INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TCITIES FOR RIGHTS BARCELONA DECEMBER 10-11 2018



"CITIES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS"

The exhibition "Cities for Human Rights" presents a small sample of the good practices that European cities have developed in compliance with the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City.

Applying local human rights policies means not only declaring and recognizing rights, but also implementing programmes and projects that have a real positive impact on the lives of people living in municipalities. Each and every one of the good practices described here is aimed at the effective enjoyment of one or more rights, recognized 20 years ago by almost a hundred cities within the framework of the 1st European Conference of Human Rights Cities held in Barcelona.

We invite you to visit this exhibition, where you will find 24 examples of good practices promoted by local administrations in multiple European cities. The right to the city, to equality and to non-discrimination, as well as social and cultural rights, are just some examples of the experiences explained, which mark the guidelines that guarantee and protect the rights of everyone.



AMSTERDAM The Zwarte Piet character changes its face

The European Charter recognizes that citizens have the right not to be discriminated against for the colour of their skin or for reasons of age, sexual orientation, etc.

In Amsterdam a change has been made to appearance of Zwarte Piet, a character who accompanies St Nicolas to distribute gifts in the local tradition. He is a Moroccan slave dressed in clothes from the 16th century, with a black face, large lips painted red and oversized gold earrings. A character that recalls the colonial past of the Netherlands and its role in the slave trade.

Amsterdam City Council decided to change the face of the character so that he no longer caricatures or discriminates against any specific group or community. Thus, Zwarte Piet is now characterized as a chimney sweep, with his face stained from climbing down chimneys to leave Christmas presents, and not as a slave from the 16th century.



EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. II - Principle of equality of rights and non-discrimination

"These rights (those enunciated in the Charter) are guaranteed by the municipal authorities, without any discrimination with regard to colour, age, gender or sexual inclination, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, or level of income."

Further information



Amsterdam City Council

NUREMBERG Human Rights Office

Various local initiatives guarantee human rights in a generic sense, especially the principle of equality and non-discrimination.

This is the case of the Human Rights Office in Nuremberg, which organises different activities aimed at fostering and raising awareness of human rights. For example, since 1995 the Nuremberg International Human Rights Award has been granted to human rights defenders who in an exemplary manner have committed themselves to human rights, sometimes at considerable personal risk. In addition, international human rights conferences and media forums, round tables or "peace tables" are organized for the people of Nuremberg and educational projects are implemented in schools.

The Office is also responsible for the protection of the citizens of Nuremberg (and the city limits) affected by discriminatory actions of various kinds. Thus, it acts as an anti-discrimination office, taking advisory action in individual cases and preventive measures in parallel.

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Further information



Nuremberg City Council

STOCKHOLM Ban on sexist advertising in the street

Sexist propaganda plays an important role in the violation of the right to equality and non-discrimination.

Stockholm has recently voted for the ban on sexist advertising in all public spaces around the city. Adverts that are considered racist or sexist will be removed within 24 hours. The decision on whether an advert should be considered offensive will depend on the guidelines established by the Swedish Advertising Ombudsman (Reklamombudsmannen - RO). This is an independent organisation made up of representatives of advertising companies, the media and NGOs of public interest which is responsible for the control of advertising throughout the country.

Since the 1970s there have been rules that regulate sexist advertising in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). However, there has not always been specific legislation and this was the case in Sweden until Stockholm City Council voted in favour of this measure.



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Further information



Stockholm City Council

VIENNA Human Rights Office

The declaration "Vienna, City of Human Rights" is a clear demonstration of the city's commitment to this issue and it is also intended to make Vienna an international model of reference.

The Human Rights Office was opened for this reason. It is responsible for broadening the scope of this issue so that it is taken into account in all the administrative departments. Furthermore, working on the principle that cooperation and the creation of networks are essential for the implementation of human rights, it acts as a coordinating body with other municipal departments, public institutions, NGOs, community initiatives and experts.

The Office focuses on the following matters:

- Raising awareness about human rights
- Children's rights: unaccompanied refugee minors, the fight against poverty and violence
- Security policies and human rights at a regional level
- The fight against human trafficking, implementing the recommendations of the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)

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GETXO School for gender empowerment

The participation of women in all areas of society is essential for compliance with the principle of equal rights and non-discrimination because there is no equality without the empowerment of women. In other words, empowerment is a requirement and a guarantee for social transformation in favour of the equality of women and men.

Since 2004 Getxo has promoted an empowerment school for women (in a network with the municipalities of Ermua, Basauri and Ondarroa). Its goal is to promote the political and social participation of women so that they can influence public policy-making, from which they have been excluded historically. It provides a meeting place for women to reflect, debate and learn, and it is a place where women of all ages and backgrounds can share an opportunity for participation and organization in groups and networks.

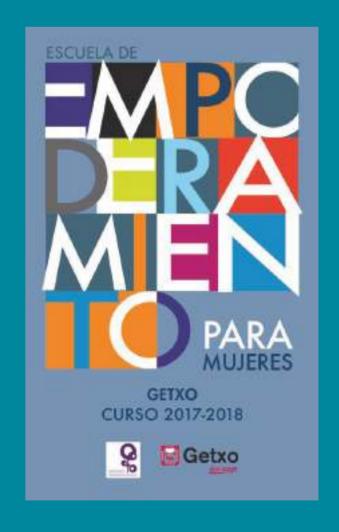
As stated by the school itself: "We seek individual, collective, social and political empowerment, since it is not enough to produce changes in the subjective and personal dimension. Rather, it is necessary that they also occur at a community level, through the creation of networks and social participation."

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BUDAPEST Accessible public transport

Specific municipal assistance must be offered to people with disabilities as regards the accessibility of public transport.

Budapest is paying special attention to improving the accessibility of many of its stations and vehicles in order to ensure that passengers with disabilities can travel around the city easily. The public transport company has adapted underground, tram and bus lines, and has also renovated several stations in the city, specifically for people who use wheelchairs. These services have also been adapted for children's pushchairs, elderly people with reduced mobility, and young children. Additionally, the accessible lines have been marked with specific pictograms.

The city council has also introduced a door-to-door service for people with disabilities. Three vehicles provide an on-demand transport service for people with reduced mobility, which can be requested on working days between 5:30 a.m. and 11:30 p.m., and on weekends from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. IV - Protection of vulnerable groups and citizens

"2. Disabled individuals are the subject of specific municipal assistance. Their dwellings and places of work and leisure must be adapted for them. Public transport must be accessible to everyone."

Budapest City Council





Further information





LJUBLJANA Information point 65+

The right to protection of the most vulnerable groups includes citizens such as the elderly, who are often overlooked.

The municipality of Ljubljana, however, is sensitive to these groups and regularly takes actions to help the aged and people with disabilities. It thereby complies with the national legislation covering the rights of local communities in Slovenia. An information point has been opened for people over 65 and people with disabilities.

This point offers basic information about services and activities to both these groups of residents in Ljubljana. The different types of support and assistance it facilitates give them more independence and a higher quality of life in the family environment. In addition, Ljubljana offers support for many other activities, programmes and projects through annual public competitions, which are not provided for by the legislation. At the same time, conditions are created to favour socialization, education, and participation in sports and culture.

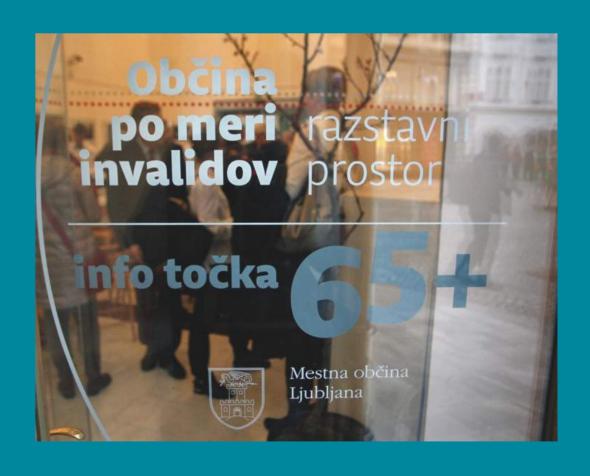
EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. IV - Protection of vulnerable groups and citizens

"1. The most vulnerable groups and citizens have the right to enjoy special measures of protection.

3. The signatory cities adopt active policies in support of the most vulnerable population, guaranteeing to each one the right of citizenship."







NAPLES Project with the Regional Services of the Penitentiary Administration

The most vulnerable groups have the right to special protection measures. One of the most exposed groups is formed by persons deprived of their liberty in prisons.

Naples City Council has begun a project to combat discourses and actions that encourage discrimination against this group. It has been organised jointly with the Regional Services of the Penitentiary Administration and consists of activities aimed at raising awareness in the community about the forms of social exclusion that occur.

In addition, support is given to various projects aimed at people deprived of their liberty. Coexistence between prisoners and their social reintegration are promoted by actions such as the recycling of non-organic waste (plastic and paper), theatre laboratories (creating theatre companies), coffee production (sold at fairs), professional cooking courses and sports activities (basketball championships). The dignity of these vulnerable citizens lies at the core of the projects.



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Further information



Naples City Council

TERRASSA Different Abilities and Accessibility Office

The protection of vulnerable groups and individuals is a right that includes, necessarily, the accessibility of people with disabilities.

Over the years the municipality of Terrassa has taken many measures to remove the barriers that may affect people's lives. The City Council sees accessibility not only as the elimination of physical barriers in urban space but also attitudinal barriers and those affecting communication and information, transport and buildings.

For this reason, the Different Abilities and Accessibility Office was set up in 2003. This office promotes municipal actions that improve accessibility: with information, advice, processing of suggestions and complaints regarding universal accessibility and promotion of participation by entities. To achieve these objectives, it also counts on the Terrassa Pact for Universal Accessibility, signed in 2012, which brings together different municipal entities and representatives.



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Further information



Terrassa City Council

VALENCIA Our city, your refuge

The reception of migrants and refugees forms part of the actions that many municipalities carry out to guarantee the protection of the most vulnerable groups.

The city of Valencia launched the project "Our City, Your Refuge" in 2015 (in cooperation with Accem, CEAR and the Red Cross). Assistance is offered to applicants for international protection and stateless persons following their arrival in the host society. The main objective is to support their inclusion: with initial reception in hostels and shelters, training of public servants in the local Administration, special aid for education, housing and basic needs, and vocational training.

One specific aspect of this project was the design of the mobile phone application Valencia Refuge. This app, in five languages, includes a map of the city where refugees can locate the legal, administrative and social resources they may need: asylum and immigration associations, asylum and immigration offices, council offices and municipal service centres, among others.

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SEINE-SAINT-DENIS Ban on cutting Internet connections

Cities have the obligation to guarantee basic services to their citizens. The right of people in difficulty or in situations of vulnerability to uninterrupted access to electricity, water and gas services has been recognized in several countries, including France.

The city of Seine-Saint-Denis is a pioneer in promoting respect for human rights in the broadest sense of the term. First, various municipal policies were introduced to ban electricity disconnection. And in 2016 a pilot project was launched throughout the region to prevent those with financial problems from having their Internet connection cut off due to non-payment.

This measure broadens the rights of citizens by situating access to online services on the same level as other services considered basic. Information and communication technologies are among these new services to which local bodies must guarantee access.



EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XI – Right to information

"2. The municipal authorities offer the means by which the circulation of information which may affect the people is made accessible, effective and clear. For this purpose they encourage the learning of computer technology, access to it and its regular updating."

Art. XI – Right to information

"1. The signatory cities consider social policies as a decisive part of their policies for the protection of Human Rights which they undertake to guarantee within the limits of their competence."



Further information



Seine-Saint-Denis City Council

MADRID Participatory process to prepare the Strategic Plan for Human Rights

The right to political participation implies more than just voting in elections. Citizens must be able to attend public debates and challenge municipal authorities about the problems that affect their municipality.

This is what Madrid City Council has done: establish a participatory process to prepare the Strategic Plan for Human Rights. This is intended to increase the commitment made by Madrid to respect, protect and foster human rights in the city. For its preparation, Madrid City Council counted on contributions from members of the community, representatives of all the areas of government in the city council and the districts, municipal employees, and numerous representatives from civil society.

42 workshops and meetings were held with civil society and, within the Council, 66 meetings took place. These served to collect a wide range of opinions, depending on the different issues and actors involved.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. VIII - Right of political participation

"3. Apart from the elections held periodically to renew the municipal governments, democratic participation is encouraged. To this end, the citizens and their organisations can access the public debates, interpellate the municipal authorities over challenges which affect the interests of the local community and express their opinions [...]."



Plan Estratégico de Derechos Humanos

MADRID



BARCELONA Protection of defenders of human rights

"In the last few years Barcelona City Council has given human rights a progressively more central role in public policies", according to the government measure Barcelona City of Rights Programme. This measure introduces the focus on human rights into public policies.

The figure of the human rights defender is fundamental. It denotes all those people who strive to promote and protect rights, individually or collectively. The promotion of the existence of defenders is key to the construction of a critical, committed community.

It is within this framework that the School of Human Rights Defenders has been set up to strengthen the capacities of the people and entities that act as human rights defenders in Barcelona.

There are also municipal programmes for the reception of people threatened for doing their job. This is the case of the programme "Barcelona protects journalists from Mexico", which facilitates temporary stays for those who are persecuted in their native country.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. V – Duty of solidarity

"2. The municipal authorities encourage the creation of networks and associations for solidarity among the citizens, and will control the correct carrying out of public duties."

Barcelona City Council





Further information





SANT BOI DE LLOBREGAT Cities in defence of human rights

The municipalities are united by a duty of reciprocal solidarity that upholds cohesion in the local community. Local authorities can promote this solidarity in conjunction with the citizens and social entities.

Sant Boi de Llobregat, a municipality with a long tradition in the promotion of solidarity and human rights, launched the "Cities in Defence of Human Rights" programme in 2013. The basic idea was to invite human rights defenders to disseminate their work and raise awareness in the community. The programme, initiated by Sant Boi de Llobregat City Council, already involves 30 municipalities as well as various institutions and entities.

In 2018, more than 700 secondary school students were able to listen in person to the stories of human rights defenders at the so-called "Forum of Student Human Rights Defenders", where they learnt more about the causes these defenders work for.

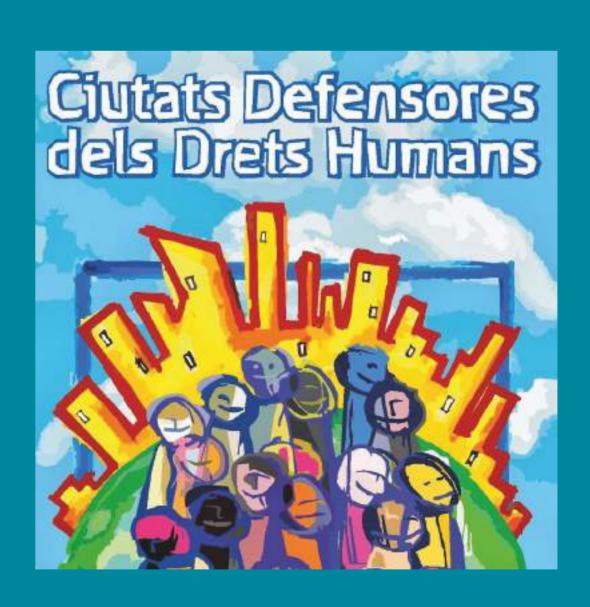
EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. V – Duty of solidarity

"1. The local community is united by a duty of reciprocal solidarity. The local authorities participate in this duty, promoting the development and quality of public services."

Sant Boi de Llobregat City Council









ATHENS Open schools

The right to education applies to all people who live in the city, including refugees.

Athens is an example of a city with policies that guarantee the right to education for everyone, including refugee children. Thanks to the "Athens Open Schools" programme, 25 schools have been transformed into spaces that welcome both the people of Athens and refugees. Language and other courses, as well as sports and creative learning activities, are organised there, and these are available without the need for prior admission. The schools are open until late in the evening and every weekend.

This programme promotes interaction in neighbourhoods and local schools and the integration of refugees. Refugee children are also offered a safe environment in which they can learn and spend time away from their shelters. Some school buildings have also been converted into local housing, thanks to the support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the city council itself.



EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XIII – Right to education

"1. Citizens have the right to education. The municipal authorities provide access to basic education for all children of school age. They encourage accessible adult education which corresponds with the values of democracy.

2. The cities contribute to social integration and to multi-culture by making available to everyone without distinction public spaces, as well as spaces in further education establishments, schools and cultural centres."



Further information



TUZLA Historical memory and public art: the Slana Banja memorial

The recovery and preservation of cultural heritage as well as respect for diversity are fundamental obligations of cities. Furthermore, the reuse and enjoyment of built heritage is a public good.

Following the Bosnian War (1992-1995), Tuzla provides an example of peaceful coexistence between people of different cultures, religions and ethnic groups who live in the country.

The Slana Banja complex is a central urban park hosting a multitude of activities, as well as being a space for people to meet up and go for a stroll. The same space is shared by monuments to the partisans of World War II and the graves of many of the children and young people killed in 1995 by a bomb (buried without visible religious symbols) and of soldiers who died in the civil war.

The park serves as a place for reconciliation between the different communities, besides being a new leisure space in the city and supporting its cultural heritage.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XV - Right to culture

"2. The municipal authorities, in cooperation with cultural associations and the private sector, promote the development of the urban cultural life with a respect for diversity. Public spaces are made available for cultural and social activities at the disposal of the citizens under conditions of equality for everyone."







CADIZ Municipal Social Housing Programme

Citizens have the right to adequate local housing and amenities. Therefore, the municipal authorities must ensure that there is an offer that tackles the various challenges: access of young people to housing, the rise in rental prices, the aging population, etc.

For this reason, Cadiz City Council has launched the "Live in Cadiz" programme, which is intended to encourage the rental of vacant homes while guaranteeing the rights of both owners and tenants. This programme is intended to put an end to the current imbalance between the high number of vacant homes and the many people who cannot satisfy their right to a home.

The programme guarantees the payment of the deposit and the rent during the period of the contract, as well as an advance of a certain amount of money to carry out repairs, among other matters. This is a way of both promoting social renting and revitalizing the economy.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XVI - Right to a home

"1. All citizens have the right to a proper, safe and healthy home.

"2. The municipal authorities endeavour to ensure the existence of an appropriate offer of homes and district amenities for all their inhabitants, without distinction by reason of their resources. [...]"





Further information



Cadiz City Council

BRISTOL Bristol, healthcare for everyone

The entire population must be guaranteed the right to healthcare and in equal conditions. Healthcare and prevention are the responsibility of the municipal authorities.

The city of Bristol recognizes the importance of providing the best healthcare for newcomers who "may have lived through periods of destitution and feel all the isolation and insecurity of exile and loss of loved ones. Their culture and language sometimes makes it difficult for them to understand how the National Health Service works and to access the right services".

Healthcare services have developed to meet the needs of asylum seekers, and health professionals must try to understand and respond to the needs of this vulnerable group.

Bristol is part of the UK and Irish network of sanctuary cities, where people who have had to leave their countries because of repression and persecution are welcomed.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XVII - Right to health

"1. The municipal authorities encourage equal access for all citizens to medical and preventive services for health care."

Bristol City Council







SABADELL Energy saving education with the help of digital meters

Energy saving is directly related to enjoyment of the right to the environment. Local entities and administrations must promote recycling, prevent pollution, and implement actions and policies to save energy. On the other hand, the involvement of the community is essential.

The municipality of Sabadell is a pioneer in promoting energy saving among home users. The Municipal Energy Office (OME) has launched a six-month campaign to install smart meters, with different users participating voluntarily. These meters instantly report on the amount of energy consumed, the resulting cost and the tons of CO₂ produced. This action is part of the Municipal Strategy for the Mitigation of Climate Change in Sabadell.



EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XVIII - Right to the environment

"2. To this end the municipal authorities adopt, on the basis of the principle of precaution, policies of prevention of pollution, including noise, energy saving, refuse disposal, recycling, reusage and recovery, extending and protecting the green zones of the cities."

Sabadell City Council





TIRANA Planting a forest ring

The right to the environment establishes that urban planning should be harmonious and sustainable.

Tirana applies the precepts of environmental sustainability to its urban policies. The city's Green Action Plan is intended to ensure that people "enjoy a healthy, high quality life in a green, resilient and inclusive Tirana that makes intelligent use of resources". For this reason, sustainable mobility, the creation of green spaces and biodiversity, the promotion of sustainable energy, the management of resources, and resilience and adaptation to climate change are taken into account.

One of the priorities has been the creation of green and blue spaces by planting a "forest ring" around Tirana. By planting two million trees, urban expansion is reduced and the amount of open green space per inhabitant is increased. These are the "birthday trees" that families plant in predetermined locations on the day of their children's birthdays. And there is another "ring" around the city designed for walking, cycling and public transport.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XIX - Right to harmonious and sustainable city development

"1. The citizens have a right to an ordered town planning development which guarantees a harmonious relationship between residential areas, public services, amenities, green areas and structures destined for group usage."









YORK Local human rights indicators

The fact that citizens can evaluate municipal actions and that results are taken into account is one of their rights and ensures more efficient public services. In the field of human rights, York is an example, thanks to the so-called local human rights indicators.

In 2017, this city was declared the UK's first Human Rights City. This declaration requires that human rights priorities be gauged at a local level. After consultation with the community, five areas of action were prioritized: education, decent living conditions, housing, health and social care, and equality and non-discrimination.

The indicators were then defined. These serve to determine and evaluate the progress of the measures taken in each area of action, linking them to international legality and also setting future goals. Thus, for example, in education, how to reduce the gap between students with different abilities is assessed; in terms of living conditions, the use of food banks and the reduction of child poverty are evaluated; and in matters of non-discrimination, the reduction of hate crimes.

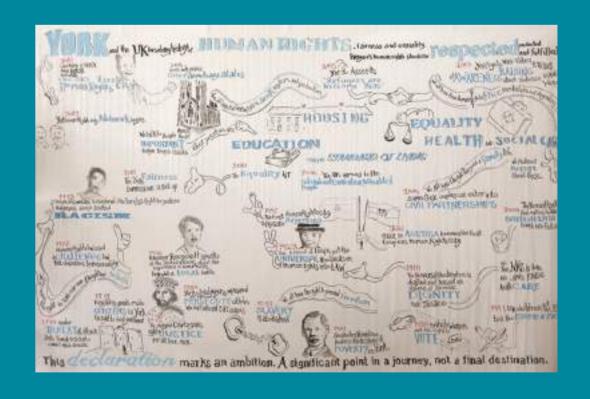
EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XXIII - Efficiency of public services

"2. The municipal authorities will have available instruments of evaluation of their municipal action and will take into account the results of this evaluation."

York City Council









LISBON Community police action: "Alta de Lisboa mais Segura"

The right to effective public services requires community police who operate "as a force for civic education". Public safety is not the exclusive competence of the police, which has to meet the real needs expressed by the community.

This is the challenge of the "Alta de Lisboa mais Segura" project: to introduce an open policing model that involves the community. For this purpose, the municipal police department participates in the uptown Lisbon community association (GCAL). This is formed by members of NGOs, neighbourhood associations, businesses, schools and health centres, and it has set up a work team to address the issue of safety.

First, a diagnosis of the problems facing the population was made in order to design intervention strategies, which included different training courses for community agents. Afterwards, the community police began patrolling on foot, progressively building up a relationship of greater trust with the community.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XXVI - Accessibility of local police

"The signatory cities encourage the development of corps of highly qualified municipal police, to be officers of 'security and of neighbourhood'. These officers apply preventative policies against crime and act as a force for civic education."



Further information



Lisbon City Council

BARCELONA Ethics and Good Governance Mailbox

Openness and the proper use of public funds are obligations of the local administrations, who must provide the necessary means for their implementation.

Barcelona City Council opened the Office for Openness and Good Practices (OTBP) in 2015 and, in this framework, launched the Ethics and Good Governance Mailbox in 2017, a digital tool that provides a channel for complaints from citizens and municipal workers who want to report alleged corrupt practices or ones that are harmful to the good governance of Barcelona.

Thanks to this tool, it is possible to inform the City Council about conduct that supposedly runs contrary to citizens' rights and the municipal code of ethics. The communications can relate to any of the entities involved in municipal administration.

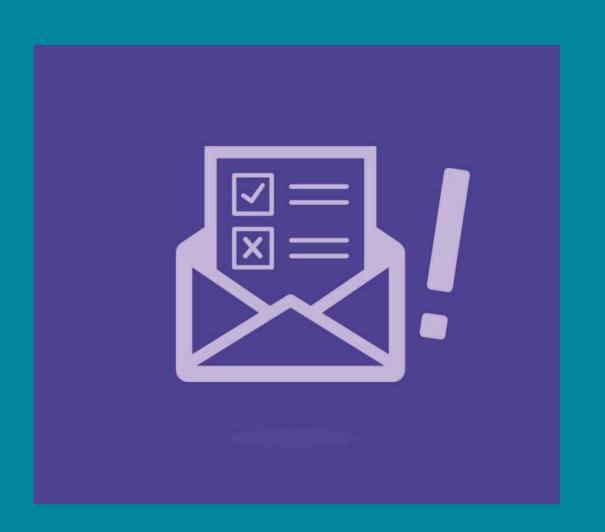
The confidentiality of complaints is guaranteed and these are evaluated by an independent department, the OTBP Department of Analysis, which undertakes to review them and respond within a maximum period of six months. Answers may range from recommendations for improvement in public management to possible disciplinary action.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XXIV - Principle of openness

"4. The municipal authorities guarantee openness and rigorous control of the use of public funds."





Further information



Barcelona City Council

CHARLEROI Local Ombudsman

In order to guarantee that local administrations fulfil the rights of citizens, municipalities can create local ombudsmen, which intervene when an action taken by the municipal administration violates the citizens' rights.

In 1992, the municipality of Charleroi in Belgium created a local ombudsman, called a "community mediator", which gives people the possibility of filing complaints for free if they have been harmed by an action taken by the local administration or they have not found a suitable solution in a first contact.

The local ombudsman presents the complaint to the Administration and attempts to find a solution to the conflict that satisfies all the parties. It also makes recommendations in order to improve the actions of the municipal public administration and avoid further violations of human rights.

EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

Art. XXVII - Warning mechanisms

"1. The signatory cities set up preventative measures, such as:

- Social or district mediators, specifically in the most vulnerable areas.
- The municipal ombudsman or defender of the people, as an independent and impartial institution."





Further information



Charleroi City Council

7000 NINERSARY

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

'Cities for Human Rights' Conference

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