basic
1202	Key 71	Listens attentively to other people	Basic
1203		Actively listens to others	Basic
1204		Pays attention not only to what is being said but also to how it is being said	BI
1205		Remembers details of the behaviour of other people	BI
1206		Pays close attention to the behaviour of other people	BI
1207	Key 72	Watches speakers' gestures and general body language to help himself/herself figure out the meaning of what they are saying	Intermediate
1208	Key 73	Can listen effectively in order to decipher another person's meanings and intentions	Intermediate
1209		Watches other people's body language to help him/her understand what they are trying to say	Intermediate
1210		When he/she is a newcomer in a group with people from a different country, he/she tries to find out the rules in this group by observing their behaviour	IA
1211		Works out native speakers' language patterns (e.g. when requesting, apologising or complaining) by closely observing their behaviour	IA
1212		Uses other people's non-verbal cues to identify their unspoken thoughts or concerns	IA

1213	Key 74	Pays attention to what other people imply but do not say	Advanced
1214	Key 75	Notices how people with other cultural affiliations react in different ways to the same situation	Advanced
1215		Observes the behaviour of people who have other cultural affiliations carefully	Advanced

## 13. Empathy

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1301	Key 76	Can recognise when a companion needs his/her help	Basic
1302	Key 77	Expresses sympathy for the bad things that he/she has seen happen to other people	Basic
1303		Expresses compassion for people who are being treated unfairly	Basic
1304		Expresses compassion for other people when they have problems	Basic
1305		Expresses compassion for another person who is hurt or upset	Basic
1306		Senses when others get irritated	Basic
1307		Can recognise whether a person is annoyed with him/her	Basic
1308		Pays attention to what other people are feeling	BI
1309		Can describe feelings identified at other people	BI
1310		Gets upset when he/she sees someone being treated badly	BI
1311		Expresses sympathy about other people's misfortunes	BI
1312		Can explain why someone else gets upset	BI
1313	Key 78	Tries to understand his/her friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective	Intermediate
1314	Key 79	Takes other people's feelings into account when making decisions	Intermediate
1315		Can describe accurately the emotions, feelings and needs of other people	Intermediate
1316		When talking to someone, tries to understand what they are feeling	Intermediate
1317		Shows ability to put himself/herself in the shoes of those who are in discomfort	Intermediate
1318		Expresses concern for other people who are being taken advantage of	Intermediate
1319		Shows ability to describe what other people are feeling	Intermediate



1320		Expresses sympathy for people who are less fortunate than himself/herself	Intermediate
1321		Expresses sympathy for a person who doesn't have friends	Intermediate
1322		Can recognise when someone wants comfort and emotional support, even if that person does not overtly exhibit it	IA
1323		Gets upset when he/she sees someone being excluded from a group	IA
1324		When others are upset, he/she becomes sad or concerned for them	IA
1325	Key 80	Expresses the view that, when he/she thinks about people in other countries, he/she shares their joys and sorrows	Advanced
1326	Key 81	Accurately identifies the feelings of others, even when they do not want to show them	Advanced
1327		Can describe other people's unique concerns	Advanced

## 14. Flexibility and adaptability

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1401	Key 82	Modifies his/her opinions if he/she is shown through rational argument that this is required	Basic
1402	Key 83	Can change the decisions that he/she has made if the consequences of those decisions show that this is required	Basic
1403		Adjusts way of working when this is necessary	Basic
1404		Adjusts interaction style to interact more effectively with other people, when this is required	Basic
1405		Changes the way that he/she explains an idea if the situation requires this	Basic
1406		Adapts his/her behaviour in new situations by taking account of lessons learnt in previous situations	Basic
1407		Changes the way he/she does things when he/she see a problem with how things are going	BI
1408		Adapts to new situations by gathering more information	BI
1409		Accommodates easily to new people	BI
1410		Adjusts plans in response to changing circumstances	BI
1411		When he/she has a problem, he/she tries different ways to solve it	BI

1412		If something isn't going according to plan, he/she changes his/her actions to try to reach the goal	BI
1413	Key 84	Adapts to new situations by using a new skill	Intermediate
1414	Key 85	Adapts to new situations by applying knowledge in a different way	Intermediate
1415		Changes own way of doing something in the light of new insights	Intermediate
1416		Shows the ability to deal flexibly with and adjust to new people, places and situations	Intermediate
1417		Shows flexibility when facing obstacles	Intermediate
1418		Shows flexibility when interacting with persons who have other cultural affiliations from himself/herself	Intermediate
1419		Can modify his/her own learning strategies when necessary	Intermediate
1420		Accommodates easily to new situations	Intermediate
1421		Welcomes new and unusual situations	Intermediate
1422		Adapts effectively to change	Intermediate
1423		Adapts easily to new cultural environments	IA
1424		Shows the ability to overcome anxieties, worries and insecurities about meeting and interacting with other people who have different cultural affiliations from himself/herself	IA
1425		When speaking with people from other cultural backgrounds, he/she adjusts the type of gestures he/she uses with them appropriately	IA
1426		Adapts well to different demands and contexts	IA
1427		Can adjust his/her habitual way of thinking according to needs and circumstances	IA
1428		Can adapt to different cultural styles and behaviours	IA
1429		Controls his/her own emotions by keeping things in perspective	IA
1430	Key 86	Adopts the sociocultural conventions of other cultural target groups when interacting with members of those groups	Advanced
1431	Key 87	Can modify his/her own behaviour to make it appropriate to other cultures	Advanced

1432		Although a member of his/her own culture, he/she is nearly as comfortable in one or more other cultures	Advanced
1433		Can use appropriate strategies for adapting to the culture of another country	Advanced

## 15. Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1501	Key 88	Can express his/her thoughts on a problem	Basic
1502	Key 89	Asks speakers to repeat what they have said if it wasn't clear to him/her	Basic
1503		When talking to someone, he/she tries to maintain eye contact	Basic
1504		Uses gestures as a way to try to get his/her meaning across	Basic
1505		Can get his/her point across	Basic
1506		Asks questions as a way to be involved in conversations	BI
1507		Uses body language to help reinforce what he/she wants to say	BI
1508		Communicates to other people that he/she is receptive to their ideas	BI
1509		Achieves good interactions with others by making his/her own communications clear	BI
1510		Can identify when two people are trying to say the same thing but in different ways	BI
1511		When there is a problem with communication, he/she quite often finds ways around it (e.g. by using gestures, re-explaining, simplifying)	BI
1512		Uses his/her hands to illustrate what he/she is trying to say	BI
1513	Key 90	Asks questions that show his/her understanding of other people's positions	Intermediate
1514	Key 91	Can adopt different ways of expressing politeness in another language	Intermediate
1515		Can persuade and negotiate with other people	Intermediate
1516		Makes sure that his/her own messages are understood in the way that they are meant	Intermediate
1517		Can identify when a person is listening to him/her but not hearing what he/she is saying	Intermediate
1518		When ambiguous communications occur, he/she can clarify or otherwise deal with them satisfactorily	Intermediate

1519		Can adjust and modify his/her own linguistic and communicative behaviour to use the communicative conventions that are appropriate to his/her interlocutor	IA
1520		Can communicate efficiently and effectively in an intercultural setting	IA
1521		Can ensure that he/she understands what another person is saying before responding	IA
1522		Rephrases what another person said, to make sure that he/she has understood them	IA
1523		Can manage breakdowns in communication by providing restatements, revisions or simplifications of his/her own misunderstood communications	IA
1524		Can recognise the different ways of speaking that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	IA
1525		Can ask questions of clarification in an appropriate and sensitive manner in cases where inconsistencies between the verbal and non-verbal messages produced by another person are detected	IA
1526	Key 92	Can mediate linguistically in intercultural exchanges by translating, interpreting or explaining	Advanced
1527	Key 93	Can avoid successfully intercultural misunderstandings	Advanced
1528		Can meet the communicative demands of intercultural situations by using a shared language to understand another language	Advanced
1529		Can recognise the different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	Advanced
1530		Is linguistically and culturally competent in at least one language and culture other than his/her own	Advanced

## 16. Co-operation skills

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1601	Key 94	Builds positive relationships with other people in a group	Basic
1602	Key 95	When working as a member of a group, does his/her share of the group's work	Basic
1603		Can work effectively and respectfully with other people	Basic
1604		Can be a team player in a group	Basic
1605		Can work in a positive manner with other people	Basic
1606		Shares own ideas and resources with others	Basic

1607		When working as a member of a group, shows appreciation of and consideration for other group members	BI
1608		Works well with other people	BI
1609		When working as a member of a group, acts in accordance with team decisions or activities	BI
1610		When working as a member of a group, can express his/her own beliefs and opinions effectively to other members of the group	BI
1611		Co-operates effectively with other people	BI
1612		Accepts shared responsibility for collaborative work	BI
1613		Can help others with their work where appropriate	BI
1614		Is a productive team worker	BI
1615	Key 96	Works to build consensus to achieve group goals	Intermediate
1616	Key 97	When working as a member of a group, keeps others informed about any relevant or useful information	Intermediate
1617		Can help someone new become part of a group	Intermediate
1618		Participates effectively in group meetings	Intermediate
1619		Proactively shares useful information/knowledge with others	Intermediate
1620		Consistently participates well in group activities	Intermediate
1621		When working as a member of a group, encourages group members to express their views and opinions	IA
1622		Accepts a variety of roles when working in groups	IA
1623		Makes others feel comfortable in a group when faced with a problem	IA
1624		Helps to motivate others when working in a group, encouraging them to participate	IA
1625		Consistently works with others to accomplish goals and tasks	IA
1626		Can set group goals	IA
1627		Can motivate other group members to co-operate and help each other in order to achieve group goals	IA
1628		When working as a member of a group, solicits and utilises the skills, ideas, and opinions of other group members	IA
1629	Key 98	Generates enthusiasm among group members for accomplishing shared goals	Advanced
1630	Key 99	When working with others, supports other people despite differences in points of view	Advanced
1631		Seeks opportunities to work co-operatively with other people	Advanced

1632		When he/she sees something that needs to be done, he/she tries to get other people to work on it with him/her	Advanced
1633		Can persuade other group members to share their relevant and useful knowledge, experience or expertise	Advanced
1634		Involves other people in the planning and development of action plans to gain their commitment	Advanced

## 17. Conflict-resolution skills

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1701	Key 100	Can communicate with conflicting parties in a respectful manner	Basic
1702	Key 101	Can identify options for resolving conflicts	Basic
1703		Works with others to resolve conflicts	Basic
1704		Shows the ability to generate practical solutions to conflicts	BI
1705		Can listen to conflicting parties to identify common interests	BI
1706		Works to resolve conflict by showing respect for others' opinions	BI
1707		Helps others determine how to settle disagreements	BI
1708		Can encourage active listening and open discussion as a means to resolve conflict	BI
1709		Can approach people involved in a conflict in an appropriate manner	BI
1710	Key 102	Can assist others to resolve conflicts by enhancing their understanding of the available options	Intermediate
1711	Key 103	Can encourage the parties involved in conflicts to actively listen to each other and share their issues and concerns	Intermediate
1712		Finds solutions to conflicts that are mutually beneficial	Intermediate
1713		Facilitates communication between people experiencing conflict who have previously been unable to resolve their differences	Intermediate
1714		Can use negotiation skills to resolve conflicts	Intermediate
1715		Can help parties in conflict to find common ground on which they can build an agreement	Intermediate
1716	Key 104	Regularly initiates communication to help solve interpersonal conflicts	Advanced
1717	Key 105	Can deal effectively with other people's emotional stress, anxiety and insecurity in situations involving conflict	Advanced

1718		Can guide conflicting parties to agree on optimal and mutually acceptable solutions to their conflict	Advanced
1719		When resolving conflicts, consistently focuses on the relevant issues at hand and avoids letting secondary or unrelated issues interfere with the outcome	Advanced
1720		Can refine possible compromises or solutions to conflicts	Advanced

## KNOWLEDGE AND CRITICAL UNDERSTANDING

### 18. Knowledge and critical understanding of the self

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1801	Key 106	Can describe his/her own motivations	Basic
1802	Key 107	Can describe the ways in which his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour	Basic
1803		Can reflect critically on his/her own motives, needs and goals	BI
1804		Can explain how his/her personal characteristics influence his/her behaviour in different situations	BI
1805	Key 108	Can reflect critically on his/her own values and beliefs	Intermediate
1806	Key 109	Can reflect critically on himself/herself from a number of different perspectives	Intermediate
1807		Can reflect critically on how other people perceive him/her	IA
1808		Can reflect critically on the ways in which his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour	IA
1809		Can reflect critically on his/her own perspective(s) on the world	IA
1810	Key 110	Can reflect critically on his/her own prejudices and stereotypes and what lies behind them	Advanced
1811	Key 111	Can reflect critically on his/her own emotions and feelings in a wide range of situations	Advanced
1812		Can reflect critically on how his/her judgments are influenced by his/her own cultural affiliations	Advanced
1813		Can reflect critically on the factors that have influenced his/her own intercultural development	Advanced



## 19. Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
1901	Key 112	Can explain how tone of voice, eye contact and body language can aid communication	Basic
1902	Key 113	Can describe the social impact and effects on others of different communication styles	Intermediate
1903	Key 114	Can explain how social relationships are sometimes encoded in the linguistic forms that are used in conversations (e.g. in greetings, forms of address, use of expletives)	Intermediate
1904		Can explain how different forms of language are used in different situations and contexts	Intermediate
1905		Can reflect critically on how different communication styles may result in a breakdown of communication	Intermediate
1906		Can describe different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	Intermediate
1907		Can reflect critically on how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information	Intermediate
1908		Can describe some effects which different styles of language use can have in social and working situations	Intermediate
1909		Can reflect critically on how intercultural communication can affect relationships between people who have different cultural affiliations	IA
1910		Can reflect critically on how one's own assumptions, preconceptions, perceptions, beliefs and judgments are dependent on the specific language(s) which one speaks	IA
1911		Can reflect critically on some effects which different styles of language use can have in social and working situations	IA
1912	Key 115	Can explain why people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective	Advanced
1913	Key 116	Can reflect critically on the different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	Advanced

## 20A. Knowledge and critical understanding of politics, law and human rights

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
2001	Key 117	Can explain the meaning of basic political concepts, including democracy, freedom, citizenship, rights and responsibilities	Basic
2002	Key 118	Can explain why everybody has a responsibility to respect the human rights of others	Basic
2003		Can explain the meaning of basic legal concepts, including justice, equality, the need for laws and regulations, and the rule of law	Basic
2004		Can reflect critically on the concept of human rights	Basic
2005		Can describe the obligations of states in relation to human rights	BI
2006	Key 123	Can explain the universal, inalienable and indivisible nature of human rights	Intermediate
2007	Key 124	Can reflect critically on the relationship between human rights, democracy, peace and security in a globalised world	Intermediate
2008	Key 125	Can reflect critically on the root causes of human rights violations, including the role of stereotypes and prejudice in processes that lead to human rights abuses	Intermediate
2009		Can reflect critically on the human rights challenges that exist in his/her own community and society	Intermediate
2010		Can reflect critically on human rights issues or movements in his/her own country	Intermediate
2011		Can reflect critically on human rights as a values framework and its close relationship with other moral, ethical and religious value frameworks	IA
2012	Key 130	Can describe the diverse ways in which citizens can influence policy	Advanced
2013	Key 131	Can reflect critically on the evolving nature of the human rights framework and the ongoing development of human rights in different regions of the world	Advanced
2014		Can reflect critically on the nature and purposes of democratic political processes	Advanced
2015		Can reflect critically on the nature and purposes of the law	Advanced

## 20B. Knowledge and critical understanding of culture, cultures, religions

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
2016	Key 119	Can describe basic cultural practices (e.g. eating habits, greeting practices, ways of addressing people, politeness) in one other culture	Basic
2017	Key 120	Can reflect critically on how his/her own world view is just one of many world views	Basic
2018		Can describe several different cultures, especially the values, customs and practices which are common in those cultures	Basic
2019		Can reflect critically on how intercultural interactions can influence situations and events	BI
2020		Can describe the commonalities and differences which exist between different religious traditions	BI
2021	Key 126	Can explain the dangers of generalising from individual behaviours to an entire culture	Intermediate
2022	Key 127	Can reflect critically on religious symbols, religious rituals and the religious uses of language	Intermediate
2023		Can explain why all cultural groups contain individuals who contest and challenge traditional cultural meanings	Intermediate
2024		Can reflect critically on the role of religions and non-religious convictions in society and public life	Intermediate
2025		Can explain why all cultural groups are constantly evolving and changing	IA
2026		Can explain why all cultural groups are internally variable, diverse and heterogeneous	IA
2027		Can analyse the variability which occurs in behavioural patterns within cultures	IA
2028		Can analyse the variability which occurs in behavioural patterns across cultures	IA
2029		Can reflect critically on how power structures and discriminatory practices within cultural groups operate to restrict opportunities for disempowered group members	IA
2030		Can describe the key aspects of the history of particular religious traditions	IA
2031		Can reflect critically on the fact that personal expressions of religions are likely to differ in various ways from standard textbook representations of those religions	IA
2032		Identifies the key texts and key doctrines of particular religious traditions	IA

2033		Can describe key features of the beliefs, values, practices and experiences of individuals who practise particular religions	IA
2034		Can reflect critically on the beliefs, values, practices and experiences of religious believers	IA
2035	Key 132	Can explain why there are no cultural groups that have fixed inherent characteristics	Advanced
2036	Key 133	Can explain why all religious groups are constantly evolving and changing	Advanced
2037		Can describe the internal diversity of beliefs and practices which exists within individual religions	Advanced

## 20C. Knowledge and critical understanding of history, media, economies, environment and sustainability

ID	Key No.	Descriptor	Classification
2038	Key 121	Can assess society's impact on the natural world, for example, in terms of population growth, population development, resource consumption	Basic
2039	Key 122	Can reflect critically on the risks associated with environmental damage	Basic
2040		Can reflect critically on the environmental interdependence of the global community	Basic
2041		Can reflect critically on the values, behaviour and lifestyles that are required for a sustainable future	Basic
2042		Can reflect critically on the need for responsible consumption	Basic
2043		Can reflect critically on the ways in which citizens and governments can contribute to environmental sustainability	Basic
2044		Can reflect critically on global inequalities	Basic
2045	Key 128	Can describe the effects that propaganda has in the contemporary world	Intermediate
2046	Key 129	Can explain how people can guard and protect themselves against propaganda	Intermediate
2047		Can explain what propaganda is	Intermediate
2048		Can explain what makes people vulnerable to propaganda	Intermediate
2049	Key 134	Can reflect critically on how histories are often presented and taught from an ethnocentric point of view	Advanced
2050	Key 135	Can explain national economies and how economic and financial processes affect the functioning of society	Advanced

2051		Can reflect critically on the fluid nature of history and how interpretations of the past vary over time and across cultures	Advanced
2052		Can reflect critically on diverse narratives from different perspectives about the historical forces and factors that have shaped the contemporary world	Advanced
2053		Can reflect critically on how the concept of citizenship has evolved in different ways in different cultures over time	Advanced
2054		Can outline diverse narratives from different perspectives about the historical forces and factors that have shaped the contemporary world	Advanced
2055		Can reflect critically on processes of historical investigation	Advanced
2056		Can reflect critically on the ethical issues associated with globalisation	Advanced
2057		Can reflect critically on the economic interdependence of the global community	Advanced
2058		Can reflect critically on the connections between economic, social, political and environmental processes	Advanced
2059		Can explain the impact that personal choices, political actions and patterns of consumption may have in other parts of the world	Advanced





## Chapter 3

# The process of developing, testing and scaling the descriptors

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**A** major source of inspiration for the development of descriptors for CDC was the previous work that has been done in developing descriptors for the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Considering the successful experience of developing descriptors for the CEFR, a similar process of formulating, testing and scaling competence descriptors was undertaken for the current Framework. The process consisted of several stages:

1. Defining criteria for formulating descriptors.
2. Formulation of an initial large bank of draft descriptors.
3. Selection of descriptors based on feedback from experts and education professionals.
4. Piloting of the selected descriptors in various educational settings across Europe.
5. Scaling the descriptors to different levels of proficiency.

## Defining criteria for formulating descriptors

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Based on the experience with the CEFR, the following criteria were identified as relevant for formulating the descriptors:

- i. **Brevity.** Descriptors had to be short rather than long, ideally no longer than about 25 words.
- ii. **Positivity.** Each descriptor had to express ability in terms of a positive statement (e.g. can, expresses, supports), not a negative statement (e.g. cannot, fails to, has limited). This would enable a teacher to say “Yes, this person can do this/has this (value, attitude, skill, knowledge, understanding)” or “No, this person cannot do this/does not have this (value, attitude, skill, knowledge, understanding)”.
- iii. **Clarity.** Each descriptor had to be transparent and not jargon-laden, and written using relatively simple grammar.
- iv. **Independence.** Each descriptor had to be independent of all the other descriptors. In other words, each descriptor could not have meaning only relative to the formulation of other descriptors in the set. For this reason, the descriptors avoided using the same statement multiple times to form a set by simply substituting a qualifying word or phrase across the statements (e.g. poor/moderate/good, a few/some/many/most, fairly broad/very broad) which would have meant that the items were not independent of each other.
- v. **Definiteness.** Each descriptor also needed to describe concrete behaviours or achievements which would indicate whether or not the relevant value/attitude/skill/knowledge/understanding had been mastered by an individual.

## Formulation of an initial large bank of draft descriptors

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A variety of source materials were used for developing the initial bank of draft descriptors, including existing scales, educational materials, research documents and policy documents that contain either relevant scale items or short descriptive statements which could be extracted, rephrased and used as descriptors or statements of achievement for the 20 competences specified by the Framework model. In total, 98 source documents were used in this exercise. Of these, some sources did not allow the direct extraction of descriptors but instead provided useful information regarding aspects of the competences to take into account when formulating descriptors, and were also used to double-check that the full scope of each competence was being captured adequately by the descriptors that were being developed. Scale items and descriptive statements contained in the sources were extracted and rephrased to construct short self-standing statements which could potentially serve as descriptors. In addition, new descriptors were written for those competences in the model for which relatively few scale items or statements had been found. New descriptors were also written where it was judged that there were important aspects of individual competences which were not covered sufficiently by the descriptors that had been compiled.

The number of potential descriptors formulated in this way was 2 085. These were then subjected to a critical scrutiny of their compliance with the five criteria stated above by two experts working together. After this process, 1 371 draft descriptors were retained and entered into the selection process.



## Selection of descriptors

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The members of the expert group developing the Framework were asked to provide feedback on each of the 1 371 draft descriptors and to rate each one on its relevance to the target competence, clarity, independence from other descriptors, concreteness, observability in an education setting, and importance for assessing the target competence. As a result, 990 descriptors which received high ratings as well as positive feedback from the expert group were retained.

These 990 descriptors were then sent for additional feedback to education professionals in 15 countries in Europe using an online questionnaire that was made available in ten languages. The questionnaire asked teachers, trainers and other categories of education professionals to assign the descriptors to their relevant competences (in order to ensure that each descriptor mapped unambiguously onto only one competence), to rate the descriptors against three criteria (clarity, concreteness, and observability in an education setting), to rate the usefulness of each descriptor for different levels of education, and to give feedback on the wordings of the descriptors. The number of education professionals who provided feedback was 1 236, and on this basis 559 descriptors which had received high ratings, and had been correctly assigned to their intended competence, were retained for the next stage.

## Piloting of descriptors

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The 559 selected descriptors were then submitted to piloting in various education contexts with learners. In order to comply with statistical requirements while maintaining a manageable sample size, and to ensure the pertinence of the descriptors to the learners, only learners aged 9 years old and above were involved.

The piloting process had three objectives:

1. To validate the descriptors in concrete education settings.
2. To eliminate the descriptors which could not be consistently used in practice.
3. To scale descriptors by associating them with levels of proficiency.

Support for this process was provided by 858 teachers from 16 countries, working in different sociocultural contexts, as well as in different types of education systems. With the assistance of education authorities in these countries, teachers were specially prepared for the process through training workshops, after which they were given the task of checking the validity of a limited number of descriptors (between 181 and 194). To this end, they were asked to observe the behaviour of one learner in the context of a series of relevant activities and to use the descriptors in the course of conducting the observation by indicating whether or not the learner exhibited the specific behaviour described by each descriptor. The teachers were then required to submit their results, as well as feedback on the ease of using the descriptors in practice, using online questionnaires that were made available in multiple languages. Over 250 responses were received for each of the 559 descriptors that had been submitted to the piloting, enough for robust and valid results in the statistical processing of the data.

## Scaling the descriptors to different levels of proficiency

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The data obtained were processed using a methodology based on item response theory (Rasch Analysis). This analysis allows the ordering of items (in our case, competence descriptors) according to their difficulty on a given dimension (in our case, the relevant competence component of the Framework model). Such an analysis generates information that allows decisions to be made about: (a) whether a specific descriptor is fit for the corresponding competence component (that is, whether it is an appropriate description for that given competence); (b) the level of proficiency to which the descriptor corresponds.

The issue of scaling descriptors is a sensitive one and it had to be addressed with the utmost scientific rigour in order to provide valid, reliable and useful references for future work. The data obtained through the multilingual online questionnaires were processed using specialised software and were also submitted to a qualitative analysis.

The outcome was that 447 descriptors out of the 559 that were submitted to piloting were validated as useful. In addition, some of them could be clearly associated with one of the three levels of proficiency (basic, intermediate and advanced), while others, although valid, were found to be situated between the basic and intermediate levels or between the intermediate and advanced levels.

From the full set of validated descriptors, and based on the statistical data and the qualitative analysis, 135 key descriptors were identified. The initial intention was to identify for each competence two descriptors for each of the three levels of proficiency. However, the analysis required making some exceptions to this rule, with three key descriptors per level in the case of some competences, a larger number of key descriptors per level for the “knowledge and critical understanding of the world”, and only one valid descriptor for one level of one competence in the case of three competences.



## Conclusion

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**T**he descriptors that have been developed represent an essential resource for those who wish to use the Framework in education settings, as they provide operationalisation of the competences contained in the Framework model in terms of the concrete behaviours that may be displayed by learners.

The descriptors can be used for many different purposes. For example, they can be used as a toolbox for those who have to design, implement and evaluate learning activities and educational initiatives for enhancing learners' competences for democratic culture. The education professionals who wish to use the descriptors for these particular purposes are advised to read Chapters 1 and 2 on curriculum development and pedagogy in Volume 3 of the present publication. The descriptors can also be used to support the assessment of learners' current level of proficiency in order to identify areas of further development, or to support the assessment of proficiency after a period of learning. Education professionals who wish to use the descriptors for either of these purposes are advised to read Chapter 3 on assessment in Volume 3. Users of the descriptors are also advised to read the section in Chapter 7 of Volume 1 on how descriptors should and – importantly – should not be used.



## Further reading

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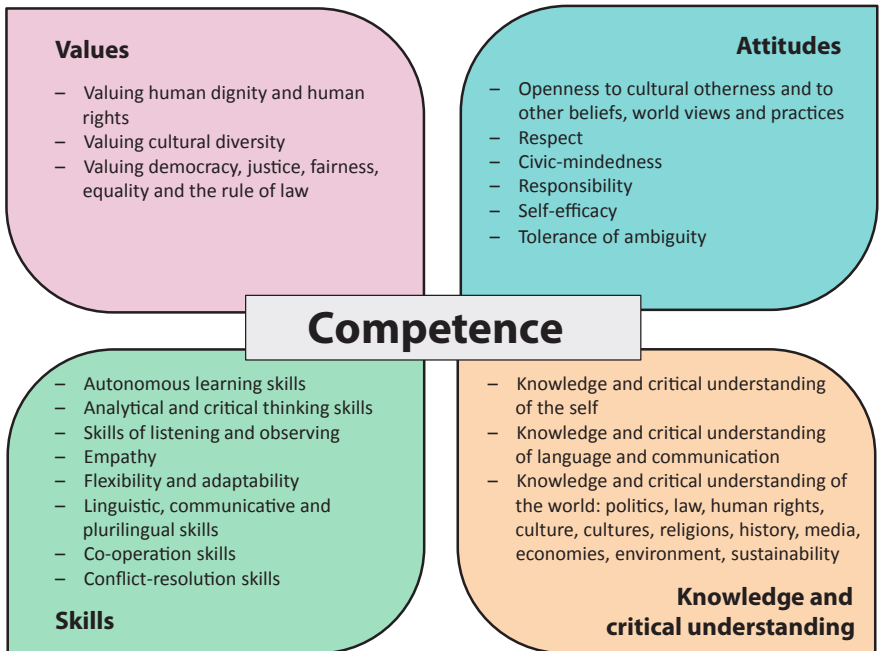
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## Model of Competences for Democratic Culture







The Council of Europe promotes and protects human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These principles have been cornerstones of European societies and political systems for decades, yet they need to be maintained and fostered, not least in times of economic and political crisis.

Most people would agree that democracy means a form of governance by or on behalf of the people and that it cannot operate without institutions that ensure regular, free and fair elections, majority rule and government accountability. However, these institutions cannot function unless citizens themselves are active and committed to democratic values and attitudes. Education has a central role to play here and this Reference Framework supports education systems in the teaching, learning and assessment of competences for democratic culture and provides a coherent focus to the wide range of approaches used.

This **second volume** contains descriptors of the competences for democratic culture that are introduced in volume one. These descriptors are intended to help educators identify learning outcomes, achieved proficiency after a period of learning, and areas for further development. Further guidance on implementation of the Reference Framework is offered in volume three.

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