

World Report 2025 - Germany

At the end of 2024, the German coalition government collapsed following clashes over the national budget, which saw the finance minister sacked.

During 2024, German democratic political parties failed to counter [mainstream far-right, racist, and anti-migrant narratives](#). Meanwhile, Germany's far-right political party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD), gained [significant political power](#) in two Eastern German state elections. Attacks against marginalized groups, such as [LGBT people](#), and [racist, right-wing, and antisemitic violence](#) appeared to be on the rise.

Following the [escalation of the hostilities between Israel and Palestinian armed groups](#) after October 2023, there was a sharp uptick in antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate violence and speech in Germany. The authorities also continued to crack down on protests, with [incidents of reported police violence](#). A Bundestag [resolution on antisemitism adopted](#) in November raised concerns about stigmatization of Muslims and immigrant communities and interference with speech and protest rights while downplaying homegrown antisemitism.

In a positive development, the government adopted a long-awaited law that created a rights-respecting legal gender recognition procedure for transgender people.

Rule of law

German authorities stifled civic space in 2024 by restricting individuals' freedom of expression, assembly, and association. The police, among others, frequently resorted to [violence](#) at climate and pro-Palestine protests. This was also reflected in the [2024 edition of the European Commission's annual Rule of Law report](#).

Germany continued to [criminalize climate protests](#). In May, the authorities [indicted](#) the climate activist group Last Generation on charges typically reserved for serious organized crime in response to the group's disruptive protests. Armed police had [previously raided](#) members' apartments and [surveilled their communications](#).

Police [frequently used excessive force against pro-Palestine protesters](#). The authorities also [denied specific persons entry into Germany](#) to speak at pro-Palestine events.

The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) as well as the newly formed political party, Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW), [regularly excluded](#) journalists from their events, which the German Journalist Association [described](#) as a restriction to press freedom. According to Reporters Without Borders, however, Germany [experienced](#) a decline in attacks on journalists by far-right groups.

Discrimination and Intolerance

Mainstream political parties [failed to forcefully counter, and even indulged](#), far-right, racist, anti-migrant narratives. Meanwhile, racialized communities [felt unsafe](#) with the far-right gaining more political power.

In January, the investigative journalist group [Correctiv revealed](#) that members of the AfD had met with far-right extremists in Berlin-neighborhood Potsdam in November 2023 to discuss plans to "remigrate," i.e. deport, immigrants and "non-assimilated citizens." In reaction, for weeks, hundreds of thousands of people across the country [took to the streets](#) in anti-AfD protests. The party nonetheless made important electoral gains later in the year.

[Official statistics](#) published in May showed a new record high of registered politically motivated crimes, including a significant increase in attacks targeting housing for migrants and asylum seekers. Among the total of 60,028 crimes, right-wing motivated crimes rose by 23 percent in 2023 compared to 2022 (from 23,493 to 28,945).

Since October 7, 2023, civil society groups [warned](#) that anti-Muslim hate violence and racism were on the rise, documenting a total of 1,926 cases for 2023—a 114 percent increase compared to 2022. These numbers were mirrored in official [statistics](#) of “anti-Islamic” crimes, which showed a 140 percent increase in 2023 compared to 2022, with a total of 1,464 registered cases.

At the same time, antisemitic attacks [drastically rose](#) after October 7. The government registered a total of 5,164 antisemitic crimes in 2023—a 96 percent increase over 2022 (2,641).

In July, an independent [study](#) by the German Center for Integration and Migration Research examined how racism has been treated in mainstream media in the past 30 years, finding that, while there has been increased sensitization around racism, coverage focused on individual cases of racism rather than systemic racism in Germany.

Migrants and Asylum Seekers

In 2024, political debates around asylum and deportation regulations in Germany resulted in controversial decisions.

In June, the government [decided](#) to tighten its deportation laws, whereby foreigners who make a single comment glorifying or approving of a terrorist crime on social media can be deported.

In August, for the first time since the Taliban took power in 2021, the government [deported](#) 28 individuals to Afghanistan, [claiming](#) they were all “convicted offenders who had no right to stay in Germany.” This decision came on the heels of a deadly [knife attack in Solingen](#) where the suspect was a rejected Syrian asylum seeker. Meanwhile, the implementation of the government’s special program to bring at-risk Afghans to Germany continued to face problems—with [only 540 Afghans having arrived in Germany between October 2022 and July 2024](#).

Germany continued backsliding on the EU-Schengen principle of free internal movement when Interior Minister Nancy Faeser [announced](#) in September that temporary controls would be reintroduced at all land borders to “reduce irregular migration.” It had already instituted controls at [borders to Switzerland, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Austria](#) in October 2023.

In June, a [new citizenship law](#) took effect, which requires people applying for naturalization in Germany to affirm Israel’s right to exist. The government [claimed](#) that this was a reaction to rising antisemitism in Germany and Germany’s position that Israel’s security is a matter of Germany’s national interest.

Between January and August, 174,369 people [applied for asylum](#) in Germany, a decrease of 21.7 percent compared to the same period in 2023. Most applicants came from Syria, Afghanistan, and Turkey.

In February, the government [reiterated](#) its commitment to protect Ukrainians in Germany. However, a [study](#) showed that integration was still slow compared to other EU countries, with only 27 percent of Ukrainians able to find work. In August, the central registry of foreigners [included](#) 1,157,220 Ukrainian nationals—many of whom had been granted temporary protection.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

In April, the government [passed](#) a much-awaited Self-Determination Law (“*Selbstbestimmungsgesetz*”) which allows transgender, intersex, and non-binary people to change their name and gender marker on official documents to reflect their gender identity via a simple administrative procedure and without need for “expert reports.” The law took effect in August and people began receiving their modified documents in November.

Domestic Violence

Official statistics [showed](#) police registered 256,276 persons affected by domestic violence in 2023, an increase of 6.5 percent over 2022, and women comprised over 70 percent of victims. Almost 80 percent of the 167,865 victims who reported violence by an intimate partner were women. Intra-family domestic violence killed 92 women.

Poverty

Official statistics [showed](#) that, in 2023, 17.7 million people, 21.2 percent of the population, were at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Following a visit in late 2023, the Council of Europe’s commissioner for human rights [said](#) Germany’s inadequate action to combat poverty and homelessness was resulting in growing social and economic inequality. The commissioner noted that poverty particularly affected children, older persons, and persons with disabilities.

In April, the government [adopted](#) its first [Action Plan Against Homelessness](#), with the aim of ending homelessness by 2030.

Disagreements among governing coalition parties led to inaction, negatively affecting the right to social security. The government [did not increase](#) the amount of basic social security support under the “Citizen Income” despite widespread [criticism](#) of its inadequacy. At this writing, plans to legislate for a new universal child basic income by 2025 had [stalled](#) almost completely.

Business and Human Rights

Following the adoption of the [EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive](#) in June 2024, the German government [announced](#) that in 2025 it would reduce by two thirds the number of companies subject to human rights due diligence obligations in existing national law, the [German Supply Chain Act](#), until full phase-in of the legislation required by the EU directive in 2029. German civil society groups [criticized](#) the move. The German and EU law both require companies to conduct human rights due diligence, but EU law is [stronger](#) on environmental protection and civil liability.