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“Youth for Human Rights”

Transnational synthesis report
of Human Rights Education (HRE) actors and practices
in national contexts (based on eight country reports)

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Intro



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“Youth for Human Rights”

“Youth for Human Rights” is a project developed in the frame of the Erasmus + Programme¹ Key Action 3 Initiatives for policy innovation – Social inclusion through education, training and youth – EACEA 05/2016 of the European Commission.

The project partners are eight National Agencies (NA)² of the Erasmus + Programme; Foundation Archimedes - Estonian NA (Leading Partner), “JUGEND für Europa“- German NA, Agence du Service Civique - French NA, Interkulturelles Zentrum - Austrian NA, YIA-BEFL – JINT-Belgian/Flemish NA, IUVENTA – Slovak Youth Institute - Slovak NA, Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes Agencija za mobilnost i programme Euopske unije -Croatian NA, and Jaunatnes starptautisko programmu aģentūra - Latvian NA.

The project stems from the need to promote social inclusion of young people and Human Rights Education (HRE) in the field of youth fully using the potential of youth work – and of HRE in the context of youth work and young people’s non-formal learning.

To this end the project aims to make sense of its already existing abundance of HRE resources at European level and educational concepts/modules, and benefit from the exchange of HRE actors and networks to develop meaningful and efficient educational modules.

The project pursues the following three objectives:

- To improve understanding of HRE in the field of youth and support young people’s acquisition of social, civic and intercultural competence
- To support youth workers, trainers and other practitioners in the field of youth in using HRE to address issues that directly affect social cohesion, such as inclusion and diversity
- To improve the quality of youth practice, and of activities undertaken as part of young people’s non-formal learning (such as, volunteering), through networking and capacity-building.

The foreseen project outcomes are:

¹ Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.

More information: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en

² To bring Erasmus+ as close as possible to the participants and make sure it works well across different countries, the EU works with National Agencies to manage the programme. The National Agencies are based in programme countries and their role involves providing information, selecting projects, supporting applicants and participants, promoting Erasmus+...

More information: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/contact_en#tab-1-0



- Gathering and analysing data about HRE state of play, key actors, concepts and resources in national and international context - 8 national and 1 transnational reports about HRE state of play, key actors, concepts and resources in national and transnational context
- Adapting and developing HRE related training and education modules - 3 human rights education training modules developed for local, regional, national and transnational youth workers and youth leaders, and compilation of recommendations for human rights education curricula
- Capacity building of actors in the youth field on HRE and support to thematic network development:
 - training of trainers - 28 trainers-of-trainers trained on HRE in the field of youth
 - training of youth workers - 280 youth workers trained on HRE in the field of youth
 - training of Erasmus+ NA staff - 24 Erasmus+ National Agencies staff are trained on HRE in the field of youth

This outcome is supported by carrying through a RAY Network³ survey “Competence development and capacity building on HRE in the field of youth”

- Communicating and disseminating project results, and compiling of policy recommendations
 - Increase of number of Erasmus+ projects on HRE in the field of youth
 - 100 stakeholders participate in an European conference
 - Compilation and communication of policy recommendations
 - Project evaluation.

Policy context and impact

The “*Youth for Human Rights*” project is being developed in a context in which Human Rights (HR) and Human Rights Education (HRE) in the youth field are gaining importance in the political agendas of the European Union and of the Council of Europe.

In the European Union, the 2012 strategic framework on human rights and democracy⁴ was designed to make EU human rights policy more effective and consistent.

More recently the EU Education Ministers adopted in Paris on 17 March 2015 the “Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination

³ RAY stands for Research-based Analysis and Monitoring of Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme. It is a self-governed European research network of the 31 National Agencies of Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme and their research partners.

More information: <http://www.researchyouth.eu/>

⁴ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11855-2012-INIT/en/pdf>



through education“. This declaration defines common objectives for Member States and urges the EU to ensure the sharing of ideas and good practice with a view to:

- Ensuring that children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences, by promoting democratic values and fundamental rights, social inclusion and nondiscrimination, as well as active citizenship, enhancing critical thinking and media literacy, particularly in the use of the Internet and social media, so as to develop resistance to all forms of discrimination and indoctrination;
- Fostering the education of disadvantaged children and young people, by ensuring that our education and training systems address their needs;
- Promoting intercultural dialogue through all forms of learning in cooperation with other relevant policies and stakeholders.

The Council of Europe agenda in relation to education for democratic citizenship and Human Rights is marked by the following initiatives:

- In 2010 the charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights⁵ was adopted as a text that supports the prevention of human rights violations by strengthening the culture of human rights.
- In the 25th Conference of Ministers of Education (Brussels, 2016), the ministers undertook to support the development of a long-term strategy for education for democratic citizenship and human rights at European level. The Ministers also endorsed the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and requested the Council of Europe to consider ways of increasing the impact of the charter.
- The 3rd Compass Forum on Human Rights Education (Budapest, 2016), provided initial input and proposals from non-governmental partners and governmental experts and called for the continuation of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme.
- The „Learning to live together“ Conference on the future of Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Europe, in June 2017, explored the current challenges and opportunities, shared examples of good practices and lessons learned, and proposed recommendations for future action, including specific criteria and mechanisms for evaluation of progress, in particular in the framework of the Council of Europe Charter on Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

In this very briefly described European policy context “Youth for Human Rights” aims to have an impact at policy level and contribute to strengthen, further develop and ensure the

⁵ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/edc/charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education>



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implementation of the current initiatives of the European Union and the Council of Europe in the field of HRE.

At national level “Youth for Human Rights” should contribute to the design and implementation of HRE strategies in the youth sector, to the inclusion of HRE as part of the education and further training of youth workers and to the current work of the Erasmus+ NAs for promoting HR through youth work.



This synthesis report

The objective of this transnational synthesis report is to synthesize data about HRE state of play, key actors, concepts and resources on the basis of eight national reports elaborated by the national agencies partners of this project. These can be found in the annexes of this report.

The national reports are structured around five main thematic topics on HRE at national level: the educational and training concepts and practices, the training and resources needs, the uncovered topics, the most recommended educational resources and the national related policies and political strategies.

In all the national reports, in relation to the two first thematic fields (educational and training concepts and practices, the training and resources needs) there is a clear distinction between HRE in the formal and in the non-formal educational settings. Therefore, this synthesis report is structured at first in these two main blocks: HRE in formal and in non-formal education. Within those blocks the educational and training concepts and practices, the training and resources needs are synthesised.

The next two thematic fields of the national reports (the uncovered topics, the most recommended educational resources) are jointly synthesised since no significant difference or dichotomy was identified for formal and non formal education.

The few findings of the „national related policies and political strategies“ in the national reports are incorporated in the overall conclusions.

This structure, as specified in the table of contents, allows the collection and systematisation of data and, by comparison and triangulation, the identification of some common tendencies and some differences for all the thematic fields of HRE at national level.

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This report was at its draft version introduced during the 1st Expert group meeting in Riga, Latvia in October 2017 and received several rounds of valuable feedback and insight in written from the project Expert group which consisted of 17 Experts, and gathered on three occasions during time period October 2017 till April 2018.



The aim of this transnational Expert group was to support the networking project in producing educational concepts, modules and a training plan which would suit both European and national contexts. The Expert group worked in 3 thematic focuses each coordinated by project partner NAs.

The Experts were selected by the NAs partnering the project based on applications received, and in addition 4 key organisations and networks identified by the project coordination nominated their representatives (indicated below) to the Expert group. The following competences and experiences were decisive upon being selected: (1) experiences in the design and practice / implementation of human rights education; (2) knowledge of the political dimensions of human rights; (3) ability to make comprehensible and adaptable proposals to the project; (4) ability to draft training concepts, modules, recommendations; (5) ability to prepare and present papers; ability to share experiences and expertise. In the final selection, gender balance and diversity of backgrounds were taken into account, as well all partnering NAs being represented by an Expert from their respective country.

Members of the Expert group include: Adina Marina Serban, Dariusz Grzemny, Georg Pirker (representative of the DARE network), Gisele Evrard Markovic (representative of the SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre), Gulesin Nemetlu Unal, Iva Zenzerović Šloser, Joanna Pankowska (representative of the European Youth Forum), Ljubov Lissina, Mara Georgescu (representative of the EU-Council of Europe youth partnership), Mohammed Alsaud, Nadine Lyamouri-Bajja, Natalja Gudakovska, Pieter - Jan Uyttersprot, Prof. Dr. Albert Scherr, Prof. Dr. Theo Gavrielides, Sabine Klocker, Sara Cincurova. The Expert group was facilitated by Hanjo Schild.



HRE in formal education

Educational and training concepts and practices

In formal education, human rights (HR) related themes are part of the curriculum of different levels of education in the eight countries part of this study. But this does not mean that Human Rights Education (HRE) takes place because the exploration of those themes is at times not explicitly linked to HR. In secondary schools Human Rights (HR) is normally explored in relation to “History” or “Civic or political or citizenship education”. In relation to history for example HR is related to national narratives and the lessons to be learned from the past.

In higher education, HR is part of the curriculum for youth workers, teachers, social workers and pedagogues. But their inclusion in the curricula at times is not explicit (just at the background of other topics like migration, globalization, diversity…) and at times very punctual (ad hoc short courses).

The educational paths for youth workers are just clearly articulated in some European countries like Estonia or Ireland. Therefore, it is very difficult and at the same time a challenge to integrate HRE in their educational paths. HRE is indeed not a regular element of the formal education of social workers and youth workers. In Flanders – Belgium, for example, the NGOs have the capacity to training to young people for obtaining a certificate of animator, master animator or instructor in youth work. This is certainly an opportunity to integrate HRE in their training which could be more consistently used.

In some countries like Germany and France, following the approach of the Council of Europe, HRE is framed together with Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC/HRE). This frame should contribute to mainstream HRE but significant progresses are still needed to do it systematically. But if this is considered an approach to be promoted in other countries some precautions should be taken because in some countries “citizenship education”, especially in formal education, is (still) closer to “patriotic” education (with some elements of nationalistic propaganda) than to HRE.

Despite its presence in the formal curricula, it seems that Human Rights Education is in the formal sector quite limited or incomplete. In most cases it seems that the concepts and practices focus on learning “about Human Rights” (knowledge and understanding). Learning for Human Rights (skills) and learning through Human Rights (attitudes and values) happens just in the



rather punctual but enriching learning experiences in cooperation with NGOs, during their internships or specialised institutes.

An interesting attempt to articulate a holistic approach to Political Education – Human Rights Education in the formal sector is the so called „Beutelsbacher consensus“⁶ in Germany. Nowadays is not so consensual anymore but in view of its own history it proposes a kind of „compromise“ on how political education has to happen in schools:

- Prohibition against overwhelming the pupil;
- Treating controversial subjects as controversial;
- Giving weight to the personal interests of pupils.

Many out-of-school educational actors criticise this approach because it does not sufficiently empower young people to stand up for their rights.

Human Rights is connected with other topics but not consistently mainstreamed in formal education, neither in the secondary school nor in higher education. As in the case of youth work students in Estonia, it could be said that to sum up there is a will and interest towards both human rights and HRE amongst students but they either do not recognize HRE in their own curriculum or have not had the opportunity to engage in HRE that much. Similarly, in the Law Faculties students learnt about Human Rights but mostly reduced to their legal dimension.

Training and resources needs

In relation to formal education (secondary education and professional one for youth workers, social workers, pedagogues, teachers, etc) the national reports identified the need of integrating HRE in the curricula in a more consistent and systematic way. This means with a clear periodicity, number of hours, with a clear structure of contents and with room for further exploration. This would imply having in the curriculum a good balance between clearly identified “core-basic” contents on HR and exploring HR related issues linked to the local contexts, specificities of the studies, interests of students, current discussions on the media or current emerging challenges (i.e. radicalisation leading to violence).

Another identified need is the promotion of a whole school approach to HR. This means promoting the development not just of knowledge but as well of skills and attitudes for students. For doing that, there is the need of training teachers on how to adapt and use in their full potential the existing educational resources. Additionally through specific trainings teachers would strengthen their motivation for HRE.

⁶ <https://www.lpb-bw.de/beutelsbacher-konsens.html>



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There is as well the need to improve the existing resources so that they become more “ready to use” in the classroom. Still many of them are used in a purely theoretical way or they are translations of international resources without the necessary adaptation to the national or local context. Meaningful adaptations of international resources or creation of new are needed. The systematisation, exploitation and ongoing update of them are crucial so that they can be used by other teachers, in other centres or with future generations. Consequently, teachers should have or receive adequate training to be able to use those resources.

Finally it was several times underlined the need of fostering the cooperation with HR specialised NGOs, the internships during the studies, the regular participation in HR initiatives out of the classroom as complement to the normally knowledge oriented approach in the formal education.



HRE in non-formal education

Educational and training concepts and practices

In the non-formal education field, in terms of concepts and practices, in all the countries, HRE is clearly more holistic. The training courses, workshops, seminars, etc develop not just knowledge but skills, attitudes and values.

An indicator of the interest and relevance of HRE for NGOs is the very important number of youth projects in the frame of the Erasmus+ programme dealing with HR issues. For example, just an indicator: around one third of the Erasmus+ projects run under the different actions in Croatia, Austria and Germany are linked to the Paris Declaration (on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education). It would deserve a deeper analysis to assess if in all cases those HR related projects are indeed HRE activities. But independently from that it shows that there is a big interest and there are a lot of attempts to explore HR issues in relation to young people's realities.

NGOs, youth councils and local initiatives contribute to connect HRE with the realities and concerns of young people. Despite the efforts of national youth councils, NGOs networks, institutes and in some cases regional authorities for the coordination of approaches and initiatives there is a certain fragmentation of concepts and practices and a lack of coordination among actors.

There is a "fragmentation" or big differences by countries. Certain HR topics are discussed and explored at a certain moment in a country (i.e. because of the discussion of a law or because of a violent incident) but are almost insignificant in other ones. Those differences in HRE are of course consequence of the different social, political and educational contexts but as well to the opportunist use of HR related topics.

In terms of contents Human Rights sometimes are paradoxically not clearly and explicitly at the core of what are announced to be HRE activities. In those cases HR are rather at the back as a kind of approach or as a kind of background ethical reference of other topics (i.e. gender equality, asylum, globalisation, migration, diversity, racism, diversity, etc). Taking the European Convention of Human Rights as starting point, HR should be the foundation of justice, peace and be maintained in an effective political democracy. Current hot HR related issues can be an opportunity to reaffirm these foundations. But if those current issues are not holistically



considered (as it often happens at policy level or in the media) their exploration can contribute to the “fragmentation” of HRE.

In some countries this fragmentation is not always consistently addressed by HRE experts and activists. Their “proximity” to the HR issue might determine their interest. They are not very enthusiastic in the promotion of HRE in relation to those hot current issues because it requires time and is often perceived as unattractive. This is another indicator of the big distance between the “theory” and the “daily reality” when talking about HR in our continent.

In other cases it is paradoxical that the attention given to Human Rights “suffers” from the attention given, for example, to the issues of refugees. The issue of refugees, migration and asylum is at first and basically a HR issue that questions the identity of the EU as a Union based on human rights values. But that perspective, the HR perspective is not sufficiently present with the necessary level of analysis and minimum necessary contents to effectively mainstream it in the non-formal sector.

These difficulties to mainstream HR are certainly due to different factors but probably a key one is the lack of understanding by some of the key players in the field of youth (i.e. local authorities, promoters and managers of young programmes, youth workers). A significant number of future youth workers and practitioners reduce HR to the legal/judicial dimension or link it more or less consciously to the idea of exaggerated claims or that HR are something to be “deserved” by human beings instead of intrinsic to them because of their dignity. Some typical misleading understandings of HR are indeed the idea that HR should be disserved, that HR are privileges for “minorities”, that HR conditionally linked to responsibilities without any other consideration, that HR is just a legal issue, that HR are a luxury or just utopia, etc. These kind of misleading understandings of HR are certainly more common among other stakeholders (i.e. media, politicians) but the researches in different countries shows that they influence those who should promote them in all their potential.

It seems that the activities and initiatives promoted by specialised NGOs (i.e. on migration, employment, etc) in comparison with “generic” NGOs manage to get a better balance between the specificity of the topic and a wider HR perspective in their educational activities. In those cases together or even beyond the concrete issue of concern, at times influenced by the priorities of the granting schemes, HRE operates as empowerment tool for young people in their different realities.

Training and resources needs

In the non-formal education field there is the need of linking more clearly and explicitly the different fields of work with HR (i.e. participation, asylum, employment, housing, health,



education, etc). And then, once the HR dimension is clearly integrated mainstream it at different levels, such as awareness raising, educational level, policy level, work with the media, etc.

Even if in non-formal education the resources are in general terms holistic they need to be more “emancipatory”. As the Belgium/Flanders report declares “the holistic HR/E approach consciously starts from “I” have rights (emancipation), and only then goes to “YOU” have rights (empathy) and “WE” can act together if someone’s rights are at risk (solidarity) - materials seem to often lack the emancipatory dimension”.

Better adapted (to the national and local reality) and more specific resources for youth workers, trainers and young people are as well needed. Quite a lot of materials are translations or strongly inspired by international ones. Those are very valid but the adaptations of those (which might happen when they are used) are not sufficient or is not systematised (i.e. for the local context, for minority languages within the country, etc). Thematically specific resources are needed to explore issues which in a certain moment become very relevant at national or local level (i.e. transgender, radicalisation leading to violence, reproductive rights, Roma, etc)

A better coordination of activities and initiatives and a stronger cooperation of the different actors would be necessary. So that the different specialised NGOs can support and learn from each other. This cooperation, mutual learning and support, would be particularly enriching between specialised and “generic” NGOs. Without losing their specificity, working in a coordinated way, would make possible to articulate a more consistent discourse on HR related issues. The national HRE TCs were in several cases a good platform for that. Additionally HR networks or specialised committees on a certain issue could play a role.



Missing topics

Both in formal and non-formal education the undercovered topics identified in the national research reports go in the direction of mainstreaming HRE in the youth field. Together with mainstreaming HRE an educational praxis through HR in the formal and in the non-formal sectors would allow live and experience HR in many aspects of daily life. The ultimate aim would be the promotion through education of a culture of Human Rights for everyone.

For achieving that a particular focus should be put on certain themes and ultimate target groups of young people. Four national reports clearly list missing topics lined to specific groups of young people:

- HR and Mixed abilities groups.
- HR and young people “without papers”
- HR and LGBTIQ young people (it seems that this is particularly challenging in Eastern European Countries)
- HR and Roma youth
- HR and transgender youth
- HR and Hate Speech online

They are not “topics” and therefore in principle not the focus of this part of the research, but in four cases audio visual and digital methods/approaches are identified as uncovered:

- Working with movies relevant to HR
- Online HR game
- MOOC on HR with catchy video clips
- Digital storytelling workshops

This insistence on the needs is probably an indicator of their importance and as well of the fact that in those countries -as it is explicitly explained in other countries- basically the most relevant topics are covered.

Two “new” or “emerging” topics are identified as uncovered.

- HR and mobility environmentally sustainable
- HR and radicalisation leading to violence



Most recommended educational resources

Analysing the most recommended educational resources in different countries there were no specific distinction between the formal and the non-formal education. This might indicate that the educational resources are or should be adequate for both educational contexts. The clearest identifiable tendency is the mention to the Council of Europe resources on HRE (i.e. Compass, Compasito, Bookmarks, We can). These are mentioned in half of the national reports.

This shows the quality of those resources and the successful strategy of translating them into national languages. At the same time, in line with the above described needs, this shows a certain lack of specific and adapted resources to the national contexts, on certain concrete issues, in “minority” languages or for working with specific target groups.

At European level the main problem is not the lack of resources. On the contrary, there are a lot but they are not centralised or consistently systematise. Therefore, their identification and their national, thematic and target group adaptation become challenging and costly in terms of time.

The few recommended national resources are specific, focus on certain issues (Children Rights, people in need, migration, etc) and they are produced by institutes, academies, educational institutions, consortiums or partnerships around a certain project but not by single NGOs. These organisations seem to be more able to work mid-term and give continuity to their materials and their use in different courses. There is an interesting and growing tendency to use internet and videos but the stage of online courses or trainings is in most cases not achieved.

The mapped materials coming from NGOs are methodologically very interesting (i.e. games, Youtube channels, workshops) but not explicitly focused on HR and rarely addressed to a clearly identified target group.

When analysing, all together, the identified as “most recommended” resources, it is very significant that few criteria are named in the national reports for resources to be “recommendable”. This might be partly due to the fact that some of them are obvious (i.e. resources addressing knowledge, skills and attitudes, clearly dealing with HR, etc) but as well due



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to the fact that other possible criteria, such as being adaptable to the local/national reality, being youth friendly, having a clear target group, are often not considered (enough).

Identifying and setting quality criteria for resources on HRE is a challenge to be addressed. Specific indicators for each context should be associated to those quality criteria so that actors and practitioners of HRE can consider in their materials what it means for example to be young friendly when working with students of social work or with young Roma.



Additional findings

All the national mappings make a clear distinction or separation between the formal and non-formal education in terms of training concepts and practices and training and resources needs. This is certainly a very relevant finding because this differentiation was not pre-defined one for the national researches. It seems that even considering the “intrinsic natural differences” between those educational sectors the distance or discrepancies are too big and the cooperation can be certainly enlarged and improved. The possibilities and obstacles for that cooperation are diverse in different countries. In some countries (i.e. France and Slovakia) the NGOs need a kind of formal accreditation in order to be able to cooperate with schools. This is not the case for example in Germany or Estonia.

When there is a long term and well planned cooperation between the formal and the non-formal sectors, the national reports show that joint HRE initiatives can be very successful. The relatively few (if compared with the overall HRE activities) long term experiences of that cooperation show that there is still a big potential in this direction. This cooperation has different forms: internships in NGOs during the formal studies, joint training activities, workshops on specific issues, etc.

There is the need of systematising these experiences and of creating resources (i.e. tool kits, manuals, methods, etc) for multiplying them so that they become long term oriented, more stable and replicable.

The identified training and resource needs for formal and non-formal education were deduced from the shortcomings of the existing ones. Very few national reports explicitly refer to them. This is very significant and eventually an indicator of the lack of an overall vision for HRE. Independently of how consensual or adequate a certain vision would be, if there is one and there is a detailed analysis of what exists, it should be relatively easy to identify the further needs. This lack of an overall vision for HRE in the countries might be linked to the weak policy dimension in the current HRE practices.

The related policies and political strategies that the national reports identified as relevant were few and weakly analysed. They are at first national and formal education policies. In those policies it is designed and articulated the inclusion (or not) of HRE in the secondary school curriculum and in the specific studies for becoming youth worker, social worker, teacher. In several countries HRE is framed or strongly linked with civic education or education for democratic citizenship. The second policy field relevant for the mapping is youth policy. In particular how youth work is



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organised, its recognition (or not) and its articulation in national plans or strategies influences very much the HRE activities (their objectives, target groups, partners, formats...). Other more specific policy fields were just named in the national reports: children rights, prevention of radicalisation leading to violence, youth participation, access to rights, youth transition and social inclusion.

HRE is indeed about education, formal and non-formal it is very natural that the educational and youth work policies have been identified as the most relevant ones. But in relation with young people, with their daily life, HR and HRE should be as well about employment, health, participation, housing, education (beyond HRE). It is significant to note that those policies were if at all just punctually identified in the national reports. For mainstreaming HRE a wide range of policies, not just the educational ones are to be considered.



Annexes

Annex 1: Estonian national report



HRE in Estonia.pdf



HRE resources in
Estonia.pdf

Annex 2: German national report



HRE in Germany.pdf



HRE Resources
Germany.pdf

Annex 3: French national report



HRE in France.pdf



HRE Resources and
trainings in France.pdf

Annex 4: Austrian national report



HRE in Austria.pdf



HRE Resources
Austria.pdf

Annex 5: Belgium/Flanders national report



HRE in Belgium
Flanders and Resources

Annex 6: Slovak national report



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