

Why human rights in the city?

Every state is obliged to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. In implementing this obligation the local level - the city - has an essential role: It is the place where people meet daily and the place where every decision concerns the human rights of individuals. To ensure that the human rights instruments are effectively applied and that specific problems are addressed locally, people must be involved in the shaping of the city. Understanding human rights is a precondition for citizens' participation in developing their human rights city: Only those who understand human rights can stand up for them and demand, protect and defend rights for themselves and others.

What does Human Rights City mean to me?

I know my rights, I respect other people's rights and I take a stand for both. Every day. Everywhere.

A sensible view on human rights improves the quality of life in a city.

Siegfried Nagl, Mayor

Human Rights City: the city where people live diversity in dignity.

Alexandra Stocker,
Office of the Human Rights Council

Human Rights Declaration of the City Graz:

The municipal council resolution of the 8th February 2001

„The City of Graz, especially the members of the city council and of the city government shall be guided in their actions by the principles of international human rights. Thereby the residents of the city, especially the youth, shall be informed about the established codes of human rights and about the rights and obligations derived therefrom. It is an objective, especially with regard to those who bear duties in public institutions, organisations and associations to respect and fulfill the human rights relevant standards in the daily life of the city. Deficits in the field of human rights are to be detected at all levels of society to respond appropriately. Thereby human rights shall play a major role in the guidelines and decisions for the future development of the City of Graz. With this declaration and with the aims and code of practice associated therewith, the City of Graz as the European Cultural Capital 2003 expresses its understanding of culture and human dignity.“

Contact

The Mayor's Office

Hauptplatz 1, Rathaus
A-8010 Graz
0043 316 872 2000

Human Rights Council of the City of Graz

Office of the Human Rights Council:
European Training and Research Centre
for Human Rights and Democracy – ETC Graz
Elisabethstraße 50b, A-8010 Graz
menschenrechtsbeirat@etc-graz.at
0043 316 380 1536



Human Rights Advisory Council
City of Graz



What are Human Rights?

Fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled simply because she or he is a human being.

Who has Human Rights?

Every human being without distinction of any kind, as to ethnic origin, skin colour, language, religion, sex, disability, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Why do all human beings have the same Human Rights?

All human beings are born free and equal (rights of equality). Human Rights apply to everyone and everywhere around the world (universality).

When acting in accordance with human rights principles is normal for many, then the Human Rights City is a living reality.

Elke Lujansky-Lammer,
Chairwoman of Human Rights Council

The Human Rights City Graz lives through humane action of each and everyone – every day!”

Renate Kicker, Director of ETC Graz

GRAZ

Milestones

- 2001** - Unanimous decision of the city council to declare Graz a Human Rights City
- 2005** - Department of Integration established
- 2006** - Joining the European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCaR)
- Interreligious Council established
- 2007** - Human Rights Council established
- Human Rights Path in Leechwald installed
- Accession to "Cities for Children"
- First human rights election campaign monitoring conducted by the Human Rights Council
- 2008** - First Human Rights Report of the City of Graz
- Human Rights Award of the City of Graz created
- ORF Styria: "Facing Nations" showing 123 oil portraits of migrants living in Graz
- 2009** - Resolution on violence towards women
- 2010** - First Poverty Report of the City of Graz
- 2012** - Accession to the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life
- Anti-Discrimination Office Styria established
- 2013** - COM UNITY SPIRIT: Graz Declaration on Interfaith Dialogue

Institutions of the Human Rights City

Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council consists of 30 members from politics, administration, judiciary, police, the media and civil society, who have been nominated by the mayor. The Council advises the municipal council and the mayor and supports the development of the Human Rights City critically.

Migrants' Council

The Migrants' Council is elected at the same time as the municipal council. It advises administration and politics and proposes solutions to political representatives for problems such as political and social disadvantages, the housing situation or educational issues.

Interreligious Council

The Interreligious Council of the City of Graz consists of representatives of all legally recognized religious communities and advises the mayor.

Department of Integration of the City of Graz

The Department of Integration works on measures for political, legal and social equality of nationals and non-nationals. It develops policies and projects to promote understanding of cultural pluralism in the urban public of Graz.

Graz Office of Peace and Development

The Peace Office is a competence center for non-violent co-existence in the city. The focus areas are dealing with conflict and violence management, preventing violence in and with schools, neighbourhood service and district service for conflict prevention and management.

European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy – ETC Graz

ETC Graz is engaged in human rights and democracy education, research and consulting. As the Office of the Human Rights Council, ETC accompanies and coordinates the human rights city process and the ECCaR obligations of the City of Graz.

European Coalition of Cities against Racism – ECCaR

The Coalition of Cities is a UNESCO initiative to effectively fight racism, discrimination and xenophobia. Graz passes a Ten-Point Action Plan for periods of three years since 2006. The ECCaR office is at the Mayor's Office.

How to go on?

What can the city do? What ought it to do?

- Base all administrative acting on the human rights approach
- Implement the Human Rights Education Strategy
- Implement the recommendations given in the Human Rights Report

What can I do? What ought I to do?

I read up on my own rights and on other people's rights. I take a stand for both. Every day. Everywhere.

The main challenge remains the question how to make human rights a part of everyday life.

Wolfgang Benedek, University of Graz

The Human Rights City can be seen as a lasting chance for a humanitarian profile of Graz.

Alfred Stingl, retired Mayor

To live in a City of Human Rights illustrates the importance of each individual human in various ways.

Daniela Grabovac,
head of the Anti-Discrimination Office

Implementation of the Human Rights City Process

Human Rights Report

The Human Rights Report annually identifies deficits in implementing human rights in the city of Graz and recommends solutions. The ETC Graz coordinates and authors the report.
<http://www.graz.at>

Election Campaign Monitoring

The election campaign monitoring evaluates the campaigns of all parties with regard to human rights standards.
<http://www.graz.at>, <http://www.wahlkampfbarometer-graz.at/>

Independent Women's Representative of the City of Graz

Since 1986 the independent Women's Representative serves as the ombud for women and girls of Graz and is also the interface between female citizens, administration and politics.
<http://grazerfrauenrat.at/fb/>

Know your Rights

Since 2010 young human rights journalists write articles on the topic of human rights and societal policy for the youth platform of the Human Rights Council. ETC, as the Office of the Human Rights Council, oversees the project.
<http://www.kennedeinerechte.at>,
<https://www.facebook.com/kennedeinerechte>

Anti-Discrimination Office Styria

The Anti-Discrimination Office was established by the City of Graz and the Province of Styria in 2012. It is an initial contact point, consulting and monitoring agent for everyone who feels discriminated.
<http://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.steiermark.at>
0043 316 714 137

Writer in Exile

The International House of Authors in Graz (IHAG) houses persecuted authors from all over the world. The team of "Kulturvermittlung Steiermark" oversees the IHAG.
<http://www.ihag.org>

IKU

Since 1998 IKU ("experience through playing") enables children a holistic encounter with other cultures, especially from Africa. This programme is carried out by ISOP. <http://www.isop.at/iku>

Welcome Box

Upon registration in Graz new citizens receive the Welcome Box of the Department of Integration of the City of Graz which contains important information about Graz in six languages. <http://www.graz.at>

We are Graz

The ongoing primary school project of the "Association Youth against violence and racism" encourages intercultural learning to objectify integration debate since 2007.
<http://www.aragejugend.at/projekte/wir-sind-graz/>

Neighbourhood Service of Graz (NABAS)

The Neighbourhood Service at the Peace Office supports citizens since 2011 by offering a hotline, legal information and mediation of conflicts in a residential area.
<http://www.friedensbuero-graz.at>, Hotline 0316 872 878