

INTERVENTION BY SLOVAKIA

In my intervention I would like to mention some points which were important during the first phase of implementation of UNECE Strategy for ESD in Slovakia. Slovakia has made an important progress in ESD since the High-level meeting in March 2005. In general we can say that the process of establishing good basis to start its implementation was not an easy task, but surely it was a good experience for all partners involved.

MILESTONES

At the beginning the important was the fact that the Strategy was translated into Slovak language and distributed to the relevant authorities. Also national focal point was designated in 2005. Good basis for starting the process of implementation of UNECE Strategy was approval of National Action plan for SD in July 2005 which includes also educational part following UNECE Strategy objectives.

In December 2005 “national ESD platform”, the national commission for ESD was set up and started to work on the task of implementing ESD into school system and lifelong learning as such. The commission consists of representatives of Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment and other relevant stakeholders. Ministry of Education is coordinating body of the commission.

The first phase of commission’s work was finished **in December 2006 when the National Action plan for ESD was finalised**. This national implementation plan addresses objectives, activities, measures, tentative timetable and means of implementation. The national implementation plan has been developed with a participatory approach, but due to the shortage of time not all possible stakeholders and partners were involved in the process of drafting it. The action plan has been signed by minister of education. At the moment the action plan is put for public discussion and after that we hope will be submitted to Slovak government for approval.

CURRENT SITUATION

Since the year 2007 has started the work of subcommittees within national committee for ESD in which the experts on various levels of education are preparing the curriculum for basic, secondary schools in compliance with the overall curriculum reform of school system. The ESF has become to be one of 4 horizontal themes that have to be respected in an educational program of each school. The experts for higher education are identifying the possibilities of making universities to become more sustainable via educational content they provide, but also through incorporation of SD principals into their overall personal and institutional management.

In 2007 was established the network CASALEN consisting of experts from governmental, academic and NGOs in which the cooperation within Central-European Vysegrad countries and Carpathian convention should be one of accelerators and facilitators of ESD in the region. Hungary organised the first meeting in November 2007 where the future cooperation in ESD among participating countries was discussed.

Concluding our intervention we can say that the I. phase was quite successful as we already have some basis and mechanism for implementing the UNECE Strategy at the State level and also for sharing information and stimulating partnerships among different actors. It is the national commission for ESD. **What we really miss is stronger political support, including financial one, at all levels of governance.**

Many things have to be done from here on (e.g. addressing medias, training and retraining of educators, decision makers, civil servants in relation to SD, establishing and strengthening of better networking and partnership etc.), but we believe we are on a good trace and in 2010 the implementation of ESD in Slovakia should be well under way. The light in tunnel towards sustainable thinking and acting is, as we hope, becoming more visible.

Róbert Korec, Ministry of Education