

Human Rights Go Local: What Works

Academy and Conference on Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels 2021 on

"Field-proven research methods on human rights"

1 - 9 February 2021

Concept Note

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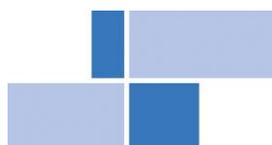
1. Background

The International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO and the UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security in Graz, Austria, together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) organize the first edition of a regular Academy and Conference to contribute to the United Nations vision of protecting and promoting human rights for all by informing local governments on how to deliver on their international obligations as well as the goals set by the 2030 Agenda and its promise to "Leave No One Behind".

The Academy and Conference series will demonstrate innovative approaches and proven practices for protecting and promoting human rights at local level, making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It ultimately seeks to improve the quality of life in urban areas around the globe for all.

Each year, a thematic focus is selected, which is closely related to the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda and the current volume of the "Human Rights Go Local" publication series. The 2021 Academy "Human Rights Go Local: What Works" is dedicated to field-proven human rights research methods and their relevance and application for evidence-based policy making on the local level. Local authorities make increasing efforts to use a human rights-based approach to underpin their work, because they are accountable for the observance of human rights, also when implementing global agendas. The theme of the 2021 Academy and Conference was chosen with the conviction that there is a need and potential to improve the practical guidance for applying human rights-based policies at local level. First and foremost, expert exchange and dissemination of well proven methods to generate reliable human rights data for evidence-based urban policy making is required.

The International Centre and the UNESCO Chair in Graz aim at bringing together the knowledge and experiences of international organisations, such as UNESCO, UN OHCHR, UN-Habitat, EU FRA, and city networks, and help facilitating its usage for local level policies all over the world. The Academy and Conference seek to reinforce existing initiatives to move forward the evidence



for human rights-based policies at the local level. Thereby the event also steps up to enhance coherence in following a human rights-based approach when implementing global agendas at the local level.

The City of Graz hosts the 2021 Academy and Conference for good reasons. In 2001, Graz became the first Human Rights City in Europe. Consequently, the year 2021 marks the 20th anniversary of Graz as a Human Rights City. For over 20 years, the city of Graz and its allied stakeholders have acquired in-depth knowledge and experience as a Human Rights City. The International Centre offers long-term experience in applied research in various fields of human rights. It is the International Centre's mandate to provide inputs for the development and application of hands-on human rights research methods anywhere around the globe.

The Conference's purpose is to facilitate the implementation of human rights policies by supporting local authorities in fulfilling their commitment. The local authorities' commitment is facilitated by the participation of the intergovernmental organisations in the Conference. The support is provided by the Academy, in which promising methods and results of human rights research are presented, exchanged, developed, and modified. The agreement upon an Outcome Document on research on human rights at the local level, which can be used as instrument and reference point, is aspired. Thus, the event pursues capacity building and policy development.

2. Overall goal

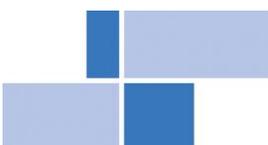
The 2021 Academy and Conference "Human Rights Go Local: What Works" aims to support inclusive social development and equitable societies by mobilizing knowledge on how to base policy-making at the local level on scientific evidence through tailored human rights research. The event aims to build bridges between all governance levels, disciplines, and regions. Further, it aims to moderate exchange among human rights researchers, local level authorities, and policy makers in all regions. The specific goals of the Academy and the Conference are closely connected to each other.

The Academy's aim is to collect proven methods for research on human rights at the local level and to formulate guidance for local governments on how their policies can be supported by evidence that is based on human rights research. It aims to facilitate implementation by directly providing local level politicians and authorities with the findings and proposals gathered during the Academy.

The Conference's goal is to support local level authorities with condensed knowledge on the state of the art in research on human rights at local level and to assist them with concrete proposals on how to locally implement the international agenda following a human rights-based approach.

3. Prime target groups

Human rights experts and practitioners working in all relevant areas, such as academia, policy making, public administration, civil society, and international or regional organisations.



4. Objectives

1. Exchange on field-proven practices of human rights research among experts, in particular local authorities, human rights institutions, academics, and civil society organisations.
2. Increase the capacity of innovative application, contextualisation and further development of existing human rights indicator systems.
3. Strengthen the links between research and policy-making: Communicate to local and regional authorities how applied human rights research can foster evidence-informed decision-making.
4. Engage local authorities as users of human rights information to establish the necessary conditions in order to carry out human rights research.
5. Establish a network for exchange of experiences and develop solid work relations and cooperation for the future.

5. Outcomes

1. Knowledge on successful human rights research methods will have been increased among local authorities, human rights institutions, academics, and civil society organisations.
2. The awareness of the specific purposes (such as impact assessment, monitoring, evaluation, baseline evidence, conclusive evidence) of particular human rights research methods will have been increased among the target group.
3. The state of the art in research on human rights at local and regional levels will have been collected and shared.
4. Concrete ideas for new pilot applications will have been developed by bringing together international and local perspectives on the topic at hand.
5. A new toolkit on human rights research methods will have been developed.
6. City authorities will have been informed about the potential of human rights research methods and will have been given an improved ability to assess proposals for commissioned studies with human rights relevance.
7. The outcome of the Academy will have been fed into the Conference by way of an Outcome Document on the creation and application of human rights evidence to support the human rights-based approach of local and regional authorities.

6. Cooperation partners

The 2021 edition of the Academy and Conference is organized in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs, the Provincial Government Styria, the City of Graz, and the University of Graz.

