

Recommendation 2303 (2026)¹

Socialising at schools: for an inclusive and participatory education fostering democratic values

Parliamentary Assembly

1. In response to a global democratic decline and referring to its [Resolution 2640 \(2026\)](#) “Socialising at schools: for an inclusive and participatory education fostering democratic values”, the Parliamentary Assembly underlines that learning and practising democracy should be a core political and educational priority in Europe today to help young people engage in democratic citizenship.
2. In this context, the Assembly upholds the decision of the ministers of education of the Council of Europe’s member States to set new priorities and actions to implement the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy by endorsing the Council of Europe Education Strategy 2024-2030. The strategy focuses on three pillars: renewing the democratic and civic mission of education; enhancing the social responsibility and responsiveness of education; and advancing education through a human rights-based digital transformation.
3. Moreover, the initiative of the Secretary General to launch a New Democratic Pact for Europe to engage and support member States in strengthening democratic resilience in Europe is timely. The Assembly considers that building more resilient and responsive education systems should be a key component of this process. The political commitment of member States will be crucial in placing education as a priority, allocating resources and developing policies that enable schools to respond to multiple societal and democratic challenges, and become places where democratic, inclusive and participatory principles can be learned and practised.
4. Teachers and school leaders are central to this process, which is grounded in a whole-school democratic culture, and which needs to be widely developed and used within the European Space for Citizenship Education. The Council of Europe provides valuable guidance and practical tools for educators, such as the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, and experiences from past projects, including Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation and “Free to Speak – Safe to Learn” Democratic Schools for All. Moreover, the 2025 European Year of Digital Citizenship Education offers to member States a useful platform to exchange experiences and access resources and innovative practices in digital citizenship education.
5. In this context, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers provide support and assistance to member States to undertake a strategic policy review, in line with the Council of Europe Education Strategy 2024-2030, and in particular to:
 - 5.1. promote a learner-centred and human rights-based approach to education, ensuring that all learners – including vulnerable groups such as migrant children and children with special education needs – benefit from an inclusive approach that values students’ needs, talents, abilities and interests, and does not reduce them to perceived limitations;
 - 5.2. strengthen the democratic mission of education systems by ensuring full alignment with the European Space for Citizenship Education; facilitate the implementation and widespread use of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture; and favour the provision of age-

1. *Assembly debate* on 28 January 2026 (6th sitting) (see [Doc. 16314](#), report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, rapporteur: Ms Luz Martinez Seijo). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 28 January 2026 (6th sitting).



appropriate education for democratic citizenship as a distinct compulsory subject complemented by the transversal integration of competences for democratic culture in other relevant subjects during all stages of formal education;

5.3. provide guidance to integrate the Council of Europe curriculum framework for digital citizenship education fully into education systems;

5.4. provide targeted and practical guidance to include the competences for democratic culture and digital citizenship education in teacher education, vocational training and early childhood and care;

5.5. continue and, where appropriate, enhance co-operation with the European Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to provide coherent and complementary guidance to uphold the democratic role of education and advance the concept of a whole-school democratic culture to be widely used and implemented in schools.