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UNESCO Chair in
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University of Graz, Austria



ZENTRUM ZUR FÖRDERUNG DER PROMOTION OF
MENSCHENRECHTE HUMAN RIGHTS
IN GEMEINDEN AT THE LOCAL AND
UND REGIONEN REGIONAL LEVELS

Under the auspices of UNESCO

HUMAN RIGHTS GO LOCAL: WHAT WORKS

GOVERNING THE CITY BY HUMAN RIGHTS OBJECTIVES: MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS AND INSTRUMENTS

8 February 2023

Outcome Document and Explanatory Remarks

The event is organized by 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, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN-Habitat, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Austrian Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs, the Federal Province of Styria, the City of Graz, and the University of Graz.





UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security
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at the Local and Regional Levels

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Introduction

From 1 to 8 February 2023, the third edition of the Annual Academy and Conference “Human Rights Go Local – What Works” was conducted online. The Academy and Conference Series aims at demonstrating and synthesising innovative approaches and proven practices for protecting and promoting human rights at the local level in order to make cities and human settlements more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. It seeks to systemise support to local level authorities together with trusted partners, foster interregional exchange, and provide a place for inspiration, reflection, and mutual learning.

This year’s Academy was titled “Governing the city by human rights objectives: Management concepts and instruments“. The event gathered people from different backgrounds, including international organisations, local governments, human rights experts, and young people, to share their thoughts and ideas on the question “Which tools and instruments help integrate human rights into the management processes of local governments to benefit rights-holders?” Participants discussed existing management concepts and instruments that have already proven helpful for local governments to advance human rights on the ground. They also shared their experiences made and lessons learnt in integrating human rights into management concepts at the local level. Further, they conversed about the needs and potential for change associated with the integration of human rights in managerial, administrative, and policy-processes of local governments. The event built upon the achievements and topics discussed in previous Academies.

In total, 62 human rights experts from around the globe participated in the Academy, sharing their valuable insights and experiences on the topic. Special emphasis was again placed on the voices and perspectives of the youth, who enjoyed an informal networking session. During this session, several human rights professions were introduced and highlighted as a crucial means towards advancing human rights locally to this next generation of human rights experts. This way, the event helped build a generation that can meet the challenges of the future. This year, a whole day of the Academy was explicitly dedicated to networking and exchanging ideas in a virtual room. This networking day was very well received by all participants, and opened up opportunities for collaboration.

The expertise gathered during the Academy’s discussions is compiled and published in the Academy’s Outcome Document, representing a source of collective knowledge. As in previous years, the document is a collection of Encouragements made by the Academy’s participants to local governments. This year’s Outcome Document includes 12 Encouragements for action addressed at local authorities. With the present Explanatory Remarks, we intend to facilitate the further use of the Outcome Document as reference point and instrument. We explain the meaning of all Encouragements, link them to the Preamble, present related findings of the plenary and workshop sessions of the 2023 Academy, and provide non-exhaustive links to examples and relevant material presented or discussed during the Academy for further reading and inspiration.

At the final Conference held on 8 February 2023, the Outcome Document was presented and discussed among representatives from international organisations and local governments. This event was attended by around 390 guests from 34 countries.

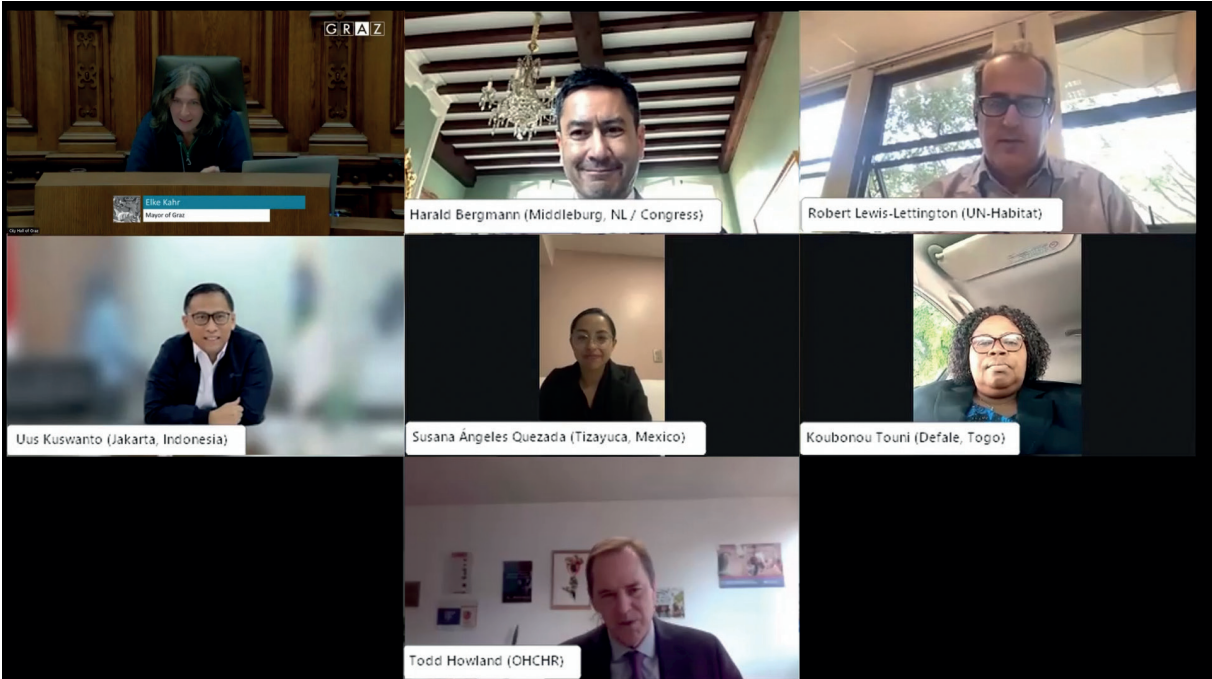


The 2023 Academy and Conference were organised by the International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO and the UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security in Graz, Austria, together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN-Habitat, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Austrian Federal Ministry of European and International Affairs, the Federal Province of Styria, the City of Graz, and the University of Graz.



At the final Conference on 8 February 2023, Gabriela Ramos, the Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, held a keynote speech on the importance of the local level in strategizing to advance the promotion of human rights.

Michael O'Flaherty, the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, gave an impulse statement on the many direct human rights responsibilities of cities and their broad scope of competence.



The Outcome Document was discussed by Elke Kahr (Mayor of Graz, Austria), Koubonou Touni (Mayor of Defale, Togo), Susana Araceli Angeles Quezada (President of the Municipality of Tizayuca, Mexico), Uus Kuswanto (Governor's Assistant to People Welfare, Indonesia), Harald Bergmann (Mayor of Middleburg, Netherlands, and Human Rights Spokesman of the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities), Todd Howland (Chief of the Development and Economic and Social Issues Branch, OHCHR), and Robert Lewis-Lettington (Chief of the Urban Legislation Unit, UN-Habitat).



“Governing the city by human rights objectives: Management concepts and instruments”

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

**of “Human Rights Go Local: What Works” – Academy and Conference
on Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels, 1-8 February 2023.**

8 February 2023

We, the participants of the third Academy and Conference on Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels,

inviting all actors to commemorate in 2023 the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 30th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,

referring to work done by

the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, who has adopted the Global call against Racism, developed a Roadmap against Racism and Discrimination providing a strategic and operational framework using human rights-based approaches to design, plan, implement, and monitor antiracism and antidiscrimination efforts, organises the annual Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination that shapes the direction, implementation, and monitoring of efforts to thwart these social ills, and collaborates with a gamut of partners, including at the local level, through the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities, where a series of policy dialogues related to legal and institutional antiracism and antidiscrimination frameworks is being conducted,

the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who has promoted dialogue among local governments and their involvement in human rights mechanisms, fostered spaces for knowledge sharing, provided with guidance documents for promoting human rights in the public sector, including through government budgets, increased efforts for raising awareness on human rights issues at the local level through advocacy notes and other resources, and contributed to building capacity of local authorities and other local actors on human rights, including through its field presences,

the United Nations Human Settlements Programme promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, reducing inequality, discrimination, and poverty, and fostering transformative change in cities and human settlements through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action, and by focussing particularly on the New Urban Agenda, Voluntary Local Reviews, the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals, multi-level governance, and rights-based legislation,

the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe in assisting local and regional governments in implementing a human rights-based approach to local governance by promoting awareness among elected representatives of their responsibilities with regard to human rights, by encouraging training for national, as well as local authorities in the field of human rights, and by disseminating information among citizens about their rights,

the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, who has developed a Framework for Human Rights Cities and an accompanying practical guidance on how to become and function as a human rights city, and who is convinced that implementing this framework can foster a culture of rights locally, assist mayors and local administrations in integrating human and fundamental rights in their work, increase participation of rights-holders, and encourage cooperation with civil society in human rights,



- a. aware that human rights standards and principles impose obligations on all tiers of government, which extend to public management processes and the way governments raise, allocate, and spend public funds, as well as evaluate their use,
- b. recalling that the international human rights framework, as well as the principles of effective governance, including transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity, and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based effective participation for all, should be the normative starting point for government bodies in the design and implementation of programmes, services, and budget allocations,
- c. recalling that human rights standards and principles are applicable to all public authorities' work, including to services that are contracted externally through service providers and procurement,
- d. recognising that discrimination, including racial discrimination, is one of the manifestations of the denial of human rights, and that governments should therefore integrate policies and mechanisms to combat discrimination in all its forms,
- e. recognising that robust legislative frameworks must match the prevailing urban reality, and that rights-based legislation is needed to create fair, predictable, and effective legal instruments that guarantee the inclusion of the interests, needs, and experiences of all city residents, particularly those at risk of marginalisation, while also providing a catalyst for local and national discourse,
- f. acknowledging that local governments are increasingly showing leadership in promoting human rights by adopting Human Rights City declarations and other commitments in line with their shared obligation with national governments to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights,
- g. recalling that cities, and local and regional governments worldwide are using Voluntary Local Reviews as instruments to track and report on the Sustainable Development Goals progress which are powerful accelerators of the process of localising human rights,
- h. acknowledging that embedding human rights in public management processes and instruments is an effective means for local governments to implement their human rights obligations and commitments,
- i. recognising that such local implementation is enabled and enhanced if supported by national frameworks and coordinated among different territorial levels,
- j. convinced of the importance of integrating human rights objectives into the governance practices of local authorities,
- k. considering that embedding human rights in public management helps to mobilise locally elected representatives and staff of local administrations towards common goals,
- l. convinced that embedding human rights in local public management requires building the capacity of locally elected officials and local government staff, and raising awareness of how they can promote human rights in their daily work,
- m. convinced that the application of human rights-based management tools and approaches can help to make human rights an everyday management practice, and improve the delivery and quality of public services,
- n. recognising that human rights-based management tools can help measure progress towards the realisation of human rights, thereby making it more visible,
- o. emphasising that human rights-based management tools are a means of fostering transparency, tracking, and ensuring accountability for human rights, and, thus, helping to build rights-holders' trust in locally elected representatives and local administrations,
- p. emphasising that decision-making approaches in local public management, including budgeting, are of particular importance, and ultimately determine whether and to what extent relevant human rights obligations are met or not,
- q. recalling that the concepts of progressive realisation and non-retrogression, appropriate and adequate allocation for immediate realisation, and the use of maximum available resources are essential for human rights realisation,
- r. recalling that the local budget is an essential element for assessing the local government's efforts to realise human rights,
- s. convinced that a human rights-based budgeting strategy will assist governments to effectively use their resources, including by setting priorities appropriately, for the realisation of human rights at the local level,



- t. highlighting the need for local authorities to be equipped with adequate resources to fulfil their responsibilities,
- u. emphasising that human rights-based management tools, such as participatory budgeting mechanisms, that impact on the formulation, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the local budget are specifically suited to help improve programme development and service delivery,
- v. acknowledging that many local governments have already gained valuable experience in implementing management approaches that are explicitly based on human rights or build on human rights principles,
- w. welcoming in particular those management approaches that have a tangible impact on the allocation of the local budget in all areas of local government,
- x. acknowledging that those local governments that already have human rights embedded in their public management systems are a source of inspiration, best practice, and experience sharing for other local governments around the world,
- y. underlining that local authorities that place human rights at the core of budgetary and further managerial decision-making position themselves as human rights leaders,
- z. underlining that according to increasing practice the benefits of human rights-based management tools outweigh their additional administrative effort,
- aa. noting that management structures and procedures vary at the local level, and efforts to embed human rights therein are diverse, and, thus, require a tailored approach,
- bb. noting that local authorities are the governance units closest to the residents, and, therefore, in an excellent position to effectively embed human rights in their management processes and instruments in a context-appropriate manner,
- cc. convinced that seeking and using rights-holders' knowledge and solutions will increase ownership and, ultimately, the sustainability of local interventions,
- dd. acknowledging that effective participation is a foundation to human rights-based public management,
- ee. recognising that local ownership and the sharing of specific knowledge and solutions can only be ensured if the voices of those most at risk of being excluded from decision-making are adequately considered through inclusive and participatory governance processes,
- ff. highlighting the necessity to consider the interests and views of young people by promoting inclusive and participatory governance processes,
- gg. recognising that an ever-growing number of international city networks or associations of cities are coming together to work collaboratively, and to learn from one another, and are becoming powerful global agenda setters, elevating and amplifying the voices of city leaders and city residents, in the promotion of human rights,
- hh. acknowledging the strong support provided by organisations and actors to local governments to develop and adopt human rights-based management approaches, such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments,
- ii. affirming that a multi-level governance approach is crucial in governing by human rights objectives locally,
- jj. intending to strengthen cooperation between existing efforts of local governments worldwide, including the creation of appropriate platforms, to base local public management on human rights standards and principles in a spirit of global solidarity,

encourage local level governments worldwide to

1. embed and highlight human rights in their public management systems with a view to govern by human rights objectives and fulfil their human rights obligations,
2. make an informed and explicit commitment to a human rights-based public management system that shall provide a continuous basis for respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights and good governance in local administrative practice,



3. seek inspiration and practical guidance from other actors at the local, regional, national, and international levels on how to integrate human rights objectives into local public management systems,
4. draw on the findings of human rights research on the local level, on inputs provided by civic and youth engagement, as well as on lessons learnt of all tiers of government to find the most appropriate solution on how to incorporate human rights into local public management, and share promising practices among peers, at regional, national, and international levels, as well as within networks and international fora,
5. train the representatives of local governments, the local governments' future leadership, local administration, as well as front-line public servants in contact with rights-holders in the appropriate use of human rights-based management tools, and inform the civil society, the youth as the next generation experts, as well as the public on their role and function in human rights-based governance,
6. provide for inclusive and participatory local governance and respective capacity building in order to leave no one behind, to guarantee meaningful participation of rights-holders, and to duly consider the views and perspectives of the youth,
7. empower children and the youth to make their voices heard in local governance processes through citizenship and human rights education in formal and informal settings,
8. integrate a human rights-based approach in the decision-making processes on the raising, allocation, and spending of funds, as well as in the procedures for auditing and evaluating the budgets,
9. establish transparent administrative procedures that openly communicate to the public the outcomes intended by the local policies, specify in which way human rights are taken into consideration, and indicate which resources are used for their achievement,
10. include in the public management system accountability procedures that allow for an assessment of the efforts and achievements in the realisation of human rights,
11. seek the support of civil society, academia, National Human Rights Institutions, youth as the next generation of human rights experts, community leaders, and other relevant actors to review and assess the achievements of human rights-based local governance, and to further refine existing approaches as appropriate,
12. apply a multi-level governance approach and build alliances at local, regional, national, and international levels, foster knowledge-sharing, join existing networks, and seek exchanges with peers, regional, national, and international actors and organisations, as well as with civil society, academia, and actors of the private sector, with a view to base local public administration more strongly on human rights standards and principles worldwide.



Encouragement No. 1

Embed and highlight human rights in their public management systems with a view to govern by human rights objectives and fulfil their human rights obligations.

Explanatory remarks

The Encouragement to embed and highlight human rights in the local governments' public management systems is the first and fundamental call of the Outcome Document. In simpler terms, it means that human rights objectives should become a core part of local public management systems, so that human rights become a central consideration in the decision-making processes and actions of local authorities. It is based on the fact that human rights standards and principles impose obligations on local authorities, which extend to the local public management processes as well. The overarching goals of embedding human rights in the local public management system is to ensure that local authorities are continuously guided by human rights objectives, the human rights of all individuals are protected, and the government is accountable to the community for upholding these rights.

The Encouragement is based on the conviction that by embedding human rights in the public management system, local authorities can create a framework for making decisions that are consistent with human rights principles and standards. This can help them to make human rights an everyday management practice and improve the delivery and quality of public services. Thus, public management systems are considered as an effective means for local governments to implement their human rights obligations and commitments. Moreover, local public management concepts and instruments that build on human rights considerations can also help rebuild trust in local governments by requiring duty bearers to justify whether and to what extent they have met their respective obligations.

Since local authorities are the governance units closest to the residents, they are in an excellent position to effectively embed human rights in their management processes and instruments. Certainly, this integration will have to be made in a context-appropriate manner taking due account of the administrative structures and practices in place. However, the Encouragement, especially when read in conjunction with Encouragements 8 and 9, strongly implies that embedding human rights in local public management will usually have discernable and verifiable budgetary implications.

This Encouragement is further based on the finding that many local authorities have already integrated human rights-relevant approaches into their local management system. In many places, however, they have not explicitly highlighted the human rights relevance of their respective tools or approaches. For this reason, the Encouragement also calls on local authorities to highlight the human rights aspects of their public management system to emphasise their significance for human rights. However, the word "highlight" is in no way meant to diminish the encouragement to make further effort to "embed" human rights in their public management systems.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (a) stressing that human rights standards and principles impose obligations on all tiers of government, which extend to public management processes and the way governments raise, allocate, and spend public funds, as well as evaluate their use.
- Paragraph (d) recognising that discrimination, including racial discrimination, is one of the manifestations of the denial of human rights, and that governance should therefore integrate policies and mechanisms to combat discrimination in all its forms.
- Paragraph (h) acknowledging that embedding human rights in public management processes and instruments is an effective means for local governments to implement their human rights obligations and commitments.



- Paragraph (j) stressing the importance of integrating human rights objectives into the governance practices of local authorities.
- Paragraph (m) stressing that the application of human rights-based management tools and approaches can help to make human rights an everyday management practice and improve the delivery and quality of public services.
- Paragraph (p) emphasising that decision-making approaches in local public management, including budgeting, are of particular importance, and ultimately determine whether and to what extent relevant human rights obligations are met or not.
- Paragraph (bb) noting that local authorities are the governance units closest to the residents, and, therefore, in an excellent position to effectively embed human rights in their management processes and instruments in a context-appropriate manner.

2023 Academy findings

- Outcome orientation with a particular focus on human rights paves the way for the provision of goods, services, and resources that directly benefit people and realise their rights. In a broader context, implementing these practices helps local authorities build public trust, integrity, and accountability.
- Local governments play a key role in the implementation of human rights obligations. This role has become increasingly evident in recent years as the world continues to urbanise, and more and more rights-holders live in cities or smaller settlements around the globe.
- Local governments can localise the sometimes seemingly lofty human rights concepts, and translate them into real, tangible changes in the lives of their residents.
- Participation is a core principle of embedding human rights in public management systems. A participatory approach involves the views of different stakeholders. The relevant stakeholders in this context include public managers, academics, citizens, and the rights-holders targeted by respective public policy-making.

Practical examples

- In Austria, there are well-proven outcome orientation procedures at the federal and provincial levels. However, they are not explicitly oriented towards human rights, but towards principles such as “equality” or “climate protection”. At the federal level, there is a concept of outcome orientation in public administration, which is implemented by the state government. This can be seen as a best practice example of multi-level governance. It has potential for explicitly anchoring human rights in public administration.
- The City of Graz (Austria) has used the Balanced Score Card since 2003 to manage the city. The tool aligns politicians and departments, with the Department for Strategic Organisational Development coordinating the process. At the beginning of every year, each city administration department establishes a contract between the head of department, the director of the city administration, and the responsible city councillor. This contract also includes the Balanced Score Card. The Department for Strategic Organisational Development initiates the elaboration of these contracts, and works with the departments on their Balanced Score Cards. Each Balanced Score Card is developed and drawn together with each department manager, and members of the team, because it is the staff that will translate the agreed upon goals and objectives into practice. The Balanced Score Card contains a template specifying the strategic goals and objectives for four focus sections that are color-coded, namely citizens, finance, administrative processes and organisation, as well as employees of the city administration. For each of these areas, strategic goals are defined, which shall be reached within the next five years in certain areas (long-term). When looking at the section focusing on citizens such strategic goals could, for instance, be the integration of all people in society, avoiding loneliness in old age or guaranteeing the right to adequate housing for all citizens. Next, there are outcome objectives which shall be reached within the next one to two years (short-term), and can be linked to a particular strategic goal. An example for the section on citizens could be to implement a centre for people without a home. In general, outcome objectives shall



only be included when they contain concrete targets of implementation, meaning projects, activities, and services that are set out to achieve the defined outcome objectives, and eventually, strategic goals. Targets are the next vital parts of a Balanced Score Card. Each department also identifies key performance indicators that are connected to goals and objectives. They are measurable numbers showing whether the department is headed in the right direction to implement their goals and objectives or not. Numbers are collected throughout the year. At the end of each year, each department has to prepare a report specifying the progress made with regard to goals and objectives, and hand it to the two other parties of the contract, namely the relevant city councillor and director of the city administration.

- The East Lampung (Indonesia) local government regularly conducts impact assessments within its area of jurisdiction with regard to the implementation of human rights as well as SDGs, and transfers its findings in local development plans on human rights and SDGs. This way, it integrates human rights development plans in the local budget. For this process, the local government seeks the support of actors of the private sector and NGOs. Further, local stakeholders conduct a monitoring of this process. The City applies two key performance indicators: human rights city indicators based on a regulation of the Ministry of Law and Human rights on human rights friendly districts/cities in 2016, and Minimum Standard Services based on government regulation of 2018.

Materials and further links

- Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Public Service and Sport, [Outcome-oriented public management](#).
- Freebalance, [Why Governments Should Use The Balanced Scorecard](#).
- Graz, [Balanced Score Card, das strategische Steuerungsinstrument](#).
- Kaplan Robert S. and Norton David P., The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action, Harvard Business Review Press, 2001.
- UNESCO Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels, Governing the City by Human Rights Objectives: Embedding Human Rights in Public Management Instruments, in: Gerd Oberleitner and Klaus Starl (series eds.), Human Rights Go Local Publication Series, Volume 4, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2023.
- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [Realizing Human Rights through government budgets](#), New York and Geneva, 2017.
- Sulhan Ahmad and Wasistiono Sadu, [Measurement of Local Government Performance with Balanced Scorecard Approach in South Tangerang City, Indonesia](#), in: Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, Volume 167.



Encouragement No. 2

Make an informed and explicit commitment to a human rights-based public management system that shall provide a continuous basis for respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights and good governance in local administrative practice.

Explanatory remarks

The Encouragement to make an informed and explicit commitment to a human rights-based public management system establishes a direct substantive link to the findings of the Academy held in 2022 and its related Outcome Document. Thus, it further concretises the previous call on local authorities to make an explicit commitment substantiating how human rights norms, principles, and standards shall inform their laws, policies, and programmes.

Committing to a human rights-based public management system shall help local authorities to create a system that continuously promotes and protects human rights, while also promoting good governance practices within the local government. The Encouragement is based on the conviction that local authorities can take a leadership role in promoting human rights by adopting such commitments.

By making a commitment to a human rights-based public management system, local authorities can demonstrate their understanding of how human rights considerations should be integrated into the manifold aspects of local administrative practice. This includes, for instance, clarifications in the commitment on how human rights considerations shall become an integral part of decision-making processes, resource allocation, policy implementation, and ongoing evaluation and improvement of government activities.

Making an informed commitment means making a commitment based on knowledge and understanding of the relevant local issues and factors involved. It further implies that before making the commitment, the local authority should have access to accurate and relevant information about human rights-based management instruments and how they apply to local administrative practice. Local authorities are thus encouraged to make deliberate and conscious decisions based on a thorough understanding of the subject matter.

The commitment shall be explicit, meaning that the local authority shall make a clear and specific pledge to implement policies and practices that promote and protect human rights and good governance in local administrative practice. Ideally, it is a commitment that is stated plainly and leaves no doubt about the intentions of the local authority.

This Encouragement acknowledges the benefits of a long-term engagement by calling for a commitment as a continuous basis for respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights and good governance in local administrative practice. It takes into account the fact that it requires a long-term commitment to, for instance, build capacity, train staff, engage with the local community, and seek input and feedback from all stakeholders. Thus, the Encouragement recognises that local commitments to human rights-based management systems can serve as solid foundation to effectively promote human rights and good governance well beyond electoral cycles.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (e) recognising that robust legislative frameworks must match the prevailing urban reality, and that rights-based legislation is needed to create fair, predictable, and effective legal instruments that guarantee the inclusion of the interests, needs, and experiences of all city residents, particularly those at risk of marginalisation, while also providing a catalyst for local and national discourse.
- Paragraph (f) acknowledging that local governments are increasingly showing leadership in promoting human rights by adopting Human Rights City declarations and other commitments in line with their shared obligation with national governments to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights.



- Paragraph (h) acknowledging that embedding human rights in public management processes and instruments is an effective means for local governments to implement their human rights obligations and commitments.

2023 Academy findings

- It is vital for local authorities to emphasise the concept of continuity when integrating the human rights-based approach to their public management systems. Continuous implementation of such an approach ensures the application of a human rights-based approach beyond just the term of office of one mayor.
- Local authorities could establish a transparent and clearly structured procedure that has to be followed whenever a new political administration wants to change a basic management approach. Analogies can be drawn from the case when states want to withdraw from international agreements. In such cases, states must follow a strict withdrawal process so that they do not rush their decision without considering the consequences for their citizens and their economy. Analogous withdrawal procedures could be envisaged for the local level if local governments intend to no longer govern the city according to human rights objectives.
- Local authorities could establish institutions, like a local human rights commission, to help them with the implementation of agreed upon human rights principles and values in their public management systems.

Practical examples

- Based on a regulation of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, the local government of East Lampung (Indonesia) adopted a human rights city label. Thus, the local government applies clearly defined criteria of being a human rights friendly district/city, and measures the realisation of human rights within its jurisdiction, namely the right to health, the right to education, women and children rights, civil administration rights, employment rights, adequate housing rights, and sustainable environmental rights.
- The City of Gwangju (South Korea) has a comprehensive Human Rights System for over a decade which includes a human rights charter, a department, and indicators. However, the system faces drawbacks whenever political leadership changes, as some leaders may take the system for granted. The system cannot exist by itself, but needs energy and commitment – energy from society, academics, experts, administrators, and people that complain.

Materials and further links

- Deklerck Jasmien, From Commitment to Responsibility for Human Rights in Cities and Regions, in: Oberleitner Gerd and Starl Klaus (series eds.), Human Rights Go Local Publication Series, Volume 3, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2022.
- International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels and UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security, [From Intentions to Commitments: Towards the Effective and Sustainable Implementation of Human Rights](#), 1-8 February 2022, Graz, 2022.
- UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, [What We Offer: Local Governance](#).



Encouragement No. 3

Seek inspiration and practical guidance from other actors at the local, regional, national, and international levels on how to integrate human rights objectives into local public management systems.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement suggests that local authorities should look to other local, regional, national, and international entities for inspiration and practical guidance on how to incorporate human rights objectives into their public management systems.

By seeking inspiration and practical guidance, local authorities can avoid reinventing the wheel, and instead build on the successes and lessons learnt of others. This way, local authorities can develop a more comprehensive understanding of how to integrate human rights objectives into their public management systems, and, thus, improve their capacity to effectively promote and protect human rights in their communities. It is further assumed that the integration of human rights objectives into the local public administration system can be better facilitated if this process is supported by corresponding national or regional frameworks or coordinated between different territorial levels.

The Encouragement is based on the finding that there are local, regional, and national governments that have already gained valuable experience in implementing management approaches that are explicitly based on human rights or build on human rights principles. Such actors are a source of inspiration and stand ready to share their best practices and experiences with other local governments around the world.

The emphasis on seeking inspiration and practical guidance from actors at the international level implies that local authorities should actively seek out and engage with further actors who have relevant expertise in this area. This includes peer-to-peer exchange within international city networks or associations of cities, who are coming together to work collaboratively, and to learn from one another. It also implies that local authorities are encouraged to seek support and advice from relevant international organisations on how to develop and adopt human rights-based management approaches.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (i) recognising that local implementation is enabled and enhanced if supported by national frameworks and coordinated among different territorial levels.
- Paragraph (j) stressing the importance of integrating human rights objectives into the governance practices of local authorities.
- Paragraph (v) acknowledging that many local governments have already gained valuable experience in implementing management approaches that are explicitly based on human rights or build on human rights principles.
- Paragraph (x) acknowledging that those local governments that already have human rights embedded in their public management systems are a source of inspiration, best practice, and experience sharing for other local governments around the world.
- Paragraph (y) underlining that local authorities that place human rights at the core of budgetary and further managerial decision-making position themselves as human rights leaders.
- Paragraph (gg) recognising that an ever-growing number of international city networks or associations of cities are coming together to work collaboratively, and to learn from one another, and are becoming powerful global agenda setters, elevating and amplifying the voices of city leaders, and city residents, in the promotion of human rights.
- Paragraph (hh) acknowledging the strong support provided by organisations and actors to local governments to develop and adopt human rights-based management approaches, such as the Congress



of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments.

2023 Academy findings

- Data provides relevant evidence and supports decision-making at the local level. A cooperation of local authorities with local universities helps to gather and access to data, also in case of limited resources for research at the side of local authorities. Through cooperation with universities local authorities may also get in contact with young people in general and next generation human rights experts in particular.
- Local authorities can seek inspiration and guidance from many international frameworks with human rights objectives at their core, like the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. However, since each city/municipality is embedded in an individual socio-economic and political context, local authorities have to adapt broad indicators and targets of international frameworks to their specific realities. Local authorities can seek support from national and international actors to transfer these frameworks to the local level in an effective manner.
- Including rights-holders in the decision-making processes at the local level in a participatory and inclusive way can generate valuable results that are also relevant at the national level. That is why it can be very fruitful to share findings gained at the local level with the relevant national governance unit. Consequently, local level collective action can have a significant national impact.

Practical examples

- It was found to be important to establish a common understanding of what it means to govern a city by human rights objectives. Tools and guidelines, established by international organisations, may provide guidance for the establishment of a common understanding or for structuring the exchange. Tools provided by international organisations are applicable at the local level as soon as they have been adapted to the context.
- The UNESCO International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities' (ICCAR) Ten-Point Plan of Action provides a framework with clearly explained steps and actions referring to various areas of competence of local authorities, like housing or employment, which can easily be adopted by cities. Exchange among local authorities facilitated by international organisations, such as the ICCAR Policy Dialogues, help bridging knowledge gaps. Holding policy dialogues among members of international coalitions of cities engages the member cities in conversations and facilitates exchange among them. The cities are motivated to collaborate in order to realise the common vision, and exchange best practices and expertise. Cities and public administrations can thrive when they have a structured network to regularly share experiences and expand the world-view. Structured policy dialogues and exchange in a formal fashion are suitable for intense political discussions.
- For several years, Georgian legislation has shifted the focus on the realisation of human rights to the local level. Local governments are aware that in order to fulfill their human rights obligations, they need the support, namely financial, methodological, and capacity-building, of other expert actors at the national, but also international level. In this regard, local authorities of 13 selected municipalities conducted a baseline assessment between March and July 2022 together with ten local experts and two international consultants to identify achievements, but also challenges and needs with regard to fulfill the local governments' human rights commitments. This was done as part of the project "Strengthening Participatory Democracy and Human Rights at the Local Level in Georgia", implemented within the framework of the Council of Europe's Action Plan for Georgia for 2020 to 2030 and with a financial contribution of the Austrian Development Cooperation. With this baseline assessment, it was possible, on the one hand, to map the individual capacities, challenges, and needs of these 13 municipalities focusing



on group rights, good governance and equality, and participation, and, on the other hand, to produce a comparative report analysing the territorial and demographic influences on the chosen themes. Based on the baseline assessment, two recommendations were elaborated for the local authority level: First, it was recommended to local authorities to strengthen capacity-building for human rights and participatory democracy. Second, it was recommended to build structures for multi-level cooperation and knowledge exchange to foster the implementation of human rights and participatory democracy.

Materials and further links

- Austria, Federal Ministry for Women and Public Service, [Handbuch Wirkungsorientierte Steuerung: Unser Handeln erzeugt Wirkung](#), Vienna, 2011.
- Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Public Service and Sport, [Outcome-oriented public management](#).
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, [Human rights handbook for Local and Regional Authorities, Vol. 1](#), Fighting against discrimination, 2019.
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, [Human rights handbook for Local and Regional Authorities, Vol. 2](#), Social Rights, 2021.
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, [Human rights handbook for Local and Regional Authorities, Vol. 3](#), Environment and sustainable development, 2022.
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Framework for Human Rights Cities](#), 2021.
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Human rights cities in the European Union - Practical guidance](#), 2022.
- Meier Isabella and Starl Klaus, Strengthening human rights at the local level in Georgia: A Case study based on the European Charter of Local Self-Government, in: European Yearbook on Human Rights 2023.
- Office of the Styrian Provincial Government, Provincial Office Directorate Department of Administrative Reform, Innovation and Strategic Project Management (ed.), [Wirkungsbericht 2021](#), Graz, 2022.
- UNESCO Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels, Governing the City by Human Rights Objectives: Embedding Human Rights in Public Management Instruments, in: Gerd Oberleitner and Klaus Starl (series eds.), Human Rights Go Local Publication Series, Volume 4, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2023.
- UNESCO International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities, [Link to website with further links to all Ten-point Plans of Action of the regional and national Coalitions](#).



Encouragement No. 4

Draw on the findings of human rights research on the local level, on inputs provided by civic and youth engagement, as well as on lessons learnt of all tiers of government to find the most appropriate solution on how to incorporate human rights into local public management, and share promising practices among peers, at regional, national, and international levels, as well as within networks and international fora.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement suggests that local authorities should use a variety of resources to integrate human rights into their public management systems, not least because an informed and tailored approach is needed for such an effort.

The Encouragement to build on research on human rights at the local level establishes a direct substantive link to the 2021 Academy's Outcome Document. It makes clear that relevant and reliable evidence is crucial for embedding human rights in the management system. Therefore, it underlines the importance of linking policy and research in the context of local public management.

The statement also explicitly encourages local authorities to use information from youth and civic engagement. The latter include, for example, women's groups, indigenous groups, and the elderly. This encouragement is made with the conviction that building on the rights-holders' knowledge helps to increase their ownership and supports local authorities to find the best solutions for their community that is context-specific.

Additionally, the statement encourages local authorities to share promising practices with their peers at the regional, national, and international levels, as well as within networks and international fora. This can help create a community of practice in human rights-based public management, where local authorities can learn from each other's successes and challenges, and ultimately create more effective systems of governance for their communities.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (f) acknowledging that local governments are increasingly showing leadership in promoting human rights by adopting Human Rights City declarations and other commitments in line with their shared obligation with national governments to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights.
- Paragraph (i) recognising that such local implementation is enabled and enhanced if supported by national frameworks and coordinated among different territorial levels.
- Paragraph (v) acknowledging that many local governments have already gained valuable experience in implementing management approaches that are explicitly based on human rights or build on human rights principles.
- Paragraph (x) acknowledging that those local governments that already have human rights embedded in their public management systems are a source of inspiration, best practice, and experience sharing for other local governments around the world.
- Paragraph (aa) noting that management structures and procedures vary at the local level, and efforts to embed human rights therein are diverse, and, thus, require a tailored approach.
- Paragraph (bb) noting that local authorities are the governance units closest to the residents, and, therefore, in an excellent position to effectively embed human rights in their management processes and instruments in a context-appropriate manner.
- Paragraph (cc) stressing that seeking and using rights-holders' knowledge and solutions will increase ownership and, ultimately, the sustainability of local interventions.



2023 Academy findings

- Intellectuals can be a driving force for human rights engagement in public management. Research institutions can be the starting point for a human rights-driven public management. Establishing links between local authorities and universities on-site is something that often works well in practice. By collaborating with universities, local authorities can become aware of the value of research as evidence for evidence-based policy making.
- Local authorities can include and consider the most vulnerable groups of their city/municipality in the policy-making cycle thanks to evidence-based research findings which clearly manifest disadvantaged groups.
- In Austria, outcome orientation (German: Wirkungsorientierung) is applied at the federal and regional levels. This example of multi-level governance has potential for an explicit anchoring of human rights in public management also at the local level.
- Local governments and administration shall seek the support of civil society organisations, and rely on their evidence-based findings, because they are drawn from the specific local context, are more tangible, and, therefore, easier to connect to a human rights-based approach for public management systems.

Practical examples

- A mayor in a municipality in Bangladesh collaborated with civil society organisations engaged in children's rights. Based on the organisations' input, the mayor chose to support their project on decreasing child labour. Eventually, this project helped 80 children of the municipality to return to school.

Materials and further links

- International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels and UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security, [Building Bridges between Local Governments and the Scientific Community to Promote Human Rights](#), 1-9 February 2021, Graz, 2021.
- Meier Isabella, Research on Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels: Methods, Practices, Approaches, in: Oberleitner Gerd and Starl Klaus (series eds.), Human Rights Go Local Publication Series, Volume 2, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2021.
- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [Realizing Human Rights through government budgets](#), New York and Geneva, 2017.
- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation](#), United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2012, HR/PUB/12/5.



Encouragement No. 5

Train the representatives of local governments, the local governments' future leadership, local administration, as well as front-line public servants in contact with rights-holders in the appropriate use of human rights-based management tools, and inform the civil society, the youth as the next generation experts, as well as the public on their role and function in human rights-based governance.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement suggests that local authorities should invest in training programmes to assist their representatives, future leaders, and front-line public servants to understand and use human rights-based management tools effectively. This includes educating them on the appropriate use of these tools and their role in promoting human rights in their communities.

Additionally, the statement encourages local authorities to inform civil society, youth as the next generation experts, and the public about their role and function in human rights-based governance. This means communicating to these groups how they can play a part in promoting human rights and good governance in their communities. By doing so, local authorities can create a shared understanding of the importance of human rights, and build support for these values within their communities.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (c) recalling that human rights standards and principles are applicable to all public authorities' work, including to services that are contracted externally through service providers and procurement.
- Paragraph (k) considering that embedding human rights in public management helps to mobilise locally elected representatives and staff of local administrations towards common goals.
- Paragraph (l) stressing that embedding human rights in local public management requires building the capacity of locally elected officials and local government staff, and raising awareness of how they can promote human rights in their daily work.

2023 Academy findings

- Local government and administration representatives need to fully comprehend the extent to which their service provision is related to human rights. Thus, local authorities shall invest in human rights trainings for the local government and administrative levels to foster a more positive view of human rights, and make them more tangible for daily work.
- In addition to expert guidance in integrating a human rights-based approach into the local public administration system, it is a good practice for local governments to include all departments and respective heads of departments in the process from the very beginning. If these actors are included, they can better understand the importance of a human rights-based approach in their work, and adhere to follow-up processes, like monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the approach.
- Capacity building of local government representatives, local administrators, and frontline officials is crucial to ensure an adequate implementation of human rights-based management tools. However, there is a significant need for more guidance in this regard at the local level due to a lack of knowledge on how to work with and on human rights. It was noted that the national government level should also promote and support capacity building initiatives at the local level.
- The importance of training administrative staff is still underestimated. There is a lack of awareness of the benefits of applying a data-driven human rights-based approach in public administration. Education and

training are effective tools to raise awareness of these benefits. They provide a better understanding of how local authorities benefit from data collection and auditing as important tools for a city administration oriented towards human rights goals and for ensuring transparency and participation.

- Frontline officials in contact with rights-holders are crucial actors in the implementation of human rights. Therefore, they need to be targeted as a specific group for capacity building and training in human rights management tools. Discrimination may originate from persons in public offices who provide services to the local population. Therefore, it was strongly recommended that those who actually work in the system are made aware of human rights.
- Local government and administrative leaders are increasingly responsive to the language and content of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, but it is crucial that local authorities are aware of the close link between the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights. Once local authorities understand this link, they can work more effectively to integrate a human rights-based approach into their local public management systems.
- In order for the public to properly exercise their rights, further human rights-related training is needed. Local media (newspaper articles, radio broadcasts) could be used to inform the general public about human rights in public administration and to raise awareness of human rights.

Practical examples

- The Municipal 2030 Agenda of the City of Francisco Morato, which assembles 392 human rights-based indicators for leaving no one behind, serves as central example for localising the 2030 Agenda. Localising the 2030 Agenda eventually resulted in the establishment of a local SDG Commission. In order to develop municipal targets, it was necessary to work not only within the commission but with all administrative departments of the municipality. Consequently, workshops with all departments of the municipality were conducted individually looking at the 2030 Agenda to identify their specific challenges and priorities, and teach them how to build their own set of indicators/targets. Finally, the work conducted with the Municipality of Francisco Morato led to the development of human rights-based targets, reflecting the main needs, and included for example the installation of a Local Human Rights Office, cash transfer programme and a basic income programme, a Youth Local Council, a LGBTQI+ Local Council, and a Housing Local Council, a Local Women Policy Plan, as well as a Local Action Implementation Plan of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The Austrian town Villach organized trainings on the identification of sexual and racial harassment and the correct behavior in alleged or identified cases for all municipal leaders, heads of departments and team supervisors. The training was mandatory and brought together all professions from financial officers over fire brigades to construction engineers. The topic was dealt with as a matter of professionalism, employer's duties and liability in case of omission of appropriate intervention.

Materials and further links

- Meier Isabella, Nicoletti Ingrid, Starl Klaus, and Lappalainen Paul (eds.), [The ECCAR Toolkit: Diversity Management in the City Administration](#), 2017.



Encouragement No. 6

Provide for inclusive and participatory local governance and respective capacity building in order to leave no one behind, to guarantee meaningful participation of rights-holders, and to duly consider the views and perspectives of the youth.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement calls on local authorities to ensure that rights-holders are adequately included and have a say in decision-making processes related to local governance. Thus, local authorities shall ensure that their governance processes are inclusive, participatory, and take into account the perspectives and needs of all members of the community. The Encouragement is based on the conviction that effective participation is a foundation to human rights-based public management. By creating an inclusive and participatory governance system, local authorities can ensure that the needs and interests of all members of the community are taken into account, promoting inclusiveness, social justice, and equity. Moreover, it is assumed that seeking and using rights-holders' knowledge and solutions will increase the sustainability of local policies and interventions.

This encouragement calls on local governments to enable people to participate in local governance processes, which also requires building their capacity for effective participation. In particular, the voices of those most at risk of being excluded from decision-making should adequately be considered through inclusive and participatory governance processes.

The Encouragements also emphasises the importance of considering the views and perspectives of young people, who are often underrepresented in local governance processes. Local governments should thus seek to ensure meaningful participation of the youth, recognising that they have a special interest in the future of the community. Thus, they should have a say in decisions that impact their lives.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (b) recalling that the international human rights framework, as well as the principles of effective governance, including transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity, and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based effective participation for all, should be the normative starting point for government bodies in the design and implementation of programmes, services, and budget allocations.
- Paragraph (e) recognising that robust legislative frameworks must match the prevailing urban reality, and that rights-based legislation is needed to create fair, predictable, and effective legal instruments that guarantee the inclusion of the interests, needs, and experiences of all city residents, particularly those at risk of marginalisation, while also providing a catalyst for local and national discourse.
- Paragraph (cc) stressing that seeking and using rights-holders' knowledge and solutions will increase ownership and, ultimately, the sustainability of local interventions.
- Paragraph (dd) acknowledging that effective participation is a foundation to human rights-based public management.
- Paragraph (ee) recognising that local ownership and the sharing of specific knowledge and solutions can only be ensured if the voices of those most at risk of being excluded from decision-making are adequately considered through inclusive and participatory governance processes.
- Paragraph (ff) highlighting the necessity to consider the interests and views of young people by promoting inclusive and participatory governance processes.



2023 Academy findings

- Inclusive local governance is promoted through transparency, participation, and accessibility. Participation is a key component for integrating a human rights-based approach into local governance processes. Participation requires that the local government is accessible to local people, that there is clarity and that there are incentives for people to participate.
- Effective participation means that people's voices are actually taken into account in decision-making. Therefore, local authorities must take the results of participatory mechanisms into account in their decision-making; otherwise, public trust will be jeopardised, not strengthened. Continuity and transparency are key factors for effective participation. Thus, local authorities are encouraged to follow up on citizens' contributions, and inform them about how the contributions have been used in public procedures.
- Many local governments and administrations offer participatory mechanisms to citizens during the policy cycle, such as participatory budgeting. However, sometimes they are not aware that the rules for participatory procedures can also be discriminatory. A database used as a basis for deciding which groups should be invited to a participatory procedure, for instance, may not be accurate as it does not reflect the actual diversity of vulnerable groups in a given municipal context, as it might only contain organised groups that have joined together, paid fees or fulfilled other required conditions. Consequently, some groups may be excluded from participatory processes because they are not displayed and are not given a voice in a relevant decision-making process. Therefore, local authorities are encouraged to revise and adapt the existing procedural rules and datasets according to a human rights-based approach in order to make their participatory processes more effective.
- Community needs assessments are an example of how to facilitate citizens' access to information and leave no one behind in an inclusive and participatory local government. Such a needs assessment might show that face-to-face appointments for citizen services are a burden for some people, e.g., older people or people with disabilities. The digitalisation of these services (e.g., electronic signatures on applications) is a good practice to reduce these barriers. Where digitalisation is not possible, local authorities may reimburse the costs of transportation to facilitate access to information about public services.
- Expressing special needs is sometimes challenging for those concerned, as it is sensitive information that is associated with stigma. Therefore, transparent procedures are recommended for local authorities when identifying needs, including easily understandable information on data processing and confidentiality. Specific forms for reporting needs that meet high standards of confidentiality and transparency also work well. It is recommended to consider intersectional aspects in order to create fully inclusive and participatory local governance procedures. Different social groups of the population have different needs at different times, which should be incorporated into local decision-making processes. Integrating a human rights-based approach into local public governance systems helps to avoid overlooking such intersectional aspects and to implement and protect human rights for all citizens.
- Intergenerational and intercultural approaches are effective ways of understanding the different realities of different groups in the local population and thereby identifying and responding to different group-specific challenges with person-centred responses.

Practical examples

- The City of Bergen (Norway) together with the International Commission of Jurists - Norwegian Branch, and the municipal police section and health services conducted a participatory project with the aim of counteracting islamophobia, including hate speech and racism, at the local level. Therefore, various leaders of the Muslim communities in the different districts were interviewed to collect problems they face in relation to the issue. This effort resulted in a local authority's action plan to combat hatred towards Muslims. Eventually, this local participatory project went even one step further. Together with the mosque and municipal police, the identified main issues were presented to the then Ministry of Culture and Gender Equality to provide the Ministry with input for the government's action plan to combat discrimination and hatred towards Muslims. This is an example of how engaging the civil society, in particular marginalised



groups facing discrimination, at the local governance level can even influence national governance actions and provide fruitful inputs for its work.

- The Ukraine takes part in open government initiatives for local authorities in cooperation with the Congress of Regional and Local Authorities and the Open Government Partnership. The open government initiative fosters public participation mechanisms, renders the activities of local authorities more transparent, and strengthens local authorities' accountability. Further it promotes open data in order to make data more available to the local population. Even though this project focuses on open government and gender mainstreaming, and not explicitly on human rights, there is a visible link since these initiatives clearly enhance the human rights-based approach in public management systems and activities of local authorities.

Materials and further links

- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe, [Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia - Participatory democracy \(coe.int\)](#).
- The Danish Institute for Human Rights, [Human rights based approach](#).
- Norwegian Ministry of Culture, [Action plan to combat discrimination and hatred towards Muslims 2020-2023](#).
- Open Government Partnership – Ukraine, [Link to Website on current Action Plan and Commitments](#).
- UN-Habitat, [Building Participatory Accountability Systems for City Policies: Handbook, Nairobi, 2020](#).
- UN-Habitat, [HerCity](#).
- United Nations Development Programme, [Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation and Programming: A UNDP Capacity Development Resource Capacity Development Group Bureau for Development Policy UNDP, September 2006](#).
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, [Toolkit for Urban Inclusion in Arab Cities: Sports for Youth Inclusion, 2020](#).



Encouragement No. 7

Empower children and the youth to make their voices heard in local governance processes through citizenship and human rights education in formal and informal settings.

Explanatory remarks

The Encouragement suggests that local authorities should take steps to empower children and youth to participate in local governance processes by providing citizenship and human rights education in both formal (such as in schools) and informal (such as in community organisations) settings. This means educating young people about their rights as citizens and providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively engage with local government.

By doing so, local authorities can encourage the next generation to become active and engaged members of their communities, and help ensure that their voices are heard in decision-making processes.

Further, this can foster the promotion of a more inclusive and participatory governance system, where everyone's perspectives are taken into account, and can ultimately lead to better outcomes for the community as a whole.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (e) recognising that robust legislative frameworks must match the prevailing urban reality, and that rights-based legislation is needed to create fair, predictable, and effective legal instruments that guarantee the inclusion of the interests, needs, and experiences of all city residents, particularly those at risk of marginalisation, while also providing a catalyst for local and national discourse,
- Paragraph (cc) stressing that seeking and using rights-holders' knowledge and solutions will increase ownership and, ultimately, the sustainability of local interventions,
- Paragraph (dd) acknowledging that effective participation is a foundation to human rights-based public management,
- Paragraph (ff) highlighting the necessity to consider the interests and views of young people by promoting inclusive and participatory governance processes,

2023 Academy findings

- Human rights advocates are important actors in helping children and the youth to become more empowered. Human rights defenders can provide empowerment in the context of formal human rights education in primary and secondary schools, in professional trainings for teachers, and in informal contexts. Human rights defenders have the necessary qualifications and experience to conduct such trainings.

Practical examples

- In 2021, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights collaborated with Education Above All and Silatech to foster human rights of youth, in particular those in vulnerable situations, by empowering and encouraging them to make their voices heard. The international partners closely cooperated with young people and organisations focusing on youth or led by youth to strengthen and provide tools for human rights education and advocacy. Three main results were achieved: 1. A Youth Advisory Board comprising ten young people from around the globe was installed to guarantee youth participation during the overall partnership, 2. Youth Consultations were conducted in various regions



worldwide between May and June 2022 to actively discuss human rights with young people, and 3. a Youth Rights Advocacy Toolkit was elaborated based on the input gained from youth consultations and the Youth Advisory Board, directly addressing young people to encourage them to stand up for their human rights.

- A remarkable practice is the elected Children and Youth Council in the city of Amman/Jordan. In the CYC young women and men between 8 and 21 years old exercise the right to participation in political decisions. The CYC works on an independent agenda, and also on topics dealt with by the city council. The CYC must be heard by the city council. The Children and Youth Council initiated several campaigns against child abuse; against sexual exploitation; against early (girls') marriages; the right to play (against child work); or against bullying in schools. The youth council further claimed for a specific human rights education programme for the youth delegates within the frame of leaving no one behind, on topics like youth with special needs, women/girls' rights and other. The Children and Youth Council is an official and elected body of the Amman municipal authority.

Materials and further links

- Decara Cecilia, Rask Carol and Tibbitts Felisa, [Guide on human rights education curriculum development: Furthering SDG Target 4.7. in primary and secondary schools](#), Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2021.
- European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Website on [Unsere Menschenrechtsschule](#) (Our human rights school).
- OHCHR, 2022, Link to the Website on [Working with and for youth in vulnerable situations](#).
- Philipp Simone, Schmiedl Barbara and Stocker Alexandra, [Toolbox Menschenrechtsbildung an Volksschulen](#),
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, [Toolkit for Urban Inclusion in Arab Cities: Sports for Youth Inclusion](#), 2020.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, [Toolkit for Urban Inclusion in Arab Cities: Citizenship and Human Rights Education](#), 2020.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Website on [Global citizenship education](#).
- United Nations Human Rights Office, Education Above All Foundation and Silatech, 2022, [Youth Rights Advocacy Toolkit](#).



Encouragement No. 8

Integrate a human rights-based approach in the decision-making processes on the raising, allocation, and spending of funds, as well as in the procedures for auditing and evaluating the budgets.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement highlights the particular potential of promoting human rights in the context of local government budgeting. It is one of the key calls of the Outcome Document for local governments. It is based on the conviction that local authorities need to be equipped with adequate resources to fulfil their responsibilities and that local budgets ultimately determine whether and to what extent local governments meet their human rights obligations or not. This Encouragement is based on the premise that a human rights-based budgeting strategy will help governments to use their resources effectively, including by setting appropriate priorities for the realisation of human rights at the local level. The integration of a human rights-based approach in the budgetary decision-making processes can help local authorities to ensure that resources are used to promote and protect human rights for all individuals in their community.

At its core, the Encouragement suggests that local authorities should integrate a human rights-based approach into all their decision-making processes related to the raising, allocation, and spending of funds. This means ensuring that the decisions related to budgeting are made with a consideration for human rights principles, such as non-discrimination, equality, and accountability. In terms of local budgets, the human rights-based approach also means that local governments should take account of the principles of progressive realisation and non-retrogression, appropriate and adequate allocation for immediate realisation, and the use of maximum available resources.

Additionally, the Encouragement calls on local authorities to integrate human rights into the procedures for auditing and evaluating budgets. This means ensuring that these processes also take into account the impact of budget decisions on human rights and that they are evaluated in light of human rights principles.

The Encouragement does not explicitly mention any specific human rights-based management tool for local budgets. Rather, it assumes that participatory budgeting mechanisms and other mechanisms that impact on the formulation, approval, implementation, and evaluation of local budgets are generally suitable for improving programme development and service delivery.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (a) stressing that human rights standards and principles impose obligations on all tiers of government, which extend to public management processes and the way governments raise, allocate, and spend public funds, as well as evaluate their use.
- Paragraph (p) emphasising that decision-making approaches in local public management, including budgeting, are of particular importance, and ultimately determine whether and to what extent relevant human rights obligations are met or not.
- Paragraph (q) recalling that the concepts of progressive realisation and non-retrogression, appropriate and adequate allocation for immediate realisation, and the use of maximum available resources are essential for human rights realisation,
- Paragraph (r) recalling that the local budget is an essential element for assessing the local government's efforts to realise human rights.
- Paragraph (s) stressing that a human rights-based budgeting strategy will assist governments to effectively use their resources, including by setting priorities appropriately, for the realisation of human rights at the local level.
- Paragraph (t) highlighting the need for local authorities to be equipped with adequate resources to fulfil their responsibilities.

- Paragraph (u) emphasising that human rights-based management tools, such as participatory budgeting mechanisms, that impact on the formulation, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the local budget are specifically suited to help improve programme development and service delivery.
- Paragraph (w) welcoming in particular those management approaches that have a tangible impact on the allocation of the local budget in all areas of local government.
- Paragraph (z) underlining that according to increasing practice the benefits of human rights-based management tools outweigh their additional administrative effort.

2023 Academy findings

- Budgets are the cities' tools for allocating resources towards human rights goals. They can be used strategically to prioritise basic human rights, such as safety and health, for all citizens. Inclusive participatory budgeting can be a driving force in creating accountable, publicly responsive governance and locally-informed expenditure priorities.
- Local authorities are encouraged to provide the population with low-threshold, accessible information about budgeting. Information on budgeting often comes in long texts and figures providing very specific information that is hard to understand – sometimes even for experts in budgeting. Thus, local authorities are encouraged to produce a “public version” of budgeting documents and data, translating the information into an easy-to-understand language.
- Public procurement is an important tool to advance human rights. However, procurement and budgetary decisions are not the end, they are the means to achieve human rights. Public procurement and funding are effective levers for the implementation of human rights standards. They are effective in building human rights safeguards into public funding, for example by linking the granting of funds to the application of a human rights-based approach to projects. Local authorities usually provide the same application forms for each contract. This allows them to use the same human rights clauses in each procedure. When local authorities use a model for the procurement process that takes human rights into account and replicates them, human rights automatically become part of the municipal structure.

Practical examples

- The regional governance level of Carinthia (Austria) provides a promising practice regarding the allocation of funds. Actors applying for funding by public authorities must comply with a Code of Conduct. This means that the funding that applicants receive is dependent on their respectful treatment of target groups and human rights. This Code of Conduct is an integral part of the funding process, thereby applicants have to integrate human rights in their projects, which in turn renders human rights more effective.
- In 2019, the provincial parliament of Styria (Landtag Steiermark, Austria) passed a human rights clause obliging the Department of Education and Society, responsible for education, gender justice, lifelong learning, women affairs, youth, and family policy, to make sure that all subsidised policy programmes and respective political decisions taken in these fields target core human rights principles, as education shall promote the development of the individual personality of learners for instance, or the prevention and elimination of any form of racism, sexism or anti-Semitism. In all these areas, the provincial government cooperates with private actors, particularly civil society organisations, to achieve its goals. For this purpose, the government grants subsidies to civil society organisations who apply for funding of specific actions in the mentioned policy areas, whereas these grants are already budgeted by means of outcome orientation. With the introduction of human rights clauses in grant contracts, the government obliges private actors to adhere to human rights when executing a public policy or using public funds. The clause stipulates that any action and any organisation that neglects human dignity, does not respect human rights, acts in a racist, anti-Semitic or sexist manner, or spreads such ideologies is excluded from public funding.



- The Municipality of Zugdidi (Georgia) developed a democratic mechanism for participatory budgeting, which was first introduced in 2019 with the help of the Financial-Budgetary Commission. The main objective is to establish trust between local authorities and citizens by getting them to cooperate on projects designed by citizens. The participatory budget (approx. one million Georgian Lari) is part of the local budget of Zugdidi. Citizens can develop their own projects which they want to carry out. Before applying with their project, they have to submit it to a verification process to check for technical implementation aspects. Afterwards, they can submit their project idea. Then, the public can vote for their favourite project, and the one with the most votes is funded by this local, participatory budget and carried out by the city hall.

Materials and further links

- Barcelona City Council, [Gender impact assessment of economic policy: municipal budget and tax system](#), May 2020.
- Evidence and Lessons from Latin America, [Mexico City's Innovation: Budgeting with a human rights approach](#), ELLA Practice Brief, without date.
- Scottish Human Rights Commission, [Human Rights Budgeting Masterclass](#), Presentation, 7 February 2018.
- Scottish Human Rights Commission, Website on [Human Rights Budget Work](#).
- The Danish Institute for Human Rights, [Driving change through public procurement: A toolkit on human rights for procurement policy makers and practitioners](#), March 2020.
- The Danish Institute for Human Rights, [Public procurement and human rights](#).
- UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2017), [Realizing Human Rights through Government Budgets](#), HR/PUB/17/3, New York, Geneva.
- UNESCO Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels, *Governing the City by Human Rights Objectives: Embedding Human Rights in Public Management Instruments*, in: Gerd Oberleitner and Klaus Starl (series eds.), *Human Rights Go Local* Publication Series, Volume 4, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2023.
- UN-Habitat, [2022 Catalogue of services](#), Nairobi, 2022.
- UN-Habitat, [Exploring the Role of Participatory Budgeting in Accelerating the SDGs: A Multidimensional Approach in Escobedo \(Mexico\)](#), Nairobi, August 2020.
- UN-Habitat, [Innovation and digital technology to re-imagine Participatory Budgeting as a tool for building social resilience](#), Nairobi, August 2021.
- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2011.



Encouragement No. 9

Establish transparent administrative procedures that openly communicate to the public the outcomes intended by the local policies, specify in which way human rights are taken into consideration, and indicate which resources are used for their achievement.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement calls on local authorities to create clear and comprehensible procedures that allow the public to understand the intended outcomes of local policies. Further, these procedures should specify how human rights are taken into account. They should be transparent with regard to the resources that are used to achieve the planned outcomes. This is also intended to publicly clarify the extent to which local authorities prioritise human rights and integrate them into local policies and decision-making processes. Consequently, it is possible to create an environment in which local authorities can be held accountable for their actions. By establishing transparent administrative procedures, local authorities can, thus, strengthen the trust of rights-holders in locally elected representatives and local administrations.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (b) recalling that the international human rights framework, as well as the principles of effective governance, including transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity, and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based effective participation for all, should be the normative starting point for government bodies in the design and implementation of programmes, services, and budget allocations.
- Paragraph (j) stressing the importance of integrating human rights objectives into the governance practices of local authorities.
- Paragraph (n) recognising that human rights-based management tools can help measure progress towards the realisation of human rights and thereby make it more visible.
- Paragraph (o) emphasising that human rights-based management tools are a means of fostering transparency, tracking, and ensuring accountability for human rights, and, thus, helping to build rights-holders' trust in locally elected representatives and local administrations.
- Paragraph (r) recalling that the local budget is an essential element for assessing the local government's efforts to realise human rights.
- Paragraph (u) emphasising that human rights-based management tools, such as participatory budgeting mechanisms, that impact on the formulation, approval, implementation, and evaluation of the local budget are specifically suited to help improve programme development and service delivery.

2023 Academy findings

- Outcome objectives transparently elaborate on the goals pursued at the local level, the resources and targets used to achieve these goals, the resources used to implement the services to achieve these goals, and the achieved results.
- Outcome orientation can help to clarify goals and impacts, to communicate transparently, and to explain the means applied to achieve specific outcome objectives.



Practical examples

- The Balanced Scorecard enables governments to better communicate goals for performance alignment. The exercise of developing and implementing a Balanced Scorecard, when accomplished properly, acts as the nexus for organisational change management.

Materials and further links

- Austrian Federal Chancellery, [Performance Management at the federal level of government in Austria](#), Vienna, 2012.
- Austrian Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Public Service and Sport, [Wirkungsorientierte Verwaltung](#).
- Kaplan Robert S. and Norton David P., The Balanced Scorecard: Translating Strategy into Action, Harvard Business Review Press, 2001.
- UNESCO Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels, Governing the City by Human Rights Objectives: Embedding Human Rights in Public Management Instruments, in: Gerd Oberleitner and Klaus Starl (series eds.), Human Rights Go Local Publication Series, Volume 4, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2023.



Encouragement No. 10

Include in the public management system accountability procedures that allow for an assessment of the efforts and achievements in the realisation of human rights.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement suggests that local authorities should establish procedures to hold themselves accountable for their actions and progress in achieving human rights goals. This includes setting up systems to monitor and evaluate the results of policies, programmes, and initiatives related to human rights, and making this information available to the public. This way, local authorities can ensure that they are making progress in achieving human rights and can be held accountable for any shortcomings or failures. Local authorities can help to establish the trust of rights-holders in locally elected representatives and local administrations by incorporating such procedures into their public management system.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (g) recalling that cities, local and regional governments worldwide are using Voluntary Local Reviews as instruments to track and report on the Sustainable Development Goals progress which are powerful accelerators of the process of localising human rights.
- Paragraph (m) stressing that the application of human rights-based management tools and approaches can help to make human rights an everyday management practice and improve the delivery and quality of public services,
- Paragraph (n) recognising that human rights-based management tools can help measure progress towards the realisation of human rights and thereby make it more visible.
- Paragraph (o) emphasising that human rights-based management tools are a means of fostering transparency, tracking, and ensuring accountability for human rights, and, thus, helping to build rights-holders' trust in locally elected representatives and local administrations.
- Paragraph (q) recalling that the concepts of progressive realisation and non-retrogression, appropriate and adequate allocation for immediate realisation, and the use of maximum available resources are essential for human rights realization.
- Paragraph (r) recalling that the local budget is an essential element for assessing the local government's efforts to realise human rights.

2023 Academy findings

- An outcome-focused approach to public administration ensures transparency, makes performance measurable and visible, promotes accountability for results, encourages people to participate, and improves service delivery to all target groups.
- Assuming accountability and being transparent with regard to the implementation of a human rights-based approach in local public management is beneficial for local authorities. It renders their policies more effective and ensures the trust of citizens towards their government, thereby increasing the local population's' well-being and satisfaction.
- Auditors and clearly defined methods are required to ensure procedural accountability.
- Human rights budgeting can also serve as a tool for local governments to fulfil their accountability, as they can publicly and comprehensibly link their budgetary decisions to their human rights priorities and impacts.



Practical examples

- In an Indonesian city, citizens can use a telephone application to submit their complaints about the poor implementation of human rights to the city administration. This way, citizens can directly follow the progress of the local government's implementation of human rights and inform them of any shortcomings identified. This tool opens a direct gateway for citizens to their local government, strengthens their rights and makes them feel heard.

Materials and further links

- Council of Europe, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Developing indicators to raise awareness of human rights at local and regional level
- [Report CG\(21\)10](#) - [Resolution 334 \(2011\)](#).
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Framework for Human Rights Cities](#), 2021.
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Human rights cities in the European Union - Practical guidance](#), 2022.
- UNESCO Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels, [Governing the City by Human Rights Objectives: Embedding Human Rights in Public Management Instruments](#), in: Gerd Oberleitner and Klaus Starl (series eds.), Human Rights Go Local Publication Series, Volume 4, HRGL Publishing, Graz, 2023.
- United Cities and Local Governments, [Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City: Co-creating a renewed global vision by local governments on human rights](#).



Encouragement No. 11

Seek the support of civil society, academia, National Human Rights Institutions, youth as the next generation of human rights experts, community leaders, and other relevant actors to review and assess the achievements of human rights-based local governance, and to further refine existing approaches as appropriate.

Explanatory remarks

The Encouragement suggests that local authorities seek the support of further stakeholders to review and evaluate the success of their human rights-based local governance initiatives. This highlights the importance of collaboration and partnership with relevant stakeholders in improving local governance based on human rights principles. The encouragement explicitly refers to civil society organisations, academia, national human rights institutions, youth, and community leaders, but is also open to the engagement of other actors relevant to the local context.

By seeking input from these stakeholders, local authorities can obtain feedback on the effectiveness of their efforts and identify areas for improvement. This engagement enables local authorities to identify the gaps and limitations in their current approach and to refine their strategies to better meet their human rights obligations.

Overall, by working with a range of actors, local authorities can ensure that their efforts to promote and protect human rights are informed by diverse perspectives and are more likely to achieve their intended outcomes.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (a) stressing that human rights standards and principles impose obligations on all tiers of government, which extend to public management processes and the way governments raise, allocate, and spend public funds, as well as evaluate their use.
- Paragraph (dd) acknowledging that effective participation is a foundation to human rights-based public management.
- Paragraph (ff) highlighting the necessity to consider the interests and views of young people by promoting inclusive and participatory governance processes.

2023 Academy findings

- New human rights indicators could be developed or existing ones could at least be reviewed by applying a participatory, bottom-up approach, including local authorities and the relevant sectors of society.

Materials and further links

- European Coalition of Cities against Racism, [The 10 Points Action Plan](#).
- International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO, [Services](#).
- Möstl Markus, Stocker Alexandra and Starl Klaus, [ECAR Monitoring Manual: Monitoring Racism and Discrimination at the Local Level](#), ECAR: European Cities against Racism Project, 2013.
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2012), [Human Rights Indicators. A Guide to Measurement and Implementation](#), HR/PUB/12/5.
- Philipp Simone and Starl Klaus (eds.), [Focusing on Human Rights at Local and Regional Level](#), European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Graz, June 2017.
- United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, [African Local Government Academy \(ALGA\)](#).

Encouragement No. 12

Apply a multi-level governance approach and build alliances at local, regional, national, and international levels, foster knowledge-sharing, join existing networks, and seek exchanges with peers, regional, national, and international actors and organisations, as well as with civil society, academia, and actors of the private sector, with a view to base local public administration more strongly on human rights standards and principles worldwide.

Explanatory remarks

This Encouragement calls on local authorities to adopt a multi-level governance approach and, thus, to work with other relevant organisations at all levels. This requires working with a wide range of actors, including civil society organisations, academia, and private sector actors, with the aim of strengthening the alignment of local public administration with human rights standards and principles worldwide.

This cooperation should include sharing knowledge, joining existing networks, and seeking exchange opportunities with peers, as well as regional, national, and international actors and organisations. This way, local authorities can learn from the experiences of others, share their own experiences and lessons learnt, and build partnerships and alliances that can help advance human rights-based governance at all levels.

Overall, the Encouragement suggests that local authorities cannot effectively promote and protect human rights in isolation. It is also paying tribute to the strong support provided by key organisations to local governments to develop and adopt human rights-based management approaches, such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments, the African Local Government Academy, and the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities.

Therefore, cooperation and partnerships with a wide range of actors are seen as essential to building more effective and sustainable human rights-based governance systems at the local level.

Related paragraphs of the Preamble

- Paragraph (i) recognising that local implementation is enabled and enhanced if supported by national frameworks and coordinated among different territorial levels.
- Paragraph (v) acknowledging that many local governments have already gained valuable experience in implementing management approaches that are explicitly based on human rights or build on human rights principles.
- Paragraph (x) acknowledging that those local governments that already have human rights embedded in their public management systems are a source of inspiration, best practice, and experience sharing for other local governments around the world.
- Paragraph (gg) recognising that an ever-growing number of international city networks or associations of cities are coming together to work collaboratively, and to learn from one another, and are becoming powerful global agenda setters, elevating and amplifying the voices of city leaders, and city residents, in the promotion of human rights.
- Paragraph (hh) acknowledging the strong support provided by organisations and actors to local governments to develop and adopt human rights-based management approaches, such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments.



- Paragraph (ii) affirming that a multi-level governance approach is crucial in governing by human rights objectives locally.
- Paragraph (jj) intending to strengthen cooperation between existing efforts of local governments worldwide, including the creation of appropriate platforms, to base local public management on human rights standards and principles in a spirit of global solidarity.

2023 Academy findings

- It is vital to recognise the importance of multilateral institutions, networks, and city diplomacy as crucial resources to advocate for and express a human rights-based public administration system. Membership in a network is beneficial for city governments, especially when there is an exchange of best practices to make local public administration more aligned with global human rights standards and principles.

Practical examples

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has adopted the Global call against Racism, developed a Roadmap against Racism and Discrimination providing a strategic and operational framework using human rights-based approaches to design, plan, implement, and monitor antiracism and antidiscrimination efforts, organises the annual Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination that shapes the direction, implementation, and monitoring of efforts to thwart these social ills, and collaborates with a gamut of partners, including at the local level, through the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities, where a series of policy dialogues related to legal and institutional antiracism and antidiscrimination frameworks is being conducted.
- The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has promoted dialogue among local governments and their involvement in human rights mechanisms, fostered spaces for knowledge sharing, provided with guidance documents for promoting human rights in the public sector, including through governments budgets, increased efforts for raising awareness on human rights issues at the local level through advocacy notes and other resources, and contributed to building capacity of local authorities and other local actors on human rights, including through its field presences.
- The United Nations Human Settlements Programme is promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities, reducing inequality, discrimination, and poverty, and fostering transformative change in cities and human settlements through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action, and by focusing particularly on the New Urban Agenda, Voluntary Local Reviews, the localisation of the Sustainable Development Goals, multi-level governance, and rights-based legislation. UN-Habitat's role is to support cities and local authorities as the focal point for all urbanization matters within the UN system. UN-Habitat works with partners to build inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and communities. UN-Habitat promotes urbanisation as a positive transformative, human rights-based force for people and communities, reducing inequality, discrimination, and poverty.
- The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe is assisting local and regional governments in implementing a human rights-based approach to local governance by promoting awareness among elected representatives for their responsibilities with regard to human rights, by encouraging training for national, as well as local authorities in the field of human rights, and by disseminating information among citizens about their rights.
- The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has developed a Framework for Human Rights Cities and an accompanying practical guidance on how to become and function as a human rights city. It is convinced that implementing this framework can foster a culture of rights locally, assist mayors and local administrations in integrating human and fundamental rights in their work, increase participation of rights-holders, and encourage cooperation with civil society in human rights.



- The World Human Rights Cities Forum (WHRCF) has been held as an annual event in Gwangju, Republic of Korea, to realize the vision of becoming a human rights city since 2011. The Forum has become a major human rights event and distinctive platform for sharing and networking amongst human rights cities, human rights organizations, activists, and miscellaneous stakeholders in the area of human rights.

Materials and further links

- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Website on [Human Rights at local and regional levels](#).
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Framework for Human Rights Cities](#), 2021.
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, [Human rights cities in the European Union - Practical guidance](#), 2022.
- UNESCO, [International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities – ICCAR](#).
- UNESCO, [UNESCO Roadmap against racism and discrimination](#).
- UN-Habitat, [2022 Catalogue of services](#), Nairobi, 2022.
- UN-Habitat, [Website on UN-Habitat and Human Rights](#).
- United Nations Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Website on [Cities, local and regional governments and human rights](#).
- World Human Rights Cities Forum, [Website](#).





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