
EXPERT MEETING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AWARENESS FOR PSYCHOLOGISTS

Venice, 9-11 OCTOBER 2016

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I. Executive Summary

The expert meeting brought together psychology and human rights experts to explore opportunities for developing a curriculum, structured learning programme and handbook on human rights education and fundamental rights awareness for psychologists. By their knowledge and skills, psychologists have an important role to play in the prevention of human rights violations as well as protection. They also have a key role in providing support for those who suffer the consequences of human rights violations. Psychologists can provide important insights into what patterns of behaviour lead to human rights violations, and they also have a potential role in preventing human rights violations, and also reducing the impact of the consequences. Psychologists can also contribute to the promotion of human rights within their discipline, as well as within society more generally, thereby strengthening the local capacity and human rights culture.

While most psychologists will have some awareness of human rights, there is much room for improvement. Human rights are not a standard reference point within the discipline of psychology. One of the challenges is to make human rights standards meaningful and relevant for them as a professional group. Yet, one cannot start just with building up knowledge of human rights Conventions and treaties and assume that they will automatically find their way into psychological practice. One important way would be to reach out through universities, national associations of psychologists, National Human Rights Institutions and civil society in developing necessary systems and commitment to fundamental rights promotion. Through a structured human rights education curriculum, psychologists would gain better access to knowledge and develop the necessary set of skills that would allow them to relate human rights to professional practice, and professional codes of ethics and conduct. While a variety of methodologies on human rights education are available, more insight into suitable approaches and practicalities needs to be achieved.

It is therefore proposed that training and raising awareness of knowledge of human rights can improve the application of a human rights approach within psychology. To achieve this, one needs to identify key competences and skills that psychologists need in becoming better human rights defenders and promoters within their professional setting. The meeting concluded with practical next steps and milestones to follow within a timeframe of 2017-2018.

Please see also summary of the meeting, on [livestream](#).

II. Introduction

This report is an account of the outcome of the meeting Human Rights Education for Psychologists and Fundamental Rights Awareness, which took place in Venice on 09-11 October 2016. The meeting was jointly held by the European Federation of Psychological Associations (EFPA), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC).

a. Background

The EFPA Board Human Rights and Psychology (BoHR&Psy) has identified the need to realise human rights as a normative standard for psychologists' professional behaviour¹. Responding to the request for practical guidance on fundamental rights awareness and promotion, FRA has developed closer cooperation with EFPA in 2015. The Fundamental Rights Forum 2016 and its Chair's statement called for further action with professional groups, and psychologists, in particular, as a desirable way forward in upholding and promoting fundamental rights and enhancing a culture of fundamental rights in the EU.

There are many opportunities for the discipline of psychology to learn from human and fundamental rights theory and practice, and similarly for human rights practitioners to learn from the discipline of psychology." The international and European human rights standards can be an immense inspiration for psychologists. The core values of human rights, dignity, freedom and inclusion are the foundation for the promotion of the wellbeing of humanity. Given their knowledge and experience, psychologists have a responsibility and should contribute to the promotion of human and fundamental rights, including the rights of the child. The principles stipulated in the EFPA Model Code of Ethics follow the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and imply a professional societal responsibility of psychologists and their commitment to human rights.²

Psychologists and their professional organisations increasingly find themselves in situations that demand knowledge and skills to respond to human rights violations, as they are expected to:

- take a public position as professionals against the violation of human rights;
- publicly intervene if they identify possible negative consequences of certain kinds of public actions and threats of human rights violations;
- support to alleviate the consequences of human rights violations.

b. Objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting

The meeting brought together a professional group of psychologists, ethicists, lawyers and human rights experts to gather input for a possible model training module and curriculum on human rights education for psychologists. The three participating organisations, EFPA, EIUC and FRA opened the meeting with introductions on their cooperation and the theme of the conference. They cautioned the conference not to fall into the trap of treating human rights as simply a legal issue. They also made the point that human rights promotion means reaching out to those at the front line of service delivery, being 'human rights duty bearers'. Furthermore, that the professional psychology associations have also a key role as non-state human rights actors.

¹ EFPA Board Human Rights and Psychology (2015). Psychology matters in Human Rights - Human Rights matter in Psychology. See: efpa.eu

² <http://ethics.efpa.eu/guidelines/>

The meeting aimed to:

- Assemble and integrate available perspectives;
- Review existing curricula and best practices on the education of human rights;
- Prepare for the development of a model training module on human rights for psychologists;
- Explore options for developing a handbook on human rights for psychologists;
- Identify next steps and timeframe for implementation.

Expected outcomes of the meeting were:

- Draft of a conceptual framework related to human rights and psychology.
Start collecting existing curricula and examples of best practice in the education on human and fundamental rights.
- Identify key competences for human rights and psychology.
- To have made a start on identifying the basic contents of a core curriculum.
- Explore possible target groups for the outcomes of the meeting (psychologists and psychology students).
- Discussion of how a psychological perspective on human rights could be of interest to other disciplines and practitioners in the diverse fields involved in human rights.

III. Psychology and Human Rights

a. Psychology matters in human rights and human rights matter in psychology

This session framed the role of psychologists and psychology in human rights promotion and pointed to the need for psychologists to receive human rights education. Nimisha Patel emphasised in her presentation the importance of promoting a socially responsible psychology, one that would empower psychologists to address contemporary human rights violations, such as: increasing poverty, poor health care, gender inequality, and the specific situation of children. She pointed out that psychologists have been at times perpetrators of human rights violations, but can and should be the defenders and promoters of human rights. Education is an important tool to achieve these goals. Her presentation provided insight into how human rights have been taught to students of psychology, in the UK.³

b. Human rights education for psychologists

Barbara Oomen addressed the contents and programming of human rights education.

She presented a nested hierarchy for the contents of education with four layers:

--*Underlying principles*, including democracy, equality, human dignity, etc.

--*Rights*

--*Conventions*, including bill of rights (such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights - UDHR), and various other kinds of conventions, such as regional instruments (e.g., the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, European Convention on human rights etc.). Monitoring mechanisms through courts, and special rapporteurs should be part of this level

--*Implementation mechanisms* rooted in institutional, political and cultural context.

The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the UN Declaration on Human Right to Education (HRE) were discussed as examples.

In answering the question how to program human rights education, Barbara Oomen argued that education should be about, for and via human rights; that it should be directed at knowledge, skills, and attitudes; and that use should be made of all the materials already available.⁴

³ For power point presentation please see: <http://www.humanrightsforpsychologists.eu/>

⁴ For power point presentation please see: <http://www.humanrightsforpsychologists.eu/>

c. Developing a model curriculum and training of trainers

Kerstin Söderström, in her presentation concerning education about children's rights, stressed the relationships between psychology, health and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Learning goals should focus on the interplay between the individual child and their family. She described the four domains of basic needs and rights - the SAFE model: safety and freedom from harm; access to basic needs and health care; family and connection to others; and education and economic security. Teaching methods can include lectures, observations and self-study as well as listening to children in order to gain their views. The didactic methods can include simulation scenarios of possible dilemmas.⁵ Psychology students have to learn to act in the best interest of the child.

IV. The role of psychologists in human rights promotion and prevention of human rights violations

a. How do we see this role and what can psychologists offer?

Psychologists by their knowledge and experience, have a role to play in human rights promotion and the prevention of violations of human rights. They should be in a position to identify processes that lead to violence. There are questions related to how private versus state employment affect the ability for psychologists to act, thus pointing at the importance of the social context in which they work. If they are working in institutions, they may be able to be role models for human rights and act to promote change towards building protective factors and minimising risk factors. Gender inequality still presents us with one of the greatest stumbling blocks to achieve human rights for all. Psychologists are health care providers and therefore duty bearers. Psychologists should influence policy makers and regulatory bodies. For this role, they would need a peer-to-peer support network and build awareness of gender discrimination.

Psychologists also have a key role in supporting people who experience the consequences of human rights violations through evidence-based therapeutic approaches.

Uri Bronfenbrenner's model (1990) of the individual in social context is a good starting point to raise awareness of the interrelationship of the individual with the community around them. Human rights education can enhance the professional capacities of psychologists to prevent human rights violations and so ought to be part of the curriculum.⁶

A human rights oriented psychology is required which touches on the whole range of complex professional issues, moral dilemmas, professional behaviour, values and attitudes. However, human rights do provide a framework to consider what kind of society we wish to see. Human rights provide a normative and inspiring framework for psychologists. Behaviour can fluctuate when groups feel under threat in certain contexts and group dynamics can become more prevalent affecting the individuals in it (Turner et al., 1987⁷). In this context, human rights give an orientation framework. Rights also encompass responsibilities. Links to ethnography and anthropology can be useful. Human

⁵ For power point presentation please see: <http://www.humanrightsforpsychologists.eu/>

⁶ Bronfenbrenner, U. (1990). Discovering what families do. In *Rebuilding the Nest: A New Commitment to the American Family*. Family Service America [web site]. <http://www.montana.edu/www4h/process.html>

⁷ Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D. & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group*. Oxford: Blackwell.

rights and psychology can both be used as justification for actions. Some basic questions centre on violation of rights of people different to you. Military and commercial psychologists may not have the same concern as clinical and child psychologists. A curriculum would need to be created for different levels of educational background and different needs. It needs to be science based and pay due attention to values and attitudes.

What role can and should psychologists take in the promotion of human rights?

- Psychologists can help to understand why human rights violations occur, i.e. Bandura's (1971) research on the mechanisms of moral disengagement.⁸
- They can address the structural issues of mental health problems.
- Psychologists may be able to describe the psychological consequences of human rights violations.
- Psychologists can help to overcome negative consequences for victims of human rights violations

b. Why should psychologists be involved in human rights?

On the basis of their knowledge about the conditions necessary for human development, psychologists should have an inherent passion for human rights, as these are indeed these necessary conditions. In fact, psychology should be based on a framework of human rights and this is described in detail in Hagedaars (2016)⁹

Where psychologists do not see the relevance of human rights, any educational programme will need to explore what underlies their lack of interest. For instance, it may be there are conflicts of interest, perhaps relating to their work contracts; or perhaps to other contextual or economic reasons. Whatever the underlying reasons, professionally it will be helpful to the psychologist to be better informed and educated about human rights and be able to think and work using a human rights agenda as using such an awareness can bring the psychologist closer to be empathetic about their client.

When considering the relationship between law and ethics, it is clear that the professional culture in psychology is not the same as in the legal profession. In psychology, there is an emphasis on professional ethics and compliance to a code of ethics, established following the American Psychological Association publishing the first code of ethics for psychology in 1953. Furthermore, the language of ethics is not the same as the language of law.

One example of where law and psychology have combined is in truth and reconciliation programmes that are based on, amongst other things, psychological ideas. Psychology is able to throw light on the consequences of moral disengagement. It can help to identify people at risk. While some lawyers see the promotion of human rights and prevention of human rights violations as a professional responsibility, psychologists tend not to, as they are not as legally minded as lawyers and the study of human rights laws and conventions are not part of their curriculum. However, they are able to clarify the consequences of moral disengagement and it would enhance their work to link this to a much broader knowledge of human rights law.

Human rights promotion in psychology should therefore be based on professional ethics and connected to ethical principles and values. In addition to these considerations, there are two currents

⁸ Bandura, A. (1971). Social learning theory. New York: General Learning Press.

⁹ Hagedaars, P. (2016). Towards a Human Rights Based and Oriented Psychology. *Psychology & Developing Societies*, 28(2), 183-202. doi:10.1177/0971333616657170

in ethics in psychology: - the codes of conduct - they define what one must do or must not do, and codes of ethics – they articulate principles, values and standards and they are often aspirational. Human rights often explicitly underpin both the aspirational values and the rules of conduct.

The Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Psychologists (UDEPP) shares moral values with the UN UDHR. Ethics can enrich human rights and human rights can enrich ethics. See Table 1.

Psychology and human rights have a common purpose in building a better world. In human rights, a free, just, and peaceful world is envisioned with elimination of abuses and injustices. In the ethics of psychology, a free, just, and peaceful world is envisioned in accordance with the highest humanitarian values of our existence. They complement and strengthen each other in meeting the worldwide challenges for human life in the 21st century. They might however differ in their approach. Human rights, as defined in the UDHR and most other UN documents, relate to the individual and put limits on what a state can do to that person. Unlike ethical principles, however, they do not address issues related to moral duties, social responsibilities, and the collective good.

c. How do ethics and ethical codes relate to human rights?

There are differences in acceptance, use and format of ethical codes in different countries. Additionally, there are differing views of the role and place of ethical codes and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This situation can limit codes' regulatory function and effectiveness and is one reason why those developing ethical codes should also be aware of human rights aspirations and assess whether current codes or those being developed are consistent with human rights standards. It will be vital for associations of psychologists to check their professional codes on these matters.

The relationship of ethics and human rights in psychology practice can be considered from two directions. One starts with a human rights framework – or indeed a rights framework more generally, and then moves to consider how psychological ideas could link to it. In the other direction, you start with psychological theories and practice about human and societal well-being and then consider how human rights fit in. These two approaches lead to different frames of reference and are useful to explore.

One aspect of the differing perspectives is that psychologists, when working on a one to one basis with a client, will have the role of professional helper, giving support to someone who needs help (altruism). From a rights perspective, the relationship is different. The worker will be seeking to ensure that the person is able to get what s/he is entitled to. This dynamic is subtly different and provides another useful basis for psychologists and human rights workers to explore their different roles.

In considering how we connect codes of ethics in psychology with the Human Rights framework we can use an approach called the 'Four Component Model'. This was developed by James Rest in 1982 and was based on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg on moral development. Rest proposes that there are four important areas for an ethical practitioner. Firstly, being sensitive to ethical issues – being able to notice a situation as having an ethical dimension. Secondly, being able to reason about the ethical issues involved. Thirdly, having the motivation to do something about them; and finally, being capable of implementing some relevant and effective action.¹⁰

¹⁰ Details of this approach can be found in the British Psychological Society Guidance on the Teaching and Assessment of Ethical Competence (download <http://www.bps.org.uk/what-we-do/bps/ethics-standards/ethics-standards>).

This model can be easily adapted to a human rights context, because sensitivity, reasoning, motivation and action are equally applicable to human rights issues and practice as they are to ethical considerations. It is recommended therefore, that working with a human rights framework and with the adapted four component model, are included in the definition of essential competencies for psychologists.

As noted above, psychologists could be approaching this from a different perspective and training will need to ensure a basic familiarity with the international and national Human Rights frameworks.

There is a large literature on human rights and professional practice, particularly in the medical field, that is readily available and this important body of work should be drawn on in psychology education.¹¹

Another important resource in this context is the General Comment no. 14 by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that sets out how the right to health is complemented by The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹²

There are useful parallels that could be introduced in a training, between the process that psychology professionals on the one hand, and human rights workers on the other, have gone through in finding ways to codify their ethical obligations. For human rights workers, these obligations are set out in an important book, *The Professional Identity of the Human Rights Field Officer* that describes the work undertaken over some years to develop a statement of ethical commitment for Human Rights workers.¹³

The parallels with professional codes of ethics are clear, but also illustrate some of the difficulties with Codes of Ethics and Conduct in the conditions under which field officers operate. This book is recommended as an important resource for teaching psychologists about the ethical challenges faced by Human Rights workers, but also to guide their thinking on the importance of being able to challenge wrongdoing when they encounter it.

There may also be some merit in reflecting on whether there are parallels between Human Rights law and Codes of Ethics, and other areas of law, as a teaching heuristic. One example concerns the relationship between the law on transport and Traffic Psychology. Many countries have Codes that provide drivers with advice about driving safely; these are not the same as the law, but may be used in prosecutions if the guidance hasn't been followed. Traffic Psychologists have been involved in drawing up such guidance and may be a useful resource to draw on.

For psychologists, professional codes of ethics have developed in a similar way to other professional codes, for example, medical and social work codes, and include both Deontological and Utilitarian principles. However, an emerging and important enhancement that links the emerging field of Positive Psychology to this area of discussion is Virtue Ethics. This framework may also provide a good platform for teaching both about human rights and psychological ethics.

¹¹ As an example, one excellent introductory text is Judith Asher: *The Right to Health: A Resource Manual for NGOs*, which is accessible on-line at:

https://www.aas.org/sites/default/files/migrate/uploads/RT_Health.pdf.

¹² Available at: Economic and Social Council

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=E%2fC.12%2f2000%2f4&Lang=en

¹³ O'Flaherty M. and Ulrich G. (2016). *The Professional Identity of the Human Rights Field Officer*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. See particularly chapter 3 by George Ulrich, 'The statement of ethical commitments of human rights professionals: A commentary.'

An additional theme is the importance of the periodic review process that is undertaken on codes of ethics to see whether they need amendment. If handled well, this process can be an effective way to support engagement with the codes through discussion and debate. Equally when psychologists have to undertake to abide by a code of ethics and conduct, involvement can help their commitment. During this process discussion of the importance of a human rights framework should be included.

Psychologists and other health professionals also at times act as witnesses, frontline responders, partners of government in institutional development and they take a role in fostering a culture of human rights. Furthermore, it should be emphasised that this is a role not only of individual health and other professionals, but also of their professional organizations. Psychologists are also partners with and can provide a resource base for other professions in responding to human rights violations.

It must not be forgotten that psychologists themselves also may act as perpetrators of human rights violations and effective governance and oversight as well as mechanisms to reflect on their own actions are needed. Feeling and thinking oneself through the needs of other people (empathy) is a key aspect of human rights education. Furthermore, we need to understand better how hate crime develops and can be prevented. There is also much passive acceptance of discrimination rather than an active attitude to help and intervene.

Psychologists need to include in their work the report of the International Project on Competence in Psychology (IPCP)¹⁴ published in 2016. In teaching it will be useful to include some concrete examples, such as how to combat hate crime, discrimination and how to take anti-discrimination action. When active as a witness, e.g. in cases of discriminatory conduct, there are several training models that have been developed including Antidiscrimination Response training.¹⁵

This has four components, not unlike the Rest model described above:

Level 1. Dis-witnessing

Level 2: Passive witnessing

Level 3: Active witnessing

Level 4: Ethical witnessing with social action

In education models, several methods can be used, such as working with concrete dilemmas, working with simulation exercises and/or using the Socratic Method. There is also a considerable body of empirical evidence on the effectiveness of different ways of teaching, and also specifically about teaching about morality from a psychological and also ethical perspective.¹⁶

Georg Lind has recently summarised decades of research in his book “How to Teach Morality”. He has developed further the approaches of Kohlberg and applied them in varying educational settings. His

¹⁴ http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.asppb.net/resource/resmgr/Guidelines/IPCP_-_THE_DECLARATION_Final.pdf

¹⁵ One that may be useful is Anti-Discrimination Response Training (see <https://www.academicvideostore.com/video/anti-discrimination-response-training-art> for some details).

¹⁶ Much of this literature can be found in the Journal of Moral Education and a recent article by a colleague of James Rest, Darcia Narvaez, summarises some of the contemporary challenges. Narvaez, D. (2016). Returning to humanity’s moral heritages. *Journal of Moral Education*, 45(3), 256-260. doi:10.1080/03057240.2016.1167030).

work is well researched and his instruments have good psychometric properties to assess educational outcomes.¹⁷

We can draw on this extensive body of work to establish best practices in teaching morality and ethics, and moving it forward from just an aspirational ethics. This means conceptualising ethics not merely as a matter of avoiding harm, but also as a commitment to respectful human interaction (focus on the dignity of the human person) and a commitment to doing good for others. The human rights framework helps to conceptualise this idea of the general good.

If a closer engagement of psychology, ethics and human rights is to be facilitated and if this entails some redefinition of ethical standards and commitments, contextualization will be needed to make it relevant for a broad cross-section of practitioners as they work in many different situations.

It is also necessary to bear in mind a contemporary problem where the media have developed a sort of industry around ethical problems and human rights issues, by focussing on scandals as a way of responding to profound contemporary challenges.

UDHR

- right to recognition of dignity
- right to recognition of inherent worth

- right to non-discrimination

- right to justice

- right to freedom

- right to education, health and well-being

- right to protection, security and social order
- right to privacy

- right to free and full consent
- everyone has duties to the community

UDEPP

- respect for the dignity of persons and peoples
- respect for the inherent worth of all human beings
- recognition that all human beings are worthy of
- equal moral consideration, regardless of perceived or real differences in social status, ethnic origin, gender, capacities, or other such characteristics
- fairness and justice in the treatment of persons and peoples
- respect for the ability of individuals, families, groups, and communities to make decisions for themselves and to care for themselves and each other
- caring for the well-being of persons and peoples, developing and maintaining competence
- informed consent, protection of confidentiality
- privacy for individuals, families, groups, and communities
- free and informed consent
- principle of professional and scientific responsibilities to society

Table 1: Meeting points between selected principles Universal Declaration of Ethical Principles for Psychologists (UDEPP) and selected human rights articles of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights (UDHR).

¹⁷ How to Teach Morality: Promoting Deliberation and Discussion, Reducing Violence and Deceit. Berlin: Logos Verlag Berlin. 2016.

c. How to motivate psychologists and psychology students to take up education about human rights?

As mentioned above, there is often lack of awareness of relevance of human rights for psychology programmes. However, when it is taught well, it is generally enthusiastically received. A useful approach might be Uri Bronfenbrenner's model of the individual in social context as this is a good starting point to raise awareness of the interrelationship of the individual with the community.¹⁸ Furthermore, as human rights education can enhance professional psychological skills, it ought to be part of the curriculum and so trainers may need to undertake training themselves to deliver this part of their programme. Another way that training in this area could be enhanced is through the use of peer networks and mentorship to educate psychologists and psychology students about human rights.

One influential author, philosopher, social-economist and Noble Prize winner Amartya Sen, has developed theory and practice with direct application to human rights and psychology. His 'capability approach' would provide a way of bridging the conditions under which people experience violations of their rights, and the necessary conditions for expressing their psychosocial needs and being able to meet them. Sen calls human rights 'recognized freedoms', seen as entitlements of a person to the development and realization of his or her capabilities.¹⁹

V. Expected competences for psychologists

a. Expected competences

Competences can be defined as clusters of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes that enable a person to act effectively and to a defined standard in a professional practice situation. Core competences in psychology involve the ability to think through people's needs using empathy. Students need to develop the capacity to be aware of the impact and effect of human rights violations on the development of the individual and their mental health. Blooms taxonomy – 'learning in action' can be useful in this context. It means to be able to recognise human rights issues in the workplace, in the home in the community, i.e. the need to develop an awareness of human rights being part of everyday life. It will mean developing awareness of human rights dilemmas – and to have the capacity to balance the different interest at stake by understanding that at times you need to give up one right for the sake of another, for instance when you are a parent and have to take responsibility for a child. Also, empathy is a key competence and it should be noted that empathy is not equally distributed among psychologists or any other health professional, or anyone else for that matter.

In terms of the knowledge base required, this would include:

- The origin and evolution of the human rights concept throughout time
- The history and content of human rights documents
- Monitoring measures
- Interpretation of human rights
- Critiques of human rights
- Linking the client to social structures – society (the client may be an individual, a group, a community, a corporation, etc.)

There are a number of aims of human rights education for psychologists which include:

- Enhancing the professional's human rights knowledge and skills;

¹⁸ EFPA Board Human Rights and Psychology (2015). Psychology matters in Human Rights - Human Rights matter in Psychology. See: efpa.eu

¹⁹ Sen, A. (2009). The idea of justice. London: Allen Lane & Harvard University Press.

- Strengthening the professional's capability to take action in situations where human rights are an issue;
- Promoting the professional qualifications in human rights and psychology practice.

Promoting human rights

- Preventing human rights violations
- Providing approaches that can alleviate the effects of human rights violations
- Deepening awareness, sensitivity and empathy to these situations
- Becoming capable of resolving ethical dilemmas that are faced in human rights applications, actions and decisions.

The learning outcomes should include:

- Be able to see connections between local and global issues
- Be able to implement human rights principles and values in their professional decision making
- To develop strategies to promote and disseminate human rights knowledge and skills
- To identify the relevant rights at stake within a professional situation
- Contextualize the individual situation within the wider community context (advocacy, dissemination of knowledge in public)
- Identify within a professional situation their own and colleagues' cultural context in order to be aware of diverse traditions and practises also in relation to their clients
- To learn the skills to be able influence governments or work with them on human rights issues.
- Understand the basis on which some psychologists have resisted human rights violations and spoken out.

So, psychologists should recognise the role of psychology and psychologists as agents of social change, develop a social awareness attitude - that transcends the individual level - regarding the impact of the profession within society, and pursue a participatory approach in societal decision-making.

One suggestion that could facilitate the necessary competences is to apply James Rest's model of 'Four Components' for ethics: (1) ethical sensitivity, (2) capacity for ethical reasoning, (3) ethical motivation (will to take action) and (4) capacity to implement ethical action. The model can be adapted to integrate the ethics and human rights paradigms with the following categories: human rights sensitivity, capacity for human rights reasoning, human rights motivation (will to take action) and capacity to implement human rights action. It is recommended to include competencies of this nature in the definition of essential competencies for psychologists.

b. Core content and optional content of the curriculum

Elements of possible training programmes for psychologists:

This should include critical appraisal, self-awareness and reflexivity. Learning needs to be a continuous progression towards personal and professional development, taking into account social justice and human rights. The human rights content could be fitted into existing curricula or be available as a standalone workshop.

The importance of understanding the potential trade-offs that may need to be made between collective well-being and individual rights, needs to be brought to the forefront. The issues that arise in daily practice for psychologists, where a human rights perspective and insight would be helpful are:

- Human dignity
- Inclusion
- Security

- Physical safety
- Freedom
- Self-determination
- Autonomy
- Empowerment
- Equality

Psychologists tend to focus on the individual and individual change and while this is important, in the human rights framework, there would need to be a shift to an approach that is contextual, historical and relevant to real life changes with emphasis on prevention, accountability and reparation.

Vested interests and power relations in society are very powerful, and teaching should include the importance of understanding this political dimension to psychologists work, as they have a significant impact on well-being. In addition, their training should aim to empower them to impart human rights awareness to other professionals, such as lawyers, through, for example, a learning hub.

It is likely that it may not be possible to develop a universal curriculum, given the variety of settings in which psychology is relevant. However, core competences in human rights can be identified in the same way as core competences were identified in the International Declaration of Core Competences in Professional Psychology (2016).²⁰

The way the competences are taught or articulated in a curriculum will depend on local needs, including, for example, values and culture.

Some suggestions for the core content of the curriculum:

- General human rights principles, theory, origin, limitation and critiques
- Why human rights matter for psychologists – critical HR thinking
- Main human rights laws and conventions that are particularly relevant for psychologists
- Transformative characteristics of human rights – achievements
- Role of psychologist on the effective realisation of human rights
- Intersection between ethics and human rights
- Linking the ethical code and ethical principles with the human rights framework (critical approach)
- Reinforce the policy maker capacity of psychologists within the human rights debate.

Optional contents should reflect:

- Specific human rights according to the different psychological specializations (health, clinical, etc.)
- Regional and historical contexts in connection with human rights challenges (refugee crisis, war, discrimination on all grounds, Roma, children, women etc.)

²⁰ International Declaration of Core Competences in Professional Psychology.2016. available at: http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz/cms_show_download.php?id=429

VI. Content, examples of best and poor psychological research and practices, malpractice as well passivity

a. Examples of best psychological research related to human rights promotion and protection

Psychological research can contribute to the promotion of human rights. As noted above in reference to theories that may be helpful, there is a similar set of research approaches that might be considered. Examples include studies on ethnocentrism, social exclusion, stereotyping, and attribution theory. In addition there is a large body of research literature on intergroup relationships that stems from the seminal studies of G.W. Allport²¹ (who developed the contact hypothesis) and the social psychology of intergroup relations and social identity theory of H. Tajfel²² (see also Brown, 2010²³).

The contact hypothesis of Allport (1954), supported by extensive empirical research (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2011²⁴), states that prejudices can be reduced and intergroup relations can be improved by contact under certain conditions. The conditions are: real life contact, equal status, common goals, institutional and normative support, like in desegregation politics in the USA, and a notion of an overarching, shared identity.

One field of psychology that may have much to contribute is the field that deals with power differences between groups, that requires researchers to take a more challenging approach to mainstream psychological research. Furthermore, relevant psychological research should also include the influence of society on individuals, and aim at interventions that improve health and well-being through social change.

When psychologists bring their professional expertise in, they should rely on empirically supported theories. The chances for being correct or successful when explaining phenomena or planning interventions increase if explanations and prognoses are based on theoretical considerations, which have been empirically supported in the past. In addition, psychologists are requested to evaluate the efficiency of their own professional behaviour when they focus human rights violations. That means, explanations, recommended prognoses and realized interventions have to be systematically assessed and analysed whether and how far they really end up in an improvement of the human rights situation.

b. Examples of best psychological practice related to human rights promotion and protection

Research and advocacy should be aligned. Ervin Staub was a life-long researcher on peace and violence. At the same time, he applied his research and was involved in many projects all over the world²⁵ and he provides a good role model whose example could be included in teaching materials.

In recent times, Chancellor Merkel's statement (2015)²⁶ related to the needs of refugees provided another principled model of how a politician can provide leadership and advocacy.

²¹ The Nature of Prejudice. (1954; 1979). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.

²² Tajfel, H. (1978). Differentiation between social groups. London: Academic Press.

²³ Brown, R. (2010). Prejudice. Its social psychology. Oxford: Blackwell.

²⁴ Pettigrew, T.F. & Tropp, L.R. (2011). When groups meet. New York: Psychology Press.

²⁵ Please see E.g., <https://www.umass.edu/peacepsychology/ervin-staub>

²⁶ <http://www.uni-marburg.de/fb04/team-wagner/aktuelles/document.2016-02-10.0875762241>

In order to share the knowledge of psychology with a wider public, psychologists need to know how to inform journalists and opinion makers.

Examples of good/best psychological practices relate to human rights promotion and protection²⁷:

- Children: promotion of rights in order to promote wellbeing.
- Psychologists going into schools to talk to teachers about victim support.
- Law enforcement training to identify children at risk from human rights violations.
- Developing of tools to help children learn to identify what is unacceptable behaviour.
- Training of personnel in institutions to recognize human rights violations of older people, e.g., who have dementia or other mental health problems.

c. **Examples of psychological malpractice related to human rights**

Adverse practices, which exclude recognition of cross-cultural psychology, specifically in the area of mental health, psychiatric hospitals and prisons, could be included in the curriculum as they provide useful material for debate and discussion. Within psychology, complexity and difficult cases make good teaching material.

Psychological research has an important role to play in public understanding of human rights issues, but it can be misused. An example is the recent successful challenge to the way research was being represented in Ireland concerning same sex marriage laws.²⁸

The prevalence of compliance and collusion regarding human rights abuses is an area that needs detailed analysis (e.g. the passivity in the face of abuse of Irish children by the Church; bystander effects and low-level collaborators in serious human rights violations) and this area has useful parallels in the field of business ethics. The use of the Human Rights Checklist²⁹ is an approach that might be applied to psychology associations so that they could gain feedback on their compliance with human rights.

d. **Examples of psychologists' passivity related to human rights violations**

Passivity means, in this context, not taking action where this could prevent harm. Much of the work in this area concerns the bystander effect (mentioned above) and conflicts of interest. Moral disobedience as a heroic act of the individual dissident or as an emerging collective response to systemic wrong can be understood as the opposite pole of this dimension and can be understood in the framework of virtue ethics. Passivity in such situations has perhaps been partly due to an underestimation of the harm involved. Over recent years, there has been a gradual increase of the visibility of psychological research demonstrating the very negative impact of human rights abuses and deprivation, particularly their effects on children, for example, those born into asylum facilities. Even so, knowledge of the practical experiences by psychologists and other professionals who are working in the field of migration with its rising needs, needs to be much more widely understood and there is more work needed here.

²⁷ Much information can be found on internet. No examples are cited as it is often difficult to evaluate the validity and utility of interventions at face value and this report is not meant for detailed inspection.

²⁸ See (<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/psychologists-caution-against-outdated-material-in-gay-marriage-debate-1.2123688>).

One way of countering passivity is through film. One example is the documentary, made by Professor John Oates, of the experience of Roma groups in Hungary. It demonstrates how to ethically and respectfully represent groups that either are or potentially may be at risk.³⁰

In other areas of psychology research there have been challenges to the consensus derived from the Milgram (1974) experiments (that themselves been criticised on ethical grounds) that those who violate human rights may be obeying authority rather than actively supporting the 'cause'.³¹

Similarly the seminal work of Hannah Arendt highlighting with the phrase the 'Banality of Evil'³² that people can engage in very serious human rights violations through lack of critical thinking or other biases. This work was ahead of its time as psychological research has confirmed many of her ideas. However, it is also the case that there is evidence that those who collaborate with human rights violations often do so as they support the enterprise wholeheartedly.

Passivity and malpractice:

There is a fine line between malpractice and passivity. In developing the curriculum in this area it will be useful to include some real life examples as well as research literature. An example might be when a psychologist, not considering they have sufficient competence in psychopharmacology, fail to raise with a doctor the possibility that they are overusing medication in a mental health setting.

Research also suggests that speaking out about unethical practice or whistleblowing can be at a high personal cost as can turning a blind eye³³. Nevertheless, training should focus on how to enhance psychologists and other professionals' strategies to be able to speak out under such circumstances. The recent issues raised for the American Psychological Association concerning psychologists who were involved in the so-called enhanced interrogations in Guantanamo Bay provide a useful learning point to understand why people took the positions they did and the consequences they experienced.³⁴

While individual action is clearly important, the curriculum could include ideas concerning governance and that to avoid passivity, there should be a system of independent oversight that is not accountable to those controlling the institution or organization in question.

The curriculum could also include reference to the useful and enlightening research on bullying. Other areas to look into are research on abuse, torture and the effect of power hierarchies.

The use of language could be explored in the curriculum as this can determine the narrative. Terminology can be revealing, i.e., when using the term 'victim' instead of 'person'. Research into the role of victimhood shows how complex the area is in terms of its effect on emotional reactions, for instance in the case of perpetrators and by-standers.

³⁰ Oates, J & Szekeres, C. (2010). Vortex (Örvény). Documentary. See: <http://www.fridaycircle.com/tag/roma/>

³¹ Milgram, S. (1974). Obedience to Authority; An Experimental View. NY, Harper & Row.

See e.g., Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, a journal of the American Psychological Association

³² Hannah Arendt. The Banality of Evil (2006)

³³ British Psychological Society. (July 2014). British Psychological Society response to the Robert Francis QC Independent Review; Whistleblowing in the NHS: independent review.

<http://www.ajustnhs.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Final-BPS-Response-to-Francis.pdf>

³³ Rice, A.J. (2015). Using Scholarship on Whistleblowing to Inform Peer Ethics Reporting. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice. American Psychological Association, 2015, Vol. 46, No. 4, 298–305

³⁴ Hoffman, D.H. (2015). Report To The Special Committee Of The Board Of Directors Of The American Psychological Association Independent Review Relating To APA Ethics Guidelines, National Security Interrogations, And Torture. <https://www.apa.org/independent-review/revised-report.pdf>

To avoid passivity and encourage speaking out the curriculum might include:

- Exploring how to have the courage to take responsibility, to speak up, feeling responsibility for promoting human rights.
- How to encourage a culture of trust instead of fear in an organisation and supporting structures that build trust. This might be done through emphasis on ethics and values, and so affecting the organisational climate positively
- Finding ways to take these aims and strategies out to the general public.
- Exploring ways to act as an agent of change in challenging circumstances

e. Teaching methods

Teaching methods in human rights education rely highly on experiential and participatory learning. It is important to employ translational skills, i.e. to translate specific scientific knowledge to various audiences. Learning needs a climate of safety, without criticising. The tendency of machine learning without human input, needs to be considered as hazardous, especially for empathy learning, as well as other sensitive issues which may turn out to result in unwanted effects without human supervision. Methods that are helpful for emotional and thought provoking learning can be grouped in two: (1) to raise awareness (best suitable for beginners) and (2) to practice skills in simulation scenarios (for advanced learners).

Here are some examples to include in teaching: simulation exercises, experiential learning, case studies, Socratic method of discussing, life challenges, visits to e.g. a museum, township, human rights offices, role playing, 'Master Narratives', ethics dilemmas.³⁵

Finally, there needs to be a strong emphasis on reflection in student learning, including peer support, the raising of social issues and the passing on of practical skills.

f. Discussion

Much useful and enlightening research has been done on bullying. Other areas to look into are research on abuse, torture and the effect of power hierarchies. Terminology can be revealing, i.e., when using the term 'victim' instead of 'person'. Research into the role of victimhood shows how complex the area is in terms of its effect on human emotions or lack of them, for instance in the case of perpetrators and by-standers. The Holocaust research has contributed much here.

Good practice in psychology means the promotion of mental health research into best practice and an awareness of risk and protective factors. Positive psychology has much to offer here. It is important to change passivity into action: Importance of regular professional training in awareness of attitudes in terms of human rights and ethical values. Other strategies ought to include:

- Having the courage to take responsibility, to speak up, feeling responsibility for promoting human rights.
- Encouraging a culture of trust instead of fear and supporting structures that build trust.
- Embedding a culture of trust in organisations through emphasis on ethics and values, and so affecting the organisational climate positively, build whistleblowing into the organisation as a positive aspect, seeing it as empowering.

³⁵ Selected internet sources: <http://www.cred-pro.org/page/curricula-1>; www.coe.int/en/web/compass/; http://www.eycb.coe.int/compass/en/pdf/2_38.pdf; <http://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/access-to-medicaments>; www.goingglocal.nl; <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2006/holocaust-and-human-rights-education>; <http://learning-from-history.de/Online-Lernen/Online-Module/all>; <http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/toolkit-holocaust-education/index.htm>;

- Ensuring transparency of expectations, examples: safe school approach, healthy schools initiative.
- Taking these aims and strategies out to the general public and finding the right path to speak on such issues, including individuals, the workplace, associations and ad hoc discussion groups. There is a responsibility in associations to provide information and share opinions on this area of knowledge.
- As an agent of change and with awareness of child development in terms of the individual and the social being in its cultural context, we need to build cultural sensitivity in professionals, parents and the wider community.
- We need to use universal principles and values and add particular value emphases in local contexts that, though, cannot contradict the universal values.

VII. Conclusions and follow up

a. Conclusions

In conclusion, it was clear from all the discussions at the Expert Meeting, that there are real opportunities to collaborate on developing training materials and programmes that will be of enormous benefit to both human rights workers and psychologists and through this work to more effectively support those who are affected by human rights violations. However, it is also clear that this is a challenging agenda. One aspect of this was made very powerfully by Ramacharan Tripathi, who noted in his reflections that closed the final session of the meeting that we would need to take careful account of the fact that the relationship between the individual and the society was radically different from the European and North American framework we had been largely assuming. He noted that particularly in India and in many Asian and African societies there is less emphasis on individuals and more on community and collective rights.³⁶

b. The next steps and timeframe

There is a need to develop tailor made approaches and human rights education for psychologists. The following tools for human rights education for psychologists were identified:

- Week training in human rights for psychologists (for example, the summer school model)
- Online training modules in human rights for psychologists, perhaps including a training manual. This online training could be a pilot for a handbook on human rights for psychologists. Webinars could be part of this approach.
- Web based materials to provide access to best resources in human rights education for psychologists
- Guidelines on human rights education for mental health workers and other professionals particularly focussing on the psychological aspects
- Development of teaching materials, for example, case studies
- The EFPA could create a topical issues blog or discussion platform.
- National psychology associations can be encouraged to provide a similar platform to develop discussions on the topic of human rights.
- A handbook could be developed focussing on human rights education for psychologists, which would include:
 - Conceptual framework,
 - Practical resources,
 - Ethics and dilemmas to learn from; relationship between ethics and human rights,
 - Examples of human rights violations,

³⁶ For full text of Ramacharan Tripathi's contribution, see humanrightsforpsychologists.eu

- Good practice examples of human rights work from psychological practice,
- Both individual needs and group/collective needs to be addressed
- Teaching methods.

Suggestions to develop courses:

1. For students to sign up to for a month
2. For a university to sign up to as a module in psychology and human rights
3. A module for professional training
4. A module for trainers
5. Possibility of a summer school

- EFPA will create working groups to draft proposals. Experts attending this meeting will be invited to volunteer to be in the working groups.
- EFPA will reach out to its national associations and universities to inform them about the process and outcome of this meeting, using for example, communication software ZOOM.
- FRA will follow up this meeting under its Work Programme 2017 and will explore the possibility of further support for developing the tools and content identified by the meeting.
- EFPA will take the lead on development of three or four human rights lectures on the importance of human rights for psychologists and will disseminate in a form of an on-line podcast to reach out to different parts of the world (from different parts of the world) (e.g., one from Africa, one from Latin America, one from Europe, one from the Middle East).
- EFPA will set up a working group, which will conduct a structured follow up on outcomes of the meeting. (There will need to be different levels of training in the curriculum. First of all, the trainers need to be trained: teachers at universities, members of the psychologists' associations should be the first group. They can then feed the new knowledge into annual training plans of psychologists' associations. The format would require the development of core elements which can then be adjusted. They would form building blocks of content and methodology.)

Tentative Timeline	Action
Early 2017	EFPA reaches out to EFPA member-associations
2017	FRA explores a possibility of a call for expression of interest to develop the curriculum, a training programme and a handbook on human rights education for psychologists.
11-14/7/2017	A statement will be presented to the General Assembly of EFPA, stipulating the need for professional education of psychologists in human rights and psychology. (July 2017). Submission is March 2017.
11-14/7/2017	Presentation of the programme and progress on human rights education for psychologists in a symposium at the ECP2017 in Amsterdam
Summer 2017	EFPA needs to adopt a plan to develop human rights education for psychologists.

September 2017	EFPA and EIUC reaches out to interested universities.
October/ November 2017 (TBC)	FRA holds a follow up meeting; expert meeting on developing a pilot curriculum, training programme and handbook on human rights education for psychologists.
2018	Pilot testing; training of trainers; training of students;
End of 2018/ 2019	Roll-out of the human rights education for psychologists' curriculum, programme and handbook through partner Universities and through EFPA national associations.
Summer 2019	Summer school on human rights for psychologists, Venice, EUIC
End 2019	End of the project and evaluation.

IX. Appendices

- a. [Agenda of the meeting](#)
- b. [Organising committee](#)
- c. [List of participants](#)
- d. [References \(list of literature and links that were mentioned in the report\)](#)