

## **Who should receive Human Rights Education**

Each human being has the right to Human Rights Education. Schools, colleges and universities and organisations such as Amnesty International are not the only ones responsible for Human Rights Education and for developing a Human Rights culture, but all people since we are constantly confronted with Human Rights issues.<sup>1</sup> However, some organisations are more important than others in educating professionals, such as teachers.

## **Human Rights Education in Austrian schools**

Human rights education has been officially part of the Austrian education system since 1978 under Political Science.<sup>2</sup> Hence Political Science and Human Rights Education are founding pillars of the curriculum in all subjects, grades and school types. Moreover the subject of Human Rights is part of the subject matter in compulsory history and political science from 8th grade onwards in all school types.<sup>3</sup>

The centre *Polis* – the information centre for political education in Austria helps teachers to communicate political awareness and humanitarian approach to their students.

## **Human Rights Education in University colleges for teacher training**

Regardless of the efforts of many parties, the knowledge of Human Rights amongst teachers and students in Austrian schools is dissatisfactory and the understanding of their meaning poor.

This was illustrated in a study done in Austrian schools in 2008 by centre *Polis* on political education, contracted by BMUKK in cooperation with institutetime (Tiroler Institut für Menschenrechte und Entwicklungspolitik- Tyrolean institute for human rights and development politics) <sup>4</sup>

A few projects would help to raise awareness of the enforcement of Human Rights Education.

This is only possible when certain requirements are met, such as:

- The educators should possess basic knowledge of Human Rights and their historical importance.

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<sup>1</sup>cf. FRITZSCHE (2004),

<sup>2</sup> cf. ZENTRUM POLIS (2009), 1; KOMPASS (2005), 5

<sup>3</sup> <http://bim.lbg.ac.at/de/menschenrechtsbildung> [20.10.2011]

<sup>4</sup> cf. BAYER (2010), 75

- The educators should choose the right to education as a central theme in their teaching.<sup>5</sup>The educators should support children and young people with self-determination, co-determination and solidarity.
- Teaching should include usage of media while it is an integral part of today's youth culture. Nowadays children and young people use social media to communicate with each other.<sup>6</sup>
- The students should critically process the most important Human Rights declarations and conventions, the historical background of the Human Rights and their foundation. Furthermore it is important to discuss the implementation and extent of Human Rights violations. They should also have discussions about the victims of such violations and the shortcomings of Human Rights organisations. Students should also learn to understand Human Rights and learn to think for themselves. They need to become open, tolerant, and critical and in addition gain an ability to manage conflict. By doing this they will learn to understand the values of humanity and our rights. The work of our educators should be founded on these values.
- Human Rights Education means that teachers have an educational and a democratic duty to include Human Rights in teaching of all subjects. This will allow us to question our society, to learn about the outside world and express the challenges of our time in education, through art.

## **New Media in Human Rights Education**

New media are part of pupils life. So they are a way to achieve an aim. It is good to have a great repertoire of digital methods so you can be flexible in different situations.

Only use tools you really like and can handle. You always have to ask the question: Whats my aim?

With the following tools I want to show how it is possible to activate teachers and pupils.

- **Geocaching**  
<https://www.geocaching.com/play/search>
- **Learning Apps**  
<http://learningapps.org/>
- **Mini books**  
<http://www.minibooks.ch/>
- **Cube Creator**  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/cube\\_creator/](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/cube_creator/)

*With the workshop I will give courage to teach Human Rights in the spirit of "Sapere aude"*

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<sup>5</sup> cf. BAYER (2009a), 23f

<sup>6</sup> cf. BAYER (2009b), 68

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