

# FAIR PLAY

## STUDENTS FOR EQUALITY

Educational project of Amnesty  
International Czech Republic 2015–16



Education for human rights

## KEEP CALM...AND FAIR PLAY!

Project FAIR PLAY – Students for Equality is an educational program of Amnesty International Czech Republic that focuses on **human rights and prevention of discrimination, racism and extremism at schools**. Through this program, Amnesty reacts to rising racist and intolerant attitudes in Czech society. In the 2015/16 school year FAIR PLAY was reintroduced for the third time. In the following article we will provide a summary of the activities we held through this project.

*“Project FAIR PLAY was a great contribution for students and everyone liked it. Actually, even during the doors open day they managed to present the cases independently. Thus it also helped to increase their ability to organize events.”*

**Anna Wolnerová, teacher, Lutheran grammar school in Bratislava**

Project FAIR PLAY is financed by a grant of Amnesty International Norway and will continue until 2017.



*“It is great that we can at least have a feeling that we have done something good for people that really need it.”*

**Student, 2. C, Business Academy Ústí nad Labem**

## SUPPORT OF THE STUDENTS

Through the FAIR PLAY project, Amnesty International is trying not only to inform the public more of human rights issues, but **to also increase the activity of students**, whom it supports, in order to take their own actions on defending human rights. Most of the participating schools also took part in an international project called **Write for Rights** (more information about these activities will be introduced below). Grammar school Teplice, which was one of the participant schools in this project, was the second most successful school in Write for Rights in the whole Czech Republic and Slovakia.

## WE COOPERATE

Who participated in FAIR PLAY with us? We cooperated with **thirteen selected high schools in Prague, Brno, Blansko, Moravský Krumlov, Ústí nad Labem, Teplice, Bratislava and Žilina**. We held a number of educational activities in collaboration with these institutions.

Trained lecturers of Amnesty International, interns, local coordinators and students all participated in this project.

Amnesty International Czech Republic has been dedicated to human rights education for many years. Thousands of students and hundreds of teachers have participated in interactive workshops on a variety of topics, and a multimedia portal [www.lidskaprava.cz](http://www.lidskaprava.cz) has been created for them. Educators can make use of “Human Rights in Education”, a series of up-to-date methodologies, to conduct workshops and classes.



## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

### At schools

- **Opening workshop** focused on introducing the class to the processes involved with the project, introducing them to the human rights issues and familiarizing them with the work of AI.
- **Human Library**  
One of the most interesting activities of the FAIR PLAY project – instead of borrowing a book, students can “**borrow**” a **person with an interesting life story**, whom they probably would never otherwise had the chance to speak to in real life. They can ask the person whatever that interests them.

Among the personnel, with whom the students can meet, **are members of different minorities** living in the Czech Republic. It is a unique opportunity for the youth to form the perception of minorities, and these members of minorities can also share their first-hand experiences with young people.

For example, this year our Human Library was enriched by homosexuals **Lukas** and **Jakub** who have been married in the church; asexual **Jana**, transgender **Gilbert**, brothers **Michal** and **Long** coming from Vietnam, Roma **David**, who is councilor in Chomutov, Congolese **Frederick**, quadriplegic **Iva** or **Natalka**, who is sharing her experience with Asperger syndrome with students.

Human Libraries are helpful for students to overcome their own fear of the unknown, to gain their **own experiences with the members of minorities**, and **re-evaluate the established stereotypes**. Human Libraries are being established in selected schools that cooperate with us in the FAIR PLAY project.

*“I really liked the cooperation with Amnesty. I would like to participate in workshops for teachers and plan future events.”*  
**Tereza Štoková, teacher, Grammar school Hady, Brno**

At the end of the workshop students are introduced to a voluntary training session on event planning involving the support of human rights, so-called Write for Rights.

- **Training for Write for Rights** during which students are familiarized with specific cases of people and communities suffering appalling human rights abuses and plan Write for Rights at their school.
  - **Write for Rights**  
A worldwide event organized by Amnesty International to support the wrongfully imprisoned, persecuted, or repressed. People write letters to the representatives of the state as well as supportive messages to the individuals.
- Eleven FAIR PLAY schools** participated in Write for Rights. More than **3,383 letters** were written altogether, and the most successful school was the Teplice Grammar School, which produced 850 letters.
- **Final workshop** includes a short summary of outputs of project activities at school and evaluation of contribution of project FAIR PLAY for students.

*“For me it is a huge improvement that I can open myself towards strangers. That is why I am no longer afraid of new environments and communication with new people.”*  
**Natálka, Human Book, Prague**



## WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT?

- 547 students in FAIR PLAY schools\*
- 27 newly trained Human Books
- 29 active lecturers
- 6 helping interns
- 13 Human Libraries
- 59 workshops

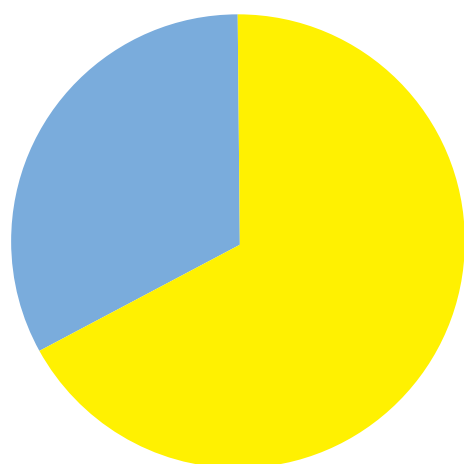
\*383 from 547 students took place in the survey

*"Thanks to FAIR PLAY I have become a better teacher, aware of importance of education in the world."*  
**Martin, lecturer, Prague**

The analysis of student questionnaires shows that through the FAIR PLAY project, programs that involved the students directly – the Human Library and Write for Rights – are the most-valued activities.

In addition, this year's participation in Write for Rights was voluntary. Not everyone underwent the training, rather only the students that were interested in organizing Write for Rights at their school. The following graphs and statistics show additional analysis of the students' responses.

## WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

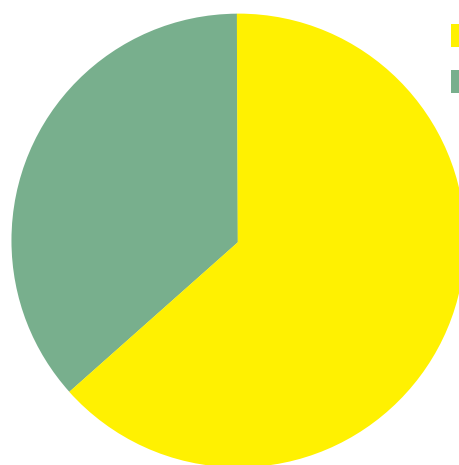


Students chose their answers from multiple choice of examples of discrimination:

- Correct answers – 67%
- Incorrect answers – 33%

*"I am glad that I got to know representatives of some minorities in Human Library. In fact I had no stance on asexuals or transgenders. They gave a good account of themselves."*  
**Student, kvinta, Grammar school of Jan Kepler, Prague**

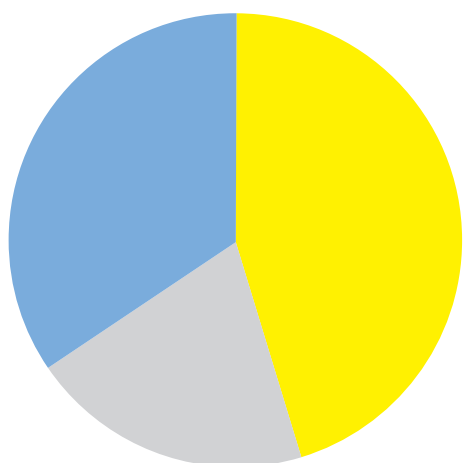
## CAN YOU CHANGE SOMETHING IN THE FIELD OF HR AND DISCRIMINATION?



- Yes – 63%
- Most likely no – 37%

*"I act less rash and less prejudiced and this is just the beginning of a journey that started with the project."* **Erik, lecturer, Ústí nad Labem**

## DID YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS MINORITIES CHANGE?



- Yes – 45%
- No, I had positive attitude even before – 20%
- No – 35%

*"Human library is a life lesson for Human Books as well. You often realize that you are really lucky, when you don't have to run away from a country or live on the street."*  
**Honza, Human Book, Prague**

## HOW CAN I HELP?

- Share and promote FAIR PLAY at the school your children attend, where you teach, which you know...
- Support Amnesty – the largest non-governmental human rights organization: [amnesty.cz/daruj](http://amnesty.cz/daruj)

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

- You can find out more about the project on [www.amnesty.cz/vzdelavani](http://www.amnesty.cz/vzdelavani) or on the Facebook group "FAIR PLAY Amnesty International"
- Interested in getting human rights films, topical exhibitions or events to a school? Contact us on [vzdelavani@amnesty.cz](mailto:vzdelavani@amnesty.cz).



## THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

One of the most commonly used methods for the evaluation of FAIR PLAY - Students for Equality project is The Most Significant Change. Based on the method, the stories of change are collected from members of the target groups such as students, lecturers and Human Books. From these stories, the most significant story was selected. **The best student story for this year is the story of Simona Sečanská from Evangelical lyceum in Bratislava:**

### THE STORY OF SIMONA SEČANSKÁ, STUDENT

*During the Human Library I spoke with an Iranian refugee named Venus and a homeless man called Evžen. I will always remember them and their stories. Although I never discriminated against refugees, I was also not trying to examine the problem. Venus told us how she had to run many kilometres through deserts, fields and dangerous roads with small children in order to reach better living conditions because her country, Iran, was full of war and unrest.*



*I am going to a refugee center in Vienna through the "Let's play" organization. I decided to go there because I like to work with children and I wanted to help in that way. It's really great! We play different games with the kids and we speak with them during the games to enrich their vocabulary. Girls like drawing and bubble blowers and the boys like playing football. It's important to give them space and accept them into society.*

*Evžen was telling us how he became homeless and how hard it has been for him since he suffered from polio when he was young. Evžen planted a seed inside of me so that I can continue to help the homeless who appreciate the things they get and use them for health purposes, paying the reception centre etc.*

*I know a homeless man who has cancer. I first met him in the church. I didn't have the best opinion of him at first. Once he asked me if I could lend him some euros for medicine. I gave him the money and the next time we met he told me he is grateful for any help. Later I got him some toiletries that he needed. Many people condemn homeless. I think it's not good to condemn people because many times it's not their fault. Before the start of the project I would probably not talk with homeless people.*

The FAIR PLAY project affects not only students but also the Human Books. Through meetings with all actors in the Human Library, they raise their self-confidence, eliminate their own prejudice about minorities, or actively start participating in the civic society. **Julek, a Human Book, speaks about these changes:**

### THE STORY OF JULEK, HUMAN BOOK

*The written student feedback from Human Libraries makes me terrifically cheerful. They understood what I was talking about. They explained that we taught them how to understand people as well as that others should not be condemned because of the colour of their*

*skin. It is awfully important to me that I spread awareness. It is important that I try to change opinions, that the children understand I am the same as them, and that actually everyone is same. When they go around Ostrava and we meet, they say: "It's Julek!" They notice me, greet me, know me. That's an honour for me. They bring me joy and hope. They make me feel like I mean something as a person... that I'm not a Black, but a human. They just never say: "It's that gypsy who steals, smells or is homeless." They consider me an equal.*



*Even my behaviour has changed. When I was at the Human Library in Bratislava, I told the students that I gamble. The students wrote into their feedback that I should put myself first and stop gambling. I began to realize that I really should stop gambling. Now I'm trying to restrict myself and I haven't gambled for four months. They message me on Facebook to ask if I still gamble and I can tell them truthfully that I do not. I have already developed different interests, for example my grandchildren who entertain me the most. The students warned me: "You give advice to others, but don't follow it yourself..." I can't expect only them to make themselves better. I myself need to get better. So it's not just about me giving advice to them but also about them giving it to me.*

Lecturers are another important group of the FAIR PLAY project. Taking part in the student education process and meeting Human Books brings them new types of knowledge. **Among the lecturer stories chosen this year is the story of Marta Křížová from Ústí and Labem:**

### THE STORY OF MARTA KŘÍŽOVÁ, LECTURER



*The most fascinating thing about the FAIR PLAY project is the Human Library. I first experienced the Human Library as a reader and it was amazing. However, when I looked at it as an organiser, it was even more incredible. You can see people changing right before your eyes. You are sitting there during the evaluation and the children all of a sudden start talking about a Human Book as if they were their family member. I was almost brought to tears when I was observing it. That*

*sort of connection might never happen during many years of friendship but there it happens in such a short time. I had never seen that before and thought that if this whole project had no other strength or value, for single moment, it was worth it.*

*This year has presented me with many obstacles and some days I felt that I could not overcome them... Then I met a Human Book called Iva who had to use a wheelchair. Our brief talk helped me a lot. She gave me the simple feeling of being able to. You can do whatever you want and you will succeed. I have been carrying this in me for almost a year and it's extremely important to me.*

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

Amnesty International's mission is to conduct research and take action to prevent and end grave abuses of all human rights – civil, political, social, cultural and economic. From freedom of expression and association to physical and mental integrity, from protection from discrimination to the right to housing – these rights are indivisible.

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