1. What capacity building initiatives have been taken to implement/incorporate human rights in local administration?

At the level of the European Union, there are a series of documents that underline the principles underlying the administration-citizen relationship, the activity it carries out with the public. Thus, principles such as legality, non-discrimination, proportionality between the measures taken and the goal pursued as well as the consistency of the act of conduct in the administrative sector are found in the European Union documents, norms that are respected by all departments of the specialized apparatus of the Bucharest City Hall.

Moreover, at the national level, a Code of Conduct for Civil Servants was developed (Law 7/2004, republished in 2007), constituted in the form of an information tool regarding the professional conduct that citizens are entitled to expect from civil servants, as well as a means of creating a climate of trust and mutual respect between citizens and civil servants on the one hand, and between citizens and public administration authorities, on the other. From the perspective of civil servants, the Code represents a clear collection of rules of conduct, by which civil servants are required to ensure equal treatment of citizens before public authorities and institutions, professionalism, impartiality and independence, honour and fairness.

a. Please provide information on institutional structures for coordination and harmonization of capacity building initiatives.

The public administration in Romania has adapted to the requirements imposed until now by adopting appropriate legislation in which the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as the positioning of the citizen in the middle of the administration's activity, occupy a central place. Thus, Romania has demonstrated that it has adopted the principle of good governance, introducing it into the legislation, but it must be taken into account that good governance represents a standard that will have to be constantly followed in order to achieve it.

b. Please provide information on the involvement of civil society, the private sector, academia, etc. in capacity building initiatives.

Currently, the public administration cannot function without the citizen. The purpose of the administration-citizen relationship is to know and find ways to solve problems by the public administration in the context of the social, economic and political situation at national and local level. The importance of dialogue with the citizen, with civil society and the mass media to ensure public transparency, but also to ensure respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms is a priority. Moreover, the Treaty of Lisbon emphasizes the fact that the participation of civil society is a principle of good governance, bringing more modernity to the content of the treaty, but also to the conceptions regarding the mode of governance.

Civil society and the citizen have the role of participating in public life and involving civil society in the legislative process, as this is the basis of democracy. Thus, transparency at the level of state authorities, access to information of public interest, knowledge of the decisions taken by the authorities, the active participation of the citizen in public life, in making public decisions are fundamental elements on which a democracy is built and on which the entire activity of Bucharest City Hall.

c. Please provide information on any monitoring or evaluation mechanisms assessing the effectiveness of capacity building initiatives and their impact on the promotion and protection of human rights at the local level.

The European system for the protection of human rights was established by the Council of Europe, with the aim that "each member of the Council of Europe accepts the principles of the rule of law and the principle by virtue of which every person under its jurisdiction enjoys fundamental rights and freedoms of man".

The Council of Europe's human rights system has its legal source in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention), which guarantees basic civil and political rights, and the revised European Social Charter, which provides for a system of social and economic rights. Each of these treaties establishes its own institutional framework for supervising compliance with the obligations assumed by that treaty. Romania ratified the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the additional protocols to this convention through Law no. 30 of May 18, 1994.

2. What are the capacity building gaps and needs of local governments in relation to implementing/incorporating human rights at the local level?

**The European Social Charter** is a treaty of the Council of Europe that guarantees the social and economic rights of man. This was adopted in Systems for the Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms in 1961 (in force since 1965) and revised in 1996. The revised European Social Charter, opened for signature on 3 May 1996, extended the number of guaranteed rights to 31. Revision of the **European Social Charter** was necessary for its adaptation to social and economic developments, which allowed the extension of its scope to a series of new social and economic rights, by modifying certain provisions and supplementing it with a series of new provisions, among which:

* strengthening equality between women and men;
* the right of people with disabilities to individual social integration, to personal autonomy and to participation in community life;
* strengthening the right of children and adolescents to social, legal and economic protection;
* the right to protection in case of dismissal;
* workers' right to dignity;
* the right of workers with family responsibilities to equal opportunities and treatment;
* the right to protection against poverty and social exclusion;
* the right to decent housing;
* extending the prohibition of discrimination.

The rights guaranteed by the **European Social Charter** can be divided into two categories: working conditions and social cohesion.

Romania ratified the revised **European Social Charter**, adopted in Strasbourg on May 3, 1996, by Law no. 74 of May 3, 1999.

**The European Committee for Social Rights** monitors the compliance of the situation in the states-parties to the revised **European Social Charter**. It examines the reports and decides whether or not the situation in the countries concerned is in accordance with the European Social Charter. Its decisions are known as "conclusions" and are published each year.

3. What measures are needed to further strengthen the capacity of local governments to implement/incorporate human rights at the local level?

**The measures**, for this purpose, provide for:

(a) Initiating and developing effective public awareness campaigns aimed:

(i) to encourage responsiveness to human rights;

(ii) to promote the recognition of the qualifications, merits and abilities of individuals and their contribution to the workplace and the labour market;

(b) Cultivating at all levels of the education system, including in all children, from an early age, an attitude of respect towards peers;

(c) Encouraging the media to present the information correctly and concretely;

(d) Promotion of information programs to raise awareness of human rights.

4. What are existing procedures and practices for engaging local governments in the work of the United Nations human rights mechanisms and in implementing, reporting and following up on relevant recommendations? How could the existing level of engagement be enhanced?

Romania supports the efforts aimed at strengthening the UN Human Rights Council, which was established in 2006. It was a member of this body subordinate to the General Assembly in the period 2006-2008, respectively 2011-2014. Romania was elected for a new mandate for the period 2023-2025.

Romania had two mandates within the CDO, the first, from June 19, 2006 to June 18, 2008, and the second, from August 2011 to December 31, 2014. Among the priorities assumed by Romania in these two mandates, we recall: ensuring compliance with the drawn standards of treaties and international instruments in the field of human rights, preventing and combating discrimination, protecting human rights for people in vulnerable situations, cooperation with civil society.

5. What are the capacity building gaps and needs of local governments in relation to engaging with the United Nations human rights mechanisms and in implementing, reporting and following up on relevant recommendations?

Within the CDO, Romania initiated two resolutions:

Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (2012, 2015, 2017, 2019) and The Right of the Child to Engage in Play and Recreational Activities (2014).

Romania is also a co-initiator of the resolutions:

• Contribution of parliaments to human rights policies;

• Eliminating discrimination against people affected by leprosy and their family members;

• Extreme poverty and human rights;

• Local administration and human rights;

• National policies and human rights;

• The right of every person to enjoy the highest standard of physical and mental health: sport and a healthy lifestyle as contributing factors;

• The right to work.

6. What are the main challenges in your country in the promotion and protection of human rights at the local level?

On July 5, the European Commission published the 2023 Rule of Law Report.

Starting from 2022, the first part of the country chapters includes the Commission's recommendations for the respective state. In the case of Romania, as last year, among these are the intensification of efforts to obtain the accreditation of a national institution for human rights, taking into account the UN Principles on the Status of National Institutions (the Paris Principles). The document mentions that "changes would be necessary regarding the operating law of the Romanian Institute for Human Rights in order for the institution to be in accordance with the above-mentioned principles", describing the current situation of the Institute.

The Romanian Institute for Human Rights was established by Law no. 9 of January 29, 1991 with the aim of ensuring a better knowledge by public bodies, non-governmental associations and Romanian citizens of the issue of human rights, of the way in which human rights are guaranteed in other countries, especially in the countries participating in the Conference for Security and cooperation in Europe. At the same time, the aim of the institute is to inform public opinion abroad, international bodies, in relation to the practical ways in which human rights are ensured and respected in Romania.