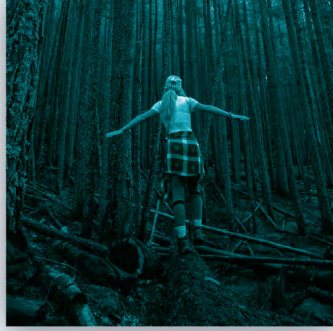
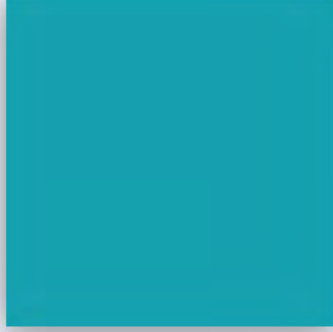


CHARTER FOR LEISURE



**WORLD
LEISURE
ORGANIZATION**

Text of the WLO Charter for Leisure

Articles

1. Everyone, whether adult or child, has the right to adequate time for rest and for the pursuit of leisure activity.
2. For those engaged in remunerated work, Article 1 requires recognition of the right to reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, as well as remuneration for public holidays. Securing these rights generally requires national/ provincial legislation.
3. Article 1 also applies to those engaged in unpaid labour, for example domestic care-givers.
4. Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community.
 - *Culture* is viewed by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as including: 'music and song, ceremonies, sport and games, natural and man-made environments' and 'the arts, customs and traditions through which individuals, groups of individuals and communities express their humanity and the meaning they give to their existence'. These activities depend on the provision of: 'libraries, museums, theatres, cinemas and sports stadiums; literature, including folklore, and the arts in all forms; the shared open spaces essential to cultural interaction, such as parks, squares, avenues and streets; nature's gifts, such as seas, lakes, rivers, mountains, forests and nature reserves, including the flora and fauna found there'.^[i]
 - *Participation* in social and cultural activities includes engagement as: an active participant, a learner, a spectator or audience member or an unpaid volunteer.
5. Leisure is also a medium through which other rights and related benefits set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and associated covenants can be exercised, including: the physical, mental, emotional and social development of the child through play; support for family life; personal expression and development; sustaining of cultural life of the community; and promotion of physical and mental health and well-being through sport, physical activity and cultural engagement. Conversely, denial of time for beneficial leisure activity can have serious consequences for the well-being of individuals and societies.
6. These rights should therefore be observed and supported by all of society's institutions, including commercial organisations, education institutions, professional bodies and non-government organisations. Governments at national, regional/provincial and local levels have particular responsibilities reflecting commitments under United Nations treaties and, in some cases, provisions in national constitutions and legislation.
7. Recognising that governments at all levels are not the only providers of facilities and services for leisure and that they face many challenges and competing demands for resources, they nevertheless have particular responsibilities to:
 - ensure availability and protection of land for open space for recreation in residential areas;
 - ensure preservation of, and public access to, natural and culture heritage;
 - ensure the provision of suitable space and facilities for children's play;
 - support provision of health-enhancing amenities, such as facilities for sport and exercise;

- support cultural institutions and activities;
- ensure that all members of the community, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, ability or income, have access to beneficial leisure facilities and services;
- support suitable training of a technical and professional work force for the leisure/ sport/cultural service industries;
- support research on the benefits and costs of leisure activity and on the provision of leisure facilities and services;
- include recognition of leisure-related rights in relevant national/provincial legislation and regulations, including those concerned with regulation of mass communications and digital media;
- recognise, in national, regional and urban policies and plans, the contribution which leisure-related provisions can make to personal, social, cultural and economic development;
- support other human rights which facilitate the participation in the cultural life of the community, including the right to food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services and security, as set out in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

[i] UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (2009). *Guidelines on Treaty-specific Documents to be Submitted by States Parties Under Articles 16 and 17 of the ICESCR*. Document E/C.12/2008/2. New York: UN, pp. 4-5.

Context of the WLO Charter for Leisure

1. The first edition of the *Charter for Leisure* was adopted by the International Recreation Association in 1970 and revised by the then World Leisure and Recreation Association in 1979 and by the World Leisure Organization (WLO) in 2000. The current version was approved publication by the WLO Board of Directors in April 2020, following extensive consultation with leisure-related organizations and WLO members over the period 2018-2020.
2. The World Leisure Organization was established (as the International Recreation Association) in 1952 and is one of 2500 non-governmental organizations recognised as a consultative body by the Economic & Social Council of the United Nations (www.worldleisure.org/about/).
3. While there is research to show leisure is a state of mind or a type of experience, in this Charter it is viewed as comprising *leisure time*, which is time relatively free of such commitments as paid or unpaid work or personal maintenance, and *leisure activities*, which occur during leisure time.
4. In developing the *Charter for Leisure*, the WLO has taken its lead from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Articles in the UDHR which relate to leisure are:
 - Article 24: 'Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay'.
 - Article 27: 'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community [and] to enjoy the arts'.
5. The UDHR is a declaration of principles endorsed by all member-states of the United Nations. It is implemented by means of two related 1966 treaties: the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant for Economic, Social & Cultural Rights (ICESCR). States that sign and ratify the ICCPR and the ICESCR are formally committed to ensuring the achievement of these rights. This involves reporting periodically to the UN Human Rights Council on progress in achieving them and being subject to evaluation. Progress in regard to working hours and holiday entitlements of people in paid employment is overseen by the UN International Labour Organization. The leisure-related rights set out in the UDHR are reaffirmed in the ICESCR, as follows:
 - ICESCR Article 7 (reflecting UDHR Article 24): State Parties recognise the right to: 'the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work', including the right to: 'Rest, leisure and reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, as well as remuneration for public holidays'.
 - ICESCR Article 15 (reflecting UDHR Article 27): State Parties recognise the right of everyone to: 'take part in cultural life'. Furthermore, they shall take steps necessary for the 'conservation, the development and the diffusion of culture' and to ensure 'the freedom indispensable for ... creative activity'.
6. These leisure-related rights stand as 'universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated'[i] with the other civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights set out in the UDHR and associated covenants. The exercise of leisure-related rights may be severely curtailed if other universal human rights are denied.
7. While the *Charter for Leisure* is focussed on the promotion of beneficial effects of leisure, we should not ignore the fact that some leisure activities can be potentially harmful to both individuals and society. Reflecting Article 29.2 of the UDHR, participation in leisure activity should be 'subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for

the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society'.

8. United Nations treaties also refer to leisure rights in specific contexts, including:
 - a. Travel/tourism: as noted above, the UDHR (Article 24) and the ICESCR (Article 7) include the right for those in employment, to periodic holidays with pay. UDHR (Article 13) and the *International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR) (Article 12) include the right to freedom of movement, both domestically and internationally.
 - b. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)* affirms that men and women should have 'the same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education' and to 'participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life' (Articles 10 & 13).
 - c. *Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)* affirms 'the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts' (Article 31) and, for those in employment, 'appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment' (Article 32).
 - d. *Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989)*: states that governments should ensure promotion of 'the full realisation of the social, economic and cultural rights of these peoples with respect for their social and cultural identity, their customs and traditions and their institutions' (Article 2).
 - e. *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities (1999)* affirms the right of these persons to 'enjoy their own culture' and to 'participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life' (Article 2).
 - f. *Political Declaration and Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002)* affirms that older persons should be able to 'participate in the economic, political, social and cultural life of their societies' and 'should have the opportunity to work for as long as they wish and are able to' (Article 12).
 - g. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)* affirms the right of persons with disabilities to 'take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life' and to enjoy equal access to: cultural materials; television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities; places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services and, as far as possible, monuments and sites of national cultural importance; and, to the fullest extent possible, participation in mainstream sporting activities, disability-specific sporting and recreational activities, appropriate instruction, training and resources, and sporting, recreational and tourism venues (Article 30).
 - h. *Hangzhou Declaration: Placing culture at the heart of sustainable development policies*. UNESCO (2013) affirms 'cultural rights, access to cultural goods and services, free participation in cultural life, and freedom of artistic expression are critical to forging inclusive and equitable societies'.
9. Other statements published by the World Leisure Organization, related to human rights and leisure (available on www.worldleisure.org) include:
 - a. *Leisure, Tourism and the Environment*. Statement arising from the WLRA World Congress, Sydney, 1991.
 - b. *WLRA International Charter for Leisure Education*, 1993.
 - c. *The São Paulo Declaration: Leisure in globalized society*. 1998; updated as: *. São Paulo Declaration: Leisure beyond constraints*, 2018.
 - d. *The Québec Declaration: Leisure, essential to community development*. 2008.

10. Charters in fields which are segments of leisure or are leisure-related have been published by a variety of organizations.
- a. Travel, holidays and tourism
 - 1. *The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism: World Tourism Organization*, 1998
 - 2. *Opinion on Social Tourism in Europe: EU Economic and Social Committee*, 2006.
 - b. Sport
 - 1. The Olympic Charter: International Olympic Committee, 2004
 - 2. European Sports Charter: Council of Europe, 1992
 - 3. International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport: UNESCO, 2014
 - 4. 2014. Declaration on Women and Sport: International Working Group on Women and Sport, 2014.
 - c. Culture (referring to both distinctive 'way of life' and 'arts/creative activity') and heritage
 - 1. Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity: UNESCO, 2001.
 - 2. Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage: UNSECO, 2003.
11. The UDHR (Art. 27) and the ICESCR (Art. 15) recognise the rights of authors/creators of literary or artistic works to protection of the moral and material interests resulting from such works. While this provision is clearly essential for culture, it is outside the immediate scope of the Charter for Leisure, although it is recognised that leisure is increasingly dependent on digital/social media. These matters are the concern of the *Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works* (World Intellectual Property Organization, 1886-1979) and the *World Intellectual Property Organization Copyright Treaty* (World Intellectual Property Organization, 1996).
12. Both leisure and human rights are complex concepts, so the relationships between the two are also complex. Such complexity cannot be fully reflected in a brief statement, but a guide to reading is provided on the World Leisure Organization website.

[1] World Conference on Human Rights (1993). *Vienna Declaration*. New York: United Nations, p. I.5.

WLO Charter for Leisure: Material for governments

Introduction

Governments at national, provincial/state and local level frequently produce legislation, policies, mission statements, plans, strategies, research reports and web content concerned with aspects of leisure, such as sport, outdoor recreation, open space, arts/culture/heritage, tourism and play. Typically, these communications seek to persuade citizens, elected representatives and managers and administrators across a range of policy sectors of the importance of these leisure-related phenomena for community welfare. As part of this communication process, it may help to inform readers that access to leisure facilities and services is a *human right* and that these rights are spelled out not only in the WLO *Charter for Leisure* but also in international treaties which the majority of nations of the world have ratified.

Ratification

The key UN treaty for leisure and culture is the 1966 *International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR), which gives legal status to relevant parts of the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Member states of the UN which ratify the ICESCR enter into a commitment to implement the covenant and to report periodically to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on progress. If your government has ratified the covenant, and therefore made these commitments it may be helpful to draw attention to this fact. The listing of countries which have ratified the covenant can be found at the following: www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx (click on 'Status of ratifications ...').

Quotations and summaries

Governmental organizations may find it helpful to include all or some of the following quotations in their policy documents.

Leisure

1948: United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

'Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, ... and the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community'. (Articles 24 and 27)

1970/2020: World Leisure Organization: Charter for Leisure

'Everyone, whether adult or child, has the right to adequate time for rest and for the pursuit of leisure activity (Article 1) and 'to freely participate in the cultural life of the community' (including music and song, ceremonies, sport and games, and natural and man-made environments) (Article 4).

Groups

1979: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Women and men should have 'the same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education and in ... all aspects of cultural life. (Articles 10 and 13)

1989: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Governments should 'recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts ... and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity'. (Article 31)

1999: UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities

'Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities ... have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination. ... and to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life'. (Article 2)

2006: UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Governments should recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy access to: cultural materials, television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats; places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, monuments and sites of national cultural importance; sporting and recreational venues; and opportunities to participate, to the fullest extent possible, in mainstream and disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and appropriate instruction, training and resources. (Summary of Article 30)

Sport

2010: The Olympic Charter

'The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport in accordance with his or her needs'. (Article 1)

1976/1992 European Sports Charter (Council of Europe)

'Governments, with a view to the promotion of sport as an important factor in human development, shall take the steps necessary to ... enable every individual to participate in sport'. (Article 1)

1978/2014 UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport

'The practice of ... physical education, physical activity and sport is a fundamental right for all'. (Article 1)

Arts/culture

1948: United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights

'Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community'. (Article 27)

Travel and tourism

1948: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

'Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country'. (Article 13)

'Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay'. (Article 24)

1998: Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (World Tourism Organization)

'The universal right to tourism must be regarded as the corollary of the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay, guaranteed by Article 24 of the UDHR and Article 7d of the ICESCR'. (Article 7.2)

'Social tourism, and in particular associative tourism, which facilitates widespread access to leisure, travel and holidays, should be developed with the support of the public authorities'. (Article 7.3)

'Family, youth, student and senior tourism and tourism for people with disabilities, should be encouraged and facilitated'. (Article 7.4)

Individual jurisdictions: Charters for Leisure

Individual countries/provinces/states/municipalities may wish to develop their own Charter for Leisure, based on the WLO charter but reflecting local cultures and traditions and possibly referring to local constitutions and/or legislation. The WLO would be interested to hear of such initiatives (via the WLO Secretariat at: secretariat@worldleisure.org)

Leisure and human rights: Educational materials

Introduction

Teaching materials related to the *Charter for Leisure* may be useful for all levels and types of educational program.

- At *primary* and *secondary* levels, they can contribute to a broader civics program.
- In higher education they can contribute to programs in politics, law, public administration and leisure/sport/tourism studies.
- In adult/continuing education they could contribute to existing politics, law, public administration and leisure/sport/tourism studies programs, but could also form an independent short course on leisure/sport/tourism/play rights.

Suggestions for additions to the bibliography would be welcome (via WLO Secretariat secretariat@worldleisure.org)

Reading materials

Bibliography of Leisure Rights, published by the World Leisure Organization, available [here](#). Leisure-related textbooks in which human rights are mentioned:

- Edginton, C. R., DeGraaf, D. G., Dieser, R. B., & Edginton, S. R. (2006). *Leisure and Life Satisfaction (4th edn.)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill (pages 127, 379)
- Veal, A.J. (2017). *Leisure, Sport and Tourism: Politics Policy and Planning, 4th Edn.* Wallingford, UK: CABI (Chapter 4, pages 73-93)
- Veal, A. J., Darcy, S., & Lynch, R. (2013). *Australian Leisure (4th edn.)*. Sydney: Pearson. (pages 102, 381–382)

Lecture materials – senior high-school/secondary/ higher education levels

Human Rights and Citizenship Rights: PowerPoint slides (20) relating to Chapter 4 of:

Veal, A.J. (2017). *Leisure, Sport and Tourism: Politics Policy and Planning, 4th Edn.* Wallingford, UK: CABI. Slides available for downloading at: www.cabi.org/products-and-services/about-cabi-books/open-resources/leisure-sport-and-tourism-politics-policy-and-planning-4th-edition/

Questions/exercises

(Adapted from Veal 2017).

1. In what ways are the right to (a) leisure time, (b) travel, (c) play sport sometimes infringed by governments?
2. In what ways do labour rights affect leisure, sport, and tourism (a) nationally, (b) internationally?
3. Marshall outlines three types of rights of the citizen: what are they and how is each defined?

4. If individuals have 'obligations' as well as 'rights', what obligations are there in (a) leisure, (b) sport, (c) tourism?
5. In what way can declarations of rights be seen as potential threats to freedom?
6. Examine any one of the declarations listed in the Boxes 4.1- 4.4 of Veal (2017 – Chapter 4) or the lists in the *Charter for Leisure* 'Context document' (items 8, 10) and discuss the implications for public leisure, sport and tourism policy at (a) national level, (b) local level.
7. Examine the extent to which human rights legislation in your own country takes account of the sorts of leisure, sport and tourism-related rights discussed in the *Charter for Leisure*.
8. It is sometimes claimed that international agreements, such as those entered under the auspices of the United Nations or the European Union, threaten national sovereignty. What implications does this have for such agreements?
9. What are the implications of the human rights of people in developing countries for policymaking in the area of leisure, sport and tourism in developed countries?

Leisure and human rights: Bibliography

This bibliography is updated from time to time. It is published on the WLO website (www.worldleisure.org) as supporting information for the WLO *Charter for Leisure*. Suggestions for additions to the bibliography would be welcome (via WLO Secretariat secretariat@worldleisure.org)

Contents

1. Document sources
2. Selected general texts on human rights
3. Leisure
4. Children/play
5. Environment/heritage
6. Sport
7. The arts/culture
8. Tourism

Document sources

United Nations treaties etc: www.un.org/rights

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Ignatieff, M. (2001). *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

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Charter revision process

Revision process: 2017-2019

The proposal to revise the *Charter for Leisure* arose at the biennial meeting of the World Leisure Academy (WLA) held in Durban during the 2016 World Leisure Congress, following a presentation by Prof. Tony Veal on leisure and human rights. The WLO Board of Directors invited the WLA to conduct the review and Prof. Atara Sivan, President of WLA, and Prof. Tony Veal, were appointed as co-convenors. Expressions of interest were called for from among the WLA members to join a Special Taskforce, which began its work in early 2017. The following contributed to the work of the Taskforce:

Individuals who contributed to the work of the Taskforce:

- Atara Sivan, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong (WLA President & Taskforce Co-convener)
- Tony Veal, University of Technology, Sydney (Taskforce Co-convener)
- Linda Caldwell, The Pennsylvania State University, USA
- Derek Casey, Former Chair of the Board of the World Leisure Organization
- John Dattilo, The Pennsylvania State University, USA
- Geoffry Godbey, The Pennsylvania State University, USA
- Arend Hardoff, NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands
- Karla Henderson, North Carolina State University, USA
- Bohdan Jung, Warsaw School of Economics, Poland
- Jeong Myung Jim, Myong Ji University, Korea
- Douglas Kleiber, University of Georgia, USA
- Cristina Ortega Nuere, Chief Operating Officer, World Leisure Organization, Spain
- Robert Stebbins, University of Calgary, Canada
- John Tower, Victoria University, Australia
- Ricardo Uvinha, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Comments on an initial draft were solicited from sixteen organizations including WLO Chapters, leisure studies associations and culture, tourism, sport and physical education organizations. Comments were received from the following associations:

- Academy of Leisure Sciences
- Australian and New Zealand Association for Leisure Studies
- World Leisure Organization: Hong Kong Chapter

Comments were also received from members of the WLO Board of Directors, collectively and individually.

- An open invitation for comments was also made on a draft posted on the WLO website to obtain views from the public from around the globe.
- The final version of the Charter was therefore the result of four drafts, hours of discussion and numerous revisions. We believe it was worth the effort.
- The revised Charter was approved by the WLO Board in May 2020.

The World Leisure Academy (WLA) seeks to promote leisure through advocacy, research and educational endeavours. We are grateful for the opportunity afforded to us to engage in this important work. We are particularly grateful for the contributions and support received from colleagues from around the world for making possible this collective contribution to the achievement of the ideal of leisure as a human right for all.

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