

EU ANNUAL REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN THE WORLD

2021 COUNTRY UPDATES

Contents

Enlargement countries.....	5
Albania.....	5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6
The Republic of North Macedonia	9
Kosovo*	11
Montenegro	13
Serbia	15
Republic of Turkey	16
EEA/EFTA Countries and non-EU Western European Countries	19
Switzerland	19
Norway	20
Iceland	22
Liechtenstein	23
United Kingdom.....	24
European Neighbourhood Policy.....	25
Eastern Partnership regional cooperation.....	25
Armenia	26
Azerbaijan	28
Belarus	30
Georgia	32
Republic of Moldova	34
Ukraine	35
Egypt	38
State of Israel	40
Jordan	42
Lebanon	44
Libya	46
Syria	48
Palestinian Authority (occupied Palestinian territory – oPt)	50
Kingdom of Morocco	52
Western Sahara	54
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	55
Republic of Tunisia	57
Russia and Central Asia	58
Russia	58
Kazakhstan	61
The Kyrgyz Republic	63

*.This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: Several high-level political dialogues took place throughout the year. The second Senior Officials Meeting took place in Brussels in September 2021, focusing on a broad range of topics, including governance, democracy, human rights, rule of law, security, and sectoral cooperation.

4. EU financial engagement: The EU, through its programmes, continued providing support to judicial reform and anti-corruption efforts.

5. Multilateral context: The Maldives continued to demonstrate its commitment to multilateralism. In June, Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid was elected President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and other senior officials participated in high-level meetings throughout the year, including at the 76th UNGA and the 26th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP26).

Mongolia

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: While Mongolia made progress on its path towards democracy, human rights and rule of law since the 1990s, 2021 saw a number of persistent challenges.

According to a 2021 survey, the trust of the population in the independence of the judiciary system and in the Independent Agency Against Corruption was rather low. Judiciary reform remained a key priority. Only a limited number of OSCE recommendations were taken on board in the reform of the Law on Presidential elections (December 2020), but the 2021 Presidential Election was deemed compliant with OSCE commitments and other international standards by OSCE observers. A Law on Prevention, Combat and Mitigation of Social and Economic impacts of COVID-19 (the “COVID law”) – which allowed passing laws under a simplified procedure – was extended to mid-2022.

Mongolian authorities strove to counter gender-based violence, gender inequality and discrimination based on sexual orientation. The government also worked on a revision of the Law on Child Protection and addressing the problem of trafficking in human beings. A new Labour Law entered into force on 1 January 2022, to address not only labour conditions in a strict sense, but also regulated non-discrimination and provided protection against harassment and violence at the workplace.

Worrying developments in 2021 included the introduction of a Law Prohibiting Foreign Grants to Civil Society Organisations. The draft Law on Associations and Foundations submitted to Parliament in November 2021 would imply a limitation on the civic space and independent NGO operations in Mongolia.

2. EU action - key focus areas: The EU continued to focus on the support of groups in vulnerable situations and the empowerment of civil society. The fight against child labour and other forms of exploitation of children continued to figure prominently among the EU’s priorities. Other priorities included gender equality, non-discrimination, rule of law, as well as

building resilient, inclusive and democratic societies and the promotion of human rights and democracy.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The last annual EU-Mongolia Human Rights Dialogue was held on 25 November 2020, followed on 3 December 2020 by the EU-Mongolia Joint Committee (both in virtual format). Due to the COVID pandemic, the meetings initially foreseen for 2021 will be scheduled in the spring of 2022. The EU engaged in a number of public diplomacy activities in 2021, such as the “16 days campaign against gender-based violence”, the European Film festival, the National Human Rights Day and the EU Human Rights Award Ceremony.

4. EU financial engagement: In 2021, the EU launched three new projects related to human rights. Mongolia was also party to the EU-financed Business and Human Rights in Asia (B+HR) programme implemented by the UNDP. The EU also continued to support human rights and democracy through several ongoing projects, carried out with Member States or other partners. These projects focused on support to the empowerment of herders; the fight against child labour and trafficking for labour or sexual exploitation; support to civil society, including youth civic engagement and participation in local economy and mitigating the impact of COVID-19 with a rights-based approach.

In 2020, the EU launched its first budget support programme for Mongolia to boost employment and improve transparency in public finances, with an upfront disbursement aiming to address the social and economic consequences of COVID-19. Included in the grant is a technical assistance project with UNDP, FAO and ILO, focusing on transparency and oversight of the budget, and employment creation in the non-mining sectors for youth and for persons with disabilities, as well as compliance with international labour standards. This support programme was ongoing in 2021.

5. Multilateral context: During Mongolia’s third Universal Periodic Review in November 2020, it received 190 recommendations out of which 170 were accepted and 20 were noted as of March 2021. The government developed a Plan of Action on the implementation of the accepted recommendations.

The UN Special Representative (UNSR) on violence against women, its causes and consequences, visited Mongolia in 2021. The UNSR’s key findings concluded that Mongolia adopted a solid legal framework to address gender-based violence, but that the existing services for victims should take a gender sensitive approach. Existing measures against gender-based violence failed to support groups in vulnerable situations (such as victims of trafficking, LGBTI persons). The UNSR would present the final report in June 2022.

The UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances issued a report on Mongolia in May 2021. It recommended bringing the definition of “enforced disappearance” in line with the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and for specific training to all law enforcement and security personnel.

Myanmar