

OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING

WORKING SESSION 3: FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS II

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

STATEMENT BY THE GREEK DELEGATION (27.09.2011)

Humanitarian issues and more specifically human rights education hold an important place in the Greek official educational curriculum. Central goal is to ensure that all children have access to obligatory education, to disincline any kind of discrimination within the “school walls” and to guarantee that human rights are respected along all educational levels. National Education Policy focuses its interest on: a) combating educational exclusion, b) offering equal educational chances to all children, regardless of their social, cultural or religious background, c) responding to every child’s specific educational needs, while respecting diversity, and d) encouraging integration of all children within a general frame of tolerance, interculturality and respect of human rights.

We will only present the latest evolutions.

In accordance to the key-concepts and principles of intercultural and human rights education, a project entitled “Zones of Educational Priority” is being implemented. Since the beginning of the present school year a number of pre-schools and primary schools will apply specific curricula and undertake actions oriented towards the general frame of human rights and intercultural education.

The main aim of this project is to assure the right to education for social groups who face the risk of marginalization and poverty. For this reason, it is implemented in areas where the total educational ratio, as well as the one concerning the access to higher education, was notably low.

The implementation and function of the programme is based on the logic of positive discrimination. Through this project, the Ministry of Education intends to also implicate the local society and gradually create a totally different image of the school.

Participating schools' teachers will obtain high quality training concerning school dropouts, school violence and gender differences.

Additionally, three more national projects ("Education of foreign and repatriated students", "Education of children of Muslim minority of Thrace" and "Education of Roma children") subscribed in the general frame of human rights, are implemented in the Greek educational system, all aiming at eliminating discriminations and possible stereotypes in the Greek schools, facilitating minority children integration and promoting an intercultural way of thinking and acting.

Furthermore, the Greek Ministry of Education is a founding member of the "Network for the Prevention and Combating of Corporal Punishment of Children". It works towards the elimination of any vestiges of physical punishment of children in Greece and its rationale is that children should be raised by means of dialogue and participation as well as with the use of methods which align with the principles of contemporary pedagogical sciences.

The Network aims at the sensitization of the people involved in children and family issues, but also of the broader public. Through collaboration with several official bodies there has been a series of coordinated actions for the exchange of information and the facilitation of institutional changes as well as towards informing and sensitizing children, parents and professionals who work with children or are involved into family issues.

In February 2011, the Ministry addressed a circular concerning violence in school (bullying) and indicated some actions and measures to principals and teaching personnel of primary and secondary education. Also, on May 3rd the Network organized an open discussion at the premises of the Ministry of Education. Its subject was "How can we help parents raise their children without violence?" and aimed at involving all competent bodies, as well as those working with and for children in a fruitful discussion about positive parental role.

Finally, it should be mentioned that around 100 schools in Greece participate in the Unesco's "Associated Schools Project" and that 40 of them are proved to be very active on the field of human rights education. During the last years, some of the treated topics were the school violence, the sexual harassment and the rights of

children. The Ministry of Education encourages these schools' participation in different ways and tries to facilitate their work and actions.