

THE ANNUAL EU CHARTERXCHANGE

Pooling knowledge to implement fundamental rights

Online event, 11-13 December 2023

Takeaways

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FRA | Schwarzenbergplatz 11 | A-1040 Vienna, Austria



Disclaimer:

The information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect the views or official position of the Agency.

Dear participants of the first CharterXchange,

Thank you for spending three days with us that we found exciting, inspiring and above all. It was our pleasure to have all of you online with us.

The CharterXchange served as a unique forum for legal practitioners, staff of national administrations, civil society organisations and others to explore current and potential applications of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, driving positive changes for people's rights.

To make sure that the event, which kept us busy for the last days and weeks, does not evaporate now that it is over, we are hereby sharing initial "take-aways", including pointers to main messages, links to key documents, and references to further reading.

Do not hesitate to contact us at charter@fra.europa.eu if you have any questions and subscribe to the FRA online newsletter under the following link: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/news-and-events/newsletter>.

Kind regards,
The FRA CharterXchange team

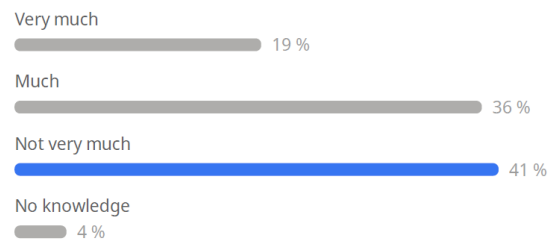
The CharterXchange participants: composition, experience, and expectations

(based on an anonymous survey taken on 11 December 2023)

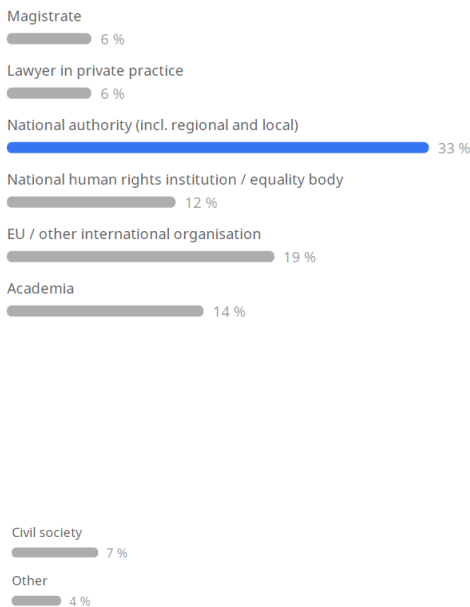
Countries from which the participants joined



How familiar were the participants with the Charter?



Participants' professional background



Participants' expectations about the CharterXchange



Day 1: Monday, 11 December 2023

Welcome



Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice,
European Commission

[Video message](#)

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

Commissioner Reynders highlighted in particular:

- ★ The role of the EU Charter as binding, primary EU law;
- ★ The central role of national authorities in implementing the Charter.
- ★ Member State authorities need to ensure the application of fundamental rights whenever EU law is applied. The Commission's Charter strategy accordingly refers to them as "Charter agents".
- ★ The important role of the CharterXchange in facilitating cooperation and building capacity amongst those interested in fundamental rights.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union](#)
- [EU Strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter](#)

European Commission's 2023 Annual Report on the Application of the EU Charter



Ingrid Bellander Todino, Head of Unit - Fundamental rights
policy
European Commission

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The 2023 Annual Charter report of the European Commission is dedicated to effective legal protection and access to justice, which are of central importance in ensuring that individuals can apply the rights they derive from EU law, including fundamental rights, fully and effectively.
- ★ The 2023 Charter report supplements other European Commission documents with a fundamental right centred analysis on recent developments at EU level and in the Member States from the field of effective legal protection and access to justice. Drawing extensively on consultation results, the report provides a snapshot of the measures put in place in this field over the past few years (2020-2023), as well as some remaining challenges.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- 2023 annual [report](#) on the application of the Charter of fundamental rights

- [Annual reports on the application of the Charter](#)
- [2023 Annual report on the application of the Charter of fundamental rights](#) (all language versions)
- [European e-Justice Portal](#) with information on the application of the Charter and where to turn in case rights are breached.

Parallel Session 1: FRA report ' Mainstreaming fundamental rights in the EU funds - The role of National Human Rights Institutions and Equality Bodies'



Andreas Accardo, Head of Unit – Institutional Cooperation and Networks, FRA



Robert Jan-Uhl, Project Manager, FRA

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The 2021 Common Provisions Regulation is a useful tool to ensure that the implementation of EU funds complies with fundamental rights.
- ★ The entire chain of actors involved in EU funds needs more capacity to ensure Charter compliance, including government officials, civil society organisations and national bodies.
- ★ A more meaningful participation of national human rights bodies and civil society would help in ensuring that the enabling conditions linked to the Charter and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are monitored effectively.
- ★ FRA report ' Mainstreaming fundamental rights in the EU funds presents the role of National Human Rights Institutions and Equality Bodies'.
- ★ FRA will continue to bring together the various actors involved in EU funds to promote mutual learning and sharing of good practice experiences on how to ensure Charter compliance throughout the funding cycle. FRA, together with the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) and national human rights institutions (NHRIs), will hold a conference on this subject on 21-22 February 2024 (Brussels), with the support of the EEA & Norway Grants.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Common Provisions Regulation 2021](#)
- [Report](#) - EU funds: Ensuring compliance with fundamental rights

Parallel Session 1: EXPERIENCES WITH THE CHARTER-RELATED ENABLING CONDITIONS IN THE USE OF EU FUNDS: PRESENTATION OF NEW FRA REPORT AND PEER-TO-PEER EXCHANGE



Natalija Šimunović, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, Croatia

KEY MESSAGE

- ★ Training and capacity building represent the most important elements of our current and future efforts in mainstreaming fundamental rights into EU Funds. Given that the Charter and its implementation in our very practical work in management of EU Funds is a novelty, what we consider crucial is to further build capacities of all stakeholders involved. In that sense we would also welcome and appreciate additional guidance and support from the European Commission, including exchanges between various member states.

Andor Urmos, Co-Founder, Bridge EU

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The volume of human rights violations in EU funds is not fully explored, yet. More research and data collection are needed.
- ★ There are some ongoing debates between stakeholders about what constitutes human rights violation in the scope of EU funds (e.g. institutionalisation of persons with disabilities, segregation of Roma children, etc.). This requires more legal clarifications to have a more consistent approach.
- ★ Human rights institutions should play a more direct role in identifying human rights violations in EU funds.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- Background materials of the webinar: [Stop discrimination in EU funds: Violation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights](#)
- [Background materials](#) of the [webinar](#): Stop discrimination in EU funds: the role of fundamental rights bodies
- European Commission 2022 [Note on the use of EU Funds in tackling educational and spatial segregation 2021-2027 programming period](#)

Ines Bulic Cojocariu, Director, European Network of Independent Living (ENIL)

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Respect for fundamental rights must be the main condition for all EU funds' investments, not an afterthought.
- ★ To understand requirements under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), the Managing Authorities and the European Commission must make full use of the General Comments, the Guidance on deinstitutionalisation, and the jurisprudence of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other UN mechanisms.
- ★ We must avoid situations where those that allocate funds are also the ones to decide if fundamental rights are being breached. Such decisions must always involve independent human rights and equality bodies, as well as human rights NGOs in the Member States and at the European level.
- ★ Any such guidance must fully respect the Charter, the UN CRPD and any other relevant human rights instrument.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Lost in interpretation](#): the use of ESI Funds during 2014 – 2020 and the impact on the right of persons with disabilities to independent living
- ENIL [Shadow report](#) on the implementation of the UN CRPD in the European Union
- [Role of the EU funding in supporting deinstitutionalisation around the world: A Call for Change Report Final forPublication 140222.pdf](#)
- EU Funds for Our Rights [video](#)
- About ENIL's work on EU Funds: <https://enil.eu/funding/>
- Please get in touch with ENIL if you would like support in making a complaint about the use of EU Funds in your country (in relation to the rights of persons with disabilities). Our contact details can be found here: <https://enil.eu/contact/>
- [LITI-GATE Project](#), which started in September 2023, aims to support who would like to go to court to challenge the misuse of EU Funds

Cezary Węgliński, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland

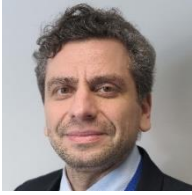
SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The research that we have conducted on the Charter and our daily observations, as an ombudsman institution, shows that the key success factor for fundamental rights compliance lies in the awareness and knowledge of civil servants and public officials to assess human rights compliance in their work. The complexity of contemporary administration structures very often generates the effect of shifting responsibility.
- ★ The current state of implementation of the Charter with its flaws and shadows is only a reflection of a broader issue: the lack of a general culture of human rights everyday vigilance and self-restraint. The same goes for the national constitutional law. The capacity and confidence on the lower levels of administration to proceed to fundamental rights review is sometimes critical.
- ★ Overloaded administration employees see the obligation to verify the compliance of their work with the Charter and fundamental rights in general as an additional and burdening task. There is a strong need to build up their skills and establish possible frameworks of knowledge-sharing and assistance to make fundamental rights check more approachable. Central administration institutions and NHRIs should engage more in that.
- ★ The outputs of our [project](#) conducted together with FRA and a few other NHRIs will soon be published on our and FRA's website. Please stay tuned! A reading of some of the best practices on the Charter that we have collected depict possible ways to unlock the potential of fundamental rights.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- FRA online project information: "[Supporting national human rights institutions](#)"
- Polish Commissioner for Human Rights website <https://bip.brpo.gov.pl/en>

Parallel Session 2: NEW EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES AND PROJECTS ON THE CHARTER – Focus on the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme (CERV) and Justice Programmes



Wojciech Postulski, European Commission,

Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ National judges and other justice practitioners are essential actors ensuring the effective application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and making the Charter rights a reality in people's everyday lives.
- ★ They should receive dedicated training on the application of the Charter, its scope of application and specific rights such as data protection, but also on its relation with national law and its interplay with the European Convention on Human Rights.
- ★ Charter training should also be incorporated into training modules on various areas of EU law where relevant.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Call for proposals for action grants to support transnational projects on judicial training covering civil law, criminal law or fundamental rights \(JUST-2024-JTRA\)](#)
- [European judicial training strategy for 2021-2024](#)



Paola Cervo, European Commission,

Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Citizens, Equality, Rights and Value (or, CERV) programme is the biggest ever EU programme promoting and supporting actions on democracy, equality, fundamental rights and the rule of law within the EU.
- ★ As of 2022, the “Call for proposals to promote civil society organisations’ awareness of, capacity building and implementation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights” financially supports civil society organisations that are active at local, regional, national and transnational level in promoting and cultivating the Charter rights. A new call is planned for publication in spring 2024.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [CERV programme](#) (general)
- [CERV Indicative Call Planning 2023-2024](#)
- [Funding & Tenders opportunities portal – CERV](#)
- [Annual reports on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#)

Parallel Session 3: THE EU CHARTER IN THE COURTROOM: DIALOGUE WITH JUDGES



Sara Iglesias Sánchez, Complutense University of Madrid

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Charter is owned not only by the European Court of Justice, but by all national courts, who are the ordinary judges of EU Law. They often discover the most interesting questions to be presented before the Court of Justice, and they raise the most pressing issues to be debated and solved at the European level.
- ★ The Charter has its "own life" outside the scope of application defined in Article 51 of the Charter, because national jurisdictions may take inspiration on it also in litigation that falls outside the scope of EU law, or where Member States are not implementing EU law. However, the opposite also occurs: the Charter can be often overlooked as national courts tend to look inwards to their own fundamental rights in their national constitutions.
- ★ Judicial attitudes and legal culture play a major role when applying and interpreting the Charter by national courts. It may be regarded as just another international law instrument. It may be relatively ignored, since the fundamental rights embedded in national constitutions may be regarded as more familiar or solid basis for legal reasoning and control. The challenge is for national courts to understand the unique nature of the Charter as a key component of the constitutional law of the European Union, and therefore, also of their own constitutional acquis.
- ★ Judicial dialogue is essential in the future of the judicial application of the Charter. This dialogue often happens through the preliminary ruling procedure as a catalyser. Dialogue with supreme and constitutional courts (but not only) has proven to be crucial in the ongoing construction of an EU standard of fundamental rights, the application of proportionality, or the flexibilization of the understanding of the proper standards of protection. Through this dialogue, national courts are key actors in the development of the interpretation of the Charter and its interrelation with national fundamental rights – which are both elements of the EU system of fundamental rights connected through the threat of general principles of law.

Goran Selanec, Croatian Constitutional Court

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Charter is currently the most comprehensive fundamental rights legal document offered to EU citizens. For example, within its 50 plus provisions the Charter includes over 20 guarantees that are not proscribed by the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) and additional 6 provisions that although similar to their sister provisions in the ECHR offer a somewhat wider scope of protection.
- ★ The Charter is indeed a “living and evolving” human rights document due to its rather specific capacity to expand its scope of protection. For example, although not directly applicable per se, the principle of social inclusion of persons with a disability has been further elaborated through provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that the EU itself

acceded to in 2010. In principle, most of the Charter guarantees have similar capacity of incorporation of other international human rights documents.

- ★ The Charter is underlined by the well-established doctrine of the effective judicial protection that was given a status of one of the key fundamental functional principles of the EU legal order working hand-in-hand with the fundamental principles of supremacy and direct applicability to secure the value of rule of law in the EU legal order.
- ★ Being a primary source of EU law, the Charter is directly applicable by national courts in both vertical and in principle horizontal disputes involving use of EU law affecting interest of the parties of a dispute.
- ★ When in doubt about the applicability of the Charter, national courts can always utilize Art 267 TFEU and consult the CJEU. As a rule of thumb, if in doubt regarding its applicability, national courts should feel comfortable in using the Charter if it is not obvious that EU law is irrelevant for deciding the dispute at hand. Even if not directly applicable, the Charter is still an important interpretative authority providing inspiration and guidance in the application of national guarantees of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Day 2: Tuesday, 12 December 2023

Michael O’Flaherty, Director of the FRA

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Charter of Fundamental Rights is a comprehensive and dynamic legal document within the European Union, offering extensive rights protection to EU citizens, incorporating principles from international human rights instruments, and serving as a primary source of EU law with direct applicability in national level.

Keynote speech: The Charter before constitutional courts



Clara Rauegger, Senior Assistant Professor of European Union Law and Digital Technology Law, University of Innsbruck

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Charter empowers ordinary courts, but several constitutional courts have reacted to this competition by themselves embracing the Charter.
- ★ The binding effect of the Charter has led several constitutional courts to adopt an entirely new approach to the Charter.
- ★ There are, in essence, three ways in which constitutional courts deal with the Charter. The first approach is to use the Charter as a direct standard of constitutional review, the second is to use it as an indirect one, i.e., to interpret national constitutional rights in the light of the Charter, and the third approach is to not give any meaningful role to the Charter at all.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- Michal Bobek/Jeremias Prassl, [The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Member States](#), Hart Publishing 2020.
- Clara Raucheegger, [National Constitutional Courts as Guardians of the Charter: A Comparative Appraisal of the German Federal Constitutional Court's Right to Be Forgotten Judgments](#), Cambridge Yearbook of European Legal Studies 2020, 278. doi:10.1017/cel.2020.13 (open access).

Council conclusions on the application of the Charter



Almudena Darias de las Heras, Justice Counsellor, Permanent Representation of Spain to the European Union

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Upholding Fundamental Rights and correctly applying the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is a shared responsibility, which requires a collective effort from all actors concerned, namely Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, as well as national, regional and local actors.
- ★ Training of legislators, administrators and justice professionals, as well as public awareness raising are key elements in this endeavour.
- ★ EU Member States have committed themselves to work on this.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Strategy](#) to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the EU:
- Council [conclusions](#) on strengthening the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the European Union:
- [e-Justice portal](#), Member States' best practices on the Charter:

Parallel Session 1: HOW CAN THE APPLICATION OF THE CHARTER ADD VALUE TO THE CITY ADMINISTRATION? DIALOGUE BETWEEN AND WITH CITIES



Laura Gonzalez Mendez, Project Coordinator for International Affairs, Gijon City Council, and Coordinator of the EU funded project EURIGHT

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Cities can play a key role to raise awareness of people about their rights and the EU Charter.

- ★ It is important to involve young people as well as local politicians on the Charter.
- ★ Raising awareness on the Charter and people's rights is best supported by long-term commitment by the city and its leadership.
- ★ There are many activities that cities and organisations can carry out that do not require a lot of resources and have a big impact (for example activities in schools; photo, painting, poetry contest; public reading of the articles by politicians, celebrities, etc...)



João Figueiredo, City of Porto, and Coordinator of the Cities Coalition for Digital Rights

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The rights that exist offline must be exercised and protected online.
- ★ Enhanced models of governance developed by cities, such as the Digital Rights Governance Framework gathering foundations, structures and tools, can greatly help cities to apply a human rights-based approach for service delivery.
- ★ Cross-national exchange within the EU and beyond, supported by cities' networks such as the Cities Coalition for Digital Rights, can be a great catalyst for innovation.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [EURIGHT](#) - The connection between the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU and Citizenship: [Video overview about the project](#) | [EURIGHT - Online course](#) in English open to everyone who wants to know more about the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
- The [Cities Coalition for Digital Rights](#), a network of cities to protect and uphold digital rights at the global and local level: the [Digital Rights Governance Framework](#) with foundations, structures and tools to govern digital rights in cities.
- [FRA Framework for Human Rights Cities](#) (practical guidance) with foundations, structures and tools that can help cities integrate human rights in a holistic and sustainable way in their work. Available in English, German, French, Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Spanish, Catalan and Swedish.

Parallel Session 2: THE CHARTER AND STRATEGIC LITIGATION: LEARNING FROM PRACTICE

James MacGuill, Former President, Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE)

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Any national court can make a reference on an EU law point to the Court of Justice of the European Union, with no requirement to exhaust domestic remedies.
- ★ The process is potentially cheaper and certainly more expeditious than with respect to the European Court of Human Rights. Procedural safeguards in criminal cases will be a further source of references now that the European Public Prosecutor is established.

Linda Ravo, Senior Advocacy Consultant, Liberties

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Charter is much less known instrument than the ECHR for example. Legal professionals and human rights defenders are less familiar with it. Yet, it has an unexplored potential, both in substantive and strategic terms. There are many areas where litigating on the Charter can help advance human rights protection. It is important to have hands-on, practical trainings, and follow-up mentoring to get cases to courts.
- ★ It is important to create spaces for legal professionals, NGOs and human rights defenders to exchange information, experiences, explore opportunities for cooperation and joint initiatives.
- ★ Liberties is also working on a joint strategic litigation protocol for its members.
- ★ Successful litigation goes hand in hand with well-framed campaigning and advocacy efforts.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- Liberties' [Handbook on Relying on the CFR for human rights litigation](#)
- E-learning course soon available Liberties' [Knowledge Hub](#)

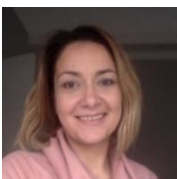
Kersty McCourt, STARLIGHT Project Director, Hertie School

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Entry points to the Charter / Getting your case to the CJEU – finding a path when it might not be obvious especially in rule of law/civic space cases. It might be necessary to look to other areas of law – such as telecommunications or data protection and then circle back to the Charter rights.
- ★ Networking and skills – including with lawyers outside your area of expertise and the complementary three key skills that are the focus of the Starlight programme “Advocacy, Communications and Documentation”.
- ★ Gaps / looking forward - we have seen a number of important/precedent setting rights-based cases over the last years – for example the Lex NGO case against Hungary. But there are several areas that need to be reviewed to improve access to justice including: access to information and transparency of proceedings, the use of expedited procedures / interim measures especially for fundamental rights cases, funding for the litigation itself. There are important new funding streams to support training and work around litigation, but challenges remain to fund cases.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [STARLIGHT Agenda & Dates | Hertie School \(hertie-school.org\)](#)



Simona Florescu, Litigation Manager, Validity Foundation

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The familiarity of national practitioners with the exhaustion of domestic remedies rule in international human rights law can be an obstacle in filing preliminary references under EU law.
- ★ The lack of clarity in whether a national law is implementing EU law or whether EU law is applicable is another important block advancing Charter-based litigation.
- ★ References to the relevant case law on fair trial and preliminary references of the European Court of Human Rights can help in determining national courts to submit preliminary references to the CJEU.

Day 3: Wednesday, 13 December 2023

Council of Europe HELP course on the interplay of the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter, developed together with FRA and the European Commission



Eva Pastrana, Council of Europe, HELP

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Thanks to EU institutional and financial support (under the EU-CoE joint “HELP In the EU III” project) and fruitful joint work by high-level experts from the EU, European Commission, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the Council of Europe Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) Programme and the Registry of the ECtHR, a HELP online course has been developed entitled “Introduction to Human Rights Protection in Europe – the Interplay between the ECHR and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights”. It addresses the needs of training on fundamental rights issues within the scope of the ECHR, the European Social Charter and EU Charter, focusing on the interplay between the two systems of the EU and Council of Europe.
- ★ The course is primarily addressed at legal/justice professionals (judges, prosecutors, lawyers, court staff), but could also be beneficial to bailiffs, notaries, mediators, legal interpreters and translators, court experts etc. It can also be useful for the training of policymakers, national human rights institutions, as well as civil society organisations, (law) university students or EU/CoE staff.
- ★ This HELP course on the interplay between the ECHR and the EU Charter should be included in particularly initial training provided by all EU (and candidate) training Institutions for judges and prosecutors. Bar councils with compulsory initial training should also embed it in their initial training programmes and disseminate it among practicing lawyers. Similarly, and with a focus on future EU future professionals, law faculties in the EU (and Candidate Countries) should also use it to complement their constitutional/international public law programmes and promote it among their students.
- ★ Thanks to continuous EU support and joint EU-CoE efforts, further translations and contextualisation will be available gradually. When contextualised to the national legislation and challenges, HELP courses address the training needs identified by various Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and support the implementation of ECtHR judgments pending execution. They also contribute to the objectives set in the EU Judicial Training Strategy.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- The (6-hour) online HELP course “Introduction to Human Rights Protection in Europe – the Interplay between the ECHR and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights” [Council of Europe HELP e-learning platform](#).

Master class on the EU Charter for law students



Gabriel N. Toggenburg, Head of Sector, FRA

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ The Charter is “[easy to read but difficult to understand](#)”. But, despite the complexities of its scope of application (Article 51) and the foggy distinction between rights and principles (Article 52) we have been observing over the last decade a steady increase of the Charter’s use at national level as annually tracked by the FRA’s Fundamental Rights Report.
- ★ Charter-specific complexities like Article 51 and 52(5) might lead to “Tur-Tur moments” where lawyers despair as the Charter appears as an [illusionary giant](#). However, the focus should be put on the added values such as the direct effect, supremacy, procedural advantages, encompassing and modern wording etc.
- ★ Access to justice and equality are two areas that are of key relevance when it comes to the Charter. This is confirmed by the figures. Articles 47 and 21 are the Charter provisions most often referred to with Article 47 leading all statistics by far. Wherever doubts arise regarding the Charter’s applicability, do not forget to consult FRA’s Charter handbook and other FRA tools.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- FRA: [FRA Charterpedia](#); [FRA Charter materials and resources](#);
- EU institutions: [Key Charter statements](#)
- Steve Peers, Tamara Hervey, Angela Ward (2021), [The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. A Commentary](#), Hart
- Niall Coghlan and Marc Steiert (eds, 2020), [The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The travaux préparatoires and selected documents](#), EUI
- [“All EU-r rights”](#), Online series to increase Charter awareness.



Bjarki F. Guðjónsson, European Law Students Association (ELSA)

KEY MESSAGE

- ★ Law students and young lawyers can benefit greatly from understanding the applicability of the Charter, as well as its potential as a legal instrument, both independently and complementing other instruments in practice.

Learning lab on EU Charter training tools



Lorenza Calcagno, Judge and Member of the Italian Superior School for the Judiciary, Coordinator of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ EJTN (European Judicial Training Network) is an international non-profit association, and its objective is to promote programmes in a European dimension for members of the European Judiciary – judges and prosecutors where they form part of the “Corps Judiciaire” – and for court staff. It represents the interests of over 120,000 European judges, prosecutors, and judicial trainers. The network is organized in working groups and subgroups; one of the subgroups deals with human rights and fundamental freedom.
- ★ EJTN organises training on the Charter through seminars characterised by the exchange of experiences, deepening issues related to specific provisions; for several years a seminar has been organised in cooperation with FRA aimed at a broader knowledge of the Charter, its implementation and its effects within national systems.
- ★ From the training experience, it appears necessary to increase Charter training. There are difficulties in the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in national proceedings, connected not only due to specific characteristics of the Charter, but also because of the existence of multiple national and supranational legal systems providing fundamental rights protection.
- ★ To improve the knowledge, it is possible to work on two directions: the development of two courses, one basic and one advanced, per year and the use of courses to produce specific training materials for the judiciary to be used for further training.
- ★ The creation of specific material allows asynchronous training. Made available online, the material can be used by a large number of users, so enabling wide-ranging training. For the improvement of the training we can also increase cooperation between institutions working at European level in the field of fundamental rights – we can cite as excellent examples the cooperation with European Union Asylum Agency (EUAA), which has set up its own database, and the cooperation with the HELP program.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms - EJTN](#)



Larisa Antohi, European Commission
Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ Applying the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights requires that justice professionals have sufficient knowledge on fundamental rights.
- ★ The Commission training projects are on 1/ the compliance of the Charter in impact assessments (2025), 2/ promoting knowledge of the Court of Justice of the EU and its procedures (2024), 3/ EU law e-Capsules (2024), 4/ a Manual on the application of the Charter in the disbursement of EU funds (2024).
- ★ The Commission has already made Charter training courses and materials available on the European training platform of the European e-Justice Portal.
- ★ The Commission is also funding EU-level cross-border training initiatives, such as the young lawyers contest, to spotlight the importance of European law for the future legal practice of the young and newly qualified lawyers.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [EUACADEMY Explore](#)
- [ETP](#) | European Training Platform
- [e-JP](#) European e-Justice Portal
- [YLC Young European Lawyers Contest](#)



Sanja Jovicic, Project Manager, FRA

SELECTED TAKEAWAYS

- ★ FRA provides practical tools and materials on the EU Charter to legal professionals and other stakeholders who apply the EU Charter.
- ★ These tools and materials are available in several EU languages.
- ★ FRA will continue developing more material analysing the EU Charter.

RECOMMENDED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

- [Charterpedia](#): the Agency's encyclopedia on the EU Charter
- [Case studies](#): a place for legal practitioners and law students
- [E-guidance](#): step-by-step guidance and concrete examples
- [Case law database](#)
- 2018 Charter [Handbook](#): guidance on why and when to apply the Charter
- 2021 [trainers' manual](#): how to provide Charter training to legal practitioners