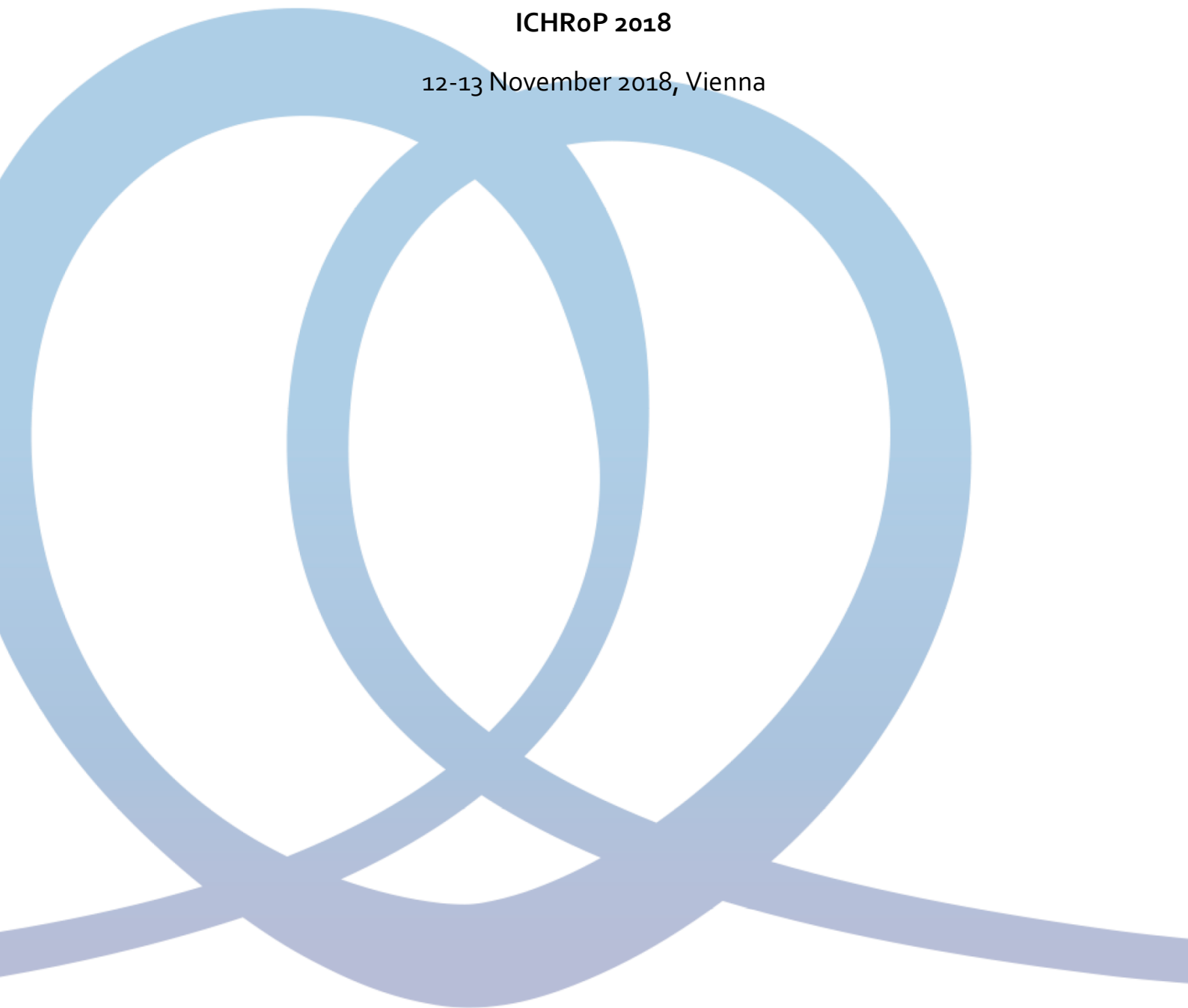


Conference Declaration

**International Expert-Conference on Human Rights of older Persons
ICHRoP 2018**

12-13 November 2018, Vienna



DECLARATION ADOPTED DURING THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERT-CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS (ICHROP 2018), HELD ON 12 & 13 NOVEMBER 2018 IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA

The participants gathered at the International Expert-Conference on the Human Rights of Older Persons from 12 to 13 November 2018 in Vienna, Austria, which was organized by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection of the Republic of Austria with the objective to exchange experiences about the new challenges and opportunities regarding the human rights of older persons, including their right to education and lifelong learning, related to technological developments such as digitalization, robotics, automation and artificial intelligence,

- Welcome the decision of the UN General Assembly (resolution 65/182 of 21 December 2010) which established the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA) and the subsequent decisions of the United Nations legislative and consultative bodies aimed at strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons.
- Take note of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits and of the international conferences held on 11 -12 April 2016 in Brdo pri Kranju, Slovenia, and on 3-4 October 2017 in Santiago, Chile, as they pertain to the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons.
- Acknowledge the work done by the OEWGA on identifying gaps in the protection of the human rights of older persons and ways to address such gaps, and welcome the increasing participation by Member States, civil society, National Human Rights Institutions, UN agencies, older persons and experts in the work of OEWGA.
- Further welcome the methodology adopted by the OEWGA in its last two sessions for gathering substantive and normative inputs on selected focus areas in order to contribute to the selection of steps for addressing the identified problems, potentially including recommendations for new standard setting on the protection of the human rights of older persons.
- Support the mandate of the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of all Human Rights by Older Persons, which was extended by the UN Human Rights Council in 2016. Take note with appreciation of the reports of the Independent Expert on assessing the state of protection of human rights of older persons across the world, in particular her report on the impact of assistive and robotics technology, artificial intelligence and automation on the human rights of older persons, which identifies remaining challenges and protection gaps and makes recommendations for ensuring that older persons are able to enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with others.

- Are encouraged by the increasing interest of the international community in the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons in the world, and that the international discourse on ageing has widened to further integrate social, development and human rights perspectives.
- Take note of the increasing calls to strengthen the protection of the human rights of older persons without further delay, and recognize that the full enjoyment of their human rights by older persons is a prerequisite for a society for all ages.
- Emphasize that all older persons have the right to enjoy the benefits of developments in technologies, such as digitalization, robotics, automation and artificial intelligence, and the right to education and lifelong learning on an equal basis with others.
- Realize that older persons continue to face challenges in enjoying their human rights in several areas of their lives, including related to the use of technologies, where they may be subject to technological restraints, denied their right to privacy, autonomy and data protection, and experience new forms of isolation and segregation. They also realize that older persons may face ageism and age discrimination and be denied access to services in the area of education and lifelong learning; and recognize the need to take action to ensure the full enjoyment of their rights and equal opportunities to participate fully in society, develop their full potential and contribute to their communities.
- Bear in mind that technologies have the potential to transform the way support is provided to older people, maintain or strengthen their capabilities, enable them to live autonomous, independent and dignified lives, improve their emotional well-being and increase opportunities for education and lifelong learning and participation in society on an equal basis with others.
- However, they also recognize that older persons are not always able to fully benefit from technologies owing to, inter alia, unavailability, including as a result of inequalities in access between and within countries and different population groups, high costs, restrictive eligibility criteria, lack of integration within existing systems of support, lack of accessibility, inadequate information about services and limited awareness and skills necessary to benefit from technological solutions.
- Believe that the use of technologies, including in the field of education and lifelong learning, must be geared towards enabling older persons to live autonomous and independent lives, fulfil their aspirations, build their skills and capacities, develop their full human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth and participate fully in society, and must not deprive older persons of their liberty, exclude them from decision-making, or stigmatize and objectify them.

To foster the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons on an equal basis with others, the participants:

- Agree to forward the outcomes of this conference to the OEWGA to inform the discussions at its 10th session, which is expected to focus on social protection, education and lifelong learning.
- Stress that a human rights-based and participatory approach needs to be embedded in the research, design and implementation of technologies paying due attention to older persons at risk of exclusion or marginalization including those with high support needs, on low incomes and with disabilities, among others.
- Further stress that older persons must be involved in the design, provision and monitoring of the use of technologies, including with regard to appropriateness in relation to their needs and preferences, and give their prior and on-going informed consent for the introduction, use and withdrawal of technologies, including those that prolong life, and be able to opt in or out of their use at any time.
- Emphasize that the providers of technologies and related software, including social media companies, must take responsibility for the privacy and protection of data and for the safeguarding of older users against any misuse, abuse or harm, and that older persons must have access to information about, and give their informed consent to, how their personal data will be used.
- Emphasize also that measures must be taken to ensure that all older persons have access to, and are involved in the development of appropriate, acceptable and affordable education and lifelong learning opportunities that fit their needs, preferences, skills, motivations, and diverse identities, including but not limited to training in new technologies, so they can develop their full human potential, personality, creativity, talents and sense of dignity and self-worth.
- Stress that steps must be taken to eliminate the barriers that older persons face in accessing educational skills and capacity building goods and services, and informal, recreational and community-based education and lifelong learning programs.
- Invite all stakeholders, including, inter alia, Member States, National Human Rights Institutions, UN agencies, international organizations, civil society, older persons and experts, to strengthen the dialogue on the protection of the human rights of older persons at regional and national level during the OEWGA inter-sessional period in order to share experiences, intensify collaboration and identify substantive and normative elements that need to be better addressed by the international community to allow older persons to fully enjoy their human rights.
- Stand together in reaffirming our commitment to ensure the involvement of civil society and in particular of older persons themselves in discussions and decisions about their human rights at all levels.