



CDDH (2019)20
10 May 2019

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (CDDH)

Online Platform on Human Rights and Business

Information provided by the Secretariat

Introduction

The present document provides an update on the current developments concerning the platform on the following aspects:

- I. The State of the technical construction of the platform and responses received;
- II. Information on the update to the HELP course on Human Rights and Business;
- III. Events regarding the platform and the potential of a Workshop / Seminar.

I. THE PLATFORM AND RESPONSES

1. The public website of the platform has been constructed and its content is being finalised, with a view to a public launch once the platform contains sufficient material.
2. The platform also comprises the dedicated participants page¹ in the HELP portal, to which national authorities are encouraged to register their contact points and relevant personnel. This portal offers a shared working space for participants which can provide a forum for peer-to-peer exchanges, and the collection and dissemination of further information and practices.
3. Several responses to the questionnaire circulated in January 2019 have been submitted by both member States and National Human Rights Institutions. The Secretariat wishes to thank the relevant authorities for their contribution to this work and encourages remaining members to submit their responses to the questionnaire.
4. The responses submitted are being reviewed by the Secretariat and their contents are being published to the platform website.
5. In addition to the circulated questionnaire, the platform is intended to perform as a continuous information gathering and sharing exercise. Submissions of National Action Plans, good and best practices, and relevant national developments are welcomed on a continuous basis, with a view to their publication on the platform.
6. Members wishing to submit further information to the platform can do so by contacting the Secretariat or making use of the dedicated HELP page for the platform.

II. THE HELP COURSE

7. The update of the HELP course on Business and Human Rights will begin following the receipt of the necessary voluntary contribution, which is in the process of being finalised.
8. The course will be updated and modernised to reflect recent developments and guidance in the field of human rights and business, including the new Council of Europe Handbook on Business and Human Rights; and will feature additional modules which could include guidance for legal professionals on, for example: the development of National Action Plans; conducting Human Rights Risk assessments; conducting and engaging in multi-stakeholder processes; and improving access to remedy mechanisms.

III. EVENTS

9. The Secretariat envisions co-hosting a session at the upcoming United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva on November 2019,² in collaboration with the European Union External Actions Service (EEAS).
10. An application to organise a panel session titled *Strengthening regional “races to the top” on business and human rights – the role of regional organisations* has been submitted to the Forum’s organisers for consideration. If selected, the platform and work of the Council of Europe in the field of Human Rights and Business will be presented at this session.

¹ <http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/course/view.php?id=2598>

² <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Business/Forum/Pages/2019ForumBHR.aspx>

11. The Secretariat has also considered the potential value of a technical level regional workshop for government personnel working on the implementation of the relevant standards in the field of business and human rights.
12. Such a technical level workshop, taking place in the course of the next biennium, would gather relevant personnel from national authorities to discuss and share initiatives and strategies, conduct gap analysis, and identify common challenges and solutions. It would also aim to foster a strong network between the participants. The workshop could be conducted *in-camera* to encourage discussion. The platform can serve as a supporting resource in both the organisation and follow up of such an event.
13. Members are invited to express their opinion on such a workshop and to contact the Secretariat with any further suggestions or interest in such an exercise.

Online Platform for Human Rights and Business

WELCOME

This platform was set up to promote the sharing of national expertise and practice in the field of Human Rights and Business.


It was established following the **Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2016)3** to member states on Human Rights and Business, which sets out comprehensive standards and guidance that aims to promote the effective implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights across the Council of Europe.

The sharing of National Action Plans and good practices between member states is a central feature of the Recommendation, and this platform highlights these developments.

Find out more about the Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2016)3

How to use this platform

Submit Information



www.coe.int/cddh

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NATIONAL PAGES



View all States' Developments

National Action Plans

National Action Plans (NAPs) are an important process to aid in implementing the United Nations Guiding Principles, and the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers has called on States to develop NAPs in both its 2014 Declaration and in Recommendation (2016)3.

- The National Action Plans published by Council of Europe Member States appear below, with a brief summary of their key features.
- The plans can be **filtered by State** by selecting from the list to the right. Clear the filter to view the full list again.

For in-depth explorations, comparisons, and evaluations of the contents of National Action Plans from both Council of Europe members and around the world, we encourage you to visit the Global Naps site from the Danish National Human Rights Institute.



LIST OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

Czech Republic NAP

2017 - 2022 | CZECH REPUBLIC

Denmark NAP

2014 | DENMARK

Georgia NAP

2018 - 2020 | GEORGIA



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Netherlands

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

Netherlands National Action Plan

2014 | NETHERLANDS

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IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

CSR Sector Risk Assessment

2014 | NETHERLANDS

In 2014 the Dutch Government commissioned a sector risk assessment (SRA) from KPMG that analysed the risks of particular sectors of the Dutch economy operating internationally.

Guidance Tool for Business: "Doing Business with Respect for Human Rights"

2016 | NETHERLANDS

The guidance document "Doing Business with Respect for Human Rights" was developed over a multi-year collaboration between companies, civil society and issue experts and is designed to provide a foundational guide for businesses on how to implement respect for human rights in line with the UN...

[View all States' implementation actions](#)



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Implementing Actions

States have been engaged in a wide range of initiatives, policies, and actions to implement the UN Guiding Principles and in the field of Human Rights and Business in general. A selection of these actions appears below.

The list can be sorted by **State** and by each of the **Three Pillars** of the UN Guiding Principles by using the filters to the right. Clear the filters to view the whole list again.

LIST OF IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

CSR Sector Risk Assessment

2014 | NETHERLANDS

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STATES ?

☐ Belgium

Standards and guidance

The field of Human Rights and Business has received increased focus in the years following the adoption of the United Nations Guiding Principles, influencing the elaboration of further standards and guidance by a number of organisations and stakeholders.

Below is a selection of some of the relevant standards and guidance issued by European and international organisations.



UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Guiding Principles

UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights



COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Recommendation CM/Rec (2016)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states

Declaration of the Committee of Ministers

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Handbook for Legal Practitioners

HELP course on Business and Human Rights

High Level Seminar on Business and Human Rights



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NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Netherlands National Action Plan

NETHERLANDS | 2014

Edit


[View the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights »](#)

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Development

Main Coordinating Authority

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Drafting Process

Research and interministerial discussions leading to the development of the action plan were conducted over a period of around 6 months. Within this process, interviews were conducted to develop a report that then formed the basis of discussion for a series of Stakeholder meetings.

- ▶ An external consultant was used to aid in the preparatory phase. This also provided an element of independence in the drafting process which was appreciated by stakeholders.
- ▶ 27 interviews with 50 representatives of the business community, civil society, and other experts, were conducted to gather a balanced range of perspectives, ideas and viewpoints on implementing the UN Guiding Principles.
- ▶ 3 multistakeholder meetings were held.
- ▶ Written submissions from stakeholders were also invited.
- ▶ An interministerial group was formed [which]
- ▶ An internal review of the level of the State's implementation of the UNGPs was conducted by the Government

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