

ENNHRI Project

“The Role of NHRIs in Situations of Conflict and Post-Conflict”

Background

Wider Europe is characterised by a patchwork of conflict and post-conflict situations. These include ongoing aggressions, dormant or frozen conflicts, instances of border disputes, initiatives of reconstruction and peace-building, as well as violent and/or terrorist actions by non-state actors. Violations of human rights dramatically increase in conflict and post-conflict settings, and are both the cause and consequence of conflict. Protecting rights-holders and addressing current and past human rights is thus essential to effective conflict prevention, management and resolution.

The Role of NHRIs in Situations of Conflict and Post-Conflict

[National Human Rights Institutions \(NHRIs\)](#) are unique and central actors to the promotion and protection of human rights, and with sufficient capacity, they can play a key role in (post) conflict situations. Their independent and impartial character, as well as their broad mandate ensure that they can address the full range of human rights issues arising, and therefore core (post) conflict tensions.

NHRIs are the only national bodies accredited periodically by reference to the [United Nations Paris Principles](#), which provides them legitimacy at the local, national, regional and international levels. As such, they act as a bridge between the international level, and the State, civil society organisations, individuals and human rights defenders.

At the same time, conflict raises a number of challenges to NHRIs’ work, including increased human rights violations, new and constantly evolving areas of work, possible limited resources and capacity, as well as politically polarised environments and shrinking democratic space.

Several consultations with ENNHRI members have shown that it is particularly important for NHRIs to exchange on thematic areas and NHRI methodologies applied to these challenging contexts, and to secure adequate levels of engagement with stakeholders at the national, regional and international level.

About the project

The Project aims **to enhance the effectiveness of NHRIs to promote and protect human rights in situations of conflict and post-conflict in the wider Europe**. This will be achieved through a series of capacity building activities, dialogues and bi-lateral / multi-lateral cooperation, as well as through targeted engagement with other national, regional and international human rights stakeholders. The Project also seeks to strengthen ENNHRI’s capacity to support more effectively European NHRIs operating in such contexts.

The Project has been developed in close consultation with ENNHRI members, through dedicated meetings and a membership survey, which collected extensive and valuable inputs from NHRIs operating in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Funded by the EU through [the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights](#) (EIDHR), the Project will run for three years (2017-2020). A Project Advisory Group will advise and support the implementation.

Objectives and Activities

1. Raise awareness on the role of European NHRIs and build their capacity to promote and protect human rights in situations of conflict or post-conflict

Activities:

- Hold four workshops to build capacity, and exchange good practices of NHRIs on topics such as refugees and IDPs; detention; non-discrimination; emergency measures, as well as on NHRIs methodologies in these areas;
- Produce a Guidance on the role of NHRIs in conflict and post-conflict;
- Organise a final project conference to present project outcomes to a wide-range of stakeholders, policy makers and practitioners; and
- Communicate on the project via digital tools and publications.

2. Enhance solidarity and cooperation between European NHRIs, particularly for those operating in conflict and post-conflict

Activities:

- Provide space and contact between European NHRIs, via peer-exchange visits or bilateral and multilateral meetings;
- Enhance online communication channels for better exchange among NHRIs;
- Develop coordinated actions with GANHRI and NHRI in other regions; and
- Enhance and tailor support to NHRIs under threat.

3. Support European NHRIs' engagement with national and international actors, including civil society

Activities:

- Develop and implement engagement strategy for regional and international human rights bodies;
- Regular meetings with international stakeholders, to increase engagement with international human rights mechanisms, identify synergies, and avoid duplications (including an international stakeholder engagement meeting in the first phase of the project); and
- Support sub-regional meetings between relevant NHRIs and local, national and international stakeholders, to address specific human rights issues occurring at the sub-regional level, and develop a joint understanding and cooperation on these concerns.

For more information on the project, please contact Valentina.Purcel@ennhri.org.