

# ANNEX II

Information collected by the EP Research Service for MEP Anja Haga on:

2.1 EU relations with selected countries with regards to FoRB

2.2 Freedom of Religion or Belief - EU Institutions

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## 2.1 EU Relations with selected countries with regards to the Freedom of Religion and Belief

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## MENA Countries

### Algeria

#### EU Relations

The European Union (EU) cooperates with Algeria in the framework of the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP). Relations between the EU and Algeria are based on the [Association Agreement](#), which entered into force in 2005.

Algeria is the EU's 19th biggest trade partner, representing 1% of the EU's total trade in goods in 2022. The EU is Algeria's biggest trade partner and accounts for the majority of Algeria's international trade (around 50% in 2021).

Total trade in goods between the EU and Algeria in 2022 amounted to €55.8 billion. The EU's imports from Algeria amounted to €41.9 billion. The EU's exports to Algeria amounted to €13.9 billion.

Source: [DG NEAR](#), [DG Trade](#)

#### Human rights

EU bilateral dialogues on human rights with countries are confidential, therefore the only information we can provide on Human Rights situation in the country and EU action in the field is taken from the last 2022 [EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World](#)

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: President Tebboune has approved pardon measures on the eve of the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the country's independence (5 July 2022). These measures concern several categories of detainees, including those under common law and those imprisoned for "gathering", arrested in the context of the Hirak marches. This decision enabled the release of dozens of prisoners of conscience who had not yet been tried or convicted. As regards those who had already been convicted, a specific law has been adopted by the parliament as an extension of the laws on the Rahma and civil concord.

Upon a proposal by the government, a draft organic law on associations has been put on the agenda of the Algerian Parliament for the 2022-2023 ordinary session. According to the explanatory memorandum, the purpose of this bill is to harmonise the Algerian law on associations with Article 53 of the new Algerian Constitution, under which "the right to create associations" is guaranteed.

This apparent comparative progress notwithstanding, the media landscape has witnessed a progressive reduction of opposition voices. Newspapers rarely criticise the authorities and tend to align themselves with their positions. This change is due in particular to the pressure exerted through public advertising, which constitutes the primary financial source for local media.

A revision of the law on information (last updated in 2012) was proposed to Parliament in December 2022 and is pending debate. This law is one of the government's priorities for the year 2023.

The year 2022 was marked by an increasing closure of the civic space, impacted notably by the tightening of the legal framework targeting peaceful dissent. Several trials are underway, including cases of students, journalists and activists that have been ongoing for the past three years. Charges of terrorism and sabotage under Article 87 bis8 are still very commonly used by prosecutors in such proceedings. Reportedly, on June 2022, Algeria had at least 260 prisoners of conscience held in 29 wilayas (districts).

According to the International Organisation for Migration, in recent years, many sub-Saharan migrants have turned to Algeria both as a country of transit and destination. Each week, a large number of migrants of different nationalities (mainly from West Africa) enter Algeria. Most arrive on Algerian territory across the 1 500 km border with Mali and Niger in the middle of the Sahara Desert. In response, there has been a growing interest in the challenges and opportunities represented by national and regional migratory flows in Algeria. According to UNHCR, Algeria is equally a country of transit and destination when it comes to the situation of refugees. Algeria mainly hosts Sahrawi refugees – in five camps near Tindouf - and 11 500 refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas, the majority of whom are. Syrians (80 per cent), with sub-Saharan Africans accounting for the remaining 20 per cent.

2. EU action on Human Rights and Democracy - key focus areas: Consultations with civil society organisations and actors were held by video conference in May 2022 in preparation for the fourth round of the Universal Periodic Review. The main areas of cooperation identified by the EU-Algeria Partnership priorities for 2017-2020, currently being updated, include governance, participatory democracy, the promotion and defence of fundamental rights, enhancing the role of women in society, decentralisation, strengthening the judicial system and reinforcing the role of civil society. Refugee protection is an integral part of EU-funded humanitarian projects in five Sahrawi refugee camps in south-west Algeria, near Tindouf.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The EU has regularly raised the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms with the Algerian authorities, in particular during high-level visits, and also during the meeting of the Political Dialogue, Security and Human Rights"Subcommittee conducted in the framework of the EU-Algeria Association Agreement. The main human rights issues addressed during the high-level meetings included freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of association.

4. EU financial commitment: The EU renewed its support to the Algerian agenda for local development and participatory democracy in partnership with UNDP: the Capacity-Building Programme for Local Development Actors (CapDeL) was extended until the end of 2022. This programme allowed the emergence of young actors (many of them women) and new collaborations between civil society and local authorities.

In the field of Justice reform and rule of law, numerous training courses were organised in 2022 in the framework of the "Programme d'Appui au secteur de la Justice en Algérie" (PASJA), for professionals in the sector such as notaries, magistrates and lawyers. The programme, launched in 2017, aims to modernise the justice sector by “contributing to strengthening the rule of law and fair, impartial and quality justice”.

5. Multilateral context: Algeria has ratified all major international human rights treaties, but not yet signed the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty. However, the country applies a moratorium on the enforcement of death penalty since 1993. On 11 October 2022 the UN General Assembly elected Algeria to the Human Rights Council (HRC) for the 2023-2025 term. Furthermore, Algeria has maintained a

moratorium on executions since 1993 and has regularly voted in favour of United Nations resolutions calling for its implementation worldwide.

The human rights situation in Algeria was examined for the fourth time in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review of the HRC on 11 November 2022 in Geneva. Algiers was asked to repeal the amendments to Article 87 bis of the Penal Code which "contains an overly broad definition of terrorism". The Committee on the Rights of the Child urged Algeria to review and amend the existing legislation in order to fully comply with the object and purpose of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the interpretation provided by the Committee.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Algeria has received some 282 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Egypt

### EU Relations

The European Union (EU) cooperates with Egypt in the framework of the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP). Relations between the EU and Egypt are based on the [Association Agreement](#), which entered into force in June 2004.

Egypt is the EU's 29th largest trading partner, representing 0.7% of the EU's total trade in goods with the world in 2020. The EU is Egypt's biggest trading partner, covering 24.5% of Egypt's trade volume in 2020.

Total trade in goods between the EU and Egypt amounted to €24.5 billion in 2020. The EU's imports from Egypt amounted to €6.4 billion. The EU's exports to Egypt amounted to €18.1 billion

Source: [DG NEAR](#), [DG Trade](#)

### Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: Although the political leadership in Egypt took several steps towards greater emphasis on and respect for human rights, creating positive expectations, human rights challenges remained, particularly in relation to freedom of expression and the rule of law. While Egypt was still recovering from the effects of the pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine strained further the state resources devoted to socio-economic protection and other wide-scale programmes.

The President had declared 2022 as the Year of Civil Society in Egypt following the reform of the NGO law and bylaws in previous years. COP27 brought the discussion on human rights under the spotlight, linked to civil society access to the event and advocacy on individual cases.

In April, the reactivation of the Presidential Amnesty Committee was announced. During the months that followed, around 1 000 prisoners were released, yet new arrests were recorded as well. Meanwhile, former detainees' reintegration into society faces challenges, with asset freezes and travel bans being some of the main hurdles. In April too, President Al Sisi announced the launch of a National Dialogue covering political and socio-economic issues, with a committee focusing on human rights. The first year report on the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy (2021-2026) was published in

December 2022, noting progress in the institutional development track, with several ministries establishing human rights departments, yet limited implementation in the legislative track. On the subject of freedom of the press, the independent outlet Mada Masr faced accusations linked to the publication of a story on corruption and saw its licence formally refused in October 2022, which it has appealed. Concerning freedom of religion or belief, President Al-Sisi has continued making visible signs of support to the Coptic community such as attending Christmas mass. In 2022, concrete and consistent progress remained necessary with respect to the protection of fundamental freedoms and the restricted space for civil society and human rights defenders. Constraints remained as regards freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and media freedom, and concerns remained about broad application of the Terrorism Law against peaceful critics and individuals, and extensive and indiscriminate use of pre-trial detention. Failings in the protection of LGBTI persons continue to present a serious concern, with security forces using digital targeting, based on “debauchery” provisions and the Cybercrime Law, to arbitrarily arrest and detain LGBTI people. In 2022, Egypt continued to manage migration, including providing protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers. Egypt has yet to adopt asylum laws. Extensive use of the death penalty continued. According to independent reports, Egypt was the third country globally with the highest number of executions in 2022.

2. EU action – key focus areas: The EU and Member States applied different tools ranging from diplomatic outreach, consultation with civil society and cooperation projects with the authorities and civil society. In addition to socioeconomic aspects, projects and initiatives focused on capacity-building for civil society organisations, support to human rights defenders, the rights of persons with disabilities, the rights of women and girls, judicial trainings, anti-discrimination, protection of vulnerable communities including refugees. Observation of trials was among the tools employed by the EU and Member States, although diplomats continued to face restrictions in access.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: In 2022, the EU and Egypt adopted the new Partnership Priorities, reaffirming a shared commitment to the universal values of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights, and an agreement to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on these issues. Salient human rights issues were raised throughout the year at all levels. The EUSR for Human Rights carried out his first visit to Egypt in April. In his wide contacts with the Egyptian counterparts, he highlighted issues such as prisoners’ conditions, the need to reform pre-trial detention legislation, and abolish the death penalty. The EU and Egypt had a constructive in-depth exchange on human rights and democracy issues at the Subcommittee on Political, Human Rights Affairs and Consular held in Cairo on 8 December 2022. Coordination meetings among EU Member States and regular consultations with Egyptian and international CSOs continued throughout the year. On 23 November 2022, the European Parliament adopted a plenary resolution on the human rights situation in Egypt.

4. EU financial engagement: In line with the August 2013 Council conclusions, the EU’s bilateral assistance to Egypt was directed to the socio-economic sector and support to civil society. The EU’s cooperation in Egypt aims to support Egypt’s ‘Sustainable Development Strategy – Vision-2030’. EU-supported projects in Egypt contributed to the promotion and protection of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights through global and bilateral means of implementation. In 2022, the EU delegation managed 24 projects worth EUR 23.6 million in support of human rights through the European Instrument for Democracy and

Human Rights / NDICI Human Rights & Democracy, thematic lines supporting civil society organisations, and the European Neighbourhood Instrument. Activities included the fight against all forms of discrimination, as well as advancement of the rights of women including the fight against female genital mutilation and violence against women, the rights of the child, migrants and persons with disabilities, freedom of religion or belief, access to justice, culture and cultural diversity. An EU-financed project in support of the National Council for Human Rights' work on implementing the National Human Rights Strategy was launched on 11 December 2022.

5. Multilateral context: Egypt voted against the ninth UNGA Resolution for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. Egypt has ratified all major international human rights treaties, but not yet signed the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, nor the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture. Egypt was cited in the EU Statement under Item 2 at the 51st Human Rights Council session in 13 September 2022.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Egypt has received some 727 million euros of Official Development Aid as well as 66,1 million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement. EUTF aid figures, though, must be taken with a margin of error, as the EU aid explorer seems to be not in line with figures provided in other EU documents<sup>1</sup>.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Jordan

### EU Relations

The European Union (EU) cooperates with Jordan in the framework of the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP). Relations between the [EU and Jordan are based on the Association Agreement](#), which entered into force in May 2002.

Jordan is the EU's 63th biggest trade partner, representing 0.1% of the EU's total trade in goods with the world in 2022.

The EU is Jordan's biggest trade partner, accounting for 12% of its trade in 2021. 15.3% of Jordan's imports came from the EU, but only 4.4% of Jordan's exports went to the EU.

Total trade in goods between the EU and Jordan amounted to €4.9 billion in 2022. The EU's imports from Jordan amounted to €0.7 billion. The EU's exports from Jordan accounted for €4.2 billion.

Source: [DG Near](#), [DG Trade](#)

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<sup>1</sup> See for example: [Update on State of Play of External Cooperation in the Field of Migration Policy](#). Council of the European Union, July 13, 2023 (please note that this Council document is not [available](#) in the Council Register - it should be requested following rules [here](#) - however this copy has been made available by [The Migration-Control Info Project](#)); however, as it is impossible from this kind of document to make a clear distinction between financial instruments and period covered, we do prefer to stick to EU aid Explorer figures.



## Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: In 2022, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan embarked on legislative reforms towards the modernisation of the political system initiated by King Abdullah II in 2021. To this end, in March 2022, the Constitution as well as the political parties' law and the elections law for the House of Representatives were amended to encourage the formation of nation-wide programme-based political parties, participation of women and youth and to enhance geographical representation. The Kingdom also launched a new justice sector strategy for 2022-2026. Still, challenges in relation to freedom of expression (online and offline), freedom of peaceful assembly and association, the rule of law, gender-based violence and gender equality remain. Civic space in Jordan was challenged through legal and administrative restrictions as well as enhanced monitoring of activities. The foreign funding authorisation system continued to put pressure on civil society actors. The economic participation of women remained low while discrimination of women continued to persist in the personal status law, particularly as regards custodianship, divorce and inheritance of citizenship.

2. EU action – key focus areas: The EU promoted leadership at municipal level, women's economic empowerment, gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence. It supported projects aimed at enhancing the resilience and strengthening the protection of women refugees, internally displaced persons and women in host communities. EU Member States supported projects to strengthen the economic and political participation of women as well as to improve gender equality with a particular focus on youth. In 2022, the EU continued to co-chair the Gender Partners Coordination Group with UN Women and the Jordan National Commission for Women.

The EU encouraged the authorities to further enhance freedom of expression and media freedom. Together with its Member States, it supported projects aimed to build capacities of independent journalists and train journalists on new media.

The EU and its Member States supported projects aimed at enhancing the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as promoting their inclusion in the school system and in the labour market. The EU continued its support to Syrian refugees and vulnerable host communities in Jordan, providing assistance in education, healthcare and socio-economic well-being. The EU and its Member States also worked on strengthening the participation of the Palestine refugee community, and on promoting the socioeconomic and political participation of young people in Jordan. They continued to support projects promoting and increasing awareness of the rights of the child, including the issue of child marriage.

The EU supported the development of the justice sector strategy for 2022-2026 and funded technical assistance to improve the criminal justice chain in Jordan. Similarly, Member States continued to support judicial institutions in Jordan, fostered capacity-building of young lawyers and implemented projects aiming to improve access to juvenile justice.

The EU and its Member States supported projects aimed to enhance the digital rights infrastructure to promote internet freedom in Jordan. The EU has also funded technical assistance in the field of digitalising the criminal justice chain and strengthening remote trials in criminal proceedings.

The EU collaborated with EU MS agencies and UNDP to foster more accountable and efficient

local governance throughout the country.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The 14th EU-Jordan Association Council, held on 2 June 2022 in Jordan, adopted the new Partnership Priorities for the period 2021-2027. The EU and Jordan reaffirmed their commitment to democratic principles and fundamental human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and in the EU-Jordan Association Agreement.

4. EU financial engagement: Strengthening good governance, the rule of law, democratic reform and human rights, including social and labour rights is a shared priority stipulated in the new EU-Jordan Partnership Priorities 2021-2027. To this endeavour, within its Annual Action Programme 2022 for Jordan the EU adopted a programme aiming at promoting a more participatory, inclusive and accountable democratic process (EUR 10 million). The EU signed a new EUR 39 million Financing Agreement with the Jordanian authorities to support the Rule of Law. Moreover, the Special Measure 2022 for Jordan (EUR 80 million) aims at supporting the country's efforts in hosting refugees from Syria for the benefit of both refugees and vulnerable host communities.

5. Multilateral context: In 2022, Jordan supported, for the second time, the UNGA resolution on a moratorium on the death penalty. In September, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities visited Jordan. In his report, he welcomed relevant legislation while stressing the need for systemic change to achieve an inclusive society and inclusive labour market.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Jordan has received some 1,04 billion euros of Official Development Aid as well as 407 million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement. EUTF aid figures, though, have to be taken with a margin of error, as the EU aid explorer seems to be not in line with figures provided in other EU documents.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Morocco

### EU Relations

The European Union (EU) cooperates with Morocco in the framework of the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP). The partnership is legally based on the [Association Agreement](#), which entered into force in 2000.

Morocco is the EU's 21st biggest trade partner, representing 1% of the EU's total trade in goods with the world in 2022.

The EU is Morocco's largest trade partner, accounting for 49% of its goods trade in 2022. 56% of Morocco's exports went to the EU, and 45% of Morocco's imports came from the EU.

Total trade in goods between the EU and Morocco in 2022 amounted to €53.3 billion. The EU's imports from Morocco amounted to €21.7 billion, while EU's exports to Morocco amounted to €31.6 billion.

Source: [DG NEAR](#), [DG Trade](#)

## Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: In 2022, the Moroccan government focused on the socio-economic reform package in an attempt to overcome the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. In this context, a compulsory health insurance scheme was finalised, which ensures equitable access to universal healthcare cover, family allocations, unemployment insurance and pensions for Moroccan citizens. The reform reinforces social assistance and rights of vulnerable persons (protection and care, including for migrants) following a rights-based approach. In the education sector, progress was registered in the pre-schooling enrolment and efforts were made to launch the reform of the higher education system.

In the area of fight against corruption, Morocco made only limited progress through the implementation of the 2015-2025 Anti-Corruption Strategy. Draft laws on conflict of interest, illicit enrichment and on the protection of whistle-blowers were put on hold. The country has an active civil society sector, which mostly focuses on questions related to social or cultural areas.

Challenges remain as regards the freedom of expression and freedom of the press, including the use of tactics, such as intimidation, surveillance and harassment of journalists. Significant challenges remain as regards the prevention of torture and the fight against impunity. The draft Penal Code has been pending adoption since 2016, without progress. Morocco's National Human Rights Council reported that sexual harassment and gender-based violence are widespread against female staff and students at Moroccan universities. Morocco should further train law enforcement and court officials in handling domestic violence cases. Morocco has improved its legal and institutional framework to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, however the implementation of adopted legislation remains limited. Some positive developments took place regarding the judiciary: two laws aimed at improving the status of magistrates and at streamlining the internal management of High Council of the Judiciary, were adopted.

Morocco continued to pursue efforts to manage migration, including providing protection and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers, but has yet to adopt the asylum and migration laws pending since 2014. The UNHCR has registered an increase of requests for refugee status and asylum in Morocco from 10,000 (June 2021) to 19,437 (January 2023) of asylum seekers and refugees, with a notable increase of applicants of Sudanese and Libyan origin. A migration incident erupted on 24 June 2022 at the Moroccan-Spanish border crossing point of Nador/Melilla when more than 2500 mostly Sudanese migrants attempted to cross into Spain, resulting in the death of 23 migrants and five Moroccan police officers. Morocco has been observing an undeclared moratorium on the application of the death penalty since 1993. No executions took place in 2022.

2. EU action - key focus areas: The main areas of cooperation include: the strengthening of processes and institutions that guarantee democracy and the rule of the law, in particular the National Human Rights Council (CNDH); decentralisation and regionalisation; the reform of the justice system; the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms; freedom of expression and media professionalization and freedoms of association and assembly; promotion of women's rights and gender equality; children's rights and the rights of vulnerable people; cooperation with the Council of Europe; and the fight against corruption.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The EU's political engagement in Morocco continued to build on the 2019 Joint Political Declaration. In May 2022, the EU and Morocco held the Sub-Committee on Migration and Social Affairs, which addressed, inter alia, aspects related to labour and social rights and social protection. The EU Delegation regularly discussed the human rights situation with the CNDH, civil society actors and human rights defenders.

4. EU financial commitment: The EU provided support to civil society actors, through several thematic and sectoral instruments. This support focused on: promotion of participatory democracy and strengthening of civil society involvement in public policies at local and regional levels; strengthening the institutional capacity of the CNDH and the International Delegation for Human Rights (DIDH) to ensure efficiency when addressing human rights violations, and to enhance human rights protection mechanisms, including the torture prevention mechanism; implementation of the Civil Society Roadmap. EU's financial support also targeted public administration reform, justice sector reform, with the aim to strengthen applicability of the rule of law and to ensure a more accessible, independent and internationally compliant justice system, which offers increased access and protection for the individuals. The EU continued to support education, training and literacy in line with the new relevant Framework Law that strengthens the right for education for all.

5. Multilateral context: Morocco is a state party to all major UN conventions on human rights and is an active member of several UN working groups, demonstrating good cooperation on human rights. On 11 October 2022, Morocco was elected – for the third time – to the UN Human Rights Council for the period 2023-2025. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) 41st Session started examining Morocco on 8 November 2022. Morocco presented the progress made in the fields of preventing and eliminating violence and discrimination against women, strengthening the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary, the use of death penalty, safeguarding the freedom of press, etc. Morocco received recommendations, including on violence and discrimination against women, gender equality (especially when it comes to marriage), the decriminalisation of consensual sexual relations outside marriage, child marriages, rights of persons with disabilities, freedom of expression and the abolition of the death penalty. Morocco also received a number of recommendations related to the situation in Western Sahara.

### **Western Sahara**

Western Sahara is listed by the United Nations as a non-self-governing territory, whose status remains the object of a negotiation process conducted under the auspices of the UN. This dedicated UN-led process assists the relevant parties in achieving a just, lasting, and mutually acceptable political solution, based on compromise, in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

The UN Security Council agreed on 27 October 2022 through its Resolution 2654 to renew the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara, MINURSO (Mission des Nations Unies pour l'Organisation d'un Référendum au Sahara Occidental) for a period of one year.

The resolution draws attention to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Tindouf refugee camps and about the increased need for funding; it urges aid agencies to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance in accordance with United Nations best practice; it stresses the importance of improving the human rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps, and encourages the parties to work

with the international community to develop and implement independent and credible measures to ensure full respect for human rights, bearing in mind their relevant obligations under international law; it encourages the parties to sustain and prioritize their efforts to enhance the promotion and protection of human rights in Western Sahara and the Tindouf refugee camps, including the freedoms of expression and association. It welcomes steps and initiatives taken by Morocco, and the role played by the National Council on Human Rights Commission operating in Dakhla and Laâyoune, as well as Morocco's interaction with Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council.

Following his appointment in October 2021 as the new Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Western Sahara, M. Staffan de Mistura established contacts with all concerned parties and paid several visits to the region. Despite the call, in UNSCR 2654, upon all parties to resume negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, and the Personal Envoy's efforts, there has been no concrete relaunch of political negotiations to date.

The overall security situation remained fragile but stable, and was marked by low intensity incidents. The UNSC Resolution 2654 recognised the important role played by MINURSO and the need for it to conduct the safe and regular resupply of its team sites, to conduct patrols throughout its area of responsibility to fully implement its mandate.

The EU continued to fully back the UN process including the Personal Envoy, and encouraged the parties to return to the UN-led talks, as well as promote and protect human rights in Western Sahara.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Morocco has received some 1,32 billion euros of Official Development Aid as well as 121 million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement. EUTF aid figures, though, have to be taken with a margin of error, as the EU aid explorer seems to be not in line with figures provided in other EU documents.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Tunisia

### EU Relations

The European Union (EU) cooperates with Tunisia in the framework of the [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP). The EU-Tunisia relations date back to 1976 and its legal basis is the [Association Agreement](#) signed in 1995.

The EU is Tunisia's largest trade partner, accounting for 56% of its trade in 2022: 70% of Tunisia's exports went to the EU and 46% of Tunisia's imports came from the EU. Tunisia is the EU's 38th biggest trade partner, representing 0.5% of the EU's total trade with the world in 2022.

Total trade in goods between the EU and Tunisia in 2022 amounted to €26.1 billion. The EU's imports from Tunisia amounted to €12.5 billion. The EU's exports to Tunisia amounted to €13.6 billion.

Source: [DG NEAR](#), [DG Trade](#)

### Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: The President of the Republic implemented the political roadmap announced in 2021, which included the drafting of a new Constitution and

subsequent referendum on 25 July 2022, and two rounds of legislative elections, which took place on 17 December 2022 and 29 January 2023, respectively. The turnout at all polls was very low and largely boycotted by the political opposition, which was excluded from any consultative process. The new Constitution strongly reinforces the role of the President who now enjoys broad executive powers and clearly has the upper institutional hand over a weakened legislative and judiciary. Human rights and fundamental freedoms are still enshrined in the new Constitution but institutional guarantees for their protection have been weakened. Individual rights were broadly respected during the past year. However, there were growing concerns with regard to political and civil rights, including freedom of expression via decree-law n° 54 on cybercrime, which provides for harsh penalties for spreading fake news and rumours. Trials of civilians in military courts have continued and the 2014 constitutional provision limiting their jurisdiction to members of the army has not been maintained in the new Constitution. Also, the government has expressed its intention to review decree 2011-88 on associations in the context of the fight against terrorism, which raises concerns over further restrictions of civic space. Socio-economic rights are under stress given the dire economic situation Tunisia, which was already fragile and severely deteriorated further due to halting progress on reforms, notably the lack of agreement with the IMF as well as the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Tunisia has ratified the UN convention on the rights of refugees. However, the adoption of an asylum law is still pending. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) registered a total of 8 940 individuals between 2018 and 2022. There was a decrease in the number of individuals registered in 2022, with 1 448 refugees and asylum-seekers, compared to 2021, when 3 183 were registered. The main countries of origin of refugees and asylum-seekers in Tunisia are Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan and Syria.

2. EU action on Human Rights and Democracy: The EU continued its work on gender equality and gender-based violence, including by coordinating efforts with Member States on the ground. Apart from the development of targeted programmes, the EU Delegation in cooperation with Member State embassies carried out public diplomacy activities around International Women's Day on 8 March and the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence. The EU civil society roadmap (2022 – 2027) aims to facilitate cooperation with civil society and support horizontal integration of human rights, gender equality and social inclusion of vulnerable groups, notably LGBTI, in their work. Other actions include the development and implementation of programmes focused on education, healthcare and youth as well as the continuation of ongoing projects in a wide range of sectors.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The EU regularly engages Tunisian authorities as well as civil society on human rights issues as well as the evolution of the political and economic situation in the country, including continuing its support to civil society in this domain. Such outreach was also conducted on the occasion of several high level visits, most notably that of the European Commissioner for Justice, as well as the visits of delegations of the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and its Subcommittee on Human Rights.

4. EU financial engagement: The EU has continued working on gender equality and violence against women, developing two new programmes aimed at protecting Tunisian women and girls from all forms

of gender-based violence. Several centres and/or shelters for women victims of violence were selected to benefit from the technical and financial support of the programme over the next four years. On the healthcare sector, the existing Essaha Aziza programme continued to deliver positive results when it comes to supporting the quality of primary health care services and access to for the most vulnerable. This project is of particular importance in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Building on existing youth, education and employability projects, the EU developed a new programme aimed at creating new opportunities for the Tunisian youth. Similarly, programmes on innovation and entrepreneurship also continued. Other relevant initiatives on Human Rights were also implemented in the past year, for instance, a programme to strengthen emerging civil society organisations and support measures to social inclusion, just to name a few.

5. Multilateral context: Tunisia underwent its regular Universal Periodic Review in November 2022. Most recommendations focused on the death penalty, prosecution of civilians in military tribunals, gender equality, LGBTI rights and rights of migrants. Some also addressed the dissolution of the parliament and the anti-corruption authority, the recent cybersecurity law and the issue of judicial independence. Tunisia accepted 185 recommendations, noted and undertook to examine 44 before giving a final reply. The “noted” recommendations focused mainly on the abolition of death penalty, revision of the Personal Status Code, abrogation of article 230 of the Criminal Code, ratification of the Convention on the rights of migrant workers, as well as those concerning freedom of press and freedom of expression (including revision of cybersecurity law) and the ‘restoration of Constitutional order’. Authorities are still examining recommendations concerning the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, revision of Military Justice Code, Criminal Code, reinstallation of the anti-corruption authority, prosecution of civilians in military tribunal and implementation of the Truth and Dignity commission report.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Tunisia has received some 1,80 billion euros of Official Development Aid and 31,5 million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement. EUTF aid figures, though, have to be taken with a margin of error, as the EU aid explorer seems to be not in line with figures provided in other EU documents.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Türkiye

### EU Relations

Türkiye's involvement with European integration dates back to 1959 and includes the Ankara Association Agreement (1963) for the progressive establishment of a Customs Union (ultimately set up in 1995). In 1987, Türkiye applied to join what was then the European Economic Community, and in 1999 it was declared eligible to join the EU. [Accession negotiations](#) started in 2005, but until Türkiye agrees to apply the [Additional Protocol](#) of the Ankara Association Agreement to Cyprus, eight negotiation chapters will not be opened and no chapter will be provisionally closed.

In 2018, due to continuing backsliding in reforms in the key areas of the enlargement strategy, in particular in the functioning of the democratic system, respect for fundamental rights and independence of the judiciary, the Council decided that accession negotiations were at a standstill.

Türkiye is the EU's 7th biggest trade partner, representing 3.3% of the EU's total trade in goods with the world (imports and exports combined) in 2022.

The EU is by far Türkiye's largest merchandise import and export partner. In 2022, 26% of Türkiye's goods imports came from the EU and 41% of the country's goods exports went to the EU.

Total trade in goods between the EU and Türkiye in 2022 amounted to €198.1 billion (3.6% of the EU's total trade with the world). The EU's imports from Türkiye were worth €98.6 billion, while EU's exports to Türkiye totalled €99.6 billion.

Source: [DG NEAR](#), [DG Trade](#)

## Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: In 2022, the deterioration of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Türkiye continued. The combined effect of new legislation, the continuous pressure and the aggressive implementation of existing legislation and measures introduced during the state of emergency, reinforced the chilling effect on civil society's activities. Türkiye continued its explicit refusal to implement certain European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) rulings, notably in the cases of Selahattin Demirtaş and Osman Kavala, further increasing concerns regarding the judiciary's adherence to international and European standards. Pressure on the judiciary continued, and the institutionalised control of judicial appointments by the executive resulted in its lack of independence. Freedom of expression and media continued to be curtailed, with increasing pressure and restrictive measures. A new law on press and media presents major risks of further reducing space for free speech and criticism, providing for prison sentences for the crime of disseminating what is vaguely defined as 'fake news'. As regards freedom of assembly and association, recurring bans, excessive use of force by security forces in peaceful demonstrations as well as investigations, administrative fines and prosecutions against demonstrators on charges of terrorism-related activities continued. Following Türkiye's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention in July 2021, violence against women and gender discrimination remained matters of serious concern. Hate speech against minorities as well as bias-motivated speech and violence against LGBTI persons and civil society continued. Media campaigns and senior government officials in their political speeches have on several occasions encouraged discrimination. The authorities continued their implementation of the Human Rights Action

Plan adopted in 2021, but the reforms undertaken have not addressed critical issues and did not lead to significant improvement of the overall human rights situation.

The functioning of Türkiye's democratic institutions continued to be severely hampered and deep political polarisation persisted. Structural deficiencies in the presidential system remained in place. Parliament continued to lack the necessary means to hold the government accountable. The constitutional architecture continued to centralise powers at the level of the Presidency without



ensuring the sound and effective separation of powers. For more information, please refer to the European Commission's [2022 Report on Türkiye](#) or [2023 report](#).<sup>2</sup>

2. EU action - key focus areas: EU actions in 2022 focused on protecting and empowering individuals, on building resilient, inclusive and democratic societies, and on addressing challenges of new technologies. Emphasis was put on support to human rights defenders, refugees, persons belonging to minorities, access to justice and support to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and media pluralism, and to increase civil society organizations' (CSO) capacity to monitor human rights. In view of national elections in 2023, the EU also focused on promoting credible, transparent and inclusive elections, including by supporting international observation and civil society advocacy, as well as on tackling disinformation and false narratives by means of training and radio broadcasts aimed at raising awareness to their inherent risks. The EU vocally denounced attempts to silence dissenting or opposition voices ahead of the 2023 elections. The EU Delegation to Türkiye attended and monitored a number of trials relating to fundamental freedoms' cases.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The EU continued to monitor closely and report on human rights violations in Türkiye. Continuous policy and political dialogue at technical and political level, and engagement with international organisations and civil society continued. The EU-Türkiye Political Directors meeting was held in Ankara on 31 May 2022. The relevant Sub-committee, under the framework of the EU-Turkey Association Agreement, which covers inter alia the functioning of the judiciary, fundamental rights and freedoms and home affairs was held in April.

4. EU financial engagement: In 2022, the IPA Civil Society Facility and Media Programme and the NDICI Thematic Programme for Human Rights and Democracy remained the main tools to support rights-based civil society organisations, activists and human rights defenders in Türkiye.

As of December 2022, 56 human rights projects were being implemented with a total value of over EUR 94 million, aimed to support civil society and fundamental rights: 11 projects for a total of EUR 31 million under the IPA programmes for Türkiye, 19 projects for EUR 9 million under EIDHR and HR&D, and 26 projects for EUR 54 million under the Civil Society Facility.

Most of this support aims at reinforcing the capacities and resilience of CSOs working on human rights. The EU's projects focus on freedom of expression and media; rights of LGBTI persons; women's rights and rights of the child; rights of people with disabilities; non-discrimination; access to justice; rights of persons belonging to minorities. A dedicated mechanism is in place to support human rights defenders. The Facility for Refugees in Turkey continued to support Türkiye in hosting over 4 million refugees from Syria and other countries. It mobilised EUR 6 billion. Its full operational budget was contracted at the end of 2020, with over EUR 4.9 billion disbursed by December 2022. Its achievements included helping 1.9 million refugees meet their basic needs, helping 740 000 refugee children go to school, the ongoing building of 405 schools, and delivering over EUR 22.8 million primary health care consultations. The Commission has allocated an additional package of EUR 3.5 billion covering the 2020-2023 period to provide support in key areas such as basic needs, healthcare and education, and protection and socio-economic support. In 2022, Türkiye also benefited from assistance under the EU/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey (phase II – financed by IPA) with projects such as

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<sup>2</sup> In the framework of access negotiations, Turkey is subject to a more detailed assessment for each of the 16 negotiations chapters (including human rights), which takes the form of a specific detailed annual report.

“Fostering Women's Access to Justice in Turkey” and “Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of Migrants and Victims of Human Trafficking in Turkey”.

5. Multilateral context: In 2022, the EU Delegations to the Council of Europe, to the UN and to the OSCE kept expressing on multiple occasions the EU's concerns over the human rights and fundamental freedoms situation in Türkiye. Türkiye continued its dialogue and cooperation with national, European and international human rights organisations and monitoring bodies. The Council of Europe anti-torture Committee (CPT) carried out a periodic visit to Türkiye in October 2022 to examine the treatment and conditions of detention of foreign nationals detained under “aliens” legislation and the procedures applied to them in the context of their removal. The co-rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) for the monitoring of obligations and commitments by Türkiye, carried out a fact-finding visit to Istanbul and Ankara from 18 to 20 May 2022.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Two main groups of EU funds have been provided to Turkey: 1) support for EU accession, mainly through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and Cross-border cooperation programmes; In addition, humanitarian aid was provided subsequent to the February 2023 earthquakes. 2) humanitarian aid, mainly for refugees, through the EU Facility for Refugees in Türkiye.

Since 2018, Turkey has received some 8,47 billion euros of Official Development Aid, including humanitarian aid for catastrophes such as the 2023 earthquake; as well as 214 million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement. (EUTF aid figures, as said above, have to be taken with a margin of error, as the EU aid explorer seems to be not in line with figures provided in other EU documents.)

Humanitarian aid for refugees is financed mainly through the [EU Facility for Refugees in Türkiye, \(FRiT\)](#) which, since its creation in 2016, has provided around €6 billion for refugees and host communities. The full operational budget of the Facility was contracted by the end of 2020. After bridge funding of EUR 535 million in 2020, the Commission continued implementation of an additional package of EUR 3 billion covering the 2021-2023 period requested by the Council.

N.B: Please note that the funding of the FRiT is joint between the EU and member states; part of the EU funds comes from the EU Budget for the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA); furthermore, the contributions of the member states themselves flow into the IPA funds; this makes it impossible to distinguish how much the EU budget allocated to FRiT, is already included in the 8.47 billion ODA disbursements mentioned above. Therefore, we would suggest to omit the information about the FRiT as it is not comparable with aid information provided for the other countries, for which we limited to EU budget funds.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#), [DG NEAR](#), [2023 report on Turkey](#);

## Iraq

### EU Relations

The EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed on 11 May 2012. The EU-Iraq PCA is the first contractual relation between the two countries. As such, it highlights the long-term

engagement of the EU in creating a legal framework for cooperation with Iraq on areas of mutual interest. The objectives of this partnership (between the EU, EU Member States and Iraq) are threefold; to provide an appropriate framework for political dialogue between parties, allowing the development of political relations; to promote trade, investment and harmonious economic relations between the parties (fostering sustainable economic development); to provide a basis for legislative, economic, social, financial and cultural cooperation.

The PCA now provides mechanisms which consolidate cooperation between the EU and Iraq in areas of mutual interest. At the core of the PCA there is regular, high-level political dialogue that focuses on peace, foreign and security policy, national dialogue and reconciliation, democracy, the rule of law, human rights, good governance and regional stability and integration.

Source: [EEAS](#)

### Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: The EU welcomed the formation of the new government under the leadership of Prime Minister al-Sudani, confirmed at the end of October 2022. The government announced the fight against corruption as top priority. Moreover, the new government's program regarding human rights and women empowerment intends to address human rights violations perpetrated at the police stations/detention centres, investigate the crimes committed against demonstrators during the 2019 Tishreen movement, combat human trafficking and support women empowerment. The political deadlock in Iraq between October 2021 and October 2022, contributed to the deterioration of an already fragile human rights situation. Iraq continued to face challenges, including intimidation of activists and human rights defenders (HRDs). Targeting, intimidation and assassination of activists and intimidation of journalists, as well as of aspiring political actors linked to the Tishreen protest movement continued, despite previous Government's promises to protect them and provide a safe environment to express their views.

The EU continued to express concerns about due process and fair trial standards, discrimination against minorities, as well as gender-based violence. Reports of torture in police detention centres and interrogation cells remained. The death penalty continued to be applied under the Law on Counterterrorism and, despite serious concerns on due process in trials, authorities carried out at least 20 judicial executions.

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) the EU remains concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation, especially as regards freedom of expression, gender equality and equal rights. The persistent conflict between the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the stalemate around the next regional election, initially planned for October 2022, could have contributed to these developments.

2. EU action - key focus areas: The EU human rights policy in Iraq continued to focus on support to the legitimate democratic demands of Iraqi citizens, strengthening democratic institutions and encouraging socioeconomic reforms. The EU further engaged on the protection of HRDs, women's empowerment, protection of minorities, easing the return of internally displaced persons, as well as national and social reconciliation. The EU regularly advocated for Iraq to adhere to the core tenets of international human rights law and, notably it undertook a demarche on the accession to the International Criminal Court. The EU has raised the problematic LGBTI legislation draft "Bill on the Prohibition of Promoting

Homosexuality” with the authorities.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The political deadlock in Iraq, between October 2021 and October 2022 shaped most of the political agenda. In this context, the EU continued its advocacy for respect for human rights with Iraqi authorities at all levels. The EU issued several statements to call for ending violence and respecting human rights obligations in the context of escalation around the political crisis in summer 2022. The EU Advisory Mission (EUAM) continued to provide support on Security Sector Reform including training to the Iraqi police.

Throughout the year, the EU has engaged in regular meetings with civil society organisations throughout the country so as to have a first-hand understanding of the situation on the ground and identify priorities for political engagement and targeted support, notably through specific projects. The EU supported reform programs addressing corruption, public financial management and more efficient public service delivery. The EU supported the government’s efforts on socioeconomic reforms and continued (until June 2022) its role as co-chair of the international Iraq Economic Contact Group.

In the Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI), the EU also followed closely the evolving situation regarding trial cases against journalist and activists.

4. EU financial engagement: In 2022, the EU supported a vast array of activities through various EU financial instruments:

- Right to Fair Trial, Detention Conditions, and Abolition of Death Penalty: a new EU project with Norwegian People’s Aid to increase the access of people deprived of liberty to human rights through fair trials and humane treatment.
- Protection of Human Rights Defenders. An EU project with Al-Amal association “Protecting Human Rights Defenders: Securing a movement for Human Rights”.
- Promoting Gender Equality and Equal Rights. The EU reviewed all programmes to reinforce the actions for women empowerment and aligned indicators with the Gender Action Plan III Country Implementation Plan.
- Freedom of Expression, Independent Media and Access to Information. The EU project with BBC media action “Community Cohesion through Community media”, aims to secure the work of independent media outlets to offer accurate and correct information.
- Accountable Institutions and Fighting Corruption. The new EU project “Support to justice initiatives curbing corruption and promoting commercial dispute resolution”, with UNDP, aims to enhance the legal and strategic anti-corruption framework in Iraq and build capacity for the investigators.
- Rule of Law and Security Sector Reform. The UNDP anti-corruption project mentioned above also includes a dedicated component in support of the Iraqi judiciary to enhance integrity standards and foster the justice sector capacity to fight corruption.
- Economic, social and cultural Rights, including Education. The EU fund "Reviving Mosul and Basra Old Cities” with UNESCO. The EU continues to implement several projects in education, social protection, labour governance, private sector development and entrepreneurship, access to finance, agriculture and agri-value chain development.
- Political Participation, Free and Fair Elections, and a Functioning Parliament. The EU contributed EUR 5.5 million support the UNDP/UNAMI led project, which provided technical assistance to the Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) to organise the October 2021 elections in line with international standards.

5. Multilateral context: Iraq is State Party to the main international human rights instruments. The EU conducted several human rights demarches, in particular in conjunction with UNGA Third Committee.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Iraq has received some 1,24 billion euros of Official Development Aid as well as 68,5 million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement. EUTF aid figures, though, must be taken with a margin of error, as the EU aid explorer seems to be not in line with figures provided in other EU documents.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Qatar

### EU Relations

The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed a Cooperation Arrangement in March 2018. This Cooperation Arrangement serves as the basis for enhanced political dialogue and strengthened cooperation on sectoral areas of mutual interest, notably private sector development and research and innovation. These are key areas for Qatar's diversification efforts and the country's transformation agenda, contained in the Qatar National Vision 2030. More recently, our bilateral cooperation has been boosted significantly, leading to the conclusion of an Agreement on the Establishment of a new EU Delegation to the State of Qatar (opened on the 1st of September 2022).

### Human rights

1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation: Qatar has continued to make progress on labour rights and reforms, in close cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO). While the most problematic elements of the kafala system have been de jure dismantled, the EU continued to encourage Qatar to implement in a sustainable and effective way the reforms undertaken and the legislation adopted. According to the 2022 ILO report, due to labour inspections campaigns in summer 2022, 463 worksites were either temporarily stopped or shut down for violations of heat stress legislation. The report also recorded a significant decline in the number of patients admitted to clinics with heat-related disorders, from 1520 in 2020 to 351 in 2022, following the introduction of relevant new laws.

Despite the progress achieved, the ILO report acknowledges that more needs to be done to ensure effective implementation of these reforms.

Although the Constitution provides for equality between citizens in rights and responsibilities, social and legal discrimination against women persisted. No reforms or large-scale initiatives were introduced to tackle or limit these discriminations.

In relation to the freedom of assembly, in May 2022 two lawyers received life sentences following their peaceful protest against exclusion of the al-Murra tribe from the October 2021 elections. The EU raised this issue with the Qatari authorities.

While Islam is the state religion according to Constitution, eight registered Christian denominations continued to hold services in dedicated places of worship. Other non-registered religious groups remained unregulated, but were allowed to practice their faith in private. The 14th edition of the Doha

International Center for Inter-faith Dialogue was held in Doha in May 2022, discussing freedom of religions and belief. Same sex relationships remain illegal, as opposing the Sharia law.

The National Human Rights Committee continued to monitor and report annually on human rights situation in the country, providing recommendations to the cabinet to strengthen protection of human rights. It also continued to refer complaints by migrant workers to the competent authorities. In the period before and during the World Cup, FIFA set up a “Grievances Mechanism” and deployed a large number of experts, officials and volunteers to monitor implementation of human rights related reforms. Most of the complaints received were related to inconsistent application of the regulation on allowing the rainbow flag into the football stadiums.

2. EU Action – key focus areas: The EU raised human rights issues in various engagements with the Qatari authorities, and in particular in the Human Rights Dialogue framework. The newly established EU Delegation in Doha engaged also with FIFA Human Rights Office.

Recurrent topics in discussions were migrant workers’ rights, labour reforms, women’s rights, non-discrimination of the LGBTI community and freedom of expression. In the period before and during the FIFA World Cup 2022 the EU Delegation monitored closely developments in these fields and raised systematically relevant concerns with local authorities.

In September 2022 the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Hamad Bin Khalifa University held a high-level workshop for women leaders in academia, in partnership with the EU Delegation to the State of Qatar. The three-day workshop aimed at further developing the essential skills and capabilities of Qatari women and creating the necessary conducive environment for women leaders to reach their potential. This activity was conducted with the support of the FPI funded “Enhanced EU-GCC Political Dialogue, Cooperation and Outreach” project.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: The EU continued to engage regularly with Qatari interlocutors on human rights issues, as part of the overall bilateral political relations. In June 2022, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore, met with the Head of the ILO Project Office in Qatar, Max Tuñón, to discuss progress and challenges as regards the labour reforms introduced to the country. On September 12 2022, the fourth EU-Qatar Human Rights Dialogue was held in Brussels, with wide range of participation from Qatari Ministries and Justice authorities, touching upon developments in human rights, with special emphasis on expatriate and domestic workers status, death penalty, women’s rights and freedom of speech.

On November 14 2022, the Qatari Minister of Labour and former President of the National Human Rights Committee, Dr. Ali bin Smaikh Al Marri, was invited to present before the European Parliament’s Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI) latest human rights developments in the country. On 24 November 2022, the European Parliament issued a resolution “on the situation of human rights in the context of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar”<sup>11</sup>, acknowledging Qatar’s recent reforms in labour policies, but asking for extended compensation for workers’ families and calling for full implementation of the adopted reforms. Moreover, in November 2022, the Vice-President of the European Commission, Margaritis Schinas, met in Doha the Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar and the Minister of Labour, and raised human rights issues, including workers’ rights and the implementation of the relevant reforms. Prior to that, Vice-President Schinas met also the Head of the ILO Office in Doha to be briefed on the latest developments on labour rights and reforms in Qatar.

4. EU financial engagement: There is no EU financial support provided specifically for human rights-related activities in Qatar.

5. Multilateral context: Qatar is member of the Human Rights Council for the period 2022-2024. It did not ratify any the new international human rights instruments in 2022. To be noted though that currently there is only an ILO Project Office based in Qatar, but Qatari officials appear ready to agree on the establishment of a permanent ILO office in Doha. Greater coordination in multilateral fora will allow for a convergence of positions on specific initiatives.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Qatar did not receive EU ODA.

## African Countries

### Nigeria

#### EU relations

In 2008, the [EU and Nigeria](#) agreed on a broader political framework known as the EU-Nigeria Joint Way Forward, in order to deepen their relationship. The agreement establishes the principles, guidelines and priority areas for enhanced political dialogue and cooperation, in the wider context of the EU's relations with the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries.

Areas of mutual interest and concern for intensified dialogue include peace and security, migration, good governance and democracy, human rights, trade, and regional integration, among others. Also included are justice sector reform, support to free and fair elections and regional cooperation.

A Ministerial level dialogue takes place once a year with other meetings at Senior Officials' Level happening more frequently. Ad hoc meetings on matters of common interest, including regional, continental and global issues, can take place when agreed between the two parties.

The EU has negotiated a regional economic partnership agreement with Nigeria and 15 other West-African countries (the Economic Community of West African States ([ECOWAS](#)) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union ([WAEMU](#)), aimed at liberalising trade and fostering regional integration and sustainable development, but Nigeria is reluctant to implement it, which is why the agreement is [not yet applied](#).

#### Human rights

From [2022 Human Rights and Democracy in the World \(country reports\)](#):

##### 1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation

Nigeria continues to face an unprecedented wave of different and overlapping security crises, including banditry, crime and kidnapping, extremist insurgencies, secessionist agitations, terrorism and farmer/herder conflicts. Almost every part of the country is now afflicted by violence and crime. Security Forces are deployed in 32 out of the 36 States of the Federation. The ongoing surge of insecurity is also a result of poor governance, mismanagement and corruption that has contributed to a dire economic

situation, widespread poverty, and increasing hunger and food insecurity, rising inflation and fuel shortages, in spite of the high oil prices caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Insecurity in the Niger Delta region and the subsequent large scale oil theft have also contributed to budget distress. Nigerian security forces have faced several allegations of human rights abuses, including a series of articles by Reuters in December 2022, which focus on abuse of women and children in the North East. Nigeria's military chief has called on the National Human Rights Commission to launch an independent investigation into the allegation. The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, also released a report on violations of the right to life committed by State and non-State actors. Previous allegations have typically ended in long internal investigations that have not led to any trials, however. In March 2022, the National Assembly rejected five Gender Equality Bills during the fifth attempt to review the 1999 Constitution since its adoption. The rejection of the bills sparked strong criticism by the women's movement, and plans are in the pipeline to re-introduce the bill for the creation of additional seats for women in the National Assembly in March. There are also a number of on-going controversial individual cases of human rights violations, the most emblematic being Sharif Aminu, Omar Farouq and Mubarak Bala, as a result of a parallel system of Sharia law passing summary death sentences on those accused of blasphemy. Nigeria's democratic landscape remains stable but volatile, and it is expected that this will remain the case in the run up to the General Elections in February 2023.

## 2. EU action - key focus areas

(i) Gender Equality and women's empowerment: Gender equality and women's empowerment is mainstreamed in all EU programmes. The EU Delegation also supported advocacy towards the signing of the Mental Health Bill, which was finally signed by the President in the first week of 2023. The EU Delegation actively participated in the 2022 edition of the 16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence alongside Nigerian key stakeholders.

(ii) Rights of the Child: In 2021, the EU launched a new project, "Access to Justice for Children on the Move". In 2022, the programme advocated for the enactment of the Child Rights Act and supported implementation and enforcement of laws on child rights and child protection in the North West and North Central.

(iii) Rights of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI): In 2022, the EU Ambassador hosted a discussion with interlocutors from the LGBTI community in Nigeria on the occasion of International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, with the participation of representatives of Member States. The EU Delegation has started consultations with various LGBTI organisations as a basis for a direct contribution as part of the Human Rights and Democracy country allocation of 2022

**(iv) Freedom of Religion and Belief: The EU Delegation has engaged with faith actors and communities across the key priority areas of our development cooperation in Nigeria. In 2022, the EU continued to follow developments around the imprisonment of Mubarak Bala and Sharif Aminu, both charged for blasphemy in 2020. Despite efforts by the EU Delegation, Member States and like-minded countries, to ensure a fair trial for Mubarak Bala, the latter pleaded guilty to all charges and was sentenced to 24 years of prison. The case of Sharif Aminu was transferred to the Supreme Court and a date for the hearing is pending.**

(v) Human Security, protection of civilians and the rights of internally displaced persons: The EU has a geographical focus on North East and North West Nigeria, where it implements projects on the protection of civilians and reconciliation efforts, including the implementation of Disengagement, Disassociation, Reintegration and Reconciliation programmes in the North East.



(vi) Democratic consolidation and support for elections: Sustained support to the democratic process is channelled through the EU flagship democracy programme “EU Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) phase II’. It promotes democratic consolidation in Nigeria by building strong, effective, and legitimate democratic institutions. In 2022, EU assistance focused on supporting INEC’s conduct of the 2023 general elections so that it is fair and credible, whilst consolidating the scope and quality of the political engagement of youth, women and other marginalised groups.

(vii) Digital rights: In 2022, the EU launched a project in the Federal Capital Territory, Lagos, Imo and Kano states to build the capacity of the main actors involved in the promotion and the protection of digital rights. It includes the creation of a digital platform for reporting of violations, free legal assistance for victims of digital rights violations or threats, and knowledge building of activists and the general population.

### 3. EU bilateral political engagement

Through the EU-Nigeria Ministerial Roadmap many technical and senior level contacts continue to take place to address cooperation, research and innovation, energy, climate, security sector issues, humanitarian assistance, migration and mobility, and investments. In 2022, the EEAS, Managing Director of Africa, the EU Ambassador and EU Heads of Mission engaged with key electoral institutions and political figures as part of their engagement for peaceful, transparent and credible elections.

### 4. EU financial engagement

The EU has financial engagements in each of the areas of EU action (see above).

### 5. Multilateral context

The most recent Universal Periodic Review examination of Nigeria took place in 2018. The next review is due for November 2023. In March 2022, Nigeria voted in favour of the UNGA motion to stop Russia’s offensive and immediately withdraw all troops from Ukraine. However in April 2022, it abstained from the vote to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council. In October, Nigeria voted in favour of the resolution to condemn annexation of Ukraine’s regions. Nigeria has advocated against the Russian invasion of Ukraine within multilateral fora.

## **Official Development Aid (ODA)**

The **Multiannual Indicative Programme** (MIP) for Nigeria for 2021-2024 amounts to **€508 million**.

Since 2018, Nigeria has received some 2,69 billion euros of Official Development Aid and 126 Million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement (2016-2021). [source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)]

## **South Africa**

### **EU relations**

The EU considers South Africa [one of its ten strategic partners](#) in the world. The [SA–EU Strategic Partnership](#) was established in 2006 and was followed by a [Joint Action Plan](#) in 2007 as a forward-looking platform that facilitates the wide-ranging cooperation between our two parties.

Their strong relationship is based on the bilateral [Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement](#) (2000) and the [EU-SADAC Economic Partnership Agreement](#) (provisionally in force since 2016).

## Human rights

From [2022 Human Rights and Democracy in the World \(country reports\)](#):

### 1. Overall human rights and democracy situation:

South Africa is a mature and vibrant democracy with a progressive constitutional and legal framework designed to ensure respect for human rights in the society. The government, active and robust media, civil society and an independent judiciary all play their role in monitoring and addressing human rights violations as well as preserving democracy.

Corruption continued to be a major threat for development of the country. Despite efforts from both the National Prosecution Authority and the Judiciary to reduce impunity, lack of prosecutions and accountability remains widespread.

Realisation of socio-economic rights and elimination of inequalities are still a major challenge, with the situation deteriorating in 2022 due to the impact of the economic and the energy crisis.

Patriarchal norms and extraordinary levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality has led to continued high-levels of Gender Based Violence (GBV)/Femicide (F), hate crimes against the LGBTI community and a worrying rise in xenophobic attacks. However, the Government has demonstrated strong political commitment to fight GBV/F. Several positive steps have been taken concerning legislation to protect people against violence and discrimination. In January, three pieces of legislation related to GBV areas were adopted, aimed at strengthening the criminal justice system response to GBV. In March, Cabinet approved the Official Identity Management Policy replacing the Identification Act, 1997 (Act 68 of 1997), to be more inclusive and aligned to the constitutional principles of equality, non-discrimination and human dignity. Cabinet also approved the White Paper on Marriages that will allow South Africans and residents of all sexual orientations, religious and cultural persuasions to conclude legal unions in line with constitutional principles. Also in March, Parliament held the first public hearings on the updated Prevention and Combating of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill, first introduced in 2018. The Bill created the offences of hate crimes and hate speech and put in place measures to prevent and combat those offences. The Bill remained under discussion in Parliament in 2022. The often difficult situation of human rights defenders (HRD) and whistle blowers remains a matter of concern.

### 2. EU action - key focus areas:

EU collective action in 2022 was focused on maintaining dialogue, providing support, offering assistance and engaging a broad range of stakeholders in the areas of (i) elimination of discrimination and exclusion, (ii) protection of human rights defenders, freedom of expression and digital space, (iii) combating inequalities, (iv) closing the accountability gap, and (v) strengthening the partnership with South Africa to advance human rights and democracy.

### 3. EU bilateral political engagement:

The seventh South Africa-EU Human Rights Dialogue was successfully held in Brussels in 2022 and the EU continued to engage government, civil society and the broader public in South Africa on human rights both formally and informally. The EU Head of Delegation and EU representatives participated in a number of public events to promote human rights, with a particularly strong focus on women's rights, fight against discrimination and exclusion, including for as regards LGBTI community and refugees and migrants, the role of human rights defenders and the support for democracy. Specifically, this included speaking on behalf of the Gender Development Partners' Group at the second Presidential Summit on

fighting GBV/F, as well as participating in a Pride march with EU MS embassies, social media and communication initiatives to mark IDAHOT and the 16 Days of activism against GBV. The Gender Development Partners' Group, chaired by the EU Delegation, continued to hold regular discussions with the South African government and civil society to track developments in this thematic area. The EU Delegation also co-hosted a public webinar on Women and the green transition with City Press media.

#### 4. EU financial engagement:

Implementation of projects launched in previous years to support action in different priority areas of the Democracy and Human Rights Country Strategy continued in 2022. The EU Delegation launched a new call for proposals (NDICI, EUR 3.1 million) for civil society projects to enhance women economic empowerment and to prevent GBV/F. In 2022, the Delegation also signed two new grants contracts with civil society organisations to prevent GBV and to address the spread of online hate speech against women and migrants. In addition the Delegation signed an agreement with ILO to address child labour in the agricultural sector in South Africa as part of the EU commitment to support South Africa to address child labour following the fifth global conference, which took place in SA in May 2022. The Delegation also launched a call for proposals for projects addressing child labour and trafficking in South Africa and the neighbouring countries. In 2022, under its "Enhancing Accountability" programme, the Delegation continued to monitor the implementation of four CSOs projects and contracted a technical assistance team which will provide support to organise policy discussions and events (on topics such as transparency, access to information, citizen oversight and inclusive governance processes). Finally under the same programme, the Delegation launched a second call for proposals on improving accountability and transparency and supporting anti-corruption efforts. Grants will be awarded in 2023.

#### 5. Multilateral context:

In 2022, South Africa was elected to serve in the Human Rights Council 2023-2025. It chaired the 66th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and went through its 41st Universal Periodic Review with 293 recommendations. South Africa continued to be an active and important player in the Human Rights Council during 2022. Even though most resolutions are tabled by the entire African Group, South Africa is one of the leading voices on some topics, in particular on the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and the rights of people of African descent, inequality and discrimination, equal pay, the right to social security, discrimination of women and girls in sports, sexual orientation and gender (SOGI), private military and security companies (PMSC), Business and human rights, transnational corporations (TNC).

#### **Official Development Aid (ODA)**

Since 2018, South Africa has received some **1,22 billion euros** of Official Development Aid. ). [source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)]

The [Multiannual Indicative Programme \(MIP\)](#) for South Africa for 2021-2024 amounts to **€129 million**.

## **Democratic Republic of Congo**

### **EU relations**

As a Least-Developed Country, DRC benefits from duty-free, quota-free EU access under the EU's "Everything but Arms" scheme. There are ongoing negotiations for a comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and all countries of Central Africa.

In the DRC, the EU participates in political and human development through a comprehensive approach, which has notably enabled the organisation of [the first European security missions without NATO participation](#):

- the EUSEC mission, 2005-2016, for the reform of the DRC defence forces;
- the EUPOL mission for the DRC police reform, 2007-2014.

In July 2023, a [€20 million assistance measure](#) under the European Peace Facility was agreed to support the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

## Human rights

From [2022 Human Rights and Democracy in the World \(country reports\)](#):

### 1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:

Respect of human rights and democratic governance continued to face serious and systemic challenges, but there was some progress. The military was responsible for 30% fewer violations in 2022 compared to 2021, while the police committed 16% fewer violations. There has, however, also been a resurgence in restrictions on civic and political space, with a sharp decline in press freedom. Freedom of expression and association drastically deteriorated in the two eastern provinces under the state of siege, where martial law was used to quash peaceful demonstrations with lethal force, arbitrarily detain and prosecute activists, journalists, and opposition politicians. Most human rights violations in the east were committed by armed groups, some of which have been involved in war crimes. Attacks by armed groups against internally displaced persons and the increasing use of improvised explosive devices have increased, and so has the tally of civilian victims. In March, the Government launched national consultations on a national transitional justice initiative and reaffirmed its commitment to accountability for serious crimes committed across the country.

### 2. EU action on Human Rights and Democracy - key focus areas

EU priorities were: (1) Promotion of the freedom of expression, demonstration and association; (2) Promotion of the democratic system as set out in the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the participation of women in political life; (3) Promotion and entrenchment of a fair and easily accessible justice system including the fight against impunity in particular for those implicated in sexual violence; (4) Promotion of gender equality particularly in public life and respect for women's rights especially for the survivors of sexual and gender based violence. Regarding the justice sector reform, the EU-funded programme PARJ III helped to strengthen the independence of the judiciary and improves the performance of the Ministry of Justice to fight against impunity and corruption and promote the respect of human rights. Another EU supported activity strengthened the independence and economic autonomy of local medias, in the fight against fake news. In addition, EU funds supported the creation of the Talatala barometer, to measure parliamentary activity and government activities by providing summaries of public debates and plenary sessions. The EU led by example in the protection of human right defenders. Its local protection mechanism, which covers the entire territory of the country, has allowed for the direct protection of over 60 human rights defenders (HRDs) since 2021. Over 445 HRDs deem they are working in a more secure environment due to the local protection mechanism. Almost four million people were reached by awareness raising activities on the respect of their fundamental rights (counts started in early 2021). The EU also supported a programme aimed at preventing torture in Kinshasa-based detention centres. The EU was also active on actively promoting gender equality and strengthen women's rights: the project 'Tujenge Amani Leo' promotes the resilience of vulnerable

women and youth in crisis-affected territories in Eastern DRC; EU's support to Panzi Foundation enabled over 4 000 victims of sexual and gender-based violence to receive medical, socio-psychological, legal and economic assistance. A new action worth EUR 20 million called 'Unis pour l'égalité du genre', launched in November 2022, aims to reduce women's, girls', boys' and men's vulnerability to gender-based violence, including through vocational training, awareness rising and wider protection measures.

3. EU bilateral political engagement: In 2022, the EU and its Member States engaged in a wide array of political actions in support of human rights, with the government, civil society at large, and international partners. Human rights were included within EU-DRC political exchanges, though no Article 8 Political Dialogue session took place in 2022. The EU Delegation carried out several demarches and outreach including on the arbitrary arrest and detainment of LUCHA members, press freedom and the death penalty. The EU Delegation and Member States have been active in advocating for the adoption of the law on protecting HRDs, which is currently being studied by the Human Rights Commission of the DRC National Assembly. A particular focus was given to coordination and communication outreach on gender-bases issues, ranging from sexual and reproductive health, to the role of women in peace processes and national decision making. The EU plays a key role in coordinating donor activities in these thematic fields and setting common donor priorities, by chairing several Inter-donor groups, including the Inter-donor groups on justice, human rights and gender. The EU is also one of the main supporters of the President's national campaign to fight gender-based violence in the country.

4. EU financial engagement: The EU provided EUR 2.5 million of support in 2022 to programs and projects regarding the rule of law and human rights, amongst others in the justice sector, the media, the protection of Human Rights Defenders and the promotion of gender equality and the strengthening of women's rights.

5. Multilateral context: The DRC is party to multiple key international human rights treaties. The DRC did not vote on any of the human rights-related resolutions in 2022 in the UN General Assembly. In the Human Rights Council, the annual resolution on the DRC, presented by the African Group on behalf of the DRC itself, was once again adopted by consensus. The resolution renewed the mandate of the International Team of Experts on the DRC for a further period of one year, and requested them to provide the DRC with technical support in the implementation of the national strategy on transitional justice. The Office of the High Commissioner was requested inter alia to continue to provide forensic expertise, to support the judicial authorities in their investigation of allegations of human rights violations and abuses with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice, and to support the process of implementation of the transitional justice mechanism.

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, DRC has received some 3,38 billion euros of Official Development Aid and 2,70 Million euros from The EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa to address causes of instability, irregular migration and forced displacement (2016-2021). ). [source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)]

The EU allocated [€424 million](#) grants to the partnership with the DRC for the period 2021-24. The DRC also benefits from regional and global EU programmes.

## Asian countries

## Bangladesh

### EU Relations

EU-Bangladesh [diplomatic](#) relations were established in 1973. The [EU-Bangladesh Cooperation Agreement](#), concluded in 2001, provides broad scope for cooperation, extending to trade and economic development, human rights, good governance and the environment.

The European Union [trade relations](#) with Bangladesh are based on unilateral trade preferences granted by the EU since 2001 under the GSP Everything but Arms (EBA) duty-free, quota-free market access arrangement for the Least Developed Country (LDC).

The EU is Bangladesh's main trade partner accounting for around 19.5% of Bangladesh's total trade in 2020. The EU is Bangladesh's largest export destination, accounting for over 60 per cent of all exports to the EU under EBA. From 2011 to 2019, Bangladeshi exports to the EU rose from €9.0 billion to over €19 billion, while EU exports to Bangladesh improved from €1.7 billion to 3.4 billion during the same period.

### Human rights

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** In 2022, Bangladesh entered a pre-election period with intensified political activity, increasing risk of political violence, and arrests, including of opposition supporters. Elections are due by January 2024 at the latest. A notable positive development of 2022 is a dramatic fall of the number of extrajudicial executions, in particular by the Rapid Action Battalion. Reportedly, the forced disappearance cases have not yet been investigated however. Bangladesh remains a proponent of the death penalty, with around 1 500 individuals on death row and calls for capital punishment to be extended to additional offences.

Whilst the media are diverse and have expanded in recent years, there is some degree of self-censorship. Civil society struggles with restrictions, including on the sourcing of funds from abroad. The authorities refused to renew the legal registration of prominent human rights organisation Odhikar in June, a move that was upheld in September.

The authorities have been responsive to input from the international community and civil society on the draft Data Protection Act, which should continue to be revised before adoption in the course of 2023. At the same time, human rights concerns have persisted over the use of the Digital Security Act (DSA) and other legislation to stifle criticism of the authorities.

Another important piece of legislation, a draft anti-discrimination law, has been under consideration in Parliament since April 2022. The bill has received positive support from civil society, though the absence of protection for sexual minorities was one of the shortcomings identified.

The Rohingya refugee crisis has passed its fifth anniversary posing acute humanitarian challenges in spite of the continuing endeavours of the Bangladesh authorities, with support from the international community. There have been several steps forward, including as regards the education of Rohingya children, but concerns remain, including on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.

There remains a need for progress to implement the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, 25 years after its adoption, and to ensure that the rights of indigenous communities are fully recognised.

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** The EU and EU Member States engage on a wide range of human rights issues with government, civil society, academia and business interlocutors. In the past year, EU Heads of Mission have issued joint statements and social media postings on human rights priorities. Gender equality, women's rights, gender-based violence, freedom of expression and of the media, access to information and the fight against disinformation were amongst the issues in focus.

The EU has followed up with the authorities on the recommendations of the 2018 Election Expert Mission in view of the next general election expected by January 2024 at the latest.

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** The EU-Bangladesh Joint Commission and Sub-group on Human Rights held in May 2022 covered numerous human rights issues. Human rights concerns were raised at high-level during the first EU-Bangladesh Political Dialogue on 24 November and during the visit of members of the European Parliament from the Committee on International Trade on 18-20 July, with labour rights and the implementation of the National Action Plan on the labour sector particularly prominent in the parliamentary visit. The EU carried out an official monitoring mission to Bangladesh in March to review the country's progress in the context of the enhanced engagement process under the Everything But Arms (EBA) arrangement. It addressed labour rights as well as compliance with the human rights obligations linked to the EBA arrangement.

**4. EU financial engagement:** The EU's development and humanitarian partnership with Bangladesh assists the fulfilment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including support to education, decent work, digitalisation, the justice sector, anti-corruption, data protection, nutrition and essential services in the Rohingya camps.

The EU extends substantial support to civil society including in the human rights and democracy domain and has engaged regularly with human rights defenders.

Projects supported by the EU and Member States focused on gender equality, women's rights and gender based violence; rights of the child; Human Rights Defenders and Civil Society Organisations; freedom of expression, independent media, access to information and fight against disinformation; political parties and the integrity of electoral processes; business and human rights; rights of refugees and minorities; the right to a healthy environment and climate induced internally displaced persons.

**5. Multilateral context:** On 12 October, Bangladesh was elected member of the UN Human Rights Council for a three-year term beginning in 2023. In seeking membership Bangladesh made several pledges.

Bangladesh also permitted visits by several UN special rapporteurs during the course of the year, including the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children and the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

During her visit in August 2022, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights called for an independent mechanism to investigate enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, citing a narrowing civic space and the need for conducive human rights conditions in the context of the next elections.

The UN Security Council resolution on Myanmar adopted in December included language on Rohingya and was welcomed by Bangladesh. Bangladesh continued to engage on the resolutions on Myanmar, including Rohingya issues, in the UN General Assembly and UN Human Rights Council.

Source: [EU Annual report on Human rights and democracy in the World: 2022 country updates](#)

## Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Bangladesh has received some 937 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Further information

[Bangladesh and the 2024 elections: From 'basket case' to rising star](#) / EPRS Briefing by Enrico D'Ambrogio, december2023

[The European Union and Bangladesh](#) - EEAS

[EU trade relations with Bangladesh](#) - DG Trade

International Partnerships: [EU - Bangladesh](#) - DG INTPA

## China

### EU Relations

[The EU and China](#) are committed to a comprehensive strategic partnership, as expressed in the **EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation**.

As China has graduated from bilateral development assistance, reflecting fast-paced economic growth, it has become a strategic development partner engaged with the EU on a wide range of policy issues.

The EU remains committed to cooperating with China to ensure continued progress towards achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and Paris Agreement targets.

The 2019 Joint Communication "[EU-China – A Strategic Outlook](#)" reiterates the need to work with China as a donor and partner. The EU and China share a commitment in global sustainable development, the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement, which presents opportunities for closer cooperation, including in third countries.

The [2019 Joint Summit statement](#) reflects the breadth and depth of ambition in EU-China cooperation, including deepening cooperation in all 3 pillars of the UN (human rights, peace and security and development), working jointly to implement Agenda 2030, and on the fight against climate change in particular. The EU will also cooperate with China on sustainable economic development and connectivity, circular economy, biological diversity, ocean governance, and regional peace and security, among others issues.

### Human rights

#### People's Republic of China

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** During 2022 the government's crackdown on civil society organisations, human rights defenders and journalists, and on Chinese citizens at large,



notably those belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities in Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia, continued. Existing obligations under international and national laws to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms for all were not respected. There were three particular developments to highlight: first, the situation of LGBTI persons continued to worsen. Censorship over LGBTI content was tightened in popular culture with the removal of gay storylines in the local releases of foreign TV series and movies. A string of deaths of young people since the end of 2021 sparked national discussions regarding gender norms, homophobic discrimination, and school bullying. Dozens of social media accounts run by LGBTI groups were suspended. Second, China's existing gender gap further widened: the newly amended law on the protection of women's rights<sup>12</sup> offered few improvements but it rather carried forward a spirit of paternalism and condescendence.

Following the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, for the first time in decades, the Politburo of the Party has no female members. Third, the freedom of speech was becoming more and more restricted, both in traditional media and on the Internet. Continued practices such as the Great Firewall, the implementation of censorship, fake news, and specific campaigns are issues of concern. The already severe censorship was tightened even more and the authorities harassed and persecuted citizen journalists, as well as foreign reporters covering topics that until recently were not considered as "sensitive", such as environmental issues, the MeToo movement, or adverse poverty reduction results. The number of journalists inside China is steadily decreasing.<sup>13</sup>

China's harsh zero-Covid policies further limited fundamental freedoms. Several spontaneous and unprecedented protests took place in major cities, shortly before the zero-Covid policy was abandoned in December 2022. The application of the zero-Covid measures included, among others, QR code-based tracking apps, surveillance drones and cameras, remote temperature scanning, and the identity recognition of persons wearing masks, offering a convenient tool to control human rights defenders, journalists and the Chinese population at large. Whole-province or whole-city lockdowns have also been used to avoid political problems, e.g., in Tibet and Xinjiang during the 20th National Party Congress.

The dire human rights situation and continued mass detention and oppression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang continued to receive global attention, with extensive evidence-based reports referring to, inter alia, the use of forced labour and forced sterilisation/birth control targeting Uyghurs. In this context, the publication of the so-called "Xinjiang Police Files"<sup>14</sup> on 24 May 2022 was noteworthy. The publication of these leaked documents coincided with the visit of then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, to Xinjiang.<sup>15</sup> The Office of the High Commissioner released its assessment of human rights concerns in Xinjiang<sup>16</sup> on 31 August 2022. The assessment stated that "The extent of arbitrary and discriminatory detention of members of Uyghur and other predominantly Muslim groups, pursuant to law and policy, in the context of restrictions and deprivation more generally of fundamental rights enjoyed individually and collectively, may constitute international crimes, in particular crimes against humanity." Welcoming the release of the assessment, High Representative Borrell issued a statement on 1 December 2022.<sup>17</sup> In Tibet, similarly to the situation in Xinjiang, increased and intrusive control and surveillance continued to operate; extra-judicial forms of political detention were widespread with political and environmental<sup>18</sup> detainees often held captive, often without the possibility to contact their family members or their lawyers. The reported practice of arbitrary collection of DNA from residents in many towns and villages within the Tibet Autonomous Region<sup>19</sup> and of the forcing of Tibetan children into state-run boarding schools are of serious concern to the EU.<sup>20</sup> The Human Rights Dialogue did

however take place after the visit of the President of the European Council, Charles Michel in February 2023. 21

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** In 2022, most of the EU's actions regarding the human rights situation in China primarily aimed at protecting and empowering individuals. The EU, also through its Delegation in Beijing, continued to regularly address, both bilaterally with the Chinese authorities and through public communications, individual cases involving human rights defenders and journalists. The EU continued to spot light on human rights violations occurring across the country, paying particular attention to the secret trials and deteriorating health situation of human rights defenders in detention. The listing of four individuals and one entity from China for their involvement in serious human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang, as part of a wider package of listings under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EUGHRSR) has been extended for another year on 5 December 2022. Despite the difficult circumstances related to China's zero-Covid policies, the EU Delegation in China and EU Member States organised and supported a number of public diplomacy activities, such as panel discussions, film screenings and social media campaigns, to mark the most significant human rights anniversaries, including the International Human Rights Day, and the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. The EU Delegation organised periodical events on gender equality, rights of LGBTI persons, media freedom, death penalty and protection of human rights defenders.

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** The EU-China Human Rights Dialogue did not take place in 2022 either, following China's unilateral suspension of the dialogue in March 2021, due to the imposition of EU sanctions under the EUGHRSR, and as part of China's countersanctions.

At the 23rd EU-China Summit, held on 1 April 2022, an in-principle agreement was reached about the resumption of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue that was reconfirmed during the visit of President Michel to China on 1 December 2022. Both bilaterally and multilaterally, the EU continued to call on China to fulfil its obligations under the UN Charter and international law, including international human rights law, as well as under China's own Constitution. EU interlocutors continued to systematically raise the EU's human rights concerns in China throughout the year.

**4. EU financial engagement:** The EU continued to implement several projects to support and promote human rights in China. These projects take shape through official government cooperation, with local partners and with grassroots support. The projects continued to focus on a wide array of social topics, including death penalty, the rights of women, child victim of sexual abuse and migrant workers, to enhancing access to justice for persons with disabilities and victims of domestic violence, and supporting the rule of law.

**5. Multilateral context:** The EU, through its Item 4 and Item 2 statements<sup>22</sup> at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC 49 and 51 and 50 respectively) and its Omnibus statement at the UN General Assembly's Third Committee, continued to urge China to abide by its obligations under national and international law to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including persons belonging to ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities across China, especially in Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia. Furthermore, the EU continued to promote and defend the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights. In this spirit, the EU exercised the utmost vigilance as regards attempts by China to introduce non-consensual language, inconsistent with international human rights law, in initiatives and resolutions negotiated in the Human Rights Council and the UNGA Third Committee.

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12 <http://www.china.org.cn/english/government/207405.htm>

13 <https://chinamediaproject.org/2022/06/14/steep-decline-for-chinas-journalists/>

14 <https://www.xinjiangpolicefiles.org/>

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<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/05/statement-un-high-commissioner-human-rights-michelle-bachelet-after-official>

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<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/countries/2022-08-31/22-08-31-final-assessment.pdf>

17

[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/china-statement-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-assessment-human-rights\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/china-statement-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-assessment-human-rights_en)

18 <https://savetibet.org/environmental-defenders-of-tibet/>

19 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/09/05/china-new-evidence-mass-dna-collection-tibet>

20 <https://tibetaction.net/colonial-boarding-school-report/>

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[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/china-38th-human-rights-dialogue-european-union-takes-place-brussels\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/china-38th-human-rights-dialogue-european-union-takes-place-brussels_en)

## **Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China**

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** 2022 was marked by the 25th anniversary of the handover of Hong Kong to China (with the visit of President Xi Jinping), by the second anniversary of the imposition of the National Security Law (NSL) on Hong Kong, as well as the swearing in of John Lee, the first elected Chief Executive after the implementation of sweeping changes in the Hong Kong electoral system. He was the sole candidate.

During 2022, the human rights situation in Hong Kong continued to deteriorate. Freedom of speech and freedom of assembly were under increased pressure. The NSL was used to stifle political pluralism and the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms that are protected under Hong Kong law and international law. The space for civil society continued to shrink and most independent media was shut down. In addition to the NSL, the colonial-era sedition law continued to be used in relation to many arrests, increasing the pressure on freedom of speech and media freedom in general.

Although Hong Kong still enjoys freedom of the internet, the practice of blocking sensitive content/websites was used. For example, the authorities blocked the website of an NGO, a decision taken under the NSL. Several other laws have the potential to threaten internet freedom, such the ‘anti-doxxing’ law and the copyright law, the planned cyber-security law as well as the ‘fake news’ law.

The year ended with the first-ever National People’s Congress Standing Committee’s interpretation of the NSL, providing for the Chief Executive and the National Security Committee to take over the ruling from

Hong Kong's Court of Final Appeal and take the final decision on the admissibility of overseas lawyers in trials concerning national security offences.

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** Despite the severe shrinking of space for civil society organisations in Hong Kong, the EU Office has stepped up efforts to highlight the need to combat all forms of discrimination in Hong Kong.

In the context of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the EU Office participated in an event raising awareness about the difficulties faced by migrant women. In January 2022, the EU Office organized a workshop focusing on international trends relating to the fight against human trafficking involving forced marriage within ethnic minority communities, anti-money laundering, financial investigation and assistance to the victims. As in previous years, the EU Office worked closely with the Bureau of Security on preparations for the event aimed at protecting the rights of victims and preventing the potential infringement of human rights. In 2022, the EU office also organised art events related to human rights, including the annual EU Film Festival, and continued to co-organise the 'EU-Asia Docs film festival' to shed light on social issues including the struggles of the LGBTI community.

The Council Conclusions of July 2020 on Hong Kong mandated the continued observation of the trials of pro-democracy activists. The EU Office and the EU Member States in Hong Kong have conducted more than 60 trial observations in 2022. In May 2022, the European Parliament and the Council also published a joint annual report for 2021 on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.<sup>23</sup>

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** The EU Office team has regular meetings with the Hong Kong authorities, during which concerns on the evolution of rule of law in Hong Kong, on the implementation of the NSL, and on the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine are expressed. The EU Office is also in contact with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China (OCMFA).

**4. EU financial engagement:** The EU is working on possibilities to step up its engagement and support for civil society, in line with Council Conclusions and taking into account practical limitations on the ground.

**5. Multilateral context:** The EU regularly expresses concerns regarding Hong Kong in Item 4 statements on situations that require the Human Rights Council's attention. In July 2022, after the UN Human Rights Committee released findings on Hong Kong's implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights<sup>24</sup>, the EU spokesperson issued a statement to support the Human Rights Committee's recommendations, in particular to repeal the NSL and the colonial-era sedition law, and to refrain, immediately, from applying them<sup>25</sup>. During the UN General Assembly, on 19 October 2022, the EU shared concerns about Hong Kong in the Omnibus statement read at the Third Committee.

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[https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/113208/hrc-49-general-debate-human-rights-situations-require-council%E2%80%99s-attention\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/113208/hrc-49-general-debate-human-rights-situations-require-council%E2%80%99s-attention_en)

[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/hrc-51-eu-statement-item-4-general-debate-human-rights-situations-require\\_en?s=62](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/hrc-51-eu-statement-item-4-general-debate-human-rights-situations-require_en?s=62)

[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/hrc-50-eu-statement-item-2-interactive-dialogue-high-commissioner%E2%80%99s-annual\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/hrc-50-eu-statement-item-2-interactive-dialogue-high-commissioner%E2%80%99s-annual_en)

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[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/hong-kong-annual-eu-report-political-and-economic-developments-2021\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/hong-kong-annual-eu-report-political-and-economic-developments-2021_en)

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<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/07/un-human-rights-committee-issues-findings-hong-kong-macao-georgia-ireland>

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[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/hong-kong-statement-spokesperson-civil-and-political-rights\\_en?s=166](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/hong-kong-statement-spokesperson-civil-and-political-rights_en?s=166)

## **Macao Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China**

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** In 2022, the Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) remained completely closed to the outside world due to restrictions related to the strict management of the Covid-19 pandemic. In this context, the authorities enabled a system of digital applications that was similar to the one used in mainland China. It involved installation of intrusive software of geolocalisation and collection of personal data, enabling close tracking of the users. During 2022, the authorities amended the National Security Law (NSL), without any public consultation, aligning it with the NSL of Hong Kong, further weakening the rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Basic Law.

The Legislative Assembly passed in July an amendment to the Legal System Governing the Interception and Protection of Communications. The law allows the police to intercept telecommunications in cases of additional suspected crimes such as terrorism, crimes endangering national security or cybercrimes. Under ‘urgent’ circumstances, the police can instruct telecom operators to provide phone logs without prior approval of a judge. Freedom of expression and freedom of assembly continued to be under threat.

The Democratic Development Union (DDU) renounced to organise a candlelight vigil for the anniversary of the Tian An Men massacre on 4 June. Former lawmaker and member of the DDU Au Kam San declared that participants could have been at risk of arrest.

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** The EU continued monitoring signs of closing civic space and democratic backsliding. In 2022, the EU Office used its Instagram account, its Twitter account and its Facebook account to share and repost human rights related information. In May 2022, the European Parliament and the Council also published a joint annual report for 2021 on the Macao Special Administrative Region.<sup>26</sup>

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** During 2022, political engagement was not possible due to Macao’s closure as a result of strict Covid-19 control policies.

**4. EU financial engagement:** There is no EU financial engagement in Macao.

**5. Multilateral context:** Macao SAR enjoys a very limited role in multilateral fora, but Macao is a party to international treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). In July 2022, Macao underwent its second periodic review under the ICCPR. In its concluding remarks, the Human Rights Committee (HRC) urged the government to establish an independent human rights body with a “comprehensive mandate and appropriate powers”. The HRC expressed concerns about possible

violations of the ICCPR regarding freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, migrant workers' rights (notably non-resident workers) and asylum seeking. The HRC also questioned the government about the exclusion of pro-democracy candidates during the 2021 legislative elections. The Macao government opposed some of the conclusions and suggested that the UN institution "avoid the politicisation of the assessment" and keep a "constructive dialogue"<sup>27</sup>

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[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/macao-annual-eu-report-political-and-economic-developments-2021\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/macao-annual-eu-report-political-and-economic-developments-2021_en)

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<https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2022/07/experts-human-rights-committee-commend-macao-special-administrative-region-china>

## Taiwan

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** Taiwan is a vibrant democracy with a system of governance based on the rule of law and the respect of fundamental freedoms. Elections are held regularly in a fair and transparent manner. The last local elections took place in November 2022. Taiwan has one of the most progressive human rights policies in Asia, being notably a pioneer of the rights of LGBTI persons. In 2022, Taiwan released its first 2022-2024 National Action Plan on Human Rights. However, some issues of concern remain, such as the slow progress towards the abolition of the death penalty and the lack of a transparent legal framework for refugees. Further efforts are also needed to improve the protection of migrant workers' and fishers' rights and to ensure proper working conditions. In this context, ongoing work on the integration of ILO Convention n° 188 (ILO C188) - Work in Fishing Convention - into domestic law and the adoption in 2022 of the National Action Plan on Fishing and Human Rights are important steps forward.

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** EU action focused on protecting and empowering individuals and building a resilient, inclusive and democratic society. The EU and Member States present in Taipei identified the following priorities: promoting Taiwan's compliance with international human rights law, including by developing its human rights institutional framework and domestic legislation to protect refugees; improving the human rights situation and working conditions of migrant workers; promoting the abolition of death penalty in Taiwan, including working towards a moratorium on executions and towards sensitising public opinion and judicial practitioners; supporting independent and pluralistic media and the fight against disinformation; and supporting and protecting human rights defenders in the region, including by contributing to the safety and protection of journalist and media workers.

The EU continued its consultations with Taiwan with a focus on migrant workers' rights and working conditions, the death penalty, and non-discrimination against persons in the most vulnerable situations. The EU remained in contact with several agencies in charge of human rights related issues. Within the EU-Taiwan Gender Equality Cooperation and Training Framework, the EU and Taiwan organised events to promote rights of LGBTI persons. Contacts with major civil society organisations also continued, allowing for the exchange of information and gathering ideas on how to further promote human rights in Taiwan.

In the context of its continued efforts to promote the abolition of the death penalty, the EU organised with Member States the EU-Taiwan Judicial Exchange Workshop for judicial experts and a film festival.

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** The fifth EU-Taiwan Human Rights Consultations took place on 5 October 2022 in a virtual format. Discussion focused on gender equality and rights of LGBTI persons, business and human rights, migrant workers' rights, the death penalty, and human rights in the digital sphere. The EU and Taiwan also discussed human rights in the EU-Taiwan annual consultations held in November 2022. The EU remained engaged on the working and living conditions of migrant workers, that have been further affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and on the abolition of the death penalty, raising this issue on a regular basis with the Taiwanese authorities.

**4. EU financial engagement:** In 2022, the European Economic and Trade Office in Taiwan (EETO) organised, promoted or supported a number of events and initiatives on human rights. These activities resulted in increased public awareness and enhanced exchanges between the EU and Taiwan, both with NGOs and with the Taiwanese authorities. More activities on human rights and democracy have been planned under the EU-Taiwan Engagement Facility, launched in September 2022, with a budget of EUR 400 000. The facility will cover areas such as the abolition of the death penalty, media freedom, migrant workers' rights and support to human rights defenders from the region, and exchanges with the National Human Rights Commission.

**5. Multilateral context:** Although not a member of the UN, Taiwan voluntarily incorporated the provisions of five of the UN's nine human rights treaties into its domestic laws, notably the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In 2022, Taiwan was in the process of aligning domestic law with the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT). Taiwan was also working to adopt the International Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. Taiwan regularly published reports on the implementation of these treaties and invited international experts to review them. The third reviews of the implementation of ICCPR and ICESCR were held in May 2022.

Source: [EU Annual report on Human rights and democracy in the World: 2022 country updates](#)

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, China has received some 86.1 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

### Further reading

[The European Union and China](#) - EEAS

[EU trade relations with China](#) - DG Trade

International Partnerships: [EU - China](#) - DG INTPA

## India

### EU Relations

The [European Union and India](#) share a commitment to a rules-based global order, effective multilateralism and sustainable development.

The [1994 EU-India Cooperation Agreement](#) provides the legal framework for EU-India relations and boosted political, economic, and sectoral cooperation. In 2004 EU-India Strategic Partnership took the relationship a step further.

The EU was India's [third](#) largest trading partner in 2021, accounting for €88 billion worth of trade in goods in 2021 or 10.8% of total Indian trade. EU foreign direct investment in India reached €87 billion in 2020. Almost 15% of Indian exports went to the EU in 2021.

### Human rights

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** India's Constitution, as well as other laws and mandated institutions, serve to safeguard the human rights of the country's over 1.4 billion inhabitants. India's economy has grown significantly in the past decade, which resulted in a substantial reduction of extreme poverty. However, socio-economic inequality persists. In terms of gender equality, notably in the areas of education and the political empowerment of women, the situation slightly improved in 2022 – as noted in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2022.

Several independent reports and UN bodies noted that space for civil society and societal diversity continued to shrink. In the World Press Freedom Index, India's ranking dropped by eight places from 2021 to 2022 to a position of 150th out of 180 countries. UN Special Rapporteurs highlighted an increasing use of anti-terror laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) against journalists and human rights defenders (HRDs), which they defined as the Indian government's attempt "to restrict civil society". Similarly, the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), a law providing immunity to armed forces personnel, currently applied in some parts of North-East India and in Jammu and Kashmir, was described by UN Special Rapporteurs as a "symbol of excessive state power" with "no role to play in a democracy".

The broader civil society movement in India continues to be significantly affected by the 2020 amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act (FCRA), regulating the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contributions by individuals, NGOs and not-for-profit organisations. The year 2022 started with almost 6,000 organisations losing their FCRA license. Others are still operating while waiting for their renewal to be granted (the Ministry of Home Affairs extended the deadline for completion of this process seven times already). This led to uncertainty among CSOs, affecting planning and implementation of their activities, and self-censorship for fear of reprisals. CSOs can lose their FCRA license from one day to another, and consequently, get their FCRA bank accounts frozen immediately. A number of reputed CSOs –including OXFAM, Socio Legal Information Centre (SLIC), the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) – had their FCRA suspended or cancelled. EU support



to CSOs in India became more complex: in particular, the prohibition of sub-granting of FCRA funds makes it difficult to support smaller, rural CSOs and ensure support to grassroots' communities. Together with some Member States, the EU also faced an increased risk of non-recovery of unutilised funds and seizure of assets purchased with EU funds – a potential loss of our tax-payers' money. Efforts by CSOs to engage with the Ministry of Home Affairs on the FCRA issue has not been very productive.

Freedom of religion or belief deteriorated in recent years, based on international reports. This negative trend was highlighted by the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief in a report submitted to the Human Rights Council in April 2022. Some central and state government policies and actions have a direct negative impact on religious freedom, such as laws prohibiting so-called “forced conversions” passed in 13 states (three of which passed such laws in 2022).

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** The EU and EU Member States engaged on a wide range of human rights issues with government, civil society, academia and business interlocutors. The rights of children, women and minorities, freedom of expression, of religion or belief, the protection of Human rights defenders, and access to justice, as well as caste based discrimination, forced labour and slavery, torture and the death penalty were among the issues in focus.

The EU also worked on promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment and supported women's participation in the climate change agenda and digitalization.

With regard to maritime movements of Rohingya refugees, the EU continued to urge the governments in the region, including India, to fulfil obligations to rescue distressed boats within their search and rescue areas, allow disembarkation and access to humanitarian assistance, and work with UNHCR and civil society to arrange safe community hosting arrangements.

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** The 10th edition of the EU-India local Human Rights Dialogue took place in July 2022, and proved again a useful bilateral platform with frank discussions.

Following an invitation to speak at the Raisina Dialogue, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights (EUSR) had a four-day mission to India in April 2022. The EUSR met with the Minister for Minority Affairs, the Chair of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Home Secretary, as well as with representatives of civil society and Human Rights Defenders (HRDs).

On the FCRA, the EU Delegation and EU Member States Embassies regularly reached out to the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs. On allegations of human rights abuses, the EU contacted several times the National Human Rights Commission.

During their visit to Delhi in May 2022, members of the Council's Asia-Oceania Working Party had several interactions with human rights activists and defenders in order to get insights on the situation in India and inform their discussion in Brussels.

In 2022, the EU Delegation organised, together with EU Member States, more than 15 meetings with civil society representatives covering all different spheres of human rights.

**4. EU financial engagement:** Through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), eight projects supported the protection of fundamental rights; three multi-country projects benefited India, focusing on strengthening indigenous people's HRDs and promoting freedom of religion or belief.

Under the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) thematic programmes [Civil Society Organisations (CSO), Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC)], six projects received support, focusing on addressing economic inequalities, labour standards and workers' rights in sectoral supply chains. Three of these were multi-country projects.

In a Team Europe approach, the EU together with its Member States supported rights-based projects in India during 2022. The majority of these projects focused on gender rights and were conducted in partnership with Indian CSOs.

Under the Partnership Instrument, one project supported business and human rights.

In 2022, the EU Delegation also launched a call for proposal focused on promoting gender equality and women's rights and contracted two new projects.

**5. Multilateral context:** On 10 November 2022, India underwent its fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council (HRC). India received 339 recommendations from 130 countries, including 22 EU Member States. India will present its formal responses to the recommendations received at the 52nd session of the HRC. In the runup to the UPR session, the EU Delegation organised several rounds of consultations between EU Member States and civil society.

India traditionally votes against or abstains on country-specific resolutions in the UN HRC, the resolution on the human rights situation in Afghanistan being a notable exception in the 51st session of the HRC, which India supported.

Source: [EU Annual report on Human rights and democracy in the World: 2022 country updates](#)

## Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, India has received some 103 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

## Further reading

[The European Union and India](#) - EEAS

[EU trade relations with India](#) - DG Trade

International Partnerships: [EU - India](#) - DG INTPA

## Myanmar

### EU Relations

The [peace process](#) is a key area, benefitting from significant EU support, where progress should contribute to important improvements in respect of human rights, particularly rights of minorities. The State Counsellor made peace and national reconciliation the top priority of the government. However, as clashes between the government and Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) continue, inclusiveness, trust and de-escalation remain key challenges. Ethnic and religious minorities remain highly vulnerable. Hate

speech and intolerance is a growing issue enforced by the increasing influence of Buddhist ultranationalist movements.

The EU intends to further improve aid effectiveness in the area of peace through an additional contribution to the Joint Peace Fund, delivering coordinated international financial and technical assistance to the peace processes. The action will aim at women's meaningful participation in the implementation and monitoring of the ceasefire agreement, further peace negotiations, peace-building and reconciliation. The systematic integration of gender perspectives will contribute to making the peace process more inclusive and peace agreements and outcomes more sustainable. As part of the support for socio-economic recovery in conflict-affected areas, a strong emphasis will be given to Rakhine State in order to alleviate intercommunal tensions and address serious human rights concerns.

The EU in Myanmar is one of the 6 Delegations around the world that has been asked to operationalise the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. As a result between 2018-2019 the delegation has developed a joint EEAS-DEVCO-ECHO Nexus vision enshrined in its Nexus Plan of Action, it has launched 4 Nexus Pilot Projects in conflict areas and is currently developing Nexus SoPs and working on "Nexus Response Mechanism" for 2020.

For the support to the reform of the Myanmar Police Force (MYPOL 2016 – 2021) the EU tends to support a more effective, efficient and accountable police service in order to become a modern police service that adheres to international best practices, respects human rights and maintains gender awareness.

## Human rights

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** The human rights situation in Myanmar has continued to deteriorate in every area. The military coup of 1 February 2021 initiated a cycle of violence, human rights violations and abuses that is likely to continue in the near future. Over the last two years, the Myanmar military has plunged the country into a deep political, economic and humanitarian crisis. The Myanmar military has sustained its violent crackdown on any form of dissent, including mass political detentions, extrajudicial killings, and the enforced disappearance of opposition supporters. The use of torture and sexual abuse as tools of terror are endemic.

According to the figures provided by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, since the coup, over 2 800 civilians have been killed while over 17 400 people have been arrested, with more than 13 600 still incarcerated. In July, the junta executed four political prisoners, including a former National League for Democracy lawmaker and a prominent pro-democracy activist, putting an end to a 30-year moratorium on the death penalty. Expanded military operations involved the indiscriminate use of artillery and airstrikes, killing civilians, damaging essential civilian infrastructure -including schools, hospitals and religious buildings- and forcing hundreds of thousands to flee. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that since the coup, at least 382 children have been killed, with 111 reported cases where victims were burned alive, in apparent attempts by the security forces to destroy evidence. According to the Special Rapporteur, when the junta's attacks occur in the context of armed conflict, they constitute probable war crimes. Over 17 million people are now in humanitarian need and almost 1.5 million people have been displaced from their homes, 1.2 million of which have been displaced in the last year alone. The military has continued to systematically deny humanitarian access to people in need in conflict areas. According to data collected by the Armed

Conflict Location & Event Data Project, Myanmar ranked second in terms of fatalities from political violence (19,000) in 2022, behind Ukraine, and tops the global list in terms of weighted severity.

Internet shutdowns and the harassment and prosecution of journalists and individuals reporting on human rights have severely limited information flows and civic space. According to the 2022 World Press Freedom Index, the country fell from 136th to 176th of 180 countries worldwide. Myanmar ranked as the world's third worst jailer of journalists, with 42 behind bars when the Committee to Protect Journalists conducted its annual prison census in December 2022. The new "Registration of Associations Law" of October 2022 criminalizes non-compliance of national and international NGOs operating in Myanmar, hindering their ability to operate. In January 2023, the junta also enacted a new "Political Parties Registration Law", imposing draconian administrative obligations on political parties willing to run for election.

**2. EU action on human rights and democracy - key focus areas:** The EU further extended its restrictive measures on Myanmar and imposed two additional rounds of sanctions in February and November, expanding the list of individuals subjected to travel bans and asset freezes. By the end of 2022, this included 84 individuals and 11 entities and mirrors sanctions of like-minded countries. Human rights and democracy continue to be the cornerstone of the EU Delegation's work in Myanmar in line with its human rights and democracy strategy; however, the crisis has led to a suspension of all cooperation with government actors, making it increasingly challenging to collaborate with local civil society organisations (CSOs).

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** Given that all formal interaction with the military regime was put on hold after the coup, no human rights dialogue took place during 2022, including the regular development cooperation and 'Everything But Arms' monitoring missions. The EU Delegation however engaged in dialogue with numerous local and international CSOs in order to align support and better understand the challenges they face since the coup, in terms of internally displaced persons and humanitarian needs. The engaged with the pro-democracy movement, including National Unity Government (NUG) representatives and other stakeholders. This included meetings at senior level. The EU Special Envoy for Myanmar engaged regional governments, the NUG, and other stakeholders throughout the year. Myanmar was not represented at the EU-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in December in Brussels.

**4. EU financial engagement:** Following the military coup in February 2021, all support channelled to the government was suspended. In line with the Council Conclusions of February 2021 enjoining the EU to support the population of Myanmar through the crisis, the EU adopted a 'back to basics approach' focused on supporting local communities and vulnerable populations and working through civil society and international organisations. Since the coup, the EU has allocated EUR 125 million to support programmes focusing on the Peace-Development-Humanitarian Nexus, on education at all levels, and on rural livelihoods, labour rights of vulnerable workers, access to energy for the rural poor. Additional funding (EUR 8 million) supports displaced Myanmar populations along the Thai-Myanmar border. The EU also supported human rights defenders, journalists and independent media outlets, documentation of human rights abuses, and capacity building in international humanitarian and human rights law.

**5. Multilateral context:** At the UN, the EU engaged in the preparation of resolutions and statements at the General Assembly and Human Rights Council. The UN Security Council passed its first ever resolution on Myanmar in December 2022. The EU and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference also

co-sponsored their annual resolution on the rights of minorities in Myanmar, including the Rohingya. EU and ASEAN leaders also agreed to redouble their collective efforts towards a peaceful solution in Myanmar.

Source: [EU Annual report on Human rights and democracy in the World: 2022 country updates](#)

### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Myanmar has received some 566 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

### Further information

[The European Union and Myanmar](#) - EEAS

[EU trade relations with Myanmar](#) - DG Trade

International Partnerships: [EU - Myanmar](#) - DG INTPA

## Pakistan

### EU Relations

The [EU's bilateral relations](#) with Pakistan are guided by the EU-Pakistan Strategic Engagement Plan, signed in June 2019, and by the 2004 Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development. The Strategic Engagement Plan provides a comprehensive political framework in the areas of peace and security, democracy, the rule of law, good governance and human rights, migration and mobility, trade and investment, sustainable development, education and culture, and science and technology.

### Human rights

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** The Constitution of Pakistan provides the necessary legal framework for fundamental rights, provincial autonomy and local governance to be guaranteed. However, the democracy and human rights situation in the country continued to present a mixed picture in 2022. Although a number of legislative measures have been initiated or adopted, political turmoil or weak institutions precluded their adoption or enactment. In many areas where legislation exists, relevant human and financial resources have not been sufficient to enforce existing laws, to train officials and to raise awareness within the public at large. The National Commission for Human Rights continues to play a crucial role in improving the human rights situation in Pakistan. Its capacity of operation should be further strengthened.

2022 saw a constitutional crisis around the ousting of former Prime Minister Imran Khan; a political crisis followed. However, the country managed a peaceful transition of power, for the third consecutive time, in April 2022.

In October 2022, the Pakistan Senate passed legislation further reducing the crimes punishable by a death sentence, by eliminating the death penalty for railway sabotage. An amendment to the Narcotics Bill striking off the death penalty for all narcotics offences was also passed by the National Assembly, and

awaits Senate approval. Nevertheless, death penalty remains applicable for more than 30 crimes – including for non-lethal offenses – and is still pronounced regularly. Although no executions have taken place since 2018, nearly 4 000 people remain on death row or are awaiting the results of appeals, often for more than a decade, while a comprehensive revision of the mercy petition procedure has not been implemented.

Violence against women continues to remain widespread. However, Pakistan adopted the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace (Amendment) Act 2022, which significantly expands the definition of workers and workplaces to cover domestic workers. The adoption of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill is still pending. Pakistan has yet to enact a law at federal level to increase the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 (currently only the province of Sindh has such legislation in force). The Transgender Person (Protection of Rights) Act 2018, a landmark bill to secure transgender rights, has been challenged in front of the Federal Shariat Court in 2022.

In November 2022, Pakistan adopted the long awaited Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention & Punishment) Act 2022, which criminalises acts of torture, custodial death and rape addressing a major problem reported by human rights defenders. Enforced disappearances remain a worrying practice, which targets mainly human rights activists, journalists and people voicing criticism of the authorities. According to the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, as of 31 October 2022 at least 2,210 cases remain unresolved. Legislation criminalizing and prosecuting enforced disappearances is still missing. A law drafted by the previous government has not materialised in the Parliament. Civil society organisations and activists notified additional restrictions, problems with registration processes, and other administrative burdens being introduced to limit their capacity to operate.

Freedom of religion or belief and rights of persons belonging to minorities continue to be areas of serious concern. Religious intolerance, forced conversion and hate speech often lead to discrimination and violence; the stringent blasphemy laws are reported to be continuously abused. Religious minorities report regularly cases of discrimination and threats, in particular the Ahmadiyya Community whose religious self-identification as Muslims is denied. Further concerns remain regarding freedom of expression and freedom of media. The Pakistani Media Authority filters internet traffic and occasionally blocks access to websites or social media platforms. Pakistan continues to rank among the most dangerous places for journalists and media workers. In 2022, seven Pakistani journalists were killed in line of duty, whereas the perpetrators of such attacks often enjoy impunity.

**2. EU action - key focus areas:** The European Union Delegation addressed human rights issues through engagement at various levels, including with government and other key stakeholders, civil society organisations and human rights activists. Particular fields of activity were access to justice and rule of law; freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, as well as labour rights.

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** The EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore, visited Pakistan in February 2022 emphasising the EU's position on human rights questions. Pakistan continued to be a beneficiary of the EU's preferential trade regime (GSP+) and undertook to implement 27 international conventions covering human and labour rights, environmental protection, and good governance. As part of the last monitoring process under the current legal regime, a monitoring mission visited the country in June 2022 calling for the implementation of the commitments by Pakistani authorities. The EU-Pakistan Joint Commission in October 2022 and its Sub-group on Democracy, Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights in September 2022 assessed and encouraged progress in the

key areas of human rights and democracy. In September 2022, Members of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights visited Pakistan, and discussed various human rights issues and called for necessary reforms. In November 2022, the EU-Pakistan Political Dialogue took place, providing opportunities to exchange on matters of common interest, including on human rights and democracy. At the same time, the Chairperson of The National Commission for Human Rights, Rabiya Javeri Agha, visited Brussels exchanging views with EU institutions and civil society organisation on human rights issues, notably in the context of the GSP+ monitoring process.

**4. EU financial engagement:** The EU continued its financial support to projects aiming at increasing awareness and capacities among stakeholders around death penalty, prison and torture reforms. In December 2022, the Delegation of the European Union signed a three-year project to increase compliance with human rights standards enshrined in the Constitution and Pakistan's international treaty obligation and to protect vulnerable prisoners from wrongful executions and unsafe prison conditions. The EU supported a project to encourage women's participation and leadership in public life in the Sindh province. The EU also funded a project to foster public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms. Through the programme 'Promoting the Rule of Law and Enhancing the Criminal Justice System', the EU is working with the federal Government to strengthen access to justice and enhance capacities of the rule law and justice institutions for better service delivery for all. Further, the EU supported in October 2022 the Asma Jahangir Conference, the most important platform in Pakistan creating a space for the legal community and the civil society to exchange on issues related to civil and political rights.

**5. Multilateral context:** Pakistan is a member of the Human Rights Council until December 2023, hence providing an opportunity for the country to engage actively on human rights issues. As part of the Like-Minded Group, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, Pakistan served as chair within the Geneva fora. In particular, Pakistan abstained on all resolutions related to Russia's war in Ukraine.

Source: [EU Annual report on Human rights and democracy in the World: 2022 country updates](#)

#### Official Development Aid (ODA)

Since 2018, Pakistan has received some 675 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

#### Further information

The European Union and Pakistan: [factsheet](#) - EEAS (2019)

[EU trade relations with Pakistan](#) - DG Trade

International Partnerships: [EU - Pakistan](#) - DG INTPA

## Vietnam

### EU Relations

Since establishing diplomatic ties in October 1990, Vietnam has become one of the EU's main partners in the region, with the highest number of [agreements](#) of any country in South East Asia, including a partnership and cooperation agreement, a free trade agreement, and a forest law enforcement, governance and trade voluntary partnership agreement ([FLEGT](#)). The EU and Vietnam have established cooperation in areas concerning political issues, peace and security, global challenges, trade and development.

### Human rights

**1. Overview of the human rights and democracy situation:** Restrictions on political and civil rights in Vietnam continued in 2022, especially as regards freedom of expression and association. The space for civil society is continuously shrinking. Several new laws and decrees introducing further restrictions in areas of cybersecurity, the work of NGOs and freedom of religion were either issued or under preparation. Journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders, as well as environmental activists, continued to be arrested and prosecuted on vague charges of crimes against national security or tax evasion and given long jail sentences in trials with little or no public access. During the year, appeal courts upheld several high profile convictions. There continue to be numerous allegations of unfair trials, including denial of legal representation; harsh physical and administrative conditions in prison, including prolonged incommunicado pre-trial detention; denial of adequate medical treatment; denial of family visits including through punitive transfers; and solitary confinement. Vietnam has continued to address the implementation of labour rights. It has committed to ratify the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention N. 87 in 2023 and to present a decree on workers' representative organisations, to implement the 2019 Labour Code. It has also increasingly been making efforts to combat child labour and to promote gender equality and LGBTI rights. The death penalty remains a serious concern and continues to be applied in a non-transparent fashion, with data on executions not published by the authorities. Concerns over the rights of religious minorities and the administration of land rights remain. Media freedom is still severely limited: print, broadcast, online and electronic media are heavily controlled; access to politically independent websites is blocked, and social media companies are forced to close accounts or remove content critical of the government. Vietnam is ranked 174th out of 180 countries in the Reporters Without Borders 2022 World Press Freedom Index.

**2. EU action on human rights and democracy - key focus areas:** EU priorities focus on freedom of expression, including for human rights defenders; access to information; freedom of religion or belief; civil society and participative democracy; equal rights and respect for diversity (including gender-related issues, people with disabilities, LGBTI); rights of the youth and child; the rule of law and fair administration of justice; abolition of the death penalty; compliance with international human rights law, and effective implementation of human rights mechanisms. In terms of action, the EU gave particular attention to protecting and empowering individuals. The EU Delegation was also actively engaged in actions aimed at supporting human rights activists. The EU together with EU Member States, who share the commitment to delivering by working together, arranged various social media campaigns, activities and events to promote human rights, including on the occasion of the World Day against the Death Penalty, International Human Rights Day and International Women's Day. Member States also arranged



various events on gender equality, LGBTI rights and the situation for civil society, with the aim of helping build a more resilient and inclusive society.

**3. EU bilateral political engagement:** Human rights have been mainstreamed in bilateral discussions at all levels with the Government of Vietnam. The EU, in close coordination with EU Member States and like-minded countries, maintained regular exchanges on human rights with Vietnam and reiterated requests for full implementation of all international human rights obligations and for the release of all persons detained for exercising their freedom of expression, both online and offline. The EU and Member States submitted many requests to observe trials of human rights defenders, to have access to prisoners, and on the provision of legal aid, medical support and for allowing family visits. However, almost all of these requests went unanswered or were denied. On 25 August, the EEAS spokesperson issued a statement on the conviction on appeal of Pham Doan Trang and other activists. The EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue and the EU-Vietnam Committee on Good Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights took place after a hiatus due to the Covid pandemic.

**4. EU financial engagement:** The EU continued in cooperation with Vietnam to implement the EU programme for Justice and Legal Empowerment (EU JULE), which supports, inter alia, justice sector reform, access to justice for the most vulnerable, and the implementation of the international human rights conventions to which Vietnam is a party (including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights the Convention Against Torture, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Women and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities). The EU also supported actions of civil society organisations in various domains, including gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence, ethnic minority rights (including land rights), children's rights, business and human rights, civil society empowerment, environmental rights, promotion of information on human rights issues online, freedom of expression, rights of migrants/returnees and informal workers, Covid-19 response and cultural rights. Throughout the year, the EU substantially advocated for providing technical assistance to support the revision of the labour code and the ratification of all core ILO Conventions and their implementation. The EU also continued to offer technical assistance for the implementation of the accepted recommendations under the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The EU is currently discussing a new programme on Rule of Law and Human Rights (EU JULE+) with the government.

**5. Multilateral context:** In terms of cooperation in multilateral fora, the EU has maintained a dialogue with Vietnam on international human rights issues, including in the context of the 77th UN General Assembly. Vietnam has refrained from condemning the Russian aggression and has abstained from all UN votes on the issue, apart from the vote to suspend Russia's membership of the Human Rights Council where it voted against. Dialogue on implementation of the recommendations to Vietnam under the third cycle of the UPR continued in 2022. Vietnam has accepted 241 of the 271 recommendations proposed. In March 2022, Vietnam submitted a voluntary mid-term report on implementation of the recommendations. Although the submission was a positive sign of engagement, the report was lacking in substance and clarity. On Human Rights Day in December 2022, Vietnam organised an event to launch the UPR process for the fourth cycle. However, a planned presentation of the involvement of NGOs was cancelled.

Source: [EU Annual report on Human rights and democracy in the World: 2022 country updates](#)

### **Official Development Aid (ODA)**

Since 2018, Vietnam has received some 231 million euros of Official Development Aid.

Source: [EU Aid Explorer](#)

### **Further reading**

[The European Union and Vietnam](#) - EEAS

[EU trade relations with Vietnam](#) - DG Trade

International Partnerships: [EU - Vietnam](#) - DG INTPA

## 2.2 Freedom of Religion or Belief - EU Institutions

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The following is a list of EU institutions documents related to FoRB or at least containing references to it or to religious based discrimination, either in general or related to the selected countries.

N.B.: For technical reasons, that would be too long to explain here, linked to the specificities of the different search engines in use at the institutions, the list cannot be exhaustive, especially as far as statements from the Council and the EEAS are concerned. But also for parliamentary questions, for which the plenary search engine does not allow queries with multiple keywords such as the name of a country associated with specific keywords such as *freedom of religion*; that means for countries like

Turkey or China which have hundreds of questions, that you should look and open each single question, to check the relevance of the question or the answer, which is not feasible for obvious reasons of resources.

Of course you will decide what to retain or not to the aim of your report.

## European Parliament

### EP resolutions

#### General resolutions

##### *On Freedom of Religion or Belief*

[European Parliament resolution of 3 May 2022 on the persecution of minorities on the grounds of belief or religion](#) (2021/2055(INI))

Date: 03-05-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0137

[European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2019 on EU Guidelines and the mandate of the EU Special Envoy on the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU](#) (2018/2155(INI))

Date: 15/1/2019 Reference: P8\_TA(2019)0013

##### *Mentioning Freedom of Religion or Belief*

[European Parliament recommendation of 15 March 2023 to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy taking stock of the functioning of the EEAS and for a stronger EU in the world](#) (2021/2065(INI))

Date: 15-03-2023 Reference : P9\_TA(2023)0077

[European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2023 on human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2022](#) (2022/2049(INI))

Date: 18-01-2023 Reference : P9\_TA(2023)0011

[European Parliament resolution of 17 February 2022 on human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2021](#) (2021/2181(INI))

Date: 17-02-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0041

[European Parliament resolution of 17 February 2022 on the implementation of the common foreign and security policy - annual report 2021](#) (2021/2182(INI))

Date: 17-02-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0039

[European Parliament recommendation of 9 June 2021 to the Council on the 75th and 76th sessions of the United Nations General Assembly](#) (2020/2128(INI))

Date: 09-06-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0278

[European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2021 on human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2019](#) (2020/2208(INI))

Date: 20-01-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0014

[European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2021 on the implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy – annual report 2020](#) (2020/2206(INI))

Date: 20-01-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0012

[European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2020 on human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2018](#) (2019/2125(INI))

Date: 15-01-2020 Reference : P9\_TA(2020)0007

### Selected countries related resolutions

#### *Algeria*

[European Parliament resolution of 26 November 2020 on the deteriorating situation of human rights in Algeria, in particular the case of journalist Khaled Drareni](#) (2020/2880(RSP))

Date: 26/11/2020 Reference: P9\_TA(2020)0329

[European Parliament resolution of 28 November 2019 on the situation of freedoms in Algeria](#) (2019/2927(RSP))

Date: 28/11/2019 Reference: P9\_TA(2019)0072

#### *Egypt*

[European Parliament resolution of 24 November 2022 on the human rights situation in Egypt](#) (2022/2962(RSP))

Date: 24/11/2022 Reference: P9\_TA(2022)0426

[European Parliament resolution of 24 October 2019 on Egypt](#) (2019/2880(RSP))

Date :24-10-2019 Reference : P9\_TA(2019)0043

[European Parliament resolution of 13 December 2018 on Egypt, notably the situation of human rights defenders](#) (2018/2968(RSP))

Date 13/12/2018 Ref: P8\_TA(2018)0526

#### *Qatar*

[European Parliament resolution of 24 November 2022 on the situation of human rights in the context of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar](#) (2022/2948(RSP))

Date :24-11-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0427

#### *Turkey*

[European Parliament resolution of 7 June 2022 on the 2021 Commission Report on Turkey](#) (2021/2250(INI))

Date 7/6/2022 Reference: P9\_TA(2022)0222

[European Parliament resolution of 19 May 2021 on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Turkey](#) (2019/2176(INI))

Date :19-05-2021 Reference: P9\_TA(2021)0243

## *Nigeria*

[European Parliament Resolution on the risk of death penalty and execution of singer Yahaya Sharif Aminu for blasphemy in Nigeria \(2023/2650\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 20/04/2023 Reference: P9\_TA(2023)0116

[European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2020 on Nigeria, notably the recent terrorist attacks \(2020/2503\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 16-01-2020 Reference : P9\_TA(2020)0012

## *Bangladesh*

[European Parliament resolution of 14 September 2023 on the human rights situation in Bangladesh, notably the case of Odhikar \(2023/2833\(RSP\)\)](#)

## *China*

[European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2024 on the ongoing persecution of Falun Gong in China, notably the case of Mr Ding Yuande \(2024/2504\(RSP\)\)](#)

[European Parliament recommendation of 13 December 2023 to the Council and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-China relations \(2023/2127\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 13-12-2023 Reference : P9\_TA(2023)0469

[European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2023 on the abduction of Tibetan children and forced assimilation practices through Chinese boarding schools in Tibet \(2023/3025\(RSP\)\):](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 7 July 2022 on the arrest of Cardinal Zen and the trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund in Hong Kong \(2022/2751\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 07-07-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0291

[European Parliament recommendation of 21 October 2021 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on EU-Taiwan political relations and cooperation \(2021/2041\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 21-10-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0431

[European Parliament resolution of 16 September 2021 on a new EU-China strategy \(2021/2037\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 16-09-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0382

[European Parliament resolution of 17 December 2020 on forced labour and the situation of the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region \(2020/2913\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 17-12-2020 Reference : P9\_TA(2020)0375

[European Parliament resolution of 19 December 2019 on the situation of the Uyghurs in China \(China Cables\) \(2019/2945\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 19-12-2019 Reference : P9\_TA(2019)0110

[European Parliament resolution of 18 April 2019 on China, notably the situation of religious and ethnic minorities \(2019/2690\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 18/04/2019 Reference: P8\_TA(2019)0422

[European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2018 on the cases of the human rights activists Wu Gan, Xie Yang, Lee Ming-che and Tashi Wangchuk, and the Tibetan monk Choekyi \(2018/2514\(RSP\)\)](#)

## *India*

[European Parliament recommendation of 17 January 2024 to the Council, Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-India relations \(2023/2128\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 17-01-2024 Reference : P9\_TA(2024)0033

[European Parliament resolution of 13 July 2023 on India, the situation in Manipur \(2023/2781\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 13/07/2023 Reference: P9\_TA(2023)0289

[European Parliament recommendation of 29 April 2021 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy concerning EU-India relations \(2021/2023\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 29-04-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0163

## *Myanmar*

[Myanmar, one year after the coup](#) European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2022 on Myanmar, one year after the coup (2022/2581(RSP))

Date: 10-03-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0079

[Human rights situation in Myanmar, including the situation of religious and ethnic groups](#) European Parliament resolution of 7 October 2021 on the human rights situation in Myanmar, including the situation of religious and ethnic groups (2021/2905(RSP))

Date: 07-10-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0417

### **The case of Rohingya**

The following resolutions do not mention freedom of religion as such, however we included them as they regard the Rohingya Muslim community (in a predominantly Buddhist country such as Myanmar) and the refugee crisis and genocide against this ethnic minority. Myanmar government does not include the Rohingya minority group - classified as stateless Bengali Muslims from Bangladesh since Nationality law in Myanmar 1982 —on the government's list of more than 130 ethnic races and, therefore, the government states that they have no claim to Myanmar citizenship. The resolutions concern therefore a de facto discrimination based on religion, although not mentioning FoRB as such.

[European Parliament resolution of 19 September 2019 on Myanmar, notably the situation of the Rohingya \(2019/2822\(RSP\)\)](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 11 February 2021 on the situation in Myanmar \(2021/2540\(RSP\)\)](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 6 October 2022 on the Media freedom crackdown in Myanmar, notably the cases of Htet Htet Khine, Sithu Aung Myint and Nyein Nyein Aye \(2022/2857\(RSP\)\)](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 11 May 2023 on Myanmar, notably the dissolution of democratic political parties \(2023/2694\(RSP\)\)](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2018 on the human rights situation in Bangladesh \(2018/2927\(RSP\)\)](#)

## *Pakistan*

[European Parliament resolution of 29 April 2021 on the blasphemy laws in Pakistan, in particular the case of Shagufta Kausar and Shafqat Emmanuel \(2021/2647\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 29-04-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0157

## *Vietnam*

[European Parliament resolution of 21 January 2021 on the human rights situation in Vietnam, in particular the case of human rights journalists Pham Chi Dung, Nguyen Tuong Thuy and Le Huu Minh Tuan \(2021/2507\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 21/01/2021 Reference: P9\_TA(2021)0029

## *Other countries ForB related resolutions*

[European Parliament resolution of 5 October 2023 on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, in particular the persecution of former government officials \(2023/2881\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 5/10/2023 Reference P9\_TA(2023)0349

[European Parliament resolution of 7 April 2022 on the human rights situation in North Korea, including the persecution of religious minorities \(2022/2620\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: Thursday, 7 April 2022 Reference: P9\_TA(2022)0123

[European Parliament resolution of 4 October 2023 on Uzbekistan \(2022/2195\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 04-10-2023 Reference : P9\_TA(2023)0346

[European Parliament resolution of 15 March 2023 on EU-Azerbaijan relations \(2021/2231\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 15-03-2023 Reference : P9\_TA(2023)0082

[European Parliament resolution of 15 December 2022 on the case of human rights defender Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja in Bahrain \(2022/2994\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 15-12-2022 Reference : P9\_TA(2022)0447

[European Parliament resolution of 15 September 2022 on Nicaragua, in particular the arrest of the bishop Rolando Álvarez \(2022/2827\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 15 September 2022 Reference: P9\_TA(2022)0322

[European Parliament resolution of 11 February 2021 on the human rights situation in Kazakhstan \(2021/2544\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 11-02-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0056

[European Parliament resolution of 11 February 2021 on the humanitarian and political situation in Yemen \(2021/2539\(RSP\)\)](#)

Date: 11-02-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0053

[European Parliament resolution of 19 May 2021 on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Montenegro \(2019/2173\(INI\)\)](#)

Date: 19-05-2021 Reference : P9\_TA(2021)0244



[European Parliament recommendation of 19 June 2020 to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the Eastern Partnership, in the run-up to the June 2020 Summit](#) (2019/2209(INI))

Date: 19-06-2020 Reference : P9\_TA(2020)0167

[European Parliament resolution of 19 December 2019 on violations of human rights including religious freedoms in Burkina Faso](#) (2019/2980(RSP))

Date: 19-12-2019 Reference : P9\_TA(2019)0106

## Parliamentary Questions

### *FoRB in General*

[Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU](#)

Question for written answer E-002093/2023 to the Commission

Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)

Date :03-07-2023

[Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU](#)

Question for written answer E-004132/2022 to the Commission

Patryk Jaki (ECR)

Date :21-12-2022

[Special Envoy for freedom of religion or belief](#)

Priority question for written answer P-003837/2022 to the Commission

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)

Date :28-11-2022

[Indifference of the EU to Christianophobia](#)

Question for written answer E-002316/202228.6.2022

[Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)]

Date : 06-06-2022

[Appointment of a new Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief](#)

Question for written answer E-001724/2022 to the Commission

Jaak Madison (ID), Gianantonio Da Re (ID), Nicolaus Fest (ID), Laura Huhtasaari (ID), Joachim Kuhs (ID)

Date :10-05-2022

[Universal respect for freedom of religion](#)

Question for written answer E-002853/2021 to the Commission

Karlo Ressler (PPE)

Date :31-05-2021

[Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU](#)

Priority question for written answer P-006663/2020 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)

Date :07-12-2020

### [Freedom of religion or belief](#)

Question for written answer E-002800/2020 to the Commission

Charlie Weimers

Date :06-05-2020

### *Selected countries related questions*

### [Protecting the human rights of Christians and all people in Pakistan from abusive blasphemy laws,](#)

Question for written answer E-002702/2023 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Rule 138 David Lega (PPE), Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Charlie Weimers (ECR), Anja Haga (PPE)

19.9.2023

### [EU measures in view of the violation of human rights of the Tibetan minority in China](#)

Question for written answer E-000669/2023 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI), Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI), Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI)

Date :28-02-2023

### [Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus \(GSP+\) and new blasphemy law in Pakistan](#)

Question for written answer E-000224/2023/rev.1 to the Commission

Peter van Dalen (PPE), Joachim Kuhs (ID), Miriam Lexmann (PPE), Charlie Weimers (ECR), György Hölvényi (PPE), Petras Auštrevičius (Renew), Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Bart Groothuis (Renew), Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)

Date :25-01-2023

### [Commission's response to the massacre of Catholics in Nigeria](#)

Question for written answer E-002046/2022 to the Commission

Dolors Montserrat (PPE), Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE), Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE), Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez (PPE)

Date :06-06-2022

### [The EU's foreign policy response to the massacre of Catholics in Nigeria](#)

Question for written answer E-002047/2022

[Dolors Montserrat (PPE), Isabel Benjumea Benjumea (PPE), Francisco José Millán Mon (PPE), Juan Ignacio Zoido Álvarez (PPE)]

Date : 06-06-2022

### [India's failure to renew the licence of the organisation Missionaries of Charity to receive foreign donations](#)

Priority question for written answer P-005731/2021 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)

Date :29-12-2021

### [Shahzad Masih, a minor imprisoned for blasphemy in Pakistan](#)

Question for written answer E-005041/2021/rev.1 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Thierry Mariani (ID)

Date :09-11-2021

[Violence and discrimination against religious minorities in India](#)

Question for written answer E-003609/2021 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Peter van Dalen (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Cristian Terheş (ECR)

Date :15-07-2021

[Attacks on non-Islamic institutions in Bangladesh](#)

Priority question for written answer P-004924/2021

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Frances Fitzgerald (PPE)

Date :28-10-2021

[Reaction to Islamic persecution worldwide](#)

Question for written answer E-006079/2020 to the Commission

Emmanouil Fragkos (ECR)

Date :10-11-2020

[Continued persecution of Christians: recent removal of crosses once more in China and slaughter of Christians in Nigeria](#)

Question for written answer E-004444/2020

Ioannis Lagos (NI)

30.7.2020

[Freedom of religion or belief in China, especially regarding churches being closed down](#)

Question for written answer E-003816/2020 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Peter van Dalen (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (ECR)

Date :29-06-2020

[Chinese legislation impacting the issue of succession of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhist leaders](#)

Question for written answer E-002786/2020/rev.1

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE), Petra De Sutter (Verts/ALE), Petras Auštrevičius (Renew), Hannes Heide (S&D), Aušra Maldeikienė (PPE)

Date : 06-05-2020

[Violence against Hindu and Christian minorities in Pakistan](#)

Question for written answer E-005640/2020

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Peter van Dalen (PPE), Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Cristian Terheş (ECR), Joachim Kuhs (ID)

Date :15-10-2020

[Hagia Sophia is not only a World Heritage Site, but over time has become a global symbol of the Orthodox religion.](#)

Question for written answer E-004318/2020 to the Commission

Manolis Kefalogiannis (PPE)

Date :21-07-2020

[Migration from Algeria and crackdown on religious minorities](#)

Question for written answer E-004214/2020 to the Commission

to the Commission Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Charlie Weimers (ECR), Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Izabela-Helena Kloc (ECR)

Date: 15-07-2020

[Pakistan's persecution of Christians and Hindus](#)

Question for written answer E-003843/2020/rev.1

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Commission

Fulvio Martusciello (PPE), Miriam Lexmann (PPE), François-Xavier Bellamy (PPE), Massimiliano Salini (PPE), Gheorghe-Vlad Nistor (PPE), Michaela Šojdrová (PPE), Salvatore De Meo (PPE), Ádám Kósa (PPE), Milan Zver (PPE), Ivan Štefanec (PPE)

Date: 30-06-2020

[Freedom of religion or belief in China, especially regarding churches being closed down](#)

Question for written answer E-003816/2020 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the Commission

Peter van Dalen (PPE), Carlo Fidanza (ECR)

Date :29-06-2020

[Hate speech against LGBTI persons in Turkey by institutional and governmental representatives](#)

Question for written answer E-003154/2020/rev.1 to the Commission

Terry Reintke (Verts/ALE), Marc Angel (S&D), Malin Björk (GUE/NGL), Maria Walsh (PPE), Alice Kuhnke (Verts/ALE), Sergey Lagodinsky (Verts/ALE), Evin Incir (S&D), Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE), Sophia in 't Veld (Renew)

Date :25-05-2020

[Attacks on freedom of religion in Algeria](#)

Question for written answer E-002954/2020 to the Commission

Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Peter van Dalen (PPE), Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Charlie Weimers (ECR), Izabela-Helena Kloc (ECR)

Date :13-05-2020

[Hate speech against minorities in India](#)

Question for written answer E-001761/2022 to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Alviina Alametsä (Verts/ALE)

Date :11-05-2022

[Chinese legislation impacting the issue of succession of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhist leaders](#)

Question for written answer E-002786/2020/rev.1

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and

Security Policy

Francisco Guerreiro (Verts/ALE), Petra De Sutter (Verts/ALE), Petras Auštrevičius (Renew), Hannes Heide (S&D), Aušra Maldeikienė (PPE)

Date: 06-05-2020

#### [Religious freedom in India](#)

Question for written answer E-002211/2020

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR), Cristian Terheș (ECR)

Date :10-04-2020

#### [VP/HR - Re-education camps in China](#)

Question for written answer E-002623/2019 to the Commission

Ilhan Kyuchyuk (Renew)

Date :03-09-2019

#### [VP/HR - Alarming situation of Christian minorities in south-east Turkey](#)

Question for written answer E-002610/2019 to the Commission

Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR)

Date :03-09-2019

#### [China - Fatal human organ harvesting from members of ethnic and religious minorities \(Falun Gong and Uighurs\)](#)

Question for written answer E-003094/2019 to the Commission

Isabel Santos (S&D)

Date: 03-10-2019

#### [Religious intolerance in Egypt: terrorist attacks on Coptic Christians](#)

Question for written answer E-000261-18 to the Commission

Mara Bizzotto (ENF)

date: 18.1.2018

### Debates

[10th anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief \(debate\)](#), Verbatim report

### Hearings

17-02-2020 [Respect for minorities, beliefs and religions](#)

## European Council on FoRB related issues

[Council Conclusions on EU Priorities in UN Human Rights Fora in 2024](#), 23.01.2024

[International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief \(22 August 2023\): Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the EU](#), 21 August 2023

[Democratic Republic of the Congo \(DRC\): Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union](#), 7 July 2023

[Council conclusions on EU priorities in UN human rights fora 2023](#), 20 February 2023

[Myanmar: Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the 2nd anniversary of the military take-over](#), 31 January 2023

[Conclusions on EU priorities for cooperation with the Council of Europe 2023-2024](#), 30 January 2023

[Myanmar: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union](#), 31 January 2022

[International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the EU](#), 21 August 2021

[EU-China Leaders' Meeting: Upholding EU values and interests at the highest level](#), 14 September 2020

[International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief: declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union](#), 21 August 2020

[Declaration by the High Representative, Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the European Union, on the occasion of the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence based on Religion or Belief](#), 21 August 2019

[Pakistan: Council adopts conclusions](#), 19 November 2018

## European External Action Service on FoRB related issues

### Annual reports on Human Rights and Democracy in the World

Each annual report contain a chapter on Freedom of Religion or belief in general part as well as country related issues in the country reports part (as reported in the country fiches in our answers)

- [2022 Human Rights and Democracy in the World Annual Report](#) ; Annex: [country reports](#)
- [2021 Human Rights and Democracy in the World Annual Report](#) ; Annex: [country reports](#)
- [2020 Human Rights and Democracy in the World Annual Report](#) ; Annex: [country reports](#)
- [2019 Human Rights and Democracy in the World Annual Report](#) ; Annex: [country reports](#)
- [2018 Human Rights and Democracy in the World Annual Report](#) ; Annex: [country reports](#)

Other statements / press releases

[EU Statement – UN General Assembly 3rd Committee: Interactive dialogue on Freedom of Religion or Belief](#), 27.10.2023

[EU standing by freedom of religion or belief during UDHR 75](#), 22.08.2023

[HRC 46 - EU Intervention: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief \(FORB\)](#), 4/3/2021

[EU Statement – United Nations 3rd Committee: Introduction of draft resolution on Freedom of Religion or Belief](#), 15/11/2019

A [video recording of a speech](#) of the EU special representative for Freedom of Religion or Belief, 16/08/2022