Acknowledgements

Words of thanks, recognition and appreciation are owed to:

- The members of the Reference Group, for their commitment, generosity and support to the writers;
- Sunduss al-Hassani, Henrike Eisfeld, Dariusz Grzemny, Dilwar Hussain, Dr Mónika Mádai, Ivan Ivanov, Yael Ohana, Tavs Qvist, Györgyi Tóth and Arjos Vendrig for commenting and suggesting texts;
- Jeroen Schokkenbroek, from the Directorate General of Human Rights of the Council of Europe, for careful reading and useful suggestions;
- Nadia Banno Gomes, Teresa Cunha, Laura De Witte, Deepak G. Naik, Eugen Gherga, Erzsébet Kovács, Anna Rogowska, Nana Saginashvili and many others for their pertinent remarks and useful suggestions;
- The Division of Human Rights, Peace, Democracy and Tolerance at Unesco for motivation and useful advice;
- Youth organisations, national youth councils, the Foundation for Human and Humanitarian Rights (Lebanon), the Charles Malik Foundation and many other organisations, for submitting reference materials;
- Users and readers of the draft texts on the Internet – including those who are sceptical about the value of this manual;
- Members of the Human Rights Education Associates’ Global Human Rights Education List for comments and suggestions for the title;
- The Monitoring Group of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme for support and ideas;
- All those who have, sometimes involuntarily, contributed to the shaping of the contents;
- Michael Hughes, from The British Council, Budapest, for being more than a proofreader.

The International Union of Railways and, in particular, Inter Rail for their financial support through the Solidarity Fund for Youth Mobility.

We apologise for any omission and regret that we were not able to include all materials and suggestions received.
It has become almost commonplace to speak about the world as a global village. Globalisation is generally associated with increased possibilities and risks, for trade, cooperation and communication. But the true challenge of globalisation remains the development of a universal conscience that puts human rights, pluralist democracy and the equality of all human beings as the most important values that we may share.

The Council of Europe and the European Convention on Human Rights were created as a response to some of the worst forms of war and barbarity that humankind has ever experienced. The Convention and other instruments that were subsequently developed – against torture, for social rights, etc. – provided inspiration and support to individuals and non-governmental organisations who have fought injustice, oppression and discrimination. Much has been achieved. But much progress remains to be made; too many rights of too many people in Europe are still violated, ignored or suppressed.

The conventions on human rights are achievements that we share as Europeans; they orient us in times of uncertainty and change. Preserving and honouring them is the highest duty for every state in Europe.

However, human rights cannot be defended by legal texts only. They need to be protected and taken care of by everyone, young people included. This manual provides young people with opportunities to understand and speak human rights. It also provides youth leaders, teachers, educators, professionals and volunteers with concrete ideas to motivate, engage and involve young people to take action for human rights in their own way, in their own community.

This manual does not provide solutions. There are no ready-made solutions to poverty, discrimination, violence or intolerance. It does not contain answers to all questions about human rights either. What the manual does provide is an opportunity for those venturing into human rights education to explore these themes in a manner that is creative, involves young people and is, in itself, human rights education.

Like a COMPASS, this manual indicates different ways and directions in a journey through human rights. Like a COMPASS, it can and should be used anywhere in Europe by anybody interested in human rights, democracy or citizenship.

If it is true that we seem to have entered the 21st century through a gate of fire, it is reassuring that many young people and youth organisations, teachers and educators, are ready to take up the challenge of education for and through human rights.

This manual is a contribution and tribute to their action.

Walter Schwimmer