

Background paper

International Conference, Pushkin town, St. Petersburg 1st and 2nd July 2013

Human Rights Education in Russia: Status and Challenges

During the last decades there has been a lot of focus on the potential of human rights education in order to promote respect for human dignity, human rights and democracy. In 2011, the UN adopted the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Learning, and a year before, in 2010, Council of Europe launched its *Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education*. In these documents the international organizations urge the states to strengthen human rights education in the school systems, as well as in the society at large.

Youth Centre for Human Rights and Legal Culture (Moscow) and the Human Rights Academy (Oslo) have been working many years with human rights education respectively in Russia and in Norway. The two non-governmental organizations share the view of the UN and the Council of Europe that teaching human rights to young people is the best guarantee for developing peaceful and democratic societies. The core values of human rights, namely human dignity, equality and the non-discrimination principle, as well as knowledge about the international human rights system, encourage people to reflect, participate, be tolerant and respect other people. Since 2008, the organizations have developed human rights education programs for teachers in the regions of Kaliningrad and Nizhny Novgorod, with support of the human rights ombudsmen and teachers training institutions. A large number of five-days courses for teachers, as well as in depth teacher training seminars have been organized. The aim is to give teachers knowledge about human rights and methodological tools, so they can give their pupils more and better human rights education.

The conference in Pushkin town, near St Petersburg, will shed light on status and challenges for human rights education in Russia today, but will also present developments on human rights education globally and in Europe.

Welcome!

About the organizations

Youth Centre for Human Rights and Legal Culture



Youth Center for Human Rights and Legal Culture (YCHRLC) has 20 years experience on human rights education in Russia and has worked with thousands of teachers since 1990s. The organization was established in 1992 as a branch of the human rights organization Memorial in order to work on human rights education with history, law and civics teachers. Several education materials, including books, on human rights and teaching methods have been developed by the YCHRLC since 1998. These materials have been distributed widely and are today used in pedagogical universities, competence centers for teachers and at the courses in human rights in Russia. More information about Youth Center for Human Rights and Legal Culture at www.ycentre.ru

The Human Rights Academy



The Human Rights Academy is a non-governmental organization that works to strengthen the respect for the international human rights in Norway and abroad. The Academy's work is embedded in the respect for life and dignity of every human being. Strengthening democratic processes, promoting freedom of speech, developing a civil society based on pluralism, cultural diversity and dialogue are important tasks. The academy organizes courses, workshops and other educational activities. Target groups are teachers, pupils and students, refugees and immigrants, employees in the social and educational spheres, journalists, activists and persons working in the non-governmental sphere. The academy is a member of Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE), a network of 51 organizations from 28 European Countries. More information at www.menneskerettighetsakademiet.no