

From: info(at)ombudsstelle-werte.at When: mar. 19 oct. 2021 11:03

Dear Mr Dudnic,

We would like to refer again to our first statement, in which the specialist department clearly pointed out that the history curricula in Austria decidedly avoid any one-dimensional, discriminatory concept. Therefore all linguistic, ethnic, religious and cultural groups living in Austria are depicted in history and politics classes in terms of equal treatment in accordance with the democratic constitution.

Best regards,  
Ombudsman Service for questions of values and cultural conflicts

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**Von:** sdudnic(at)gmail.com <sdudnic(at)gmail.com>

**Gesendet:** Mittwoch, 8. September 2021 12:06

**An:** info(at)ombudsstelle-werte.at

**Cc:** 'info' <info(at)egalitate.md>; 'Secretariat' <secretariat(at)ombudsman.md>

**Betreff:** RE: School, Textbooks and the Ethnic equality (Moldova case)

Dear members of the Austrian Ombudsman Service for questions of values and cultural conflicts

Sorry for my light delay in the reply, we forwarded your answer to our national Ombudsman, and our Council against discrimination.

Your expert opinion is very important for our decision makers, and we thank you a lot for replying to our request, even if is *not* an internal Austrian affair, is kind of you to have found the time to analyze and answer it.

Particularly, our Council is wondering if the *name* alone of a national *schoolbook* can, or can't be treated, as an ethnic "discrimination"?! Because they should answer us, if such a denomination can be, or can't be labeled as "discrimination" from the part of the Ministry of Education.

We believe it should... let's take by ex the definition of discrimination from the UK, the Equality Act 2010 Section 13 (1) and (5) that defines:

*A person (A) **discriminates** against another (B) if, because of a protected characteristic, A treats B less favourably than A treats or would treat others.*

*If the protected characteristic is race, less favourable treatment **includes segregating B from others.***

NI Race Relations Order 1997, Art. 3(2)

*Race Relations Order Segregating a person from other persons on racial grounds is treating him less favourably than they are treated.*

So, putting a specific ethnicity on the national schoolbook cover, means excluding other entities from that cover, so that is a less favorable treatment, putting only one group on a preferential light, segregating it, so a *discrimination* by definition.

That is our opinion. We are just expecting an *expert* confirmation or infirmation of such a position.

The question would be, particularly, from the legal point of view, in Austria, the national education schoolbook named "History of Germans" treated as discriminatory from the part of the Ministry of Education versus the Austrian children or not (in theory)...

/Best regards

Sergiu DUDNIC

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**From:** [info\(at\)ombudsstelle-werte.at](mailto:info(at)ombudsstelle-werte.at) <[info\(at\)ombudsstelle-werte.at](mailto:info(at)ombudsstelle-werte.at)>

**Sent:** Thursday, September 2, 2021 2:31 PM

**To:** 'Sergiu Dudnic' <[sdudnic\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:sdudnic(at)gmail.com)>

**Subject:** AW: School, Textbooks and the Ethnic equality (Moldova case)

Dear Mr Dudnic,

we forwarded your request to the responsible department. You can see their answer below – we hope this information helps you.

The Austrian history curriculum for all school types and levels has not followed a national or ethnic concept since 1945. After the experiences of National Socialism, people wanted to strictly differentiate themselves from their shared past with Germany, although “Austrian history”, especially with a noticeable tendency towards the Habsburg myth, nevertheless - and logically - certain national features through the demarcation from “German history” revealed. Although German-speaking, but following Austrian German, there is a strong tendency to distance oneself from Germany on some issues of the past. But there are also social groups which, although they strictly feel they belong to the (large) German cultural community, actually represent a minority in Austria.

In the curricula of the younger generation, history lessons have a much stronger focus on the European perspective, albeit with the necessary references to their own Austrian past, combined with a critical look at it. In doing so, for example, the different approaches to individual or social understanding of identity are addressed, which, especially in an immigration country like Austria, requires a multi-perspective point of view and also addresses the existence of several identities.

However, this guideline does not exclude that both autochthonous and immigrant ethnic or cultural minorities publish publications on their own "Austrian" history, as it contributes to a broader understanding that history is never one-dimensional and that it includes sometimes different, often common but also contrary experiences and perspectives.

The handling of “German literature” may be a special case, as this term originally included the great works of the so-called German classics Goethe, Schiller, etc. and national delimitation in today's sense hardly played a role. The curricula now include the term “German-language literature”, which means that literature from all German-speaking countries or regions - Austria, Germany, South Tyrol, Switzerland, the German Community of East Belgium, Alsace, German language islands in Eastern Europe - can be taken up. However, this always takes place in the context of world literature or foreign-language literature, both in the original language in foreign language lessons and with German-language translation in German lessons.

There are strong efforts and initiatives on the part of both the EU and the Council of Europe to introduce a tendency towards nationalistic historiography by adding pan-European perspectives to look at a larger and future-proof whole. An “observatory” initiated by the Council of Europe will in future observe curricula and history books and enable and stimulate a discussion across national borders.

Best regards,  
Ombudsman Service for questions of values and cultural conflicts

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**Von:** Sergiu Dudnic <[sdudnic\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:sdudnic(at)gmail.com)>

**Gesendet:** Donnerstag, 12. August 2021 20:45

**An:** [info\(at\)ombudsstelle-schule.at](mailto:info(at)ombudsstelle-schule.at); Hochschulombudsmann INFO <[info\(at\)hochschulombudsmann.at](mailto:info(at)hochschulombudsmann.at)>;

[info\(at\)ombudsstelle-werte.at](mailto:info(at)ombudsstelle-werte.at)

**Betreff:** School, Textbooks and the Ethnic equality (Moldova case)

Hello

I am not sure I write to the right address, so I put in a copy the other ones, sorry if it is not your field and you are receiving this letter.

Sorry of writing in English, I don't know well German. :")

I would like to ask the Austrian Ombudsman and Austrian Experts in Education and Equality rights, on an educational subject.

I am from Moldova, from the Republic of Moldova, we are facing the same educational problem as Austria. We are a small country nearby a bigger one, speaking the same language.

Like Austria is near Germany, Moldova is near România.

There should be similar ambiguity over the ethnic appartenance of the Austria citizens, should they be Austrians or Germans, opinions are divided.

However, my question is rather about education rights.

Our (Moldovan) Ministry of Education Curricula imposes to all the children in Moldova to learn History "of Romanians", and "Romanian" Literature. Leaving alone the literature, as being linked with the language. The History of "Romanians" seem somehow discriminatory for the people, not considering themself "Romanians", however, like "forced" to teach the romanian-centric history of the Moldovan people.

How do you treat these questions in Austria?

Do you have textbooks named "History of Germans" or "German Literature".

Of course, the "German Language" is not in the list because of a shared official value for all citizens.

Should it be seen as discrimination, and if positive, what are the regulations against it, at the national, and European, levels?

A brief view on the situation in Austria will really help us to understand an European View on the question, because our national equality and non-discrimination body seem to be stuck with this question and unable to give us any solution or view on the problem.

PS. If you are curious, here is our petition we translated it in German, as well

<https://www.petitionen.com/history-md>

and the map ([zoom it](#))



Best regards,

Sergiu DUDNIC  
initiative group "For the History of Moldova"