

Raising Children to Become Democratic Citizens

Educational Initiatives for Preventing Extremism and Radicalization in Norway

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Abstract

Norway is often highlighted as an outstanding democracy. Nevertheless, there is still a need to work on democratic issues to prevent radicalism and extremism. This chapter presents how a national prevention approach, *Democratic Preparedness against Racism and Anti-Semitism* (DEMBRA), is conducted in southern Norway. DEMBRA is directed at both schools and at teacher education. It highlights the origins of the DEMBRA programmes and how a regional peace centre (ARKIVET) and a local university (University of Agder) both work on the issues of radicalism and extremism. Finally, the authors draw some conclusions from the two different implementations of DEMBRA.

Keywords

democracy – DEMBRA – prevention – teacher education – school

1 Introduction

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) measures the worldwide state of democracy annually. The *Democracy Index* report covering 2019 stresses in general that global democracy seems to be in a very vulnerable state (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2020). Although Norway was highlighted in this study as the most democratic among the 167 participating countries, there is no room for complacency where democracy is concerned. While democratic values are fundamental in Scandinavia, there can be no doubt that democratic values are under threat in Norwegian society just as in other countries. Globally, a focus on the inability to handle environmental challenges and the unfair

distribution of trade and production as well as migration and refugee challenges are predicted to initiate and maintain antidemocratic movements in democratic societies (Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise, 2018). Nationally, Norwegian society is becoming more and more culturally diverse due to many different types of immigration, and therefore the need for competence in cultural understanding is growing more crucial. This competence is not simply about being familiar with different languages, clothes, and customs, but also about seeing oneself as a responsible and active contributor to making society as inhabitable as possible for oneself and every other member of society.

In Norway, schools carry the bulk of responsibility for ‘producing’ democratic citizens because they are the natural meeting point for pupils from different cultures, religions, skin colours, and origins. As a consequence, schools offer a suitable environment for working with this diversity in order to create, support, and maintain democratic societies. In a broad sense, democracy can be seen both as the infrastructure and the anchor for all teaching and learning in the classroom. That is why it is necessary to provide schools with knowledge about democracy, terrorism, and extremism. It is also essential to enhance the self-confidence, routines, and practices for addressing controversial themes, developing an inclusive community, and fostering critical thinking in the classroom for both in-service and pre-service teachers.

Against this backdrop, the educational role becomes more and more critical. In a world with right- and left-wing forces and values, high-speed distribution of correct and incorrect information via the internet and social media, social changes, and great diversity, there is an obvious need for taking care of democracy and for fostering critical thinking abilities. We suggest that educational systems have a moral obligation to meet the need for understanding and to initiate activities that contribute to citizens’ enlightenment.

In this chapter, we will explain the characteristics of Norway’s national educational system as this is the point of departure for the prevention programmes we will present. After that, we will focus on the southern part of Norway, where two kinds of national prevention initiatives are currently operational, namely *DEMBRA for Schools* and *DEMBRA for Teacher Education*. The chapter closes with a discussion of democracy as an issue in school and the educational system.

2 Democracy and Education in Norway

The school system in Norway is very similar to the school systems in other Scandinavian countries. The public free school in Norway spans grade 1 to

grade 10 and is mandatory for all children between the ages of six and sixteen. After that, most pupils attend secondary school (grade 11 to grade 13). Norwegian schools follow the 'one school for all' ethos, aiming to provide equal learning possibilities for all pupils. The principle of adapted education applies to all pupils, including low achieving pupils who need individual support and high achieving pupils who need additional academic challenges. Special needs education is provided within the pupil's regular class to the extent that this is possible and sufficient (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2016). In this way, Norwegian schools by their very nature have a diverse composition and an inclusive function. According to large-scale assessment studies, socio-economic factors seem to play a minor role in pupils' achievement in Norway compared to many other countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2019).

2.1 *Research Findings Regarding Democracy and Education in Norway*

The 2016 large-scale assessment study *International Civic and Citizenship Education Study* (ICCS, 2016, see Schulz et al., 2017) conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) is an essential frame of reference for Norway for comparing how the citizenship competencies of Norwegian young people score from an international point of view. At the same time, the ICCS study indicates how well the educational system prepares pupils for democratic understanding and principles. Thus, Norway's participation in the ICCS study provides the stakeholders with information on how far the educational system succeeds in promoting democracy.

Findings from ICCS 2016 show that democratic characteristics are well represented in Norwegian schools and that Norwegian 9th graders (pupils between 14 and 15 years of age) have a good understanding of how democracy works in theory and in practice. At the same time, Norwegian pupils have a lot of confidence in the government, police, and military institutions. As is the case in many other countries, however, pupils from minority families have a lesser understanding of what democracy is. Norwegian pupils report positively on democratic activities in school, such as pupils' councils, parliament, and debates. Over 90% of the pupils report that they have participated in the election of prefects, and 60% of the pupils have been involved in school decisions (Huang et al., 2017).

All in all, findings from ICCS 2016 corroborate the impression that Norwegian schools are built upon a democratic fundament and that they have a central role in conveying democratic thinking and fostering democratic values in society. In view of these results, both in-service teachers in school as well as pre-service teachers in education need to focus on and consider democratic principles.

2.2 *The Role of Democracy in Norwegian Education*

The Norwegian school system has a long tradition of integrating the topic of democracy in instruction and curricula as well as fostering democratic understanding, critical thinking, and participation (Briseid, 2012). Although different iterations of the curriculum have addressed different opinions of democracy over time, promoting varying ideas of what pupils need to learn in school (Briseid, 2012), democratic values have never lost their importance in Norwegian school curricula.

Democracy is a general basis for the school curriculum and not a separate subject. It is meant to be treated in several study subjects and ought to be practiced in participation and councils, fostering a pupil's respect for diversity and the courage to exchange opinions. Although democracy is crucial in the Norwegian school curriculum, it is, however, not a separate subject in education, with the exception of the elective subject 'democracy in practice'.

In Norway, it is part of the schools' duty to promote support for democratic values and to help pupils understand the rules of democracy. Mutual respect, tolerance, individual beliefs, freedom of speech, and free elections are values that must be promoted by all primary and secondary schools (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017). The idea behind this approach is that democratic values and attitudes are counterweights to prejudice and discrimination and that democracy requires independent and educated people. All participants in the school community must develop an awareness of both minority and majority perspectives and create a space for cooperation, dialogue, and opportunities for defending opinions. School is meant to be a place where pupils experience democracy in their daily lives. Furthermore, in providing pupils with knowledge about democracy, schools play an essential role as a meeting point for children and young people from diverse cultures with diverging cognitive abilities and different supporting environments. Schools mirror diversity in society, but all children have 'school' as a common denominator where they meet each other and learn about each other's backgrounds and histories. Thus, teachers have an important role both in implementing democratic values and in handling critical situations in school and class.

2.3 *The Crucial Role of Teachers in Promoting Democratic Values*

Several research studies underline the importance of teachers for cultivating a trusting learning community and for developing actively engaged pupils (Cornelius-White, 2007; Nordenbo et al., 2008; Moos et al., 2004). Ravndal (2019), a terrorism researcher at the Centre for Research on Extremism (C-REX) at the University of Oslo, highlights three factors which are supposed to prevent extremism and radicalization among pupils (Ravndal, cited in Skjong, 2019).

These are: first, teaching pupils to recognize extremist ideas and ideology and informing them about all kinds of fanaticism, conspiracy theories, authoritarian practices and antidemocratic attitudes; second, fostering pupils' critical thinking with regard to the internet and the use of social media, including 'fake news'; and third, teaching young people about democratic thinking and living. Ravndal underlines the importance of giving pupils a basic understanding of what democracy implies, not only in theory but also in practice. An essential prerequisite for this to succeed is that teachers must have been trained and must have gained knowledge about these issues (Ravndal, cited in Skjong, 2019).

According to Børhaug (2004), democracy is broadly about the individuals' empowerment when they meet with other people, community structures, and other cultures; this empowerment is grounded in a democratic society which brings in freedom and equality as a reference point. When teachers listen to pupils' opinions and encourage them to participate in discussions or in school elections, this activity in turn builds a bridge between the individual's activity in the classroom and in society (Westrheim & Hagatun, 2015). Røthing argues that the classroom should be an arena in which controversies are welcome to be discussed and in which teachers should be encouraged to uncover issues and to raise questions (Røthing, cited in Skjong, 2019). Nevertheless, Røthing distinguishes between relational and categorical approaches and advocates a relational approach. This is because a categorical approach might unintentionally escalate extremist attitudes. Pupils who are singled out and rebuked based on categorical rules such as, for instance, 'we have no tolerance for racist slogans in the classroom' may quickly feel rejected and misunderstood. Such an experience can reinforce a feeling of being an outsider and strengthen a marginalized development.

A relational approach, by contrast, focuses on relationships within the class and promotes an environment in which pupils can dare to contribute controversial statements without being excluded from the class. Taking an extremist position involves emotions and faith in oneself or a like-minded group (Hogg, 2014). The role of the teacher is demanding. On the one hand, teachers are expected to challenge racism and extremist thinking, and on the other hand, they are being asked to take care of the individual as well as the whole group of pupils in the classroom (Røthing, cited in Skjong, 2019).

A relational approach could focus on building good relationships with and between all pupils in the classroom and nurturing an inclusive class environment where everyone feels appreciated. Research findings show that the atmosphere in school classes depends to a large degree on the teachers' behaviours in their interaction with pupils. Yet teachers themselves seem scarcely conscious of the strength and influence their actions have. Most teachers are

prone to underestimating their importance in this matter (Jackson et al., 1993; Jacobsen et al., 2003). However, some teachers also feel uncertain about how to handle difficult situations and choose to ignore them and rush to other content because a given situation feels too controversial and sensitive (Aasebø, 2017). Well-prepared teachers can give pupils opportunities for acting and participating in decisions with their own opinions. They can also listen to and influence attitudes, and they can highlight utterances and discuss consequences of opinions that are not at all compatible with a democratic way of thinking. Nevertheless, for the classroom to become an arena where controversial topics can be discussed, the classroom atmosphere and the relationships between pupils and teachers are of great importance (Deimel et al., 2019). Thus, working on providing knowledge about democracy and guidance for dealing with critical incidents in school and instruction are essential topics for both in-service and pre-service teachers.

A programme called *Democratic Mobilization* (DEMO) at the University of Agder (UiA) in Grimstad/Kristiansand was established at the Department of Education in 2015. This programme aims to mobilize, corroborate, and strengthen the emphasis on democracy as an essential issue within pedagogy and teacher education. The UiA cooperates with the surrounding municipalities in southern Norway as part of the university's vision for the 'co-creation of tomorrow's knowledge', within which 'democracy and active citizenship' is one of six interdisciplinary priority areas. The UiA also has a close relationship with the ARKIVET (Archive) Peace and Human Rights Centre in Kristiansand. This chapter will present how ARKIVET and the UiA work hand in hand in the national initiative *Democratic Preparedness against Racism and Anti-Semitism* (*Demokratisk beredskap mot rasisme og antisemittisme*, or DEMBRA; see Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies, 2020a). DEMBRA is a programme that works on the prevention of racism, group-based hostility, and antidemocratic attitudes, and it supports schools and teacher education all over Norway.

The DEMBRA initiative is twofold and focuses on both schools and teacher education. Both the project DEMBRA for Schools and DEMBRA for Teacher Education can be characterized as having a proactive approach when it comes to preventing the development of radicalization and extremist thinking.

3 The DEMBRA Initiative

The early beginnings of DEMBRA date back to March 2010. The Norwegian public broadcaster Norsk Rikskringkasting (NRK) published a story covering

anti-Semitism towards Jewish pupils in Norwegian schools (NRK, 2010, 12:30–20:15). In the wake of the debate that followed, the Norwegian government put together a working group to come up with ideas on how to handle anti-Semitism and racism in schools. The group was also asked to try to explain why such prejudice existed amongst pupils. The report, entitled *It May Happen Again*, was handed over to and subsequently published by the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (Eidsvåg et al., 2011) in January 2011 and contained thirty-nine suggestions for strengthening knowledge, working skills, and awareness on this topic through courses and programmes. Several of these suggestions emphasize working with the school as a whole rather than class by class. For example, instead of dealing with racism as a problem concerning one class or a few pupils, schools should pursue a whole-school approach to encourage inclusion and fight exclusion. DEMBRA was implemented as a direct response to these suggestions.

Just six months after the report was handed to the Ministry of Education and Research, racist terror struck the whole nation as eight people were killed by a car bomb in Oslo, followed by the attack on the Norwegian Labour Party's youth camp on the island of Utøya, where sixty-nine people died in a massacre. These significant incidents shed a worldwide light on the prevalence of radicalism and terror in Norway and were an eye-opener for Norwegian society (Kristiansen, 2015; Lenz & Nustad, 2015). It was baffling how such atrocities could happen in such a small and peaceful country of about five million people that is economically well situated with an average high level of education and with a functioning system of law and justice. As a result, DEMBRA could not be implemented fast enough as the debate that followed (and that still continues) showed how deeply rooted both anti-Semitism and racism seem to be in some areas and segments of Norwegian society.

As a consequence, in 2012, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research asked for initiatives that could serve to fulfil some of the thirty-nine suggestions. DEMBRA got funding as a national initiative for this work. The Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies (The Holocaust Centre) and the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) started up DEMBRA in 2013, primarily for schools in the Oslo region. The Holocaust Centre is also where project management and vital administrative functions are based. Since then, DEMBRA has advanced and been established through several national peace and human rights centres in Norway: the Falstad Centre (central), the Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue (inland), the Rafto Foundation (west), the Narvik Centre for Peace (north), and ARKIVET Peace and Human Rights Centre (south). DEMBRA also serves as a model project for other Nordic countries, particularly Sweden and Denmark.

In late 2013, the first five schools completed a DEMBRA initiative in Oslo. Simultaneously, the Norwegian government set up a task force to provide new insights for the school system. The official Norwegian Report (NOU:8), the *Ludvigsen Report* (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2015), was handed to the authorities in 2015. The report advised a revision of the whole scale of learning practices within the school system. The report suggested a more holistic view of the school system and a curricular change, dedicating more time to lifelong learning and in-depth learning. This conjunction of events created momentum for DEMBRA and led to extended funding for the project. Since 2019, DEMBRA has been funded from the national budget, and each coordinating centre receives a part of this funding proportionate to the size of the initiative and to how many schools the centre serves. Evaluation reports indicates that the DEMBRA efforts are worth the time and finances invested (Lenz & Kjeøy, 2015; Lenz et al., 2017).

The ARKIVET Peace and Human Rights Centre is the DEMBRA provider for the southern part of Norway as it is located in Kristiansand, the biggest city in the region. ARKIVET started its work in 2001 in the buildings of the old state archive. As this building served as the headquarters of the German Gestapo (secret state police) from January 1942 until May 1945, educational work on the promotion of peace and the protection of human rights has been the backbone of ARKIVET since its very beginning. ARKIVET became a regional coordinator of DEMBRA in 2018 and is a natural partner for schools in the region.

Both in-service and pre-service teachers need support in disseminating knowledge and dealing with extremism situations. In the next two sections, we present the implementation and research work of DEMBRA for Schools and DEMBRA for Teacher Education in the region of southern Norway.

3.1 *DEMBRA for Schools*

DEMBRA as a programme for schools is a nationwide initiative and has been promoted in Norwegian secondary schools since 2013 (Lenz & Nustad, 2015). In southern Norway, ARKIVET is the partner for the schools in the region. This section presents the ideas behind DEMBRA for Schools, the characteristics of the local intervention programme, and some research findings connected to the implementation.

3.1.1 The Implementation of DEMBRA for Schools

ARKIVET provides schools with personal DEMBRA guides who map a school's prerequisites for participation and suggest measures and initiatives in school to focus on democracy and citizenship. Cooperation with the teaching staff and consideration of the experiences and desires of the teachers are essential

when it comes to setting up practical measures. It is therefore important to provide the necessary time needed for the DEMBRA guide to explain thoroughly that DEMBRA is about critical reflection and changing viewpoints rather than giving schools top-down input on trends or best-practice recipes to achieve critical thinking. It is a fundamental prerequisite that DEMBRA must be accepted by the staff. Acceptance is achieved by asking the participants in both formal and informal ways, for instance in a democratic vote about participating in the study. This is intended to strengthen the participants' ownership and to make the initiative less top-down. So even if the principal and other leaders are eager to conduct a DEMBRA initiative, it will not be implemented unless the staff have agreed to it.

Nevertheless, to ensure quality and progression, the suggested timeline and development is defined by five basic principles and ten steps to be completed within a DEMBRA year. In sum, they cover and explain the ideas behind DEMBRA and set up boundaries for what DEMBRA stands for.

The five DEMBRA principles are: (1) participation and inclusion; (2) knowledge and critical thinking; (3) diversity competence; (4) ownership and embeddedness; and (5) entirety. Behind each principle, there is a variety of ways to explain how and why this principle is essential and why it is necessary to fulfil the implementation of DEMBRA. Because all these explanations are intertwined, it is evident for the DEMBRA teachers that there is no single correct answer on how to prevent xenophobia and bigotry but rather an array of possible methods and outcomes. DEMBRA does not prescribe specific theories and methods. On the contrary, the project allows a school's staff to determine the best way for working on their specific area within the scope and the methodology of the five DEMBRA principles.

The DEMBRA website provides a checklist of ten steps to be completed during the DEMBRA year (Table 8.1, see also Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies, 2020b). The steps do not need to be followed slavishly, but they do show the desired change, the progress, as well as the outcomes of the efforts that both the school and the DEMBRA guide put into the initiative.

3.1.2 Research on DEMBRA for Schools in Southern Norway

Since ARKIVET started DEMBRA for Schools in southern Norway, the first two schools in the region have completed their year of tutoring. The effects of the schools' work are being investigated both quantitatively and qualitatively. Here, we report the first qualitative findings on the development of the programme at the first two schools in southern Norway, which we will call School A and School B.

According to the ten steps of implementation (Table 8.1), DEMBRA should start with a mapping of experiences, attitudes, and behaviours among pupils

TABLE 8.1 10 process steps in the DEMBRA for schools programme

Step	Contents/actions
Step 1: Start-up	Administration and staff decide to participate in DEMBRA. School establishes a DEMBRA team to work with the DEMBRA guide.
Step 2: Mapping	Mapping of tendencies among pupils and teachers (discrimination, bullying, etc.) at the school via online questionnaire; alternatively, discussions, interviews, or drawing exercises.
Step 3: Workshop	The DEMBRA guide sets a date for a workshop for all the school staff. The theme for the workshop is based on findings from the school mapping survey.
Step 4: Meet with the pupils' representatives	Empowering the pupils. Pupils' representatives are informed and given the opportunity of addressing the findings from the mapping survey as well as discussing specific measures for dealing with obstacles.
Step 5: Define areas of work	The DEMBRA group discusses possible areas of focus for their work (for instance, use of xenophobic language and reasons for it). The DEMBRA guide helps the group to observe critically and not to jump to hasty conclusions. The DEMBRA group and guide may meet on several occasions to dig deeper into what area is to be defined for their work.
Step 6: Discuss measurements	The area of work represents the boundaries on topics but not on methods; there are endless options for tackling obstacles practically. The DEMBRA guide encourages groups or teachers themselves to come up with ideas and measurements. The DEMBRA guide facilitates drawing on experiences from other DEMBRA schools.
Step 7: Finish the DEMBRA plan	The year during which a DEMBRA guide supports the school is merely a first step towards change, knowledge, and critical reflection on oneself and the school as a whole. When the DEMBRA plan is finished, schools need to prepare for continuing the work on their own.
Step 8: Supervision and guidance on specific completed measurements	As the DEMBRA plan comes to an end, there are already set measurements with which both staff and pupils have gained experience. Learning from those experiences is pivotal for defining the need for and the quality of new measurements, which may span years to come.
Step 9: Building capacity for the whole staff	Schools work on their area of focus. Staff are invited to a whole day of capacity-building exercises if possible (i.e. a seminar on dialogue and discussion in the classroom).
Step 10: Evaluation and discussion on how to continue DEMBRA work	The school is now entirely in charge of how they will follow up, expand, or leave.

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM: 'DEMBRA-IMPLEMENTATION', BY NORWEGIAN CENTRE FOR HOLOCAUST AND MINORITY STUDIES (2020B)

and teachers alike. The end point of the year of tutoring, which also marks the start of a new approach towards otherness, bigotry, etc., requires finalizing a plan going forward based on the experiences and competencies that the school has gained during that year. The findings referred to reflect on the development of School A and School B.

Approximately 40% of School A's pupils came from minorities. Since 2002, since before the DEMBRA initiative, the school had already worked very hard to create a sense of 'we and us'. The school was well known in the region and had also won awards for the 'we and us' work. School A did not use the DEMBRA mapping survey because the staff were concerned that some of the questions might generate negative attitudes towards ethnic and national minorities and that, despite the tool's good intention, the survey might trigger use of words such as 'Poles', 'Somalians', 'gay', 'Muslim', 'Norwegians', and 'women' in a negative way. As School A had worked so hard over such a long period of time on creating a common identity instead of segregating certain groups, it provided a convincing reason for not using the DEMBRA mapping survey. Nevertheless, the school had to provide another kind of mapping exercise as a starting point for the DEMBRA work. Therefore, the school's DEMBRA group together with its DEMBRA guide decided to conduct qualitative discussions on what the school needed most to strengthen and further its already established work.

Based on the findings, the whole staff was provided with two day-long workshops on specific themes, namely 'in- and out-groups' and 'dialogue'. The first workshop provided the philosophy, theories, and effective educational practices for understanding and combating the emergence of in- and out-groups, micro-aggression, etc. The second workshop provided the same for creating safe environments for discussion and disagreements in the classroom, including the importance of trying to understand one's interlocutor, regardless of whether the person is a pupil or a teacher. As a result of the intervention, the teachers decided to dedicate more of their work on strengthening communication within the classroom rather than the whole school. So far, they had worked more on communication at school level, but now they saw the need for inserting measures in the microcosm of the classroom.

Unlike School A, School B did complete the mapping survey and benefited from this exercise when deciding the scope of intervention. While the survey is mostly designed for teachers and pupils in grades 8, 9, and 10, School B also distributed surveys to grades 1 to 7. The DEMBRA guide helped to identify what stood out from these surveys based on the responses. School B identified as its starting point for the DEMBRA initiative the use of specific abusive words and particular places in the schoolyard which were conflict areas where insecurity thrived. Based on this information, School B's competence workshop was designed to promote the understanding and interpretation of the language

of the pupils and to include exercises on taking other people's perspectives. Through role play and by creating awareness of different the connotations and meanings that words may hold in different contexts or for different audiences, the DEMBRA group decided to work on 'unity' as the school's primary objective. The intervention resulted in a workshop about democracy and all the arrays of what democracy is and can be for 8th and 9th graders.

Results from interviews with the principal after the conclusion of the programme indicate that the programme output had far better effects on pupils in the upper year groups (grades 8–10) than in the lower year groups (grades 1–7). This coincides with experiences from the focused work on critical thinking. Critical thinking as a concept is much easier to implement for teachers and easier to grasp for pupils the older the pupils are. Feedback given by the school to the DEMBRA guide also suggests that there is still improvement to be made on empowering teachers and staff to provide conceptual DEMBRA teaching when this is not conducted by the DEMBRA group or a designated guide. Such feedback helps build a better programme for schools that will participate in years to come.

3.1.3 Discussion: DEMBRA for Schools at ARKIVET

DEMBRA programmes have been conducted in the Oslo area for up to seven years in total. Thus, evaluation reports with findings concerning the learning potential for a DEMBRA school are now available (Lenz & Kjørøy, 2015; Lenz et al., 2017). In the south of Norway, however, DEMBRA is still in its infancy, and there are few research findings to date. Nevertheless, more and more data is becoming available from investigating the 10-steps process (Table 8.1); this data provides valuable insights into how schools in the region can improve their work related to democracy and radicalism and offers some knowledge about which priorities teachers set and how they develop measures for improving their schools. In this way, other schools and the project overall can profit from the experiences that DEMBRA schools have had. The main objective of DEMBRA is not primarily to provide data but rather to provide local opportunities and tailored tools for schools to conduct targeted work on certain challenges and specific goals.

The examples provided above show how schools can choose very different approaches to the DEMBRA work within the same framework and based on the same principles. School A and School B ended up with very clear goals for improvement in the years to come, but yet they handled the programme very differently. DEMBRA does not simply finish at the end of the year. Through its guidance and competence raising activities, DEMBRA promotes ongoing critical thinking and self-reflection with the aim of creating better knowledge and therefore sustainable environments for democratic citizenship.

3.2 *DEMBRA for Teacher Education*

From a long-term perspective, it is crucial to guarantee a focus on democratic values not only for pupils in schools but also for students during their teacher education; thus, pre-service teachers are future ambassadors for preventing extremism and radicalism in schools. This section presents the ideas behind *DEMBRA* for Teacher Education and exemplifies some teaching methods and report results from a local case study in southern Norway conducted by the UiA.

3.2.1 The Implementation of *DEMBRA* for Teacher Education

The importance of education and the role of the teacher have been highlighted among researchers in the field of terrorism and extremism (Ghosh et al., 2017; Gereluk, 2012). The influence of teachers is essential as a multiplier of democratic values far beyond the school's boundaries. Therefore, it is crucial to equip pre-service teachers with the knowledge and skills to cope with the challenging situations that might occur in the classroom (Ravndal, cited in Skjong, 2019). This is what *DEMBRA* for Teacher Education is about.

DEMBRA for Teacher Education is based on the same ideas as *DEMBRA* for Schools, but the aims of the two programmes differ. The aims of *DEMBRA* for Teacher Education are to contribute to teaching strategies and materials for pre-service teachers. To this end, a digital database (see Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies, 2020c) was established which contains materials from which teacher trainers can draw inspiration when they create their lessons and seminars related to democracy, citizenship, racism, and anti-Semitism for pre-service teachers. The digital database of resources is a continuous work in progress and is based on teaching materials collected from teacher educators in various institutions.

The digital database consists of teaching units through which the different teacher educators in the programme present different ways of teaching *DEMBRA*-related topics. In southern Norway, teacher educators at the UiA contributed materials regarding the multicultural classroom, democracy, critical thinking dialogue, racism, ethics, and trust to the database (Endresen et al., 2020). The teaching units were evaluated by the students, sometimes improved, and subsequently documented and registered. Finally, all teaching materials from each teacher educator were submitted in detail to the project management group at the Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies in Oslo. The content in the digital database consists of informative texts, didactical programmes, teaching units, and various types of exercises. All materials are free and available to all teacher educators and pre-service teachers (Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies, 2020c).

The teacher training institutions participating in the project must adhere to the DEMBRA values, but they can also add their own local nuance to the submitted teaching materials. The UiA, for instance, seeks to promote pre-service teachers' capacity for building an inclusive and supportive classroom environment in order to prevent marginalization and discrimination among pupils, and to focus on and develop pre-service teachers' critical thinking abilities. Furthermore, teacher education aims to stimulate the pre-service teachers' sensitivity and vigilance towards attitudes and ideologies which strip away an individual's humanity by pigeonholing, infringing human rights, promoting black-and-white thinking, and disregarding in various ways the individual's uniqueness. This requires not only fostering an awareness of these challenges but also nurturing pre-service teacher students' self-confidence and fostering sufficient resilience in future teachers to enable them to discuss controversial issues in the classroom instead of avoiding difficult and challenging situations.

The next section presents a closer look at the materials that were developed and implemented by the UiA. The materials were evaluated by the students and subsequently sent to the project management group at the Norwegian Centre for Holocaust and Minority Studies for further processing and preparation for inclusion in the resource database.

3.2.2 Developing DEMBRA Materials for Use in Teacher Education

In this section, we present a case study of how an educator in a teacher training programme conducted a teaching unit. The teaching unit consisted of twelve hours of instruction in the autumn of 2018. There were about twenty teacher students in the group. The teaching unit was divided into three sections and was carried out using a mixture of various methodological approaches.

In accordance with research findings that underline the teacher's role and the classroom atmosphere (Hattie, 2008), the starting point for Section 1 was to articulate and draw lines between the fields of values, ethics, and identity. This is supported by the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, who claims that there is an essential link between identity and a kind of orientation. He writes: 'To know who you are is to be oriented in moral space, a space in which questions arise about what is good or bad, what is worth doing and what not, what has meaning and importance for you and what is trivial and secondary' (Taylor, 1989, p. 28). The quotation highlights that values, morals, and ethics are dimensions that are, in fact, deeply involved in a person's self-understanding.

The content of Section 1 involved a mixture of information presented by the educators, various examples from the internet and YouTube, and practical exercises in which the teacher students participated. The meaning aspect is

TABLE 8.2 Topics of the DEMBRA sessions for pre-service teachers at the UiA

Teaching unit	Content
Section 1: Role of the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Classroom atmosphere – Teachers' self-understanding in the light of values and moral and ethical dimensions – Narratives as a basis for reflection and dialogue on personal experiences relevant for future work as a teacher
Section 2: Racism, anti-Semitism, and stereotypes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Historical knowledge from the fields of science, culture, and ideology – Victims' perspectives – Storytelling in small groups about experiences of racism
Section 3: Trust and dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Role of trust and dialogue in society, politics, and interpersonal relationships – Teacher's role in establishing frameworks for trust and dialogue in the classroom – Creating a dialogue and trusting relationships amongst pupils

SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM 'DEMBRA—IMPLEMENTATION', BY NORWEGIAN CENTRE FOR HOLOCAUST AND MINORITY STUDIES (2020C)

strengthened by thinking about teaching from a narrative perspective (Taylor, 1989, p. 47). The pre-service teachers had the opportunity to grasp their lives as a narrative. By looking back in time on their own personal experiences, they reflected on fundamental values and thought about what sort of values and ethics would become important in their prospective work as a teacher (Haraldstad & Kristiansen, 2019). The here-and-now situation invited a dialogue about attitudes and ideas from the past and about what could be important to develop further, or to change and rethink. Engaging the teacher students in these different exercises meant that more implicit attitudes and ideas were brought forward. In general, the narrative approach permits a dialogue in the classroom where stories are put on the table and discussed (Rendtorff & Hermansen, 2002). The sharing of good and bad memories and of stories from their own lives often led to discussions about which values—if possible—they could agree upon as fundamental values for a teacher to practice, which values

should be discarded or rejected, and which values might lead to a deterioration in classroom atmosphere. The different values were further discussed in light of the Norwegian ethical code for teachers (Bjerkestrand et al., 2012).

Section 2 was about racism, anti-Semitism, creating stereotypes, and black-and-white thinking. The teacher students were encouraged to share stories in small groups about their experiences of racism, both their own stories or stories they had been told or had read about. One goal for this teaching sequence was to give the students an understanding of how it might feel to be a victim of racism and more knowledge about the different sorts of mechanisms involved in racism. Another goal was to give a historical introduction to the concepts within the field of science, culture, and ideology in a Norwegian and European context, illuminating the ideas that led to the ultimate and horrifying scenarios during the Second World War. Finally, today's 'everyday racism', which is hard to define and which is expressed more indirectly and is somehow invisible at different levels of the society (Bangstad & Døving, 2015), was put on the agenda. Through sharing experiences, watching authentic scenes on the internet, and participating in various exercises, the students were encouraged to challenge their own attitudes and ideas and to explain them clearly. In this way, fundamental attributions and tacit values were revealed.

Section 3 was titled 'trust and dialogue'. Trust and trusting relationships seem to be a very basic prerequisite for the functioning of a democratic society at a political level ('general trust') as well as for life in communities and inter-human relationships, including the classroom community (Kristiansen, 2005). However, trust is a difficult concept to define. At the individual level, it has to do with a feeling of safety based on the expectation that 'the other person does not have an intention to harm me' (Baier, 1991, p. 4). If trust is indeed fundamental for a well-functioning democratic society, it is important to teach future teachers how trust can be nurtured and how to create a trusting atmosphere in the classroom. A trusting atmosphere will influence students' willingness to take part in discussions and to share ideas and thoughts. Moreover, getting to know a person and learning to trust him or her could contribute to reducing both prejudice and preconceived negative images of people or groups of people to which a particular individual is assumed to belong. A further factor that could prevent extremism is an increased awareness of ideas that contribute to pigeonholing people and of ideas that nourish further polarization between 'them and us'. Trust and dialogue are related terms. Both refer to some relational qualities and basic ethical standards. To take part in a conversation would imply a willingness to listen and to adjust to what the other has to say. Fostering dialogue and trusting relationships amongst pupils may well serve to counteract lines of extremist development.

3.2.3 Discussion: DEMBRA for Teacher Education at the UiA

At the end of each section, teacher students gave a written evaluation based on the work of Brookfield (2014), who has worked specifically with the concept of critical thinking and on principles of making education relevant for future work. Altogether thirty evaluation forms were collected. The findings show that 90% considered the topic of the unit as very important. About 75% of the students reported to have been the most engaged when they were involved in solving different tasks, participated in exercises, or took an active part in the dialogue. In response to the question if anything surprised them, 50% of the students agreed. Some were surprised by their own attitudes as they were revealed in some of the exercises. Others were astonished by their fellow students' views. The general impression was that the students found the teaching sessions to be relevant and essential in light of their prospective professional life. Some of the students also wanted to go deeper into the material and write their mandatory essays about some of these topics.

The findings showed that the sharing of stories and experiences in addition to participating in solving the different tasks contributed to creating a positive atmosphere among the students. The student group was composed of participants from different religious and cultural backgrounds. The students rated the unit as relevant, and we therefore think that the training will be of importance in their future work. In particular, we feel that it is important that the students themselves had the experience of a supportive classroom atmosphere and know how it feels to take part and be listened to. In their evaluation, the students also expressed their appreciation of themselves being active in the training by participating in the different activities. However, the students also stated that the sessions could have challenged them more regarding their personal attitudes. They also would have liked to have been given some tools and to have seen a stronger emphasis on best practices and potential pitfalls in designing a supportive and inclusive classrooms atmosphere. Moreover, questions on democracy and citizenship education were not explicitly put on the agenda in this unit. Nevertheless, there is hope that the experience of taking part in the discussions in the classroom community might stimulate higher levels of self-confidence in the students for their future work as teachers.

4 Summary and Overall Discussion

Although international surveys report a positive status of democracy in Norway, it is still important to be concerned about democracy. Democracy cannot be taken for granted; it has to be nurtured and taken care of. That is why

prevention programmes like DEMBRA for Schools and DEMBRA for Teacher Education are so important.

But prevention programmes have to consider many issues. Democracy as a term is quite vague, and Biesta (2006) even claims that ‘democracy has so many meanings that it has ceased to have any meaning at all’ (Biesta, 2006, p. 122). The understanding of democracy in school curricula frequently changes according to trends and policies (Briseid, 2012), and in Norway, we recognize that different aspects of democratic values are emphasized through the different curricula reforms (Briseid, 2012; Børhaug, 2004). Thus, working on the topic of democracy, we have to keep the fundamental issue in mind, i.e. that the word democracy implies a different understanding in different contexts and that this understanding differs from individual to individual and across time. This implies another issue. The findings of ICCS 2016 might show a good match between the ICCS questionnaire and the current curriculum in Norway, but it is not certain that the curriculum considers relevant and actual aspects of democracy sufficiently if the curriculum does not remain up to date. Thus, it is important not to adhere to old conceptions but instead continually to rethink democracy in the curriculum, to develop interventions, and to calibrate research instruments according to societal trends because new forms of communication and new types of movement will challenge the democratic values again and again in the future.

How prominent democracy should be as a topic in school curricula is discussed in many countries, and there are also differences in how different countries weight democratic values in school. In Norway, there is a particular emphasis on underlining the importance of equipping pupils with the relevant skills to be able to reason and analyse in order to be able to interpret information and to give reasons for their opinions (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2017). Different cognitive skills are essential for participating in a democracy, for analysing and recognizing extremist ideas and ideology, and for critical thinking. Teachers are the social actors who implement school curricula, and schools are a mirror of the society in which pupils with all kinds of opinions, attitudes, and values meet. With that, it is obvious that schools and teacher education are natural places for implementing prevention programmes. In this chapter, we have presented two Norwegian approaches whose aim it is to build the capability of in-service (DEMBRA for Schools) and pre-service teachers (DEMBRA for Teacher Education) to work on democratic issues in the classroom.

DEMBRA is targeted at in-service and pre-service teachers to ensure a sustainable democracy in the future. The findings from research conducted alongside the implementation of the DEMBRA programmes show that the DEMBRA

for Schools and DEMBRA for Teacher Education projects enhance their participants' focus on the topics of democracy, racism, and anti-Semitism. The work in the two sample schools School A and School B showed that DEMBRA supported the schools in establishing and conducting concrete measures. Findings also indicated that older pupils responded better to the programme than younger pupils. This means there is a need to think about concepts for younger pupils as well.

To ensure a high level of acceptance and motivation, DEMBRA for Schools aims to anchor the programme with the teachers from the very beginning of the initiative. At the same time, it is a challenge to get a school's holistic attention and compliance to work on democracy. In everyday life, principals struggle with implementing various guidelines and recommendations distributed top-down from the government, and teachers are not always very keen on starting yet another draining and time-consuming project if it is not entirely necessary. Furthermore, there are many competing programmes, both commercial and public, trying to get a foothold in schools. It is now essential to continue with the DEMBRA work in schools and to ensure that the focus on democracy is not at risk of drowning among other innovations and programmes that might enter schools.

Following research that shows that the role of teachers is much more important than teachers are aware of (Jackson et al., 1993; Jacobsen et al., 2003), it becomes crucial to put this theme on the agenda for teacher education as well. DEMBRA for Teacher Education can play an essential role by preparing prospective teachers to help prevent children from developing extremist ideologies. Attitudes will involve an awareness both of critical thinking as well as of emotional aspects. DEMBRA for Teacher Education provided pre-service teachers with knowledge and skills on how to deal with difficult situations relating to democracy, racism, and anti-Semitism in the context of a regular teacher education course. The students perceived the instruction as very important and greatly relevant for their own lives as teachers. About half of the students were surprised after having taken a closer look at their own attitudes and the values of their peer students. Most of them had not previously reflected upon these topics to a great extent. According to Schön (1984), this surprising and confusing experience represents a potential for learning. Surprises can play a constructive role in this sense. The students' lack of skills in reflecting upon this topic corroborates the importance of implementing DEMBRA into teacher education.

At this time, the curriculum and instruction around democracy and citizenship are being reformed and re-implemented in Norway. In so doing, experiences and knowledge gained from intervention programmes like DEMBRA

provide essential contributions and support for the emerging ideas on creating good arenas for sustainable learning on democratic issues in schools.

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