



Code of Conduct of Helsinki España

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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

In these times, *education for peace and human rights* is facing important challenges, not only in Spain but also in the rest of the world. Although it is true that there are also great opportunities for its development and evolution. It represents to a large extent the reality we live in Europe, where it is promoted and praised by some, and fought and despised by others.

Helsinki España is undertaking this strategic planning as part of its ongoing work, since its establishment in 1992, to disseminate and promote the principles of the Helsinki Final Act of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in relation to the human dimension, especially human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Since it was founded, Helsinki España has been working for the respect, promotion, and defense of human rights through education. With this purpose, Helsinki España created in 1992 the *University Network*, a network composed of 140 universities from 53 countries on five continents. This network was recognized by the OSCE on February 4, 1993, when it approved this international inter-university project at its meeting of Ministers held in Prague.



Helsinki España began holding international university forums in parallel to the OSCE Summits in Helsinki (1992) and Budapest (1994) to develop recommendations for raising awareness among OSCE participating States on security, cooperation, and the human dimension. These international university forums resulted in an enriching exchange for the development of future projects and initiatives to promote respect for the human dimension in the youth field.

This work evolved into the development of international conferences on human rights with the participation of members of the Helsinki España university network. Some examples are the Mediterranean Project (1999) on "*Environmental Education and Human Rights*" with the participation of 26 universities from the European Union and the Middle East; the Atlantic Conference (2000 and 2002) "*Technology and the Impact on Human Rights and Duties*" in Valencia and Costa Rica with the participation of 18 universities from the European Union, South America and North America; and the "*East-West Hispanic-American Initiative for Volunteerism and Civic Participation*" (1994, 1999 and 2001) held in Seville, Lithuania and Santander with the participation of 60 universities from 45 countries.

Since 2001 Helsinki España has been involved in peace and human rights education through specific Human Rights Education and Volunteerism programs such as "*Youth for Youth: Educating in Human Rights and Sustainable Development Goals*" that contributes to developing a culture of peace and human rights in which children and young university students are aware of their rights and obligations towards others, contributing to their development as responsible members of a free, pluralistic, peaceful and inclusive society.

It also organizes training programs on issues related to international peace and security such as the REACT program - Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Teams for Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation, aimed at young professionals interested in improving their knowledge in conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, and developing practical skills for their work in a peace mission. These programs and activities contribute to raising awareness of the global problems we face and are vital strategies for the promotion, protection and effective realization of human rights and the criteria of a universal culture of peace.



Furthermore, Helsinki España promotes volunteering as a key tool for personal development and works on the basis that volunteering not only creates an opportunity for social mobilization and participation, but also strengthens trust, solidarity, and reciprocity between people. These actions are aimed at young people who, as essential members of our societies, share the responsibility to ensure that respect for human rights is a reality in all communities and in our society.

The Strategic Planning Committee of Helsinki España, considering that education for peace and human rights is an invaluable asset in the formation of democratic citizenship for all people and in the promotion of a culture of human rights and peace, has developed this strategic plan with the support of the Executive Board. This strategy will guide the work of the organization for the years 2022-2026.

This strategic plan is a further contribution to the work being done by Helsinki España for the dissemination and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It has been an excellent exercise of reflection and will contribute to the improvement of the programs, activities, and initiatives of Helsinki España.

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION HELSINKI ESPAÑA

1 – VISION

A world composed of peaceful societies, respectful of human rights and fundamental freedoms in which Helsinki España is a leading organization in the field of education for peace and human rights, both nationally and internationally, thanks to the quality and diversification of its educational and training programs capable of adapting to a dynamic society in continuous change.

2 – MISSION

Work for the respect and protection of human rights through education at the university level. Concentrate our efforts on the development of awareness-raising initiatives and quality training in areas related to peace and conflict resolution, human rights, poverty, and development.

3 – OUR CORE VALUES

Tolerance and non-discrimination – we work with young people to promote tolerance, acceptance of diversity and non-discrimination on ethnic, national, social, political, cultural, linguistic, and religious grounds.



Equality – we work to achieve full equality in access to resources, opportunities, rights, and responsibilities among all members of society, regardless of gender, race, disability, and beliefs.

Education of excellence – we work with the best experts to offer an education based on excellence and innovation that can foster critical thinking and analysis.

Collaborative associations – we work to reinforce our commitment to strengthening jointworkspaces and coordination with actors and organizations that are experts in human rights education, culture of peace and conflict resolution.

Volunteering and community – we work to disseminate and foster volunteering as a key tool for the promotion, protection, and realization of human rights, on the basis that volunteering is not

only a way to promote and protect human rights, but also a way to promote and protect human rights. that volunteering not only creates opportunities for social participation, but also strengthens trust, solidarity, and reciprocity among people.

4 – ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Since its foundation and through its work, Helsinki España has acquired contrasted experience in the development of the following competencies:

- *Raise awareness and educate in human rights and culture of peace*
- *Provide quality, relevant, and accessible education and training in matters related to international peace and security*
- *Promote volunteerism and social mobilization*

5 – WHO DO WE WORK FOR?

We work with university students, school children, and young professionals who are interested in the field of conflict resolution.

Young people are rights holders since the right to human rights education is increasingly recognized as a right in its own terms. It is not only a moral right, but a legal right under international law. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings have the right to an education *"which shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."* We cannot aspire to a culture of human rights and peace if the subjects of rights themselves do not know their rights.



However, young people also have responsibilities. As an essential part of society, they share the responsibility to make respect for human rights a reality in every community, starting with themselves.

Since Helsinki Spain was created in 1992, we have trained professionals from all over the world, educated thousands of children and youth, and worked with hundreds of international experts who have donated their time and knowledge to support our mission. All of them constitute the social base of Helsinki España.

6 – WORK CONTENTS

Since it was founded, Helsinki España has focused its work on the main fundamental global areas related to human rights, peace, and international security:

- *Children's rights* – The Convention on the Rights of the Child guides us in our commitment to the protection, defense, and effective realization of children's rights. Helsinki Spain works through the "Youth for Youth" educational program with children between the ages of 5 and 18, working with them to make them aware of their rights and to enable them to respect the rights of others.
- *Citizenship and Participation* – Helsinki España is very committed to the recent concept of citizenship committed to a more equitable and sustainable world. In this new model of citizenship, young people actively participate and engage with their communities, are aware of their rights, know and reflect on the world's problems and celebrate diversity. Helsinki España works to disseminate this new concept of citizenship in all its human rights education projects.
- *Democracy* - Helsinki España works on the close relationship between human rights and democracy. Through different activities, programs, and initiatives, we contribute to the development of a culture of Human Rights and Peace in which people are aware of their rights and duties, contributing to their development as responsible members of a free, democratic, pluralistic, and inclusive society.
- *Disability* – The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities guide us in our commitment to the protection and rights of persons with disabilities. Helsinki España works through initiatives that promote equal participation of people with disabilities, respect for inherent dignity and accessibility, among others.
- *Discrimination and intolerance* – Helsinki España works under strict principles of equality and non-discrimination, both established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Through human rights education projects, Helsinki España works to deconstruct stereotypes, break down prejudices and fight against discriminatory attitudes based on origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, among others.
- *Environment* – Environmental protection requires a human rights approach based on equity and justice, rights, and responsibilities. With Helsinki España's educational programs, children and youth are made aware of the importance of respecting and caring for the environment, responsible consumption, and their responsibility as global citizens of an interconnected and interdependent world.
- *Gender* – Equality between men and women, and the fight against discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation are central to Helsinki España's work.

Our work with the youth population often provides a safe and unique space for young people to discuss and share their thoughts and experiences on gender issues. All of Helsinki España's initiatives incorporate gender-specific and cross-cutting components.

- *Migration* – Programs such as Youth for Youth specifically address the rights of migrants and refugees. All our projects are designed to help young people understand and comprehend, through analysis and critical thinking, the circumstances of migrants, thus promoting knowledge of the other, empathy and tolerant values.
- *Peace and security* – Helsinki España is convinced that life without war is a prerequisite and precondition for the effective realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is committed to the right of peoples to peace and, therefore, we provide our best resources to contribute to international peace and security. With our training courses, we empower young professionals to be part of the international community's efforts to maintain peace and security in the world.
- *Poverty* – Through the celebration of the project "*Poverty Alleviation: A Challenge for Universities*", Helsinki España has developed the Global Platform for Poverty Alleviation (UPA), a project promoted to reduce poverty with the collaboration, work and interaction of universities, institutions, and the private sector.
- *Religion and Beliefs* - Religious freedom, being one of the fundamental human rights, is part of our core values. Helsinki España believes in an inclusive society, and we support the freedom of every person and community, public or private, to manifest their religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.
- *Terrorism* - Helsinki España uses training to raise awareness of global issues that threaten international peace and security, as well as the international community's mechanisms to prevent, respond to and resolve conflicts. Through our training courses and seminars, we empower young professionals to be part of the international community's efforts to maintain peace and security in the world.

HELSINKI ESPAÑA'S CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

1. Transparency and management

- 1.1 Helsinki España will always act in accordance with the law.
- 1.2 The management of Helsinki España shall be responsible and loyal, always seeking to achieve the objectives of the institution.
- 1.3 Helsinki España, as an organization at the service of society, shall provide anyone who requests it with periodic information on its lines of action, programs, objectives, how it obtains resources, the amount of such resources, and the composition of its governing bodies.
- 1.4 Helsinki España will publish an annual report with information on its activities, programs, resources, and governing bodies.

2. Financial Management

- 2.1 All fundraising activities carried out by Helsinki España shall comply with the legal framework as well as the ethical principles set out in this Code.
- 2.2 All fundraising activities shall be truthful and avoid misleading messages, correctly describe the identity of the organization, and avoid the use of pressure or blame tactics.
- 2.3 Helsinki España will not solicit donations for actions to which the organization will not be able to respond adequately.
- 2.4 Helsinki España shall attach the annual financial report and shall inform its partners and donors and the counterparts with whom they work of the financial data.
- 2.5 When income exceeds 300,000 euros, Helsinki España shall carry out annual external financial audits of the organization, which shall be available to anyone who requests them.

3. Human Resources

- 3.1 Helsinki España will take the necessary measures to avoid any discrimination based on race, sex, nationality, or religion.
- 3.2 Helsinki España will implement its Gender Equality Plan 2022-2026 and develop initiatives to ensure effective gender equality.
- 3.3 Helsinki España will clearly define the relationship with volunteer staff, establishing their conditions and respecting their rights.

3.4 The data referring to the total number of people (paid and unpaid) at the service of Helsinki España shall be made public.

4. Communication and use of images

4.1 Helsinki España shall place the people and not only the organization as the protagonists of the communication.

4.2 Helsinki España shall preferentially place the people involved in the events narrated as the protagonists of the communication. The testimonies of the people shall be used in preference to the interpretations of third parties.

4.3 Helsinki España will take advantage of the potential of ICTs to promote dialogue and the participatory construction of communication, guaranteeing access to and use of the media by the groups with whom it works.

4.4 The message shall avoid generalizations that relate injustice by appealing to stereotypes or generalizations. In this sense, Helsinki España will avoid reinforcing prejudices and stereotypes based on race, religion or membership of a particular group.

4.5 Helsinki España will contribute to the increase of citizen participation in the processes of social change, intensifying dialogue and global citizen solidarity.

4.6 Helsinki España will offer channels for youth participation by taking advantage of the possibilities offered by social networks.

4.7 Helsinki España shall publicize the positive results of the organization's work in the field of human rights.

4.8 Communication will contribute to the transparency and accountability of Helsinki España. Accessibility and clarity of information shall be guaranteed so that any person can consult it openly.

4.9 Helsinki España will work together with media professionals to improve the quality and treatment of the information provided on the different realities of the human rights situation.

CODE OF ETHICS AND PERSONAL CONDUCT

All Helsinki España personnel:

- a) shall always comply with applicable law,
- b) shall have a certificate of freedom from crimes of a sexual nature, which is required for work with minors,

c) shall be mindful of and behave in accordance with the values of the organization as described above: Tolerance and non-discrimination, Equality, Education of excellence, Collaboration with associations, and Volunteerism and community.

1. General obligations

1.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all persons working or collaborating in any capacity with Helsinki España.

1.2 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall uphold and respect the principles of human rights, including belief in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the individual and in the equal rights and opportunities of men and women. Accordingly, they shall respect all cultures, shall not discriminate against any person or group of persons, and shall not misuse any powers or authority that may have been vested in them.

1.3 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall demonstrate the highest degree of efficiency, competence, and integrity.

1.4 No person associated with Helsinki España shall take advantage of his or her position or acquired knowledge for personal, financial, or other benefits, or for the benefit of third parties, such as family or friends.

1.5 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall observe the utmost discretion with respect to all official matters.

1.6 When a conflict of interest arises, this must be notified to their immediate superiors as soon as possible.

1.7 The property and assets of Helsinki España shall only be used for official purposes.

2. Rights and obligations of personnel

2.1 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall comply with applicable laws and regulations, including those of institutions collaborating with Helsinki España projects.

2.2 All persons associated with Helsinki España will be obliged to respect the application of this code of conduct, and any discrimination, exploitation or abuse by personnel will be grounds for dismissal.

2.3 In activities in which Helsinki España personnel collaborate with minors, the highest standards of conduct shall be observed, in compliance with applicable laws and international conventions and recommendations.

2.4 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall report all forms of discrimination or harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, as well as all forms of mistreatment in the workplace or in connection with work.

2.5 All persons associated with Helsinki España will be obliged to build and preserve a climate which avoids discrimination, sexual exploitation, or abuse.

3. Principles for working with minors

3.1 Helsinki España will defend the rights of children based on international legislation. Helsinki España works on the basis that children and adolescents are subjects of rights and, as such, must be able to exercise and defend them when they see that these are being violated.

3.2 In case of conflict of interest, Helsinki España will always make the best interests of children prevail.

3.3 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall treat all children with respect without showing any deference to the detriment of others.

3.4 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall consider the circumstances, ways of thinking and personalities of the children with whom they work.

3.5 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall avoid behavior or language that could create a negative influence on the children with whom they work. They shall avoid smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages and consuming any type of narcotic substance in the presence of minors.

3.6 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall encourage environmentally responsible behavior in the presence of minors.

3.7 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall promote respect between boys and girls.

3.8 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall report any substantiated suspicion and/or act of child abuse.

3.9 No person associated with Helsinki España shall subject a child to any form of mistreatment or humiliating treatment that could cause moral harm.

3.10 No person associated with Helsinki España will have any sexual relations with minors involved in the activities of the organization, nor will they impose the inappropriate exercise of their rank or status.

3.11 No person associated with Helsinki España shall encourage contact with minors outside the activities of the organization or provide their personal data.

3.12 No person associated with Helsinki España will offer money, employment services, goods, or benefits in exchange of sexual favors.

4. Rights and obligations regarding gender equality

4.1 Helsinki España will implement its Strategic Plan for Gender Equality that includes concrete actions for protection and recognition of rights.

4.2 All persons associated with Helsinki España shall act in accordance with the protocol for the prevention and management of gender-based violence included in the Strategic Plan for Gender Equality.

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