

UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
Office of the High Commissioner

Vienna, 12. Februar 2019

City of Vienna: Human Rights Council resolution 39/7
on Local Government and Human Rights

1. Laws, policies and programs that have been explicitly developed by local authorities to promote and protect human rights.

I. “Vienna – The City of Human Rights”

The City of Vienna pledges to act as a guardian and defender of human rights by striving to respect, protect, fulfil and be accountable for human rights in all of its areas of competence. Based on this approach, the City of Vienna actively supports its population in asserting and upholding their human rights by providing adequate framework conditions and using them as a basis for actions.

After two years of broad and participative process in collaborations with civil society, NGOs, academia and the national government in December 2014, the City Council approved the declaration “Vienna- City of Human Rights” and therewith Vienna became a Human Rights City.

<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/pdf/human-rights-declaration.pdf>

The main goal of the Human Rights City is ensuring inclusion in an equitable society. This approach is firmly anchored in the Declaration “Vienna – City of Human Rights” reiterating that “every person living in the city has the same human rights – regardless of their nationality or residency status.”

The Human Rights Office was established in 2015. The basis of the work of the Human Rights Office is defined in the declaration as well as in the government coalition agreement between the Social Democratic and Green Party of the Vienna city government from 2015.

<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/human-rights/office.html>

FIVE STRATEGIC AREAS OF THE DECLARATION

1. Establishment of the Human rights approach as a cross-cutting principle in Politics and Administration

The City of Vienna uses human rights as guideline for its decisions and actions in the fields of legislation, executive authority and administrative jurisdiction, when acting as a local authority or as a private entity, in its own sphere of competence or in matters of delegated federal competence. The City of Vienna develops measures to promote openness, diversity, political participation, a barrier-free environment and an equal chance in all spheres of life, consequently guarantees universal access to rights.

The Human Rights Office acts here as a connecting-link between departments of the city administration, the various human rights organisations located in Vienna and in general in all governance levels. The office encourages the dialogue of these institutions on human rights and organizes discussions and seminars on various subjects since 2016.

Security policy and human rights, children's Rights (combating child poverty, homelessness of families with minors, unaccompanied minor refugees, violence against children and child trafficking) and combating of human trafficking especially at local level have been the main topics until now.

2. International Cooperation and Networking

Due to federal structure and distribution of competences, the City of Vienna (is also a federal province) is part of national and international networks.

The office provides support for delegations come to Vienna from all over the world and cooperates globally with Human Rights cities to exchange experiences and provides mutual support. The office-staff participate in regional, European or global networks.

In May 2018, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the UN- Conference on Human Rights, the Vienna+25 international expert conferences took place in the premises of the Viennese municipality. The Human Rights Office had a key role and contribution in defining of contents and the concept of the conference.

3. Human Rights learning and promotion of Human Rights Education in the City and in all parts of Society

Education of pupils and students

The Human Rights Office has held many seminars and panel discussions for awareness-raising on human and children rights in schools. In the past years over 1000 pupils and students took part in different activities related to these subjects.

The human rights office has established a strategic cooperation with the Vienna Federal School Board since its establishment (2015). The Vienna school authority is an important partner in access to teachers, pupils and also their parents. Moreover it serves as a platform for dissemination of outcomes of cooperation with schools.

- *Human rights learning in the city*

Cooperation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
Students were invited to a competition to create video, spots, animated films, photos or drawings under the motto "connect.reflect.act" on human rights in the city. The competition was led by the Human Rights Office, the FRA and the Vienna School Board. The winners of this contest were announced at the first "Fundamental Rights Forum" held 2016 in Vienna. Workshops with professional film producers and directors were organized during this conference.

- *"Youth make cinema"*

With the support of the Austrian Film Institute, the agency "EINBLICK unfiltered" and the Human Rights office the project "Youth make cinema" has been realized in the past two years. The project has the aim to attract young people especially female potential filmmakers with a migration background as participants and to promote human rights as content of the films.

The films have been produced by the young people under professional guidance. They receive inputs and workshops on human rights before the process of making the films. More than 3.000 youth and young adults have watched the films at schools and the films were broadcasted on the Austrian TV channel OKTO.

<https://okto.tv/de/oktothek/episode/19809>

- *Events on International Day of Human Rights (10th December)*

The Human Rights Office organized a human rights walk for students on this day in 2017. The aim was to give them an interactive introduction on human and children's rights and the insights into the human rights activities in Vienna. In the City Hall had the participants the chance to talk to "living Books". Experts from politics, international organizations and NGOs were the discussions partners.

On the International Day of Human Rights 2018 the Human Rights Office organized in cooperation with representors the European Union in Vienna and the school authorities a panel discussion with young members of the European Parliament on "Freedom of Expression" as a fundamental right underpinning the protection of all other civil rights. The civil society was invited to this discussion.

Examples of diverse awareness raising and human rights learning policies

- *Day of the Open Door of the Human Rights Office 2015*

On the International Human Rights Day, the Human Rights Office invited to the Day of the open doors in the office. The Team of the Human Rights Office together with representatives of the international organizations UNHCR, the Austrian Commission for UNESCO, the UNIS Vienna, the FRA and the Information Office of the European Parliament answered the questions of the participants from all walks of life.

- *Speed dating for Human Rights*

The Human Rights Office organizes in its premises since its establishment on each last Friday in April a speed dating for Human Rights. Diversity (gender, age, ethnicity ...) of the participants is the significant feature of this event.

Educational programs of the administration employees

In order to establish a culture of human rights in the city administration, the Human Rights Office integrates human rights into the educational programs of the city officials in administrative academy of the city.

Examples:

- In 2015, a training course for interested employees of the City of Vienna was offered under the title "The Human Rights City of Vienna presents itself".
- Since 2017 a concept has been created to include human rights as a cross-cutting subject in the seminar "Administrative Procedures for Law Officers".
- An online education on human rights is planned to be offered soon.

4. Civil society participation

Development of an urban culture on human rights is of major importance for a human rights city. The human rights office actively contacts initiatives and prepares and opens new forms of participation that promote the advancement of human rights. Civil society will consider as experts and they are encouraged to take part in thematic discussions and the round tables of the Human Rights Office on different subjects.

A group of neighbourhood inhabitants "Citizens Council", active under umbrella of the Local Agenda 21 uses the office for their activities. The staffs of the office take part regularly in panels and discussions on human rights and are also (co)organizers of seminars and workshops.

5. Institutionalisation, Action Plan and Reporting, Independent monitoring

From very beginning of the process of human rights city a steering group has been established. Representatives of the city government, the national human rights institute and the city administration are member of this group. Strengthens the collaborations among administration, politics and academia along side of human rights and the implementation of the defined areas of action of the declaration is the main goal. The steering group meets 4 times a year and discusses on activates, challenges and future focuses of the Human Rights Office.

The outcomes of already held round tables and panel discussions and the recommendations of the NGOs and civil society have been documented in an action plan (still draft). This action plan will act as guideline for activities of the human rights city at both strategic and operative level.

Setting up an independent monitoring structure for evaluating and ensuring of achievement of proposed goals is planned for 2019.

II. Laws

1. Antidiscrimination Act

Vienna Anti-discrimination Act (2004- amended and adopted 2010, 2017)

The Vienna Anti-Discrimination Act prohibits any kind of discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, ideology, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender.

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000171>

2. Viennese Equal Treatment Act

Act on the equal treatment of women and men and the promotion of women as servants of the municipality of Vienna

3. Persons with Disabilities

for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Vienna (Equal Opportunities Act Vienna - CGW) (2005)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000240>

4. Children's Rights

Vienna Child and Youth Welfare Act (2013)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000259>
(German)

Vienna Education Act – WrSchG (1976)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000197>
(German)

Vienna Kindergarten Act (Elementary Education) – WKGG (2003)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000263>
(German)

5. Social Welfare

Vienna Minimum Wage Guarantee Law (2010)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000246>
(German)

Vienna Basic Supply Act (2004)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000258>
(German)

Hospitalization Act and the Nursing Home Residence Act

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000278>
(German)

Act on the Viennese Nursing, Patient and Patient Advocacy

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000307>
(German)

Vienna Housing and Nursing Home Act (2005)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000278>
(German)

6. Housing

Housing Security Act Vienna (Vienna Housing Security Act - WSG)

<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000093>
(German)

Provision of housing allowance for low income residents (1989)
<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000086>
(German)

Vienna Social Assistance Act (1973)
<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000250>
(German)

7. Environment protection, living in a healthy environment

Vienna Nature Protection Act (1998)
<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000454>
(German)

Vienna Environmental Protection Act (1993)
<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000183>
(German)

Measures for air emission control (2005)
<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=LrW&Gesetzesnummer=20000204>
(German)

III. Policies and programmes

1. The City's Government Program (2015-2020)

Current human rights jurisdiction and recommendations by international organizations (UN, the Council of Europe, EU...) on promoting of human rights are applied and adopted in Vienna. They are fundament and basis of legislation and lawmaking in Vienna.

There is a strong juridical background and tradition of promotion of human rights in Vienna. Without tents of equal treatment and protection against discrimination, which are emphasized by the principles of non-discrimination on the ground of sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, color, national, ethic or social origin, property, birth or other statues, Vienna would not have been able to declare itself a Human Rights City.

In the government coalition agreement between the Social Democratic and Green Party of the Vienna city government (2015-2020) promotion and protection of human rights is a key policy.

“As a human rights city, our political responsibility is a clear attitude against populism, exclusion, racism, xenophobia and any form of discrimination - in the sense of good coexistence and the future of all”.

2. Gender Equality Policies

The Vienna Women's Service (Department 57) develops proposals and pilot projects for measures to improve equal opportunities for women at the labor market, in private life or in public spaces.

In 1998, the Vienna City Council founded the Vienna Women's Health Program. Since then Vienna fosters a more woman-friendly health care and information.

<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/women/department/>

3. LGBTQI Equality Policies

The Vienna Anti-Discrimination office advocates the rights of same-sex and transgender lifestyles and undertakes measures for combating discrimination against lesbians, gays, transgender and intersex persons. It is committed to legal and social equality in all areas of life and it is a part of City Administration.

4. Social Housing Program

Vienna's social housing originated from an internationally acknowledged reform program in the 1920s and has been developing for almost one hundred years. Two-thirds of Viennese population lives in municipal or publicly subsidized housing, and eight out of ten flats built in the city today are financed by Vienna's housing subsidy scheme. For many years now, Vienna has been recognized as an international pioneer in publicly subsidized housing construction, the policy of providing supply-side building subsidies allowing more new flats to be built than in other major cities. The city is even further ahead of the field housing refurbishment. The City of Vienna subsidizes the modernization of some 10,000 flats per year.

<https://www.wienerwohnen.at/> (German)

5. The Urban Development Policies

The urban development Plan of Vienna (STEP 2015) has been developed according to sustainability principles and includes the general strategies of the "Smart City Program of Vienna".

The new Smart City framework will be updated in an interactive process and from mid. 2019 will be implemented, integrated the SDGs across all target areas. Many objectives from the 2030 Agenda are already covered by the strategies and activities of the City of Vienna. Already at this stage, the Smart City Wien initiative includes numerous projects that contribute significantly to the 2030 Agenda.

<https://www.wien.gv.at/stadtentwicklung/studien/pdf/b008379b.pdf>

2. Effective methods to foster cooperation between local government and local stakeholders for the promotion and protection of human rights, including reference to local government programmes.

I. Vienna - The City of Human Rights

"The making of process" of the Human Rights City (2013-2015) was itself a participative process through involvement of all relevant local stakeholders. The cooperation of the City with civil society, NGOs, national bodies and institutions as well as with international organizations based in Vienna has been continued by the human rights office. With round tables and the thematic focus groups to three main subjects of the human rights city, the office has developed a new format for continuation and creating of new collaborations on promotion and protection of human rights.

The political steering group established in 2013 links the results of the cooperations directly with the political strategies and policies of the City Government.

II. Vienna Charter - Shaping the Future Together

The City of Vienna started the Vienna Charter project in 2012. It contains the basic principles for good neighborly relations in the city through an interactive and participative process. The Charter was developed in a completely new, open and transparent direct communication with the Viennese. Everyone who lives in Vienna was welcome to join the project and express their ideas and suggestions for good neighborly relations in the city. The City of Vienna provided moderators (free of charge) for the talks organized by citizens. The Vienna Charta project has been continued with the refugees (in different languages) as a part of welcome projects since 2016.

<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/living-working/vienna-charter-results.html>

III. Local Agenda 21 Vienna

The model of sustainable urban development is based on decisions committed by the city policy since 2001. It is a bottom-up approach and proposals for change should come from people who are living, working or spending their free time in the respective district. The Agenda Groups set the topics which are important in the district and should be developed. The City finances the process and implements most of these ideas and recommendations.

<https://www.la21wien.at/> (German)

IV. Network Democracy Culture and Prevention (WiND)

With the WiND, the city of Vienna has been successfully pursuing a municipal strategy against extremism and devaluation ideologies. This Network consists of stakeholders, which are responsible for the care, counseling and education of children, adolescents and young adults.

<https://kja.at/site/praevention/netzwerk-deradikalisierung-praevention/> (German)

V. Bündnis Gesellschaftsklima (Alliance of social climate)

The goal of the “Bündnis Gesellschaftsklima” is to promote a respectful, equitable, inclusive and cohesive society, which is characterized by diversity. The participants of this platform are from civil society, economy, politic and the city administration.

<http://gesellschaftsklima.at/uber-uns/> (German)

3. Ways in which local governments raise awareness about, and contribute, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, including by ensuring participation by local stakeholders.

The human Rights Office plays an important role in implementation of sustainable development goals in Vienna especially in highlighting of human rights approach of the SDGs.

Human Rights are in general reflected in the SDGs and they are basis and fundamentals. If Agenda 2030 would be promoted under this aspect; it is accompanied by a major legal obligation. It is then no longer arguable that the implementation of the SDGs is entirely based on voluntary action.

I. Conference on Sustainable Development Goals

In October 2018 organized the City of Vienna with the support of the United Nations –Vienna office a conference on localizing of the Sustainable Development Goals. The representatives from, Vienna, Ljubljana, Krakow, Sarajevo, Jihlava, Prague, Sofia and Zagreb took part in this conference and pointed out how could be SDGs implemented at the local level and which projects are.

<https://www.eurocommpr.at/de/Mediaroom/Wien/News/Documents-ECC-Sustainable-Development-Goals-and-UN-HQ-in-Vienna>
<https://www.wien.gv.at/english/politics/international/sdgs.html>

II. Smart City Vienna Framework Strategy

The SDGs have been integrated in framework Strategy of the “Smart City Vienna” program. It will be updated in an ongoing interactive process with the SDGs as an across-cutting subject in all target areas of the framework strategy. An “Open Day” for the public took place in October 2018.

<https://smartcity.wien.gv.at/site/en/the-initiative/framework-strategy/>

4. Ways in which local governments are connected with the UN human rights system, for example participation in the Universal Periodic Review and the work of the human rights treaty bodies and Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, and the implementation of their recommendations.

The City of Vienna - as host city of one of the four Headquarters of the United Nations – is in close and constant cooperation and exchange with the Vienna based UN organisations; the Municipality is also represented with a liaison office on site.

1. Human Rights Reports

All of the periodic reports on the human rights (UPR, CEDAW, CAT, CPT, ECRI, etc.) at the federal level will be prepared by the Human Rights office, since the head of the office and the Human Rights Commissioner of Vienna is also the human rights coordinator of the federal level and she cooperates closely with the national level.

<https://www.justiz.gv.at/web2013/home/verfassungsdienst/grund--und-menschenrechte/menschenrechts-koordinatorinnen-und--koordinatoren~2c94848b60c168850160df6c4ba94cd3.de.html> (German)

2. The Monitoring Committee

is an independent committee at the federal level. This body observes the compliance of the human rights of persons with disabilities. It refers to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

<https://www.monitoringstelle.wien/> (German)