

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions



Making rights real

A guide for local and regional authorities

→ COORDINATION
AND LEADERSHIP

→ PARTICIPATION
AND CIVIL SOCIETY

→ COMMUNICATING
FUNDAMENTAL
RIGHTS

→ UNDERSTANDING
FUNDAMENTAL
RIGHTS

→ PLANNING,
MONITORING AND
EVALUATION

FOREWORD

This booklet is the result of fruitful cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Committee of the Regions over recent years towards the practical implementation of fundamental rights at all levels of governance. It aims to provide local and regional officials with a framework for understanding more about fundamental rights and applying them when making decisions and completing their regular tasks and activities.

We hope it will inspire local and regional authorities to be more aware of their key role in protecting fundamental rights when shaping policies and to reinforce their position in the European Union (EU) multilevel governance set-up. By sharing useful experience and best practices, it should also encourage them to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills required to promote and safeguard fundamental rights.

The booklet will help officials address key questions like how to understand the fundamental rights-dimension of policy issues? How to translate them into real, practical and tangible measures? How to plan appropriately with useful steps in order to meet people's needs and expectations in the best possible way? How to increase public awareness of fundamental rights-related issues? Guidance can be found throughout this booklet.

Empowering decision-makers and officers at local and regional level is the best way to guarantee respect for fundamental rights effectively, which are at the heart of European values including democracy. Furthermore, building and maintaining strong relationships among authorities at all levels and civil society is a condition for successful and sustainable governance based on democracy, respect of citizens' rights and the rule of law. We trust that this booklet will contribute to this aim and we hope that it will make an interesting reading for you.

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President
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WHY REGIONAL AND LOCAL OFFICIALS SHOULD READ THIS GUIDE?

At all levels of government, officials must make fundamental rights a reality for the people they serve. By safeguarding rights in policies and service delivery, national, regional and local governments treat individuals fairly, with dignity and respect, while balancing the needs of the wider community.

Fundamental rights can seem abstract. But individuals exercise them daily when receiving education or medical treatments, benefiting from healthy and safe working conditions or complaining about unfair treatment.

Regional and local authorities are called upon to support the fulfilment of fundamental rights – in their own work and for services that are commissioned, delegated or financed by them but carried out by others. It is also vital that the work of these authorities reaches out to human rights organisations and that non-governmental organisations support their endeavours. Coordination between these different actors is therefore key to the successful implementation of fundamental rights.

Joining up fundamental rights in practice

In 2009, FRA began working with national, regional and local officials from Belgium, Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom, as well as the Committee of the Regions – the EU's assembly of Regional and Local Representatives, to explore the most effective ways to integrate planning and implement joined-up human rights governance.

In September 2013, the lessons learnt were brought together in **Joining up fundamental rights**, an online toolkit for local, regional and national public officials offering advice to help implement fundamental rights in their policy making and service delivery.

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>

Recent EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) surveys reveal rights violations remain all too common across the EU:

- One in three women has suffered physical or sexual violence since the age of 15;
- Almost half of Roma say they have experienced discrimination because of their ethnic background;
- Over 20% of lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents say they have been physically assaulted because of their sexual orientation; and
- Over half of Jewish respondents say that expressions of hostility towards Jews in the street and other public places are a widespread problem.



KEY CHALLENGES REGIONAL AND LOCAL OFFICIALS FACE

Experiences collected from hundreds of regional and local officials in workshops and focus group discussions across the EU have highlighted certain key challenges that can be grouped under the five main issues listed below. This guide **Making rights real** provides you with concrete suggestions, illustrated with examples of what other officials have done.

	<i>Read the section</i>	<i>Page</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to ensure that regional and local initiatives comply with national, European and international obligations? 	UNDERSTANDING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to work together to coordinate activities and avoid duplication? How to get support from leaders – both senior managers and politicians? 	COORDINATION AND LEADERSHIP	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to explain fundamental rights in ways that relate to everyday life and are easy to understand? 	COMMUNICATING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to understand and engage communities and stakeholders? 	PARTICIPATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to identify the right data, information and people to monitor and evaluate? 	PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION	15

More detailed information, including other practice examples and useful resources are available in English at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>



The terms 'fundamental rights' and 'human rights' are interchangeable throughout this guide.

UNDERSTANDING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

How to
understand
fundamental rights
and make links
to other legal
frameworks?

All levels and sectors of government including regional and local actors are bound to comply with fundamental rights obligations as defined in national, European and international law.

All EU Member States are parties to the **European Convention on Human Rights**, various thematic **Council of Europe conventions** and **United Nations (UN) Human Rights treaties**. **Within the EU**, the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union** is also binding for its Member States when implementing EU law. States assume the duty to respect, to protect and to fulfil human rights and to translate them into national law.

Respecting the legal frameworks

To ensure that activities are in line with fundamental rights, it is recommended to:

- Identify applicable fundamental rights-related provisions in national legislation.
- Check related EU and international norms.
- Seek legal advice to validate the legal obligations.



Example

The United Kingdom's Human Rights Act (1998) has made rights from the European Convention on Human Rights enforceable in UK courts. The Ministry of Justice produced **Human rights, human lives**, a handbook for public authorities at all levels to help officials implement the Human Rights Act. It advises and contains real-life examples of how to consider the potential fundamental rights impact when devising new policies and procedures or trying to improve public services <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Checklist

How to ensure regional and local initiatives comply with national, European and international obligations?

1. Have you been able to identify all relevant national laws?
2. Have you described the legal framework(s) in the documentation related to your fundamental rights initiative?
3. Have you taken into account the EU legal framework, such as regulations, directives and case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union?
4. Have you referred to United Nations and Council of Europe treaties, as well as case law from the European Court of Human Rights or the decisions of UN treaty bodies?

Key resources

- Council of Europe Treaties: <http://conventions.coe.int/>
- United Nations Treaties: <http://treaties.un.org>
- The FRA Case Law database – a compilation of European Court of Justice (ECJ) case law <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/case-law>
- Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union: <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/charter/>
- FRA's Charter 4 Mobile – one-stop-shop for mobile devices on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/charter4mobile>

Getting expert advice

Fundamental rights are complex and dynamic, evolving as new rules and initiatives are adopted and implemented.

- Public officials can find expert advice on fundamental rights in national administrations, independent bodies, civil society or academia.
- It is essential to have access to independent experts and specialists in technical fields as the credibility of the source information is enhanced if its provider is independent from political or external influences.

Example

Collaboration across Europe is demonstrated by the work of EUROCITIES on poverty and exclusion. This network enables officials to exchange views and experiences on programmes and projects that have been put into practice in their cities. It also monitors EU policy developments that affect local government and organises meetings, seminars and conferences to share expertise and learning. <http://www.eurocities.eu/>

Checklist

Are you making use of available expert advice on fundamental rights?

1. Have you engaged organisations or institutes that are recognised authorities on fundamental rights, such as a national human rights institution or a research institute?
2. Have you exchanged ideas with colleagues from other EU Member States to share your own knowledge and learn from good practice?
3. Have you worked with intermediaries (civil society, local communities or academia) to improve understanding about the needs of vulnerable individuals?

Key resources

- International Coordinating Committee for National Human Rights Institutions: <http://nhri.ohchr.org>
European Network of National Human Rights Institutions <http://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/Regional/Europe>
- Bodies European Network of Equality <http://www.equineteurope.org>
- International Ombudsperson Institutions: <http://www.theioi.org/>
- ECCAR – The European Coalition of Cities against Racism: <http://www.eccar.info>
- FRA Fundamental Rights Platform – list of civil society organisations working on fundamental rights: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/cooperation/civil-society>

Education and training

Fundamental rights training enhances effectiveness, professionalism and responsiveness in public service delivery. It equips civil servants to safeguard all people's fundamental rights.

- Experience also shows that mandatory training can create resistance to fundamental rights issues.
- It is recommended to identify the staff that could benefit from training and persuade them to participate.
- Embedding fundamental rights into general staff training has proven to achieve greater continuity, impact and outreach. It also saves funds and resources.

Example

The Centre for the Study and Information of Human Rights at the University of Utrecht, in the Netherlands, held a workshop on the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its implications. This was part of a series of debates about local fundamental rights initiated by the Municipality of Utrecht. The workshop drew on external expertise and learning from peers and included presentations from local authorities, the university and organisations working with people with disabilities. <http://www.utrecht.nl/>

Checklist

Are you using the right tools and partners for fundamental rights training?

1. Have you mapped and identified specific target groups for education and training? Are management and elected representatives included?
2. Is fundamental rights awareness taken into account in performance appraisals and career development?
3. Are you using real-life examples from daily work to link to participants' actual professional environment?
4. Does training include follow-up sessions and on-going mentoring?

Key resources

- The European Civil Service Training Network (ENTO) established by the Council of Europe and the Congress of local and regional authorities: <http://www.coe.int/t/congress/>
- Marginalised Minorities in Development Programming – A United Nations Development Programme Resource Guide and Toolkit: <http://www.undp.org/>
- FRA Handbooks for specialists on various topics: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/>
- FRA Fundamental rights-based police training – A manual for police trainers: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications>
- FRA Diversity toolkit for factual programmes in public service television: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/tools>



Find more information, examples and resources online
<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>

COORDINATION AND LEADERSHIP

Why is partnership so important – both internally and externally?

Joining-up the work of different levels of government helps create a more inclusive implementation of fundamental rights in policy and service delivery. In times of economic austerity, coordination and leadership are even more important to ensure the pooling of resources and know-how.

Coordination can be strengthened by:

- Engaging elected representatives – experience has shown that in planning policies and services this helps provide the leadership required to deliver results.
- A clearer division of responsibilities between and within levels of governance – to avoid duplication of interventions, each sector/level must be aware of, and explicit about, its positions and roles, and those of other sectors/levels.
- Sharing resources and information between all levels and sectors of government helps address lapses or gaps.



Example

To promote policy implementation at all levels, the Spanish government adopted the Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration. As a central resource for regional authorities and municipalities, the Plan provided a framework for collaboration to improve the social inclusion of migrant groups in service delivery including education, employment, health and housing as well as awareness raising and equal treatment. <http://www.immigrationpolicy2.eu/node/157> Cross-sector and multi-level cooperation between central government, the Comunidades Autonomas and local government was underpinned by annual Autonomic Action Plans, which describe jointly financed measures. These Plans explain how actions would be monitored by using indicators to evaluate their effectiveness. The funding was part of the national budget.

Checklist

How to work together to coordinate activities and avoid duplication?

1. Have you coordinated activities with other levels of government?
2. Have you passed on data and information on how you manage fundamental rights issues to other levels of government?
3. Have you tried to set up a coordination mechanism around fundamental rights?

Key resources

- The human rights report of the city of Graz: <http://www.etc-graz.at/>
- International local and regional authorities associations published by the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities: <http://www.coe.int/t/congress/>
- European Commission programme on City Strategy for tackling unemployment and child poverty: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/home.jsp?langId=en>

Leadership

Experience shows the positive effect of promoting ownership from elected representatives and senior management within public administrations.

- Fundamental rights need the support of local councillors and elected officials.
- Having local officials engage actively with fundamental rights is essential to create a strong momentum within the community.

Example

The Municipal Council of the City of Örebro in Sweden demonstrated political leadership by establishing a human rights working group of elected politicians, under its business and growth committee. It was created to ensure there are consistent and integrated working methods related to fundamental rights across various policy areas. Its main task is to promote the city as a place where all residents are respected by sharing knowledge and driving local activities.

Checklist

Are you engaging elected representatives and senior managers?

1. Are you proactively engaging elected representatives and senior managers?
2. Are you producing regular communications and information on fundamental rights for elected representatives?
3. Have you suggested tools such as audits, staff appraisals etc. to your management for integrating fundamental rights into working practices?

Key resources

- Guide addressing local leaders for mainstreaming equal opportunities on local level from the Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism: <http://www.diversite.be/>
- Economic costs of Roma social exclusion - key messages published by the World Bank: <http://web.worldbank.org/>
- Dosta !-Congress Prize for Municipalities of the Council of Europe: http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/dosta_en.asp

Funding

Identifying sustainable funding is essential but can be challenging for public officials.

- A multi-annual budget allows long-term planning and can protect fundamental rights activities from the negative effects of public spending cuts and financial cycles.
- A multi-level partnership helps tap into additional funding sources.
- Taking a bottom-up approach ensures the allocation of funds that make a difference at the local level.
- When there is no earmarked budget, combining municipal and regional funding can help finance initiatives.
- Make use of national resources (e.g. some national human rights institutions have dedicated grants for education and training programmes) and EU funds for co-financing programmes and projects.

Defending budgets against cuts

Using robust data to identify the issues that require public action helps reassure managers and politicians about the importance of having available funds. It helps to:

- Point out how the gaps in existing provision can lead to inefficiencies and possible human rights breaches.
- Articulate the business case for fundamental rights and creates clarity about value for money.

Example

In Belgium, the Social Cohesion Plan for cities and towns in Wallonia aims to support municipalities committed to promoting social cohesion. This often involves a transfer of funds to one or more of the organisations that implement actions in the Plan. Coordinating partnerships, a 'Commission for Local Support' provides a participatory tool to ensure the smooth running of the Plan by boosting local projects. More than half of the municipalities have been involved and around €4 million have been allocated to partner organisations.

Checklist

Have you secured funding for fundamental rights?

1. Have you considered different funding sources for your activity?
2. Do you have a multi-annual budget for long-term stability?
3. Have you explored opportunities for joint funding from different government levels?

Key resources

- EU funding in justice and home affairs: http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/grants_en.htm and <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/> EU Regional funds: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/
- EU funding tracker from the UK's Local Government Association: <http://www.local.gov.uk/eu-funding-tracker>
- Gender budgeting: practical implementation handbook from the Council of Europe: <http://www.coe.int/>
- EU Regional funds: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/



Find more information, examples and resources online
<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>

COMMUNICATING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

What are
the best ways
to explain the
importance of rights
for everyone?

While fundamental rights are a legal obligation, their implementation requires public support. Public officials play a central role in providing accurate information, challenging stereotypes and actively promoting fundamental rights principles in public debate.

Convincing the public

Officials highlighted in focus group discussions during the toolkit's development:

- how having a dedicated group of committed people who persistently advocate for fundamental rights can make the difference between success and failure;
- how understanding the local context and engaging with civil society and local communities early on in the process can address invisible forms of opposition and help anticipate opposition;
- the importance of demonstrating the positive impact of initiatives, partly through identifying champions (including senior managers and politicians);
- the need to engage in public debate helps to challenge misconceptions;
- how public campaigns and a narrative for political and other leaders to deliver consistent and coherent messages can help dispel myths.



Example

In London, Hackney Council has worked with its partners in the health service and the private sector to explain how fundamental rights are implemented day-to-day. As a result they recruited 60 members of staff, 20 service users and a local councillor as volunteer 'Human Rights with Dignity Champions'. They ensure staff can translate legislation into their practice and users understand their right to challenge, for example by holding events such as a 'Dignity Day' to promote fundamental rights.

The Council supports the champions with regular training and, in collaboration with Roehampton University, is currently running a project to test the FRA governance toolkit and encourage its use. This is designed to create an organisation trained in human rights approaches that is practitioner focused, and supported by academic papers on policy-making and management.

<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/>

Checklist

How to engage communities and stakeholders?

1. Ensure you understand the different forms of opposition to fundamental rights, both direct and indirect?
2. Can you present win-win scenarios to generate support from sceptical audiences?
3. Are there public personalities who can act as ambassadors/champions?
4. Have you engaged in public or media debates to raise awareness of fundamental rights and challenge misconceptions?

Key resources

- The Eurobarometer surveys of the European Union provide statistics about public opinion towards specific fundamental rights issues: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb_special_399_380_en.htm#393
- National statistical offices, and some National Human Rights Institutions or similar bodies, undertake surveys.
- FRA has undertaken surveys on the experiences of discrimination and other fundamental rights abuses by different minority groups (Jews, LGBT people, and ethnic minorities including the Roma), children and women: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps>

Communications strategy

The promotion of fundamental rights requires an effective communications strategy and cooperation with partners who can act as delivery agents or intermediaries to get the message across to citizens. Raising the profile of fundamental rights keeps them in the public eye. Focus group discussions suggested:

- Using a charter helps communicate the public commitment of politicians and officials to fundamental rights - and inviting individuals and institutions to sign up to the charter helps raise awareness.
- Producing clear and precise information and making it accessible and easy-to-read, and where possible in different languages.
- Exploiting the expertise of communications staff to explore the opportunities of social media, other online tools as well as traditional public events for rights awareness.
- Developing a communications strategy should embrace information for officials, especially those in direct contact with the public, and helps keep politicians well briefed.

Example

Herefordshire Council in the United Kingdom and its health partners worked together to promote equality policies across all public services in the region. This resulted in the first countywide Herefordshire Equality and Human Rights Charter. It was signed by different services, including the police, emergency services, the local hospital trust, and a range of voluntary and civil society organisations. To promote the Charter, a launch was organised that reached out to the public, media, local politicians and also colleagues across Herefordshire. This was followed by a campaign called 'No Discrimination HEREfordshire'. Individuals living in the community were actively involved in its design and delivery. For example, disability groups produced a Dignity Code that was widely read and adopted. <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity>

Checklist

How to explain fundamental rights in ways that relate to everyday life and that are easy to understand?

1. Are you reaching out to elected representatives and public personalities to help promote fundamental rights?
2. Have you included colleagues working directly with citizens?
3. Have you adapted communication materials to make them accessible for people with disabilities?
4. Have you explained win-win scenarios to show the benefits of fundamental rights for everyone in society?

Key resources

- Easy read publications, infographics and other useful resources from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications>
- Charter 4 mobile APP <http://fra.europa.eu/en/charter4mobile>
- John Blankenstein award, the annual award of the city of The Hague for organisation, person or group that play an important role in gay emancipation <http://www.thehagueonline.com/>
- European Award of Excellence City for Children by the European City Network Cities for Children (initiated by the City of Stuttgart) <http://www.citiesforchildren.com/121.0.html>



Find more information, examples and resources online
<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>

Get engaged the Charter for multilevel governance in Europe open for signature



Adopted by the Committee of the Regions of the European Union on 3 April 2014 and supported by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the Charter is a political manifesto from European cities and regions inviting all public authorities to make “multilevel governance” a reality in day-to-day policy-making and delivery.

Multilevel governance involves participation, cooperation, openness, transparency, inclusiveness and the development of policy coherence, all of which are essential conditions to guarantee the success of public policies in the interest of the citizens. Although not legally binding, the Charter will commit its signatories to use multilevel governance in the management of public policies, to launch projects in partnership with both the public and private sectors, to further develop territorial cooperation and to modernise their administration.

To sign or support the Charter:

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/mlgcharter>

PARTICIPATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

What are the most effective methods to maximise engagement?



Public officials have a duty to safeguard the human rights of everybody. This entails reaching out to society's most vulnerable groups to protect them from violations of rights. Working with individuals, communities and their associations helps to develop successful initiatives efficiently.

Engaging the community requires flexibility and partnership to succeed but doing this effectively depends on a good understanding of local demographics, needs and aspirations of people.

- Think about any special requirements of civil society organisations and individuals to facilitate participation.
- Make sure your engagement events are accessible by organising them at convenient times, in easy-to-reach locations with special needs facilities and avoid using jargon.
- Residents need to feel comfortable talking about their communities so make sure you understand your local diversity, and the opportunities and challenges this raises.
- Other channels for participation should be used, including websites and social media, so that people can choose their preferred method of providing comments.

Facilitating participation requires adequate arrangements and processes for individuals and communities to engage with public authorities and become involved in making decisions that affect them.

- Explain the purpose of consultation, and how individuals and organisations can be involved in transparent decisions.
- Participation requires investment of time and resources but pays off in increased ownership and engagement among all concerned.
- Volunteers contribute energy and valuable insights that help strengthen cooperation so involving them can be productive but expectations should be clear.

Example

In March 2012, the City of Vienna initiated the Vienna Charter with the aim of agreeing common ground rules for the future of the city based on what each individual can do to improve the way the Viennese live together. At its heart were efforts to ensure broad public participation. Around 10,000 people were actively involved. Working together with individuals and communities was an integral part of joined-up governance to avoid mistakes that could have made the population feel disengaged or disappointed that their expectations had not been met.

All organisations in Vienna were invited by the Mayor to become partners. 325 organisations joined the project including companies, businesses, cultural and sport associations, employer associations, trade unions, religious communities and political parties. By establishing an online forum and a 'Charter Hotline' all Viennese could suggest topics. 651 'Charter Talks' were organised in all districts of the city, at clubhouses, pubs, offices, schools, people's flats, parks and public swimming pools. 8,500 people participated, investing a total of 12,700 hours in discussing how to live together as good neighbours. The Charter was launched in November 2012 and published in Serbian, Turkish, Bosnian and Croatian, which, besides German, are the languages most spoken in Vienna. <https://charta.wien.gv.at/>

Checklist

Are you creating sufficient opportunities for participation and civil society engagement?

1. Have you worked with civil society organisations and individuals when implementing fundamental rights?
2. Have you made special arrangements to facilitate participation of civil society organisations and individuals?
3. Have you considered language issues and different needs?
4. Have you identified a location with easy access?

Key resources

- FRA video on engaging civil society organisations in FRA's work through the Fundamental Rights Platform: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/videos>
- The European Commission consults interested parties when developing its policies based on principles and minimum standards: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/docs/comm_standards_en.pdf



Find more information, examples and resources online
<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>

PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

What are the steps required to check projects are making a positive difference for fundamental rights?

As demonstrated throughout this guide the sustainable implementation of fundamental rights requires joined-up commitment and support. Feedback from the officials interviewed underlined the need for coherent planning, involving key stakeholders, ensuring that policies and services are effective and lead to long-lasting results.

Identifying issues

Politicians and decision makers need accurate data and evidence that build a picture of challenges, demonstrate the need for action, help set the right priorities and use resources effectively.

- A baseline assessment of the situation on the ground helps identify current gaps and challenges in the protection of fundamental rights. It helps define targets for future policies, strategies and action plans.
- Data on the current situation can be collected from: EU data, national statistics and other sources including civil society and academia.
- Statistics do not tell the whole story so look behind official sources by using qualitative field research, reports from non-governmental organisations, academic research and individual complaints.



Example

Lancashire County Council in the United Kingdom includes a human rights checklist as part of the report which officials present to their managers and politicians when recommending a decision or action:

- Has the author of the report taken the Human Rights Act into account?
- Is the proposed recommendation or action likely to have any Human Rights Act implications?
- Identify the Convention right or rights likely to be affected.
- Outline briefly any consultation with interested parties.
- Identify groups or individuals likely to be affected.
- Explain why an action or recommendation is necessary by referring to the actual Convention/Act.
- What is the legal authority for taking a decision/action?
- What is the aim of the recommendation/action and what are the potential effects?
- Does the report take into account any human rights issues highlighted above?

Checklist

How is your organisation identifying fundamental rights issues?

1. Have you assessed the current situation before planning a fundamental rights initiative?
2. Have you used statistics and objective data sources to strengthen your case with colleagues, managers and politicians?
3. Have you used measurable indicators to analyse the current situation?

Key resources

- EUROSTAT – The European Union Statistical service:
<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home>
- The EU Open data portal: <https://open-data.europa.eu/en/>
- FRA publications and resources: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources>
- *FRA Survey results data explorer* on discriminations across the EU on the following topics: LGBT, antisemitism, Roma and violence against women <http://fra.europa.eu/en>

Planning

Coherent fundamental rights planning, involving key stakeholders, helps ensure that policies, strategies and programmes are effective and lead to lasting results.

- An **action plan** can be a useful tool for joined-up strategic planning related to fundamental rights.
- **Involving various stakeholder groups** from within and outside public administrations creates co-ownership and co-responsibility.
- Planning should be transparent and include the participation of all relevant stakeholders.
- Highlight the proposed benefits and challenges involving the people that the initiatives are aimed at as well as frontline staff.

Example

In the Czech city of Ostrava, the provision of social services is organised through a community planning approach that brings together three principle stakeholder groups. These are the service providers, the users of social services and the city of Ostrava, as the funder. There are ten working groups involved in community planning, one of which is the 'Roma ethnic' group. There are four main goals that are discussed and coordinated with all members of the working groups: support of existing social services, developing their capacity, exploring new services, and supporting and developing existing related activities.

Checklist

How is your organisation planning its activities on fundamental rights?

1. Have you involved groups of individuals likely to be beneficiaries or to have been affected?
2. Have you engaged frontline staff?
3. Have you engaged elected representatives to get their political support and reviewed progress?
4. Have you created an action plan to address fundamental rights problems?

Monitoring and evaluation

When not monitored and evaluated across all levels of government, tensions between different policies can be overlooked and remain unresolved. Some of the feedback received highlighted the need for policy makers to identify and analyse how policies and measures impact on other aspects of fundamental rights at the initial planning stage to avoid errors.

- Measure trends and progress over time helps to understand impact.
- Structured feedback from the beneficiaries of policies or activities can be used to assess the impact of fundamental rights.
- An independent evaluation will enhance the legitimacy of a final report on a project, activity or policy measure. It will also enable civil society and other stakeholders to be involved.
- Feedback on the effectiveness of actions helps generate fresh ideas.
- Assess direction and effectiveness by asking 'is this improving the situation, how, why and under which conditions?'
- Reporting achievements and less successful experiences increases accountability and transparency.

Example

In Spain, the Ombudsman independent institution for the Basque country (*Ararteko*) is in charge of defending the rights of individuals in their relations with the Basque Public Administration by receiving and handling complaints as well as evaluating public policy. It initiates actions to ensure that Basque authorities: mainstream equality and non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation; promote a culture of non-discrimination within wider Basque society; and combat homophobia and transphobia. <http://www.ararteko.net>

A Working Plan was developed for 2011–2013. One of the issues identified was the need to raise awareness and improve education about sexual diversity and gender identity. Evaluation and monitoring has identified how educational materials have made a positive contribution in schools and with parents. This has also helped to ensure the support of the Basque Government.

Checklist

Is your authority monitoring and evaluating its performance on fundamental rights?

1. Have you developed specific indicators that relate specifically to the targeted fundamental rights area?
2. Do you have sustainable data sources to measure trends and progress over time?
3. Have you gathered feedback from beneficiaries? Have you commissioned an independent evaluation?
4. Have you considered evaluation results when planning new activities?

Key resources

- Examples of national human rights action plans and United Nations' handbook on national human rights plans of action: <http://www.ohchr.org/>
- Manual on monitoring racism and discrimination to help evaluate policy measures: <http://www.eu-ecar.eu>
- United Nations guide for the measurement and implementation of human rights indicators: <http://www.ohchr.org/>
- FRA's work on indicators: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/>



Find more information, examples and resources online
<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this guide **Making rights real** we have aimed to demonstrate how a joined up approach can help strengthen dialogue and cooperation between all those working on fundamental rights in the EU – from local and regional to national governments, parliaments to European and international bodies, national institutions such as Ombudspersons, equality bodies, national human rights institutions, civil society and citizens themselves.

Engagement with individuals and communities will help to build the momentum of joined-up governance to bring about positive change. This means building on the good work done to date in making regional and local policies and services more sensitive to public needs – since these are all underpinned by fundamental rights.

The principle of **Joining up fundamental rights** is to learn from your peers as well as help other officials benefit from what has worked (or not) for you.

After all, that's what **Making rights real** is all about.

**How can you
inspire colleagues
and the public to
recognise the importance
of fundamental rights
in your work?**

For more information and examples, please access the online toolkit where you can:

- Find out what's going on across Europe
- Submit examples of your own practice

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home>



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FRA and the Committee of the Regions welcome the re-use of the content of this guide and the online version of the toolkit to contribute to the on-going awareness of local, regional and national officials on how to help integrate fundamental rights into policy making, service delivery, and administrative practices.

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Feedback

Comments or suggestions for improvements on this guide and the online toolkit available at <http://fra.europa.eu/en/joinedup/home> are welcome at joinedup@fra.europa.eu.

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The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) provides independent, evidence-based assistance and expertise on fundamental rights to EU institutions and Member States. FRA is an independent EU body, funded by the Union's budget.

Working in partnership with the EU institutions, its Member States and other organisations at the international, European and national levels, the FRA plays an important role in helping to make fundamental rights a reality for everyone living in the EU.

This guide draws on the practical experience of hundreds of local, regional and national public officials. FRA conducted 32 focus group discussions and expert interviews in eight EU Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom).

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The **Committee of the Regions** is the EU's assembly of regional and local representatives from all 28 Member States. Its mission is to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council are obliged to consult the Committee in policy areas affecting regions and cities. It can appeal to the Court of Justice of the European Union if its rights are infringed or it believes that EU law infringes the subsidiarity principle or fails to respect regional or local powers.

The Committee of the Regions has developed over last six years fruitful and sustainable relations with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights by setting up an Annual Dialogue dedicated to fundamental rights issues that are of particular importance at EU level and of relevance for regional and local authorities. This is a forum for discussion of themes such as: the rule of law, access to justice, multi-level approaches to combating hate crime in the EU, rights of the child, and fundamental rights of irregular migrants.

<http://cor.europa.eu/Pages/welcome.html>

Charter for multilevel governance: <http://www.cor.europa.eu/mlgcharter>

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