

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Background

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union sets out the basic rights that must be respected by the EU and by its Member States when implementing EU law. The Charter was solemnly proclaimed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission in Nice in 2000. After being amended, it was proclaimed again in 2007. It became legally binding on 1 December 2009. Article 6(1) of the Treaty on European Union now provides that '[t]he Union recognises the rights, freedoms and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union [...], which shall have the same legal value as the Treaties'. The Charter constitutes primary EU law. It serves as a parameter for examining the validity of secondary EU legislation and national measures.

Inside

This leaflet provides an overview of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights itself and of its implementation in the EU. It also presents the activities of the European Parliament and of other key actors protecting fundamental rights in the EU. Scan the QR code or click on the title of the publication to access it directly.



Publications

[The Charter of Fundamental Rights, fact sheet](#) - February 2016

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU brings together in a single document the fundamental rights that are protected in the EU. The Charter contains rights and freedoms under six titles: Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizens' Rights, and Justice. Its provisions are addressed to the institutions and bodies of the EU with due regard for the principle of subsidiarity, and the national authorities only when they are implementing EU law. This fact sheet gives an overview of the historical background, the content, and the scope of application of the Charter, amongst others.



[Respect for fundamental rights in the EU, fact sheet](#) - February 2016

Fundamental rights set out minimum standards to ensure that a person is treated with dignity. Whether this is the right to be free from discrimination or the right to get access to justice, they should be respected, promoted and protected. The Member States have a long tradition of safeguarding fundamental rights. The EU itself is built on these values and is committed to guaranteeing the rights proclaimed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. This fact sheet looks at the legal basis, the achievements and the role of the European Parliament in this field.



[European Parliament reports on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU - 2010-2014](#)

The adoption of the annual reports on the situation of fundamental rights is a specific feature of Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, as committee responsible for the protection of citizen's rights, human rights and fundamental rights in the EU. They assess breaches of fundamental rights as enshrined in the Charter and invite relevant actors at EU and national level to remedy the situation. The drafting process includes a public hearing and a wide consultation of stakeholders in order to present the most encompassing analysis of the situation.



[The evolution of fundamental rights charters and case law: a comparison - February 2011](#)

This report seeks to convey the importance of the institutional context of human rights protection. It examines the human rights protection systems of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union. It explores the substantive rights, protection mechanisms, modes of engagement within, and the interactions between each system. The report also outlines the protection of minority rights, and the political processes through which human rights and institutions evolve and interact. A series of recommendations are made on how to advance the EU human rights system.



[The interpretation of Article 51 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights - February 2016](#)

This study considers the dilemma of a broad or narrow application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights to national measures. It considers the way the Court of Justice of the EU has been interpreting fundamental rights in relation to such measures before and after the Lisbon Treaty and the constitutionalisation of the Charter. The study concludes that a more courageous approach should be taken at EU level when examining national implementing measures of EU law raising fundamental rights issues, notably until these are not evenly and properly guaranteed across the EU.



[European Commission annual reports on the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights - May 2015](#)

To ensure the implementation of fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the Charter, the European Commission has published, since 2010, an annual report on the application of the Charter. This report monitors progress in the areas where the EU has powers to act, showing how the Charter has been taken into account in actual cases, notably when new EU legislation is proposed. It provides an opportunity for an annual exchange of views with the European Parliament which adopts a resolution every year on the situation of Fundamental rights in the EU and the Council of the EU.



[Fundamental rights agency report: challenges and achievements in 2014 - June 2015](#)

The EU established the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) to provide independent, evidence-based assistance and expertise on fundamental rights to EU institutions and Member States. It is an independent EU body. Its annual report for 2014 examines fundamental rights-related developments in equality and non-discrimination; racism, xenophobia and related intolerance; Roma integration; asylum, borders, immigration and integration; information society, privacy and data protection; the rights of the child; and access to justice including rights of crime victims.



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The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union sets out the basic rights that must be respected by the EU and by its Member States when implementing EU law. It is available in 23 languages. Click on the link or scan the QR code for direct access.



[The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#)

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Responsible for the vast majority of the legislation and democratic oversight of Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) policies, the Committee ensures the full respect of the Charter of Fundamental Rights within the EU, the European Convention on Human Rights and the strengthening of European citizenship. It also tackles JHA policy issues of a common interest at EU level.

www.europarl.europa.eu/libe

Policy Departments

The policy departments provide high-level independent expertise and advice at the request of committees and other parliamentary bodies. Covering all areas of Parliament's activity, they deliver policy analysis to feed into the legislative work of committees or members' delegations. Policy departments organise events, including workshops and expert panels, which enhance Parliament's analytical capacity and develop common approaches to current political issues.

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