

Women remained inadequately protected in law against domestic violence.

LGBTI PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

Legislation continued to discriminate against LGBTI people. Authorities detained individuals for their sexual orientation or gender expression.

In February, plain-clothes security forces arrested Manuel Guerrero Aviña, a British-Mexican national, shortly after he agreed to meet another man through the LGBTI dating app Grindr. His family believed he was entrapped by law enforcement officials. Authorities detained him without charge for more than six weeks, interrogated him without a lawyer and forced him to thumbprint a so-called “confession” in Arabic, which he did not understand. The authorities subsequently charged him with drug-related offences and sentenced him to a six-month suspended prison term.⁴ He returned to the UK in June after receiving a deportation order.

RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

In January, Qatar announced its Third National Development Strategy, which included a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% “relative to the business-as-usual scenario by 2030”. However, in February, Qatar announced plans to expand its liquefied natural gas production by 85%.

Qatar joined other higher-income countries during COP29 to mobilize USD 300 billion annually by 2035 to help lower-income countries address climate change.

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1. “Global: FIFA must publish its review into compensation for workers harmed delivering the World Cup in Qatar”, 9 May 1
 2. “Qatar: FIFA’s Qatar World Cup Legacy Fund ignores exploited workers”, 27 November 1
 3. “UN body calls for release of Qatar whistleblower”, 24 July 1
 4. “Qatar: Quash conviction of British-Mexican national sentenced to six-month suspended prison term in grossly unfair trial”, 5 June 1

ROMANIA

Romania

Roma people, including Roma refugees escaping the conflict in Ukraine, continued to face segregation and discrimination when accessing basic services. Multiple protests took place peacefully without police using excessive force. The government adopted a new plan to prevent ill-treatment of people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. Reports of domestic violence continued to increase.

BACKGROUND

In December, the Constitutional Court cancelled the first round of the 2024 presidential elections, held in November, due to irregularities and violations of electoral regulation. New presidential elections were scheduled for May 2025.

DISCRIMINATION

Roma

In a human rights report published in April, the US State Department denounced racism against Roma across the region, including in Romania. It noted that Roma in Romania continued to face discrimination and segregation in education and housing and to allege police harassment and brutality.

In June, the European Roma Rights Centre NGO reported that Roma refugees from Ukraine faced discrimination in accessing basic services including housing, education and healthcare. Focusing on the experiences of Roma refugees in five Eastern-European reception countries including Romania, it noted that these problems were heightened by a general context of discrimination and inequality against Roma, as well as by issues such as lack of documentation and language barriers.

The NGO Centre for Legal Resources raised concerns that little progress had been made in overcoming segregation in the education of Roma children, with an

inadequate regulatory framework matched by lack of will and effort by institutions.

Jewish people

In April, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) found that Romania had discriminated against and violated the rights of two Jewish plaintiffs, both Holocaust survivors. The court said that by failing to inform the plaintiffs and the wider public of extraordinary appeal proceedings – which had acquitted two high-ranking military officials previously convicted of crimes connected with the Holocaust – and by denying them access to the proceedings and files, Romania had caused “emotional suffering” and breached the plaintiffs’ rights to private life and psychological integrity.

LGBTI people

A citizens’ initiative bill aiming to change the constitution’s existing definition of family as based on marriage between “spouses” to a definition based on marriage between “a man and a woman” remained pending. Its sponsors claimed it was designed to “protect the family”. NGOs denounced the initiative as stigmatizing and discriminatory. At the end of the year, same-sex marriage and partnership remained unrecognized.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ASSEMBLY

In February, the ECtHR ruled that a judge’s freedom of expression was violated when the Superior Council of Magistracy gave him a disciplinary sanction for posting Facebook comments about the “resumption of political control over institutions” in 2019.

Peaceful protests took place across the country on issues ranging from environmental policies to women’s rights and solidarity with Palestinian people in Gaza. There were no reports of excessive use of force by police.

TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT

In May, the government adopted a five-year National Action Plan for the prevention of ill-treatment in medical and social institutions. Requested by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the plan was

developed after the ECtHR condemned Romania in 17 cases. These concerned violations of the rights of people with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities who were deprived of liberty and held in institutions.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Law enforcement agencies continued to register an increase in reported incidents of domestic violence compared with previous years. NGOs denounced the inadequacy of legal mechanisms and judicial procedures, including prohibitive costs and inefficient court processes. These structures failed to protect victims – predominantly women – from alarming levels of violence.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

NGOs reported that access to safe abortion services was being hindered by lack of information and a decreasing number of hospitals and clinicians providing abortions. Services were often available only in costly private clinics, while many doctors and entire public hospitals increasingly cited religious or moral objections to performing abortions.

RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

According to the National Integrated Energy and Climate Change Plan, Romania aimed to phase out coal production by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2045. However, NGOs criticized the plan’s incomplete legal framework and the lack of specific targets, actions and budgets for the development of renewable energy.

Greenpeace launched legal proceedings seeking the suspension of a major gas extraction project in the Black Sea, arguing that this would have a significant polluting impact on the environment.

RUSSIA

Russian Federation

Russia continued its war of aggression against Ukraine. The rights to freedom of