



البعثة الدبلوماسية للمملكة العربية السعودية  
لدى الأمم المتحدة  
جنيف، فيينا

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The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations Office and other international organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and wishes to refer to its note verbale Ref. OHCHR/TESPRD/HRESI Section/Child and youth rights/Tel: /+41 22 928 92 49 dated 10 November 2017, in which the OHCHR requests to receive any relevant information for the preparation of its report on youth and human rights, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 34/15.

In this regard, the Mission has the honour to enclose herewith the reply of the National Institution for Human Rights on the aforementioned subject.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurance of its highest consideration.

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**Youth and Human Rights Report**  
**Prepared by**  
**National Institution for Human Rights**  
**in the Kingdom of Bahrain**

**1. Is there a national law on youth in your country? If yes, please describe it (including how youth is defined within the specific law).**

The United Nations for statistical purposes defines "youth" as persons between the ages of 15 and 24, without prejudice to further definitions by Member States. However, national legislation on youth in the Kingdom of Bahrain did not provide a clear definition of that category.

Bahrain legislation pays a great attention to youth through the following laws:

1) Law No. 37 of 2012 Promulgating the Child Law:

Article No. (4) stated that: "The child means in this law anyone who did not exceed eighteen full calendar years, taking into account the special laws governing the organization of those under this age".

2) Law No. (15) for the year 2014 amending article (1) of Decree-Law No. (17) for the year 1976 regarding juvenile affairs:

Article (1) stated that: "The juvenile in this law is a person who has attained the age of seven years and has not attained the age of fifteen full calendar years at the time of the offense or when he is in a case of delinquency".

3) Law No. (36) for the year 2006 amending certain provisions of Decree Law No. (14) for the year 2002 Concerning the Directing of Political Rights as amended by Legislative Decree No. 35 of 2002:

Article (1) stated that: "Clause No. (1) of Article 2, Article 3 and Article 4 of Decree-Law No. (14) of 2002 on the exercise of political rights shall be replaced by the following texts:

Article (2) Clause No. 1: To be twenty years of age on the day....."



The amendment aims to reduce the legal age to exercise the political rights by reducing the age of election from twenty one years to twenty years on the day of referendum or election.

- 4) Decree-Law No. (21) for the year 1989 promulgating the law of social and cultural associations and clubs and private bodies working in the field of youth and sports and private institutions and its amendments.
- 5) Decree Law No. (33) for the year 2010 amending certain provisions of Decree Law No. (5) for the year 1983 concerning Amiri Decree No. (2) of 1975 regarding the establishment of a Higher Council for Youth and Sports.

## 2. What are the main challenges that young people face in your country?

Through the NIHR's monitoring of the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain, it can be said that the most important challenge facing the Bahraini youth during the current period is the political exploitation by political groups through acts of violence, sabotage and terrorism, whether in return for money or for free. Exploitation has also been monitored and noticed in the election process in society. Therefore, in 2015 the NIHR submitted a proposal on the amendment of the provisions of the articles (60) and (69) of Law No. (37) for the year 2012 by enacting the Child Law, with regard to the criminalization of the exploitation of children in the electoral process.

The NIHR has expressed its concerns regarding to what children in the Kingdom of Bahrain are exposed to - the exploitation in the process of election propaganda- during the elections period, which may expose them to the risk of injury or death or detention, whilst emphasizing the impermissibility of exposing the life of children to danger or placing them within the matrix of political competition whilst being in the stage of forming their political consciousness, and it emphasizes the responsibility of those involved in this, given that protecting children from political exploitation is considered among the fundamental elements related to



assuring their right to survival, growth and development, in order to be able to contribute to building society and to achieve its progress.

**3. What measures is the Government taking to ensure the full implementation of young people’s rights (civil and political rights and economic and social rights)?**

A number of measures taken by the Government to support youth in various spheres political, civil, economic, social and cultural. The most important measures are:

1) The establishment of a ministry specialised in youth affairs called “Ministry of Youth and Sport Affairs”.

In 2015, His Majesty Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, issued the Royal Decree number (27) for the year 2015 to appoint a Minister for Youth and Sports Affairs to oversee the General Organization for Youth and Sports and the Royal Decree number (35) for the year 2015 to dissolve the General Organization for Youth and Sports whereas the Ministry of Youth & Sports Affairs - or the body to be assigned by a decree - will assume GOYS responsibilities.

2) The establishment of the “Supreme Council for Youth and Sports” (SCYS) since 1975.

The main SCYS’s mandate is to draw overall policy for youth and sports programs aiming to achieve the total integration of all sectors of youth and sports sectors with the aim to build the good citizen: socially, physically and intellectually.

3) The establishment of the “Bahrain Olympic Committee” (BOC) since 1979.

BOC is an independent civil body with legal personality and is a member by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). It has all the rights and obligations set forth in the Olympic Charter. The (BOC) is the official organization supervising sport activities in Bahrain and under the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports.



- 4) Law No. (36) for the year 2006 amending certain provisions of Decree Law No. (14) for the year 2002 Concerning the Directing of Political Rights as amended by Legislative Decree No. 35 of 2002.

It amend some of the provisions of Decree Law No. (14) for the year 2002 concerning the exercise of political rights by reducing the age of election from twenty one years to twenty years on the day of referendum or election.

- 5) Developing the National Youth Strategy

The idea of developing the National Youth Strategy was introduced in August 2003, when the General Organization for Youth and Sports, on behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, agreed with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to develop a national youth strategy, A work based on capacity-building in various national institutions. The strategy included key youth issues such as education, health, employment, culture, information and communication technology, sports, promotion, participation and human rights. In 2011, the National Youth Strategy for the years (2011-2015) was launched. This strategy has focused on capacity-building in various national institutions. Also supported the key youths' issues such as education, health, employment, culture, information and communication technology, sports, promotion, participation and human rights.

**4. Could you please give examples of policies and programmes adopted to support and empower young people in the exercise of their rights?**

The tasks of The National Institution for Human Rights (NIHR) focus on the promotion, development and protection of human rights, in addition to striving to consolidate the relevant values and awareness of such values, and ensuring that these values are practiced freely and independently, in line with the Paris Principles relating to the status of national institutions in the promotion and protection of human rights - endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly under Resolution No. (48/134) issued on December 20, 1993 - were the legal reference for establishing NIHR.



Based on the mandates given to the (NIHR) by the Law No (26) of 2014 on the Establishment of the National Institution for Human Rights as amended by Decree-Law No (20) of 2016.

In 2017 The (NIHR) has focused on youth to support and enable them to exercise their rights by holding a series of lectures and training courses that contribute to spreading human rights culture and clarifying best practices in line with national and international human rights standards.

The following table illustrates the events in 2017 related to youth empowerment:

No.	Training Program Title	Targeted Group	Date
1	Human Rights and Good Governance "Youth Leaders in Peace and Human Rights Program"	Young people	12-13 Feb.2017
2	Peace-Building Process "Youth Leaders in Peace and Human Rights Program"	Young people	26-27 Feb.2017
3	Advocacy and Lobbying Campaigns "Youth Leaders in Peace and Human Rights Program"	Young people	12-13 Mar.2017

Moreover, since 2013 the (NIHR) effectively contributed to the "Legal Clinic for Human Rights at the University of Bahrain" program. This is a practical training program for law students that enable them to acquire skills in the field of human rights, by offering workshops, lectures and presentations by specialists from the NIHR about its role in the promotion and protection of human rights. The program was spread over fifteen weeks and tackled the Institution's jurisdiction in the area of promotion, as well as its role in the protection of human rights through a mechanism to receive complaints and related procedures, to provide legal assistance and advice, and its role in the process of monitoring human rights violations.

In addition, since 2015 the (NIHR) held a training program for the students of the summer camp to prepare the future young men in the



Royal Police Academy, which addressed the fundamental principles of human rights, targeting the age group between (7-17) years.

**5. How are youth organizations or youth-led structures involved in developing implementing, monitoring and/or evaluating policies and programmes on youth in your country?**

There is no doubt that the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports is one of the most important structures and institutions concerned with the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth policies and programs in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This is clearly demonstrated by the Council's subsequent objectives. For example, one of their goals is “Setting general policies for youth and sports programs in various fields and follow up its implementation by cooperating and setting common goals with the competent authorities and influencing public opinion on the importance of all what is offered for the youth in terms of services”.

There are large numbers of youth associations focusing on the empowerment of young people to exercise their rights. In order to strengthen cooperation, With a view to promoting and spreading a culture of human rights and youth empowerment in the field of human rights, NIHR signed number of memorandums of understanding with those bodies such as; “Bahrain Youth Association”, “Together for Human Rights Society” and “Youth and Technology Association”.