

2024 Human Rights and Democracy in the World (country reports)

Enlargement Countries.....	6
Republic of Albania.....	6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	8
Republic of North Macedonia	10
Georgia	12
Kosovo*	14
Montenegro	16
Republic of Moldova	18
Republic of Serbia.....	20
Republic of Türkiye.....	22
Ukraine	24
EEA/EFTA Countries and non EU Western European Countries.....	26
Swiss Confederation.....	27
Kingdom of Norway.....	29
Iceland	31
Principality of Liechtenstein.....	32
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	34
European Neighbourhood Policy.....	36
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	36
Republic of Armenia	38
Republic of Azerbaijan.....	40
Republic of Belarus.....	41
Arab Republic of Egypt	43
State of Israel.....	45
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	48
Lebanese Republic.....	50
State of Libya.....	52
Kingdom of Morocco.....	54
Occupied Palestinian territory (oPt).....	56
Western Sahara	58
Syrian Arab Republic	59
Republic of Tunisia	61
Russia and Central Asia	62

Republic of Kazakhstan	62
Kyrgyz Republic	64
Russian Federation	66
Republic of Tajikistan	68
Turkmenistan.....	70
Republic of Uzbekistan.....	71
Africa.....	73
Republic of Angola.....	73
Republic of Benin	75
Republic of Botswana.....	76
Burkina Faso	77
Republic of Burundi.....	79
Republic of Cabo Verde.....	81
Republic of Cameroon.....	83
Central African Republic.....	84
Republic of Chad.....	86
Union of the Comoros	87
Democratic Republic of the Congo.....	88
Republic of the Congo	91
Republic of Côte d'Ivoire	92
Republic of Djibouti.....	94
Republic of Equatorial Guinea.....	96
State of Eritrea	98
Kingdom of Eswatini	99
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.....	101
Gabonese Republic.....	102
The Republic of The Gambia	103
Republic of Ghana	105
Republic of Guinea	106
Republic of Guinea-Bissau.....	108
Republic of Kenya.....	111
Kingdom of Lesotho	112
Republic of Liberia.....	114
Republic of Madagascar	116
Republic of Malawi.....	117

Republic of Mali.....	119
Islamic Republic of Mauritania.....	121
Republic of Mauritius	123
Republic of Mozambique	125
Republic of Namibia	128
Republic of Niger	130
Federal Republic of Nigeria	132
Republic of Rwanda.....	134
Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe	136
Republic of Senegal	137
Republic of Seychelles	139
Republic of Sierra Leone.....	141
Federal Republic of Somalia	143
Republic of South Africa	144
Republic of South Sudan	146
Republic of the Sudan	148
United Republic of Tanzania	150
Togolese Republic.....	152
Republic of Uganda	153
Republic of Zambia	155
Republic of Zimbabwe.....	157
Arabian Peninsula	159
Kingdom of Bahrain.....	159
Republic of Iraq	161
State of Kuwait	164
Sultanate of Oman	166
State of Qatar	167
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	169
United Arab Emirates	172
Republic of Yemen.....	174
Asia	176
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	176
People's Republic of Bangladesh	178
Kingdom of Bhutan.....	180
Brunei Darussalam	181

Kingdom of Cambodia	183
People's Republic of China	185
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.....	188
Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China	190
Taiwan	190
Republic of India.....	192
Republic of Indonesia	194
Islamic Republic of Iran	196
Japan.....	197
Republic of Korea	198
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	200
Lao People's Democratic Republic	202
Malaysia.....	204
Republic of Maldives	205
Mongolia.....	207
Myanmar/Burma	209
Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.....	211
Islamic Republic of Pakistan	213
Republic of the Philippines.....	215
Republic of Singapore.....	217
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.....	219
Kingdom of Thailand	221
Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.....	223
Socialist Republic of Vietnam	224
Oceania	226
Commonwealth of Australia	226
Republic of Fiji	227
Republic of Kiribati	229
Republic of the Marshall Islands	231
Federated States of Micronesia	232
Republic of Nauru.....	235
New Zealand.....	236
Republic of Palau.....	237
Independent State of Papua New Guinea.....	239
Independent State of Samoa.....	241

Solomon Islands	243
Kingdom of Tonga	245
Tuvalu	248
Republic of Vanuatu	250
The Americas.....	252
Antigua and Barbuda.....	252
Argentine Republic.....	253
Commonwealth of the Bahamas.....	254
Barbados.....	255
Belize	256
Plurinational State of Bolivia	258
Federative Republic of Brazil.....	259
Canada.....	261
Republic of Chile.....	263
Republic of Colombia	265
Republic of Costa Rica	266
Republic of Cuba.....	268
Commonwealth of Dominica	270
Dominican Republic.....	271
Republic of Ecuador.....	272
Republic of El Salvador	274
Grenada	276
Republic of Guatemala	277
Cooperative Republic of Guyana.....	278
Republic of Haiti	280
Republic of Honduras	281
Jamaica	283
United Mexican States	285
Republic of Nicaragua	287
Republic of Panama.....	288
Republic of Paraguay.....	290
Republic of Peru	292
Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis	294
Saint Lucia.....	295
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.....	295

Republic of Suriname	296
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago	298
Eastern Republic of Uruguay.....	300
United States of America	301
Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.....	303

Enlargement countries

Republic of Albania

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: Albania's legal framework sets out a generally good basis for respect, protection and fulfilment of fundamental rights. Progress during the reporting period included the adoption of a new strategy for the protection of crime victims, the adoption of the bylaws relevant to the implementation of the framework law on the rights of persons belonging to minorities as well as the preliminary results of the national population and housing census published in June. Implementation efforts need to intensify overall, particularly in the areas of freedom of expression, violence against women and property rights. The electoral framework remained conducive for organising democratic elections. Parliament adopted amendments to the Electoral Code, partially in response to Constitutional Court rulings, thus enabling out-of-country voting by Albanian diaspora, introducing partially open candidates lists (mixed candidate lists) and changes to the party quotient. However, there has been limited progress in addressing outstanding recommendations from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Venice Commission, as the mandate of Parliament's ad-hoc committee on electoral reform expired without any results. Parliament exercised its powers in a mostly satisfactory way. However, its oversight role over the executive remained to be strengthened. Parliamentary activities were affected by strong political polarisation. Confrontation between the ruling majority and a part of the opposition continued to be harsh until March 2024, with the latter disrupting a plenary session with barricades due to alleged restrictions on their rights. Despite the return to normal functioning of the Parliament in March 2024, political polarisation remained high. This continued to negatively impact Parliament's key legislative and oversight roles and extended delays in appointing individuals to key positions, including the Ombudsperson and the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination. Civil society organisations (CSOs) operated in a challenging environment, including in relation to registration requirements and limited public funding for CSOs. The structures for consulting civil society were not reinforced to be fully operational. The conditions necessary for effective VAT exemption need to be put in place without further delay.

Albania continued implementing the justice reform and the vetting process, which led to significant improvements in the functioning of the judiciary. The vetting process in first instance has been completed, which is a major milestone. Concerns remained about attempted political interference and pressure on the judicial system and shortcomings in the merit-based appointments of non-magistrate members of the High Judicial Council and the

implementation in 2024. These projects cover a variety of topics such as the rights of Indigenous peoples, children's rights and the fundamental rights of people in detention. In addition, four projects funded by the Civil Society Organisations and Local Authorities instrument (OSC-AL) successfully continued in 2024. Their areas of work included revitalising civil society as a development actor and improving the living conditions of homeless kids in Brazzaville. Through the bilateral NDICI envelope, the EU is also supporting civil society's contribution to gender equality for an inclusive economic and social development (EUR 5 million). Furthermore, the 'Police +' project (EUR 5 million), aimed at improving respect for human rights by the police in pilot police stations, continues making progress. The EU, in the context of promoting social and economic rights, supported the informal private sector through projects targeting local economic initiatives. The EU also engaged with young people through the launch of an initiative that aims at establishing a Youth Advisory Group.

5. Multilateral context: The Republic of the Congo is party to several key human rights treaties but it has not ratified the CPED or the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aimed at abolishing the death penalty, despite abolishing the death penalty in 2015. In 2024, the country ratified the Optional Protocol to the CAT.

The fourth cycle of the UPR for Congo took place in January 2024. The country received 200 recommendations and noted almost all of them. Reports from civil society groups signalled the low level of implementation of the recommendations from the previous UPR in 2018. The Ministry of Justice has drafted an action plan to implement the recommendations of UPR 2024. The country's priorities on human rights in UN fora did not match the EU's.

Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: Overall, the human rights situation has slightly improved. However, as indicated in the UPR undertaken in 2024, some challenges remain such as access to basic social services, prison overpopulation, gender inequalities and unequal access to economic, social and cultural resources especially in rural areas, violations of freedom of expression and assembly and attacks on civic space as well as persistence of child labour. 2024 also saw significant tensions in Abidjan following evictions by the Ivorian authorities. Last summer, Côte d'Ivoire experienced an unprecedented anti-LGBTI movement in the form of an online campaign, followed by dozens of acts of violence.

Civil society remains fragile and needs support in terms of structuring, capacity-building, and independence. Following the Civil Society Organisations Ordinance, adopted in June 2024 to replace the 1960 Law on Associations, several CSOs have seized the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, sharing their concerns about the shrinking of the right of association.

In view of the presidential elections scheduled for October 2025, Côte d'Ivoire undertook the revision of the electoral list, an essential step to ensure inclusiveness of the electoral process. Although almost one million new voters were registered, the target of registering more than four million voters was not met - a significant deviation from the initial forecast. The International Electrotechnical Commission plans to publish the provisional list by end February, followed by a period of litigation. The final list will be drawn up three months before the elections.

2. EU action - key focus areas: In terms of cooperation and in line with the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 and the Country Strategy for Human Rights and Democracy 2021-2024, eight strategic and operational priorities identified have been implemented: tackling child labour, child trafficking and forced labour; contributing to the eradication of torture and improving detention conditions; preventing GBV; strengthening the rule of law, the independence and functioning of the judiciary, and supporting the integrity of electoral processes; strengthening the role of CSOs; contributing to equal opportunities for women and men and fighting against all forms of discriminations; improving access to public services, including through digital technologies; and promoting freedom of expression and countering disinformation and hate speech.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: EUDEL has regular meetings with CSOs as well as with Côte d'Ivoire authorities and political parties. The EU and Côte d'Ivoire hold annual Partnership Dialogues, the latest in December 2024. Several topics related to the human rights situation, good governance, as well as the rule of law and the fight against corruption were discussed. During this Dialogue, parties were able to reaffirm their commitment towards shared values and interests.

The EU, with support of the EU MS represented in Côte d'Ivoire, carried out several formal démarches on human rights and democracy issues in 2024 in the framework of the 79th UNGA and the 55th session of the UNHRC.

4. EU financial engagement: EU cooperation focuses on human capital with actions on technical and vocational education and training; social protection and migration; sustainable and inclusive growth with actions on business environment, agriculture, and low-carbon transition; as well as democratic governance, peace and security and digital governance. The European Union has developed a wide range of projects to support its political engagements towards Côte d'Ivoire. In 2024 and among other, the EU defined an 'elections package' which will support the country in holding transparent and inclusive elections in 2025 (presidential) and 2026 (legislative). The EU also supports CSOs and launched a new support project in January 2024 in close cooperation with the five Regional Civil Society Support Centres.

5. Multilateral context: Côte d'Ivoire is a member of the Human Rights Council (2024-2026) and has ratified almost all international UN and AU instruments. The Government has adopted policies to combat child labour and trafficking in human beings. The ratification procedure for the Second Optional Protocol to the IICPR, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, has been finalized. However, implementation of international instruments and reporting requires further improvement. There are no specific legislative provisions governing compensation to victims of torture. The national mechanism for the prevention of torture, which was to be established in March 2024 in accordance with Côte d'Ivoire's international obligations, has not yet been established.

Côte d'Ivoire participated in the UPR exercise in 2024. Multiple recommendations have emerged from the UPR, including recommendations on the prison living conditions, on gender equality, as well as on children's rights, education, civil and political rights, including the right to demonstrate and associate, and LGBTI.