

Brussels, 10-11 December 2025

25 Years of Rights: Reflecting on the Impact of the Charter

Conference to mark the 25th anniversary of the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

Wednesday 10 December – International Human Rights Day

From 9:00 Arrival and registration of participants

Event moderated by Friso Roscam Abbing, Head of Brussels Liaison Office, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

09:30 Opening remarks

Director-General for Justice and Consumers, Ana Gallego

09:45-10.15 Scene setter – *How the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights shapes EU law*

Michal Bobek, Judge of the Supreme Administrative Court of Czechia, former Advocate General at the Court of Justice of the European Union

10:15-10.30 *The Charter today – take-outs from the third annual CharterXchange online event of Charter practitioners*

Interview with Sirpa Rautio, Director, European Union Agency of Fundamental Rights

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:00 Panel 1: *Two anniversaries, two overlapping protection systems – the European Convention of Human Rights and the Charter*

- *Arnfinn Bårdsen, Vice-President of the European Court of Human Rights*
- *Niels Fenger, Judge of the Court of Justice of the European Union*
 - *Exchange moderated by Inge Govaere, Professor of EU Law, Director of the European Legal Studies Department of the College of Europe*
 - *Questions from the audience*

12:00-12:15 Art performance

12:15-13:00 Panel 2: *The Charter's role alongside international and regional human rights instruments – ensuring consistent application and adding value*

- *Christina Meinecke, Regional Representative for Europe Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*
- *Gianluca Esposito, Director-General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe*
 - *Exchange moderated by Kirsten Roberts Lyster, Chair of the Human Rights Program at the Central European University, Chair of the FRA Scientific Committee*
 - *Questions from the audience*

13:00-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:30 **Marketplace of connections - Civil society best practice initiatives from the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme**

Participants will be invited to join thematic marketplace tables where CERV beneficiaries present best practices from their projects. Participants can join in 3 out of 10 tables on the following topics:

- *Capacity building and awareness raising on the Charter*
- *Empowering the civic space*
- *Strategic litigation*
- *Combating hate speech and hate crime*
- *Whistleblower protection*
- *Promoting and protecting children's rights*
- *Violence against women*
- *LGBTIQ equality*
- *Anti-racism and non-discrimination*
- *Citizens' engagement and participation*

The marketplace will be moderated with 25 minutes of presentation and discussion at each table. Participants will be asked to choose their preferred topics during event registration.

15:30 – 16:00 **Coffee break**

16:00 – 17:00 **Panel 3: Empowering individuals – 25 years of equality and rights**

- *Colm O'Cinneide, Professor of Human Rights Law at the University College of London*
- *Aleksandra Dulciewicz, Mayor of the City of Gdansk*
- *Beate Rudolf, Director, National Human Rights Institution of Germany (online)*
 - *Exchange moderated by Delia Ferri, Professor of Law, Maynooth University, Member of the FRA Scientific Committee*
 - *Questions from the audience*

17:00 – 17:15 Civil society perspective on supporting the application of the Charter

Interview with Kersty McCourt, Senior Advocacy Advisor at Liberties (Civil Liberties Union for Europe)

From 17:15 Cocktail and tapas with cultural performance

Thursday 11 December

9:00 Arrival and welcome coffee

Event moderated by Friso Roscam Abbing, Head of Brussels Liaison Office, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

09:30-10:30 Panel 4: National actors as Charter agents – challenges and highlights

- *National authorities as guarantors of fundamental rights: Adam Bodnar, Senator of the Republic of Poland (online)*
- *Ensuring the application of the Charter in national courts, Goran Selanec Judge of the Croatian Constitutional Court*
- *The role of national parliaments in ensuring the implementation of the Charter: Speaker TBC*
 - *Exchange moderated by Jonas Christoffersen, attorney, former Director of the Danish Institute of Human Rights*
 - *Questions from the audience*

10:30-11:00 Coffee break with side programme

11:00-12:00 Panel 5: The policy framework – recent insights from the Mid-term review of the Charter strategy

- *Presentation of the mid-term review outcomes, Director-General for Justice and Consumers, Ana Gallego*
- *Key messages from the perspective of justice professionals, Ingrid Derveaux, Secretary-General of European Judicial Training Network (EJTN)*
- *Key messages from the perspective of NHRIs, Debbie Kohner, Secretary-General of European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)*
 - *Exchange moderated by Director-General for Justice and Consumers, Ana Gallego*
 - *Questions from the audience*

12:00-13:00 **Panel 6 – Looking forward into the next 25 years**

- *Javier Zarzalejos, Chair, LIBE Committee*
- *Teresa Anjinho, European Ombudsman*
- *Norma Foley, Minister for Children, Disability and Equality of Ireland*
- *Marilena Raouna, Deputy Minister for European Affairs of Cyprus (online)*
 - *Exchange moderated by Gabriel N. Toggenburg, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights*
 - *Questions from the audience*

13:00-13:15 **Closing words** – *Michael McGrath, Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection*