



SAVE THE DATE

Join us for a side event at the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE region

Sustainable Recovery: Delivering on both Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda in the UNECE Region

ONLINE EVENT
10 March 2021
12:15 – 13:45 CET (GMT +1)



CO-SPONSORS OF THE SIDE EVENT

- Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN Geneva
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
- European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)
- Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).
- Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations Office and Other International Organisations in Geneva.

THEMATIC FOCUS

” This is not a time to neglect human rights; it is a time when, more than ever, human rights are needed to navigate this crisis in a way that will allow us, as soon as possible, to focus again on achieving equitable sustainable development and sustaining peace’ UN Secretary-General.¹

¹ UN Secretary-General from the report “Human Rights and COVID-19: we are all in this together”, April 2020 <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/covid-19-and-human-rights-we-are-all-together>

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating effect on vulnerable groups and societies and on a range of fundamental human rights in the UNECE region. Older people; people with disabilities; Roma and Travellers; homeless people; and migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are just some of those who bear the brunt of the epidemic in the region.² The reasons for existing and newly formed vulnerabilities are, however, not new. Their root causes are entrenched in systems, policies, structures and attitudes that allow inequalities and discrimination to persist. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed these systemic patterns of neglect, revealing gaps in states' fulfilment of their existing human rights obligations and deep-rooted challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has provided some with a pretext to silence dissent and pass emergency legislation with limited democratic control that risk having longer-term effects on our societies. Depending on how states address this crisis, inequalities could become even more pronounced, undermining the promise of the 2030 Agenda "to leave no-one behind".

Member States in the UNECE region are taking various policy and legal measures to address the impact of COVID-19. While the full range of human rights and SDGs are interlinked and indispensable for achieving sustainable recovery, certain targets and human rights have already proven to be of the utmost relevance in the context of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. Can these targets and rights constitute the basis for identifying concrete and context-specific solutions? How can we ensure that policies and interventions reach those most at risk? Do we know how to identify those at risk? How can we effectively involve local authorities in response and recovery efforts? Do the SDGs and human rights offer an adequate monitoring framework for the assessment of sustainable recovery, based on SDG indicators and recommendations from international human rights mechanisms? How can Covid-19 recovery programmes and plans, such as the EU's Recovery Plan for Europe, build on human rights and the 2030 Agenda?

This side event will address the human rights dimension of the central theme of the Forum, "Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and action and delivery on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the UNECE Region", contributing also to the cross-cutting session on SDG data and statistics. (Session 4.1) It aims to concretise how sustainable and resilient recovery can build on human rights, human rights principles, and recommendations from human rights mechanisms and inform action and delivery on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development post-Covid-19.

The side event will explore the following key questions:

- How can we conceptualise a human rights-based sustainable recovery which builds on both states human rights obligations and SDG commitments in recovery programmes and measures, such as the EU's Recovery Plan?

² For more information on the impact of the pandemic on fundamental rights in the EU, see the focused papers developed by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) [Products | European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights \(europa.eu\)](https://fra.europa.eu/en/products)

- What are the specific SDG targets and human rights that appear to be the most relevant at the regional and global level when designing Covid-19 response and recovery plans and programmes?
- How do we ensure that the principle of leaving no-one behind is entrenched in Covid-19 recovery strategies and plans, drawing on human rights recommendations and disaggregated data, and ensuring that the voices of those “left behind” are included? How can we produce this disaggregated data for generating evidence-based policies and measures?
- How can local authorities be involved to ensure their vulnerable residents benefit from the recovery and development plans?
- How can national human rights institutions (NHRIs), United Nations agencies, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and other stakeholders assist or complement, including in helping to make the planning and delivery more inclusive and human-rights based?

Speakers will include representatives from member states in the UNECE region, including a local authority from a UNECE member state; regional and international human rights bodies; national human rights institutions; and representatives from vulnerable groups.

PARTICIPANTS AND EVENT FORMAT

The event seeks to convene representatives from member states in the UNECE region; regional and international human rights bodies; national human rights institutions; and representatives from vulnerable groups.

The event will take place virtually on 10 March 2021 from 12:15- 13:45 CET (GMT +1). Check-in from 12:00-12:15 CET (GMT +1).

For registration and information about the side event please visit [this event page](#).