



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI PADOVA

DEPARTMENT OF  
POLITICAL SCIENCE, LAW  
AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE  
"ANTONIO PAPISCA"



UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

## Joint letter among the Human Rights Centre "Antonio Papisca" of University of Padua, the UPR Branch of OHCHR and UPR Info

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was established in 2006 by the UN General Assembly as a human rights mechanism of the Human Rights Council that involves a periodic review of the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UPR provides an opportunity for all States to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situation in their countries and to overcome related challenges. The UPR is designed to prompt, support and expand the promotion and protection of human rights on the ground by assessing States' human rights records, providing them with technical assistance in order to enhance their capacity to deal effectively with human rights challenges, and sharing human rights best practices among States and other stakeholders. The second and subsequent UPR cycles have strengthened the focus of the UPR mechanism on the implementation of previous recommendations supported by states under review.

In his Call to Action for Human Rights, launched in 2020, the UN Secretary-General acknowledged the pivotal role of the UPR in terms of engagement at country and international levels to promote and protect human rights worldwide, using the UPR supported recommendations as an entry point for commitment with the holistic and comprehensive implementation of all country-related recommendations issued by all international human rights mechanisms. Civil society actors and academic institutions are critical for the successful implementation of UPR recommendations and, therefore, are valuable partners for the OHCHR-UPR Branch.

Since 2018, the University of Padua, the UPR Branch of OHCHR and UPR Info have been actively collaborating with the Padua UPR Model, developed by the University of Padua, with the aim to increasing the knowledge among young students of the *MA Degree Programme in Human Rights and Multi-level Governance* about the Human Rights Council UPR mechanism.

As a continuation of this collaboration, the University of Padua, the UPR Branch of OHCHR and UPR Info commit to continue increasing the knowledge among students of the Universal Periodic Review as a human rights mechanism as well as supporting youth engagement in the promotion and protection of human rights through the UPR. The partnership is based on relationships of transparency, mutual cooperation and trust.

With around 60,000 students and 4,000 teachers and researchers, the University of Padua is among the most important higher education institutions in Italy. The Human Rights Centre of the University of Padua, dedicated to prof. Antonio Papisca (1936-2017), was established in 1982, supports research, training and dissemination programmes and the international joint PhD in Human Rights, Society and Multi-level Governance. It contributes to a bachelor and a master's course in human rights and is the venue of the "Peace human rights" database of the Region of Veneto. In 1997 the Centre launched the EU-backed European Master's Degree Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation, currently one of the regional masters of the Global Campus of Human Rights in Venice. Since 1999 it is home to the UNESCO Chair on "Human Rights, Democracy and Peace".

The UPR Branch serves as the Secretariat of the UPR. The cooperation with the University of Padua and UPR Info is in line with OHCHR Management Plan 2018-2021 and the UPR Branch work plan. It will, in particular, support the implementation of two of the pillars of the OHCHR programme related to the international

human rights mechanisms and enhancing the participation of rights holders in public life. Additionally, the activities that will be conducted within the framework of this joint letter will be in line with SDGs 16 and 17 related to peace, justice and strong institutions and partnership. It will further support the goal of putting a spotlight on youth to promote their knowledge of and engagement with the UPR and raise their awareness as rights holders of the importance of promoting and protecting human rights to overcome the challenges that the international community is facing.

The UPR Info has built over the years a unique expertise in the field of the UPR process. UPR Info's 2020-2022 Strategic Plan includes supporting youth to improve their engagement with the UN human rights system and to establish collaboration with universities, and raising awareness on the potential of the UPR in the advancement of youth rights.

The primary purpose of the cooperation among the three entities is to promote the Padua UPR Model to reinforce university students' knowledge, skills and competencies to advocate for the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

To achieve this goal, the parties will:

CONTRIBUTIONS		
University of Padua	UPR Info	UPR Branch
Draft a manual on the Padua UPR Model that can be used as a reference to replicate the simulation exercise in other universities worldwide.	Provide guidance to students as part of the Secretariat of the Padua UPR Model.	Provide inputs to the manual on the Padua UPR model.
Provide permission to use the manual in other Universities.	Participation in the Padua UPR Model as external expert along with OHCHR.	Participation in the Padua UPR Model as an external expert along with UPR Info.
Formally mention the collaboration on the webpages of the University.	Formally mention the collaboration on the website pages of the UPR Info.	UPR info and the University of Padua can mention OHCHR name and use OHCHR emblem only with OHCHR agreement on a case-by-case basis.
Collaborate with UPR Info in defining a UPR Model that reflects the implementation phase (after the UPR).	Collaborate with the University of Padua in defining a UPR Model that reflects the implementation phase (after the UPR).	Provide the knowledge, expertise, and tools to follow up on the implementation of UPR recommendations.

The parties to this joint letter strongly believe that their collaboration will provide mutual benefits to the three institutions in enhancing students' leadership by raising awareness about human rights through the UPR process.

They agree that neither of them shall use the name, emblem or trademarks of another one, or any of its subsidiaries, and/or affiliates, or any abbreviation thereof, without, in each case, the express prior written approval of the concerned Party in each case. In no event will authorization to use either Party's name or emblem, or any abbreviation thereof, be granted for commercial purposes, or for use in any manner that suggests endorsement of the institutional services or opinions of the other Party.

**On behalf of the Human Centre of the University of Padua:**



(Padua, 6 September 2021)

Prof. Gabriella Salviulo  
Director

**On behalf of the UPR Branch of OHCHR:**



(Geneva, 31 August 2021)

Mr. Gianni Magazzeni  
Chief of the UPR Branch

**On behalf of UPR Info:**



(Geneva, 31 August 2021)

Ms. Mona M'Bikay