



Strasbourg, 26 October 2007

DGIV/EDU/CIT/WPHRE (2007) 1 rev 2

Concept Paper

Implementing human rights education in the school system: Regional European Meeting on the World Programme for Human Rights Education

**Council of Europe, Strasbourg
5-6 November 2007**

Background information

On 10 December 2004, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing) to advance the implementation of human rights education programmes in all sectors.

Building on the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), the World Programme seeks to promote a common understanding of the basic principles and methodologies of human rights education, to provide a concrete framework for action and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grass roots.

Unlike the specific time frame of the Decade, the World Programme is structured around an ongoing series of phases, the first of which covers the period 2005-2009 and focuses on the primary and secondary school systems. Developed by a broad group of education and human rights practitioners from all continents, the Plan of Action for the first phase proposes a concrete strategy and practical ideas for implementing human rights education nationally.

In January 2006, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) sent a joint letter to the Ministers of Education in the 46 member states of the Council of Europe on the launch of the Plan of Action for the first phase (2005-2009) of the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education, which the Council of Europe will monitor at the European level. The first phase is dedicated to the integration of human rights education into the primary and secondary school systems which touches upon the following five areas:

- Policies;
- Policy implementation measures and mechanisms;
- The learning environment;
- Teaching and learning practices and tools;
- Educational and professional development of teachers and other educational personnel.

Governments and other actors are encouraged to implement the Plan of Action in 4 steps:

- Stage 1: Analyse the current situation of human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems;
- Stage 2: Set priorities and develop a national implementation strategy;
- Stage 3: Implement and monitor activities;
- Stage 4: Evaluate.

Each Ministry of Education or equivalent institution should assign or strengthen a relevant Department/Unit responsible for coordination with all relevant actors and for serving as national focal point for human rights education in the school system.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Meeting is to assist the Council of Europe and OSCE member states in the national implementation of the Plan of Action and other related commitments.

The objectives are as follows:

- 1) Identify and highlight national practices of the implementation, including achievements, problems and obstacles, and discuss possible solutions;
- 2) Promote information-sharing, co-operation and networking within and among Council of Europe's and OSCE countries;
- 3) Discuss and strengthen joint support by European and other intergovernmental organizations;
- 4) Raise awareness on the Plan of Action and on the World Programme for Human Rights Education;
- 5) Raise awareness of the upcoming "Compendium of good practices" which is lead by the OSCE;
- 6) Highlight the links between the Plan of Action and the Council of Europe Programme of Activities "Learning and Living Democracy for All" for 2006-2009;
- 7) Highlight the links between the OSCE/ODIHR (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) work in the area of human rights education/diversity education and the Plan of Action;
- 8) Disseminate relevant materials and publications;
- 9) Contribute to the evaluation of the implementation of the Plan of Action and its follow up.

Date and place

Strasbourg, Council of Europe Headquarters
5-6 November 2007

Participants

The participants of the Meeting will be officials from the 56 states (49 states parties to the European Cultural Convention which are at the same time OSCE participating states, and additional 7 OSCE states¹), involved in the national implementation of the Plan of Action at the decision making and executive level. Representatives of international institutions, civil society and foundations active in the field will also be invited. 150 to 300 participants are expected to attend the Meeting.

Request for nominations will be addressed to the member states asking to nominate the following people:

1. The person coordinating the implementation of the Plan of Action
2. High level official from the Ministry of Education

Also will be invited

3. Moderators, rapporteurs, chairs and a general rapporteur;
4. Member organisations of the UN Inter-Agency Committee on Human Rights Education in the school system established under the World Programme and one person to be delegated by the Committee;
5. UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education and a representative of the UN Treaty bodies;
6. Network of UNESCO Associated Schools (ASPnet);

¹ Belarus and Holy See are included in the 49 states parties to the European Cultural Convention. Additional 7 are: Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, USA, Canada.

7. Representatives of the National Commissions for UNESCO Commissions;
8. Representatives of the OSCE member states;
9. National human rights institutions;
10. European Commission;
11. OECD;
12. Other regional and international institutions;
13. NGOs and foundations (list to be established in co-operation among the members of the Organising Committee).

There will be a possibility for international and national NGOs to apply on-line (the number is to be confirmed). The selection will be made on the basis of their potential role in the promotion and implementation of the Plan of Action.

The travel and subsistence expenses of all the participants will have to be covered by their organisations / institutions.

The travel and subsistence expenses of the moderators, rapporteurs and chairs will be covered by the Council of Europe, except for those who are representatives of other international institutions. The travel and subsistence expenses of some NGOs will be covered by OHCHR.

Expected Outcomes

A report from the meeting will be published on the Council of Europe website and the websites of other Organisations involved. In addition, the organisers will use the good practices from the meeting as an additional input in the Compendium of Good Practices which is being developed jointly by the OSCE/ODIHR, UN OHCHR, UNESCO and Council of Europe.

Organisers and partners

The Organising Committee of the meeting includes representatives of UNESCO, OHCHR, OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe.

Organisation and working methods

As this is a working meeting, the number of speeches will be kept to a strict minimum, and the workshops will aim to produce practical outcomes. For this purpose, detailed guidelines for the moderators will be produced by the Organising Committee.

An Information Market will be organised in parallel with the meeting (i.e. materials and publications relevant for HRE in school system will be put on display, promoted and distributed by the organisers and participants).

Background documents

- Plan of Action (2005-2007) of the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education.
- Council of Europe Programme of Activities “Learning and Living Democracy for All” for 2006-2009.
- The Final Evaluation Report of the “2005 European Year of Citizenship through Education”.

