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**Contribution of the Republic of Slovenia**

**to the Questionnaire on Midterm progress report on the implementation of the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education**

**Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

27 May 2022

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| **Questionnaire on Midterm progress report on the implementation of the fourth phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education**  **Contribution of the Republic of Slovenia** |

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| 1. **Policies and related implementation measures** |
| 1. Have policies and legislation been developed to ensure the inclusion of human rights and human rights education in **formal education** for young people (secondary, higher education and vocational training)?   Human rights education is enshrined in the Slovenian education legislation (the Organization and Financing of Education Act), namely the goals to educate for respect of human diversity, of children’s and human rights and fundamental freedoms, for sustainable development and active participation in a democratic society, including a responsible attitude to oneself, one’s health, other people, one’s own and other cultures, natural and social environments, and to future generations.  Education about and for human rights and peace are in Slovenia thought as dedicated compulsory school subjects as well as cross-curricula and integrated in other subjects in basic (integrated primary and lower-secondary) and upper-secondary schools.  The Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme till 2030, adopted in March 2022 comprehensively addresses the field of higher education, in particular with a view to further raise the level of quality of higher education in Slovenia in all its dimensions, increase the responsiveness, flexibility and attractiveness of the higher education system to the needs of the economy, non-economic activities and society as a whole, strengthen its integration into the international environment, improve access to education and lifelong learning, increase the intensity of research and innovation and improve the transfer of knowledge, all with the emphasis on social justice, equity and inclusion. Detailed Action Plans and a Strategy for Internationalisation and a Strategy for Digitalization of Higher Education are to be prepared by the end of 2022. |
| 1. Have policies and legislation been developed to facilitate and support the work of civil society – including youth groups and youth-led organizations – in conducting human rights education in non-formal settings (**non-formal education**)?   Slovenia and the Slovenian education system, with collaboration of civil society, supports and implements a number of activities for young people in non-formal settings, which contribute to the formal education and an effective comprehensive human rights education fostering a culture of peace, tolerance, and understanding of diversity in societies, including their religious, ethnic and cultural aspects and national minorities.  Slovenia has been very active in promoting human rights education among young people also on the international level. More than 250,000 children from 26 countries in Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East have participated in the Our Rights project.  The objective of the Our Rights project is to enable young people, particularly children, who are still developing and trying to establish their identities, to learn about human rights, i.e. their rights and respecting the rights of others. The empowerment of children, notably through education about human rights, including their own, is one of the key priorities of Slovenian foreign policy in the area of human rights promotion. Read more about it here: <https://www.gov.si/en/registries/projects/our-rights/>  There is a strong belief that a joint and proactive engagement by states and non-governmental and international organisations in human rights education can help further advance universal values and respect for human rights.  Among major programs let us highlight:  - THE PROGRAMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHT  One of the main concerns of these programmes is how to best implement instruments on children’s rights such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other acts that concern rights and well-being of children, youth and families.  - THE SLOVENIAN NGOs NETWORK ZIPOM  The Slovenian NGO network ZIPOM is a coalition of non-governmental organizations that work in the field of children’s rights. ZIPOM is designed to support and strengthen NGOs by providing mentoring hours, training, information and opportunities to take part in different actions of preventing and eliminating the violation of rights of a child.  - CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT  The aim of Children’s Parliaments is to enable children to exercise their rights as guaranteed by international conventions, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, education for active and democratic citizenship, multiculturalism and inter-cultural dialogue, which is of vital importance for the “promotion” of values such as human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity, and for the awareness of common values such as the respect for difference, tolerance and reasonable dialogue.  - EUROPE AT SCHOOL  The aim of the Europe at School initiative is the development of interest activities and participation of children and young people in processes and development activities relating to the European integration processes. They can participate in and prepare works of literature, art, video, photography, project assignments, research projects, websites and a unifying (multidisciplinary) competition, on the related themes.   * A WEEK OF A CHILD   This programme is intended for children and adults. It happens on the first week in October every year, providing opportunities to assess the state, tackle and respond to questions relating to the children’s rights, to their position in society and the implementation of their rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Different activities (workshops, exchanges, sport activities) are organized throughout Slovenia with the assistance of local associations, in order to give children a chance to actively participate in the debates. |
| 1. Have those policies and legislation been developed in **collaboration with youth** as key partners?   Slovenia encourages active participation of young people in the development of youth policies and legislation through the following main bodies and organizations:   * The National Youth Council of Slovenia (Mladinski svet Slovenije – MSS) is an umbrella organization linking all national youth organisations irrespective of their various interests, ideological or political orientations. As a non-profit and non-governmental body, it represents the opinions of the Slovenian youth at the national and international level. The key purpose of MSS is to defend the interests of young people and to promote their participation in policy making processes in the fields which have a significant impact on their lives and work. MSS strives to create an environment in which young people can become autonomous, responsible, sympathetic and active individuals and members of society. It also endeavours to improve the position of young people as a specific social group. * The Upper-Secondary Students’ Organization of Slovenia <https://dijaska.org/> * The Slovenian Student Union (<https://www.studentska-org.si/predstavitev/english/>) Študentska organizacija Slovenije (ŠOS) is the national organization of all students in Slovenia and represents the interests of more than 75.000 students from the Slovenian universities, colleges, high schools, be it Slovenian or foreign students, and also the Slovenian students in vocational and higher education institutions abroad. ŠOS’s main concern is to enhance student conditions and possibilities for study, social issues and the development of extracurricular and curricular activities, to pursue students’ interests in their own university and locally. ŠOS cooperates actively in the development of national policies and programmes concerning higher education, scholarships, student residence, student work, health care and the employment of graduates. ŠOS communicates with the Government through the Government Council for Student Affairs and its working groups on all issues concerning students. * Other National, regional and local organisations (NGO’s etc) |
| 1. Are those policies and legislation accompanied by **implementation and monitoring measures** (coordination mechanisms, allocation of responsibilities and resources, etc.)?   Policies and legislation relating to HRE in different policy areas at the national level are prepared, implemented and coordinated by the relevant authorities and stakeholders in the field of education and, in its external dimension, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  As for the monitoring and assessment of the progress in Human Rights Education, these are among the regular tasks of the National Education Institute of Slovenia: <https://www.zrss.si/en/>, which is the main national research, development and consultancy institution in the field of pre-school, basic (primary and lower-secondary) and general upper-secondary education.  In order to obtain a more comprehensive and internationally comparable assessment in this area, Slovenia decided to join the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study - ICCS 2022, the goal of which is to highlight ways young people in different countries and educational systems are preparing for active citizenship as well as the state and challenges in citizenship and civic education in the participating countries. The results of the survey will form an important indication on the progress in this area in the country. |
| 1. Have **other relevant national initiatives** been undertaken – including on youth, education, human rights, including gender equality, global citizenship, sustainable development, peace, security, crime prevention, criminal justice, preventing violent extremism, fighting corruption and combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance?   Among other relevant initiatives it is worth mentioning activities relating to the digital citizenship education as a part of the digital competences framework to be pursued within the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027), adopted in April 2022, and those relating to the wider process of modernisation of curricula launched in 2021 in order to respond to the demands also of an ethical green and digital transition through education and training.  The following projects with relevance in this context were co-financed by the Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the European Union, through the European Social Fund:   * »Developing social and civic competences of the school professional staff - Only together with others we are« (SRC SAZU, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts, 2016 - 2021). More than 10 000 teachers and educational managers were involved in this project, developing competences for creating all-inclusive school and class communities, by raising awareness of the importance of respect of differences, intercultural cooperation and respectful co-existence in multicultural societies. * »The Challenges of Intercultural Coexistence project« (Isa Institute, 2016-2021, http://www.medkulturnost.si/en/ ). The main goal of the project was to help develop the values of interculturalism and to improve the professional competences of educational managment staff and teaching professionals for a more successful integration of migrant children with a different linguistic and cultural background into the Slovenian educational system. * The project “Students innovative projects for social benefit” involves students’ work for the benefit of the local/regional environment. Interdisciplinary groups of students led by academic mentors (from higher education institutions) and work mentors (from the local/regional environment) are involved in projects focusing on solving challenges/problems in their social (local/regional) environment. Work mentors are coming from the non-business, non-profit and/or business sector. |
| 1. If so, were such other relevant initiatives developed taking into account those specific to human rights education for youth, to ensure **coherence and synergy**?   Yes.   1. Have any efforts been undertaken to engage with United Nations and other processes and mechanisms in relation to human rights education for youth?   Slovenia has been an active member of the Platform for Human Rights Education and Training for several years. The Platform is an informal cross-regional governmental grouping in support of human rights education and training. It is comprised of the following UN Member States: Brazil, Costa Rica, Italy, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, Slovenia, and Thailand.  As a member of the Platform, Slovenia has taken over the role of the penholder of the resolution on the World Programme for Human Rights Education at the Human Rights Council, including the recent resolutions that have led to the adoption of the 4th phase of the World Programme for Human Rights Education focusing on youth (A/HRC/RES/36/12, A/HRC/RES/39/3 and A/HRC/RES/42/7).  While the pandemic has significantly marked the operations of the Human Rights Council, Slovenia has in the past year engaged in the **High-level panel discussion on the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training: good practices, challenges and the way forward** with active participation of **H.E. Ms. Simona Kustec**, Minister for Education, Science and Sport of Slovenia.  Slovenia also organized a **Workshop on Human Rights Education for Youth – implementation and assessment of progress.** The workshop took place online on 30 March 2022 and aimed to provide an overview of the 4th phase of the World Programme, facilitate the sharing of information and good practices and encourage State engagement in the midterm progress report exercise.  Finally, President of the Republic of Slovenia H.E. Mr Borut Pahor has agreed to take part in the documentary series on young human rights educators, an initiative conducted by Amnesty International, Soka Gakkai International and OHCHR. |
| 1. **Teaching and learning processes and tools** |
| 1. Have **programmes** aimed to develop young people’s competencies (in the areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes) to exercise their rights and respect and uphold the rights of others been implemented, particularly for youth in situations of exclusion or vulnerability?   Among the latest achievements it is worth highlighting the introduction of a new compulsory school subject (’integrated curriculum’), Active Citizenship (Active Citizenship and Democracy) into upper-secondary schools (35 hrs), starting with school year 2021/2022. Interdisciplinary in the conception, this general educational subject combines and links the findings of various scientific disciplines (sociology, philosophy, political science, history, geography etc.), upgrading the content and goals of sociology lessons. The curriculum is available in Slovenian at:  <http://eportal.mss.edus.si/msswww/programi2020/programi/gimnazija/gimnazija/spl-del.htm>  Provisions for EDC/HRE at higher education institutions are sometimes incorporated in study programs and certain Universities offer full study programs (for example the “European Master’s Program in Human Rights and Democratisation” at the University of Ljubljana). |
| 1. Have learner-centred, gender-sensitive and participatory **methodologies** been applied in human rights education for youth? Is peer-to-peer learning fostered?   These methodologies form part of pedagogical recommendations and are enhanced through teacher education and continuous professional development; the choice of teaching methods and approaches is within the autonomy of teachers. Peer-to-peer learning is fostered. Digital education platforms have considerably contributed to this. |
| 1. Have **teaching and learning materials** specific and relevant to youth and their contexts been developed? Are they accessible and engaging for young people, particularly youth in situations of exclusion or vulnerability?   In relation to the new integrated curriculum of Active Citizenship in upper-secondary education, a special Monography has been published to provide substantive and theoretical support to teachers teaching the compulsory contents of the active citizenship subject in upper-secondary school. The publication is entitled: ‘Active Citizenship in Upper-Secondary School: the individual, the community, the country, the world’.  Please find the publication (in Slovenian) on: <https://www.zrss.si/pdf/Aktivno_drzavljanstvo_v_srednji_soli.pdf> |
| 1. Has **technology** been used to facilitate the implementation of human rights education?   The use of teaching materials and tools, including new technologies and digital platforms, is within the autonomy of schools and teachers. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Slovenia - as many other countries - knew periods of complete closure of schools where distance education was based mainly on the use of digital solutions for communication, teaching and learning, in all the subjects and contents, including HRE. |
| 1. **Training of educators** |
| 1. Have **human rights training policies and legislation** regarding educators in both formal and non-formal education adopted?   Slovenia provides substantial support for continuous professional development of professional staff in education and for appropriate teaching materials/resources.  Professional support for teachers designing and implementing the active citizenship education in upper-secondary schools is provided through targeted trainings and teaching materials:   1. Training of professional staff in designing and implementing active citizen education in upper-secondary schools (»Usposabljanja strokovnih delavcev za načrtovanje in izvajanje aktivnega državljanstva v srednji šoli«).   <https://www.zrss.si/digitalnaknjiznica/Aktivno_drzavljanstvo_v_srednji_soli/>   1. Active citizenship. Individual, community, state, world, 2021 (»Aktivno državljanstvo. Posameznik, skupnost, država, svet, 2021)   <https://www.zrss.si/digitalnaknjiznica/Aktivno_drzavljanstvo_v_srednji_soli/>   1. Active citizenship. Teacher's manual, 2021 (»Aktivno državljanstvo. Priročnik za učitelje. 2021)   <https://www.zrss.si/digitalnaknjiznica/AD_v_srednji_soli_prirocnik/> |
| 1. Have any **other measures or strategies** been adopted to ensure adequate training in human rights and human rights education methodologies for educators working in **formal education**?   In the school year 2021/22, as many as 98 from 551 continuing education and training programmes were made available to the professionals in the field of education, focusing on sustainable development and active citizenship. The Ministry has identified this area as one of the priority topics in the field of continuing professional development. The range of available options in teachers' professional development, based on EDC/HR objectives, has increased in the last five years.  <https://paka3.mss.edus.si/Katis/KatalogProgramov.aspx>  In Slovenia, school leaders/headmasters have a variety of learning and training options, highlighting, among other, the importance of ethical management issues.  Education through human rights has been further underpinned through numerous teachers’ professional development activities, such as the “Enhancing social and civic competencies of professional staff in education” programme co-financed from the European Social Fund.  In the frame of International Mobility Projects Slovene higher education teaching staff was able to spend a period of time in higher education institutions abroad. The benefit from that experience is the transfer of knowledge and experience in their discipline as well as further development of intercultural competences and contribution to the international openness of their home institutions and study programmes, based on universal values of democracy and human rights. |
| 1. Have **any measures or strategies** been adopted to ensure adequate training in human rights and human rights education methodologies for educators working in in **non-formal settings**?   The National Youth Council of Slovenia organises seminars to identify obstacles and active operation of civil society organizations working in the interests of young people. The goal is to emphasize the importance of key youth rights, including the right to be involved in decision-making, the right to organize young people. This is a part of the Government’s endeavours to assure necessary space for a good functioning of civil society and to facilitate the work and development of youth organizations. |
| 1. Have **human rights training curricula** for educators in both formal and non-formal settings been developed? What are the learning objectives?   Professional support for teachers designing and implementing active citizenship education in upper-secondary schools consists of targeted trainings and teaching materials:   1. Training of professional staff in designing and implementing active citizen education in upper-secondary schools (»Usposabljanja strokovnih delavcev za načrtovanje in izvajanje aktivnega državljanstva v srednji šoli«).   <https://www.zrss.si/digitalnaknjiznica/Aktivno_drzavljanstvo_v_srednji_soli/>   1. Active citizenship. Individual, community, state, world, 2021 (»Aktivno državljanstvo. Posameznik, skupnost, država, svet, 2021)   <https://www.zrss.si/digitalnaknjiznica/Aktivno_drzavljanstvo_v_srednji_soli/>   1. Active citizenship. Teacher's manual, 2021 (»Aktivno državljanstvo. Priročnik za učitelje. 2021)   <https://www.zrss.si/digitalnaknjiznica/AD_v_srednji_soli_prirocnik/>  The new Active Citizenship subject in upper-secondary school includes a chapter on World and Globalization, where students learn about the concepts of transnationality and globalization and evaluate inter-ethnic relations in the global age; furthermore, they analyse and critically assess the effects and processes of globalization and the impact on their lives from various angles; they identify and evaluate the consequences of conflicts and wars in a globalized world, and discuss on endeavours for peace and conflict prevention. They reflect on the dilemmas of intercultural relations, assess the causes and consequences of global migration, analyse the concept of sustainable development, research and plan activities to protect human rights. The Ministry plans to monitor the quality of the implementation methods, which will enable it to improve the insight into the state of education in this area, and to move more decisively from form to content. |
| 1. Has particular attention been given to young educators and **educators from groups in situations of exclusion or vulnerability**?   In 2019, the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth issued a public tender for a two-year programme: Strengthening the competencies of young people through active citizenship for greater employability. The project was carried out within the Operational Programme for the Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy in the Period 2014–2020, priority axes: 8. “Promoting employment and supporting transnational labour mobility”, investment priorities: 8.2 “Sustainable integration in the labour market of young people, in particular those not in employment, education or training, including young people at risk of social exclusion and young people from marginalised communities, including through implementation of the Youth Guarantee”, specific objective: 8.2.1 “Reduce youth unemployment”.  The aim was to provide co-financing of projects carried out by organisations operating in the public interest in the youth sector, aimed at promoting active citizenship among young people to increase youth employability and employment.  The expected results and objectives of the tender were achieved, including the development of innovative forms of youth work in solving the problem of youth unemployment, which also had wider effects in the field of youth work and youth policy. The project provided support to the implementation of practical workshops and trainings, individual mentoring, opportunities to meet entrepreneurs and employers, co-creation of social space. Young people enjoyed opportunities to raise competences relating to active citizenship and employment, such as career planning, creative literacy, rhetoric and public speaking, communication and etiquette, social skills, problem solving, critical and analytical thinking, ability of argumentation, leadership, motivation, teamwork, time pressure work, planning and organization, (self) initiative, self-reflection, adaptation and flexibility, personal development, digital literacy and digital marketing, financial literacy, informal recording acquired competencies, entrepreneurial knowledge, knowledge of the labour market and individual (human) rights. |
| 1. **An enabling environment** |
| 1. Have measures been put in place **to encourage and facilitate** the organization of human rights education activities for young people, and to facilitate their participation?   Different policies in formal and informal education and learning, aiming at democratic citizenship education, form part of a wider Safe and enabling school environment initiative of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport promoting a whole-of-institution approach and strengthening cooperation with wider communities. |
| 1. Have measures been taken related to the **protection and realization of young people’s human rights**?   Yes. As an example it is worth mentioning the attention given by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and HEIs in the past few years to the issue of sexual and other forms of harassment and violence in academic and research area. The Ministry has commissioned an analysis entitled "Normative regulations for the prevention of harassment and other forms of sexual violence in the academic and research area" and organised a public consultation on this topic. The Ministry also launched a Target Research Program "Institutional, Legislative and Awareness Solutions and Activities in Addressing Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of Sexual Violence in Higher Education and Research Organizations" with the aim to prepare a legislative framework for the protection of students, educators and other staff and to raise awareness on the subject.  Another example are provisions allowing that a more favourable treatment of candidates with special needs and/or special status may be obtained by applicants for enrolment at the undergraduate level in the application procedure (special status is granted to candidates with documented disability or special needs, chronic illness or consequences of acute illness, and to candidates with underprivileged socio-economic conditions). An increased emphasis has been given to continuous awareness raising among students and educators at the level of HEIs in the past few years. |