**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE CULTURAL DIMENSION OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

1. Please provide information on how, in your country, the issue of respect for cultural diversity and the cultural rights of each person is reflected in school curricula (legislative, institutional and policy framework, and implementation).

ANSWER:

In Portugal, respect for cultural diversity and the cultural rights of each person is embedded in the constitution and in the Basic Law of Education. Schools, from kindergarten to secondary, usually foster knowledge about cultural diversity by means of fairs, plays and other activities that present to students the culture of other countries (with an aim at getting to know the culture of the immigrants that attend the school).

In the law of the curriculum for basic education (Portaria 223-A/2018), a subject on Education for Citizenship has been created and as a part of it schools are obliged to give classes on Human Rights (civil and political, economic, social and cultural and of solidarity) and on interculturality (cultural and religious diversity).

2. Please provide information on how, in your country, the issue of respect for cultural diversity and the cultural rights of each person is taken into account in the organization of the school system and schools (legislative, institutional and policy framework, and implementation).

ANSWER:

In Portugal, cultural diversity and the cultural rights of each person is not taken into account in Portugal in respect to the organization of the public school system. Children attend the school of their address.

However, civil society may open and operate independent schools based on religious or philosophical values. This right is embedded in the constitution and education law makes it an effective right.

3. Please clarify to what extent the measures described above relate not only to the issue of languages in education (in this regard, please briefly explain the context and provide details on the State language policy), but also to the arts, heritage, science, history, values and religions, or world views and ways of life, in all their diversity.

ANSWER:

The curricular approach to foreign languages is not based on respect for diversity and the language rights of minorities but on the need for children to learn foreign languages as a tool for their own personal development and to become active citizens of a globalized society. Besides the mentioned subject of citizenship, the Portuguese curriculum does not have a clear focus on cultural diversity.

4. Please specify the specific and particular difficulties encountered in ensuring an inclusive and quality education that allows cultural diversity and the cultural rights of each person to flourish at the same time.

ANSWER:

5. Have specific mechanisms been established to consult and ensure the participation of stakeholders, in particular the populations concerned and parents, for a better understanding and effectiveness of the right to education, including its cultural dimension? What place is given in this context to the voice of children?

ANSWER:

The Portuguese Ministry of Education has been pushing on the issue of giving students a voice in the school. This effort has led to the participation of Portugal in several international events and to the development of school based initiatives that have empowered students.

A number of independent schools now have student councils that have effective power to determine some aspects of life at school. Namely in respect to internal rules and curricular developments.

6. What recommendations should be provided to States and other stakeholders on these issues?

ANSWER:

Children learn by example. A monolithically school system is not capable to educate for diversity and respect. Therefore, States must foster public school autonomy to create a value based school and must find a balance with the independent school sector supporting those initiatives that are a materialization of civil society desires and values.



Associação de Estabelecimentos de Ensino Particular e Cooperativo

Av. Defensores de Chaves, 32, 1.ºEsq, Lisboa

[www.aeep.pt](http://www.aeep.pt)

[aeep@aeep.pt](mailto:aeep@aeep.pt)