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HUMAN RIGHTS AND CITIZENSHIP

Michaela Chládeková*

On the occasion of International Human Rights Day celebrated on 10th December an annual human rights conference was held for the second time at the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences (FSES), Comenius University in Bratislava.¹ It is a small-scale but in-depth conference for experts, doctoral students and other interested participants. The conference was organised by the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights Education (Comenius University) in cooperation with the Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (Brno). While the 2012 conference introduced a more general theme - *Human rights in the current globalised world*, the second year the conference was held in the spirit of European Year of Citizens and thus its aim was to find intersections between human rights dimension on one hand and rights related to the citizenship on the other.

In the opening panel the following persons participated: prof. **Jaap de Zwaan** (TEPSA) with an introductory speech on evolution of EU internal market and EU citizenship, an expert from Human Rights League JUDr. **Zuzana Številová** who focused on practical issues related to protection of stateless persons in the Slovak Republic, and finally a FSES lecturer **Andrej Findor**, PhD. with an intriguing topic on social justice as equality and proportionality based on **Jonathan Haidt** theory of moral foundations.

In the afternoon a second panel on the *Access to Citizenship* took place, followed by a third panel on *Social and Political Aspects of Citizenship*. A number of participants from Slovak and Czech Republic presented their papers and joined the ensuing lively discussion.

The afternoon session *Access to Citizenship* opened with the contribution of JUDr. **Jana Michaličková** (Pan European University, Bratislava) on

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¹ More information about the program and participants can be found at FSES website, in section on UNESCO Chair and its activities: <http://www.fses.uniba.sk/index.php?id=5610>.

theoretical aspects of the right to freedom and security as enshrined in Article 6 of the EU Charter on fundamental rights. Mgr. **Jozef Rojík** (FSES CU) compared different models of EU member states migration policies and Mgr. **Lenka Kissová** (Masaryk University) focused on Italian migration policy in the context of the recent tragedy at Lampedusa and subsequent attribution of citizenship post mortem. The next group of panellists dealt with Slovak and Czech legal regulation of citizenship and problems in practice. Mgr. **Pavel Kandalec**, PhD., LL.M. (Masaryk University) explained the conflict of legal, biological and social determination of fatherhood in the new Czech Act on Citizenship and Civil Code, Mgr. **Libor Kučera** (Poradna pro integraci) concentrated on application practice of the Czech Ministry of Interior that often interprets and determines the fulfilment of the conditions relevant for attribution of citizenship too strictly. **Denisa Holubeková** a **Jana Horská** (District Office Bratislava) referred to application problems of "automatic" loss of Slovak citizenship that arose with the prohibition of double citizenship. Mgr. **Michal Čermák** (Masaryk University) had a presentation on the character of social rights and different level of guarantees applicable to citizens and persons from third countries, possibly stateless persons. Doc. JUDr. **Jozef Čentěš**, PhD. (Comenius University) concluded the session with a contribution on different aspects of the right to privacy as guaranteed by the Slovak Constitution.

Issues related to *social and political aspects of citizenship* were heterogeneous but equally engaging. PhDr. **Dagmar Horná**, PhD. (National Institute for Lifelong Learning) stressed the importance of human rights promotion via training and education to human rights and citizenship despite the obstacles that exist in the Slovak educational system. Mgr. **Zuzana Maďarová** (FSES CU) presented an image of the "proper" women, "good" citizen and revolutionary on the basis of 16 narrative interviews with women involved in the events of November 1989. Mgr. **Alexandra Ostertágová** (Comenius University) focused on normative images of citizenship that despite the declared equality imply an image of an ideal citizen – a white man in his productive years, belonging to middle class and without a significant health disadvantage. Mgr. **Tomáš Horváth** (Project Forum) drew attention to the recent demonstrations of wilful circumvention or refusal of "classical" civic participation and to the expansion of "carnivals of civil disobedience" such as protests in the streets. Mgr. **Ulzhan Dyusembayeva** (FSES CU) introduced a topic from behind the borders, the adoption of language laws in Central Asia, their influence on the status of minorities and redefinition of the post-Soviet countries identity. Mgr.

Kristína Janková (FSES CU) concluded the list of speakers with the example of the interconnection of the right to citizenship and the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine in case of the conflict in Sudan and South Sudan independence.

Following the conference we may conclude that human rights and citizenship are important and leading values in modern democratic states. Individually, they are subject of numerous debates and research but being at the interdisciplinary boundary, attention is rarely paid to all their mutual bearings. The conference met its goal – to create a space for discussion about the intersection of human rights and citizenship – the challenges, successes and failures. Different issues from the area of legal regulation, politics, democracy, sovereignty and migration were raised. Human rights and citizenship are perceived as irreplaceable means of strengthening the status of human beings on national, European, international and global level, but simultaneously these values are constantly being threatened and they are far from being positively guaranteed. New legal norms, new events in the world of politics, development of gender issues and migration flows – they all bear an influence on the dynamics of citizen rights.