

Input



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Strengthening the rights of older people worldwide

The call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons

Erasmus+ project: Learning, teaching and training event

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About BAGSO (1)

Umbrella association of around 120 member organisations

- Social associations
- Senior citizens' organisations of political parties and trade unions
- Self-help organisations and advocacy groups
- Associations of disability organisations and patient organisations
- Church-based organisations
- Sports associations



About BAGSO (2): How it works



- Representation in political processes and boards of civil society organisations
- Elaboration of positions and statements
- Dialogue with political authorities
- Conferences, meetings and workshops
- Publications and public relations
- Pilot projects for good living in old age



About BAGSO (3): Secretariat for International Policy on Ageing



- Representing the voice of civil society in international processes
- Expressing the call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons on national and international level
- Promoting bilateral und multilateral exchanges



→ Striving to strengthen the rights of older persons worldwide

Internationale Altenpolitik – wie und warum aktiv werden



The situation of human rights of older people worldwide (1)



- Human rights are by definition universal. International human rights treaties cover and protect older persons.
- However, there is no comprehensive prohibition of age discrimination in the norms of the international human rights protection system and older persons are often treated as mere recipients of welfare – instead of rights holders. Often at risk of deprivation and exclusion; poverty; violence, abuse and neglect.
- These challenges are a result of age-based discrimination and ageism (stigmatisation, stereotypes, prejudice and/or discriminatory actions against older persons).

The situation of human rights of older people worldwide (2)



- WHO Global Report on Ageism found that half of the world's population is ageist against older persons.
- COVID-19 pandemic has made human rights protection gaps for older persons visible.
- Older persons are invisible in current international legal framework. There are no international, universally applicable standards, that could serve as reference for developing legislation to protect such rights.

The situation of human rights of older people worldwide (3)



■ High-Commissioner for Human Rights & Independent Expert:

Significant gaps in the protection of older persons.

Current framework provides fragmented and inconsistent coverage of the human rights of older persons.

■ Office of the High-Commissioner for Human Rights:

“States should, in collaboration with civil society, national human rights institutions, the UN and older persons themselves, develop and adopt a comprehensive convention on the human rights of older persons that builds on existing rights and regional instruments.”

Developments to strengthen the rights of older people



Since 1990s important developments on ageing and older people at the United Nations: (see background materials at end of presentation for further information)

- UN Principles for older persons in 1991 and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2002
- Since 2010, Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons (OEWG-A), with annual meetings
- Creation of the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons in 2013
- UN Decade for Healthy Ageing 2021-2030
- Resolutions by the UN Human Rights Council, especially in 2021 on ageism and age discrimination

Call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons (1)



■ Who articulates this call?

Different UN bodies, states (especially from Latin America and Caribbean, few EU countries and others), NGOs and national human rights institutes

■ What barriers are there?

Member states block a new instrument for different reasons, one being additional resources.

■ How to overcome these barriers?

Turn the human rights of older persons more visible and increase the pressure for a UN convention.

Call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons (2)



- BAGSO joined discussions at OEWG-A in 2012 and expressed endorsement of Independent Expert's call for the development of a UN convention in 2016.
- Since then, active in advocating for a UN convention internationally and nationally, for instance, highlighting protection gaps in German family and social law as well as around digitalisation and age discrimination (see BAGSO statement 2020).
- What do we do to articulate this call nationally and internationally?

Call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons (3)



- Participate actively in the work of the OEWG-A and preparation of inputs to reports of the Independent Expert
- Organise events about the human rights of older people, e.g. during Ministerial conference on MIPAA in Rome and at national and regional levels
- Publish statements, briefings etc. <https://www.bagso.de/english/publications-in-english/>
- Advocate nationally by sending letters and through meetings with politicians and Ministries
- Join forces with international organisations and networks: AGE Platform Europe and the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People

Ways to support the call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons (1)



- Join discussions at United Nations by seeking accreditation for the OEWG-A and participating (also online) in the sessions via UNWebTV
- Join the movement by becoming a member of the Global Alliance (GAROP) which brings together over 400 organisations from across the world
- Providing written inputs to the calls for inputs by the Independent Expert for her reports to the UN-General Assembly and the HRC
- Following and supporting the global AgeWithRights campaign on Twitter #agewithrights

Ways to support the call for a UN convention on the rights of older persons (1)



- Cite reports and resolutions of human rights mechanisms referring to older people's human rights
- Lobby governments to include older people in human rights reporting, e.g. Universal Periodic Review or review of UN-Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and engage in the discussions about the human rights of older people
- Interact with other (national) civil society organisations, including human rights organisations, to make them aware of older people's human rights and discussions at international level

Kontakt



**Thank you very much for your
attention.**

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Background material: International framework (1)

■ **Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)** – set of non-binding recommendations to States, adopted by United Nations in 2002.

Goals of include: “full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all older persons” (para 12(a))

Broad affirmation: “The promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms ... Combatting discrimination based on age and promoting the dignity of older persons...” (para 13)

Since then, implementation, review and appraisal (every 5 years) including Ministerial Conferences and reporting at all levels.

Background material: International framework (2)

Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing of the United Nations (OEWG-A) set up in 2010/11, “for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons by considering the existing international framework of the human rights of older persons and identifying possible gaps and how best to address them, including by considering, as appropriate, the feasibility of further instruments and measures, and requests the Secretary-General to provide all necessary support within existing resources for the duration of its mandate.”

Meets once a year (week before Easter) in New York. Participation of Member States, NGOs, national human rights institutes and UN organizations.

Background material: International framework (3)

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) –

secretariat for all mechanisms and technical agency on human rights, e.g. secretariat to the Human Rights Council (HRC) and UN Treaty Bodies (e.g. the Convention of the Right of People With Disabilities).

Independent Expert on the human rights of older persons (special procedure)

Important, substantial resolution on the human rights of older persons by Human Right Council in September 2021 with concrete language concerning ageism and age discrimination, and actions, such as a report on normative standards and obligations and a multi-stakeholder meeting which took place in August 2022

Resources

- BAGSO position papers and briefing on human rights of older people, <https://www.bagso.de/english/publications-in-english/>
- OEWG-A, <https://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/>
- Independent Expert, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/ie-older-persons>
- EU Council Conclusions on the human rights of older people, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/10/12/improving-the-well-being-of-older-persons-in-the-era-of-digitalisation-council-adopts-conclusions/>
- AGE Platform Europe, <https://www.age-platform.eu/publication-type/age-publications>
- GAROP, e.g. for advocacy tools <https://rightsofolderpeople.org/garop-advocacy-tools/>