

HUMANISTS INTERNATIONAL

HUMANISTS INTERNATIONAL IS THE GLOBAL REPRESENTATIVE BODY OF THE HUMANIST MOVEMENT, UNITING A DIVERSITY OF NON-RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS.

It is made up of over 120 member organisations from over 60 countries.



- The largest humanist organisation in the world is the Norwegian Humanist Association.
- The countries with the highest number of Humanist International member organisations are the UK, India, and the US.
- As of July 2021, the newest member organisations of Humanists International are from Barbados, Estonia, Malawi, Myanmar, and Zimbabwe.

WHAT DOES HUMANISTS INTERNATIONAL DO?

The organisation has four basic areas of work:

1. **Campaigns** to promote humanist values such as reason, empathy, freedom, and secularism around the world
2. **Advocacy**, representing humanists at the United Nations and other international forums
3. Supporting the **growth** and nurture of new humanist organisations in the developing world
4. **Supporting humanists at risk** around the world

“I would love to live in a world where individual freedom and dignity is respected, where universal human rights are not simply words on paper but something upheld and defended... I don't want to live in a world where atheism is the only way of living for people. I simply want to believe in a world where everyone respects each other regardless of the disagreements.”

GIOVANNI GAETANI,
Humanists International



The map below shows the location of Humanists International member organisations.



The board and staff members of Humanists International



BLASPHEMY LAWS

Many humanists believe that people should be free to challenge and criticise religion. Blasphemy laws in many countries deny people this freedom of expression. They can be used to silence the voice of the non-religious and even, in some cases, control any form of dissent against a government.

The End Blasphemy Laws campaign is a global campaign to repeal blasphemy laws. In many European countries such laws exist but are no longer enforced in practice. However, their continued existence is often cited as a defence by other countries that use blasphemy laws to restrict freedom of religion and belief.

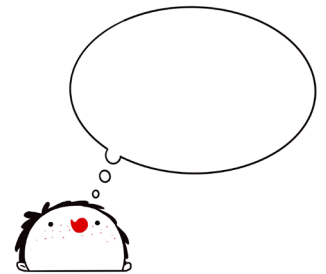


The campaign has seen blasphemy laws repealed in ten countries: Malta, France, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, Greece, and Scotland. However, blasphemy laws still exist in many European countries such as Germany, Poland, Italy, Spain, and Northern Ireland.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION

Humanists International campaigns for equal treatment of everybody regardless of their religion or belief. The Oxford Declaration was adopted by Humanists International in 2014 to assert humanist support for the rights to freedom of thought and expression.

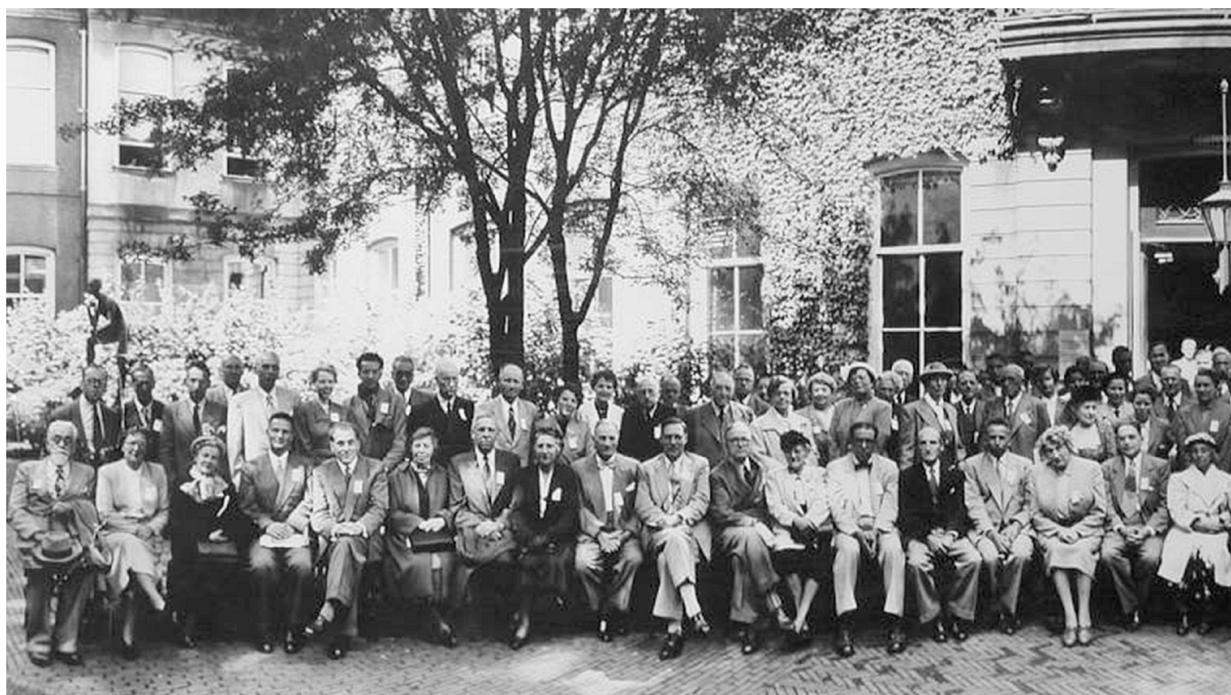
Every year it publishes The Freedom of Thought Report, which assesses every country in the world on the basis of human rights, and on the legal status of humanists and the non-religious.



SUPPORTING HUMANISTS IN DANGER

Humanists International also work on the front line, helping humanists at risk, especially in those countries where atheism and apostasy (leaving religion) are considered crimes – sometimes punishable with prison or even the death penalty. Work is done to try to offer these individuals advice, to help them to escape if necessary and relocate to places where they are no longer in danger, and then to put them in contact with a community who is able to support them.

Some of the founding members of Humanists International (1952)



GROWTH

On its formation in 1952 there were five founding members of Humanists International (then known as the International Humanist and Ethical Union). Today it has more than 170 member organisations, 50 of whom have joined in the last two years. Many of these new organisations are from Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The organisation is moving away from its more Eurocentric past to becoming something truly global, better reflecting the international roots of humanism.

“Numbers of humanists in all countries around the world continue to grow, humanists continue to organise themselves and create new campaigns and activities at a higher rate than ever before so I think from an organisational point of view the future is very bright for humanists, but I am still very concerned that the threat to the fundamental idea of freedom of religion and belief continues to grow.”

GARY MCLELLAND,
Chief Executive,
Humanists International



THE FUTURE

Living as a humanist is certainly easier today than it was 70 years ago, but it is not certain that this progress will continue forever. With the rise of religious nationalism in many parts of the world, the threats that exist to democracy and human rights, and the risks to evidence-based knowledge from fake news and scepticism of science, one could conclude that humanism's time has been and gone. However, many humanists believe that by working together and collaborating across borders they can solve the challenges they face today.

‘Humanism is a democratic and ethical life stance, which affirms that human beings have the right and responsibility to give meaning and shape to their own lives. It stands for the building of a more humane society through an ethic based on human and other natural values in the spirit of reason and free inquiry through human capabilities. It is not theistic, and it does not accept supernatural views of reality.’

**HUMANISTS INTERNATIONAL MINIMUM
STATEMENT ON HUMANISM**