The interdisciplinary Research Centre Human Rights was founded in May 2014 under the Faculty of Law of the University of Vienna. It follows six years of successful interdisciplinary human rights research by the research platform ‘Human Rights in the European Context’.

The Research Centre is directed by Manfred Nowak (Department of European, International and Comparative Law) in close collaboration with Deputy Director Christina Binder (Department for European, International and Comparative) and Deputy Director Hannes Tretter (Department of Constitutional and Administrative Law) as well as an interdisciplinary steering committee.

**CORE GROUP**

The heart of the Research Centre is its core group, in which 15 academics from five faculties of the University of Vienna have come together to promote interdisciplinary human rights research.

- Faculty of Psychology
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Social Science
- Faculty of Philological and Cultural studies
- Faculty of Catholic Theology

A far greater number of affiliated academics from all faculties are also working together on projects within the framework of the Research Centre.
IDENTITY AND OBJECTIVES

Centre of Competence
Innovative, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research identifying the main challenges, developments and potential in the field of human rights.

Network
Intra- and inter-university networking on human rights research, international partnerships with selected research institutions.

Research in Vienna
The establishment of an institutionalised structure at the University of Vienna strengthens the university’s profile, as well as academic human rights research in Vienna.

Cooperation
With research institutions, in particular the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, NGOs, the media, the Austrian federal authorities, the City of Vienna, as well as with European and international organisations and institutions, such as the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe.

Visibility
Making human rights research visible both inside and outside the University of Vienna, including through lecture series, panel discussions, seminars and conferences.

RESEARCH

Based on the University of Vienna’s 2015 Development Plan, the Research Centre Human Rights connects the research of academics, who through different faculties and institutes are already engaged with issues concerning human rights. The most important areas for action and human rights challenges for the future include the following:

- Sustainable Development Goals 2015
- Democratisation, participation and good governance
- Human rights violations and institutional violence
- Human rights in the context of secularism and desecularisation
- Environment, climate change and human rights
- Social rights and economics
- Gender and women’s rights
- Global justice
- Citizenship in the MENA Region
- Inclusive societies

More than 20 years after the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and in light of the discussions at the VIENNA+20 Conference, existing implementation gaps form another focus of the Research Centre. The Centre takes a critical approach to the question of to what extent national and international mechanisms are sufficient and where they need to be improved to achieve comprehensive human rights protection.

ENCOURAGING YOUNG ACADEMICS

Particularly through its ‘Researching Human Rights: Young Academics Network’, the Centre seeks to inspire and bring together young academics, such as through their participation in projects and through the publication of outstanding academic work. Post-doc researchers at the start of their careers are brought to the Research Centre via scholarships. There are close connections with both the Vienna Master of Arts in Human Rights and the European Master in Human Rights and Democratization (E.M.A) through which young academics from varied disciplines and a multitude of countries come to Vienna and a lively exchange between teaching and research is cultivated.

IMPETUS FOR TEACHING

The Research Centre sees itself as a catalyst for innovative and practical inter- and transdisciplinary teaching in the field of human rights. Outstanding and advanced students should in future be able to work on real cases within the framework of Human Rights Clinics – guided by teaching staff and in collaboration with Human Rights lawyers, NGOs, public authorities and international institutions. In many European states and the USA law clinics are already fixed components of teaching and an important bridge between academia and civil society.

EVENTS

In the HUMAN RIGHTS TALKS-series, representatives of the Human Rights Centre discuss current affairs related to human rights from an interdisciplinary perspective with Austrian and international experts. The series of events are held in conjunction with the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights.

Documentary films, which deal with varying themes related to Human Rights, are shown in conjunction with Top Kino and the ‘This Human World’ festival in the context of ‘Cinema and Human Rights’. These showings are followed by an interdisciplinary podium discussion.

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTES (AHRI) AND CREAN (CHILD RIGHTS ERASMUS ACADEMIC NETWORK).