



**NATIONAL COMMISSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OLYMPICS**  
**XIX-th annual national competition of secondary school youth**

Bratislava, September 2016

Characteristic of the Human Rights Olympics

Human Rights Olympics (hereinafter referred to as “HRO”) is a prestigious national competition of secondary school students in the Slovak Republic in the area of the promotion and protection of human rights. The event is unique in its category not only in Europe, but over the world, as well. It uses innovative and modern elements of education, develops creativity, communication and presentation skills, techniques of argumentation, and helps young people to form their own opinion. It significantly contributes towards prevention and elimination of discrimination, racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.

HRO is organised annually in three stages: school rounds, regional rounds and the national round. The content of HRO and the forms of its realisation are focused on knowledge, skills and attitudes of students in the area of human rights, principles of democracy and the rule of law. The competition is announced by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, and guaranteed by the expert panel of the National HRO Commission in cooperation with the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights Education at the Comenius University in Bratislava and the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Slovakia. Among the partner institutions are, for example, the European Parliament Information Office in Slovakia, the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia, and UNIS Vienna. The National HRO Commission makes an effort every year to acquire needed financial, material and personnel support of the partners, so that all rounds of the competition can take place up to the national level, which is a three days long competitive, professional and educational event accompanied by seminars and workshops.

Each year, the HRO has a leading theme. In the XVII-th edition (2014/2015) the theme was “Right to Education and its Key Aspects”, in the XVIII-th edition (2015/2016) the theme was “Human dignity” and in the current XIX-th edition (2016/2017) the theme is “Freedom of thought, conscience, expression and religion in the context of democratic citizenship”. One part of the competition usually takes place in English.

HRO track record

2 pilot, regional and 18 national competitions (school years 1996/1997 – 2015/2016)

HRO approaches the majority of schools every year; approximately 300 of them participate in the regional rounds.

More than 4,500 young people participate in the competition altogether each year.

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