

Resolution 2584 (2025)¹

Multiperspectivity in remembrance and history education for democratic citizenship

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The importance of history teaching was affirmed at the Summits of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in 1993, 1997 and 2005, and its relevance for democratic citizenship and stability is well captured in the motto of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe: “Teaching history, grounding democracy”. Well-designed history education is essential for gaining a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the past, and applying it to evaluate the present with a critical eye, as it develops the capacity to differentiate between facts, memories, interpretations and perspectives, and to detect and analyse distortion and propaganda.
2. At a time when historical narratives are increasingly distorted to justify aggression – most notably in the context of the ongoing war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine – the role of critical, evidence-based history education in countering disinformation has become vital. Referring to its [Resolution 2558 \(2024\)](#) and [Recommendation 2280 \(2024\)](#) “Countering the erasure of cultural identity in war and peace”, the Parliamentary Assembly emphasises the perils of politicising history and highlights the power of history education to build resilience against the misuse of narratives justifying aggression, human rights abuses and territorial claims.
3. The Assembly holds that the inclusion of sensitive and controversial topics of history in school curricula, the consideration of multiple perspectives and the analysis of historical sources can play a role in reinforcing democratic culture within a society and fostering respect for different opinions, pluralism, tolerance and diversity. Taking students out of the classroom to learn *in situ* from historical places and sites of remembrance should be part of this process. The Assembly firmly believes that history education should be a key part of human rights education and a foundation for young people to develop democratic citizenship.
4. However, delivering quality history education in schools can be very challenging due to overloaded curricula, traditional teaching practices and, in many instances, highly centralised education systems. History teachers may struggle to address multiple, coexisting perspectives; they may lack adequate training and even though they may have an in-depth knowledge of their discipline, they often have limited time to work on the overall historical context with students and limited access to teaching and financial resources. Moreover, in many countries, initial teacher training does not include the development of competences required to deliver citizenship education.
5. The Assembly values the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture created by the Council of Europe and welcomes the political momentum provided by the 2023 Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education for the renewal of the civic mission of education. The Council of Europe Education Strategy 2024-2030 “Learners first – Education for today’s and tomorrow’s democratic societies” aims to establish a European space for citizenship education to exchange good practices and implement existing Council of Europe instruments and tools.

1. *Assembly debate* on 29 January 2025 (5th sitting) (see [Doc. 16090](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Ms Luz Martinez Seijo). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 29 January 2025 (5th sitting). See also [Recommendation 2290 \(2025\)](#).



6. Education systems must adapt to social changes and respond to new demands with new curricula and interactive methodologies – not only to meet emerging job requirements but also to respond effectively to the growing diversity of societies. They must also contribute to countering the erosion of democratic values, particularly among young people in Europe. For these reasons, education for democratic citizenship should be provided as a distinct compulsory subject, be included in other relevant subjects, such as history teaching, during all stages of formal education (primary, secondary and higher education), and form a constituent part of vocational training and non-formal education.

7. With all these considerations in mind, the Assembly calls on member States of the Council of Europe to undertake a strategic policy review aiming to incorporate the Council of Europe's "Quality history education in the 21st century – Principles and guidelines" and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture throughout their education policies, and in particular:

7.1. concerning curricula, to:

7.1.1. introduce education for democratic citizenship as a distinct compulsory subject and incorporate competences for democratic culture in other relevant subjects, such as history teaching, during all stages of formal education;

7.1.2. provide for more flexibility of history curricula to enable teachers to develop a learner-centred and competence-based approach alongside chronological and knowledge-based teaching;

7.1.3. allow sufficient space and time to properly study the complexities and implications of the history of the 19th and 20th centuries, aiming to deepen students' understanding of the challenges of the present time, including as regards sensitive history and remembrance;

7.1.4. include in history curricula the study of different forms of totalitarian regime as well as other violent ideological movements which have devastated Europe in the 20th and 21st centuries, as serious violations of human rights that people in Europe have suffered, with a particular focus on the ways in which distorted historical interpretations can be deployed to justify acts of aggression in the present day;

7.2. concerning methodologies, to:

7.2.1. stimulate critical thinking through learning how to evaluate historical sources and make well-informed judgments;

7.2.2. develop a human rights-based analysis of historical events, multiperspectivity in history education and critical consideration of different standpoints;

7.2.3. foster interactive pedagogies and co-operative learning in small groups, acknowledging cultural differences and multiple identities among learners in a class;

7.3. concerning measures to create a supportive and enabling environment for teachers and learners, to:

7.3.1. include the competences for democratic culture in teacher education and vocational training, multiply teachers' opportunities for professional exchange and development, and provide a range of different teaching resources and guidance – including the Council of Europe's "Quality history education in the 21st century" guiding principles – and make them available in local languages;

7.3.2. guarantee free access to virtual learning environments and open educational resources;

7.3.3. promote collaborative learning projects, for instance to facilitate contacts between students and survivors of totalitarian regimes and violent ideological movements, or victims of terrorist groups, and transnational networking and co-operation in the field of education for democratic culture and history teaching;

7.4. concerning synergies between formal and non-formal education, to:

7.4.1. facilitate partnerships between schools, cultural institutions and other relevant stakeholders, such as sites of remembrance, museums, archives, civil society, artists and associations of victims of terrorist groups, to co-create history lessons; this requires time and financial resources for visits and joint projects, as well as training and curricular support for teachers to prepare for the wider historical context this will involve;

7.4.2. grant funding and autonomy to museums and remembrance sites to develop as safe learning spaces for democracy, co-creating educational projects based on thorough academic research, a human rights-based analysis and multiple perspectives, aiming *inter alia* to foster intergenerational dialogue within local communities and offer visitors fresh perspectives and a more nuanced understanding of the past.