

Document #2088550

Freedom House

Freedom in the World 2023 - Poland

FREE

81

/ 100

Political Rights 34 / 40

Civil Liberties 47 / 60

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

81 / 100 Free

Global freedom statuses are calculated on a weighted scale. [See the methodology.](#)

Overview

Poland's democratic institutions took root at the start of its transition from communist rule in 1989. Rapid economic growth and other societal changes have benefited some segments of the population more than others, contributing to a deep divide between liberal, pro-European parties and those purporting to defend national interests and "traditional" Polish Catholic values. Since taking power in 2015, a coalition led by the populist, socially conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party has exerted significant political influence over state institutions and damaged Poland's democratic progress. Recent years have seen an increase in nationalist and discriminatory rhetoric.

Key Developments in 2022

- The national government, local governments, and Polish citizens offered significant assistance to Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion of their country. In March, the lower house of Parliament passed legislation granting significant rights to refugees, though the national government unsuccessfully attempted to lessen financial support for Ukrainians in June. Some 1.4 million people had registered for temporary protection in Poland as of October.
- In July, the government lifted the state of emergency at the border with Belarus, which it implemented in 2021 as migrants and asylum seekers attempted to cross in large numbers. Authorities instead implemented a 200-meter ban, constructed a wall to prevent crossings, and continued a pushback policy for at least part of the year.

- In December, the government said it agreed on legislative amendments to address concerns over the rule of law, which stemmed from its growing control over the judiciary and unwillingness to abide by European Union (EU) law. However, President Andrzej Duda said that a judicial reform bill would not be immediately debated in Parliament.

Political Rights

A Electoral Process

A1 0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections? 3 / 4

The president is directly elected for up to two five-year terms. The president's appointment of a prime minister must be confirmed by the Sejm, the lower house of Parliament. While the prime minister holds most executive power, the president also has some influence, particularly over defense and foreign policy matters. Andrzej Duda, the PiS candidate, was reelected in July 2020, winning 51 percent of the vote in the second round. Turnout was 68.1 percent, the second highest since 1989.

The election was originally scheduled for that May. In April, amid political conflict over whether to hold the polls during the COVID-19 pandemic, the government drafted plans to hold the vote as scheduled but with mail-in ballots, transferring the election's administration to the post office instead of the constitutionally legitimate National Electoral Commission (PKW). The government ultimately backtracked, and the first round was called in June.

Observers noted that the government had failed to meet its constitutional obligations by abandoning the originally scheduled vote without any formal procedure. In September 2020, an administrative court ruled that the prime minister had broken the law in attempting to transfer the election's administration to the post office. In 2021, the Supreme Audit Office (NIK) blamed high-ranking officials for seeking to organize the mail-in vote without a legal basis and at considerable cost. The government has repeatedly defended the legality of its actions.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) observers concluded that the election was competitive and well-organized, but was tarnished by "hostility" and "biased coverage by the public broadcaster," which PiS had effectively transformed into a government mouthpiece. The observers noted the insufficiency of regulations governing public officials' campaign activities, with Duda receiving an "undue advantage" from campaigning by high-ranking officials including Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. Observers also raised concerns over the persistent use of homophobic rhetoric by Duda, his team, and PiS's media allies.

Prime Minister Morawiecki was appointed in 2017 with the approval of PiS's parliamentary majority. He remained in his post at the end of 2022.

A2 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections? 4 / 4

Members of the bicameral Parliament are elected for four-year terms. The 460-seat Sejm is elected by proportional representation and holds most legislative authority. The 100 members of the Senate, the

upper house, are elected in single-member constituencies. The Senate can delay and amend legislation but has few other powers.

In the October 2019 parliamentary elections, PiS won a second term with 43.6 percent of the vote, retaining its 235 lower-house seats. This majority initially allowed PiS to continue governing without formal coalition partners, though two smaller parties, United Poland and Agreement, were included within its electoral lists and parliamentary caucus. In August 2021, Jarosław Gowin, the leader of Agreement, left the ruling camp with a number of lawmakers. The coalition continued to pass legislation by making deals with smaller parties and individual parliamentarians.

The centrist Civic Platform (PO) party won 134 seats. Four other parties or coalitions passed the threshold to enter the Sejm, including left-wing and far-right parties that had been absent during the previous term. PiS narrowly lost control of the Senate in 2019, with an opposition coalition taking 51 seats and PiS winning 48.

OSCE observers concluded that the 2019 elections were generally conducted in a “professional and transparent” manner. However, they expressed concern that judicial reforms had left a “lack of trust in prosecutors and courts to handle election-related complaints independently.” They also noted that “nationalist and homophobic rhetoric gave rise to a sense of threat,” which they echoed in their report on the 2020 presidential election.

In December 2021, a research team at the University of Toronto reported that a mobile phone belonging to a Polish opposition politician, then the head of the PO campaign team, had been hacked with Pegasus spyware ahead of the polls. Text messages stolen from his phone were used in negative reports about him on PiS-controlled public television broadcasts during the campaign. Phones of an opposition-linked lawyer and a prosecutor critical of PiS’s judicial reforms were also hacked. In a November 2022 report, the European Parliament said Warsaw’s use of Pegasus may have affected elections to that body as well as national elections.

A3 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the 3 / relevant election management bodies? 4

Poland’s electoral framework and its implementation have generally ensured free and fair elections, though 2017–18 legal changes have increased the potential for political influence over the PKW, which manages elections, oversees party finances, and can withhold state subsidies. Previously, all nine PKW members were nominated by courts. Seven members are now chosen by Parliament. As the largest parliamentary grouping, PiS was allowed to nominate a maximum of three members at the beginning of the current parliamentary term. PiS could also exert influence over the member picked by the Constitutional Tribunal (TK), which is currently led by PiS-installed judges. The PKW was also affected by PiS’s attempt to order the postal service to administer a mail-in voting process in 2020 without passing proper legislation.

The Chamber of Extraordinary Control and Public Affairs, a Supreme Court chamber whose members are appointed by the politicized National Council of the Judiciary (KRS), can validate or reject election and referendum results. The chamber’s substantial power, along with its vulnerability to politicization, further threatens the integrity of electoral oversight.

In November 2022, Parliament passed and President Duda signed a law extending the term of local governments to April 2024, ostensibly so that local elections do not interfere with parliamentary

elections due in 2023. Observers warned that the law would impact the functioning of local government and was passed to protect PiS's electoral prospects.

B Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings? 4 / 4

Poland's political parties generally organize and operate freely. While PiS and PO have long dominated the country's modern party system, challengers have risen and fallen. The latest of these is Poland 2050, a center-right party founded by presidential candidate Szymon Hołownia in 2020; Poland 2050 gained Sejm representation in early 2021 when three lawmakers defected from other parties.

AGROunia, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) focusing on agrarian issues, has sought political-party status but has not won court approval as of February 2022. In January, Citizen Lab reported that AGROunia leader Michał Kołodziejczak was targeted with Pegasus in 2019, the same year AGROunia announced its intention to register. The government acknowledged the use of Pegasus but denied using it for political purposes.

B2 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections? 4 / 4

There have been multiple rotations of power among rival parties since the transition from communist rule. However, the opposition faces obstacles including propaganda by PiS-controlled public media and legal changes related to electoral administration.

PiS defeated a two-term PO government in 2015. In 2019, PiS won a slim majority in the Sejm but lost control of the Senate. The Democratic Left Alliance returned to Parliament, while four new parties entered for the first time.

The 2020 presidential campaign of pro-EU Warsaw mayor Rafał Trzaskowski was one of the most significant challenges to PiS's grip on power since 2015. That vote ended with the narrowest margin of victory for an incumbent since 1989.

B3 0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means? 4 / 4

Voters and politicians are generally free from undue interference by outside groups. However, there are concerns that the PiS government's control over various state institutions could be exploited to mobilize political support among public employees in future elections.

B4 0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities? 4 / 4

Women have equal political rights but are underrepresented in national political bodies, holding 28.3 percent of Sejm seats and 4 of the cabinet's 25 seats at year's end.

Ethnic, religious, and other minority groups enjoy full political rights and electoral opportunities. However, LGBT+ people face significant challenges to entering politics and seeing their interests represented in Polish politics in practice. Government figures and their media allies commonly espouse homophobic rhetoric. Despite such challenges, in 2020, Robert Biedroń, an openly gay member of the European Parliament, was nominated as a presidential candidate by an alliance of three left-wing parties.

Electoral lists representing recognized national minorities are not subject to the minimum vote threshold for parliamentary representation.

C Functioning of Government

C1 0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government? 3 / 4

Freely elected officials generally determine and implement laws and policies without interference, though PiS leader and former prime minister Jarosław Kaczyński retains significant influence on government affairs even after resigning as deputy prime minister in June 2022. Throughout its time in power, PiS has sought to limit parliamentary scrutiny of legislation through various means, such as making use of private-members bills that require no consultation or impact assessments; abruptly introducing legislation, sometimes in the middle of the night; and limiting opportunities for the opposition to question or amend legislation.

C2 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective? 3 / 4

PiS came to power promising to address corruption, cronyism, and nepotism. Cronyism, a problem under all previous Polish governments, is widespread under PiS. The current government has altered, lowered, or removed many criteria for staffing of public institutions, allowing for appointments based on party loyalty and personal connections.

In past years, the NIK has raised concerns about the misuse of public funds by PiS and its coalition partners. NIK chief Marian Banaś, a PiS appointee, has himself been investigated over his financial dealings, which he claimed were politically motivated. In January 2022, Banaś warned a Senate committee that the NIK was considering compelling Jarosław Kaczyński's testimony over the use of Pegasus.

In January 2022, criminal-code amendments that enshrined conflict-of-interest measures and banned public officials from taking posts in some state-owned enterprises took effect. The amended code includes new prison sentences for corruption; some "repeat" offenses could be punished with a life sentence.

C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency? 2 / 4

The right to public information is guaranteed by the constitution and by the 2001 Act on Access to Public Information but obtaining records and data from public institutions can be slow and difficult.

The current government avoids consulting outside experts or NGOs on policy ideas and tends to

introduce and pass legislation rapidly, with little opportunity for debate or amendment.

Beginning in 2021, the government faced a string of scandals when official correspondence was leaked from private email accounts; it blamed the leak on Kremlin-backed Russian hackers and claimed that some of the emails were inauthentic components of a Russian disinformation campaign. In September 2022, Michał Dworczyk, Prime Minister Morawiecki's chief of staff, resigned over the leak of his emails, which revealed that Dworczyk met with TK chair Julia Przyłębska with the apparent aim of postponing some of its rulings.

Civil Liberties

D Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media? 3 / 4

The constitution guarantees freedom of expression and forbids censorship, though libel laws have been used to harass journalists. According to March 2022 report by the Coalition against SLAPPs (strategic lawsuits against public participation) in Europe, Poland had the highest number of such lawsuits in Europe, though a majority were ultimately dismissed.

Public outlets and their governing bodies have been purged of independent or dissenting voices since PiS came to power in 2015. TVP, the state broadcaster, promotes government messages and often seeks to discredit the opposition, breaching its statutory obligations to present news in a "reliable and pluralistic manner." TVP also depicts those who criticize the government, including NGOs and judges, as agents of the opposition or foreign forces.

PiS uses state-run companies to exert control over local media. In 2020, PKN Orlen, an oil firm in which Warsaw maintains a significant stake, bought Polska Press, which operates a large number of regional newspapers and online portals. While PKN Orlen pledged to safeguard editorial independence, all but one of the chief editors at Polska Press's daily newspapers was replaced by May 2022.

Since 2015, state-controlled companies have shifted their advertising to private outlets that support PiS. More critical outlets have suffered a corresponding drop in advertising revenue, as well as a sharp decline in subscriptions from government ministries.

Journalists were barred from visiting two provinces on the border with Belarus in September 2021, as migrants and asylum seekers entered the border zone. The ban was lifted in July 2022, with a 200-meter ban being imposed instead.

In February 2022, Polish authorities arrested journalist Pablo González, who was reporting on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Warsaw alleges that González, who has Spanish and Russian citizenship, spied for Russia. González, who denied the charges, took his case to the European Court of Human Rights in October; he remained in detention at year's end.

D2 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private? 4 / 4

The state respects freedom of religion. PiS is aligned with the Roman Catholic Church, which wields significant influence in Poland. Religious groups are not required to register with the authorities but

receive tax benefits if they do. Minority faiths are generally able to obtain registration in practice. While there is a formal ban on state funding for church construction, a church can obtain Culture Ministry funding if it includes a museum.

D3 0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination? 3 / 4

PiS has sought to discredit academics who challenge its preferred historical narrative, particularly with regard to the events of World War II. However, the right to pursue academic research has been upheld by courts.

In June 2022, President Duda signed a law creating a the Copernicus Academy, which is charged with financing scientific research. In 2021, Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) head Jerzy Duszyński warned that the new academy would duplicate much of the PAN's work and threaten its funding.

In 2022, Education Minister Przemysław Czarnek attempted to introduce legislation that would have empowered education officials to more directly influence educational and extracurricular activities in schools. Human Rights Watch (HRW) noted in February that the proposal would have allowed head teachers to be removed by "educational welfare officers" and could have been used to restrict sex education. President Duda vetoed the proposals in March and December.

D4 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution? 3 / 4

People are generally free to engage in private discussions without fear of harassment or detention by the authorities. However, Poland has harsh insult laws, including against offending religious feelings and insulting the president, which have been increasingly used to pursue criminal cases in recent years. In September 2022, the Supreme Court upheld the acquittal of a protester charged with insulting Duda at a 2020 election rally. That same month, an appellate court upheld an earlier determination that writer Jakub Żulczyk, who was charged with insulting Duda on social media, did not commit a crime.

E Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly? 3 / 4

Freedom of assembly is generally respected in law and in practice. Public demonstrations are held with some regularity, though local authorities can limit demonstrations in their districts on grounds of maintaining public order.

LGBT+ pride parades have taken place in Poland in greater numbers in recent years, despite authorities' unsuccessful attempts to obstruct them.

E2 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights- and governance-related work? 3 / 4

Although NGOs have generally operated without government interference in Poland, public media and top officials have systematically undermined the credibility of rights and governance-related groups in

recent years, accusing many of lacking financial transparency and pursuing an opposition-led political agenda. A 2017 law centralized distribution of public NGO funding through a new body, the National Freedom Institute (NIW), which is indirectly attached to the prime minister's office. The NIW went on to disproportionately fund organizations that fit the government's ideological profile.

NGOs were barred from entering the border zone near Belarus when Warsaw imposed a state of emergency in September 2021; authorities stopped NGOs from providing humanitarian aid to migrants and asylum seekers or monitoring the conduct of authorities. The state of emergency was lifted in July 2022 as a border wall neared completion. At least nine human rights activists had been detained and charged with organizing or assisting in organizing an illegal border crossing by the time the state of emergency was lifted. Organizations operating in the border area also noted that authorities repeatedly detain activists for hours-long checks. In June 2022, prosecutors dropped an investigation against activists from the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia (KIK) who sought to provide assistance at the border. Proceedings against another KIK member were dropped in November.

E3 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations? 4 / 4

Poland has a robust labor movement, though certain groups—including the self-employed, private contractors, and those in essential services—cannot join unions. Complicated legal procedures hinder workers' ability to strike.

F Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary? 1 / 4

Since taking power in 2015, PiS has asserted control over the judiciary, passing legislation designed to curb the powers of the TK and to install progovernment judges on its benches.

New, lower retirement ages for the Supreme Court took effect in 2018; 27 judges were effectively forced to step down but were reinstated after the European Commission (EC) launched an infringement procedure and the European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruled that the measures violated European law. Under measures that took effect in 2018, 15 of the KRS's members would be appointed by Parliament and not elected by fellow judges.

A law on the Supreme Court created powerful new chambers, including the Disciplinary Chamber (ID). The EC later launched infringement procedures, saying that the ID undermined judicial independence. In July 2021, the ECJ ordered a suspension of the ID's activities, a ruling Warsaw ignored. On the same day that the ECJ made its ruling, the TK said that the ECJ's interim measures conflicted with the constitution. That October, the ECJ imposed a daily one-million-euro penalty against Warsaw, which remained in effect as of November 2022. Also in October 2021, the TK ruled that some parts of EU law were incompatible with the constitution. The EC responded by launching another infringement procedure, arguing that the TK's rulings had violated EU law.

Individual judges have also been scrutinized, suspended, or transferred to other courts for questioning the government. In August 2022, for example, Warsaw criminal judge Marzanna Piekarska-Drażek was transferred to another court after she had questioned the government's judicial appointments.

Concerns over judicial independence persisted in 2022. In March, the TK supported the Justice Ministry's assessment that the right to a fair trial as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights was unconstitutional. The Sejm voted to abolish the ID in May, with the Professional Liability Chamber taking on some of its functions; opposition lawmakers called the changes cosmetic. In June, the Supreme Court's criminal chamber ruled that the KRS no longer abided by its constitutional purpose due to political interference, a claim PiS rejected. In December, Warsaw said it had agreed on legislative amendments that would address the EU's rule-of-law concerns, though President Duda said that a judicial reform bill would not be debated immediately.

In December 2022, the Sejm passed a law that would stop criminal proceedings of government officials who supplied voter lists to the post office without a legal basis before the 2020 presidential election. The law also provides for the erasure of already-rendered court convictions on the matter. The law was criticized for granting Parliament the power to supersede final court decisions, violating separation of powers.

F2 0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters? 3 / 4

Defendants generally enjoy due process protections in Poland, though the law allows for extended pretrial detention, and a large backlog of cases exists. The use of pretrial detention has significantly increased since the PiS came to power.

The PiS government's decision to merge the roles of justice minister and prosecutor general "creates potential for misuses and political manipulation" of the justice system, according to the Venice Commission.

Legislation introduced in 2016 gave law enforcement agencies broad authority to monitor citizens' communications, including the ability to access metadata without a court order, monitor the movements of foreign citizens without prior court approval, and hold terrorism suspects without charge for up to two weeks. It also contained ambiguous provisions on collecting individuals' data, arresting civilians, prohibiting demonstrations, and blocking internet access.

F3 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies? 4 / 4

Civilians are largely free from extralegal violence, though incidents of abuse by police have been alleged particularly in the context of antigovernment demonstrations. Human rights groups have reported inadequate medical care in prison facilities.

People in Poland have generally remained unaffected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, two people when a missile struck farmland near the village of Przewodów in November. Preliminary findings suggested the strike was unintentional and that the missile may have been launched by Ukrainian forces.

F4 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population? 2 / 4

Women and ethnic minority groups generally enjoy equality before the law.

LGBT+ people continue to face discrimination. While public support for LGBT+ rights has risen in recent years, PiS has stoked fears of “imported LGBT ideology” by mounting an intense anti-LGBT+ campaign. By the end of 2020, more than 100 local governments had declared themselves “LGBT-ideology-free” zones or established “family charters,” in resolutions without specific legal implications that rights groups described as hateful toward LGBT+ people. Warsaw asked local authorities to repeal their anti-LGBT+ resolutions in 2021, after the EU threatened to withdraw funding from towns that had adopted them. In June 2022, the Supreme Administrative Court ordered four municipalities to revoke their declarations, though many of them persist.

Because Poland’s law against inciting hatred does not cover crimes motivated by sexuality or gender identity, public figures have been free to make slurs that would be prosecuted if targeted at other marginalized groups.

In October 2021, Parliament authorized border guards to forcibly expel migrants who had crossed into the country illegally, after Belarusian security forces stranded migrants and asylum seekers who then crossed the border into Poland. The situation, which the Belarusian regime engineered in an effort to force the EU to reverse sanctions against it, trapped thousands of people between the two countries. The United Nations and human rights organizations were denied access to the border zone and criticized Warsaw’s policy of “illegal pushbacks.” In June, the country’s Commissioner for Human Rights reported that migrants’ right to health care had been systematically violated in closed detention centers. At least 27 people died in the border zone as of November 2022.

The pushback policy continued for at least part of 2022, though Polish courts called it unlawful in June and September rulings. A border wall, which was largely completed when the state of emergency was lifted in July, was constructed to restrict the flow of people from Belarus.

The national government, local bodies, and citizens offered significant support to Ukrainians fleeing the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In March 2022, the Sejm passed legislation granting significant rights, including labor-market access, to Ukrainian refugees. However, the legislation does not apply to stateless persons arriving from Ukraine, who enjoy less protection. Warsaw attempted to cut allowances to refugees and to their Polish hosts in June, a policy that was not enacted due to widespread local opposition. Under a government proposal announced in November, some Ukrainian refugees would be responsible for more housing and food costs beginning in March 2023. Some 1.4 million people registered for temporary protection in Poland as of October 2022, the highest figure among EU member states.

G Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education? 4 / 4

People in Poland typically enjoy freedom of travel and choice of residence, employment, and institution of higher education.

G2 0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors? 4 / 4

Citizens have the right to own property and establish private businesses. However, a 2016 law imposed onerous restrictions on sale and ownership of agricultural land, ostensibly to protect small-scale farmers. State and religious institutions are not bound by the new restrictions.

G3 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size 3 / of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance? 4

Under Polish law, abortion is permissible through the 12th week of pregnancy if a woman's health or life is in danger or if the pregnancy is a result of a criminal act such as rape. In January 2021, a TK ruling that abortion in cases where the fetus has a congenital disorder is unconstitutional—effectively restricting legal abortion to cases involving rape, incest, or danger to the life or health of the pregnant person—went into effect. UN experts said the ruling violates Poland's human rights obligations and effectively prevented access to legal and safe abortions within the country. Under regulations that took effect in October 2022, doctors must record pregnancies in a national register, sparking fears that it could be used to detect illegal abortions or prosecute people who survive miscarriages. By November, five women had died in Poland due to complications with their pregnancies and under circumstances where health-care providers did not perform abortions.

Since 2017, contraceptive pills have been available by prescription only. An NIK report found that in many, especially rural, parts of Poland, gynecologists are rare. Many must travel to obtain care, and reliable and timely access to contraception and other sexual-health services is limited.

Same-sex civil partnerships and marriages are not permitted, and same-sex couples are not legally allowed to adopt. The constitution places "marriage, as a union of a man and a woman," under the "care and protection" of the state.

Since 2020, government ministers have debated withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention, a treaty to combat domestic violence and violence against women, on grounds of its alleged promotion of "LGBT and gender ideology." As of the end of 2022, Poland remained a signatory.

In a 2021 report, the Council of Europe praised several initiatives to combat domestic violence, including a law mandating the immediate separation of perpetrators of domestic violence from their victims, but called for more progress. In October 2022, Parliament began work amending existing legislation that would allow law enforcement to issue restraining orders and contact bans in domestic violence cases.

G4 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation? 3 / 4

The law provides meaningful protections against abusive working conditions and child labor, especially in the formal sector. The authorities work to combat human trafficking, but women and children are still subjected to trafficking for sexual exploitation and foreign migrant workers are vulnerable to conditions amounting to forced labor.

State-owned entities have expanded their already considerable presence in various sectors, such as banking, often by buying out foreign owners, as the government effectively renationalizes parts of the economy. Hiring for senior positions at such firms is often based on political loyalty or connections rather than merit, a longstanding issue that has grown more widespread under the current administration.

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