

Intervention under the 2 item of the agenda: Public policy objectives for education in, and the teaching of minorities languages

Intervention presented by: Elizabete Krivcova – Russian community of Latvia

As a human rights defender and former OHCHR fellow, representing interests of Russian speaking community in Latvia, I very welcome recommendations made by the panelist concerning practical measures to ensure minority education.

Since last year our community has faced elimination of mother tongue based bilingual education. On 14 November this year Latvian Constitutional Court decided that even private schools are subject of strict restrictions and prohibitions of using minority language in the teaching process.

As representative of Latvian mission confirmed today the decisions of elimination of minority education in Latvia are based on pure political will of majority. We insist on evidence based decision making. As advocates for minority rights we are trying to collect and analyze data about effects of education policies in order to explain minority parents, why their children are facing problems and how to compensate learning deficits. We strictly support the recommendations of the European regional forum concerning monitoring, evaluation and reporting system for minority education, based on clear ant theory based indicators. We urge UN agencies and European governments to cooperate with international assessments of education quality like PISA in order to implement obligatory minority perspective there.

Minority families in Latvia are forced to look for alternative ways of education - additional education, family education, distance learning. The key for success of this effort is resource sharing. Therefore, I want to support recommendation made by the European regional forum that stakeholders involved in the development, implementation, and management of educational programs for minorities should develop cooperation across European countries in order to share resources and experiences, and create common educational spaces and programs. To make such cooperation possible, we recommend to map minority schools teaching in particular minority language. Furthermore, we encourage the European Union to create Minority education institute that could provide independent expertise and assistance to minority education initiatives, as well as to develop European curricula for minorities.

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