



**HUMAN RIGHTS
CITIES NETWORK**

YEAR OF REPORT 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Prepared By:

The Human Rights Cities Network

www.humanrightscities.net

In 2025, the Human Rights Cities Network (HRCN) consolidated its role as a key European actor in strengthening human rights and democratic participation at the local level. Building on the momentum of 2024, the organisation moved from **project design and experimentation into implementation, standardisation, and capacity-building at scale.**

Our vision is to make human rights a lived reality in cities.

Our mission is to multiply human rights cities in Europe and equip them with practical, participatory, and results-oriented tools.

The Human Rights Cities Network :

- Deepened cooperation with the Global Parliament of Mayors (GPM)
- Expanded and consolidated the DeCiDE network of cities
- Moved from concept to operational monitoring systems
- Positioned itself as a reference actor in human rights monitoring at city level

A Year of Consolidation and Structuring

If 2024 was the year of **launch and expansion**, 2025 was the year of **methodology, systems, and institutionalisation**.

HRCN's work in 2025 focused on:

- Turning **human rights monitoring into an operational, shared practice**
- Building **technical and institutional capacity** in cities
- Creating a **common language, tools, and indicators** across municipalities
- Strengthening **peer learning and policy dialogue**

The flagship achievement of 2025 was the **transformation of DeCiDE from a project into a structured, results-based monitoring ecosystem** for human rights cities



Network Growth and Institutional Positioning

◆ Strengthening the European Ecosystem Deepened cooperation with:



European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights



United Cities and Local Governments



UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights



Rather than only growing numerically, the network grew in **quality, coherence, and shared methodology.**

◆ Consolidating the DeCiDE City Network

The DeCiDE network now represents:

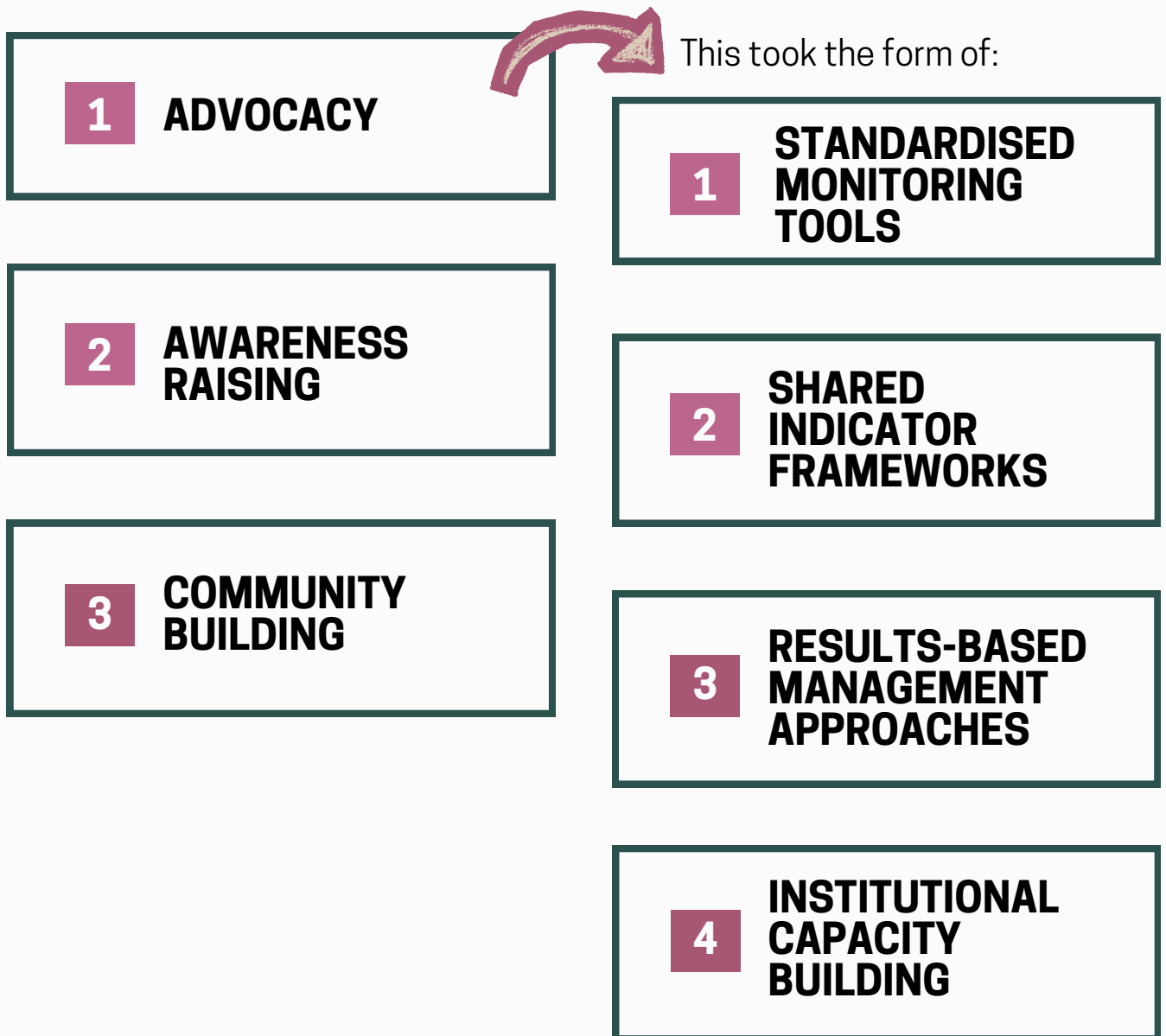
- A group of pilot cities across Europe working on:
 - Non-discrimination
 - Access to social and cultural services
 - Civic participation and voting rights

By 2025, the network was no longer just a learning community — it became a **co-producing governance laboratory** for human rights monitoring

OUR WORK IN 2025

From Advocacy to Infrastructure

In 2025, **a strategic shift occurred:** Human Rights Cities Network began building the infrastructure of human rights governance at the local level.



Our Flagship Project in 2025: DeCiDE

DeCiDE – Boost Democratic Participation in Cities to Recharge Democracy in Europe. 2025 marked the core implementation year of DeCiDE

◆ From Launch to Full Methodology

Building on:

- The 2024 launch in Barcelona
- The initial design phase

2025 delivered:

- A full **Standardized Monitoring System (SMS)**
- A complete **Monitoring & Evaluation toolbox**
- A shared **indicator architecture**
- A trained and operational **community of practice** among cities



◆ Key Milestones in 2025

Webinars & Workshops – Aligning the Network

- Cities were introduced to the **Standardized Monitoring System**
- A collective process led to the selection of **three shared rights to monitor**:
 - a. Access to social and cultural services
 - b. Non-discrimination
 - c. Civic participation and the right to vote
- This created the first shared political and methodological agenda across all cities

High-Level Webinar – Linking Cities to the EU Charter

JUNE

Focus on translating the **EU Charter of Fundamental Rights** into local action with contributions from:

- Ghent
- Józsefváros
- Civil society organisations

Strong emphasis on:

- Bottom-up governance
- Participatory indicator design
- City-level accountability



Expanding the Community & Deepening Expertise

SEPTEMBER

Info-session for new cities:

- Ensured methodological coherence
- Integrated new members into the common framework

High-level webinar on Non-Discrimination:

- Cities like:
 - Barcelona
 - Leuven
 - Utrecht
 - Graz
- Shared advanced monitoring and policy practices
- DeCiDE cities learned from **external best practices** and imported them into their own systems

The Treviso Training: A Turning Point

The **5-day Monitoring & Evaluation Training in Treviso** was the single most important milestone of the year.

It delivered:

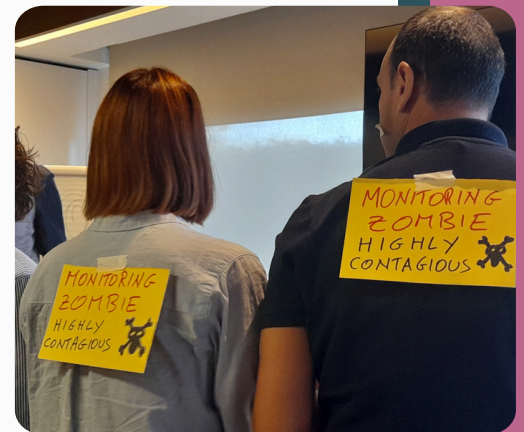
A full **Results-Based Management** framework

Practical Tools

- Simplified Results Framework
- M&E Matrix
- Indicator Identity Sheets
- Indicator Analysis Sheets
- Composite Indicators

A **shared professional language** for human rights monitoring

The **co-creation of 10 core human rights indicators** used by all cities



Results and Strategic Impact

By the end of 2025, HRCN and its partner cities had:

Built the first standardized, participatory human rights monitoring system for cities in Europe

Shifted from:

Activity reporting → to outcome monitoring

Isolated practices → to shared governance infrastructure

Created the foundation for:

Data-driven local human rights policy

Comparable progress tracking

Evidence-based democratic governance

Conclusion

Advancing the Institutionalisation of Human Rights Monitoring in European Cities

This year marked a decisive step forward for the Human Rights Cities Network. After laying the groundwork through advocacy and collaboration, HRCN has entered a new phase—one focused on building concrete systems that make human rights measurable and actionable at the local level. The priority in 2025 was not just to promote values, but to translate them into tools and practices that cities can use in their daily work.

Through the DeCiDE network, cities across Europe are now moving beyond knowledge-sharing to actively co-creating a common framework for human rights monitoring. With shared indicators, practical tools, and a growing community of practice, local governments are better equipped to track progress and strengthen accountability in key areas such as non-discrimination, access to services, and civic participation.

This evolution reflects a deeper shift—from isolated initiatives to a shared governance infrastructure, and from reporting activities to measuring real outcomes. It creates the foundation for more transparent, data-driven, and participatory policymaking at the city level.

Looking ahead to 2026, the next step is to scale this system further, launch the first full data collection cycle, and continue embedding human rights into everyday governance—reinforcing the role of cities as key drivers of democratic resilience across Europe.



HUMAN RIGHTS CITIES NETWORK

**“We promote & strengthen
Human Rights in cities in
Europe and beyond!”**

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