



HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE V4 REGION

- PRACTICES, CHALLENGES AND WAYS FORWARD -

Concept note and draft agenda

The Tom Lantos Institute (Budapest, Hungary), together with its partners Pro Humanum (Warsaw, Poland) and Tandem (Komárno, Slovakia), is launching a regional project on **Human Rights Education in the V4: Practices, Challenges and Ways Forward**. The project looks at human rights education (HRE) in the context of the Visegrad Four countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia). Human rights education comes in many different forms and even has a diversity of denominations. Moreover, human rights education practitioners face a wide range of challenges. While the impact of HRE is difficult to measure, there is an established correlation between the implementation of human rights and democracy. Against this background, we aim to give a comprehensive overview of realities and challenges of HRE with a practical purpose, namely reflecting on the ways these challenges can be addressed, individually and collectively.

Project description

This project is a series of two expert seminars on HRE in the V4 region. It aims to look at the V4 countries from the perspective of HRE, and lay down the foundations for long-term collaboration in this field, both within formal and non-formal educational frameworks. The project develops a dialogue and strengthens cooperation between HRE practitioners and institutional actors from all V4 countries, including decision-makers on educational policies, in order to develop a comprehensive overview of existing practices and possible answers to the identified challenges. The project consists of two thematic seminars to be held in Budapest and Warsaw. In the first seminar in Budapest participants discuss concepts, narratives and current practices in HRE, share experiences, and start assessing the situation of HRE in these countries and mapping out the possibilities of cooperation. In Warsaw the seminar will focus on concrete challenges identified in individual countries and in the region as a whole, and discussing possible ways to address these challenges through regional cooperation.

Each seminar touches upon the specificities and the local context of the hosting country.

Participants: 20 to 25 participants from Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia:

- **HRE practitioners** from schools, universities and civil society organisations; trainers of teachers in the field of HRE;
- **Decision-makers** on educational policies;
- Human rights **public actors** such as officers working for public defenders of rights, equal treatment authorities, independent public human rights organisations.

The organisers will do their best to cover the travel and accommodation costs of participants.

Content

The seminars address HRE from different perspectives and discuss four major set of questions, as suggested below:

- Concepts and narratives:
 - How concepts such as *human rights*, *civil rights* and *citizenship* are understood and interpreted by relevant stakeholders in the V4 countries? What are the implications of these conceptualisations for the education of human rights?
 - What does HRE consist of? Which are the concrete topics and issues it addresses?
 - How does HRE relate to other relevant fields, such as citizenship education, global education, Holocaust education, intercultural education, etc.? How does HRE address issues such as recognition and redistribution, social justice, identity politics, and minority rights?
- Methodologies and practices (types of activities, methods and tools):
 - What are the existing methodologies, applied methods and tools of HRE?
 - How do formal and non-formal education complement each other when it comes to HRE and how can non-formal educational practices be included into formal education?
 - To what extent is it possible to mainstream the human rights approach into school curricula and more generally in the school environment?
 - How does HRE reach out to marginalised groups?
- Actors and institutions:
 - Which are the major actors and institutions (formal and non-formal, public, private, civil and hybrid) in the field of HRE, and how do they relate to each other?
 - For instance, how do educational practitioners cooperate with institutional actors such as ombudsperson's offices or equal treatment authorities, and how could this cooperation strengthen the development of HRE?
 - How do teachers and educational decision-makers comprehend HRE? What are their objectives?
 - What is the role of higher education in training future teachers in this field and how does the formal school system support HRE activities?
- HRE in action (evolution and impact):
 - To what extent is it possible to monitor and measure the impact of HRE on society? Is there a nexus between HRE and democracy?
 - How has HRE evolved in the past few decades in the individual countries?
 - Have recent critical theories in human rights influenced HRE? What is the future of HRE in the current context of crisis faced by human rights in Europe?

Please note that not *all* questions will be discussed during *each* seminar, though we aim to have started a dialogue on all these issues by the end of the project. At the same time, **we welcome any input from participants** regarding other concrete issues to be addressed (cf registration form below).

Moreover, we **strongly encourage participants to bring** (or share beforehand via email) **background materials to the meetings**.

Seminar in Budapest: 14-15 April 2016

Draft Agenda

Thursday 14 April

- 11:00-12:00 Arrival of participants
- 12:00-14:30 Lunch (*with flyer/book display?*)
- 14:30-15:30 Presentation of the project, getting to know each other, keynote speech (with a focus on the local context of the seminar)
- 16:00-17:00 First round of group discussion: Concepts and narratives (1)
- 17:30-18:30 Second round of group discussion: Concepts and narratives (2)
- 18:30-19:00 Plenary wrap-up: how do we understand HR and HRE in the V4 region?
- 19:00-20:30 *Dinner*
- 20:30-21:30 *Evening session (film screening, informal discussion with local community leaders)?*

Friday 15 April

- 09:00-10:00 Summary of, and reflection on the discussions of the first day
- 10:00-11:00 Third round of group discussion: Actors and institutions (1)
- 11:30-12:30 Fourth round of group discussion: Actors and institutions (2)
- 12:30-13:00 Plenary wrap-up of the morning sessions: how do HRE actors and institutions relate to each other and what are the conditions for fruitful cooperation?
- 13:00-14:30 *Lunch (with local Roma organisations?)*
- 14:30-16:00 Plenary discussion: HRE in the past decades and in the future
- 16:30-17:30 Plenary discussion: next steps and preparation of Warsaw seminar

Registration form

Name:

Country:

Current position/affiliation:

We aim to tailor the agenda as closely as possible to the wishes and expectations of participants.

Please, reply briefly (bullet points) to the five questions below:

1. What have been your concrete professional experiences and current responsibilities in the field of human rights, human rights education, and/or citizenship education?

2. In light of the concept note above, which are the specific issues you would like to discuss during the upcoming seminar in Budapest?

3. Based on your experience, which are the most acute challenges to be addressed in the field of human rights and human rights education?

4. Considering your current position, how do you see your own responsibility and leverage to address the challenges you listed above?

5. To what extent do you think fruitful and efficient cooperation can take place among actors in the V4 countries to address the challenges you listed above?

Debate starters: Each discussion session will be launched by a “debate starter”, i.e. a brief input of max. 5 minutes by a participant. The aim is *not* to present an organisation or a project but to launch the discussion with a critical reflection, a provocative but constructive question, a hypothesis to further explore, etc. **Would you like to give such an input, and if so, what would it be concretely?**

Logistics:

- Day and time of arrival to Budapest:
- Day and time of departure from Budapest:
- Means of transportation:
- Special need (dietary, mobility, or any other specific requirement):